

FROM THE RECTORY



We've just had a phone call "Please pass on our thanks to your new Church for the wonderful welcome we received at the Induction and Institution and for the refreshments afterwards." Our friend and her husband hadn't known anyone else present, except the Frith family, but they felt at home and wanted. Pam and I were also conscious of a real warmth which can only be Christian love. We were given a great start. Thank you very much indeed.

We can't hide the fact that we're struggling a little! We struggle to get our lovely new house straight (there's still some way to go here!). We struggle to learn names, to find our way around to discover what is going on and to sort out our priorities. Yet "struggle" isn't the right word. We know many folk are praying for us and God is in control. I am finding two quotations a real help. first, some words from the address of William Temple (later to be Archbishop of Canterbury) when he was enthroned as Bishop of Manchester:

"I come as a learner, with no policy to advocate, no plan already formed to follow. But I come with one burning desire; it is that in all our activities, sacred and secular, ecclesiastical and social, we should help each other to fix our eyes on Jesus making him our only guide . . .

"Pray for me, I ask you, not chiefly that I may be wise or strong, or any such thing, though for these things I need your prayers. But pray for me chiefly that I may never let go of the unseen hand of the Lord Jesus and live in daily fellowship with him. In this way, you will most of all help me to help you".

It's a pity I'm not the first to say these words - but I echo them completely.

Secondly, some words of God through Jeremiah, apply to us all as a Church:

"I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Let's do all we can to keep in line with these plans!

Christopher Frith

To all my dear friends,

I so much wanted to share the increasingly better news with you all, and to thank those of you whom I have not yet been able to see.

When I came out of hospital, my diabetic consultant told me that my eyes were in "a hell of a mess". I believed that it was miraculous to be told a couple of weeks later that I was allowed to go on holiday, with a few restrictions. (I hadn't particularly wanted to climb Snowdon, anyway!) However, we arrived on Friday evening and I had another haemorrhage on Saturday morning, so I was put back under sedation until the blood was absorbed somewhat by the Wednesday, and I was thereafter allowed to keep my eyes open and to be taken out in the car, which made a big difference.

We must never forget to count every blessing. Richard whilst sailing in a rough sea, bit his anorak so hard that the whole of one of his front teeth snapped off. Not having had the foresight to take a dentist friend with us and finding that Blue-tak was inadequate, he spent the rest of the holiday looking like so something out of Frankenstein. Since he laughs alot, I am sure it helped our marriage for me to have my eyes closed so much!



REJOICE

We came home just one day early, so that I could go for treatment and I could hardly believe my ears when Mr. Talbot said that both my eyes were looking good, except for a cluster of capillaries in my right eye which are too near the centre to be lasered. He said that I am the most difficult case he has ever had to treat (I'm not sure whether he meant me or my eyes!), moreover, having originally said that I could be blind by the end of this year, he now thinks that there is a 40% to 60% chance of retaining my sight. I thank God for such news; the result of laser, Mr. Talbot's skill, and the answer to many prayers.

I am now waiting for an appointment to go back to the Hammersmith hospital in London, but I hope that I won't have to stay in the Hammersmith for the requisite 2 months or so. However, if it is God's will, I am more than thankful that there is a drug available and I know that He will have a job for me to do there. "Thy way, not mine, O Lord".

Meantime, I am allowed to drive again and "potter gently," so, if any one wants a gentle potterer, you know where to find me!

I hope you know how very much I appreciate all your loving concern shown in so many ways. My prayers are for you, as I thank you for upholding me; and thank you for helping me to bear what has been the most difficult burden of my life.

May our Lord Jesus keep you and give you daily grace and strength.

With love in Him,

Jill (Robinson)



STILLNESS MEDITATION AND PRAYER

"Be still and know that I am God"

Contemplative prayer, or Christian meditation has been called the simplest prayer (although not the easiest!). Until recently it has been neglected in the church generally, and practised only by those in monastic seclusion. Today, however, many Christians are realising that "waiting on God in the silence" can be an enriching experience and a way of developing their spirituality.

Four of us from St. Thomas' Meditation and Prayer Group recently spent a week-end at Morley Rectory taking part in a Meditation and Prayer Seminar guided by Canon Norman Todd. Much of the time we were in silence, and for those who have not experienced it before this can be a traumatic occurrence. Most people today dislike silence, they are acutely embarrassed by it, and jump in to destroy it with words. Even in church our services are almost entirely verbal. We recite, we read, we preach, we sing, we pray aloud. We forget that if we are to hear "the still small voice of God", we must at times be quiet and listen. Anyone who has attended a Quaker Meeting will know that sometimes and for some people silence can be more deeply meaningful than words.

At Morley, as in our own Meditation and Prayer Group Meetings, we try to practise the techniques man has used through the ages. We try to relax our bodies, quieting our breathing, still our minds, and just stay in the silence together. Often this is difficult - mundane thoughts intrude, or we remain too tense, but even so we feel it is intrinsically a good thing to do. Sometimes, of course it is truly rewarding.

I do not want to suggest that meditation is a universal panacea for all ills, Some people may not find it particularly helpful. There are after all many many paths to God, and I am a little suspicious of people who claim to have all the answers. However, all of us would benefit if we could relax more, and, dare I say it, do more of the listening and less of the talking!

