

# Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

## Parish Magazine

### Extracts from Parish Magazine for January 2003



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On Advent Sunday I shared in a programme of music at St Christopher's Lutheran Church in Laubegast, a suburb of Dresden worst affected by the dreadful floods of August.

Although some shops and houses nearby are still not reoccupied, amazingly the modern church is back to normal and a brilliant chamber orchestra, led by the priest's young daughter, played Corelli and Reichard, and the priest's wife beautifully sang an Advent solo. Musical talent in Dresden seems unlimited! All under the illuminated Saxon star, a sure sign that beyond the suffering of 1945 and 2002 the Light of Christ truly shines in Dresden.

John Carruthers

### THE COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

Following on from Rabbi Jonathan's recent visit, the Library now contains publications from the organisation he works for, the Council of Christians and Jews. These publications are entitled Shabbat (the Jewish Sabbath); The Holocaust; Who are Jews and What is their Faith?; and Hard Sayings (Difficult New Testament texts for Jewish-Christian dialogue). All are readable and enlightening.

There is also a selection of Bible reading material for everyday use which I will order on a regular basis for anyone who wants it.

Margaret Bass

### CHRISTINGLE SERVICE SUNDAY 12TH JANUARY AT 6.30 PM

Shine a light in the darkness for children this Christingle.

We will be holding a special Christingle celebration of light, in aid of The Children's Society and its work for disadvantaged children. We hope you will join us for this joyful and moving service.

## THANK YOU LETTER FROM THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Dear Mrs Morgan  
BOX COLLECTION

Thank you for the recent gift of £861.53 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 over 100 projects in England, we work with children in schools, in prisons, in care homes and in poor communities.

One of the ways this generous donation has helped is with our work with young runaways at risk on the streets. Joe is an example of just one of the children we have helped.

Joe first ran away when he was 14. His parents had split up and he was being bullied at school. He ended up hanging around with the "bad kids" to avoid them picking on him, by becoming one of the gang. His mother was worried and ended up having a row with him. He ran away in the middle of winter and ended up begging to get some money for something to eat. That was when Chris and Sam from The Children's Society found him.

"I told them that I had a row with my Mum and that I didn't know what I should do. They took me for something to eat and we talked about what I could do. I was thinking about going home so we practised what I would say to my Mum and they let me phone her. She was angry, but was more worried than anything else and said I could go home. Sam and Chris took me to the bus stop and paid my fare for me. Chris gave me one of his cards and said that if I felt like running away or had any other problems at home then I could contact them. I get in touch with them every now and again when things go wrong. But I know now that running away isn't the answer."

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.

Yours sincerely  
Stephen Blunden  
Fundraising Director

### CHRISTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

At the November meeting of the Christleton Parish Council, Councillor Kenyon reported that improvements to the Pit would be considered by the common land group. Repairs had been carried out to seats. With respect to hedge laying at Birch Heath Common he reported on a useful meeting with City Council Officers and said volunteers would be welcome to assist with the work.

With respect to the successful entry in the Cheshire Best Kept Village Competition Councillor Brown reported that a black poplar tree to be donated by the Cheshire Landscape Trust would be planted on December 3 to mark the achievement.

Matters regarding attention required to the recently installed equipment by Creative Play at the King George V Playing Field play area would be brought to the attention of the contractor. The emptying of litter bins at the Capesthorpe Road play area would be negotiated with the City Council.

The Clerk reported receipt of correspondence from the solicitor regarding the KGV fields which indicated that the Council could not be a corporate trustee and from the Christleton Sports Club seeking an early resolution. Councillor Beech believed that there was sufficient information to proceed. Councillor Crawford believed that trustees should be appointed in accordance with the requirements of the National Playing Fields Association. It was agreed to obtain a copy of the original trust deed and seek advice about the position respecting the Council or individual members becoming trustees.

Councillor Henson remarked that volunteers were being sought for driving the community vehicle available under the Project Rural Matters initiative.

