

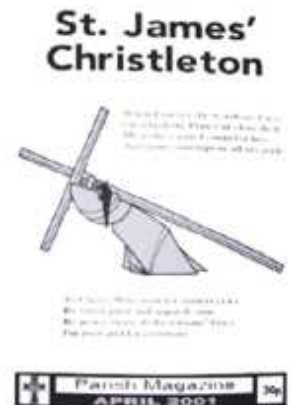
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Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

Parish Magazine

Extracts from Parish Magazine for April 2001

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Thank you from Peter and Fiona

Thank you for all the cards and messages we have received and your support in so many ways, especially your prayers. Treatment is progressing and the cumulative side effects being tolerated! We feel confident that this 'time out' will enable Peter to return with renewed health and strength in due course. We are thinking of you and praying for the continuing ministry in the Parish

From The Editor

Dear Readers,
F.H.B.

I took out my somewhat rusty editorial pen at the beginning of the month and penned an editorial tome. This month however we have been almost overwhelmed with contributed material – for which many thanks to all. I have therefore decided to edit the editorial rather than reduce your contributions, applying the old adage of "Family Hold Back".

I would like to say however how delighted your editorial team are with recent feedback. In particular you may like to know that we have heard that one of our regular magazine readers is a Littleton resident, currently in Japan, who tunes in to www.christleton.org.uk on her computer!

In these month's we all remember our Rector Peter Lee in our prayers and wish him every success with his treatment, a speedy recovery and well-earned rest.

Please keep your contributions coming – and remember should there be any flack it should be directed to your editor.

Best wishes from

David Bull

Songs of Praise In Eastertide

The evening service at 6.30pm on Sunday 29th April will be a Songs of Praise occasion. I hope that many of you will come and that several of you will help me by suggesting a hymn and by being prepared to introduce it: you could tell us why the hymn is particularly important to you, or you could tell us something about the author of the words or the composer of the music. This introduction should take no more than three minutes. While it would be good to include Easter hymns, please feel free to range more widely in your choice.

Please let me have a note of the hymn you would like to include in the service before April 19th so that I can organise the sequence of our hymns for this occasion.

John Carhart

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The Degree Ceremony at Chester Cathedral

On Friday the 9th March I was privileged to be present at a very impressive ceremony at Chester Cathedral for the presentation of awards to students graduating from the University of Liverpool, Chester College. The splendour of the occasion in a packed Cathedral was enhanced with an impressive robed procession of Academic and University Staff, Clergy, Officials and Guests, accompanied by some wonderful music. Several pieces had been specially composed by Cathedral Organist David Poulter in honour of the conferment of a Degree of Law on The Dean, The Very Revd. Stephen Smalley, and included a dramatic fanfare by college trumpeters. The sound during the last verse of the opening hymn O Praise ye the Lord was awe inspiring, when the whole building reverberated to the sound of two thousand voices, the organ at full power and eight trumpets in unison.

Almost 600 students bedecked in robes of scarlet or in black gowns, each with the appropriate coloured silks for their degrees, were presented with their well-earned awards, and amongst them were four students from Christleton. Gertrude Wright (Degree of Master of Theology, with Distinction), Elaine McFarlane (Degree of Master of Science in Environmental Biology), Rachel McGuicken (Degree of Master of Arts in Landscape, Heritage & Society) and Zoe Holdsworth (PGCE in Primary Education).

Congratulations to all four ladies on their hard work. There were some very eloquent addresses, particularly from the Principal of Chester College Professor Tim Wheeler and The Very Reverend Dr. Stephen Smalley, before the retiring procession left the dais and processed back up through the central aisle and the main body of students, following the Vice-Chancellor Professor P N Love and the University Mace. This was the signal for all the students honoured that morning to leave the Cathedral by the West Door which was especially opened for this wonderful occasion.

David Cummings

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

Many thanks for an excellent magazine. I have two ideas which could be useful. The first is a buy/sell/wanted section. The second is a letters page.

Many thanks again for all your hard work.

Yours etc

Richard Bird

Dear Sir

We do not live in the Parish but regularly attend St James' and would like to express our thanks for all the support and welcome we get whenever we can attend.

My wife suffers from Alzheimers and does not always know where she is, but she is always aware of smiling faces of welcome and I hope the little ditty that I have written will be appreciated.

God bless you all.

Jim Murray

Doreen's Week

Doreen is the love of my life,

And my best friend too.

For 53 years she has been my wife

And I often tell her, "I love you".

She asks what day it is

When I take her a cup of tea.

