

PLOUGHSHARE

February 2008/March 2008

Volume 16, No 2



St Thomas' Brampton St Peter's, Holymoorside Share the love of Jesus



A White Christmas at St Thomas'! –See page 2

60p per copy (£3.00per year)

Sunday Services

During the interregnum the service pattern is planned to be as below. Communion will always be available in the Parish on a Sunday morning, either at St Thomas' or St Peter's. This is correct as the magazine goes to press. Please check the notice sheet or www.st-thomas-brampton for up to date information.

	St Thomas'			St Peter's	
	9am	11am	6.30pm	9.30am	6pm
Feb-03	HC	MW -AA	EW	HC	EW
Feb-10	MW	HC	EW	HC	EW
Feb-17	HC	MW	EW	MW	EW
Feb-24	MW	MW	HC	HC	EW @M
Mar-02 Mothering Sunday	HC	MW -AA	EW	HC	EW
Mar-09	MW	HC	EW	HC	EW
Mar-16 Palm Sunday	HC	MW	YS	MW	EW
Mar-23 Easter Sunday	10.30am Joint HC		EW	HC	EW @M
Mar-30	HC	MW	HC	MW	EW

HC	Holy Communion	MW	Morning Worship
EP	Evening Prayer	EP @M	Evening Prayer at Holymoorside Methodist Church
AA	All Age Service	YS	Youth Service (for all ages)

St Thomas'

9am is fairly traditional using 'Common Worship' with a choir and organ music

11am is a more informal service usually with a music group

Children's groups (from 3 years old to school year 9) plus Crèche

6.30pm fairly informal usually with a music group

6.30-8pm Pathfinders (school years 7-9) meet

8pm onwards CYFA (school years 10-13) meet

St Peter's

9.30am is a fairly traditional with organ music and using 'Common Worship' and 'Mission Praise', Crèche for under 3s, Sunday Club for pre-school children up to school year 9

6pm is a service of Evening Prayer. Fairly traditional with organ music and using the '1662 Service' and 'Mission Praise'.

From the Church Warden

'Do not dwell in the past. See, I am doing a new thing' -Isaiah 18-19.



As I look forward to Lent and Easter I find myself reflecting on the past year. We have seen some big changes; sad ones -Alex Simpson leaving St Peter's to move to Norfolk and David Mouncer having to leave St Thomas' for health reasons, and happy ones -Dawn Edingborough joining as our Children's and Families' Worker and Audrey Smith being appointed as minister for St Peter's.

Being in a vacancy is never easy and Bernard and I are very grateful to everyone for pulling together to ensure we continue to share God's love with our communities, especially in making all our Christmas services and events so successful. (See the pictures of the Youth Ball on the front cover.) A visitor leaving a carol service was overheard saying "You'd never know they haven't got a vicar".

The interviews for the Rector's post are on 6 February. If it is God's will we will appoint one of the candidates. If not we will have to be patient and wait for God to show us the right person.

We have lots of new things to look forward to in 2008. As well as finding a new Rector, Audrey Smith will be joining as the Non Stipendary Minister for St Peter's soon after Easter. We are forging ahead with our development plans for St Thomas' Parish Centre and there are plans to replace the vestry at St Peter's.

No doubt many unexpected things will happen, but on the days when we are bewildered by events, or we wonder "what is the world coming to" we can be reassured that God loves us and knows his plans for us. Easter reminds us just how much God loves us.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who can be called according to his purpose.....If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all -how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" -Romans 8: 28, 31-32.

Karen Riley

Front Cover Pictures

Christmas was a busy time at St Thomas'. The most ambitious event was the Youth Ball. St Thomas' was turned into a Winter Wonderland for an evening. Some sixty young people sat down and were served a three course meal to the accompaniment of a string quartet.

From the Editor

Due to the lack of availability of space in recent magazines some of the articles in this edition are 'out of season'. Some of the other contributions I have had for some time but have not had space to publish.

Having too many items for a church magazine is, apparently, a rarity. So thank you to everyone who has contributed and may I encourage others to submit articles.

In December, Heather Hollington retired from the Church Office. Also in December Bryn Garland, one of our Deputy Wardens at St Thomas', moved to Norwich. On behalf of all the Ploughshare readers I would like thank Heather and Bryn for their contributions to the life and smooth running of St Thomas' and wish them, and Maureen Garland, all the best for the future.

