

PLOUGHSHARE

April/May 2010

Volume 18, No 3



St Thomas' Brampton St Peter's, Holymoorside

Share the love of Jesus

*We aim to become more like Jesus every day
as we respond to His love for us and
as we share the good news of Him with others*



**Ben and Gail's Wedding -they tie the knot and also make a fruit cocktail!
See page 10**

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brampton
onethousanddaysofprayer
11.10.09 02.07.12

**St Thomas' Church is open during the week from 9.30am to 12.30pm
for prayer and reflection.**

60p per copy (£3 per year)

Monthly Pattern of Sunday Services

There is a variety of services each Sunday in both our churches. Details are set out below. Please note that changes may occasionally occur at short notice. For the latest up to date information please check the weekly notice sheet or www.st-thomas-brampton.org/diary.html

St Thomas'

Sermon themes and readings are available in church or at www.st-thomas-brampton.org/services.html

Recordings of the sermons and readings are available at www.st-thomas-brampton.org/podcast_index.html

For those who enjoy tradition:

9am A service of Parish Communion (*Morning Prayer once a month*) using 'Common Worship' and with the choir and organ.

For those with families:

11am An informal service that's 'family friendly'. Sung worship led by the worship band. Weekly crèche (0-3's) and children's groups (3-10 plus years old). On special occasions the service may be 'All Age' with the children taking part.

1 st Sunday	Morning Worship
2 nd Sunday	Holy Communion
3 rd , 4 th (and 5 th) Sunday	Morning Worship

For those looking for something more:

6pm A relaxed service with in-depth teaching and extended worship led by the music team.

1 st Sunday	Informal Communion
2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th (and 5 th) Sunday	Evening Worship

4.30pm 'energize -1' for 10-14 year olds

8pm 'energize -2' for 14-18 year olds

St Peter's

9.30am A traditional service of Holy Communion every Sunday using 'Common Worship' and 'Mission Praise' accompanied by the organ. There is Sunday Club (3 years old to school year 9) and a crèche.

6pm A traditional service of Evening Prayer using the '1662 Service' and 'Mission Praise' accompanied by the organ.
(*Note: the evening service on the 4th Sunday of the month is held at Holymoorside Methodist Church.*)

For details of Holy Week and Easter Services see page 9



From the Rector

Dear Friends,

In the last edition I started *Ploughshare* by talking about the weather...let me do the same again this month. I was disappointed to learn that the Met Office were giving up on long range 'headline' forecasting after predicting a barbeque summer in 2009 and a mild winter in 2010. It's true that as a nation we're obsessed with the weather.

Someone rightly commented that we complain if we have any kind of the same weather for more than two weeks regardless of what it is! With that in mind I told this story at ALPHA the other evening - I hope you enjoy it!

The Blackfeet tribe of Indians asked their Chief in autumn if the winter was going to be cold or not. Not really knowing the answer, the Chief replies that the winter was going to be cold and that the members of the village were to collect wood to be prepared. Being a good leader, he then went to the nearest phone booth and called the National Weather Service and asked, "Is this winter to be cold?" The man on the phone responded, "This winter was going to be quite cold indeed." So the Chief went back to speed up his people to collect even more wood to be prepared. A week later he called the National Weather Service again, "Is it going to be a very cold winter?"

"Yes," the man replied, "it's going to be a very cold winter." So the Chief went back to his people and ordered them to go and find every scrap of wood they could find. Two weeks later he called the National Weather Service again and asked "Are you absolutely sure, that the winter is going to be very cold?" "Absolutely" the man replied, "the Blackfeet are collecting wood like crazy!"

If the joke tells us anything then it reminds us about how easy it is to just 'follow the crowd' without finding out the facts for ourselves and making an informed judgement. Often we do this with our faith. We believe what others would tell us about God and Jesus without taking the time to explore this vital area of life for ourselves. I often urge readers of *Ploughshare* to become more active in the search for the trust of God. Again I compel all readers during this wonderful Eastertide to think anew and afresh about the astonishing hope we have in the resurrected Jesus and what that means for our lives today.

If you don't know what a difference Jesus can make then don't rely on what others say, come along to one of our services or join our next ALPHA/START! course and discover the good news for yourself (*you might also hear some bad jokes like the one above!*)

Happy Easter, Matt Barnes, Rector

Valentine's Day at St Peter's

What a joyful celebration it was at St Peter's on 14th February, Valentine's Day. At our Holy Communion Service, which is a symbol of God's love given to each one of us, four couples confirmed their personal love for each other in renewing their wedding vows before the altar.

