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Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

Parish Magazine

Extracts from Parish Magazine for February, 2004

**St. James'
Christleton**



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LeprosHealing Service at St James'

6.30 pm on 8 February

'We care for you with Faith, Hope and Love'

If you wish to have someone included in our prayers, there will be cards available at the back of church for you to write their names on, prior to the service.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE

Christleton Wednesday Group's

SPRING LUNCH

Will be held in the Parish Hall on

Wednesday 10 March at 12.00 noon

Further details in March issue

Littleton Barn - Children's Centre

Despite the very sad and sudden death of Vincent Tonge, his family wish the Barn to continue in its present role.

It is felt that Vincent would want it to serve the needs of children and be enjoyed by all who appreciate freedom and fresh air, as it has done in the past.

Barbara Tonge and the Barn Trustees

Please contact Shirley Earl on 01244 332210 for booking information

Parish Rambling Group.

Sunday February 8th

Loggerheads Country Park.

Meet in the church car park at 1.30pm
Leader David Cummings

Tuesday 24th February
Hill forts on Offa's Dyke. 8 miles (Some steep climbs)
Meet in church car park 9.00am
Leader David Cummings

The Millennium Window Christmas Cards

(The contents of a letter from Sussex, from a recipient of one of our Christmas card)

'I want to send congratulations to Churches Together in Christleton for giving such a wonderful commemorative window for the Millennium. It must be so meaningful to everyone in the village and so impressive for visitors, especially with the informative text'.

Sets of these cards are now available as packs of 5 letter cards with envelopes, (as the Christmas card but with no greeting) for £1.50. All the proceeds go towards Church Funds. Packs of these cards, together with The Swans on Christleton Pit Hospice Cards are also available from church, from Paul Jackson at The Post Office or me.
David Cummings.

Adult Confirmation: Any adults interested in being Confirmed will be welcome at a first 'get-together' on Monday 23 February at 7.45 pm at the Rectory, and/or please contact the Rector (335663). The Confirmation by the bishop of Chester will be on Sunday 23
Feature of the Month

Each month I intend to feature the activities of one of our village groups, and where possible to include a photograph of their activities. If you would like me to put a feature about your group, in the magazine please let me know.

David Cummings

Christleton - Keep Fit Group

This enthusiastic group from all sections of the community meets in the Parish Hall on Fridays between 10.30- 11.30am. Led by Mrs Christine Johnson they carry out a series of aerobic exercises, some set to music, to fully exercise limbs and joints, and to enjoy a good workout. You don't need any special clothing and equipment, and it only costs a £1. Everyone is welcome. If you are interested you can find out more from any member of the group, or just turn up at the Parish Hall one Friday soon. The photograph on the front cover and below shows members enjoying a pre Christmas work out in the Hall.



The Children's Society

Lesley Morgan received the following letter:

BOX COLLECTION

Thank you for the recent donation of £1,069.93 for the work of The Children's Society. We really appreciate the concern shown for children and young people. Please share this letter with all those who have helped in this wonderful effort. Through our projects all over England, we work with children in schools, in prisons, in care homes and in disadvantaged communities.

One of the ways this generous donation has helped is with our work with young carers. Danielle and Petra are an example of the sort of problems children can face and how The Children's Society has helped.

Danielle, 8 and 10-year-old Petra are sisters. Their mother Ella has a history of anxiety, which has recently become more severe and she no longer feels able to leave the house. Danielle and Petra often miss school, because they don't want to leave their mother alone in the house. They are often her shoulders to cry on. One day they came home to find a frightening scene. Mum was unconscious on the floor, having taken an overdose.

The school is aware of the mother's illness, but the family have not wanted to share any details. Some of the teachers are more understanding than others. Danielle and Petra do not want their friends to find out about their mother's condition. They are quite withdrawn at school, occasionally experiencing bullying as a result. Thanks to help from The Children's Society, they now attend a young carers' project once a fortnight, where they get vital help and support. Danielle and Petra say they enjoy the break from home.

