

PLOUGHSHARE

June/July 2007

Volume 15, No 4



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

Farewell to

**Alex and Pat
Simpson**



and



**Bill and Pauline
Woodend**

60p per copy (£3.00per year)

Monthly Service Pattern at St Thomas'

Sunday Services are usually at 9am, 11am and 6.30pm.

9am is Communion, except 2nd Sunday when it is Morning Worship.

11am is Morning Worship, except the 2nd Sunday when it is Communion.

There are children's groups (3 years old to school year 9) and a crèche.

6.30pm is Evening Worship, except on the 4th Sunday when it is Communion.

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

CYFA (school years 10-13) meet from 8.15pm.

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*The **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*

Monthly Service Pattern at St Peter's

Sunday Services are usually at 9.30am and 6pm

9.30am service is Communion.

There are children's groups (3 years old to school year 9) and a crèche.

6pm service is Evening Prayer except

No evening service at St Peter's on the 1st Sunday, instead a joint service is held at Holymoorside Methodist Church at 6pm.

Keep up to date with the news sheet or the web site

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

From the Rector – Heaven and Hell

Many years ago a man conned his way into the orchestra of the emperor of China although he could not play a note. Whenever the group practised or performed, he would hold his flute against his lips, pretending to play but not making a sound. He received a modest salary and enjoyed a comfortable living.



Then one day the emperor requested a solo from each musician. The flautist got nervous. There wasn't enough time to learn the instrument. He pretended to be sick, but the royal physician wasn't fooled. On the day of his solo performance, the impostor took poison and killed himself. The explanation of his suicide led to a phrase that found its way into the English language: "He refused to face the music".

Jesus was very clear; we all have to face the music someday. Each of us, without exception, will have to give an account of our lives to Almighty God. Such judgement, the Bible states, can result in only one of two possible outcomes; heaven or hell. A place with God, or a place far away from God. Although an unpopular subject in many churches today, in the month of June we will be studying the key texts to do with heaven and hell. But, be honest, when did you last hear a sermon about hell? It's a pretty unpopular subject. But I agree with C.S. Lewis who once said,

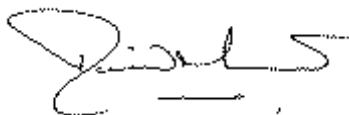
"There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this hell if it lay in my power. But it has the full support of Scripture and, especially, of our Lord's own words; it has always been held by Christendom, and has the support of reason."

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A place of endless darkness, of pain, of weeping, of wailing and gnashing of teeth – hell is not a place that we would want anybody to go to. So, let me finish with the following true story.

One day when Vice President Calvin Coolidge was presiding over the Senate, one senator angrily told another to go “straight to hell”. The offended senator complained to Coolidge as presiding officer. The vice president looked up from the bible he had been leafing through while listening to the debate. “I’ve been looking through the rule book” he said, “You don’t have to go”.

As you listen to the coming sermons concerning hell, remember this; because of Jesus, you don’t have to go, because of the cross, you don’t have to go!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Jones', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

From the Editor

In May we said farewell to four of our much loved church family members, Alex and Pat Simpson and Bill and Pauline Woodend. Alex and Pat are moving to Norwich and Bill and Pauline have already moved to Spain. Both couples have written about their time with us in this edition of the magazine.

May God bless Alex, Pat, Bill and Pauline as they start a new phase in their respective lives.

Please note that we no longer have a tape library, sermon library is available from the church web site.

We would like to welcome Irene Jones as our new deputy warden.

The closing date for articles for the the August/September edition is July 6

6 Years at St Peter's and in Holymoorside

Alex Simpson looks back at his six years in Holymoorside and forward to starting life in Norwich.



I have been the Minister in Residence at Holymoorside for six years. I actually agreed with Chris Frith to stay for two years but I liked it and have stayed and no one objected. Now I think it is right to go, having become, as far as the village is concerned not the minister in residence, a title they would not understand, but Vicar of Holymoorside, which is kindly meant, but is not the case.

When I came, the parish had Petra, a curate, Sam and Geoffrey, retired ministers, and at much the same time as us coming, Robin and Eileen came to live in the parish. Now the staff is much reduced and there are now also fewer Lay Readers.

