

Spearhead October/November 1991

From the Rector, Christopher Frith

This issue, I don't speak just for myself but for all our members when I say:

CONGRATULATIONS to St. Peter's, 150 years old this Autumn. It is a milestone to celebrate and enjoy - and Spearhead is playing its part in this. Mind you, the Church of Christ is nearly 2000 years old and our local Churches are really quite young, in the light of that!

WELCOME to Philip and Karen Herrick, Emma and Jonathan. At last they are with us and all four of them are playing a part in our Church life. Philip has been kept exceptionally busy in his first fortnight – I hope not too busy - and already I have felt the benefit. Before long, the improvement is bound to be felt right through our Churches. Co-ordination and communication are vital ingredients if we are to continue to be vibrant and growing.

AND FINALLY, THANK YOU DOUG for being a brilliant Editor of Spearhead for 15 years. We don't want you to stop but you deserve a break. During Doug's term of office Spearhead our magazine has been of consistently high quality. It always looks interesting. Doug gives the reader every incentive to get on and read it. In my experience that is a rare quality in Church magazines! It is hard to imagine a more good humoured, tolerant Editor, brilliant at dealing with clergy who find deadlines hard to meet. Part of Doug's secret has been Barbara's support and we are truly grateful to both of them.

In the coming weeks, a thorough review of Spearhead is to be undertaken. If you have any comments, please let me know. I hope to be announcing the appointment of a new Editor soon. (Sue Ward was appointed.)

Christopher Frith

St. Peters, 150 Years Old

Parish History

The Church at Old Brampton dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul was built on the site of an earlier church about the middle of the 13th century. It served Brampton Parish including the area we now know as Holymoorside. The church had the status of a Chapel at ease to Chesterfield Parish Church and as late as the 16th century the inhabitants of Brampton Parish were under obligation to pay certain dues to the Vicar of Chesterfield Parish Church. This was the cause of controversy over a long period until Brampton became a separate ecclesiastical parish.

The end of the 18th century and the early part of the 19th century saw a great population increase and it was decided to create a new ecclesiastical parish at New Brampton. This was formed from the old Township of Walton in Chesterfield parish and a part of the Old Brampton parish. A new church was built at what we now call Chatsworth Road and dedicated to Saint Thomas. The new church was opened on 29th July 1831 and is still the parish church of Holymoorside.

Ten years later, 1841, a combined mission school and church was built to serve Holymoorside. It was opened late in 1841 and is dedicated to Saint Peter. The day school was one of the 'National Schools' run by the Church of England and the schoolmaster around 1850 was John Stevens. Use as a day school probably continued until 1872. The burial ground was added in 1914 and at this date it was proposed to build a new church on the site of 'Rose Cottage'. This scheme did not materialise and 'Rose Cottage' is now the residence of one of the parish curates.

Keep Sunday –How and What?

The excellent piece by Alan Sheldon in the last edition of Spearhead prompts me to write on a topic which has caused me much agonising and seems laden with the potential for hypocrisy. We decided some years ago to be more particular about keeping the Sabbath. This has resulted in many failures, like allowing workmen on our extension on Sunday, taking Grandma out for meals and making exceptions for holidays. If your reaction is that this is not a failure, then think about your attitudes to how others use Sunday.

Keeping the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8, Mark 2:27) can be viewed in three aspects: how we keep it, how that affects others and how we seek to impose our views on others.

How we should keep Sunday appears pretty straightforward don't work and don't cause others to work. But Jesus made it clear that this didn't exclude gathering food (but see Exodus regarding Mana.) or did it exclude doing good. Importantly Jesus made it clear that it included worshipping God. Where do we draw the line? Sunday should not be so full of Church activity that it leaves us exhausted!

Gardening is not work for many of because they find it relaxing. I may find do-it-yourself or washing the car relaxing. Does it only become work if it saves us money, or if it makes us tired, or if we would normally do it on a weekday? My point really is that if you make an exception to the no work rule for yourself, how can you comment on others' use of the day?

Shops appear to be a definite no-no. But what about Stately Homes or meals out? How can we have a pub meal and then criticise someone who couldn't afford that who buys groceries on a Sunday?

So, how does our Sunday affect others? We've cut out visits to the shops, petrol stations and public attractions. But what about the Sunday paper (or the Monday paper for that matter). Our system of electricity supply relies on low efficiency stations being used only if demand is high enough. Your cooked meal may up the balance. Our television companies only put on programmes which people watch - otherwise advertisers won't pay. So your viewing ensures people work on Sunday. Would the BBC screen the Wimbledon final if nobody watched on Sundays? (You can't use the argument that it would be on anyway, because that also applies to shops!)

