

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

St. Peter's Holymoorside

- 23rd Dec. 4th Sunday in Advent
6.00pm. Service of Lessons and
Carols
The Holymoorside Choral Society
will be visiting us at this service
- 24th Dec. 7.0pm Carols round the Christmas
Tree in Holymoorside Recreation
Ground.
The Village Carol Service.
11.30pm Midnight Mass and first
Communion of Christmas in
St. Peter's.
- 25th Dec. 9.30am Family Communion.



The Caretakers' Letter

With this issue of "Spearhead" 1984 will have finished its weary course, and although the horrors portrayed in George Orwell's '1984' have not come upon us - God be thanked - it has been a very troubled 336 days. There is unemployment, there are still two very damaging Strikes (the other one, in case you are wondering, affects anyone who has to draw family allowance, retirement or disability pension or any other government hand-out); new or continuing wars in many parts on the world, and starvation of a massive scale in Africa.

There have been many good things happening of course, but in general we won't hear of them. Reporters, whether they work for newspapers, radio or television are rather like Mr. Wardle's Fat Boy in "Pickwick Papers"; they want to make our flesh creep.

I made a vow when it started that I should make no comment about the Miners' Strike. This was fairly easy - nobody asked my opinion anyway. I will only say that anyone who, to further his own political or commercial interests, brings about the amount of misery and hate that has been the result of this strike, is not worthy of holding any high office in either union or management. Michael Buerk's programme about the famine in Ethiopia has touched the consciences of the nation. This is not a disaster confined to 1984 or indeed to Ethiopia. Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children Fund and many others have been telling us of famine, from the horn across all the countries of Central Africa almost to the West coast, and asking for our help. The help is now forthcoming and there have been many generous gestures, but I suspect that the countries at present in difficulty will require our help for a very long time before they are able to stand on their own feet.

We as a congregation have lost our Rector though this is not a catastrophe on the scale of the Miners' strike or famine in Ethiopia. But just as the miners' strike is an opportunity for management to reflect on the unwisdom of making rash statements before consulting those who work for them; and for the Union ruling body to confine itself to co-operation with management for the good of the industry they both serve; and the famine in Africa an opportunity for all countries to co-operate in order to mitigate the affects of any climatic or other mishap which may lead to starvation; so, in a lesser way the interregnum is an opportunity for the people of St. Thomas, St. Peter and St. John to show (as demonstrated at the last P.C.C.) that they are prepared to be the People of God in this place. It is an opportunity to care for the sick, comfort the dying and the bereaved, to nurture the children in the faith. We shall make mistakes, but provided we are prepared to listen and take advice, we may not go far wrong.

God's Blessing on you all this Christmastide and for the whole of 1985.

KEN SCOTT



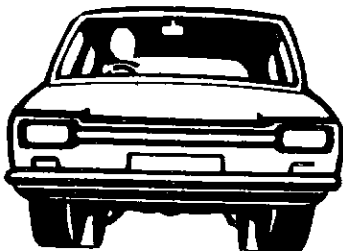
PICK YOUR FEET UP!

You may be walking on carpet that is still not paid for! No, not really, but there is still an outstanding deficit of £500 on the cost of the carpet installed this year in St. Thomas' Church. What an improvement it has been, worth every penny.

Many parishioners always intended to make a donation, but never got around to it. Why not give a Christmas present towards the missing £500? Do it now, whilst you are thinking about it. Thank you.

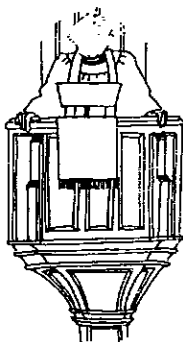


TRANSPORT A CLEGYMAN



As you will have seen from the inside front cover, arrangements have been made to ensure that St. Thomas' services will have a clergyman for most of the services during the next few weeks. This means that the visitors have to get to the churches in the parish, and often could do with a lift! If you are able and willing to offer help in this way, please contact Phil Johnson or David Oldale as soon as possible.

Good Bye!



On Monday evening 29th October and with a standing ovation, a congregation of over two hundred said goodbye and thank you to the Rector and his wife. Ten memorable years of service were recalled by Vyvyan, from the pulpit for the last time. Ten years of growth, triumphs, disappointments and most of all, love.

He had inspired and seen more lay involvement in the Christian life of the parish, celebrated anniversaries, married and baptised members of his own family and many others. He had seen a new vitality in the Sunday School, the working groups and the friendships that had developed amongst St. Thomas' members over the ten years of his incumbency. Phil Johnson, churchwarden, also recalled the growth of the body of the church, typically illustrating it by the increase in our Diocesan Quota to over thirty times what it was ten years ago, statistical proof of the vigour of St. Thomas. Phil said that the ten years were certainly for him packed with memories that would never fade. After Phil and David presented Vyvyan with the farewell gift of hi-fi equipment, Barbara Inger on behalf of the flower arranging team gave Gill a book token with thanks for the hard work and inspiration that Gill had given to the ladies who enriched our worship with flowers. She recalled the not-so-gentle art of collecting greenery in pouring rain, daffodils in snowstorms, and miles and miles of transport so unstintingly devoted by Gill in just this one activity. Hilary Ratcliffe presented the Rector with a massive signed card from all the Sunday School. Vyvyan in reply thanked all involved, paid tribute to Gill, the human dynamo, and to Ken Scott and Sylvia incumbents at Holymoorside.

A handsome buffet supper was enjoyed by all, and contributions (originally intended to help the costs) of over £250 will be sent to help the famine relief fund in Ethiopia. It was a memorable evening, after ten memorable years, and the joy and goodwill was only slightly softened by the thought of losing two friends, and apprehension about who next would guide, inspire and serve the parish of St. Thomas, Brampton.



HARVEST WORKSHOP



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKED

For all the Sunday School to develop their creative talents in the Harvest Workshop on September 22nd. Forty seven children arrived at St. Thomas' kitted out in an assortment of wellingtons, painting overalls, leotards and mining helmets to enjoy the variety of activities planned for them.

The painters made a marvellous altar frontal that has been enjoyed by the congregation, on the Lady Chapel altar for a number of weeks after its creation. Others played football coached by a professional footballer.

In the afternoon lots of children went to John Clayton's farm to see calves, puppies and other animals. Other paid a visit to Ron Amner's lead mine at Via Gellia. Those who stayed in the meeting room developed their dramatic talents under the direction of Sue Hunt.

The following Sunday morning service involved a representative from each activity presenting an example of their work to be blessed as part of the Harvest Thanksgiving. The bread and wine used in the service were produced by the children, symbolising the meaning of that day - "All things come from you 'O Lord, and of your own do we give you". By the way, everybody had a lot of fun too!



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Would anyone who has any greenery available to help to decorate St. Thomas' Church at Christmas please contact Barbara Inger (Tel. 566014) or any member of the Flower Club? Any variegated holly or ivy or other evergreens would be appreciated. There will be a retiring collection for anyone who would like to contribute to the Christmas flowers after the morning service on December 16th.

