

## Spearhead October/November 1992

### From the Curate, Brian Porter

My diary is the kind that has a quotation for every day. One recent quotation caught my eye. It said "Tomorrow is the day all the lazy-bones of this world are going to be terribly busy". The message is clear and very perceptive. Many of us operate on the basis of putting off until tomorrow the things we should be doing today. It becomes a habit to the extent that really important things get left until perhaps it's too late to do anything about them.

A great number of people treat God like that. They know somehow it's important to find out what He says about life, and they have every intention of getting round to asking Him - but today has too much in it, and so it is put off until tomorrow.

I once heard of the various stages of life expressed in this way:

- ◆ Christ comes to a person in early life. They say to Him, it's too early. I have so many things to think about before I settle down and take You seriously.
- ◆ Christ tries again in middle life. They say to Him, I am too busy. I have a family and a career; so many things Till my life. I will think of You later.
- ◆ Christ tries again in later life. They say to Him, I am too old to change my ways. I can't think clearly enough.
- ◆ And then comes death. It is too late.

It may be that some reading this letter are like this, putting off any thoughts of God until later. Will you recognise how quickly life slips away from us, almost without us realising it? Will you acknowledge the danger of putting off until it is too late any thoughts about turning to Christ in repentance and faith.

There is a verse in the book of Jeremiah which says "*The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved*". If this speaks to you of your condition and you want to know more about getting right with God you can ring one of the numbers listed at the end of the magazine or simply drop in to church and introduce yourself to us.

Don't put it off until tomorrow!

Yours in Christ

**Brian Porter**

## St John's Church Centre

St. John's was completed in 1916. It looked a little bleak without the trees. Who then would have imagined it as it was a few months ago?

Now the Church as we have been used to seeing it, mature trees, friendly and usually full. Some 75 years on it serves the people of Walton in ways probably not dreamt of by those who faithfully laid the foundations.

Progress on the Church Centre has been so rapid that the marvellous Gift Day of 21 June '92 now seems like history. The walls are complete and the roof structure erected. It may have caused some surprise to see a tin roof! In order to keep the roof as low as possible the slope is too flat for slates to be completely watertight, so we end up with both.

Inside the electrical wiring is underway, floors are being laid and the plumbing started. Outside the Car Park should be surfaced during October and a start made on the extensive Landscaping work.

Chairs and tables have been ordered and colours chosen for carpets, tiles and paintwork. The kitchen layout and equipment is being decided upon, and office requirements sorted out.

We must not forget Tom and Alan Stockton who are devoting a great deal of skill, time and care to ensuring that we end up with a first class building.

The sub committee dealing with the use of the building has started to meet again and the DCC has decided to allow a six month settling in period before accepting regular use by outside organisations.

Amongst all this the bills have to be paid. Carol Woodward has done "sterling" work in ensuring that pledges arrive and cash is available when required, with assistance from Phil Johnson in sorting out the covenants. The DCC has undertaken to meet any deficit arising in the next eighteen months from general funds.

Planning is also underway for the opening of the Centre which will be on Saturday 21 November 1992 at 2.30pm. Bishop Peter has agreed to preside.

We hope that all those who have taken an interest in this project will be able to share in this special occasion.

Well that's it! Not really, it's only the start. The Centre looks like this on the drawings, but what does it look like to God? Just as the Church building was only a shell to start with, the Centre will only have a Life when it is used by a faithful family of God. Where do you fit in to the picture?

We all have our special hopes for the Centre. If we are going to make full use of it as God wants, there are three things to remember; prayer, prayer and prayer.

It is certain that there will be a need for leaders. People who are prepared to offer a commitment of time and effort to ensure that each particular area of Church life grows. There will be a need for helpers who can be relied upon to turn up and support.

If you hadn't seen yourself in these roles before, think again! The Bible is full of the reluctant leader and the person rejected by the world but used powerfully by God. Don't forget that the job anyone could do will not be done unless you do it! The Church does not discriminate on the grounds of age or experience.