I have preached more frequently in this House for Duty job than I ever did in my last full time post. I have counted over 450 sermons in the six years. How can a person have so much to say, and how can the same congregation carry on listening. Then I think of the way that attitudes can change over time and after much pastoral contact with people.

I will not miss all the nervous tension that I always feel when conducting services and preaching and with the thought of impending retirement I am already sleeping better.

In St Peter's we have received far more than we have given, friendship and fellowship are really good at St Peter's and Pat and I have been offered lots of both, for which we are very grateful.

For a townie, having worked and lived in East and West London for 67 years I have found village life wonderful. Such a contrast in atmosphere and the fact that there isn't much about your life that is not known by everyone is, to me very comforting, a bit like being known by God.

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Another aspect of this village compared with a church I had in East London is that here, people want to stay, indeed Holymoorside is a very popular village and many others would come if there were houses for them. In Hackney, East London I served on a housing estate where 90% of the tenants had requests in for a transfer to somewhere else. It is not easy to build a church in such a place where everyone wants to leave. Hackney is where I was converted and my then Vicar actually did it, he built a thriving congregation in which I became a Christian, a Warden, a Lay Reader and then an NSM and finally an incumbent. John Pearce drew more people into the ministry than any man I know.

Pat and I are at that time of life when we think it would be good to live near one of our children. My ideal would be to live in the same street as all my children and grandchildren, but circumstances have moved all four of them in different directions, to Hitchin, Bracknell, Huddersfield and Norwich. We will also be free of a mortgage again when we move, which means we will not have to think each month about interest rates.

I aim to finish my autobiography, not for publication but just to let the grandchildren know something of their origins. I also want to try my hand at cooking. I am sure it will be successful with my able assistant Pat. I also intend to join the Julian Society and Douglas my son, wants me to help him build a workshop.

I have recently been told that the parish I will be living in, and the Anglican church that I will probably attend has lost a clergy person who will not be replaced. Pat, my manager as well as my assistant cook has already said that the first words on our lips are going to be 'no'! We shall see. One has to keep one's hand in.

St Peter's and the people of Holymoorside have been very good for me and very good to me. I should like to thank them and let them know we shall miss them very much. Prayer will continue.

Alex and Pat Simpson

April 2007

Thank you Alex and Pat

Adrian Marsden-Jones writes on behalf of the members of St Peter's.

It is difficult to write about Alex purely as our minister at St. Peter's for the past six years, for in truth his ministry is much wider than this. Because he is so approachable and recognises the good (and faults) in each one of us he is loved and valued by the community as well.

Who else could start the morning service with "Hang on a minute, I've forgotten my specs!" or "Welcome on this lovely day. Well, at least it was a just few moments ago!" "If you really want to experience true worship, then go and watch Arsenal playing!" We can all relate to this.

The children are enthralled by their few special moments with him each Sunday and will miss his scruffy, loveable Edward the bear greatly, but in truth his message was often more pertinent to us grown-ups.

This typifies his all-embracing ministry. Let me give you some more examples:

-After our last 'Miracle Play' in church on Maundy Thursday evening, Alex asked those of the cast who wished to share in the bread and wine to join us. Many did so and this made a great impression on me, I'm sure this is what Jesus would have wished us to do. You don't have to worry now Alex; they can't defrock you in retirement!

-Our ecumenical Bible Study in the village now has three regular new members aged 10-12 years; very humbling for us elderly codgers. How did this happen? Well, it's Alex again, he met them in the street on his way one evening during Lent and invited them to come and join us. We now need to build on this opportunity he has created.

Alex's ministry always contains a challenge and he hates complacency. The greatest way in which we at St. Peter's can acknowledge his commitment and ministry is to

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follow his lead to ‘encompass change’ and appreciate ‘that churches grow when they do new things’. We have a strong faith at St. Peter’s, but if this is to grow numerically it will entail commitment leadership, teamwork, encouragement and above all prayer to strengthen us for the new challenges ahead.

Pat has been our Treasurer throughout these six years for which we are extremely grateful, but even more valuable she has provided the family foundation for which Alex will now have more time.