It was a delight to share in this personal act of commitment. We thank Joan and Bill Galloway, June and Peter Grayson, Vera and Terry McBride and Irene and Ken Franklin for this splendid act of devotion.

As a token of remembrance the couples were each given a heart shaped shell. The widows in the congregation were all given a prayer card with the words to the hymn *Love Divine*.

We ended the service with a celebration cake and drinks.

Rev Audrey



From the Editor

Welcome to this edition of *Ploughshare*, and a special welcome to any new readers.

In this edition we look back at some happy and fun occasions and an exciting partnership that we are entering into. There are also a couple of articles that may make less comfortable reading -a testimony and our challenge to mission.

Happy Easter

Mark Hoare -Editor

3 F's Walks Fun, Fitness and Friendship



Following the success of last year's walks, John and Ann Small and their dog Troy, invite you to share with them in a number of walks planned for 2010.

Details of each walk including starting points will be provided by information sheets that will be at the back of St Thomas' Church nearer the event dates.

The walks are for all: families, couples and individual so please do try and come and join us. We look forward to seeing you.

If you want to know more contact **John** 07752 798756 or **Ann** 07751 169333. (Troy hasn't got a phone number!)

Saturday 10 April, 2pm	Robin Hood, Nelson and Wellington
Friday 14 May, 7pm	Stanton Moor with Nine Ladies
Thursday 10 June, 7pm	Deep Rake and Coombs Dale
Tuesday 13 July, 7pm	Chatsworth and its Parkland
Friday 20 August, 7pm	Hardwick Hall and Country Park
Saturday 25 September, 2pm	Monsal Head and Brushfield

Read about and see pictures from last year's walks in the December 2009/January 2010 edition of *Ploughshare* or at st-thomas-brampton.org/walks.html

In Partnership with CVM



The organisation, Christian Vision for Men, has moved its base from the West Country to Chesterfield and has entered into a partnership with St Thomas'. Carl Beech, who heads up CVM talks to the Editor.

What is the aim of CVM?

Putting it simply, CVM is a movement of men that seeks to connect Jesus to men and men to the church. We aim to see over one million men come to faith in UK.



What are the things that put men off church?

That's an immense question that I unpack at length with leaders and denominations. Usually people have the Sunday meeting in mind when they are asking that question but the answer lies in both the meeting and what it means to be a follower of Jesus through the week. If we focus on the Sunday meeting for now, we need to think about teaching and learning styles, worship culture and the way the whole message is presented and its relevance to daily life. Give me two hours and I'll unpack it properly!

Conversely what can attract a man to church?

Again, this is a massive question but here's a simple taster. If I showed you two lists with one that had the words: 'love, nurture, compassion, relationship, empathy' and another that had words like: 'task, achievement, goals, risk, challenge' which list would you say is more attuned to the Christian faith? Most people choose the first list. Interestingly that list is the core characteristics of a woman from the famous book *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus*. The other list is male characteristics! Now of course this is a broad brush stroke and not all men and women would embrace either list in such a polarized way, but if the church is only talking about list 1 then not only is it setting men up to fail but it is also ignoring the fact that the bible is full of risk, challenge and adventure (Nehemiah, Acts, Exodus, etc etc etc!) In terms of worship, I would also add that some songs are just far too sentimental, overly intimate and hard for men to sing! (Especially if we are thinking about being missional.) These aren't just my opinions (although I share them) but the evidence of extensive surveys and research and my own time as a church leader for over ten years.

Why is it so important to get men in particular to church?

Simply this: if you lead a child to Jesus 3.5% of families will follow. Lead a mother to Jesus and 17% of families follow. Lead a man to Jesus and 93% of the time the rest of the family will come to faith! Yet at the same time research shows that over 75% of men in the UK are antagonistic or apathetic towards the Christian faith. The battle lines have been drawn!

Why have you uprooted your office and family from the West Country and moved to Chesterfield?

The movement is growing rapidly and I have to travel a fair bit. Travelling the UK from Bath was a bit tough and so we decided to plonk ourselves in the middle of the country...and we are loving it!

So you decided to come to Chesterfield and bought a house in Brampton which has St Thomas' as the parish church. Matt is the Rector who has a heart for men's ministry like you –holy coincidence?