Tim Wheeler has volunteered to become a Deputy Warden to replace Bryn –thank you Tim.

Mark Hoare -Editor

The closing date for the April/May 2007 edition is 7 March 2008

Recent additions to the Church Website

Recordings of the November, December and January services at St Thomas' and more testimonies. www.st-thomas-brampton.org/podcast_index.html

Information about and recordings of the St Thomas' Development Meeting held on 25 November 2007. www.st-thomas-brampton.org/sttdev.html

Pictures from David Mouncer's Leaving Service and Christmas 2007. www.st-thomas-brampton.org/gallery.html

Information about St Thomas' clock and bells. www.st-thomas-brampton.org/bells.html

Tim Wheeler –New Deputy Warden

Tim has taken over the role of Deputy Warden at the Evening Service at St Thomas'



My name is Tim wheeler. I'm 46, married to Sue, with two teenage sons Josh and Sam. I work as a Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN). I've been a Christian all my life and with my family I have been a member of St Thomas' since 2000.

You would have thought that with all that experience of attending church I would have an idea what goes on behind the scenes wouldn't you? However, since becoming a Deputy Warden late in 2007 I have realised there are so many people doing so many "hidden" jobs to make our services run smoothly. Over the years I didn't realise how much I have benefited from these quiet and unassuming people. Whilst they may not be leading services or preaching etc., they have helped me to experience and interact with God. Not only to worship him in church but practically express his love for people at home, work or at play.

I'm no great spiritual giant and I struggle with praying and reading my Bible regularly. Over the last couple of months I have tried to read my Bible and pray with greater regularity and it is having an effect. I have started to be more forgivingsometimes grudgingly!! I'm seeing people more in the way Jesus views us. Wonderful as we are we aren't perfect. We are in need of forgiveness. We need love and the Holy Spirit to change us. The surprising news is that God's love is for everyone from those people with tremendous self confidence to those who are broken in spirit.

If anything I have said strikes a chord with you and you want to explore your relationship with God, do come along to St Thomas'. I'll be acting as deputy warden at the 6.30pm service which is a smaller quieter service than the morning services. You will have a warm welcome. I hope to welcome people personally as they come into church but if I don't say "hello" come and introduce yourself to me. Like those before me, I hope that I will be able to work behind the scenes to allow us to grow closer to God.

Tim Wheeler

Congratulations to Ben Widdowson

3rd Brampton Group Scout Leader and Queen Scout

Ben, a member of our church family and Group Scout Leader of the 3rd Brampton (St Thomas') Scout Group has received the Queen's Scout Award. This is the highest youth training award in Scouting and involves challenges in many areas including community involvement, adventurous activity, personal growth and leadership development.



Ben received a Royal certificate bearing this message from Her Majesty:

'As a Queen's Scout you have prepared yourself for service to God and other people, and have shown yourself a worthy Member of the world-wide Scout Movement, I wish you God-speed on your journey through life; may it prove for you a joyous adventure.'



Ben joined the 3rd Brampton as a Beaver at six years old, was a Cub, a Scout and then became Scout Leader in 2005 and Group Scout Leader in January 2007. At the age of 23, Ben is the youngest Group Scout leader in the country.

Throughout his time at 3rd Brampton the Group has enjoyed a close affiliation with St Thomas' Church. When in Cubs, Ben attended the monthly Church parades and the annual Remembrance Sunday Service. As a Scout, and now as a leader, he vividly recalls the experience of preparing for camp and the removal of all the camping equipment down the narrow staircase from the tower!

For his Queen Scout Award, he undertook two week long expeditions, one around the Dark Peak area in Derbyshire and the other to the Cairngorm region in Scotland. He has also undertaken community service projects, physical recreation activities, developed his electrical skills and explored his own faith. Ben was confirmed at St John's in 2007.

Ben says that Scouting has opened up many opportunities. He has met some truly amazing people and forged many lasting friendships which he would not have made if he had not joined the Scouts. Today, the Scouts which Ben leads take part in activities that encourage team work and build individual confidences around the Scout promise which Baden Powell introduced in 1907.

To join the adventures of the 3rd Brampton (St. Thomas') Scout Group, both youths and adults volunteers, please contact Ben on 01246 234082 or go to: www.3rdbrampton.co.uk/

David Mouncer's Testimony Given at Furnace on 26.10.07

Before David left he gave his testimony at 'Furnace' on 26 October 2007. Below is the transcript of what he said.

