



ST. JAMES' - CHRISTLETON

PARISH MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2009 35p



www.christleton.org.uk

Occasions In October

Thur 1 12 noon Prayer Lunch (Methodist Church)

Sun 4 The Seventeenth Sunday After Trinity: Proper 22

8.00 am Holy Communion (Order 2)

10.45 am Sunday School (Parish Hall)

10.45 am Parish Communion

6.00 pm The Crew Youth Group (Parish Hall)

6.30 pm Evensong - Followed by refreshments

Prayer Link Road: Durban Avenue

Neighbourhood Link: Jenny Brown

Mon 5 10.45 am Holy Communion at Tarvin Court Nursing Home

11.20 am Holy Communion at Oaklands Nursing Home

Wed 7 10.45 am United Communion - followed by refreshments

Thur 8 7.45 pm Bereavement Support Group (Tarvin Road)

Fri 9 NB: Last date for any contributions for November Parish Magazine to Janet Milton (335469). Earlier if possible. You can attach your Word document and e-mail to: christletonmag@hotmail.co.uk

Sat 10 9.0 am Decoration of Church for Harvest (contributions and help welcome)

Sun 11 HARVEST FESTIVAL

8.00 am Holy Communion (Order 1)

10.45 am Harvest Family Service. Followed by refreshments.

You are invited to bring a gift of Harvest produce to be given out in the Parish

6.00 pm The Crew Youth Group (Parish Hall)

6.30 pm Festal Evensong (Prayer Book)

Prayer Link Road: Fir Tree Lane

Neighbourhood Link: Chris Bower

Mon 12 9.00 am Preparation and distribution of Harvest parcels

2.00 pm Mothers' Union (Parish Hall)

Wed	14	10.45 am	Holy Communion - followed by refreshments
		11.30 am	Holy Communion at Birch Health Lodge Nursing Home
		2.00 pm	Toddlers, Parents and Grandparents (Parish Hall)

Thur	15	7.30 pm	“Science and Religion” a talk by Fr Paul Shaw. Organised by Churches Together in Christleton. (Methodist Church)
------	----	---------	--

Fri	16	6.30 pm	Choir Practice
-----	----	---------	----------------

Sun	18		ST LUKE’S DAY
------------	-----------	--	----------------------

8.00 am	Holy Communion (Order 1)
10.45 am	Sunday School (Parish Hall)
10.45 am	Eucharist for Healing
12.00 noon	Baptism
6.00 pm	The Crew Youth Club (Parish Hall)
6.30 pm	Evensong
	Prayer Link: Greenfield Lane and Claypits Lane
	Neighbourhood Link: June Owen

Wed	21	10.45 am	Holy Communion - followed by refreshments
		7.30 pm	“An Evening with Peter Ashburner and Nick Hall” Antiques: A talk and valuation (Parish Hall)

Fri	23	6.30 pm	Choir Practice
-----	----	---------	----------------

Sun	25		The Last Sunday After Trinity - Bible Sunday
------------	-----------	--	---

8.00 am	Holy Communion (Order 1)
10.45 am	Parish Communion with Baptisms
6.30 pm	Evening Communion (Order 1)
	Prayer Link Road: Greystone Road and Ring Road
	Neighbourhood Link: Lynda Disley

Tues	27	8.00 am	Church Walking Group leaves car park. Contact David Cummings (332410)
------	----	---------	--

Wed	28	10.45 am	Holy Communion for St Simon and St Jude – followed by refreshments
-----	----	----------	---

Dear Friends

“Give us today our daily bread”

I always love Harvest Festival as we come into Church to thank God for all the beauty and bounty of nature, and to be surrounded by all the fruits and flowers and vegetables. Its not only the sights, but also the scents, which evoke memories of Harvests past and images of “valleys thick with corn”. But the farmer would soon tell you that there is nothing sentimental about Harvest. It depends on careful planning, expert knowledge, a great deal of hard work and constant vigilance. Even then there are no guarantees as it all depends on the vicissitudes of nature and weather.

