

# Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

## Parish Magazine

Extracts from Parish Magazine  
for March 2003

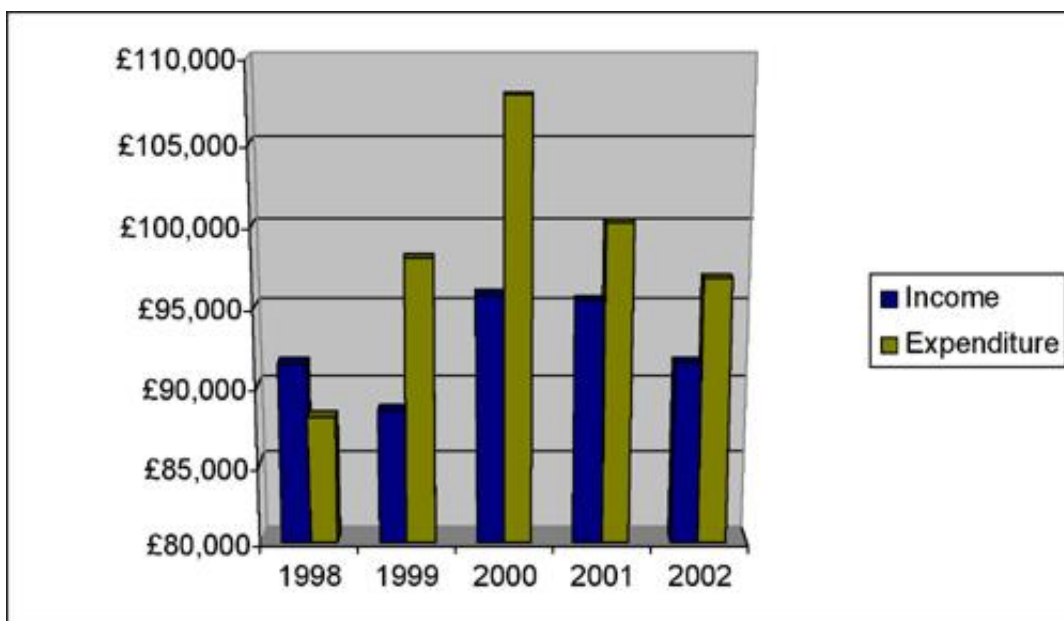


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### THE THREE 'R's - AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL OF US

Time For a Realistic Review of our Regular Giving

The Church Council has recently met to look into ways of improving our giving at St James. The problem is that expenditure has exceeded income for all of the last four years (see chart below).



Income versus Expenditure – 1998 – 2002

We must, therefore, increase our income, in order to meet our future financial commitments as a Church.

Our main income is from the Church collections.

How can we increase income to meet/ exceed our expenditure?

We can:

1. REVIEW OUR GIVING AND INCREASE IT TO A MORE REALISTIC LEVEL
2. ENCOURAGE REGULAR AND TAX EFFICIENT GIVING.

With regard to 1, it is probable that most donors have not reviewed the amount they give over the last four years. Some people still have Covenants where they agreed to pay a specific amount over a four-year period. Most, however, have now transferred to Gift Aid and can give what they wish but, generally, they keep to their previous Covenant payments.

Because our expenditure has exceeded our income over the last four years, we are now asking those people who give by Gift Aid to consider increasing their giving. This can be done in the stewardship envelopes, or by revising their standing order or cheque payments.

For the few donors who still have Covenants and wish to increase the amount they give, our Gift Aid Secretary, Martin Wheeler, (Tel: 336644) will be pleased to help them transfer to Gift Aid. Please 'phone him and he will call and see you.

With regard to 2, there are now 120 donors who give by Gift Aid or Covenant, enabling the Church to reclaim the tax on these gifts. Last year over £9,200 was received from the Inland Revenue – a substantial sum of money representing 10% of our total income!

However, in spite of publicity over the last two-and-a-half years of the benefits to the Church of giving by Gift Aid, almost £10,000 was paid in cash into the Church collection last year. The Inland Revenue will not allow tax to be reclaimed on loose cash. With Gift Aid, the Church could reclaim £2,800 on a gift of £10,000.

Please will the donors who at present give in cash, consider signing a Gift Aid declaration and joining the stewardship envelope scheme? Martin Wheeler or Betty Dunning would be pleased to help in this matter.

Unlike a Covenant, with Gift Aid a donor no longer needs to pay basic rate tax. However, they must have paid tax at the lower rate of 10% or, perhaps, on building society or bank interest at least equal to the tax the Church reclaims on their donations. For example, if someone donated £100 in a tax year, the Church could reclaim £28 from the Inland Revenue and the donor would have had to pay at least £28 in that tax year.

It is appreciated that we have just had the Restoration Appeal for the Church roof and tower, yet we are convinced that unless we increase our regular giving, St. James Church will be unable to continue to serve the community as well as it has done in the past.

Let us not forget, as a Church family, the importance of the three Rs – a Realistic Review of our Regular giving.

