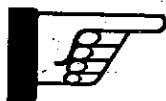


## SERVICES AT ST. PETERS    OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

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|---------------|--|
| October 6th   | Harvest Supper - Village Hall 7.30pm.<br>Admission: £1.50                                |
| October 20th  | Concert - School Hall, Holymoorside<br>7.30pm. Admission.                                |
| November 4th  | All Saints & All Souls. Remembrance of<br>departed at Evensong 6.00pm. St Peters Church. |
| November 11th | Remembrance Sunday. 3.00pm. Remembrance<br>Service - Holymoorside Village War Memorial.  |



### COMMENT.

I MUST admit that I don't like writing valedictory messages, they're a bit too much like writing obituaries, but I feel I must write something because VYVYAN AND GILL ARE LEAVING!!!!

I have known them both ever since I came to Derbyshire, (which is not surprising as Vyvyan was the one who offered me my present job). and have, over the years come to respect and admire a Rector who, whole being supportive in everything has allowed this particular curate anyway to develop his own ministry. How far Vyvyan has been able to develop his other interest (I almost said obsession) of encouraging the people of St. Thomas' to be the people of God, and to work out their mission both individually and as a congregation will only become apparent after he has left us for Chislehurst. It would be a poor return to him if we just gave up and patiently waited for a new incumbent to tell us what to do, but I don't think that we will, and that Vyv will find that the seeds he so patiently planted will grow into very hardy plants.

In all his ministry Vyvyan has of course been ably supported by that ball of fire Gill, whose energy, excitement and interest has admirably complemented the more contemplative, quieter ministry of her husband.

With all his people at St. Thomas', St. Peter's and St. John's I wish them both well in their new parish, and hope the people there learn to love them as much as we do.

K.M.S.

# *From the Rector*

This is my last contribution to Spearhead. Gill and I leave the parish at the end of October. We shall take our leave of our friends in the church at a Eucharist on Monday, 29th October, at 7.30pm. in St. Thomas'.

I have always maintained that a clergyman should not normally remain in a parish for more than ten years. Some twenty years ago the Church of England set up a Commission under the then Vicar of Leeds, Canon Fenton Morley, to enquire into the whole subject of appointment to parishes. The result was a fine report, which came to be known as the 'Morley Report'; covering every aspect of the subject. Needless to say, like many another report in the Church of England, it was thrown out. One of its recommendations was that clergy should be appointed to parishes for seven years, with a possible extension to ten years if this seemed right.

I believe that that was wise counsel. No clergyman is the complete all-rounder. Everyone has his weaknesses and his prejudices, which have their effect on the life of the parish. No parish should be shut up indefinitely with the limitations of one minister. When I had been in my last parish ten years I resigned the appointment to take a years' sabbatical leave. Although I consider that I would have been justified in extending my stay here for another three years, until the official retirement age of 65, circumstances have indicated that it is advisable that I withdraw now, after ten happy and eventful years in the parish.

As many of our readers will know, for many years now my wife Gill and I have worked in partnership. Gill is a fully trained minister (though not ordained). She has had her own areas of ministry in the church and has made a contribution to the life of the church that any assistant priest would find it difficult to match. In addition to her church work she has done much in the field of bereavement counselling, particularly in connection with St. Luke's nursing home, and in connection with the probation service.

Gill and I have always seen our ministries as complementary, the gifts of one making good the weakness of the other. In this respect we have been a microcosm of the whole church which is a body made up of many limbs and organs each with their separate and vital function. But not everybody has seen our partnership in this way. Some have interpreted it as an example of an ailing and incompetent Rector abdicating responsibility in favour of his domineering and equally incompetent wife. Each member of the church will see us as he wants to see us; and we are content that it should be so.

Now we are on our way. Although I am technically retiring. I am not going to be idle. It has not been possible to find a paid job. The church of England intones pious words about the special contribution which older men can offer, and about the need to relieve them of the burden of heavy administrative work; but it has not devised a way to create openings for them. I have therefore accepted an offer from a Kent Vicar to become his unpaid assistant in return for accomodation in the cottage which was orginally provided for the Coachman ( or the Gardener - I am not sure which). There we hope to be able to contribute something useful to the life of the church. We shall be living just ten miles from the Royal Festival Hall and that is quite an attractive thought.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving you during the last ten years.

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## PARISHIONERS IN HOSPITAL

Jack was very ill. He was suffering from Cancer; and although little could be done for him medically, he made frequent visits to hospital for the relief of his symptoms. St. Thomas' parish visitors made contact with him during one of these visits. Members of the church were able to visit him at home, to pray with him and to give support to his wife and daughter so that they need not bear the burden alone. Jack died peacefully at home. Members of the church remain in regular contact with his widow to help her in her bereavement.

Jane is a widow who had recently moved to this district to be near her brother. She had to go to hospital for surgery; and her fear was that a malignant growth might be the verdict. Apart from her brother she had no friends in the area, and she felt frightened and alone. One afternoon the visitor from St. Thomas' parish appeared at her bedside. 'It was so comforting to find that there were some people who were interested in me', she says as she recalls that day.

Sue is a young mum, she had her baby in the hospital, and during her short stay the church visitor happened to come to see her. That visit meant a lot to Sue, as she explained when she came shortly afterwards to enquire about a Christening.

Jack, Jane and Sue (the names are fictitious but the people are real) all testify to the value of the ministry of visiting by the church. This verdict is supported by members of the hospital staff. As one senior member of the nursing staff commented, 'We can see the difference in patients after the church visitors have come. They are noticeably more content'.

For centuries it has been the church's concern to care for the sick; and an important task of the clergyman is to visit people who are ill, especially those in hospital. In the past, the parish clergyman has been welcomed in the hospital and accorded the status of an honorary member of the staff. Arrangements have been made to make available