I have often pointed out that Jesus used nature to teach us the deepest truths about the Kingdom of God. Indeed, I believe he used it more as an example than as an illustration. In the Parable of the Sower Jesus did not say “The seed is like the kingdom of God”: he said “The seed is the kingdom of God.” Uniquely among the world religions Christianity is an Incarnational faith. We do not find God in some esoteric practice which elevates us above the world, but God is close to hand – in Jesus he became man and taught us to find him in our everyday life. So the provision of food through nature is an example of God at work, inviting is to share in his work of creation and recreation. In the Lord’s Prayer Jesus taught us to pray “Give us today our daily bread.” Bread is the ordinary common stuff of life – our staple diet. At one level Harvest is to thank God for granting that prayer – that we have received our daily bread. And that is important in itself. But in Jesus the ordinary becomes special and the common is made holy. Bread has an echo of the manna in the wilderness that God provided. It came as a gift when they were hungry, but it could not be hoarded – there was just enough for each person for each day. We begin to understand that nature and ‘bread’ contain a Kingdom connotation: it is more than just my provision, it is God’s gift to be used according to God’s purpose. If we each just take what we need for our daily provision there will be enough for all, but if we take more than our share or try to hoard it, it will go bad. But Jesus also himself took bread and broke it and said: “this is my body given for you, do this in remembrance of me.” Now bread takes on even greater significance. It has been described as “a taste of tomorrow’s bread today.” The bread we

take at Communion is a taste, a glimpse, of the heavenly banquet. At the same time it is not only symbol, but sacrament, of the life that Jesus offered on the Cross to be broken and shared for all the world, that by coming to him we may find our place in God's Kingdom in heaven. In the meantime it also symbolises the life we offer to God – in popular connotation 'bread' symbolises all physical and material provision. So our Harvest Festival offers symbols of the material provision God has provided for us, and that is blessed and shared out as symbol of the lives we offer to God in every aspect, that they may be used by God to bring in his Kingdom on earth as in Heaven.

I hope, and pray, that this year our Harvest Festival may act as a focus for our planning and preparation as a Church for GAP (Growth Action Planning). Already we are planning for the next harvest just as the farmer does. Everyone has a part to play in this in helping us, as a Church, to consider where our priorities should be in planting and growing seeds of God's Kingdom. What are we doing right as a Church and where are we failing? What are the most important seeds we should be planting as a Church to encourage the growth of God's Kingdom in this Parish? There will be response sheets in Church and elsewhere or you could e mail me on kpeter.lee@btinternet.com. As we thank God at Harvest for all his gifts to us, may we see them as a foretaste of his Kingdom and offer our lives to help bring in his Kingdom on earth as in heaven.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Peter Lee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Prayer of the Month: John Kingsnorth

Your kingdom, O God, is among us as a seed growing secretly. Let it burst into flower in our generation. Where the poor are raised up, there is your kingdom; where justice flows down like the mountain streams, there is your kingdom; where men and women yield their lives to Christ and the doing of his will, there is your kingdom.

Help us, O God, to read the signs of the times, to discern the kingdom's presence, and to make it known in prophetic words and committed lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bishop Peter at St James'

During the rededication service on Sunday 13th September Bishop Peter presented Sid Hardy with a Medal from the Royal School of Church Music recognising his 40years of service in the Church Choir.

Sid was also presented with a gift from the choir, who also said goodbye to Mark, Elizabeth, Helen & Chris long serving members of the choir who have just moved to a new home on Wirral. We wish them every happiness in their new home, and

great success in the future. The choir sang an introit, the motet "Cantate Domino" (Sing to the Lord) by Pitoni at the beginning of the service, and celebrated Sid's award with the anthem "With the Voice of Singing" by Martin Shaw.



John Sellers Educational Foundation Christleton

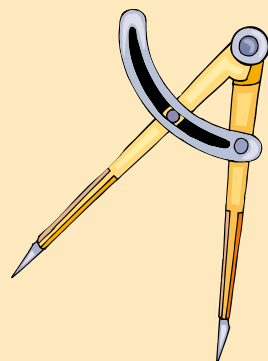
This ancient Trust was set up on 23 December 1779 by John Sellers and local worthies for the education of poor children in Christleton and Littleton. It was originally to provide instruction in reading, English, writing, arithmetic, and for spinning, sewing and/or other manual work. In 1805 it was extended by deed to include the children of Rowton. The original Minute Book is still in use.

The main source of income is from the rent of a field in Plough Lane. The present trustees comprise the Rector, Clerk, a representative from Cheshire West & Chester, and two Christleton Parish Councillors. It is their intention to try and increase the capital and use the interest to provide grants. Further donations or legacies, which could be used to increase the level of grants paid out, would be very much appreciated.