Serious answer to prayer that one! Another sign of God's hand on the move!

Who else from CVM has moved up with you to Chesterfield?

Two of my core team have moved so far. That's Joe who heads up our conferences and administration (Joe by the way is a woman who happens to add an 'e' on the end) and Jonathan who heads up communications. We have staff all over the UK and two other core team members who live and work just outside London.

Tell us a bit about yourself and family?

I'm 38 and met Jesus when I was 18 in what was a profound encounter with his love and mercy. (I only went to church because I heard there were some nice girls there...). I was going to join the British Army but I felt Jesus ask me to fight his battles instead. The night I became a believer I also had a revelation of the reality of hell given to me and I knew life would never be the same again. I married Karen (one of the girls in the church) when I was twenty two after completing an engineering degree. I then worked as a financial salesman in London before leaving to plant a church from scratch on a council estate. I ended up as senior pastor of a church leading a few congregations and pastors, and being ordained as a Baptist minister. Having always been



Karen



Joe



Jonathan

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first and foremost an evangelist I left to engage in the battle to win men to Jesus. Along the way Karen and I were blessed with two daughters, Emily (11) and Annie (9) and have acquired a dog, cat and apparently a hamster.

Briefly, how did you come to faith?

I was sitting in a meeting feeling quite scornful about it all when I heard God speak to me in my heart and call me to follow him and devote my life to telling others. In an instant I knew it was all true...I found myself sobbing my heart out and completely overwhelmed when only a moment before I had been smirking to myself about how stupid it all was. I was so shaken I couldn't drive for an hour.

Reading your literature you seem like a super fit guy. Things you have done include cycling from the northern tip of Britain to North Africa. Now you are in training for the London Marathon. But do you do things that us normal guys can relate to?

Hahaha...yep sometimes! I love Xbox, good food and wine, various normal sports, reading, playing the piano, music, eating out and the occasional cigar! Having said that, next year I'm cycling the width of America!!

Not liking football must be quite a disadvantage when it comes to evangelism among men –I find if I am stuck for something to say football is usually a good way to make conversation.

I'm here for the other four men in the UK who share my dislike of football! (Actually I don't dislike football I just only follow England when they are playing). I normally find plenty of other common ground. Besides which, reaching men is about being in a band of brothers who share life together and celebrate our diversity. Normally there are men around me who can make up for my shortcomings! Having said that I will develop an interest in whatever will connect with men, so this month CVM are launching *Scorchio* -the ultimate guide to this year's World Cup.

Finally what can CVM do for St Thomas', and what can St Thomas' do for CVM?

We want to offer St Thomas' as much of our resources as it wants and the input of any of our team of specialists. We will be praying for you all and the church leadership. We want to see many men and, as a result, their families come to faith in Chesterfield. As for what you can do for us...its just good to be in a church that understands what we are doing. We covet your prayers as we are always on the front line of mission. Check us out on the web cvmen.org.uk and on *facebook*, *twitter* and perhaps join our mailing and prayer lists.

On behalf of Ploughshare readers may I welcome the CVM team to our parish and we look forward to getting to know you better. -Editor

Cliff College Festival 2010 28-31 May



What does it mean to be a Christian in today's world? What is the experience of being Church on the edge of society? How can we witness in ways that are honest and open, yet faithful and effective?

If you would like to answer some of these questions through Bible study, seminars, great worship and good fellowship then why not consider visiting Cliff College over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. Special guests include Adrian and Bridget Plass, Phillipa Hanna, Matt Summerfield (Urban Saints) and D J Kubiks.

Fliers are available or you may wish to visit the website www.cliffcollege.org/festival for more information. Alternatively, you can speak to Alison Woodgate (237697) – as she is one of the organisers of the event.



TRAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade
traidcraft.co.uk

at St Thomas'

Thank you to all those at St Thomas' who continue to support the stall – fighting poverty through trade. It is much appreciated, especially by those whose lives it changes for the better in the developing world.



Traidcraft, like all business has had to face the challenge of these difficult economic times.

Sadly, staff redundancies at the head office in Gateshead are now being considered. May I ask your prayers for all involved? Please be assured that redundancies in the UK do not adversely affect the producers in developing countries.

The next stalls will be in St Thomas' on Sundays April 18 and May 16.

Alison Woodgate

Puddings Galore!