23 years, 5 days, 40 minutes ago God sorted me out. It wasn't particularly that I was a horrendous sinner before this point but I'd got things mixed up – upside down. Let me explain. I grew up in a Christian home, my parents were Christians and I went to a good evangelical church. I went to Sunday School, Pathfinders, CYFA, I was in the choir. I knew all the words in the Prayer Book. But I was still mixed up. (This worries me still, it is surprising how much good teaching can go into our ears without touching our brain or heart. We can be teaching the right things but are our young people really taking it onboard for themselves?)



So I was a 'good person'. When I was 18 I went off to Aberystwyth University. I remember kissing my parents goodbye and thinking "No one knows me". I could be whoever I wanted to be, do whatever I wanted to do. I could go home and my mum would say "Everything OK dear?" "Yes". "Been to church?" "Yes." Ummm!

In my first year I didn't really go to church much. (But I didn't get into wine, women and song either!) One day however I did go twice on one Sunday. I distinctly remember coming out of the church in the evening and looking up and saying, "I hope you're impressed". It's as if I had got obedience and love round the wrong way. I thought God would love me more the more obedient I was to him. The more times I went to church the more he's bound to love me. God would think, "That's one good mark, well done". I'd got things mixed up. I felt I had to earn God's love. The more I did for God the more acceptable I would be to him. Obedience would result in love.

That was until October 21 1984. I went to a different church and learnt a valuable lesson. Love and obedience are part of our lives - but it is *love* first and obedience next. There was a lady preaching by the name of Isabel Chapman. I don't know what she said. I don't even know what text she used. All I know is that at about 8pm she asked anyone who wanted to experience the love of God to come forward. Zip I was running up that aisle. I had never felt God's love. I had heard about God's love, read about it in the Bible but never felt it – because I was trying to earn it. I went up to the front of the church and burst into tears. Because it was at that moment I learnt really that God loved me. I hadn't been particularly obedient, but it felt like God's love was pouring into me. I was crying and enjoying the moment.

/Contd

Then I learnt the next lesson, that obedience comes *from* love. I went to church in the evening and took someone with me. He was called 'Trougher'. (I don't know his proper name only his nickname. It was to do with the amount of food he would consume in our halls of residence.)

Partway through the service Trougher said to me, "Let's go". I didn't really want to go but we went. Coming out of church we could turn right back to our halls of residence or left and along the promenade. We turned left and walked along the promenade. As we walked along in silence I heard God speaking to me deep inside me. I don't often hear God speaking to me but now I heard God saying, "Take Trougher back, take Trougher back". (It always makes me smile looking back, perhaps God knew I didn't know Trougher's real name – God speaks to us in ways we understand.)

At that moment I had a decision to make. This was nothing to do with God's love; it was to do with being obedient. "We've got to go back haven't we?" "Yes" Trougher said, and we went back.

We got back to the church and most people had gone but Trougher went forward and gave his life to Christ. I didn't realise he was a backslidden Christian. He re-committed his life and was changed from then onwards.

I learnt a very valuable lesson about obedience. As I was sitting in the seventh pew down on the left with my size ten white boots on the seat (there were box pews and I had to twist round to get comfortable) a lady, who was the cleaner came down the aisle and looked at me. "Hello" I said. "Hello" came the reply. This was the first time that I met Lisa. Within two and a half months we were engaged.

I often mull over the thought: would I have met Lisa if I hadn't been obedient? I don't know. But I did learn a valuable lesson that it is always best to be obedient because it's God's best way for us.

I went back to my halls of residence full of God's love. I was sharing a room with a mate called Dudley. On Monday morning I woke up and Dudley was looking at me strangely. I thought "What have I got, what's wrong with me?" He said these words that will always stay with me "David, you have been hugging that pillow all night!" It wasn't because I had met Lisa but because I was so full of God's love. I had to express it so what did I do, I hugged the pillow.

It's interesting sometimes how God converts us. He often comes back into our lives, he reverberates in us. I had learnt at that time that God loves me. Not because of what I do but because he has chosen me. That love is secure.

Coming right up to date people ask, "How can you believe that God loves you with what is going on in your life [MS]. I have no problem knowing that God loves me. His love is secure; is like a rock that never changes in my life. Yes storms come, yes they batter us, but God's love is constant. He loves us, he loves us, He loves us. But we do need to respond and we need to respond and

the way we respond must be with obedience. Jesus said, "If you love me, do what I say". My response to God's love has always been to follow him.