I tell her it is Sunday,

We are going to church and see Rev Lee.

On Monday we do what we want

Because it is a free day.

If it's fine, we go into the garden

And watch the dogs as they play.

Tuesday is slightly different.

She goes to Barbara Barks.
She enjoys it there
Especially Andy's Scottish accent.

Wednesday is spent at the Grosvenor Wing
Where she enjoys her lunch.
Sometimes they may sing
With the rest of the bunch.

Thursday we go shopping
And I have to hold her hand
Because I dread losing her
If she grabs another fellow's hand.

Friday is her "Club" day
Where she meets all her friends.
It is run by Age Concern
And sometimes makes and mends.

Saturday is spent at the Wing
While I get on with everything
And wonder what next week will bring.
I must close now, feeling sad
Because my best friend thinks I'm her dad.

Dear Sir

You can imagine my surprise when I opened the February magazine and read the story about the mission hospital at Ekwendeni in Malawi, a place we know well. My parents worked there for a couple of years in the late 80s and continue fund raising to support the community. The clothes and teddy bears referred to in the article were collected and packed by my mother, and she was absolutely thrilled to have confirmation that they had arrived safely... not always the case in remote parts of Africa!

Let me briefly tell you the story. My father had spent his working life as a family doctor. Originally from Aberdeen, but working in Kent and latterly in Montrose, he always had a desire to put something back into the world. The opportunity came in 1988 to take up a post at the Church of Scotland hospital in Northern Malawi at Ekwendeni. It was a tough assignment: the country was very much a police state at the time, which brought added pressures. The work involved general surgery and caring, using very basic materials and often in competition with the local 'witch' doctors. My mother, a trained dietitian, was also fully occupied touring village communities on health education programmes.

My wife Sarah and I visited them during their stay and made the acquaintance of Fred, a very old and tired Land Rover, full of character and quite unlike any other road vehicle I have ever known. We had a chance to travel a bit around the country, including driving along the Mozambique border where there were seemingly endless refugee camps at the time. The roadside was populated by little boys trying to sell us dead mice to make an income. We also saw the wildlife – my particular memory being of the late night encounter with a hippo as it chomped its way through the flowers on the veranda of our hotel room.

The most outstanding memory is of the warmth and kindness of the people we met. In Ekwendeni and the surrounding villages we were greeted as honoured visitors from far away; we were welcomed into mud huts and we were danced to. These people had almost nothing in the world, yet their custom is to pass gifts to their visitors. We received a cabbage from one family, eggs from another. But the most humbling experience was when the children of a widowed mother gave me a live cockerel, and Sarah received a beautiful piece of crochet work. Needless to say we re-distributed our gifts to even more needy families, but the crochet mat is still one of our most treasured possessions.

The church by the hospital had just reached its hundredth birthday the year we visited. It had been founded by the missionary explorer Dr Laws, who was sent in Livingstone's footsteps to build a Church of Scotland community in this part of Africa. Incidentally, he is buried in the churchyard of St Machar's Church in Aberdeen, where my parents are elders and only a short distance from their home.

Malawi is called the warm heart of Africa and for anyone who has visited the country, it is impossible to forget the smiles and kindness shown. Yet it remains the fourth poorest country in the world; it is riddled by Aids and struggles to feed its people. Meanwhile my mother will continue to collect old t-shirts and knitted teddies to bring some hope into a community they were once so much a part of.

If any readers would like to knit a teddy I have the instructions to hand!

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Alastair Donald

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SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

Lots of children attend Sunday School ranging from four to ten years of age. Most of the children go to different schools so it is a good way of making new friends.

Sunday School begins when Berenice lights the candle, then everyone is quiet. We begin with a prayer and talk about what we're doing for the morning. Sometimes we have a song and a story. Normally we make things or bake using the story as a theme. Sometimes we make up a play and act it out. At the end we have birthday candles if it's somebody's birthday. Some weeks, after Sunday School, there are refreshments.

Gemma Smith

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CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT

At the March meeting at Kingsway Chapel there was disappointment because the expected speaker was unable to attend. However, we were told over coffee and excellent home-made biscuits and fruit cake that three local substitutes were willing to talk to us and in the event, it proved to be a most enjoyable and interesting morning.

Jean Pullin had been a missionary nurse at a hospital in Bangladesh in an area where over 20 different tribes lived, all speaking separate languages. The tribes were distinguishable by their dress: usually just two pieces of coloured cloth for the women, woven by hand on a strap loom. Many patients suffered from leprosy and Jean told us that lepers were now referred to as leprosy patients as the word 'leper' was derogatory.