On Saturday 27th February 100 people enjoyed puddings galore at a fundraising '**Pudding Evening**', raising funds for the *Samaritan's Purse* Haiti Earthquake Appeal.

Members of St Thomas' Church, Samaritan's Purse volunteers and friends from the Brampton community raised £1,510 whilst enjoying well over 30 puddings donated by many local businesses and individuals. Between courses funds were boosted with a fun mini auction, with a huge range of items ranging from chocolates, signed footballs, hand made quilts and special occasion cakes.

A huge thank you goes to: Fredericks Ice-Cream; Boots No7; Brampton Brewery; Brampton Manor; Chesterfield College Fitness Suite/ Refectory/Quad'rnt Restaurant; Chesterfield Football Club; Crich Tea Rooms; Koo; Northern Tea Merchants; Pacific; Royal Oak, Old Brampton; Simply Cakes; Somerset House, Calow; Top Nails...and lots of kind individual donations from many *Samaritan's Purse* volunteers and friends and members of St Thomas' Church.

Samaritan's Purse is still very active in Haiti, providing medical care, shelter, food, water latrines and basic essentials. They are also clearing ground prior to rebuilding. For more information on work to date, including an up to date personal blog from one of our UK aid workers, visit the website samaritans-purse.org.uk

Jane Simmonds



Jane tucking into some ice cream with our friends from Fredericks

Some Diary Dates including Holy Week and Easter

Monday 29 March, Holy Week

7.30pm Meditation and Prayer, St Peter's

Tuesday 30 March, Holy Week

7.30pm Meditation and Prayer, St Thomas'

Wednesday 31 March, Holy Week

2pm Communion and Cuppa, St Thomas'

7.30pm Meditation and Prayer, Holymoorside Methodist Church

Mauudy Thursday 1 April

1pm Rendezvous, St Thomas'

7pm Agape Meal and Communion, St Peter's

7.30pm Agape Meal and Communion, St Thomas'

Good Friday 2 April

11am Hot Cross Bun Service, St Thomas'

2pm An Hour at the Cross Services, St Thomas' and St Peter's

Easter Sunday 4 April

9.30am Holy Communion Service, St Peter's

10.30am Family Communion Service, St Thomas'

6pm Songs of Praise Services, St Thomas' and St Peter's

Saturday 10 April

2pm 3Fs Walk -see page 3

Saturday 17 April

St Peter's Spring Fayre, Holymoorside Village Hall

Thursday 28 April

2pm Communion and Cuppa, St Thomas'

Thursday 6 May

1pm Rendezvous, St Thomas'

Thursday 13 May, Ascension Day

7.30pm Communion Service, St Peter's

Friday 14 May

2pm 3Fs Walk -see page 3

Thursday 26 May

2pm Communion and Cuppa, St Thomas'

More information on the weekly notice sheet and on the diary page of st-thomas-brampton.org

Please note also:

Sunday 4 April

11.30am Special Parish Meeting* at St Thomas'

Monday 19 April

7.30pm St Peter's AGM

Wednesday 21 April

7.30pm St Thomas' AGM

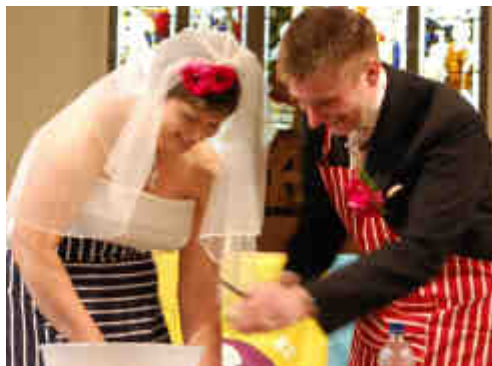
Sunday 25 April

6pm Annual Parish Church Meeting at St Thomas'

**The Special Parish meeting is to seek dispensation from the Church of England rules that a Church Warden can only serve for six years at a time.*

The Wedding of Ben Widdowson and Gail Bleakley

St Thomas' was full with Ben and Gail's relatives and friends including those from the church family, the Scouts, Cubs and Beavers. Both are involved with the life of St Thomas' and Ben is Group Scout Leader of the 3rd Brampton and Gail a Beaver's leader. The Rector, Matt Barnes took the service. In his address he talked about Ben and Gail living and working together as one. He illustrated this by getting them to actually 'tie the knot' and make a fruit salad together as he talked! A guard of honour was formed as the service ended and as they left for their reception. Their honeymoon was in Tenerife -although it was rumoured that Ben had suggested camping in England!