The Children's Society makes a real difference in the lives of over 40,000 children every

year. We use what we learn to campaign with Government for the improvements that are needed in practice and policy to make things better for all children. We could not do any of this without such support – by helping us, you have already helped to change a child's life.

If you have any enquiries or requests, please do not hesitate to contact us on our Supporter Action helpline 0845 300 1128. It will be only the cost of a local call.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Blunden – Fundraising Director

PS – this was a wonderful achievement! If you are a tax payer and would like to see your donation go even further, you can simply complete a gift aid declaration form, available from myself, or make your declaration by telephoning the Support Action Line on 0845 300 1128. Completing this declaration means that every donation you make, both now and in the future, whether regular or a one-off, will be worth nearly a third more at no extra cost to you. Currently a gift of £10 will be worth £12.80!

The Future of the Church – Building Strong Parish Communities

The Church in our Diocese is facing great challenges in the next few years. As you may have heard, Parish Share will be rising by an average of 12% in 2004 and again by around 8% in 2005. The question is whether we can rise to this challenge – because the alternative is to cut clergy numbers and to close churches. These issues were raised at Diocesan Roadshows for Clergy, Wardens and Treasurers in October and November.

In his address to Diocesan Synod in July 2003, Bishop Peter said that the future of the Church lies in building strong parish communities. He made it clear that he was not talking about a centralised, top-down approach to mission and ministry in the Diocese, but rather one that emphasises the importance of the local church as the heart of the Church's life – and that means your church and mine!

What are strong parish communities?

Parish communities are about more than just the life of the local congregation. They are about the life of the church and the life of the whole community. The kingdom of God is about more than the Church and the Church should be concerned about more than just its own organisation and members. We are committed to our parish communities – not just to the church as a separate entity.

Strong parish communities are to do especially with: the life and growth of the local congregation; its associated organisations (Mothers' Union, Uniformed Groups, etc); Church schools and other local schools; and the quality of community life and of life in the local community – for all its members.

What do strong parish communities look like?

Well, clearly they can come in all shapes and sizes! From the point of view of the local church and the part it can play, here are some suggestions.

Congregations that reflect the local community in terms of age profile and background

Congregations that are drawing in new members and renewing themselves or growing numerically

Congregations where people are discovering more of the reality of God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit

Congregations where people are actively involved in service to the local community, including beyond the church's own organisations

Congregations where people are helping the local community to function effectively

Congregations where people give regularly and generously to support the mission and ministry of the Church

What can we do?

We want to encourage every congregation and every church member to think and pray about how they can help to build a strong parish community in their locality, in order to help us to meet the challenges ahead. With that in mind, this article will be followed by two more, focusing on growing such a community in your own locality and on the need for us to provide the resources to help such parishes to grow. Watch this space!

Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs
Chairman – Diocesan Roadshow Working Group

Nature Notes

Wintering wildlife on the Dee Estuary



Last weekend I spent a few hours exploring the banks of the Dee Estuary near Thurstaston, and was amazed at the wonderful array of bird life we have on our doorstep. I had just forgotten about the huge numbers of waders coming in to this area for the winter months, over 120,000 in all, over 10% of the British population, feeding on the nutrient rich marsh and mudflats of the Dee estuary. Thousands of knot, dunlin and oystercatchers were

foraging silently away as I looked over towards the river, with beautifully camouflaged turnstones, and the long curved beaked curlew, together with the straight beaked, bar tailed godwits, feeding almost within touching distance of me. Further out in the mud were hundreds of redshanks, teal, and colourful shelducks with their broad bills, foraging for the tiny hydrobia snail. Above my head were thousands of tiny sanderling and knot, wheeling, dipping and diving in the sky looking for a safe place to rest, away from the hungry eyes of peregrine falcon, hen harriers, short eared owls and other birds of prey.