Something else I remember that has run through all of my life. When I was seven I fell in love – Clarke, Bremner. I was watching the television and Leeds beat Arsenal to win the FA Cup. They haven't won it since but I have followed through thick and thin – and there have been more thin times.

Do you love God? As a response you have to show it to God by putting him first, his ways first, his glory first. That means obedience. Show me someone who says they love God but does not do what God asks and I would doubt that love. We show our love of God in response to his great love, obeying what he says when times are good and when times are bad, through thick and thin. His love is constant and our love for him should be also.

You can listen to David's, and other testimonies at:

www.st-thomas-brampton.org/testimonies.html

Prayers for the Week

Monday Wash Day

Lord, help me wash away all my selfishness and vanity so I may serve you with perfect humility through the week ahead.

Tuesday Ironing Day

Dear Lord, help me iron out all the wrinkles of prejudice I have collected over the years so I may see the beauty in others.

Wednesday Mending Day

O God, help me mend my ways so I will not set a bad example to others.

Thursday Cleaning Day

Lord Jesus, help me to dust out all the many thoughts I have been hiding in the secret corners of my heart.

Friday Shopping Day

O God, give me the grace to shop wisely so I may purchase eternal happiness for myself and others in need of love.

Saturday Cooking Day

Help me, my Saviour, to brew a big kettle of brotherly love and serve it with the clean sweet bread of human kindness.

Sunday The Lord's Day

O Lord, I have prepared my house for you. Please come into my heart so I may spend the day and the rest of my life in your presence.

More Musings!

In the October/November 2007 edition of the magazine John Small wrote an article entitled 'Musings During a Sermon'. There were two interesting replies in the last edition. John now comments on one of these replies.



Preparing an article for Ploughshare has its dangers! First of all friends at church start talking to you. Secondly, and possibly more dangerous, David Smith writes a response and wants to change the whole process from speculation to actually doing something!

"Bear one another's burdens", not just think about it but act, get involved and live out this faith of ours.

What is this bearing of burdens all about? I decided that to analyse this I need to apply the "5 Ws & H" test. It goes something like this:

Who: So who has these burdens?

In 'Pilgrim's Progress', Pilgrim carried a burden to the foot of the cross, where it was loosed from his back and rolled away. However, when I read the tale it is only after the cross and on the road to the celestial city that Pilgrim is attacked, gets bogged down in doubts and allows his fears and vanity to divert him from his route.

Paul writes to a church to instruct them to bear each others burdens. So my assumption is that Christ deals with the issue of sin but we as fellow Christians are there to support, care and empower each other on this difficult pathway of service. So the '**Who**' is all of us in the church. That includes you, and if I am honest, me!

What: What is involved in bearing a burden?

We often learn from opposites. Some time ago a Christian asked me if I was "OK". This is supposed to elicit the reply, "I'm fine." On this occasion I decided to tell them that I was troubled and struggling. The friend's eyes rolled upward and eventually the reply was "I haven't got time at present, but I will pray for you." The net result to me is to be apprehensive about disclosing any concerns.

I suppose that 'bearing' requires me to get involved, to understand how another is experiencing a situation and take the strain and weight so that they can find relief and not feel like the only one in that situation.

When: When to do it?

It is a bit difficult to 'bear a burden' if I only see or talk to someone once a week and then after a service at the church.

So....

- Do I sit back and wait to be approached and invited to bear a burden for awhile (first of all find me!).
- Do I go round identifying burdens that another has and insist that I get involved. “Come on, I can see you are troubled, I’m here to help, I don’t care if you don’t want help.....”

Getting involved must require a greater depth of sharing based on love, friendship, respect and, here’s an idea, allow another to help me/you first so that I can learn about the feelings of support, empowerment and true fellowship.

Where: So where do we go with the burden?

Wherever we go, we go together. There seems little point in marching off in another direction, even if we are convinced it is the right route! The journey needs to be shared together. Included in this are times of talk, times of action and times of just being together. Sometimes words are not necessary, but empathy and love are the basis.

Perhaps you could discuss what a good solution is, and then find the steps necessary to achieve that outcome. Soon a partnership will become a trio as Jesus is invited to walk with you.

Why: Why is always difficult.

Scripture tells us that it is a requirement to fulfil the law of Christ. Jesus said this is my commandment “that you love one another”

I suppose that love, like faith, without works is dead and that a Christian without love is like a clanging cymbal and their good deeds are nothing.

