

## Ploughshare April/May 1999 (scanned version from the original)

### From the Rector Christopher Frith

These are exciting times at St Thomas'. It's a big contrast to feeling mediocre and perhaps, stuck in recent years. Since the last *Ploughshare*

- we have had a terrific Gift Day. A total of over £60,000 was given including returned tax.
- two enthusiastic work parties have achieved a great deal
- the "exile", worshipping God at 3.30pm on Sundays at St John's is proving an enriching experience, getting to know each other better, learning from doing things differently, sensing that God is at work in us in a new way.
- an atmosphere of co-operation characterises Church life, despite a few inevitable tensions.
- the redecoration and reordering seem to be progressing well.
- both St John's and St Peter's seem to be encouraged and buoyant.

We have had just three Sundays in "exile" as I write. By the time this is read, the remaining four will have come and gone, much more progress will have been made, I trust, and we will be preparing to celebrate Easter with the grand return.

The resurrection of Jesus brings a message of new life. It can be more compelling than ever for renewed people, meeting in a renewed building, ready to face a renewed challenge to reach out to those around us with the Love of our risen Lord.

Quite a vision! Risen Lord, please help us fulfil it.

**Christopher Frith**

ps Thank you for all good wishes and support offered when I was made a Canon. I like to think it is an acknowledgement of the contribution of our churches to the life of the Diocese, as much as that of the Rector.

## Face to Face with Midge Thompson

**Midge Thompson**, with her husband Roy, is a member of St Peter's. She was on Holymoorside and District Parish Council for 18 years, and chair on two occasions. She is a Council Member of Red Cross, Derbyshire, for whom she worked for nearly 50 years. Among other voluntary organisations, she was a founder member of the Chesterfield Care Group on Tontine Road and Crossroads, which provides relief for carers. She was awarded the BEM in the 1975 New Year's Honours list for services to the community. She is the mother of two grown up children and has four grand-daughters.

### **Midge, what was your training?**

I was a nurse. I trained in Nottingham and did mid-wifery in Oxford. I had a Sister's post at Scarsdale and at one time I had the responsibility of being Night Superintendent. It was then I was alarmed to discover that my eye-sight was failing and I experienced difficulty checking drugs. So I retired and concentrated on voluntary service.

### **What has caused you to be partially sighted? However do you cope?**

It's hereditary - called Macular disease. You have no central vision. Actually, we are trying to get a support group going in Chesterfield for those who suffer with it. You do learn to cope, you know your limitations and to try to make the best of what you can do. I decided to use my professional training in any way I could in voluntary service. I am very dependent on others, especially those who drive me around, I am so grateful to Roy in particular.

### **Red Cross has been your main concern hasn't it?**

Well at one time, I found I was obsessed by it and couldn't talk about anything else. So I broadened out and got involved in various other organisations! I got into it through St Thomas' when I used to attend as a child, because I was born and brought up in Brampton. I have always sought to delegate and develop the involvement of others, whatever I am doing. Then, when people are ready, I gladly hand over responsibility. At the moment my responsibility

is to represent Red Cross on the Community Health Council of the North Derbyshire Health Authority. We monitor everything to do with health -community care, hospitals, ambulance service, you name it .....

### **How does your faith help you?**

I've grown up with faith in Jesus Christ and I can't imagine being without it. There have been some special answers to prayer. But, it has been very hard facing bereavement. Our daughter-in-law, Teresa, died suddenly leaving two young children, I've prayed and prayed and prayed for them and Richard our son.

### **Have you still got plenty of energy? You seem to have!**

My doctor tells me to slow down! I'm on pills for blood pressure, But I'm, determined to help where I can. I want to use my experience and abilities to help others. I'm naturally enthusiastic and I love organising -isn't that awful?! I know I've got to be careful but then .....

## **St John's Family Breakfast**

On Saturday 6th February seventy five members of St John's congregation met to share breakfast and to hear about the Armonia project in Mexico. This is a project which the children of Sunday Club are supporting.

The children told us of the work being done by the project in Mexico City helping children and young people with housing, employment and education. Part of the presentation was an "interview" which highlighted the vast difference in lifestyles and expectations of a typical child in Mexico City and Chesterfield.