Although looking like a dull, black, sludgy wasteland, the mudflats are one of the most productive habitats on the planet, supporting nearly half a million worms, 30,000 snails and 300 cockles in a single square metre of mud. The marsh, and surrounding fields nearer to Queensferry, support a large population of wintering swans, and on a recent visit, I counted 94 mute swans, 5 whooper swans from Greenland, and 2 black swans originally from Australia but now escaped from a wildlife collection, happily feeding and surviving in the wild.

The Dee Estuary is a vital link in a chain, a fuelling station for migrating birds, which fatten up here on their annual journeys around the globe. In Spring they stop off for breeding grounds in arctic Canada, Greenland, Iceland and Russia. In Autumn they moult and rest here on the way back to Southern Europe and Africa, whilst others remain all year. Our own swans are still together as I write on the 9th January, the two adults and three remaining cygnets flew past my window this morning. However reports from the village suggest that the cob and pen are now regularly appearing at the Pit again, and taking claim of their usual breeding territory. So the annual cycle of the adventures of a pair of mute swans start all over again! Watch this space.

David Cummings.

Nest Box Scheme

Paul Brady, manager of the Cheshire Cat was telling me recently about their involvement with the RSPB, and how they have been responsible for putting up a large number of nest boxes (69 to date) aiming to attract a variety of bird species to nest in their grounds. He would be delighted if anyone from the local community would like to donate a box, or to talk to him about the scheme. Just call in when passing, or telephone Paul on 332200. It is just one of many initiatives being carried out to improve our local environment, and create a much needed habitat for birds. Another project underway is the planting of many native trees, with the help of one of our local conservation groups.

David Cummings

The work of Cliff Boddy.

I've recently been privileged to have been given access to the working diaries of my old friend Cliff Boddy, who sadly died in 2001, and found some beautiful lines of poetry that he wrote. These were often used later as exercises for him to practice his art of calligraphy. I would like to share some of his creative writing with you in the next few editions of the magazine. This first piece was written on November 11th 1986, at the suggestion of a lady whose husband was a wood turner.

The oak branch cut one summer morn,
T' was on the day the boy was born.
And as the new born baby slept,
The log for seasoning was kept.
The child grew on in health and strength,

The log dried out in all its length.
 The boy with learning was impressed,
 The log lay on in patient rest,
 Until one day he felt the wood
 He liked the scent, and found it good.
 Wood turning was his father's craft,
 The boy looked on attention rapt.
 He saw the shapes grow, more and more,
 As shavings tumbled on the floor.
 "One day" he said "when I'm a man
 I'll be a turner, if I can"
 The years passed on, his father died,
 His lathe became the young man's pride.
 The oaken log was brought indoors
 And cut in pieces with his saws,
 Then fastened in the lathe, and spun
 And shaped with tools, till all was done.
 The shavings fell, the dust flew by,
 Shaped by the turner's accurate eye.
 Those blocks of wood, once living tree,
 Were things of use, and good to see.
 'Tis strange to see in life's long tether
 How man and oak branch came together.

y 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.

NATIONAL CHILDBIRTH TRUST (N.C.T.) OPEN HOUSE GROUP:

Informal coffee mornings are held locally offering support to mums-to-be and families with young children (whether members or not) in a friendly, informal way. Please contact your local organiser Debbie Tel. 332103 for further details.

Christleton Local History Group

Books for Sale

Christleton 2000 years of History.

136 pages of text, fully illustrated with b&w photographs, maps & drawings,

and including 8 pages of colour photographs. Laminated cover with water-colour painting of the Church & Pump House by Phil Hodges.

£12.50 & (£2.75 postage & packing.) Free delivery locally.

Christleton Village Trail

A self guided tour of the Village in aid of the "Well for Africa" Appeal.

£2.50. (+30p postage& packing))

From David Cummings, 25 Croft Close, Rowton, Chester CH3 7QQ

or from Christleton Post Office.

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_ years until school entry age are accepted.

Please contact the Supervisor, Carole Penney, on 336586 for further details.

Mobile Library Van Service

The van calls fortnightly: for details of when the van is next in your area, please telephone Upton Library on 380053.

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