Finally I recall the time when Harry Martin and I were decorating Rose Cottage for what seemed the umpteenth time and Alex was visiting his new home; we asked him if he had ambitions to change our style of ministry. Definitely not, was his response. Well, he needs to know that he has, for we now sense the meaning of true love amongst us.

Thank you Alex and Pat for being with us.

Adrian Marsden-Jones

Teach us to pray

Elaine Nudd reflects on the 2007 Lent Course.

Over the period of Lent many of St Thomas’ members met in groups to study a book about prayer, called ‘**Source**’. It was both stimulating and challenging. Source took us on a journey in our relationship with God using a framework of ‘**seeing-knowing-going**’.

In ‘**seeing**’, we considered what things enable us to celebrate and enjoy God. Why should we take time to do this? We were shown a range of objects and pictures and asked to take one which was pleasing to us and spoke to us of God. I was immediately drawn to a photo of a large group of people of all ages who were obviously a community. It made me think of the groups that I belong to where I feel cared for and listened to, and where I am able to care and listen to others. One of the psalms talks about

God placing the lonely in families. I feel that God has done this for me.

'Knowing' looked at how listening and honesty are important in our relationship with God. If we want to get to know someone we spend time with them and listen to them. I know that I'm eager to speak to God about all sorts of things, but forget that He wants to speak to me. How can I hear Him? I think that often God speaks to us in very ordinary ways, through conversation, things we read, newspapers and even things on the television. It can lead us to action, again possibly very simple things like cooking a meal for someone or phoning someone up.

When we discussed the concept of honesty, we realised that none of us had anyone with whom we were totally honest with. We all have things that we don't want people to know. So it can be uncomfortable to know that God knows us intimately. When Isaiah had his vision of God, his first response was an awareness of his sin. After he had been forgiven he was then ready to serve God. We can't hide things from God. He sees us better than we see ourselves. What is wonderful is that He sees our worst bits and still loves us dearly.

The last part of our course was **'going'**. God wants us to be practical as well as prayerful. He wants us to be loving at work, at home, and at church, sharing that love that he pours down on us. Our teenagers have made a brave move to run a service called 'Furnace' which runs the last Friday of each month, offering a worship experience that is a bit different. There are church led initiatives around the town working with the homeless and those who are disadvantaged.

Over the series my favourite prayer was 'palms down, palms up'. Palms down, we pour out everything to God; feelings, events, people, everything that clogs us up. Then palms up; I'm ready to receive, waiting, listening, open. What is God going to pour in?

Elaine Nudd

Pauline and Bill Say Goodbye

Pauline and Bill Woodend have moved to Spain.



When we first arrived in Chesterfield at the beginning of 1997 we rented a flat in Lindisfarne Court on Walton Road from where we could clearly hear the bells of St. Thomas' beckoning us. We decided we would present ourselves on the first Sunday and we did so at the 10-30 or was it 10-45 service. The pews and the towering pulpit existed then of course. The ASB communion service with lots of "ceremony" was familiar to us.

The church was very busy and we were made welcome. Our first impressions were completely positive. We had found a warm, loving, welcoming family in the town that was to be our new home. That meant a great deal to us and still does.

Over a period we got to know individuals in the church family and we value their friendship highly. With the excellent leadership and the strong fellowship we have developed our faith and we have had the added bonus of being able to enjoy our time with many good friends at St. Peter's, both in their worship and socially. The whole experience has been a great gift from God and we thank Him and praise Him.

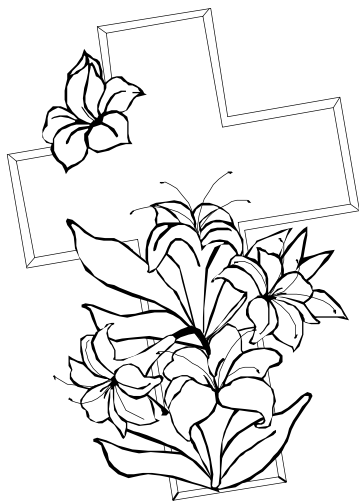
We shall take many fond memories with us and will miss you all.

God Bless

Pauline and Bill

From the Parish Registers

We extend our sympathy to the relatives and friends of those whose funerals have taken place in recent months.