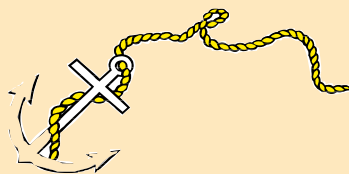
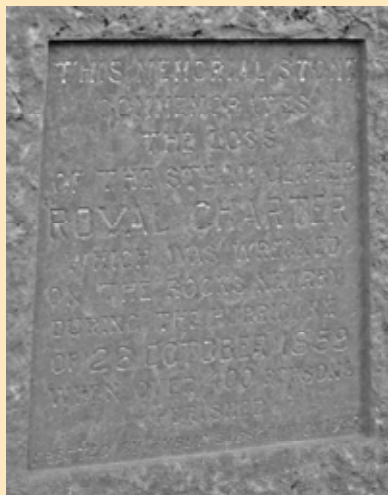
This year the Primary School and the High School have been given money but applications are encouraged from individuals in exceptional circumstances who would like to apply in confidence.

Applications for grants from individuals or groups wishing to be considered should apply in writing before November to the Clerk, Mrs M Croston, 5 Bridge Drive, Christleton, CH3 6AW.

The 150th Anniversary of the sinking of the Royal Charter



The Royal Charter is probably the most important ship to have been constructed on the River Dee. It is also the most famous as it ended its life as a shipwreck off the coast of Anglesey on 26th October 1859 with the loss of 459 lives, the most ever on any shipwreck off the Welsh Coast, and one of 200 ships lost in the fiercest storm of the century. The Royal Charter, a steam clipper was built at Cramms yard at Sandycroft in 1855 and launched sideways into the Dee. There were however problems before and after the launch, as on the first occasion she got stuck on the slipway, and mysteriously moved on the slipway on her own a month later before the second attempt was made. This was successful, but she promptly got stuck on a sandbank near Flint, and it was yet another month before the next high tide and she could be towed to Liverpool to be fitted out. She was a new type of ship, a 2700 ton steel-hulled clipper, able to use sails but also with auxiliary steam engines which could be used to speed her passage.



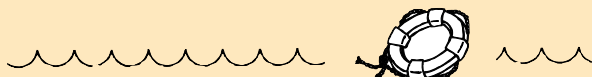
She was a three masted ship with 15,000sq ft of sail. She had a top speed of 14knots and could do the journey to Melbourne Australia in 59days. This was vital as the gold rush was on at that time and speed was of the essence. She could carry 600passengers with luxury accommodation in the first class. The Royal Charter was reputed to be carrying over £360,000 of gold at the time of her sinking some of it carried as cargo in the strong room, but most of it in the pockets or belts of the gold miners who were coming home with their rich findings. A fierce storm was brewing as the ship with 371 passengers and 112 crew approached Anglesey, but the Captain decided to try to continue to Liverpool. Off Point Lynas the Captain attempted to pick up the Liverpool pilot, but by now the winds were force ten rapidly rising to hurricane force twelve!! They also changed direction from E to NNE so driving the ship



towards the rocks off Moelfre. The waves were tumultuous and the ship struck the shore splitting into two sections, throwing all but 32passengers into the sea. A lifeline from the shore enabled some people to get to be rescued, but most were killed being dashed against the rocks, and it said that many others were drowned weighted down by the belts containing gold that they carried around their waists. Just 21passengers and 18 crew members (all men), survived this terrible ordeal, and it resulted in the Meteorological Office bringing in a gale warning service to prevent similar tragedies in the future. Many of the bodies were later washed ashore and buried at nearby Llanallgo Church where their graves and a memorial can still be seen. There is also a memorial stone on the rocks above the site of the disaster on the Anglesey Coastal Footpath just north of Meolfre. Charles Dickens one of the first visitors to view the scene, described the disaster in The “Uncommercial Traveller”. It’s also said that the wreck was extensively salvaged by Victorians soon after the disaster, and that the twisted mass of iron plates, bulkheads and ribs still appear from time to time in the shifting sands. Some gold has been recovered over the years, but no doubt a great deal more still lies beneath the sea bed at this treacherous place.

Ref; Wikipedia The Royal Charter

BBC North West Wales History; The Royal Charter Shipwreck
The History of the River Dee. Mike Griffiths.



COMING SHORTLY!

Two books are to be published this Autumn by friends of St James:

‘Disabled Church’ by Graham Evans. Many of us know The Revd Graham Evans who was Superintendent of the Methodist Circuit, and Minister here in Christleton until he had to take early retirement on health grounds in 2004. His book combines personal experience with theological reflection to address questions surrounding the condition of the Church in Britain and how it got there. It argues that experiences of disability have much to teach the Church both in its present situation and in considering its future. Graham is passionate about Christian discipleship and remains convinced that communities centred on Jesus have an important contribution to make to the human journey.