Why not join us?

Joyce Crowther.



St. John's Church Walton 1985



COMPLETION OF THE EXTENSION TO ST JOHN'S MISSION CHURCH, WALTON

The extension to St John's Church, comprising a stone porch with a vestry, sink, toilet and storage cupboards, was completed on 17th August 1985. The work was carried out by Mr Howard Stockton of Holymoorside under the supervision of the Brayshaw Harrison Partnership, architects.

It is proposed to hold a Thanksgiving service for the extension of the Church at 7.30 pm on Friday October 4th. The Bishop of Derby has promised to attend. The church will be decorated for the Harvest Festival by Holymoorside Floral Art Group who arranged the flowers for last year's Sweet Pea Festival in the church. The church will be open to all from 10am to 6pm on Saturday and Sunday, October 5th and 6th. The Harvest Festival service will be held at 3pm on Sunday October 6th.

Produce will be sold after the Harvest Festival service, proceeds to be devoted to the Harvest for the Hungry, appeal.

FROM THE EDITOR



CHRISTOPHER J.C. FRITH M.A.
Rector of St Thomas'

Wednesday 4th September saw the Institution (by the Bishop of Derby) and Induction (by the Archdeacon of Chesterfield) of Rev. Christopher Frith to the benefice of St Thomas' Brampton.

A congregation of about 350 people, including the Mayor and Mayoress of Chesterfield, local councillors, representatives from local schools and many clergy from the deanery assembled at St. Thomas' Church at 7.30pm.

Two coaches containing over a hundred people from Christopher's old Parish at Haughton Green, came to wish him well and say goodbye, and they joined over two hundred of St Thomas' parishioners to see the fourteenth priest-in-charge installed at St Thomas' since its beginning. The buses arrived just in time, much to the relief of the church wardens!

The ceremony was very traditional, using language almost archaic to our modern ears, as Christopher was "admitted to the cure of souls in this parish", and we prayed that "God will give him grace to be faithful to the duties of his office". During the service the whole congregation was made aware of the magnitude and scope of these duties, and also made aware that the people have duties as well. We will all need God's Help.

The Bishop said in his sermon that going to church used to indicate membership of the Christian Faith. It is certainly a mark of faith, and the media tend to assess us by numbers at church, but there is much more involved in being a Christian than "going to Church". The people are the church, living by faith and love, together, with Jesus Christ.

We should not think of the church as a bastion to be sheltered within, a barrier to exclude non 'club members', but as a bridge to spread the love of God beyond the boundaries of church walls and even parish.

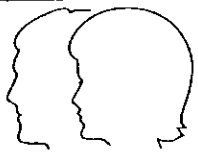
We must welcome new life, of whatever race or colour, for if we fail we are the poorer. The Bishop asked us to look on the advent of a new Rector as the start of new opportunities for service in our community. A challenge to come back closer to God, and renew our vision of Him.

The ceremonies over, the songs of worship movingly sung, the congregation - as directed by Phil. Johnson - collected their food and drink (well done all concerned in providing a wonderful selection) and returned to the church to share in fellowship.

The happiness was apparent, good will and hope everywhere. It was raining and getting late but on-one seemed to want to go home. I was glad I had been at the beginning of a new phase in the life of the parish of St. Thomas' Brampton.

Doug. Inger

SINGLE . Does it mean PRACTICALLY INVISIBLE ?



IN THE COUPLE-ORIENTED SOCIETY of 1985 it seems an impertinence to admit being not even a 'swinging single' but a real old-fashioned card-carrying SPINSTER. Like others of my kind, I'm middle-aged, up to the neck in work and taxes and in the eyes of society (including the church) totally INVISIBLE.

You don't believe it? Then I'd like to ask all you caring, sharing folk out there to answer truthfully the following question.

Does your church or house group ever pray for single people. If not, why not? Perhaps you think it might give offence but you couldn't be more wrong. I remember once hearing the intercessions in a church which I was visiting and they included (with various family groups) 'all those who have not yet found a partner'. I nearly stood up and shouted 'yippee'. It was so wonderful to be accepted.

JESUS HAD REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS ABOUT WOMEN

Jesus was a revolutionary, not least in His ideas concerning women. Pious Jews prayed daily thanking God that they had been born Jews and not Gentiles, freemen and not slaves – and that they had been born men and not women. Rabbis taught that it was a waste of time talking to women on any subject demanding thought. This background explains the amazement of the disciples when they found Jesus talking to a woman at Jacob's Well. (John 4, 27.) And they were not indulging in small talk, but actually discussing theology!

Search the Gospels and you will find no trace of condescension, patronising or flattery in our Lord's talk with women. Always He took them seriously. He told various parables concerning the shortcomings of men, but never one about women's failings.

He commended Mary for listening to Him rather than in joining Martha in the



housework. He healed, rather than rebuked, a woman who through internal bleeding was ceremonially unclean, who touched Him. Small wonder, as Dorothy L. Sayers pointed out, women were last at the cross and first at the empty tomb, for they had never met a man like this man.

Our Lord's message for today, for us to work out its implications, is that men and women are equal partners, but different. Where Christ is the Head of the home, husband and wife share an equal responsibility to Him.