The breakfast advertised as "simple" was in fact a feast thanks to the hard work of the Sunday club teachers! All present seemed to enjoy the food and fellowship.

A collection was taken which will be sent to help the Armonia project.

**Richard and Pauline Neep**

## **The collation and installation of the Revd C J C Frith as an Honorary Canon of Derby Cathedral.**

Those of us who thought that collation was what happened at the downstream end of photocopiers, or was something to do with cold soup received a surprise at evensong at Derby Cathedral on 21st February.

Two bus loads of supporters accompanied Christopher to the Cathedral to where he was to be made canon. We considerably augmented the evensong congregation and enjoyed the organ music before standing for a large procession with the choir, men in wigs, men in robes, men with sticks and the Bishop to enter the church.

The Bishop sat on his throne in front of the chancel screen and told us that the cathedral did not have an OHP and that we would be asked not to join in when the choir sang an anthem. He had obviously reached the conclusion that an OHP makes a congregation madly participative.

Christopher arrived under heavy escort, two men with sticks (cathedral wardens) and a man and a lady with sticks (St Thomas' warden and assistant warden). Assisted by a legal gentleman with a wig, Christopher had to make a number of promises relating to helping the bishop through the work of the cathedral and he was then allowed to go and sit with his family.

Evensong started with the cathedral choir leading us and including in the service some of `our' more modern hymns/songs. The lessons were those for Lent which related to penitence, but also to following God's way more closely.

During the service the Bishop informed the Provost (why does Derby Cathedral have a Provost and not a Dean?) that Christopher was quite a good chap and had made a number of promises. Christopher then had to come out and make

some more promises to the Provost, many of which appeared to have to do with looking after the rights and privileges of the cathedral.

Two splendidly robed residentiary canons then seized Christopher by his elbows and took him to his very own Canon's stall in the cathedral as if to show he was one of the boys now. At some stage in these proceedings Christopher had received his canon's cloak, a rather splendid affair slightly on the olive side of British racing green. He has to keep it at the cathedral though.

The Provost preached about how Christopher's position as canon would be both of benefit to the cathedral and to St Thomas through better communication of ideas and cross fertilisation of the things we find helpful. He did also say that the cathedral was looking towards revising the promises canons have to make so that more is said of the cathedral's function in service and less of its rights and privileges. But it's the Anglican church and these things take a long time.

So at the end of the service we were presented with Canon Christopher Frith duly collated and installed and we were able to give him a round of applause. The cathedral went out of their way to make us welcome, the music (of all traditions) was great and a good Anglican cup of tea was provided at the end.

We all enjoyed the service. It's ritual was fascinating, if sometimes arcane. It revealed the complex workings of the Anglican church and the rather odd relationship between a diocesan bishop and the semi independent group that runs his cathedral. And it gave Christopher an ecclesiastical pat on the back which is richly deserved.

**Robin Dawson**

## Hope for Eastern Europe

A very warm thank you in the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ for your continuing support for God's work in Romania. As I write this sheet Dina will already have arrived in India. Her calling came earlier than expected. Isn't God amazing? We look forward to hearing the news on her return at the end of this month. Please can you continue to pray for her and the poor families in Basarabi - especially her family.

Our next journey will be very soon. We are responding to an urgent request for help. The Minister of Cross street Baptist Church, Revd David Bailey has received a letter from a Pastor of five very poor gypsy churches in Avaden. Apparently they are facing very severe winter conditions and are so poor they are without essential supplies to keep nourished and warm. Dried food appears to be a main priority for this journey.

Perhaps you may be able to help them by asking a few friends or relatives to prepare a 'gift of love' food parcel for a very poor family.

Suggested items include:- spaghetti, rice, pasta, sugar, flour, dried peas, lentils, beans, dried milk, cooking oil. We also need help to service and fuel the lorry. My husband Les has kindly volunteered as a driver for this journey. Thank you Lord!

Our next mission is planned for May. A 38 tonne vehicle will hopefully be available to convey supplies to Bucharest, Constanta and Tulcea. We need your prayers, support and encouragement to fill this vehicle and meet the fuel costs. Help is also need to purchase Romanian bibles and Christian literature.

Remember the words of our Lord Jesus - *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

God Bless you all.

Pamela