



SPEARHEAD

Vol. 5. No. 5.

August - September 1981

The
magazine
of the
parish
of

St. Thomas
Brampton

WORSHIP

Where & When



PARISH OF ST. THOMAS, BRAMPTON.

Clergy. Rev. Vyvyan Watts-Jones (Rector),
St. Thomas' Rectory,
408 Chatsworth Road, 32717.

ST. PETER'S, HOLYMOORSIDE

Rev. Kenneth Scott, Rose Cottage,
Holymoorside. 69106

SERVICES

St. Thomas' Parish Church
Sunday 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
1st Sunday in month Old Prayer Book
3rd Sunday in month Series 2
Others Sundays Series 3.

Family Communion with crèche for
babies and classes for children,
10.30 a.m.

Evening Services 6.30 p.m.

Second Wednesday in month, Pram
Service 9.30 a.m.

Thursday 10.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

ST. JOHN'S, WALTON.

Family Communion 9.00 a.m. every
Sunday.

ST. PETER'S, HOLYMOORSIDE.

Family Communion.
11.00 a.m. Sunday School.
6.00 p.m. Evensong.
Tuesdays 9.45 a.m. Holy Communion
followed by coffee at Rose Cottage.

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

Sixteen members and friends of the Lifestyle Group gathered at St. Thomas' early on Saturday, July 11th. Despite over-cast conditions, we set off in good spirit, and by half-past eight, we were trotting merrily through the damp grassy meadows of Hope towards Lose Hill.

After climbing this, and Mam Tor, we headed downhill for Edale, where our gallant back-up ladies served coffee and encouragement. Hordes of hikers were just preparing to set off, whilst we had already done two peaks! By mid morning we were climbing Jacob's Ladder to Kinder Downfall, where we spent a cold half-hour eating lunch. After feeding ourselves and some sheep, we "bog-trotted" for a mile across Kinder Scout, using a compass bearing to establish our route.

Once across the tops, one of our party dropped out and made his way to Edale via Grindsbrook. The remainder headed east along the Edale Ridge for a further ten miles through the mist, eventually reaching Hope after being on the hills for exactly nine hours. The whole twenty four miles were sponsored to help swell the Lifestyle Group fund, going towards the cost of "sending Ernest to Kenya" - Ernest walked with us the full distance. Simon Inger



Roundabout

SPEARHEAD CIRCULATION MANAGER

This month, Pamela Oldale takes over the management of Spearhead's distribution from Rosemary Robertshaw. Rosemary, who has done this job for several years, is shortly to take up new responsibilities. On behalf of our readers, we give her our thanks and good wishes. Enquiries about distribution should now be made to Pamela, who lives at 48 Netherleigh Road, telephone 72333.

CHURCHYARD MONUMENTS

Certain unauthorised items, such as stone flower holders, have recently been appearing in the churchyard. It may not be generally understood that everything in the churchyard, without exception, needs the authorization of the chancellor of the diocese. The standard method of obtaining such authority is by application for a 'faculty', or legal clearance - a procedure that now costs about £40. In the cases of certain simple items, such as an additional inscription or the provision of a standard cremation tablet, the chancellor delegates authority to the incumbent of the church. In all other cases, however, an application for a faculty must be made by the person who wants to place the item.

Parishioners who have placed unauthorised items in the churchyard are asked to give this matter their kind attention.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Harvest thanksgiving services will be held at St. Thomas' Church on Sunday, 4th October. At St. John's, Walton, there will be a harvest thanksgiving service on Sunday, October 11th at 2.30 p.m.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Any adults who wish to consider confirmation, and any who are already confirmed but would like to join a discussion group to reconsider Christian belief, are invited to have a word with the Rector.

