

Ploughshare August/September 2000

(Selected articles scanned in from the magazine)

From The Rector

From 1 August 2000 the parish of St Thomas' Brampton will be a different shape - and smaller - and the parish of St John's. Walton will have come into being. As far as we are concerned, they have taken responsibility for most of Walton and Somersall from us, with the River Hipper acting as their northern boundary. In addition, the small part of Boythorpe around Sycamore Avenue which used to be part of our parish has now passed to St Augustine's.

Readers may well discover that they are no longer St Thomas' parishioners. As I said in the last issue of Ploughshare, no one needs to move from one Church to another. However, if your allegiance is to St John's you may decide that you no longer wish to receive Ploughshare. You have probably paid for it for the rest of this year. If you would like to cancel your subscription, please ring the St Thomas' office (558461) and we'll quite understand.

Readers who are still in St Thomas' parish may like to help by finding new Ploughshare subscribers. We are eager to extend our readership and to see this new era as an opportunity for contact with many more of our parishioners.

Angie Moves on

For over four years. Angie McGovern has been the Rector's Personal Assistant, staffing the Church Office for three days a week. She is to take up employment with the Post Office.

"Angie has been a solid performer hasn't she? A hard act to follow" a St Thomas' member observed recently. The office always combines friendliness with a feeling of efficiency - an unusual combination - and Angie epitomises both. She has always got on with whatever has needed doing, quietly and speedily.

Her common sense, amazing neatness, organisation, sense of humour and deep commitment both to our Lord and to his Church here have all played their part in making her a tremendous asset. Her husband Tom, who is a supreme computer whizz-kid, has helped out on innumerable occasions and we owe both Angie and Tom a big debt of gratitude.

Her successor is to be known as our Administrator/Rector's Secretary - a more accurate description of how the job has worked out. As this edition goes to press, the search is on to find that person.

Christopher Frith

Our Mission Partners

New: Alison Hawksley

Alison is to serve in Arequipa, Peru with the South American Mission Society (SAMS). As soon as her visa arrives, she hopes to arrange to fly out.

She trained as a Primary School teacher and worked for a year as a teacher. Then she went to Peru with SAMS as a volunteer teacher for a very formative year. "God blessed me through it far more than I could ever imagine" she says.

Her care for the people, culture and country became strong, and the Archdeacon of Peru invited her to return to work for the church on a more permanent basis.

She returned to England for a year's training at Redcliffe Bible College in Gloucester. Last summer, she went back to Peru with her parents and that time increased her desire to return.

The day care centre where she had worked, looking after unsupervised "street children" of single parents, is being converted into a school. Alison is to teach there and to work in a new home being set up for abandoned children.

We look forward to regular news and enjoying a fruitful mission partnership with Alison.

Old: Paul and Ruth Lapworth

Paul and Ruth have returned from their two year contract in Rwanda with Christian Outreach for Relief and Development (CORD). Ruth writes:

We returned from Rwanda in June after almost two years working with CORD (Christian Outreach - Relief & Development). Together with a team of about 30 Rwandese staff, we were running a community development project in a district called Mugesera. The challenge was to help the community get back on its feet again after the huge disruption caused by the 1994 genocide and war. The work was very wide-ranging and included such things as building schools, improving water supply, teaching primary school children about good hygiene practices, setting up fish farms, literacy training, supporting youth groups and giving small loans to enable people to set up small businesses.

It was an action-packed two years, and certainly the most challenging thing we've ever had to do. Nevertheless, it has been encouraging to look back over our time there and see the impact that CORD's work has had on the lives of many people. The work is continuing, but as yet, permanent replacements for our positions have not been found - please do pray about this.

As for us, we don't yet know what our next step will be. We are expecting a baby at the end of August and are praying that God will show us clearly what type of work we should be involved in.

We'd like to say a big thank you for all the support we've received from St Thomas' during our time in Rwanda. The gift from the Mission Committee enabled us to build about 20 new tap-stands, bringing water to hundreds of people who previously had none. We have also particularly appreciated the prayer support you have given. We have been very aware of God's presence with us throughout, and his strength enabling us to do things we'd never have **thought possible otherwise**.

Ruth and Paul Lapworth

Students Serving Overseas in the Summer

Two of our students members are on exciting projects with **Tear Fund** this summer.

Sara Griffith: after a year out which has included time helping in the Philippines, is to start studying Nursing at the University of Surrey in September. She has gone to the Dominican Republic, where Hurricane George caused widespread destruction in 1998, to be part of a team helping with building work at a children's home in Monte Plata.

This involves being a labourer and carrying out all sorts of non-skilled tasks, as well as participating in social and developmental activities of the Church, worship and evangelism.

Sarah Frith is a student at Birmingham University, reading Law with French. She is deputy leader of a team helping at the Near East Boys Home in Beirut, Lebanon.

They will allow resident staff to take a **well** needed break and are hoping to give the children a very special time.