‘A Conscript in Korea’ by Neville Williams. Neville Williams was a member of our PCC until recently, and has kindly restored various articles of the ‘furniture and fittings’ at St James. His book covers the two years of his National Service. His remarkable story begins when he arrived at the Welch Brigade Training Centre in Brecon and ends when he was demobbed in 1953. Between this he spent twelve months with the First Battalion the Welch Regiment in Korea as part of the Commonwealth Division. “Brilliantly capturing the atmosphere of this grim yet almost forgotten war, he tells his story in graphic detail.” But perhaps the most important chapter is the last one on the lessons of war.

Watch this space for further details! Once the books have been published we shall give details of where to buy them.



**An Evening with Peter Ashburner
& Nick Hall**

Wednesday 21 October at 7.30 pm



Christleton Parish Hall

Tickets £7

Some of you will remember the “Evening with Adam Partridge” held approximately 2 years ago which was a great success and raised a lot of money for the St James’s Christmas charities.

Adam has now moved on but we are fortunate that both Peter Ashburner and Nick Hall from Marshalls Antiques in Knutsford are happy to come along to talk about their auctioneering and TV experiences. They are also happy to talk about items that people bring along and where appropriate give valuation advice.

So, to refresh your memories the idea is that people will bring along their favourite antique or collectable, whatever that may be, and the experts will discuss them. There is no limit on the number of items you bring. It could be a piece of silver, porcelain, a picture, a book, it really doesn’t matter.

Put the date in your diary now so that you won’t be disappointed. Tickets are available from me (telephone 335469) and last time there was a waiting list so apply early. As before, all the profits will go to St James’s Christmas Fair charities.

Janet Milton

An Osprey flying along the A41!!

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity of visiting the current Osprey nest site at Bassenthwaite in the Lake District, the first pair to nest in England for over 170yrs. Unfortunately the female had already flown back to West Africa, whilst the male and the two surviving young were out fishing. However I was able to learn a great deal about their breeding habits at this now well observed site. I have watched



ospreys in Scotland, St Lucia, Australia and for one magical month in South Cheshire. So I'm very familiar with this magnificent species of sea eagle. However it took me completely by surprise when one flew quite low over my car when I was driving down the A41 last weekend. It looked as though it had been fishing in a marl pit as its talons were down, but it was unmistakably

an osprey, with its white head, largely white under parts and splayed out finger like wings. I was on my way to give a talk in Nantwich at the time and didn't have my camera in the car, so was unable to film or follow it. However it's not the first time such a bird has appeared in the area on its migration route back to West Africa, A juvenile spent a month on a small private lake at Betley on the Cheshire Staffordshire border at this time of

year a few years ago and there have been sightings at Tatton Park in the past. I had also read of an unusual event in Neath the previous day, when “The Times” reported that an osprey flying south, had dropped a huge fish into the garden of a hotel, much to the amusement and surprise of staff and guests.

Although there are now over 180 pairs in Scotland, and two pairs in Wales, it was in 1997 that two young Osprey’s first appeared in the Lake District. Another pair stayed in the area for the season during 1998, but it wasn’t until 2000 that the pair secretly nested at Bassenthwaite, rearing just one chick. However they came back the following year to rear three chicks. Subsequently they have been given protection and closely watched as the RSPB, The Forestry Commission and the Lake District Authority have provided a secure safe site for the birds, and involved the public in their story by enabling them to observe the birds at relatively close quarters. Since then over twenty juveniles have been reared at the Bassenthwaite site, making the birds great celebrities in the National Park. In 2008 they changed their nest site and are now using a platform nest provided for them by the Lake District Osprey Project in Dodd Wood. Ospreys are almost entirely fish eaters, and eat mainly surface swimming species such as perch, roach and trout although in Scotland many catch salmon. The nest sites are huge, almost five ft across and up to six foot deep, almost the size of a double bed. They are constructed mainly of branches spread across the top of conifers, although there are many instances of them using artificial nest sites as at the famous Loch Garten site and now at Bassenthwaite. There are usually three eggs and essential food is brought to the sitting female two or three times a day, and when the chicks hatch up to four or five times a day. On migration they require two fish a day which they catch with their specially adapted talons designed to grasp slippery fish. We know a lot about the movement of these birds due to ringing, and they almost all fly to West Africa, but it was great surprise when a Lake District youngster from 2004, Green ringed 5S turned up in Western Norway in 2007. I’m not sure of the direction my osprey flew, but it will almost certainly be in West Africa by the time this article is published.

