

# FROM THE NEW RECTOR



## INTRODUCING THE FRITH FAMILY

We've driven through Brampton many times. My parents live in Norfolk and Chesterfield is en route from Manchester. I have always noticed St. Thomas' looking attractive in its well kept surroundings., but I never guessed that one day we would be living and working in the parish.

We are all looking forward to coming. We keep hearing good things about the three churches, the town, the area and Chesterfield folk. It's funny to think that, just a few months ago, Chesterfield didn't mean much more to me than a crooked spire and Tony Benn!

It wouldn't be right to say that we can't wait to come. We have spent eleven very happy years in Haughton Green, a residential area of largely council housing, about eight miles east of the centre of Manchester. We have been privileged to see God at work and the church family growing. It will be a tremendous wrench to leave.

Pam and I met in Cambridge. She was training as a nurse and I was at a local parson factory. We got married in 1969 during my first curacy at St. Thomas', Crookes in Sheffield. Ruth, now 14, was born in Sheffield, Jonathan (12) was born in Manchester when I was Curate at Holy Trinity, Platt. Sarah (6) and Daniel (3) were born in Haughton Green.



Daniel is an enthusiast for Mr. Men and lollipops; Sarah is into swimming, gymnastics and My Little Pony; Jonathan (we often call him Jonty) enjoys computers, table tennis and cricket; Ruth is keen on various sports and art, including music which ranges from Wham! to playing the piano herself. Pam is a country girl at heart, having been brought up on a Gloucestershire fruit farm, and she is fully occupied keeping the five of us out of mischief. She's useful at tennis too. I like nearly all sport (not keen on wrestling!) and cricket in particular.

If I am a bit 'churchy' sometimes, it must be because of my pedigree. My brother Richard and I are the sixth consecutive generation of parsons! But it's not churchiness which is important, but Christ-likeness. It continually amazes me that we, the Christian Church, have been entrusted with the Good News of Jesus Christ and with the responsibility to pass it on. This Good News is always relevant and never old fashioned or out-of-date.

As our time in Brampton gets closer, we feel a strange mixture of excitement and trepidation. Do please pray for us as we pray for you. God surely has great things in store.

Two final things: I hope you'll take the opportunity to hear Billy Graham at Bramall Lane, Sheffield. He's due to be there from 22nd to 29th June and it may be our last chance to hear him in this country. Here in Haughton Green, we have a number of new church members as a result of Billy Graham's meetings in Liverpool last year. He is well worth hearing.

The other thing is - please call us by our Christian names.

Looking forward to getting to know you.

CHRISTOPHER FRITH

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## WHEN HARVEY SPOKE OUT ON T/V

Harvey Thomas made a discovery when he was pulled out of the rubble of the Grand Hotel, Brighton, after the IRA bomb planted there had gone off: Christians are not outspoken enough in sharing their faith with the people they meet in their every-day lives.

After his dramatic escape - an answer to prayer as he lay under tons of rubble two floors below where he had been sleeping - he spoke of his faith in Jesus Christ in the television interviews that followed. But, said Harvey,

'The response I have had from those interviews on that fateful morning when I said that I'm a Christian, that I prayed, that I've committed my life to the Lord had been extraordinary. People have written to me saying, 'What an incredible testimony . . .'  
It's nice of them to write. It *isn't* an incredible testimony, but it is so rare that people on television news actually say they are Christians. When I got all those letters it suddenly dawned on me that we have to be more outspoken about our faith in everyday life.

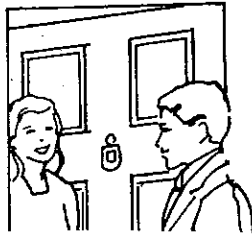
## St. John's Church Walton 1985



### EXTENSION OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, WALTON - PROGRESS REPORT

The February issue of Spearhead contained a report on the extension of St. John's Church and an appeal for funds. Work on the porch was to have been completed by 16th February, but bad weather and delays in obtaining materials have caused the completion date to be put back. Though the external structure was up before Easter, joinery, plumbing, electrical and painting works are still outstanding. Instead of an official opening in July it is now hoped to celebrate late in September, when our new Rector may be able to attend. As the vestry is still at the back of the nave it has not been possible to provide new furnishings to give extra seating.

The appeal for funds by means of a canvass of the population within about a mile of the church was carried out as a Lenten task during March and April. The Church's 1985 budget contained an item of £2000 for donations (the 1984 figure being £56) and this has already been exceeded. Seven members of the congregation gave £890, and the canvass yielded 181 donations totalling £1190, with more promised. New covenants, including some of these donations, total £219, which with tax refunds will cover half the loan repayments over the next four years.



The canvass was also intended to advertise the church and encourage people to attend. In this respect it has so far been less successful. Those on the Electoral Rolls of the three local churches, and the farmers who had given generously a few months earlier in memory of Margaret Wildgoose, were excluded from the canvass. Contact was however made with 1085 households. 513 of these said they were members of the Church of England, 223 said they supported other Christian churches, 9 belonged to other religions and the rest indicated they were not interested. Only 3 said they were atheists and we found one agnostic.