I see it rather like a circle, if I get involved and share the love of Christ then I also experience that love. The brother or sister may have the opportunity to grow and feel supported but I also learn something of the ways of God.

How: How do I bear another’s burden?

Surely that’s not for me to say. The ‘How’ is between you, God and you and your fellow Christian.

Think about what you would like. It may include respect, the ability to ‘stand in my shoes for awhile’ and understand how I experience the ‘burden’, honesty, spiritual wisdom and of course, confidentiality.

For me it would be bearing a burden with me rather than having it done to me. Try and work out how you would like to experience this part of fellowship and then how you can apply this to fulfilling the law of Christ in your every day life.

John Small

You can read John’s first article and the replies at:

www.st-thomas-brampton.org/biblestudy2.htm

Iona – a Short Visit in August 2007

Jill Sargent from St Peter's tells us of her visit to the island of Iona.

"Was it nice?" someone asked me in church when I returned from six nights on the island of Iona visiting the Abbey community. There is one thing that Iona isn't and that is 'nice'. Iona is amazing, it is challenging, it is beautiful but it is uncomfortable. Iona pulls you, it tests you, it exudes a power that enwraps you.



It was the middle of summer and there were visiting singers staying at the Abbey. I experienced modern church singing such as I had never heard before. There were hymns from across the world with musical accompaniment – be it bongo drums or violins.

The approach to pilgrims is gentle and friendly. I felt at home there. The worship is accessible but not cosy, it demands commitment and your full attention.

I travelled in a group of seventeen; we were fellow pilgrims from across England. Our journey together began in Durham, where most of us had time to visit the cathedral, one of the earliest cathedral buildings in England. This was a great place to begin our pilgrimage.

The Abbey at Iona also has remnants of early beginnings and we were fed on the tales of these early Christian Celtic Saints who came over from Ireland to Scotland on small, frail craft through tempestuous seas. If you have ever been in a coracle you will know what this must have been like. They founded monasteries wherever they went.

The Iona Community was founded by Saint Columba, who died in 597. It has remained a place of pilgrimage ever since, a holy and sacred site. These early missionaries challenged established authority as they saw fit. They were fearless and single minded and not always scrupulous about the sanctity of human life. However a Christian presence has prevailed over the centuries, although the Abbey buildings were in ruins for many years.

It was in the early twentieth century that major restoration work began followed by the emergence of a new dynamic leader the Reverend George McLeod, a minister in the Church of Scotland. He pioneered the work of establishing the present day modern community of Iona, which now has worldwide links. It became a thrusting, intrusive, ecumenical movement, which sought to establish a living faith that strives for peace and justice among all people.

So Iona has gradually evolved into a mixed community of men and women, many of whom are young adults. Some live on Iona but many live out their

lives elsewhere, active in their local churches and who visit the Abbey when they can.

The Abbey offers hospitality and opportunities for those who wish to learn more and to participate in the day to day life of the Community. The Abbey is a place that seeks a clear and disciplined approach to community life. But there is also a flexibility that is accepting. It is hard but easy, if you can accept the paradox.

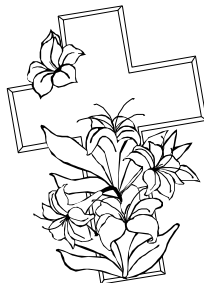
The Abbey exists within a small rural community. There are several hotels, guest houses and bed and breakfasts. There are small farms with livestock and a few shops, a Post Office, school and craft workshops, fishing boat trips plus the beautiful unspoilt countryside and seascapes where the gannets 'dive bomb' into the ocean. In summer visitors come non-stop every day on the short ferry ride from Mull. It is a long way from home.

Our leader on our trip was the Venerable Bob Fitzharris, the Archdeacon of Doncaster – a friendly companionable presence. We stayed in the Bishop's House, the Retreat House for the Episcopalian Church in Scotland. It was warm and comfortable but the bedrooms were small and the bathrooms spartan. However the food was really good. There is also a lovely chapel.