Ref; The Lake District Osprey Project P3 Publications.



Christleton Parish Hall

**available for Meetings, Parties, Functions etc,
occasional or regular use.**

The Hall has wheelchair access
and specially adapted facilities.

Please contact the Booking Secretary,

David Mercer 336155

Please telephone between 10.00am and 8.00pm
Monday to Saturday

CLUB NEWS

Chester Lecture Society will be recommencing lectures next month in the Grosvenor Museum at 7.30 pm. A wide range of lecturers in October – first lecture Thursday

1 October will cover The Grand Canyon. Following Thursdays in October cover Hedges and Edges – how were they planted and by whom?; The Big Apple (New York); Chasing Dragons (a winter journey across Northern China in search of the world's last steam trains) and The Mysteries of the Gobi Desert.

Members are admitted free on presentation of their membership card. It is more economical to join as a member – Annual Subscription of £20 entitles one to attend 18 lectures. Non members pay £4 each on the door (children £2). Contact Chester 335955.

4. Progress – Virtue or Problem?



As the England cricket team celebrated winning the Ashes series against Australia, expensive champagne was showered on the players and sponsorship money dripped in thousands, I left for my second visit to Romania. I love cricket, I played it, I have watched it for hours, but where will the excesses of western affluence lead the game, or football, or indeed society? The content of another article, maybe!

It is not so much that Romania contrasts with Britain, which it does, more that great differences in the country itself add to its interest and vitality. In 2007, I stayed briefly in the bustling capital, Bucharest, then spent the rest of my time in Sibiu in the heart of Transylvania.

This summer I went a stage further, first going straight to a small farm in rural Romania which made Sibiu itself (the size of Chester) seem like the metropolis. I shall write separately about my stay on the farm.

Although honoured in 2007 as the European Capital of Culture, Sibiu remains a beautiful but provincial town. As with the much bigger Liverpool from its year of 2008 in the role, the legacy in Sibiu is

a mixture of spruced up old buildings, more cafés and fuller and more expensive shops. Prices rose for 2007, Sibiu people told me, and stayed fairly high. But for overseas visitors, they are still relatively low.

As in many parts of Britain and in heritage cities like Chester, residents in Sibiu seeking to purchase a house for the first time are being pushed out of the market. Just before the credit crunch hit the western world earlier this year, many professional people in their 40's and 50's renting poor quality socialist flats in Sibiu, had built up their hopes of buying a small house for the first time. But property prices have edged upwards and in this respect Sibiu's resurgence is spoiling their dreams.

However, the city and its citizens remain vibrant and cheerful and as I arrived the two-day costume, craft and music festival in the two main squares was delightful. Such events have improved the summer employment situation locally despite a fairly grim picture nationally.

Overall the huge investment of American and European companies in Romania in the first few years of the millennium was a mixed blessing, with the sudden slump that followed this year. Hopes had been raised, but I met no bitterness about this. As for Sibiu, restoration of splendid old buildings and streets may have slowed down, but it has not stopped altogether, and the country's first motorway is being built.

Romania's strength lies in its large areas of rich, settled subsistence agriculture – people feeding themselves in a spirit of hard work and contentment. Christian worship and values are strong and people help each other.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Held in the Parish Hall from
10.45 am – 12.00 noon each Sunday
during term-time, except when Family
Service is held at St James. For further
details please contact
Berenice Hogg, 336779.

CHRISTLETON METHODIST CHURCH

We meet for Informal Prayers and a
Simple Lunch on the first Thursday of
each month at 12 noon. All welcome.
There is no charge for the lunch but
a donation to cover costs would be
appreciated

CHRISTLETON WEDNESDAY GROUP

CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARD SALE

Come & buy all your cards direct
from the local & national charities
on

**Saturday 17th October,
Christleton Parish Hall,
10.00 am – 12.00 noon.**

Coffee / tea & biscuits included in
£1 admission.

Also cakes, toys & books for sale.

CHRISTLETON W.I.

Meets on the second Wednesday of the
month at 7.15 pm in the Parish Hall

Next Meeting

14th October

ANTIQUE TOOLS

Peter Collins

CHESTER FLOWER CLUB

Meetings are held in Christleton Parish
Hall on the 3rd Wednesday of the
month at 1.30pm. Details of any events
can be obtained from the Secretary,

Trish Pollard

Telephone: 01829751140

CHRISTLETON W.I. MONTHLY WHIST

Meet in the Parish Hall on the last
Wednesday of the month at 2pm.