Tear Fund Sunday

*And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6v8*

March 4 2007 was a Mission Sunday at St Thomas' for Tearfund. Stan Jenkins, from Tearfund came and spoke at all three of our services.

Stan has a great concern for those entrapped by modern day slavery and exploitation. He demonstrated in his talk to the children how much people who make trainers are paid. From a purchase price of £60 about 50p goes to the people who make them.

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Stan's background

Stan is a trained chemical engineer who travels all around the world in the course of his work. As he stayed in four star hotels he began to notice the plight of the locals living in poverty. People sleeping in ditches, waiting beside the road hoping to get a job for a day, all be it for a measly wage. Although he went to church, looking back he realised he was not really a Christian.



It was when on holiday with his wife in the Sudan and experiencing wonderful hospitality from people who had nothing that he felt God speaking to him. By now he had become self-employed and found he had more money and, importantly, more free time. He had often given money to the poor, and was amazed that he always seemed to have more money, but now he felt God wanted him to use his time.

He decided to join Tearfund as a speaker for them. He chose Tearfund because it is a Christian organisation, works with only Christian partners but helps anyone and has very low administration overheads (about 1%).

At the evening service Stan told us about modern day slavery around Isaiah 58 vv6-12.

Stan's challenge

"I was in a restaurant in Lahore with two Malaysian businessmen. A young teenage girl was following an older woman around waiting at the tables. One of the business men said to me 'She is a slave'.

"What would you have done? To my shame I did nothing. I was in a foreign country with a culture I was not familiar with and I did

not speak the language. However it has now made me determined to do what I can, through Tearfund, to help eliminate slavery.”

Slavery today

Stan told us briefly about slavery today. William Wilberforce had tried for 30 years to abolish slavery in Britain. In 1807 Parliament finally voted for abolition and sixteen years later to free all slaves employed by Britain. Two hundred years later there are still slaves in the world including Britain.

In 1807 there were 4 million slaves in the world. It is estimated that there are at least 20 million slaves today. Slaves include those in debt bondage. Examples of these included the cocklers drowned in Morecombe bay recently and fruit pickers employed on our farms. They are brought over to Britain in the expectation of a better life but are then exploited by the gang masters who arranged for them to come. Others are slaves of war, forced to fight by rebels in countries such as Uganda and Sudan.

In the Sudan, Tearfund runs a project called Noah’s Ark. It provides shelter for up to 7000 children a night to protect them from being abducted into rebel armies. Others are sold as slaves for labour or sex. 1 billion people earn less than a dollar a day.

The International Labour Organisation estimate that up to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year. 80% are female and 50% are children. Human trafficking is the third largest source of criminal income after drugs and arms.

So what can we do as a church and individuals?

Stan suggests we can do three things:

1. Pray.
2. Give to agencies trying to abolish modern day slavery.
3. Campaign and petition.

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Tearfund produces packs containing lots of information and includes a petition to send to the Prime Minister, which many of us completed in March.

Tearfund is also part of Micah Challenge, a global movement of Christians that seek to speak out, with a common voice, against the injustices of poverty. It unites countries as they call their leaders to account on the promise made in the **Millennium Development Goals**: to halve poverty by 2015.

Sue and Tim Wheeler are our Tearfund reps at St Thomas and they have more information.

Stan emphasised to us that doing nothing in God's eyes is unacceptable. We must all take action. The text at the top of this article, which was our Church Motto a few years ago should spur us on.

You can find out more about Tearfund, the Micah Challenge and listen to Stan's talking at our services at:

<http://www.st-thomas-brampton.org/ms.html#tear>

Coming of Age – St Peter's Tuesday Group is Twenty One

How the group began.

In 1986 Peter Allan, the then Resident Curate at St Peter's asked my late husband, Ken, if he could use our home, once a week, for a confirmation course and others wishing to renew their baptismal vows.

The group began with seventeen members and at one stage included Peter Allan leading the group, Ian and Betty Wright, Edna and Ralph Noble, Keith and Chris Sharratt and baby Heidi, Jean Millard, Debbie Botham, Miss Ransome, Ken, Joanne (our daughter) and myself. It became a happy gathering with social as well as study events for many months.

The outcome was a service of confirmation and a renewal of baptismal vows conducted by Henry, the Bishop of Repton at St Peter's Church on Passion Sunday March 20th 1988.