Jill Sargent

Our trip was organised by UKLTG Pilgrimages, telephone 0845-601-9567 or visit: www.ukltg.com

You can read about another church member's visit to Iona in the December 1998 edition of the magazine at www.st-thomas-brampton.org/holidays.html#3



Diary Dates **(Including Holy Week, Easter and Hope 2008)**

Ash Wednesday Wednesday 6 February

7.30pm Holy Communion, St Peter's

7.45pm Holy Communion, St Thomas'

Thursday 7 February

1pm Thursday Rendezvous, St Thomas'

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 February

Youth Weekend Away

Sunday 10 February

Day of Commitment for St Thomas' Development Project

Sunday 17 February

Mission Sunday for Scripture Union, St Thomas'

Thursday 28 February

2pm Communion and Cuppa, St Thomas'

Friday 29 February

7.30pm Furnace, St Thomas'

Saturday 8-16 March

Hope 2008 –Cliff College Students are in Chesterfield

Saturday 8 March

Hope Event in Chesterfield, –Welcome to Cliff College Students and Celebration in Chesterfield. (See page 16)

Mothering Sunday Sunday 2 March

Normal service times

Wednesday 12 March

7.30pm Hope Event, St Thomas' –Fun and Food

Thursday 13 March

1pm Hope Event, St Thomas' –Over 55's event

Saturday 15 March

10am Hope Event, St Thomas' –Family event

Palm Sunday

Sunday 16 March

Normal service times

10.45am Blessing of Easter Garden, St Peter's

Hope Event in Chesterfield, –Farewell to Cliff College Students and Celebration Service in Chesterfield

Maundy Thursday Thursday 20 March

3pm Service, Holymoorside, Methodist Church

7.45pm Holy Communion, St Thomas'

Good Friday Friday 21 March

10.30am All Age Service, St Thomas'

2pm 'An Hour at the Cross', St Thomas'

2-3pm 'Watch by the Cross' meditation, St Peter's

Easter Day Sunday 23 March

9.30am Holy Communion, St Peter's

10.30am Joint All Age Holy Communion, St Thomas'

6pm St Peter's meet at Holymoorside Methodist Church for 'Songs of Praise'

6.30pm Easter 'Songs of Praise', St Thomas'

Friday 28 March

7.30pm Furnace, St Thomas'

Wednesday 2 April

NoviMost Day of Prayer

Thursday 3 April

1pm Thursday Rendezvous, St Thomas'

Lent Courses

Ecumenical Lent Bible Study in Holymoorside Methodist Church

Wednesdays at 7.30pm

February 13, 20, 27, March 5, 12

Lent Course St Thomas'

This year we are going to be studying a six week course on DVD called '**Intelligent Church**', featuring Steve Chalke and Tony Campolo. It will help us explore how to be a church in a relevant, credible and accessible way and how to make a positive difference in our community without losing our passion and commitment for Jesus. This is a really exciting resource, especially in light of our 'Living Stones' Development Project and 'Hope 2008'.

The course will be run as part of the existing Open House structure **beginning week commencing 11 February**. If you are not already a member of a house group we invite you to join a group for Lent. There are currently 12 groups meeting on different day and a different times and places. If you are interested please contact Emma Atkinson on 551388.

Lent Lunches

Lent Lunches will be held at 143a Holymoorside Road, on Saturdays or Mondays commencing 9 February. More details will be on the weekly Notice Sheet.

Keep up to date via the Notice Sheet or the Church Website

www.st-thomas-brampton.org

St Thomas' "Fun"draising

What do empty wine bottles, walking boots, a 400 page novel and an empty margarine tub have in common? Any ideas?

The wine bottles were decorated; the walking boots took their owners on a night hike; the 400 page novel has been written and published by one of our church members, and the margarine tubs have been filled with loose change. Do you know why yet?

These are just some of the ways in which members of St Thomas' are raising funds for the **Living Stones Development Project** in response to the meeting held in November 2007 when the call went out to get involved in "FUN"- raising (sorry - that should read fundraising, but either way the first three letters are FUN!). The purpose is to mingle together, have fun, and raise money all at the same time. Ideas to engage your interest are displayed in church and new ideas will be posted each month to capture interest, raise a smile and also some money

In November we heard again the familiar story of the feeding of the five thousand, and you are invited to enter into that story by offering Jesus what you can - however small it may seem, because once it is in His hands the miracle can begin.

If you want to know any more about the "fun"raising activities or you would like to volunteer to organise something, please contact Emma Atkinson on 551388 or email ec_atkinson@yahoo.co.uk.



Holymoorside Well Dressing 2007

“Am I Not A Man And A Brother?”

This is the text to accompany the pictures on the back page.