All welcome

KELSBORROW CHOIR

with the

Grimethorpe Colliery Band

Chester Cathedral

**Saturday 12th December
7.30pm**

Reserved Tickets £17

Unreserved Tickets £12

Tel: 01829 740868

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

CHRISTLETON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Wednesday October 21st

7.30pm

at the Primary School
in Quarry Lane

Speaker. Simon Ward

Senior Archeologist Chester
City Council

*Developments in Archeology in
Chester*

*An exploration of recent
discoveries in the city*

NEARLY NEW SALE

Christleton Primary School

Saturday 3rd October

11.00am - 1.00pm

Good Quality Children's
Clothes, Toys & Equipment
Information and
seller registration
contact Anna Barnes
01233 321645

edandanna@tiscali.co.uk

THE JIM PARTINGTON MEMORIAL TALK

At Christleton Parish
Hall.

7.00pm

Saturday 17th October
2009

"The Battle of Rowton Moor"
& "Wildlife in the Christleton
Parish"

Talk with Buffet supper; £6 Adults
£3 Juniors

All proceeds for the refurbishment
of Christleton Scout Hut.

Tickets from

David Cummings 332410
or Village Store

ST JAMES WALKING GROUP

Tuesday October 27th

West Cheshire; Walk Mill

R Gowy - Waverton - Christleton.

Rating; Moderate 9 miles

Farmland & canal side walk.

Depart. Church Car Park 8.00am

Parking & Lunch at Walk Mill,
Waverton.

**CHRISTLETON
WEDNESDAY GROUP**

Fun Quiz Evening
on

Saturday 14 November,
at Christleton Parish Hall,
7 for 7.30 pm.

Tickets £8.50
(available from members) includes
a glass of wine & finger buffet

In aid of Claire House
Children's Hospice

BOX OPENING 2009

**Attention all
Box Holders!!**

Please check next month's Parish
Magazine for details of our Annual
Offertory Service... There's just a
few weeks

left to collect those pennies!

Many thanks
Lesley Morgan

CBS CONCERT
Saturday 17 October
at 7.30pm

Wesley Methodist Church,
Chester

BRAHMS REQUIEM and Motets
conductor Martin Bussey

Tickets: £12.50
(concessions available)

from CBS tickets
Tel: 0151 677 3137
or from Chester Tourist Office
Tel: 01244 402111



Richard Lightfoot (grandson of Gordon and Dorothy Robinson) and Ruth Porter were married on August 1 at St Annes, Kew Green, London, where Richard and Ruth are regular worshippers. They honeymooned in New York.

CHRISTLETON GARDENING CLUB

2009/2010

The new season for the Gardening Club has begun. There is a most interesting and varied programme of speakers and events. The meetings are on the 2nd Monday of every month at the Methodist Hall, Christleton at 7.30p.m. Subscription is £10 per year. New members and visitors are welcome.

14 September	Time in the Indian Ocean Dr Richmond Dutton
12 October	Plant Swap and Video
9 November	Winter colour in the garden Julia White
14 December	Winter Christmas Decoration
11 January	Club Dinner
8 February	The Walled Gardens of Poulton Hall Mrs June Lancelyn Green MBE
8 March	Sweet Peas Clive Coleclough
12 April	Outing – tba
10 May	Willow garden Structures Caroline Gregson
14 June	Outing – tba
12 July	to be arranged

Enquiries contact Judith Butt 01244 335296

UNDERSTANDING ANGELS

Tina
Lightfoot

Last month we looked at some facts and figures about angels and identified the fact that they had a varied role. The name angel, however, suggests that they are messengers. This month we consider how angels act as messengers for God and consider how we might listen to and act on messages from God.

Zechariah was a priest and Elizabeth's husband. He and Elizabeth were old and had no children. He was a devout and loyal priest. One day, in the temple, the Angel Gabriel visits him and tells him something quite unbelievable: Elizabeth is with child (Luke 1 5-22). I have some sympathy for Zechariah. There he was, going about his priestly duties in the part of the temple where no one else was supposed to be. No wonder he was startled and afraid. Perhaps, then, as now, we suspect the worst from people who are in places where they're not supposed to be. They may be there to attack you, rob you or do some other mischief. I doubt we ever think they are there to bring us good news.