And how do we judge others? If you are happy reading a Sunday paper, why can't I go to B and Q on Sunday? If I spend Sunday afternoon painting the hall, why shouldn't my neighbour get in some overtime?

I am particularly conscious of people who work six paid days a week, as I have often done so. Many live away from home. When are they supposed to get to the shops? Do you have time to wash the car or mow the lawn during the week - well, many don't.

This all sounds very negative, so what are the answers? Firstly let's get our own houses in order. Does our Sunday schedule give time to Worship God, share with our family and friends, and to relax and have a change from the rest of the week? Do we do everything we can to avoid making others work on Sunday? If we approach this honestly, we should be revived by our Sunday to show others how theirs should be kept. But please, if we are signing petitions let's first ensure we have a clear conscience - KEEP SUNDAY SPECIAL FOR EVERYONE!

Sunday is still special....let's keep it that way

George Carey - Archbishop of Canterbury:

We have got to retain the special nature of Sundays - if we lost that we would never be able to replace it. I recognise some people's desire for access to shops on Sundays, but I am not convinced that this is a greater right than the right of others - particularly shopworkers - to spend the day resting or worshipping with their families.

Basil Hume - Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster:

We seek one day of the week which is a holiday in common, free from normal pressures, providing opportunities for rest, recreation, and alternatives in life, amongst them time for reflection and worship.

Donald English - President of the Methodist Conference:

Sunday is the day in which I want to express my freedom as a Christian to worship with other Christians.

David Coffey - General Secretary of the Baptist Union:

I believe our freedoms need protecting and Sunday is one of our freedoms. The worker needs to rest, the family requires time together and the Christian should have the opportunity to worship. I hope this present initiative will be supported by the same commitment to prayer which made such a difference to the 1986 campaign.

Terry Virgo - House-church leader with nationwide ministry:

We were thrilled with God's wonderful mercy and faithfulness in answering our prayers in 1986 We must work to sustain the victory and keep Sunday special so that with the greatest possible liberty we can continue to advance the gospel in our country.

Rabbi Sacks - Chief Rabbi of Britain and the Commonwealth:

When I was a boy growing up in England, I knew that Sunday was special a holy day Not a holy day in my religion but in Christianity, in the English way of life. You could feel it in the air

Our Link Missionaries, Andy and Mandy Lines

It was good to receive a letter from Andrew, Mandy and Alex at the beginning of September, telling us that they are settling in to their new surroundings. The work is hard, the weather hot (30C and it is winter), and the language difficult, so let us keep on supporting them with our prayers and letters, so that they will feel well blessed by the support from St. Thomas'.

Dorothy Banks

Waiting for God –Karen and Philip Herrick

Many people have asked how we knew that Philip's new job as Ministry Coordinator was the right way forward. It is a long story and in telling I will try and explain the more recent changes God has brought about in our lives.

For as long as I have known Philip, he has always looked for an alternative career outside banking but never really known what he should be doing. As he progressed rapidly through promotions, it seemed less likely that he would leave. Yet, there came a point where he was growing more frustrated and dissatisfied with his job and the demands placed upon him. So, when the Bank insisted two years ago that we moved to Worksop, it was with great reluctance and brave faces that we left Chesterfield and many friends at St. Thomas'.

It was a difficult move and when we arrived carefully laid plans for the house fell apart. Everything seemed to be going wrong. Our new church did not seem very welcoming at first and we felt alone. I quite enjoy moving house (after 12 times I have had a bit of practice) and we busied ourselves getting the house straight, to divert our minds away from our uncertainty in God's purpose.

We knew that the move to Worksop had to be God's purpose and part of his plan for us yet we could not at first see the reasons. Everything seemed to be very dark and I would often sit in a corner in the kitchen and cry. Emma and Jonathan (then aged 2 and 1) did not know what to make of it and it would make me even more upset when they brought me tissues with Emma saying "Don't cry Mummy". It seemed as if we were totally alone and I now believe that is what God intended. For in moving to Worksop we were taken away from the security of St. Thomas'. We had both been very busy in the church but we had perhaps got out of the habit of talking to God. In taking away everything that we relied on, there was only one way we could go and that was back to God.