Joy Kench

Some of the members write about the group and what it means to them.

It is a *study* and a *support* group. Our studies have included St John's Gospel, 8th and 9th century prophets, Psalms and Advent and Lent courses. We have also looked at various poets including Emily Dickinson, T.S Elliot and R.S. Thomas, who wrote;

"Life is not hurrying on to a receding future, nor hankering after an imagined past. It is turning aside like Moses to the miracle of the burning bush."

Jean Millard

The group has become a very important part of my life. Sadly, but inevitably we have lost some original members and others have come and gone for various reasons. However the group has retained a nucleus of five or six members, with strong fellowship and consideration for each other.

Latterly the Book of Psalms study has proved fascinating and beautiful.

Mary MacDonald

I joined the group in 1987 shortly after the sudden death of my husband Malcolm. That period of my life was intense with sorrow, pain and loss and I felt bereft. But meeting each week with all my friends, discussing issues gave me a real focus and over the months and now the years I have friends who are the most important in my life. At the end of each meeting we light a candle before saying Compline, to bring us guidance and illumination.

For me the group over the past twenty years has given me comfort, stimulus and above all friendship for which I am immensely grateful

Olive Gillingwater

We have very different personalities. Together we explore the Bible, the poets and our faith. We are there for each other. The support of

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our peers and friends in old age is very special and a great help in our wellbeing.

Nancy Sturdy

As my memory is not very good and not being one of the oldest I will focus on what the group means to me at the present time.

It means a lot! Why? Six old biddies coming together at 3pm on a Tuesday. Why do I wake up on Tuesday mornings and think 'Oh good, Tuesday Group?' Undoubtedly it's the depth of friendship from many years first and foremost of getting to know and trust one another.

Then there is the 'study'. Jean digs away and brings out all sorts of treasures, scraps of knowledge with which she patiently feeds us week after week –lovely for me a lazier soul.

The Psalms were our latest challenge. I found a greater depth and joy in their ancient words than before. Now I can use them as companions along the way –old friends, so rich and rewarding.

We end with Complaine –the old version. It's beauty and constancy is difficult to convey unless, like the group one has experienced it over the years.

Sue Brown

Reader's Bible Thought –Eileen Balch

When I was a teenager in the youth group back in the 60s, the 'in' music came largely from a book called *Youth Praise*! I vividly remember singing, with a great deal of gusto, the following song,

"This world's not my home, I'm just a passing through.

My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue

The Saviour beckons me from heaven's open door

And I can't feel at home in this world any more!"

And the chorus continued,



*“O Lord, you know I have no friend like you,
If heaven’s not my home, then Lord what will I do?
The Saviour beckons me from heaven’s open door,
And I can’t feel at home in this world any more!”*

I realise that this song is light years away from the contemporary music performed at the evening service on April 29th which was led by the CYFA group. But the content of the message, which was conveyed, is unchanged. CYFA ably led the congregation in an interactive service based on 1 Corinthians 15, where St Paul discusses the Resurrection Body, heaven and victory over death.

It was a joy to see our young people expressing deep Christian beliefs. These are fundamental truths that will underpin them for the whole of their lives. When I sang my song with such earnest conviction in my teenage years, death and heaven seemed aeons away! Now over 40 years later on the prospect seems a little more of a reality! Life has challenged and tested those fundamental beliefs, as it will for our teenagers of today.

1 Corinthians 15 v 55 *“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting.”* is a wonderful cry of defiance in the face of the ‘last enemy’, which we must all face one day. For me, v 57 crowns it all, *“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

So the following morning I took my tiny mustard seeds that I was given on leaving church, and planted them in a little pot of compost. I watered them and placed them on my kitchen windowsill, to wait for growth. This is a reminder to me of the power of the resurrection –that in dying we live eternally.

By faith, I expect that to be my experience one-day.