2007 commemorated the 200th anniversary of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. This Act outlawed the slave trade throughout the British Empire and made it illegal for British ships to be involved in the trade, marking the beginning of the end of the transatlantic traffic in human beings.

For over four hundred years Europeans enslaved millions of Africans through the slave trade. It is thought that over 2 million died during the journey.

“Am I not a man and a brother?” – Josiah Wedgwood, a renowned potter, made pottery plaques with a kneeling figure with the caption *“Am I not a man and a brother?”* on the outside. Wedgwood was an abolitionist and handed out the cameos free to his business associates to foster an awareness of the plight of the slaves. The sides of the well depict Wedgwood’s cameo.

Members of the Holymoorside Well Dressing Committee and many others from the community started working on the well picture from Saturday 18 August – ‘puddling’ the clay, ‘barking’ the picture and ‘flowering’ the well. It is an enormous task requiring many hours of hard work. As the well is constructed and worked on entirely outdoors, they have had to endure the downpours. It was particularly difficult this year because the clay from the heading began to fall because of the weather conditions and as a consequence the whole of the title had to be re-worked. Despite all this, they managed to keep cheerful (most of the time!).

The well dressers are proud of the fact that they do not spend any money on equipment, flowers etc. All the flowers are given from people’s gardens, the clay is re-used every year and even the pieces of wood (the barking) is removed, cleaned and saved for the next well dressing. Because of this all donations are given to charity.

The year’s the chosen charity was PATHWAYS. This is a centre run by volunteers and aims to give advice and practical help to people who have no home. The centre is entirely dependent on charity.

Hope 2008

Hope 2008 is a national campaign to encourage imaginative outreach. It is supported by the main Christian denominations and many of the mission and support agencies in the UK. To put it briefly the aim is to encourage church members to share their faith in word and deed.



Churches and Christians in about 1,200 villages, towns and cities across the UK have registered to express interest in taking part in **Hope 2008** initiatives in their community.

Hope 2008 is intended as a catalyst for local churches to engage with the Gospel through working together and communicating the Gospel in both words and actions. A good cross section of people in Chesterfield and over 30 churches have indicated an interest in the project. A number of events have already taken place in the build up to 2008 including the launch of the project in Chesterfield on New Year's Eve at the Winding Wheel when over 250 people met.

The next big event will be the visit of a team of 60 people from Cliff College who will visit Chesterfield from March 8th-16th. There will be central events in Chesterfield and in local churches including St Thomas'.

At St Thomas' there will be 'Fun and Food' (Wednesday 12th), Over 55's event (Thursday 13th) and a Family Activity Day (Saturday 15th). Details can be found in the Diary Dates, page 12.

Accommodation

We will need to find bed and breakfast accommodation for the mission team during their visit. Can you help? If you can help contact: David Sanderson 231115.

St Thomas' Open House Groups

In January St Thomas' Open House Groups met to discover ways in which they could further God's mission in the Brampton area. While the events of March 8th to 16th remain our immediate focus, after we have celebrated Easter we will be taking things further, not simply in terms of what happens on St Thomas' patch, but a number of town wide events. **Watch this space!**

Royal interest in 2008

During 2007, the Hope 2008 leadership team have been in conversation with The Prince of Wales's office to arrange for him to meet a small group of people from across the country in the summer of 2008 who have been involved in the acts of kindness carried out by churches during May. Plans for a reception at Clarence House are still at an early stage but we expect to provide more information early in 2008.

More information can be found at www.st-thomas-brampton.org/hope2008.html

David Sanderson

In Conversation –with Kathryn Shemwell

The Editor finds out a bit about Kathryn, a St Thomas' Church Family member who is a line dancing instructor.

Editor - You were brought up in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. What brought you here to live in Chesterfield?

Kathryn - I visited my sister at college in Dudley in the West Midlands and there I met Steve, who came from Chesterfield. We worked in Southend in Essex, and then later came back to Chesterfield to live. That was in 1977, thirty years ago - we celebrated our thirtieth wedding anniversary on August 20th last year.



Editor - Congratulations! You have two children.

Kathryn - Yes, Gregg who is twenty two and Pippa nineteen.

Editor - How did you first get interested in line dancing?