Everyone who is a member of the Church Family has a vital contribution to make, even if they don't realise it. We are living stones. If you are missing the wall will fall down!

Here are three things each of us can do.

- ◆ Pray about your vision for this part of the Parish.
- ◆ Pray about your special skills and how you can fit into that vision.
- ◆ Pray for others to recognise their skills and about how you can help them.

And that's just for starters! Watch this space.

**Alan Wilson.**

## **Book Review** **Brushing Up On Believing**

Which came first: evangelism or knowledge? Nevertheless, Gavin Reid and Shelagh Brown have written and admirable summary of Christian principles entitled "**Brushing Up On Believing**" (£3.95) to partner their "Lights That Shine" outreach study book. Described as a fresh look at basic Christianity and prayer it has much to commend it: clearly written with relevant bible passages to refer to, and short and concise chapters, plus study helps. If you remember points from images or pictures there are cartoons to help!

## Treasure Seekers –Summer Club

This years summer club was called **Treasure Seekers**. It was held over 3 days at the beginning of the summer holidays. It was based at St. Thomas' Church, but we also used Storrs Road Methodist Church and Westfield Infant School. The children who came were aged from about 4 to 13, and they came from all of the three churches. There were also some children who didn't usually go to church.

The children were divided by age and each group did their own activities. The activities were led by parents and other helpers and they were based around lots of parables.

At the beginning and end of each day all of the groups were seated in the church, where the different groups reported back to Jim Crawley and the other children. We also sang a few songs and our favourite song was "*Blessed be the name of the Lord*".

### **Jessica Rodgers.**

Hooray it was Summer Club time again! Having been to two before at St. Thomas', I was looking forward excitedly to this year's Summer Club.

It started soon after the school term finished and lasted for three days. This year it was called "**Treasure Seekers**" and was about Jesus' parables.

There were lots of children there and many were from my school. We were organised into different groups. I was in the 'Maroon Spots' and my sister, Natalie, was in the 'Gold Stars'. We did lots of different things. We made bread, a collage, took part in drama and played games.

I learnt about Jesus and the meaning of his stories, called parables. This made me think a lot about Jesus and God. I decided I wanted to follow Jesus.

Things seem different now. Jesus is my friend and loves me. He helps me when I am sad and when things seem difficult. He has helped me to settle at my new school. I am sure many other children would like Jesus as a friend.

### **Jonathan Abbott (Aged 11)**

## From Jonathan Jee

Dear Friends,

It was great to see such a crowd of you at my licensing service. Thank you so much for coming and helping to make it such a memorable occasion.

Thank you too for the marvellous send off you gave us from Chesterfield in July. We will long remember those farewell services, and your generosity in giving us all those presents. They are all in very good use.

Thank you most of all for your love and friendship over the last four years. It really was a very happy curacy, and time will reveal just how much I learned from you all.

Juliet and Thomas join me in sending our love. Do come and see us when you can.

Thank you again,

Jonathan

## The Apostles –Who were they?

Jesus chose twelve men to be his closest friends and companions. Who were they; and what happened to them?

### Philip and Nathanael (Batholomew)

'Philip' was a Greek name, meaning 'Warrior' or 'A love of horses'. He was, like all the apostles, a Jew and must have had a Jewish name, but what it was is unknown. His home was Bethsaida in Galilee (Jn. 1:44, 12:21), the birthplace of Simon and Andrew, a fishing village on the western shore of the lake.

Nathanael was from Cana, a village in the hills west of the Sea of Galilee (Jn. 21:2). His name means 'Gift of God', and it only occurs in Jn. 1:45-51; and 21:2. The first three Gospel writers never mention Nathanael but name Bartholomew, linking him with Philip in the list of Apostles (Mt. 10:3; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:14), so it is possible that the two men were paired off and worked together. John never mentions Bartholomew in his Gospel but links Nathanael with Philip. This has led many scholars to conclude that Nathanael and Bartholomew are the same person. 'Bartholomew' is in fact a family name, meaning 'son of Tholmai', so Bartholomew would have had a personal name as well. Perhaps the full name of this apostle was Nathanael Bartholomew.