ANTHEM COMPETITION

The anthem competition which was sponsored by the rector in connection with the Anniversary celebrations has been won by Mr. John Kiddy, of Repton Preparatory School. There were five entries, and the adjudicator, Mr. Frank Laming, of Nottingham University, described Mr. Kiddy's composition as 'easily the best'. It is a setting of the 'Prayer of humble access' ("we do not presume to come to this thy table, merciful Lord ...") which looks easy enough, but which, in the opinion of Mr. Laming, would tax a choir of only moderate ability. He adds that some of the harmonies might cause a few raised eye-brows among some of the more conservative choirmen!



150th anniversary

The season of festivities to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the foundation of St. Thomas' Church and parish will begin with a Festal Service on the afternoon of Saturday, September 19th. The Duke of Devonshire (whose ancestor laid the foundation stone in February, 1831) will be there; the Bishop of Repton will preach; and the Holymoorside Band will join with the organ in providing the music.

This will be a great occasion not only for the congregation of St. Thomas' Church, but for all the people who live in this large parish. In Jesus Christ God proclaims his love not only towards the committed few who make up the church but towards all people - even those who don't believe. The church exists to serve the whole community; and we want the whole community to be associated with this celebration. It is therefore a pleasure and an encouragement to know that several leaders in our local community, including the Mayor of Chesterfield, will attend the service. There will also be representatives from the churches in the locality.

The chief theme of the service will, of course, be thanksgiving; and the service will reach its climax in the proclamation of jubilee. Within the service, however, there will be another ceremony. One of the less attractive features of St. Thomas' Church is its entrance; and members of the congregation have been looking forward for a long time to the day when worshippers could come in through a pleasant lobby. The west end of the church is to be refurbished to the design of Professor K.H. Murta, professor of architecture at Sheffield; and it is hoped to complete the initial phase in time for the inaugural service, so that the new work can be dedicated.

Following the service, there will be tea in a marquee behind the church - the first social event in the festal season's programme, full particulars of which are now published in the Festival brochure, the copies of which are available at the churches. Please note especially the first concert of the season to be given by the English Sinfonia with Ian Wallace, tickets for which are now on sale.

FROM THE RECTORY



This month's given theme is marriage; of that there can be no doubt. The royal wedding has added a welcome dash of colour to the drab canvas of contemporary events; but I'm not thinking only of that. There have been two other significant happenings. A few weeks ago, the church of England's General Synod decided that, under certain circumstances, divorced people could be remarried in church. And, nearer home, the Bishop of Repton, Stephen Verney, who is a widower, created quite a sensation by announcing his marriage to a woman who had been divorced. (The bride is a baptist, and the marriage took place in her church.)

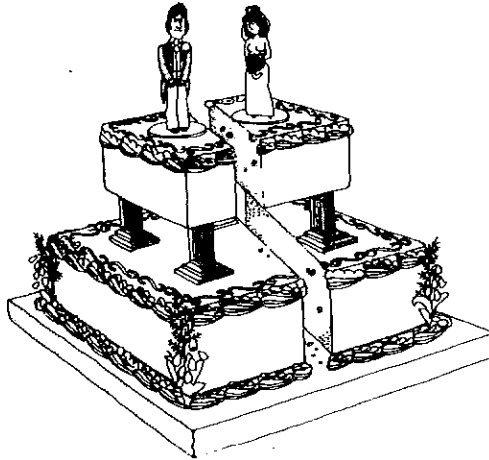
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It is a sad prediction that most of us, having used the royal wedding for our own enjoyment, will now begin to take the marriage for granted, expecting Prince Charles to be constantly available, adapting to any situation and saying exactly the right thing on every occasion: and expecting Lady Diana to be consistently pleasant and charming.

Charles has learnt, and Diana will soon learn the accomplishment which all the Royals must acquire: like good clowns, they must look happy even when they feel grim. And there will be times when they feel grim - especially when their marriage isn't going very well. In the fairy tales, the prince and the princess get married and live happily ever after. In real life a royal couple are at even greater risk than the rest of us - and that's saying something. The difference in age and in life experience the aloneness, the tyrannical demands of public service will not make life any easier for Charles and Diana. Nothing will equip our future King and Queen for their task better than a happy marriage; and nothing will cripple them more severely than marital stress. The Prince and his bride need the prayers of all men and women of faith during the years ahead, and the 'state prayers' in church can take on a new and urgent meaning.