Our church in Worksop was very different to St. Thomas' and although we felt as if we did not fit in anywhere we certainly learnt a great deal from them. Healing, words and pictures occasionally came to members of the evening congregation and it was one such service that made me stand up and see a chink of light in the blackness that seemed to enclose me. At that service we sang a song about the need for us to allow God to wipe away our tears and be prepared to give to Him our lives of pain so that He might heal us. In the "words of Knowledge" that night were the words to "someone feeling life is very dark". God said to that person "I will restore your love for me and wipe away your tears". I knew that those words were for me and that was the beginning of the lifting of the darkness. It was also the beginning of a new relationship with God; in coming back to Him daily, and in quiet times as I listened, He spoke.

I keep a journal of what I hear and think as I read through the Bible and when I re-read that journal God was showing us the way forward if only we had noticed.

By now, Philip had begun to look at job advertisements. In June 1990 he successfully applied for the Bursar's job at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford. Much to my horror and disappointment he turned it down. Knowing how unhappy he was I could not understand why. Surely if Philip had got the job this was the right thing to be doing. But it was not to be and God was still teaching and leading us both.

The Ministry Co-ordinator's job was advertised within a month of the Oxford offer. The decision to apply was a torment and initially did not seem appropriate. Nevertheless, Philip applied but the appointment announcement in November 1990 brought many questions: Why had we moved away only to go back? Could we sell the house within the set time? Could we afford to move again? What would our families say? Out of fascination, but in fear and faith we accepted, subject to house sale.

The house did not sell - had we misunderstood God again? Philip was very depressed and all of our plans were again uncertain. Yet when we felt in despair a letter or a telephone call from someone at St. Thomas encouraged us and kept us going. The deadline was extended yet we still could not sell the house. Why wouldn't He let us come back to Chesterfield? And as I asked, the same answer would be "In My time, you are not yet ready: Look to the spring and watch for the seasons, for as they change so will you".

I had trusted God before and He always kept His promise and so I looked to the spring impatiently expecting His answer. I gave up waiting and in the deadline week, persuaded Philip to write a letter to Christopher Frith explaining that we could not take up the appointment. Philip reluctantly posted the letter. The following day we had notice that an offer for the house would be made within two days from a couple in almost perfect circumstances. Since that time in late May 1991 there have been many things to further test our persistence and patience and the house move itself was the biggest trial so far. Nothing was certain until mid August and Philip handed in his resignation from the Bank on 31 July 1991 in faith that the house sale would proceed. We exchanged contracts for sale and purchase on 13 August 1991 and moved within two weeks.

God's timing is always right - it is our impatience that is in error, yet we never really trusted His control. We are here, unpacked and almost in order but tired and a little bewildered by all that has happened. Yet what opportunities there lie ahead of us.

We haven't had a holiday yet - all plans were cancelled - so please excuse us if we are not around for a few days after the harvest celebrations - we feel as if we need it.

Karen Herrick

Reflections on Blaithwaite 1991, CYFA Venture Camp

Northward bounding - (car allowing)
Mini-bus-ing - People Meeting
Trumpet Waking - Friend Making
Games Playing - Bible Reading
Water Fighting - Onion Peeling
Barn Dancing - Song Singing
Aerobicing - God Meeting
Up-Washing - Faith Finding
Not Sleeping - Cake Eating
Thought Provoking - Buzz Grouping
Jesus Praising - Life Changing
Mind Blowing - Thirst Quenching
Award Winning - Fond Farewelling
BLAITHWAITE!

"Blaithwaite was good for renewing lost faith and for making new friends."

"We were dead close by the end."

"We were dead by the end."

"Looking forward to next year!"?!

Rosie Welch

Gains 1991, Pathfinder Venture God's Go-Karts

On the 17th August 1991 I went to Gains Pathfinder Venture for not only a fun-packed adventure week, but to learn about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

When we had finished breakfast, at 10 o'clock, we would have our seminars for one hour. They would contain three optional seminars and three fixed. My three optional seminars were 'Christians in Sport', 'Christians in Music' and 'The Media' and my three fixed were 'God - The Father', 'Jesus' and 'The Holy Spirit'. The seminars lasted for one hour every day. After that we would have free time until lunch. After lunch we would have time to do all sorts of activities like Tennis Tournaments, Volley ball Tournaments and Badminton, they also had Football, Go-Karts and Swimming. My favourite activity was the Go-Karts. For one pound you had six laps of the special track made for the go-karts - they were fast, furious and fun.