Jesus found Philip and called him to join his band of disciples. Immediately Philip sought to bring others to Christ. He found his friend Nathanael and told him about Jesus. Nathanael was sceptical about the possibility of a Messiah from Nazareth, so Philip introduced him to Jesus. Astonished that Jesus already knew about him Nathanael confessed that Jesus was the Son of God and King of Israel (Jn. 1:45-51).

When the hungry multitude gathered around Jesus by the Sea of Galilee he tested Philip's faith by asking, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" Instead of saying that Jesus himself was capable of feeding the hungry crowd, Philip made a mental calculation of how much food would be necessary, and how much it would cost, before declaring it an impossibility. Jesus went on to feed a crowd of over five thousand from a boys picnic lunch. (Jn. 6:1-13).

A group of Greeks, who wanted to meet Jesus, approached Philip but although he sympathized with their request he was too timid, or lacked the confidence, to take them to Jesus himself so he, in turn approached Andrew (Jn. 12:20-22).

Philip seems to have been slow to grasp Jesus' teaching, rather timid and retiring, but Jesus had nothing but kind words for him (Jn. 14:5-9).

We cannot be sure what happened to Philip after the first chapter of Acts because second century writers tend to confuse Philip the Apostle with Philip the Evangelist (Acts 6:5; 8 etc), but it seems likely that Philip died as a martyr in Heiropolis.

Nathanael Bartholomew was one of the seven apostles who met Jesus on the seashore in Galilee after the Resurrection (Jn. 21:114). Traditions tell us that he travelled extensively as an evangelist with Philip and Thomas, before being flayed alive with sharp knives and then crucified. The place of his death is not known with any certainty,

Keith Chappell.

## Project Senegal 1992 9 July to 7 August

The sudden arrival of 15 young 'TOUBABS' (*white people*) caused quite a stir in Richard Toll, a growing town of 100,000 people in the very north of Senegal, W. Africa. Despite the fact that white missionaries has been present in this area for many years, the novelty clearly hadn't worn off, for wherever we went we were immediately surrounded by excited black faces; eager to shake hands and chat. "Degg na TUTTI wolof rekk!" (*I only speak a little Wolof –the widely used language in Richard Toll*) became an essential phrase, although it was largely ignored. Those who had been to school spoke French which aided communication a little.

I was one of those 15 'TOUBABS' on a month-long trip organised by the Solent Christian Trust in conjunction with WEC missionary society. We are to be working alongside the team of 8 WEC missionaries spread around the Richard Toll

area. Senegal being a mainly Muslim country, the girls in the team had to wear ankle-length skirts. No chance of a sun tan this year, but at 40 degrees C in the shade, the sun was to be avoided at all costs!

Apart from the heat and flies, we also had to get used to the food. "Cebu jen" was the local speciality - rice, fish and a few veg, all in a big bowl on a mat on the floor, to be shared by 4-5 people. The locals eat with their hands, but one attempt at that was enough for me! Illness was inevitable and frequent - but fortunately God only allowed two of us to be ill at any one time so that the team could continue to function.

So what were we actually doing? The aim of the trip was to get us involved in both practical work and evangelism. Digging septic tanks and ditches was left to the blokes (too hot for Women's Lib!) whilst the girls got themselves invited to 'tea parties' with the local women. This gave opportunities to sing our Wolof songs (many taken straight from the Bible).

The whole team went out distributing literature. Many New Testaments were brought, and we just have to pray and trust that God will be causing those widely scattered seeds to grow. Evenings were taken up with showing the film 'Jesus' (dubbed in Wolof) in various parts of the town. The response was generally good, although the opposition we occasionally encountered only served to remind us of the intense spiritual battle being fought in the area.