* * *

The Church of England's attitude to remarriage after divorce has been more rigorous than that of any other Christian Church. The 'Free' churches allow the remarriage of divorced people under certain circumstances; and the Roman Catholic Church, while asserting that marriage is indissoluble, gets round the problem by finding reasons to 'annul' a marriage - that is, to declare that the marriage wasn't valid in the first place. The Church of England alone has given an unequivocal 'no' to those who seek remarriage in church.

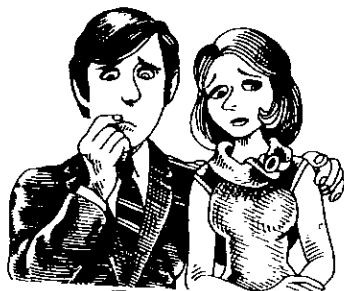


Until now, the Church of England's position has been confused. While the majority of its teachers agree that a marriage can become 'dead', and acknowledge that often a second marriage can succeed and may be 'blessed by God', the Church's law-making body, General Synod, has consistently voted against allowing remarriage in church on the ground that to do so would compromise the Church's witness to the life-long nature of marriage. Meanwhile, the divorce rate in this country has increased alarmingly and is now the highest in Europe. It hardly seems, therefore, as though the Church of England's policy has had the desired effect. What it undoubtedly has done is to create the impression that the Church is unsympathetic towards marital difficulty and judgmental towards divorced people.

I constantly despair to see how people whose marriages are in trouble are reluctant to seek out their minister and share the problem with him. More often than not, I don't hear about the problem until it's too late to do anything to help. I believe that many people have a feeling in their bones that the church condemns them. This feeling is reinforced when a couple, one or both of whom have been divorced, come to me to ask to be remarried in church, and I have to say that my Church does not allow me to do it. The situation is complicated by the fact that they probably know that there are some clergy who exercise their right in law to conduct remarriages of divorced people in defiance of their own Church's ruling, and they can't see why I should do the same for them. I am sure that sometimes a couple in this situation feel that I am discriminating against them and acquire a grudge against the Church.

Not only does the Church give the impression of being unsympathetic; it also gives a hint of hypocrisy. Although the divorced may not be remarried in church, there are few clergy who are not willing to conduct a 'service of blessing' after the civil ceremony. Here is a flagrant example of double-think. What we are implying is that to have the legal ceremony in the register office and the blessing in church is O.K., but to have both the legal ceremony and the blessing (that is, the marriage service) in church is not. I for one feel that this attempt to have one's cake and eat it is a threat to my integrity.

...MARRIAGE



There are, of course, people who sincerely believe that Jesus was a law-giver, and that his recorded words about marriage mean that marriage is indissoluble, that there can, therefore, be no such thing as divorce, and that 'remarriage' after divorce is bigamy. Clergy who seriously believe this would (presumably) be unable to hold even a service of blessing after civil remarriage. Many of us, however understand the way of Jesus quite differently. We don't regard Jesus as a law-giver. We believe that he showed that all men break God's law, but that God is bigger than his law and is able to cope with the situation. The only unforgivable person is the one who maintains that he hasn't broken God's law. To those who admit their need, God offers forgiveness, and renewal. God in Christ sets us free from the crippling effect of our failure.

Christian marriage, Bishop Verney declares, is based on the forgiveness which God offers to us in Christ - and he has had the great courage and honesty to declare it not only by his teaching but also by his example. Anyone who knows Stephen Verney will be in no doubt that this is no act of defiance but a response to the love of God made after much struggling in prayer.

* * *

It is much too early to be able to say when, and on what conditions, we shall be able to marry divorced people in church. Certainly there will be careful consideration of each case on its merits. And that is much more than can be said for the way we conduct first marriages.