Sara and Sarah are most grateful to everyone who has responded to their activities, raising £1000+ each to enable the trips to take place.

Millennium Festival Friday 22-Sunday 24 September

Our millennium celebrations continue with "Festival 2000", a weekend of celebration at St Thomas' church. We have a number of things to celebrate.

Would you like to know more about the local history in Brampton? Between 1780 and 1830, New Brampton as it was known, was transformed from a quiet rural backwater into a hive of busy industrial sites. We can celebrate life in community and church around Brampton. This involves setting up displays of the life of the community and the church. The Chesterfield Historical Society, Robinsons and others will be helping us with this part of our celebration.

The Duke of Devonshire laid the foundation stone of St Thomas' Church on 2 February 1830 and the Bishop consecrated the church in 1832. A lot has happened since then, not least the creation of the new parish of St John. As we look back, and look forward we have much to praise God for - we endeavour to express this thankfulness in the various displays and presentations.

Also as part of the celebrations there will be a flower display offering reflection on themes from scripture relating to our church motto (Hebrew 13:8) and to harvest. In order to view these displays the church will be open between 10am and 4pm Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd and 2pm to 4pm on Sunday 24th.

On Saturday 23rd we will be holding a Barn Dance. Tickets will be available nearer the time. Contact the church office for information.

Sunday September 24th is the Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Day with services at the usual times, 9am, 11am and 6.30pm.

Hope for Eastern Europe

May 2000 - Mission in faith to Romania

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer believe that you have received it and it will be yours!" Mark 1 1:24

I was personally truly overwhelmed with the needs for this last mission to Romania - the largest that the "Hope for Eastern Europe" team has undertaken - 5 regions, plus an essential visit to see my son Matthew training on a **six month discipleship** course with "Youth with a Mission" in Sighisoara, Central Romania, all in just 10 days.

I asked God to confirm very clearly and powerfully what were his plans and purposes and asked him to respond by blessing the work and providing every essential need for this mission - physically, practically, materially and financially. Help did come, but it was very slow and the "Spring into Action" outreach held in St Thomas' meeting room was very poorly attended, just six days before the lorries were due to begin their 4,500 mile journey!

The day before the Outreach, (which was arranged to help raise funds for extra food parcels and the financial resources for the children's breakfasts at the Special School in Isaccea) God told me to order food for 200 food parcels and purchase it Saturday afternoon ready to be packed Monday. Although we had a poor response - Rosanne, Les and myself still went ahead in faith and purchased £1,400 of dried food for 200 parcels - totally putting our trust and confidence in the Lord.

The next day being Sunday there was an opportunity during the Youth Service at St Thomas' to be prayed with. I went forward and sat between two friends - placed the written bible promise on my knee for my pray partners to see - we all smiled together and began to pray, thanking God for what he had already done - to bless the money we had already received and to multiply it - and to claim the written promise for the remaining needs. The list of needs appeared enormous to me - it included the cost of the Chiriac family's apartment, food for the children's breakfasts, bibles and Christian literature and many other things.

That same evening and over the next four days the floodgates of Heaven opened - all the resources came pouring in. I felt overwhelmed with love, a divine peace and an assurance that all was now fully in God's wonderful hands of care and provision. The food was officially checked by a very efficient, friendly Environmental Health Officer on the Tuesday morning who was available at just the right time! Once checked, the parcels were completed with a very important message, A gift of LOVE from JESUS (in Romanian), before being sealed and labeled.

These parcels were very special –**Romania** packed with love and now ready for the long journey to Romania - all in four days. **All the glory** to you Lord! It was a miracle!

Remembering the words of our Lord Jesus Christ –
*"It is more **blessed** to give than to receive".*

May God bless you all and a very big thank you for all your love, encouragement and support.

The Church Cricket Match Tues 27 June 2000

Darkness was falling as Dave Simmonds trudged to the wicket moaning that he needed a pit helmet. 34 more runs were needed from 6 overs - a stiff target. Dave and skipper Keith Bates cannily managed to take advantage of regular wides and no-balls, to run innumerable short singles and they got there. Once again, the Rector's XI had managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory! The Choirmaster's XI won by 7 wickets. With just two balls to spare. A suitably close finish to an enjoyable match.

There were several notable performances. Paul Lapworth hit the one six of the evening - and there are few practice facilities in Rwanda! Steve Broadbent and Dave Simmonds played good innings and Phil Antill held the latter part of the Rector's XI innings together well. The outstanding bowler was Geoff Beresforde, working up a fine rhythm; no Churchwarden has the right to bowl as fast as that! Peter Hooley bowled a sharp second spell and young Paul Smith clean bowled two of the early batsmen. Paul Benson, greyhound like in the outfield, was the star fielder.

But there was no question who deserved the Charlie Brassington Player of the Match award. The Choirmaster himself kept wicket with the agility of a man half his age, ran between the wickets like a hare and engineered a well deserved victory. Well done, Keith!