The 'church' in Richard Toll is young and very small. The group of 8 or so believers meet on a Sunday under a lime tree to worship and study God's word. It struck me how easy we have it as Christians in the UK. There are so many things we take for granted which people in other countries just don't have (bibles, fellowship, acceptance in society). It made our trip worthwhile simply to have those Senegalese Christians come to us as we were leaving, unable to express their gratitude for the encouragement we had been to them - just by being there!

As a team we were very aware of God's protection over us the whole time. Thank you to all those back here who were faithfully praying for us - it made a difference!

And now I feel I've travelled in time as I find myself in a high-tech high-flying business environment in the Marketing department of BP France in Paris. All the experiences and challenges of the Senegal are still very much in my mind. Although I **knew** God was everywhere, it was brilliant actually to experience that and to realise that Psalm 139: 9-10 is indeed true!

A bientot

**Ruth Frith**

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
If I settle on the far side of the sea,  
Even there your hand will guide me,  
Your right hand will hold me fast.

## **Link Missionaries, Andy and Mandy Lines**

The latest letter from Andrew was full of good news. Sofia Zoe Janet Lines was born on 12th August, weighing 3.960 kg and Mother and baby are fine.

The whole family feel overwhelmed with love and best wishes shown to them by the numbers of letters, cards and gifts which they have received since the Open House groups focused on them recently, and they send their grateful thanks. This must surely show how much the links with our church family are growing in strength as time goes by.

## **Blaithwaite 1992**

Blaithwaite is a Christian Centre situated in the Cumbrian Fells, near Carlisle, and where C.Y.F.A. are let loose for their annual venture.

The mini-bus pulled into the courtyard and after being greeted with hugs and hello's and bumping into people we thought we knew but didn't really, we found our rooms. These come free with new friends!

Every morning we were woken at 7.45am. by a trumpet call, the tunes ranging from Jingle Bells to Chatanooga Choo?!! We stumbled bleary-eyed to breakfast at 8.30am. and woke up for Focus, a short time of worship and notices, some by the tantalizing tuck shop boys and others for "Buzz groups" (sorry "Pick and Mix") which followed.

For two afternoons we went off site for activities such as windsurfing, rock climbing, horse riding and fell walking. There were also onsite activities such as drama, fashion (or the lack of it in most cases) making high flying rockets and learning to play Bridge and other card games.

We had one afternoon of an "It's a Knockout" competition, which basically consisted of lots of wet and muddy games. On Friday afternoon we took over a local town for a game of Hunt the Spy, in which leaders dressed up as gnomes and window cleaners, slept in show room beds and various other strange and weird things.

Before bed each evening we had "Dorm groups" which were Bible Studies, then to bed (or that's what the leaders thought).

On Saturday when we were leaving Blaithwaite, the yard was filled with cases, bags, good-byes, "write soon's", people looking for lost clothes, and even a few tears here and there.

We learnt a lot at Blaithwaite about God and his love for us all. We came home with a much firmer faith, looking forward to Blaithwaite '93.

**C. Garland and R. Williams-Morgan.**

## **St Anne's on Sea –Pathfinder Venture**

St. Annes was super camp. There were loads of facilities including football, swimming, tennis, squash, table tennis, visits to Blackpool Pleasure Beach and Sandcastle, computer games and pool.

We were in dormitory groups of eight or nine. Each group had a leader who was supposed to keep order. This was only in theory! Each night saw fierce water fights, pillow fights and throwing missiles at neighbouring dorms.

Each evening there was a meeting where we learnt about Jesus' life on earth. This was done through the story of Robin Hood. Robin Hood was Jesus, his merry men were the disciples and the Sheriff of Nottingham was Pilate. We also sang songs and had quizzes.

After the meetings we had cocoa and sandwiches. Then we had a fun time where we had to win points for our dormitories.

At 10.30pm. we had quiet times in our dormitories. In our quiet times we followed up what we had heard in the meetings. We read the bible verses and talked about them.

The average lights out time was 11.30pm. but our group didn't exactly match this time.

It was a great camp and everyone was really friendly. I would like to go next year.

**Andrew Goodacre.**