To see more pictures and listen to the service go to st-thomas-brampton/2010bengailwedding.html

Mission Weekend at St Thomas' 6 and 7 March 2010

St Thomas' gives away ten percent of all the money received from giving to mission, both in this country and overseas. At present the 'mission partners' supported are: Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), The South American Mission Society (SAMS –now part of Christian Missionary Society, CMS), Scripture Union, Novimost International, Tear Fund, Samaritans Purse, the Overseas Mission Fellowship (OMF) and Church on the Bus. Each organisation has a member of St Thomas' as a link co-ordinator.

Saturday –Prayer and Breakfast

As well as financial support it is equally important to know what the needs of the organisations are and to support them in prayer. So on the Saturday at 8am some fifty or so members of St Thomas' gathered for *Prayer and Breakfast*.

Displays about our eight mission partners were set up around the church. We divided into two groups and each group moved round to four mission displays spending fifteen minutes at each. Before we prayed our mission co-ordinators updated us on each organisation and told us of any specific prayer needs.



All ages tucking in!

Following our prayer time we adjourned to the meeting room where we found a wonderful breakfast of toast, cereal, hot bacon cobs and croissants (warmed to perfection) waiting for us.



Two of our wonderful chefs

The morning was, in my opinion, a great success. Our corporate prayer for mission, which had previously been held on a weekday evening, had become stale and poorly attended. (I have to admit that I would be there looking at my watch and wondering how much longer!) This was a new and fresh approach. We were able to learn more about our mission partners, pray for them (I didn't look at my watch once) and enjoy fellowship together. We give a big thank you to all who were involved in organising the morning.

Sunday –Mission Sunday for Church on the Bus

At the Saturday prayer morning with the Church on the Bus display were Church Army Captain Alan Park, who is in charge of the Bus project, and Captain Rob Lowe, who has recently joined Alan to help, and Robert Batten, a volunteer who often drives the bus. The three of them plus other Church on the Bus volunteers were at our three services on the Sunday as it was our Mission Sunday for Church on the Bus. (The last one was in 2007.)

Captain Alan spoke at the 9am and 6pm services. His theme was *'How to we respond to Jesus?'* Captain Alan said that everyone should take time out and ask God for opportunities to share His love in words and actions. However it is one thing to agree to do something; doing it is another matter. How many times have we promised God to share his gospel then failed to do so? Before the team take the bus out of an evening they pray for God's Holy Spirit to equip them with patience and a loving attitude and most of all to take control of the situation as they minister to the many broken people they meet. This gives them confidence in their faith and they have the assurance that Jesus is in control of everything they do that evening.



The Church on the Bus project is all about those who don't know Jesus Christ; being there for them and giving them a promise of salvation. He told the story of Cider Dave who wasn't a Christian before he came to the bus. Over a period of years he came to accept Jesus into his life. A few weeks ago he came to the bus and asked Captain Alan to pray for him as he was dying. He told Alan that a few years ago he didn't know where he was going after he died but now he did. God had met Dave where he was through the bus and the people on it sharing their faith.

In our communion services we use the words *'Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory'*. Do we fulfill this promise or do we come to church and leave God at the altar when we leave?

Captain Alan left us with a few questions:

How are we going to respond when Jesus calls us?

Are we going to follow through our promise to Him and act upon it?

Jesus does not offer us material wealth and power but an awesome, powerful and transforming love giving meaning and purpose to our lives. So we need to encourage people to make Jesus special in their lives. Are we ready to follow Jesus with all our heart, soul and mind to show people that Jesus exists today?

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Captain Rob Lowe spoke at the 11am service. He spoke about *homelessness and what the Church on the Bus project is doing*. He illustrated his talk with a number of examples. Church on the Bus base their work on WWJD –what would Jesus do in this situation. They don't want to just feed and clothe homeless people but to deal with other issues that may be affecting their lives, for example alcohol, drugs. Jesus would journey with these people and meet their needs. This is what the bus team wants to do and in doing so show those they serve something of Jesus.



Rob, like Allan, challenged us with some questions. Are we putting our faith into action: helping the poor and the vulnerable? Do we really know Jesus? Do we know, like Cider Dave does, where we are going after the grave?