The Council had been invited by the Highway Authority regarding a proposed traffic regulation order in connection with drainage work to be carried out in Quarry Lane. It was agreed that more detailed information be sought as to the extent of the closures which might affect traffic to the Primary School. Members believed it to be important that access to properties should be maintained at all times. Councillor Kenyon referred to an early day motion as to the speed of traffic through villages. Mrs Christine Russell MP would be informed that this was supported by the Council. County Councillor Burke indicated that the County Council had formed a speed review panel to consider speed limits. Councillor Crawford had completed his initial analysis of the data from the speed surveys carried out on Birch Heath Lane and Plough Lane.

It was agreed that youth issues should be a standing item on the agenda.

It was agreed to approach landowners along Style Path to secure agreement to tidy the land.

Members referred to damage to trees caused by recent gales. This would be reported to the district maintenance engineer.

The Chairman referred to damage to trees by buses using Greenfield Crescent. The matter would be drawn to the attention of Chester City Transport.

The advice of the Dog Warden was to be sought as to what action might be taken to deal with dog fouling in the vicinity of the Primary School.

The Chairman suggested that given the numbers of residents working from home in the parish they should be encouraged to register their interest with BT for the exchange to be upgraded to offer Broadband facilities.

Nature Notes.

The battles between the swans reported last month seem to have ended, with no one in overall control, as all birds have dispersed. However heron, cormorant, and grey and pied wagtails have replaced the swans. Smaller birds have returned to feed in local gardens after their partial migration of the summer, and we've seen good numbers of all four species of titmice, wren, robin, dunnock, house sparrow, starling and blackbird at our bird feeding station. All are in fine plumage now, and often display with early morning songs. The starlings love bathing in the stone birdbath, which regularly has to be refilled, after their ablutions have emptied most of the water from it. It's also amazing that long tailed tits will now feed on peanut feeders, something they have learned to do within the last ten years.

Look out too for the tiny green goldcrest, a bird smaller than a wren, with a gold flash on its head, often seen feeding in the churchyard, as are fieldfare and redwing, on hawthorn bushes, or on the berries from our yew trees. These colourful members of the thrush family spend the spring and summer in Scandinavia, before returning to winter here. They can also be seen at the Sports Club and Playing fields, or along Birch Heath Lane, both feeding on the ground, or just flying away from trees or bushes, as they are easily disturbed by passers by. There has also been a welcome return of a good flock of peewits, or lapwings to the field between the canal and Pearl Lane in Littleton.

DC

### **Happy Birthday.**

Congratulations to Nigel Bromage, 70years young on December 3rd .  
Congratulations from all your friends at St James'.

### **Christleton Local History Group.**

Next Meeting. Wednesday 22nd January 2003.

7.30pm at The Primary School, in Quarry Lane.

Chester Local History & Heritage Road Show.

Have you ever tried to trace your family history? or wondered what research facilities are available locally.

Come to the meeting at the Primary School and see what is available in Chester, at our Local Heritage Centre.

### **Millennium Stained Glass Window at St James'**

The window is now safely installed, and completes our village Millennium Projects. Bill Davies from Irby Wirral, has created a masterpiece based on ideas from members of our own community. It is best seen around mid-day when the sun illuminates it directly through the central light. Here the figure of Christ stands magnificently with arms outstretched welcoming people through the ages to our church and chapel, standing side by side at his feet. This reflects the work of Churches Together in Christleton, and the unity of our work as a group of different faiths spreading God's word.

Above the figures of Christ are the symbols of a shell representing St James', a bell rope for the ancient tradition of Bell Ringing, and the Swan representing the Village Community. On either side of Christ are figures representing village history over the last thousand years. On the right hand side, are Robert, Baron of Malpas, given patronage of the church by Hugh Lupus the first Norman Earl of Chester in 1086. Above him is the kneeling figure of Celia Fiennes a famous traveller, who came through the village on her white horse in 1685. The uppermost figures are Lucy Anne & Townsend Ince, benefactors of the present church building, and of the village in general in Victorian times.