Eileen Balch

Dear Diary

Forthcoming dates to remember

Thursday 7 June

First Thursday Rendezvous, St Thomas

Saturday 9 June, 10.30-12 noon

Coffee Morning at Holymoorside Village Hall

Sunday 10 June

Mission Sunday for Church on the Bus, St Thomas'

Wednesday 20 June, 7.30pm

People at Prayer, St Thomas'

Saturday 23 June

St Thomas' Fete

Sunday 24 June

St Peter's Patronal Festival Services

Thursday 28 June, 2pm

Communion and Cuppa, St Thomas'

Friday 29 June, 7.30pm

Concert at St Peter's by Holymoorside Choral Society

Thursday 5 July

First Thursday Rendezvous, St Thomas

Monday 23-Wednesday 25 July

Holiday Club –Jungle Jamboree, St Thomas'

Keep up to date with our regular activities and other events by reading the weekly news sheet or the church web site www.st-thomas-brampton.org

David Sanderson's visit to Msalato Theological College, Tanzania



David is back after spending two months teaching at the college.



- 'What can we use in Holy Communion when we cannot afford wine and where bread is scarce?'
- 'How can we encourage women in leadership when many people want to fix them in traditional tribal roles?'
- 'How does the church respond to polygamy when many Africans, especially the Masai, value this form of family life?'

These are just some of the issues which African leaders have to face in their ministry and which emerged in the seminars I had the privilege to lead at Msalato Theological College during my recent visit.

Msalato college is the training institution for the Diocese of Central Tanganyika. It provides training and in-service training for clergy, catechists and other church leaders. They not only teach theology, but also run courses in English and business studies.

One of the difficulties of studying theology in Tanzania is that hardly any text books for the study of theology at diploma or degree level exist in Ki-Swahili, the national language. Publishing texts in such a language would not be a profitable project of a publishing house. Therefore students need to be able to read either English or possibly German to access serious study texts.

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The college had an international staff. The Principal and several of staff were Tanzanians, but we had a strong representation from CMS (Church Mission Society) Australia and New Zealand and a number of folk from North America. Two of us were from the UK.

While the majority of students came from the local diocese we had some Kenyans as well as folk from other dioceses. There was also an interesting mix in terms of churchmanship. The Australian CMS, the main mission agency working in the diocese of Central Tanganyika had left a strong evangelical stamp on the diocese. However there were some students at the college from the Dares es salaam area where the primary mission agency had been the Universities Mission to Central Africa with its strong Anglo Catholic emphasis, exactly the opposite end of the Anglican churchmanship spectrum. These students were sharing together in the same lectures, seminars, practical work and worship.

I worked mainly with two groups of students, one studying mission and the other 1 and 2 Corinthians and urban mission. Leading such seminars does not leave one untouched, especially when one realises the massive task many of these men and women have to face with lack of resources and a church that is growing rapidly. The mission students were grappling with issues like: 'Which local traditions are to be retained or rejected in an authentic African Christianity?' One comment that might sound strange in Western society was: 'We need to safeguard the way we respect our elders'. The students grappling with the Corinthian epistles were aware that many of the problems that Paul was dealing with were real issues today in their parishes.

As I have already indicated, the church in Tanzania is growing. There is evidence of this with many new church buildings being erected. Yet there is a desperate need for mature, able and well taught leaders. Competent teachers are required to raise the academic standard of pastors, but there is also a need for pastors to develop other kinds of leadership skills. Clearly leadership is also

important for the provision of adequate teaching for the many new converts who are entering the church on a regular basis.

There was some opportunity to show the students ways in which they can communicate in a more imaginative way. My black puppet which used to rejoice in the name of 'Sunshine' has become a Tanzanian citizen and is being used by his new African puppeteers to share the good news of Jesus with the vast numbers of children in the remote rural villages.



I learnt a number of things while I was there. Here are just a few that emerge from living in Tanzania:

- Never leave things to the last minute, the electric can go off at any time of the day or night.
- Belonging to a community is a crucial factor for life enrichment.
- When you have no material resources, true life is still found in a relationship with Jesus.

And finally on a less serious note, I discovered that president Mugabe (of Zimbabwe) is a Yorkshire man. His name is 'E ba Gum' spelled backwards!

Thank you all for your prayers and support during my time in Tanzania.

David Sanderson

Ian and Katie Hoare were married at Enfield Baptist Church, London on Saturday 28 April 2007. It was a wonderful occasion attended by many of their friends from St Thomas'.

Ian and Katie are now living in Birmingham.