Of those who said they were Anglicans, 167 attended the churches in the parish (55 St. John's, 105 St. Thomas's and 7 St. Peter's). Many of the others said they still went to the churches they attended before they moved into Walton. Five new families have so far attended St. John's, and the remaining "Church of England members" said they did not attend church or intend to do so, for various reasons.


Donations were given by many who had little to do with the church, some prompted by the 1984 Sweet Pea Festival, W.I. Carol Services, the appearance of the churchyard and the new porch. Many generous donations came from elderly people who recalled the church as it was 50 or more years ago. Not everyone was pleased to be approached, and some just refused to answer the door, especially when Mastermind or football were on TV.

On the other hand the great majority appreciated the work that was being done. Some said this was the first time anyone from the church had been to see them (the longest time quoted was 46 years), and this was compared with the enthusiasm of other denominations. One obvious problem was the mobility of people in these modern housing areas. Many only intend to stay a few years, (7% of the houses were for sale). Some took long holidays, some were still on winter holidays. Many used their cars to work or take leisure miles away and had no interest in Walton as a community. Suggestions were made which have been noted and will be followed up as time and money allow.

The Church Council is grateful for the trouble taken by so many residents to give advice and money. The canvass realised over twice as much as the five events run by the church in 1984 on which much more effort was expended. Work can now be carried out this year instead of waiting several years for funds to accumulate. (The artist who produced the new picture of St. John's is Keith Swift, a local resident to whom we owe our thanks).

**THANK YOU**

# ANNUAL MEETING



## ST. THOMAS' YEAR - The Secretary's Report

### 66th Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Monday 22nd April

This year, eight meetings of the P.C.C. were held and the average attendance, as last year, has been twenty two.

The key issues throughout the year have been:

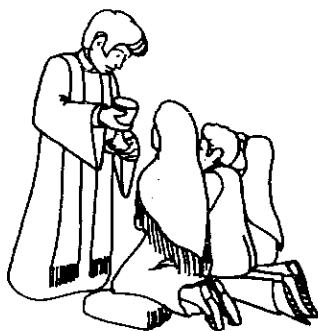
- a) the resignation of Vyvyan and Barry North and the process of interregnum
  - b) the Scargill retreat
  - c) Children and the Eucharist
  - d) New form of Family Service
  - e) Organ
- a) **Barry North**, the curate, left in May 1984 to take up an appointment as curate at St. Augustines. It was with regret that the rector informed the P.C.C in July 1984 of his intention to resign. Of all the reasons surrounding this decision, it should be noted that the central one as far as Vyvyan was concerned, was that his leaving would be far more beneficial to St. Thomas' than his staying on. This makes his decision an extremely caring and courageous one. After ten years building up a parish and becoming a devoted parish priest, such a decision has indeed had a profound effect on many people in St. Thomas' parish.
- Philip Johnson and David Oldale, as churchwardens, took over the running of the P.C.C. from August 1984. The rector's resignation took effect as from the 30th November 1984. The churchwardens announced on Sunday, April 14th that a new rector has been appointed, Rev. C.J. Frith.
- b) **Scargill**. Thirty-eight members of St. Thomas' Brampton along with fifty-two members of St. John Bilton (Harrogate) spent 23rd-28th November 1984 at Scargill House, Kettlewell. With one or two criticisms, it can be reported that the weekend was highly successful and that the weekend provided a revitalising stimulus for the whole congregation. It has been suggested that we plan a further weekend of this nature for 1986.

c & d) It is appropriate to talk of 'Children and the Eucharist' and 'New form of Family Service' together because both involve the concept of children in worship. Before Vyvyan's departure, the Sunday School staff were well advanced with proposals for an alternative Sunday Service, with a main objective of making the family service less complicated, more welcoming but just as sincere as the present Eucharist. Copies of the provisional form of service are now available but as we have been advised not to make any further moves during an interregnum period, it would not be useful to try to promote this at the present time. We will await the new Rector's views with interest.

In February, last year, the Diocesan Synod published a paper entitled 'Children and the Eucharist' which addressed itself to the problem of children, confirmation, communion and infant baptism; all four being inextricably connected. The detailed discussions of St. Thomas' P.C.C. are available in the minutes of the meeting of the 30th April, 1984. These views have been carried forward to Deanery Synod. It may be of interest to the parish that in a recent Deanery Synod vote a majority of 70 to 9 voted in favour of children, suitably prepared, being allowed to take communion without first being confirmed.

It is clear that children and family worship is not simply a 'bandwagon' of St. Thomas' but a serious issue in the Church of England at large. To this extent, it is an important issue to be resolved in our church under the guidance of the new rector. We must pray for sound consensus and for sensitivity in the decisions we will have to face, unavoidably, in the coming months.