We can read with sickening regularity in the Derbyshire Times the sorry list of broken marriages in our own area. Teenage marriages are particularly at risk, a high proportion of them coming to grief. Yet if a pair of 18-year-olds come to their parish vicar requesting marriage, he is legally bound to marry them, no matter how great his misgivings. The church has been yattering on for years about the problem of divorce and remarriage; yet we ourselves are involved in creating the problem in the first place. Now that more than one marriage in four ends in the divorce court, has the time not come to tackle the problem at its roots and to require that a couple make adequate preparation before entering into a first marriage? And is it not high time to forget this 'established church' nonsense and to demand that no clergyman should be required to conduct a marriage ceremony against his better judgment?



The True Rock

The Rt. Rev. Stephen Verney comments on his decision to marry a divorced person.

Some have questioned my decision - that a bishop should marry a divorced person! May I share with you two thoughts - about marriage, and about bishops?

I believe marriage is sacred - that is to say, God is in it. God reveals HIMSELF in the love between husband and wife. His 'steadfast love' is the rock on which our marriages are built.

Marriage is difficult and creative, painful and joyful. It takes a life-time, and we have to work at it. We confront each other. We need each other. We clash and grow. We learn to see the truth in each other, and help each other to become real. We quarrel and forgive, and when forgiving is difficult, we discover that the heart of marriage is God forgiving us.

Marriage can be a door between earth and heaven. Yet some-times, tragically, a marriage dies. Divorce is hell - as those who experience it know, but in hell God can still forgive us. If, like the prodigal son, we return home, then the Father comes running to meet us. He sets us free, to make a new start.

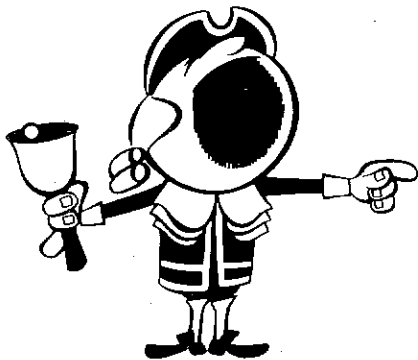
This good news of repentance and forgiveness is the rock-truth of Jesus, on which we built our homes, and through which day by day God recreates our marriages.

What sort of bishop did Jesus choose in Peter, the Rock? I have found myself drawn back to that story in which Peter saw a sheet let down from heaven, full of all sorts of animals which a Jew was not allowed to eat. A voice said, "Kill and eat". "No, impossible", he replied. But the voice said "What God has cleansed, you must not call profane".

Immediately messengers arrived, and Peter found himself being called by God to baptise Gentiles - something which went flat against the truth as Jews had hitherto understood it. Back in Jerusalem, Jewish Christians were shocked. So he told them what had happened. They didn't say "Resign, Peter. You are a bishop". Instead, they praised God and said "This means that to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance, leading to life".

God's truth is too big for us. I know I may be wrong. But is the rock on which Christ builds his church still our weakness and faith, through which he can lead us deeper into the truth of repentance and forgiveness?

Stephen Verney.



The Doors are Open

Following the excerpts in the March 1980 issue of the History of St. Thomas' Church, Brampton, by Spencer Spooner, a further period in the history is now covered.

The Church is built. Following the design of the church architects, Woodhead and Hurst, the workmen took almost 18 months to build St. Thomas's, on and around that first stone. And then, in the midsummer of 1831 came the second important date in the history of the church.

The doors open. "The congregation was highly respectable, but not so large as might have been expected from the fine state of the weather". This rather curious observation was passed by a Derby newspaper in a report of the visit of the Bishop to Brampton for the opening services of the newly built church, dedicated to St. Thomas. The date was July 27th 1821 and the church had actually been opened by a licence a short time before.