At the 9am service **Robert Batten** explained *how he got involved with Church on the Bus and another project that has developed from it for the homeless*.

About ten years ago St Thomas' was supporting a scheme for the homeless in Chesterfield called *Rootstock* providing them with housing. It was for 18-25 year olds and was part of a larger project run by Social Services to provide housing. However there were a lot of complaints about anti-social behaviour from these houses and the Social Services project, including *Rootstock*, was closed down. However the need did not go away.

In 2004 Chesterfield Baptist Church held a meeting about homelessness. Representatives from a number of organisations attended. One of the people there was an Alan Park and he spoke about a bus he had and the work he wanted to start with the homeless. Being interested in homelessness and being qualified to drive a bus (though not a bus driver) Robert joined the fledgling Bus team becoming their driver. The team started parking the bus one night a week outside Chesterfield Town Hall. (They now have two buses going out four nights a week going to Clay Cross and Matlock as well.)

Robert said they make no apology for proclaiming that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. They don't overwhelm the people. However they do talk about Jesus, pray, study the Bible and give out tracts. People who come to the bus accept this.



The original bus (left) and the second one

In 2006 Alan said to Robert that they needed to do more. People come to the Bus but then where did they go? They went back to sleeping rough. People needed a home. And within two months they had acquired a house! They started taking people in and to date they have had thirty seven people living in this house –some for a few days, others for over a year. Their prayer is that they can rehabilitate those who use the house. Robert says they are sowing the seed of the Gospel. Psalm 126 says ‘we sow in tears but reap in joy’. It has been hard. There have been tears. The police have been called a number of times to deal with problems. But there have been happy times and laughter as well.

Robert describes Alan as a wonderful person. He is fearless, committed and absolutely focused on this work. He has an affinity for these people, having been homeless himself for seven years. Alan has prospered with Church on the Bus and the Bus has prospered with Alan.

Robert said he thanked St Thomas’ for the financial support, prayers and encouragement for Church on the Bus over the last five years. They are looking forward to the next five years.

You can listen to both these sermons and Robert Batten giving a brief history of Church on the Bus at st-thomas-brampton/ms.html#cb

Listen to Alan’s testimony at st-thomas-brampton/testimonies.html#apark



A couple of new drivers?

Patricia Twigg's Testimony

In the last edition Simon Twigg gave his testimony. As promised, his wife, Patricia, now gives her's, telling us how Jesus transformed her life.

I was a little girl when our family moved to Poolsbrook, a small mining village near Staveley. My dad had just got a job as a fitter underground at Markham Colliery. As my mother was also working, my grandmother started looking after me. She was a Christian and she made me attend our local Sunday school, which I enjoyed.

Several years later in 1973 there was an accident at the pit resulting in many deaths. The pit cage in Number 3 shaft that men rode up and down the mine in had crashed down to the bottom. My dad had just finished his shift and was showering in the pit head baths at the time. He volunteered to help bring the bodies up from the bottom of the shaft. Dad went back to work after the accident but after a couple of days he had to be brought up out of the mine because he was screaming. This happened several times as he was having flash backs. After about six months dad left the pit and took a new job. So we had to move and this is when I stopped going to Sunday school.

The years past and when I was fourteen I met a man two years older than me. My mum tried to tell me to keep away from him as she thought he was no good for me, (how true my mum was), but being a typical teenager I thought I knew better and I carried on seeing him. I thought this man was the one for me. I stopped out late at night and skipped school to see him. I was very rebellious and went off the rails. How I managed to pass all my exams I don't know.

When I was eighteen I fell pregnant. I came home from work to find all my clothes were packed in bags and a twenty pound note with them. My parents had thrown me out of their home as I had disgraced them. I moved into my boyfriend parent's home with him. However he didn't provide for me or the unborn child and I was wearing clothes that didn't fit properly and I looked a real mess. When I was six months pregnant I was in the market where I saw my mum. She saw that I didn't look too good and invited me back to her house to have a family tea. Mum took pity on me and I started to go to my mum's in a morning and then back to my boyfriend's just before he got home from work.