Kathryn - About twelve years ago I saw an ad in the local paper and thought I'd try it. The class was being held at the Assembly Rooms in the Market Hall. I hadn't a clue what to expect, so I stood in the back row. However I soon discovered there is no 'back row' in line dancing as the dance sequences are repeated on each wall! Everyone else in the room clearly knew what they were doing so I felt rather out of my depth. However, a very kind group of dancers gave me details of a beginners' class. I went along and was instantly hooked!

Editor - Do you need any aptitude for line dancing? I have tried it and I can't seem to keep up with the steps.

Kathryn - It's so important to listen to the instructions. Having a sense of beat and timing also helps. I've done piano exams to Grade IV so identifying rhythm and tempo is easy for me. But as with anything new, perseverance and patience are very important.

Editor - So you started line dancing regularly and obviously got quite good at it. What made you set up your own classes and become a line dance instructor?

Kathryn - After my A levels I worked for Midland Bank in Head Office Finance departments in Southend, London and Sheffield, then in local government finance. When the children started school, I became Practice Manager and Fund Manager for a consortium of doctors' surgeries. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, about ten years ago, during a reorganisation I was made redundant. I took a few years off working to be a fulltime housewife and mum. When I considered my options I really felt called to teach

/Contd

line dancing. I knew God never wastes any of our experiences: in five years I'd become quite a proficient line dancer, I'd got musical training and my financial experience would help me run the business side. So I did my British Western Dance Academy line dancing instructor training in 2000, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Editor - I know you have led line dancing at St Thomas'.

Kathryn - Yes, I've done it for the Summer Rendezvous three times and for the young adults and children. I've also done line dance social events in local junior and senior schools, youth clubs, Brownies, Guides and Scouts, and in other churches locally and further afield.

Editor - When did you become a Christian?

Kathryn - It would be nice to give a time and date! However, I didn't have a 'Road to Damascus' experience...it was more a gradual thing.

I was taken to church as a child and went to a Sunday school at RAF Halton. I remember being baffled by the Bible - the King James version! Nevertheless I was particularly moved by a song '*I Will Make You Fishers of Men If You Follow Me*'. At 13 years old I was confirmed, although I don't really remember if I truly understood what it meant. Through my teenage years and early 20's I only went to church for weddings, christenings, funerals and at Christmas.

When Gregg was born in 1985, I experienced an overwhelming desire to thank God for him. Steve and I started coming to the monthly family service, then later, coming as a family to the 9:09 service. It was a real revelation (pun intended!) to find the Bible was printed in modern English - the NIV. I still have the King James version which I received at my confirmation, along with my NIV, CEV, Good News, and Youth bibles - all of which I use. Having a Bible 'that reaches the parts other Bibles cannot reach' has been very important to me on my journey with Jesus.

Editor - Have you any favourite Bible verses?

Kathryn - Two of my favourite Bible verses are John 14v 2-3

'In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.'

These verses, for me, take away any fear of death, because Jesus will be there to receive me when I draw my last breath. I often wonder what my 'prepared' room will be like as I've never had a room of my own let alone one prepared especially for me!

Editor - Do you bring your Christian life into your line dancing?

Kathryn - For some dances I use songs with Christian lyrics. At the moment I am using 'I Found Jesus on the Jailhouse Floor' by George Strait and 'Silver and Gold' by Dolly Parton. The lyrics of the latter say that the silver and gold will not last, we need something more in our lives. Chris DeBurgh's song 'Be Strong' declares his faith for 'the One who died upon the cross', and has a very popular dance choreographed to it. A surprising number of country singers are Christians.

Editor - Are there similarities between the Christian life and line dancing?

Kathryn - Yes, I think there are. Although everyone is an individual, to line dance properly everyone has to follow the choreographer's scripted sequence of steps and the instructor's call. Similarly Christians aim to follow the example and teachings of Jesus, listening carefully to sermons! Beginners and advanced dancers have to try hard to be in step. They aim to do their best according to their experience. Effective Christianity is similar. We have to be in step and do our best wherever we are on our Christian journey. We have a common aim, to proclaim Christ as our Saviour.

In our Christian life we make mistakes but are forgiven. Similarly in line dancing we also make mistakes, although we call them variations!

Editor

Thank you Kathryn for sharing this with us. Maybe I'll have another go at line dancing.

If you want to find out more about line dancing contact Kathryn.

St Thomas'

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

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

Holymoorside Well Dressing 2007



Two wells were 'dressed' in the summer. The main one commemorated the 200th anniversary of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act and the smaller one the Centenary of the Scout Movement.

The text accompanying main well is inside on page 15