According to reports, the Right Rev. the Henry Ryder, who had been appointed Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry in the 1820's arrived in Chesterfield on the evening of Tuesday, July 26th and "took his abode for the night" at the Vicarage. He made the short journey to Brampton with his retinue in the middle of the following morning, and after opening St. Thomas's Church for services he delivered an "excellent and appropriate sermon". The same Derby newspaper reported that the choir from Barlow "added greatly to the ceremony by singing some beautiful pieces of sacred music in their usual chaste and correct style". And although the congregation may not have been large, the receipts - from the sale of tickets, and the collection at the church doors - never-the-less amounted to over £45. An astonishing sum this, even by present day standards!

And so, with the opening of the doors, the life of the Church in Brampton really began, and as tokens of its birth there were gifts of a Bible and Prayer Book and two books for the Communion Table, all in elegant bindings and suitably inscribed, from the Ministers of Chesterfield and Brampton.

It was in the summer of 1831 that the Church people welcomed as their first incumbent the Rev. Matson Vincent. He took up residence at Brampton Manor House and it is recorded that the income of the Brampton living then totalled £150 a year derived from pew rents and an augmentation grant from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The year 1832 was to bring two major events in the history of Brampton Church - the opening of the National Day School connected with the new Church (known as St. Thomas's Schools) and when the Bishop came again to Brampton on August 9th 1832 the consecration of St. Thomas's Church and the burial ground took place.

The Parish of St. Thomas was formed by an order in council dated 1st August 1832 and the first baptism was on the 19th, Martha, daughter of Luke and Elizabeth Knowles of Brampton Moor.

. Old records show that a gallery was incorporated in the design - this was built at the West end - and it was intended that side galleries should be added when the population required the additional accommodation. This plan, however, never matured and the original gallery was eventually taken down during the restoration work of 1903.

One bell was hung in the tower to call people to worship and an old report says that of the 700 sittings in the Church half of them were free.

The Rev. J.B. Jebb who became Incumbent of Brampton in 1846 . . . was "a person decidedly above the average in ability who held strong and settled opinions on life, religion and other leading questions". The link with St. Thomas's . . . began with Mr. Joshua Jebb, Squire of Walton. He died in 1845 and John Beridge Jebb was his third son.

THE RECTORY Records show that the building was erected by Mr. Jebb, probably in 1848, as a Parsonage House for the Perpetual Curate. An Agent's account, which is still in the possession of the Church was submitted for payment in April 1848, claiming two pounds for, among other things "perusing and considering the draft conveyance for a piece of land at Brampton Moor on the main road, for a site for a Parsonage House on behalf of the Bishop of Lichfield."

RAISED TO A RECTORY. The development of Brampton as an industrial zone continued and as more businesses took root in the district and new homes were built, the parish church of St. Thomas found itself catering for an ever-increasing population. Thus, with the 1860's came new status - the Brampton benefice was raised to a Rectory by an order of the Queen in Council in August 1867 and the Rev. J.M. Mello, Incumbent since 1863 became the first Rector. Historically then, the ministry in Brampton of John Magens Mello is of immediate significance, but in many other ways it was a vigorous period of progress and development.



BEDTIME STORY

fast asleep, dreaming of God's great love
for her and all mankind.

Are you one of those unfortunate people
who cannot go to sleep?

Being a very sound sleeper myself, I was
very pleased to hear recently how a
friend of mine had solved her problem of
sleeplessness.

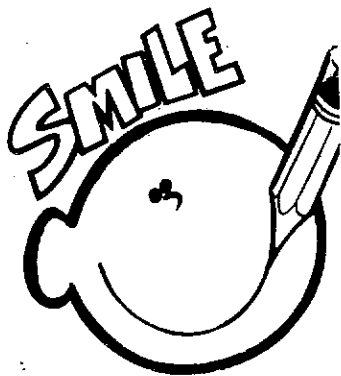
Having said her prayers, she then begins
to think of our Lord and, starting with
"A", thinks of some word to praise Him,
or to describe Him and His love. She
carries on with succeeding letters of the
alphabet, and she tells me she never
gets beyond L, for by that time she is