Where I was living wasn't too clean and my health visitor told Social Services of the condition who were not prepared to let a new born child live there. So I had to make arrangements to find a new home as I wanted to keep my baby. When my mum found out about this she and dad said that my child and I could live temporarily in their house until we found somewhere else to live. When my

son Robert was two months old we moved into our own home. My boyfriend moved in as well and when Robert was six years old we decided to marry. This is when things got really bad. He thought having a marriage licence gave him the right to treat me differently (and not in a good way). It started with him physically abusing me. I thought he would stop but how wrong I was. The beatings got worse and then when I refused to have marital relations he raped me. This went on for many years. He then started bringing other women home and making me watch him have sex with them. I did this as I was scared of what he would do to me. Finally he went and moved in with fifteen year old girl and her family.

He came regularly to visit Robert. However I stopped all visiting when Robert told me that my husband's girl friend had interfered with him. We then started to get divorced but again this was a difficult time as my husband began to call round to my home at all hours of the day and beat me up, eventually stopping only when I got the police involved. Once the divorce was settled and I started to get my life sorted out.

When I was thirty one I was in the market place and a group of people were dancing and singing. This was YWAM [Youth With a Mission] and a woman called Sue came to talk to me about Jesus. She then invited me to church that Sunday. Initially I just went to see what it was like. On one occasion I sat all the way through the service crying as I felt that there was lots of love around me. At the same time, however, I felt jealous of the people around me as they seemed to have nice lives and everything I hadn't got. I had been going to church for about four months when I became a Christian. Early the following year I was baptised.

Since becoming a Christian the Lord has blessed me in many ways. These include having the love of a new husband and three more wonderful children. Through all this Jesus has taught me that I cannot do anything in my own strength but only through Him who guides me in everything I do.

This is just a short version of events and I give glory to God for all things good in my life. The bible passage which gives me strength at times of trouble is 1 Samuel 2:1-10, Hannah's Prayer.

Tricia Twigg

Hannah's Prayer

1. Then Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the LORD; in the LORD my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance.

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2. "There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.
3. "Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.
4. "The bows of the warriors are broken, but those who stumbled are armed with strength.
5. Those who were full hire themselves out for food, but those who were hungry are hungry no more. She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away.
6. "The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up.
7. The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts.
8. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honour. "For the foundations of the earth are the LORD's; on them he has set the world.
9. He will guard the feet of his faithful servants, but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness. "It is not by strength that one prevails;
10. Those who oppose the LORD will be broken. The Most High will thunder from heaven; the LORD will judge the ends of the earth. "He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed."

The Markham Colliery Winding Accident

Markham Colliery was a large mine some five miles east of Chesterfield. On Monday 30 July 1973 at 6.20am as twenty nine men were being lowered down the No 3 shaft (some 1400 feet deep) into the mine there was a catastrophic failure of the braking system and the cage in which the men were fell to the bottom. Eighteen men were killed and the remaining eleven seriously injured.



This was not the first disaster in the mines around Chesterfield. In 1938 seventy nine men were killed, again at Markham Colliery in an explosion. In 1950 eighty miners died in a fire at Creswell Colliery.

St Thomas' Youth Weekend Away in Edale

In February a number of our young people went for a weekend away at Champion House, Edale. Aidan tells us a bit about it.



The weekend started in a bit of a rush for me because the school bus was late. I was excited about the weekend and looking forward to making some new friends and getting to know the others a little better.

Friday evening was spent getting to know each other. We sang songs and prayed and then played sardines which was new to me. It was brilliant fun!

On Saturday morning we prayed, spent time talking about sleep and the way GOD can help us and played a lot of ping-pong. In the afternoon we went for a walk with 'chicken' and rolled down the hills -this was exhilarating.

The best bit of the weekend for me was making the video about sleep on Sunday morning. My role was to control 'chicken'. (You will have to ask Aidan who or what was 'chicken'.)

The food, cooked by Tony and Marie was fantastic.

I made lots of good friends, laughed a lot and managed to pack in fencing, archery, and walking amongst everything else.

Thanks to Gemma, Gaz, Abi, Kat, Tony and Marie for making it a fantastic time for us all. When can we go again?

Aidan Baker-Johal

Watch the video they made at www.youtube.com/stthomasch



Future Vicars? The Beavers Visit St Peter's

Towards the end of last year the Holymoorside Beavers were invited by the Rev Audrey to visit and find out more about St Peter's Church. They had a good time and especially enjoyed trying on some of the vestments.



If anyone between 6 and 8 years old is interested in joining the Beavers come along and find out more. They meet on Monday evenings at 6pm in Holymoorside United Reformed Church.