On the left are the figures of Prince Rupert of the Rhine, nephew of King Charles 1st, who largely destroyed the village in early 1645, before the main Civil War battle on Rowton Moor. The Abbot seen kneeling above, obtained water from the well in Christleton in 1285 for the Abbey in Chester, now The Cathedral. The figures of a mother & child, represent our present generation.

The technique of creating stained glass, is an ancient one, and Bill has excelled in his design and execution of this window, which due to ill health will be his last major commission. Now aged 71, Bill began his seven-year apprenticeship in Liverpool before the war, with master craftsman William English. Later he joined his Uncle, Teddy Woods, as they repaired hundreds of windows in the city damaged by Hitler's bombs.

A window design evolves from a series of ideas done in watercolours. Once the outline is created, he draws each segment as a full size cartoon. He will have to do this accurately, to fill the exact space available in the window framework. Each panel is then cut from antique glass, still produced in Poland, Germany and France. Often impurities in the glass create their own exciting patterns, when light strikes them. The glass is cut, shaped and painted with a pigment containing metal oxides and powdered glass. The details are carefully drawn, often with a fine brush, and the completed design is fired in a special kiln. Sometimes the glass is fired several times to obtain the desired effect or colour. Many of the techniques used, date back to medieval times.

The finished panels are then fitted together using thin strips of lead. They are attached to the window frame by strategically placed metal bars and bolts. Each section not only has to fit together, but to match in texture, colour and order with the surrounding pieces. Bill always signs his windows with his own special symbol, a windmill, and this can be seen in the lower part of the window, above the date. We hope that this unique piece of craftsmanship will grace our church for centuries to come, letting the light of Christ illuminate the Lady Chapel through this beautiful work. As it is Bill's final work, it is fitting that he has used his own, now frail hands, as models for those on the figure of Christ. We are grateful to him for his dedication and superb craftsmanship in completing the design.

The window will be dedicated at our joint New Year Service, at 10.45am on Sunday 5th January 2003, by the Reverend Graham Evans from the Methodist Church, and the new Dean of Chester Cathedral, the very Reverend Dr. Gordon McPhate.  
David Cummings.

### **Dr George Guest. CBE 1924-2002.**

Many older parishioners will be saddened to learn of the recent death in Cambridge of the eminent organist and choirmaster, Dr George Howell Guest. Dr Guest a Welshman from Bangor was well known in Christleton after his service as Organist & Choir Master at St James. He first came to the village in 1935 when his father, a commercial traveller and visiting organist, moved to Chester. Young George was often employed pumping the bellows for his dad to play the organ console. Whilst a pupil at the Cathedral Choir School he learned to play the organ himself, became very proficient, and often played for services at Christleton. By 1942 he was an accomplished musician, and after service with the RAF in India, he found himself appointed Organist & Choirmaster at St James' under the guidance of the Rector Rev AA Guest Williams at a salary of £52p.a. His success was immediate, and Malcolm Boyle soon offered him the additional post of sub organist at Chester Cathedral, for a further £126 p.a.

In his autobiography he describes St James' Choir as "consisting of boys and girls, men and women, and that they very quickly reached the standard of being able to sing an anthem at each service." Success followed success, and he was persuaded by the Rector and others, to apply for the post of Organ Scholar at his old college, St John's in Cambridge. This he achieved, and from then on became a Master of Music, producing choirs to easily rival that of nearby Kings College. He remained a lively and enthusiastic choir trainer until just a year or so ago, and was much in demand as a recital organist, choirmaster, examiner and raconteur on music. He made over 60 recordings at St John's, including Hadyn's St Nicholas Mass, sung at St James' on the 8th December 2002. He was a passionate supporter of Chester Football Club, and on his visits to Chester would often slip into St James' for evensong. Cliff Boddy an old friend, would quietly say to the choir "Dr George is in the congregation tonight, make sure you sing well." He was a much loved man, and it's very pleasing to know that Christleton had such a special place in his heart, a place where he began his outstanding musical career.  
David Cummings.

### **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.

### **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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