On Monday we had "It's a Knockout" to do and on Tuesday we went to a Safari Park which was wild, and an Amusement Park with rides and things to see. On Wednesday we had an assault course to go round, which was tough. The activities lasted until about 5 o'clock. After tea we had Teamtime where we were split up into groups. Every night we had to carry out a task to use our brains and physical ability. When we had finished Teamtime it was the evening meeting where we sang songs, had bible readings and prayed about the world's unrest. After the meeting it was tuckshop and then bedtime.

I enjoyed Gains very much and I thought the camp was brilliant. The facilities were very good and the food was excellent. I recommend Gains to anyone who can go.

Rob Lewis

Sizewell 1991, Pathfinder Venture

This year during August a group of eight girls from our church, St. Thomas', set off on a journey to Sizewell Hall in Suffolk. For me it was my first "Christian" Holiday and I was curious at what to expect; on the one hand looking forward to the fun side of things, but on the other not so keen on the "religious" bit!

When we arrived and had settled in, having made ourselves very much at home, it was time for the evening meeting. The atmosphere towards the meetings as we went on through the week gradually built up. Pathfinders started off with the odd clap and a few lines to the songs, but after we got to know each other and were relaxed and less self-conscious it was easier to have an attitude of lifting our hearts to God. Each evening at the meeting one leader gave a talk. The topic covered was "God's World". Most talks were interesting and had you thinking of how mighty God was and of course still is!

Towards the end of the week the majority of pathfinders had become Christians. Encouragement, honesty and openness between all at Sizewell was important, but firstly to open our hearts to God and allow Him to enter. I, myself became a Christian and it was one of the best and worthwhile decisions I'll ever make. Now I as many did that week, have learnt that God is MY friend as well as my saviour. Throughout the hectic seven days there were organised games and activities and each one was enjoyed by the group of 80 pathfinders.

The food was...food and sometimes...enjoyed, always filling and useful for the food fights we were itching to have, the pillows were good substitutes nevertheless!!

So, Sizewell was fun, but more than that the whole week taught me so much and I now understand more about God and have accepted all He wants to give me. From now on there's no looking back.

Laura Cromwell

Summer Club 1991 -Superbook

Summer Club 1991 took place on Thursday and Friday, 25th and 26th July. (This year only two days as the schools didn't break up until Wednesday). The theme was "Superbook". The aim was to teach the children about the Bible. The children were "explorers" of God's word found in the Bible.

As in previous years there was a theme song. This year it went like this:

"Come on, let's go exploring. Let's find the truth in the Bible, digging into God's word."

On the Thursday we dug into the Old Testament. The 5-6 age group learnt about Noah's Ark and made some beautiful animal masks. The older groups studied the 10 Commandments and Jonah and the Whale. The 9-10s made a tape and cartoon of Daniel in the lion's den which is to be shown at the family service in October (a date not to be missed), and the 11 plus group set parts of psalms to music.

On Friday we dug into the New Testament. The children spent some time learning about the miracles and parables of Jesus.

The 9-10s brought the parable of the Good Samaritan up to date and acted out real life situations where the Good Samaritan could be found today.

Such a venture as this needs much planning and many thanks go to Jim Crawley and his team, Chris Cowley (St. Thomas), Anita Wilson and Carol Woodward (St. John's), Helen Clayton and Anne Dilkes (Storrs Road Methodist).

Each group of children had a pastoral leader who stayed with them throughout the two days, and numerous others helped run workshops, make drinks and so on.

In all, some 200 children took part in "Superbook". The atmosphere in church was electric. I would recommend any member of our churches to attend the final half hour of each day at St. Thomas' next year (Yes please, Jim!). The excitement and enthusiasm of the children is wonderful.

In the secular world in which we live we can no longer assume that all children have a knowledge of the Bible. Many households do not own even a dusty copy. For some of the children this may be their only contact with the church until next year, but seeds have been sown and the questions in the theme song have been answered:

Is it only for grown-ups? No, No, No!

Is it all very boring? No!

Is it all very made up? No, No, No!

Is it just fairy stories? No!

This year 33 children went forward at the end on Friday, expressing a wish to learn more about God's word and Jesus. They will be contacted individually and put in touch with a church locally.

As a workshop leader of 7-8s I was amazed at the knowledge and grasp some of the children had of the fifteen or so miracles we discussed. It brought home to me the responsibility we all have in sharing our faith with the young.

I ask you to pray with me that in God's good time the seeds sown these two days will come to fruition and the children will learn to live their lives in the knowledge and love of God.

Liz Travis