Being frightened by the sight of Gabriel, however, wasn't Zechariah's undoing. He came from a long line of priests and had grown up with stories of Angels and it seems that he recognised Gabriel as an Angel of the Lord. No, his mistake was that he dared to question Gabriel. In reply to his questions, Gabriel says:

'I am Gabriel

I stand in the presence of God

And I have been sent to speak to you

And to bring this good news'

The anger in his voice is clear.

He is an important Angel, important enough to stand before God where others may kneel.

The news he has to bring, however, is important, so he himself acts as messenger. He certainly doesn't expect a priest, who should know better to question the message that he brings. Gabriel must have realised that more dramatic measures were necessary to get his message across and hence poor Zechariah was struck dumb until the birth of which Gabriel spoke, John the Baptist's had happened. Definitely a bad day at the office for Zechariah!

But Mary also questions Gabriel when, on another mission for God, he appears before her to tell her that she has been chosen to be the mother of the messiah, the saviour, God's only son. His response to Mary is entirely different. Unlike Zechariah, who should have known better, Mary is a young girl and so, in answer to her quite reasonable question:

'how can this be since I am a virgin?'

Gabriel shows his sensitive side, he explains to her that she has found favour with God and goes on to explain how, through the Holy Spirit, she will conceive the Son of God. Immediately Mary says 'yes':

'Here am I, the servant of the Lord,

Let it be with me according to your word'

Did she give a second thought to the possible consequences of being an unmarried mother in that society? The possibility of being rejected not just by her betrothed but by her family and community? The prospect of eking out a living, probably through prostitution in order to feed herself and her child?

We will never know, but Gabriel did his job well. Mary recognised him to be an Angel of the Lord, she believed his message and had faith that God would

not desert her. That if this was his wish for her, then he would provide.....God chose her well.

Of course, the story which Mary would have heard as a child and one Zechariah would have studied in depth and hence should have understood that God cannot be restrained by nature, is that of Abraham and Sarah.

Again it was Angels who told them of the birth of a child who was to be the means by which God would raise a people to worship him and witness to the world. This was a very precious child, and yet God asks Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham doesn't question the word of God but having tied up his son ready to place on the pile of wood for sacrifice, an Angel appears and says

‘You don't have to do this, God does not require it’

As we all know, Abraham looked around and saw a ram caught in the thicket and sacrificed it in Isaac's place.

I find it impossible to imagine myself in Abraham's position and this story has always disturbed me. I wonder if Abraham was, at that time doubting his faith and God, by setting him this task, helped Abraham to confirm his faith and to realise that he really could put all his trust in God. As for Isaac, well I doubt he ever trusted his dad enough to go for a walk with him up a mountain ever again!

It seems that whenever Angels are encountered, even in bringing good news, a response is required, possibly even a sacrifice. Even the shepherds, who were understandably petrified



when the glory of the Lord shone around, were prepared unquestioningly to leave their sheep and pay homage to the messiah. We don't know what happened when they returned to their fields but if the sheep had been stolen, had scattered or had been taken by wolves they may well have paid dearly for their response.



So what can we learn from these encounters?

Firstly can we recognise an angel when we see one?

Like Zechariah, are we too entrenched in our religious rituals or so sure of our interpretation of scripture that our minds aren't open to possibilities?

Are we prepared to completely change tack, to give up our lifestyle when we hear what God wants from us?

When we look at all these encounters, one thing is for sure, God didn't use a pin and a telephone directory to pick the people who were to be vital in working his purpose out. Abraham and Mary demonstrate what complete faith in God involves.

An encounter with an angel is undoubtedly a scary affair but it is not ad hoc, it has a purpose, and that purpose is God's will. Once we can accept that, we will also know that whatever God wants for us, he will provide us with the strength if we have the faith just as Abraham and Mary had such great faith in him. Life in Christleton is very cosy so if you are visited by an angel be scared, be very scared but be uplifted and reassured for, like Mary, you will have found favour with God and through the power of his holy spirit you will be able to fulfil your purpose for it is God that has chosen you.

Lord, open our hearts and minds to your calling and through the power of your spirit, give us the courage to do your will.

LEPROSY MISSION

Stamp out leprosy!

Please donate your used stamps so that money can be raised for Leprosy Mission. Stamps should be trimmed to quarter inch border around the stamp, and can be left at the back of Church.

PLEASE TELL US...

If you know of any special birthdays, anniversaries or anyone celebrating a special occasion, who is a Parish Magazine reader, please inform the editor, David Bull.