THE OLD GARDENER

Tall and erect though seventy years and more,
He strides along the narrow country lane,
Returning from the market-gardener's
Where often still his skilful aid is sought.
Bouncer, his mongrel, bounds on fast ahead,
But at old Henry's first summoning call
Returns devoted to his master's feet.
The old man's bushy, white, uncovered hair
is ruffled in the cool and freshening breeze.
His ruddy, wrinkled face aglow with health
Delights in the caress of wind and sun,
Or boisterous gale, or frost, or stinging rain.
His searching eyes are bright, and blue, and quick
To see small, furry creatures in the brake.
Alert, his ears still catch the slightest sound
Of some light movement in the undergrowth.
His workman's clothing carries country smells,
The scent of rich, brown earth, or fragrant herb.
His hands, though rough and hardened with much toil,
Hold softly, lightly, bird, or beast, or plant.
Compassion, kindness, reverence for life,
Are written in each action, in each look.
Gentle his eyes, his voice, his hands, his heart.
Though humbly born and bred, yet - Nature's gentleman.

Some drink from the fountain of knowledge; others limit themselves to gargling.



When I said I might plant aubrietia in the garden my small daughter said:
"We sing about it at Sunday School . . .
All things bright and beautiful. Aubrietias great and small."

A young bride complained to her friend: "My husband and I are getting along very nicely, but he simply can't bear children".
"Oh well," the friend consoled her, "you can't expect men to do everything."

Lord, today help me to make my words tender and sweet. Because tomorrow I'll have to eat them.

From a letter to the bishop: Some time ago I wrote to inform you that one of our boys who was confirmed in January took his confirmation gift money and bought a collared lizard, which he named Bishop in your honour. A little later he bought a smaller lizard and named it Rector in my honour. I thought you would be interested to know that I recently learned that the Bishop ate the Rector.

A little girl, whose church did not have a choir, was taken by her mother to a neighbouring church where there was a surpliced choir. She whispered in dismay to her mother: "They're not all going to preach, are they?"



"It really is a pity that my next door neighbour doesn't come to church. So many of our Ministers' Sermons seem to be addressed directly to him."

IN YOUR GARDEN



If the weather is warm and dry resulting in the lawn producing very little growth it will be beneficial to leave off the grass box when you mow (if you have that type of mower). The cuttings being short will quickly rot down and form a mulch to the ultimate benefit of your lawn.

The wallflowers which you sowed in May and pricked out 6" apart when they were big enough to handle are now ready for planting out. If the soil is dry make sure that you soak it so that each planting station is thoroughly moist. The nursery bed from which the plants are taken should be similarly treated. Dig them up, using a trowel, with a good ball of soil, plant firmly and you should have a magnificent display next year.

If you want to take cuttings of favourite plants, early August is the latest time for this operation. The cuttings should be inserted in pots containing a mixture of equal proportions of peat and sand and each pot should be enclosed in a polythene bag (failing a specially made propagator).

Shading from direct sun is recommended, if nothing better is available, newspaper will do. If this absorbing job is left any later it is unlikely that the temperature will be high enough (in an unheated greenhouse) to provide the necessary degree of humidity without which rooting will not take place. The pot should be well watered before inserting in the bag; if there is not sufficient warmth the cuttings will probably rot.

Make sure your onions are well ripened before putting them in store. Despite the poor summer last year mine kept till June because, I kid myself, they were well ripened and kept in a cool airy situation. Light frost will not harm them.

In this latitude no more than four trusses of tomatoes should be expected. Be sure to nip out the growing point of outdoor plants two leaves above the fourth truss. In greenhouses you might manage up to eight with the warmer and more sheltered conditions you will have in late summer and early autumn.

If you need to clear tomato plants from your greenhouse as an alternative to picking and storing the fruit, the plant can be taken up with roots intact and hung upside down in a frost free shed or garage. Ripening will slowly take place.

Laying outdoor tomato plants down on peat or straw and covering with cloches (with ends closed) will hasten ripening. A plastic tent could be similarly rigged.