# FOR THE FAMILY





- e) **Organ.** Sadly, we have not moved much further since last year's A.P.C.M. Meetings have, however, very recently, taken place between:
- i) the churchwardens and the Diocesan Davisor for organs. A report on repair work necessary and quotations are in the possession of the P.C.C.
  - ii) the churchwardens and representatives from pipeless organ manufacturers.
  - iii) the churchwardens and representatives of a local church where a pipeless organ has been installed.

It is hoped that very early in the new P.C.C. year a decision will be made concerning repair or replacement of our present organ. Again, the P.C.C. views this matter with concern and urgency and it is yet another serious issue where prayers about our decisions are needed.

Past P.C.C. minutes are available from K.P. Morgan. April 5th, 1985.

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## THE LAST APPLE



*THE STORY is told how, many years ago, there was a man who had absolutely nothing. But God, who loved him, gave him ten apples.*

*The man devoured the first three apples and they were delightful. He traded the second three apples and got himself somewhere to live. He traded the other three apples and got himself something nice to wear. Then he came to the tenth apple. Now he knew that God had given him the tenth apple so that he would*

*have something to give back to God in appreciation for the other nine.*

*The trouble was, the longer he looked at the tenth apple, the bigger and juicier it appeared. He began to think that, after all, God owned all the apples in the world so one more or less wouldn't matter.*

*So the man did what so many of us have done. He ate the tenth apple and gave God the core!*

From an item in Christian Herald

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# Memorandum

# JMC

TO: Jesus, Son of Joseph  
Woodcrafter Carpenter Shop  
Nazareth

FROM: Jordan Management Consultants  
Jerusalem

Dear Sir:

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have now taken our battery of tests; we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Sincerely yours,  
Jordan Management Consultants

# "THAT'S A NICE BADGE IS IT A FISH?"



ABOUT two years ago I bought a fish badge from a member of our house group. I was debating about the best place to wear it, when I thought of my uniform at work. There're about a dozen permanent members of staff around the Lewisham Hospital Casualty Department but the pupil and student nurses are coming and going every eight weeks. Then there is the tremendous number of patients passing through every day, 365 days of the year!

It's been a really good form of Outreach/Witness, call it what you may. Christian patients, doctors, physiotherapists, secretaries, policemen see the "Fish" and a conversation ensues. "Which church do you belong to?" etc. with, in some cases, other members of staff (not Christians)

'listening in'.

People who don't recognise the significance of the badge say, "That's a nice badge, is it a fish?" I can then explain what it means, why I wear it and that I'm a Christian. It seems a natural sort of witness.

Actually a drawing of a fish is one of the earliest Christian secret signs and used by Christians meeting in the catacombs of Rome. The initials of the words (in Greek) Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour make the word Ichthus which means fish.

You hear of fishermen bragging about the "big one that got away" – well this fish is really small fry – but it's here to stay!

– JOHN MARLEY



*This devotional aid from an airline's inflight magazine was culled by a member of Redland Park URC, Bristol, and quoted in the URC magazine 'REFORM'.*

## A TOURIST'S PRAYER



Heavenly Father, look down on us, your humble obedient tourist servants, who are doomed to travel this earth taking photographs, writing postcards, buying souvenirs and walking around in drip-dry underwear.

We beseech you, O Lord, to see that our plane is not hijacked, our baggage not lost, and our overweight luggage and illegal imports are unnoticed.

Lead us to good inexpensive restaurants where the wine is included in the price of the meal and the staff speak our tongue. Give us the wisdom to tip correctly in foreign currencies we do not understand.

Grant us strength to visit the museums, palaces and cathedrals, and if perchance we skip an historic monument to seek

private pleasure have mercy on us, for our flesh is weak. Protect our wives from bargains they do not need or cannot afford; lead them not into temptation, for they know not what they do.

Keep our husbands from looking at foreign women and comparing them with us. Save them from making fools of themselves at social gatherings. Above all, do not forgive them their trespasses, for they know exactly what they do.

And, finally, when our wanderings are over, grant us the favour of finding someone who will look at our movies and photographs and listen to our prattle so that our journeys as tourists will not have been in vain.

## "SHOW ME SOMEONE WHO DRINKS TOO MUCH..."



"Show me someone who drinks too much who has to try out some new drink, and I will show you someone miserable and sorry for himself, always causing trouble and complaining. His eyes are bloodshot, and he has bruises that could have been avoided.

Don't let wine tempt you, even though it is rich red, though it sparkles in the cup, and it goes down smoothly. The next morning you will feel as if you had been

bitten by a poisonous snake. Weird sights will appear before your eyes . . . You will feel as if you were on the ocean, seasick, swinging high up in the rigging of a tossing ship . . . 'I must have been beaten up' you will say, 'but I don't remember it. Why can't I wake up? . . . 'I need another drink.' "

*A few wise words from King Solomon to be found in Proverbs 23 v 29 to 35 New English Bible*