AVAILABLE AT ST JAMES CHURCH

"Loop" system, for the hearing impaired
Large print books for the visually impaired & large print weekly notice sheets
Easy to follow Communion Service Books for children
Access for wheelchairs
Please ask any of the Churchwardens or Sidesmen if you need assistance in any way.

CHRISTLETON UNDER-FIVES

COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

Registered Charity 1022817

Christleton Under Fives is an established pre school playgroup attracting children from a wide area. It enjoys good and well founded links with Christleton Primary School. Children from the age of 2 1/2 years until school age are accepted. Please contact the Supervisor, Carole Penny, on 336586 for further details.

MOBILE LIBRARY VAN SERVICE

The van calls weekly: alternate Thursdays all day and alternate Fridays in Quarry Lane 11.15 am – 12.45 pm. For further details of when the van is next in your area, please telephone Upton Library on 380053.

READERS

Please remember to support our magazine advertisers and mention where you have read their name.

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

Please ensure all items for inclusion in the **November** edition are sent to Janet Milton (335469), as soon as possible **BEFORE Friday 9th October** or you can e-mail this to

Advertising

contact: Ann Smith, Tel: 332434
e-mail: ann.smith10@virgin.net

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

The **November** magazine will be available for collection from Church on **Sunday 25th October**

CONTRIBUTORS

The best way to send contributions to St. James' Parish Magazine is to e-mail the document.

Attach your Word document and e-mail it to

christletonmag@hotmail.co.uk

Parish Registers for August 2009

The Marriage Service

- 7th Richard Ian Fearnley & Hayley Sarah Miles
15 Sheraton Road, Christleton
- 15th Adam John Stevens & Lucy Victoria Pudge
47a Black Diamond Street, Newtown Chester
- 21st Nicholas Andrew Hirst & Catherine Lucy Taker
9 Pickering Street, Hoole, Chester

“Those whom God has joined together, let not man divide”

The Funeral Service

- 28th Robert Thomas Sconce 7 Grove Avenue, Vicars Cross

“Grant them eternal rest”

Offertories

August.	Cash	CSE	2009	2008
2nd	131-23	663-50	794-73	932-41
9th	91-90	512-20	604-10	727-61
16th	108-60	467-10	575-80	530-00
23rd	56-20	799-40	855-60	812-35
30th	111-50	640-50	758-00	822-18
Totals.			£ 3,588-23	£ 4,024-55

“Of your own do we give you”

PARISH CHURCH OF ST. JAMES, CHRISTLETON

SUNDAYS	8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion	
	10.45 a.m.	Parish Communion	1st & 3rd Sundays
		Family Service	2nd Sunday
		Mattins	4th & 5th Sundays
	6.30 p.m.	Evensong	1st, 2nd & 3rd Sundays
		Evening Communion	4th Sunday
		Songs of Praise	5th Sunday
WEDNESDAYS	10.45 a.m.	Holy Communion	
SAINT'S DAYS	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	

WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S WHAT

Rector: **The Rev'd Canon K. Peter Lee, M.A.**
The Rectory, Birch Heath Lane, Christleton335663

Churchwardens:	John Pearson	335101
	Keith Smalls	335688
Reader	Wayne Morris	01978 263389
Reader Emeritus	John Roberts	332207
Verger	David Ellis	336879
Sacristan:	Betty Dunning	335652

Sunday School:	Berenice Hogg	336779
Mother's Union Branch Leader	Janet Brown	335785
Organist & Musical Director:	Steve Roberts	815277
P. C. C. Secretary:	Brenda Bailey	335034
P. C. C. Treasurer:	David Mercer	336155
Stewardship Envelope:	Betty Dunning	335652
Gift Aid Secretary	Nigel Seddon	335588
Bellringers	Ian Braithwaite	300565
Bellringer Vice Captains	Ian Crossan	332280
Parish Hall Booking	David Mercer	336155
C. M. S. Secretary	Janet Brown	335785
Children's Society Sec.	Lesley Morgan	335088
Visiting Group:	Berenice Hogg	336779
Library	Lois Dickinson	378320
Church Flowers	Olive Hammond.....	336562
Magazine Editor	David Bull.....	332234
Magazine Compiler	Richard Nicholson	336004
Magazine Distributors	Jenny Davies and Valmai Griffiths	335884
Neighbourhood Link Co-Ordinator	Janet Bowden.....	335705
Parish Resource		
Person for Child Protection	Susan Alexander	335077



BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS & APPOINTMENTS
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE RECTOR 335663