Janet Dann had helped her husband establish a Christian Church in Marrakesh amongst a mainly Muslim population and told of the early difficulties but compensatory visits to the Atlas mountains.

To finish, Olive Smyth spoke of the years she had served at a school in India and showed a book she had been given in India about the area where an Australian missionary family had suffered a tragic experience as recently as 1999 when the father and his two sons had been attacked and burned alive in their sleeping van. His wife and daughter have had the courage to stay on. At present three captives are being held in Bangladesh: one British and two Danish and she asked for our prayers for them.

All speakers brought mementoes and samples of the local crafts.

Further meetings are being arranged and no doubt Gill Hibbert will give details when they are known.

Margaret Croston

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St James' Millennium Window

Appeal Fund for the new window.

Readers of the magazine who are not regular attenders at Church may be interested to learn of the appeal being made, to raise funds for a new stained glass window in the Lady Chapel at St James'. This window in modern glass, but in keeping with the Christleton (Kempe) style, is being created by William Davies, designer and manufacturer of stained glass from Irby, Wirral, and is based on ideas from members of the community. The window shows figures from the history of the village, created around the central figure of Christ with arms welcoming, calling people to Him throughout the ages.

Blue and yellow glass will reflect light around the design, which includes the Robert the Norman Earl, patron of the church in 1086, the Abbot of the Abbots Well, Prince Rupert from the period of the Civil War, Celia Fiennes a 17th-century traveller, Lucy Anne and Townsend Ince from Victorian times, and a mother and child representing modern times. At the base of the window the St James' Church and Methodist chapel stand side by side linking together the churches in Christleton, and the upper part of the window has the emblems of St James', a village swan and a bell rope.

The appeal has been opened in order that anyone in the community or connected with the village, may contribute to this special window, commemorating the most momentous date in our lifetime, and recording it for future generations. The total cost will be £13,000, so any help you wish to give will be appreciated. Donations can be sent to Mr C J Rydings, 32

Woodfields, Christleton, or handed in to any church official. Please make out any cheques payable to Christleton PCC. Thank you very much.

David Cummings

Appeal Co-ordinator.

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Coincidences

Since coming to Christleton I have joined regularly with the congregation of St James' to pray for Christine Nairn. I knew general facts about Christine – that she was fighting a brave battle with multiple sclerosis, that she had sadly lost her husband with cancer during her own illness and that she had two lovely and supportive daughters – but I knew nothing more personal and had not met her.

It was, therefore, a great surprise to realise from a chance remark made on the local bus, that Christine was a fellow student nurse with me at the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, approximately 35 years ago and that she had been an encouragement to me in my training days. Neither Christine, then known to me as Christine Lingard, or I are Cheshire born so it seems a coincidence we should both be Christleton residents, but even more of a coincidence that the unknown Christine Nairn should be known to me.

Christine now lives in Thornton Manor Nursing Home and we have met up again. We both, of course, have changed somewhat from our student nurse days but Christine remains the same vibrant and caring person that made her such an outstanding nurse. During our training, Christine was selected from among all the student nurses to present a bouquet to Princess Alexandra when she visited our hospital and I would like, in this article, to give Christine a 'written bouquet' of thanks to a brave woman and a valued friend.

Margaret Bass

Golden Wedding Anniversaries

Congratulations to Harry (Bill) and Kathleen (Kay) Cunliffe on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary on 5th April 2001.

Also congratulations to John and Audrey Goldberg who celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary earlier this year.

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Walk the heart of London for Christian Aid Sunday 20th May 2001

Once again Christian Aid invites you to central London for a sponsored walk around the historic heart of the capital. It is designed for walkers of all ages, all paces and abilities, with entertainment, activities for children and a thanksgiving service as Christian Aid Week 2001 comes to an end.

Beginning from Westminster Central Hall at 2pm (refreshments available from 1pm) you can visit some of London's oldest churches, taking in Fleet Street, Strand, Whitehall and the north bank of the Thames to the new piazza up to St Paul's.

There will be refreshments and entertainment for children along the way, together with live music, exhibitions and special guests – all to raise funds for the world's poorest communities.

The event will end with a Thanksgiving Service at 5.15pm back at Westminster Central Hall.

Further details, with a sponsorship form and map, are available from Christian Aid, London and Southeast team, All Hallows on the Wall, 83 London Wall, London EC2M 5ND. Tel: 020 7496 1686.

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