### **ST JAMES RESTORATION APPEAL – CONCERT**

Saturday 15th March at 7.30 pm in St James

Adults £5 and children of school age £3 (tickets include refreshments after the concert)

The concert performed by the Vale Royal Singers under the direction of Roger Wilkes will be in two halves. The first half will feature a mixture of sacred works by European and English composers including Bruckner, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Thomas Tallis and John Rutter and a organ solo by Brian Heald. The second half is a mixture of Elizabethan madrigals and solo lute pieces, played by Hugh Cherry, and English traditional songs such as Golden Slumbers and O Waly, Waly.

Tickets are available from Katherine Seddon (335588).

### **ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION 2003**

Just a reminder that the latest date for joining the Electoral Roll for this year is 28 March 2003.

Forms are available from the back of Church and when completed, should be forwarded to Pat Nilssen, 11 Littleton Lane, Littleton, CH3 7DJ, or handed in to the Rector.

### **CHRISTLETON VILLAGE SHOW**

is on Saturday 12th July in Christleton Parish Hall

Once again it's the one occasion in the village when such a wide variety of skills and interests can be displayed. As in previous years we've listened to comments made after last year's show and there are some new categories as well as the old favourites.

Hanging Baskets are once again on the list and anyone in the Parish (Christleton, Littleton, Rowton, Cotton Edmunds and Cotton Abbots) can join in, and you don't need to be an expert. The theme this year is MAGIC and the Theme Trophy will go to the exhibit(s) which best portray Magic.

Schedules will be available from Paul Jackson at the Post Office in April so get a schedule, choose some categories and start planting, sewing, painting etc etc – whatever is your thing. It doesn't cost much, is great fun and you could win a trophy – there are lots of them.

If you have any queries or if you would like to help on the day (PLEASE) ring any of the committee below. David and Beryl Cummings (332410), Janet Brown (335785), Charles Smeatham (335209), Margaret Croston (335955), Sue Haywood (01829 741814), Chris Marsland (335424), June Pearson (335101), Jane Pickering, Judith Butt (335296), Pat French Lynch.

Here is a place where prayers are said  
Or – if you'd rather sit instead  
And think on things  
Pray do: and as you sit and rest  
Your further journey shall be blessed –  
For by the King of Kings  
Your soul shall lose its pain and fear  
In quietness God is very near.

### **THANK YOU**

Christleton Wednesday Group wishes to thank all those kind people who supported us so generously once again in our events last year. You enabled us to raise £2,500 to donate towards our chosen charity – Chester Link.

### **ODE TO THE SPELL CHECKER**

Eye halve a spelling chequer  
It came with my pea sea  
It plainly marques for my revue  
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strikes a key and types a word  
And weight four it two say  
Weather eye am wrong oar write  
It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid  
It nose be four two long  
And eye can putt the error rite  
It's rare lea ever wrong.

Eye have run this threw it  
I am shore your pleased two no  
Its letter-perfect awl the weigh  
My chequer tolled me sew.

### **CHRISTLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

The Council at its January meeting gave careful and detailed consideration to the likely expenditure to arise in 2003/2004. It was proposed by the Chairman, Cllr P Evans, seconded by Cllr M Renner and agreed that a precept of £12,000 should be requested.

Two families from Hoole and Coedpoeth, who had complained alleging damage to personal belongings while using the tunnel at the Pit play area were being contacted. The Clerk reported a complaint through the Public Rights of Way Unit about the condition of a hedge adjoining the Capesthorpe Road play area, which would be inspected.

A meeting was arranged between Birch Cullimore, solicitors, Parish Councillors and members of the Sports Club which took place on 22nd January concerning the King George V Playing Fields.

City Cllr J Boughton had written to the Police Divisional Commander paying tribute to PC Richard Tack's service and seeking his replacement as quickly as possible. PC Tack has retired.

The Parish Council had informed City Cllr B Bailey that they wished to retain four minor improvement schemes: the provision of a footway on Birch Heath Lane west of The Park, and schemes on Plough Lane involving the provision of footways from Village Road to White House and from Windrush to Greenmantle, also for an unspecified visibility improvement.

Proposed footway improvements on Quarry Lane had been accepted by the District Maintenance Engineer using funds from the Safer Routes to School initiative, Chester City Council and the Parish Council. A footway has now been provided.

Chester City Council informed Cllr Whalley in December of the specification which would be required for a proposed footway in Plough Lane to enable the application to be favourably considered – this included the retention of the hedgerow.

A Parish Open Morning will take place on Saturday 22nd March in the Parish Hall from 10.00 am to 12 noon. Material to be displayed will include the map of open land, details of the proposed footway in Plough Lane and proposals for the development of the British Legion area. The Clerk would approach Mrs C M Russell, MP, the Home Watch manager and the Public Rights of Way Unit inviting their attendance and a Highway Authority representative regarding the proposed improvements to the A51 road this summer. A Newsletter will be distributed before the Open Morning.

Cllr Brown reported that a generous donation of trees and hedges had been obtained from the Cheshire Landscape Trust. It was agreed to consider a donation to them at the February meeting.

### **MEMORIES OF THE 1930s**

We changed the old car with the side curtains and few electrics for another Citroen with leather seats, wind-up windows, the lot but the engine was poor and had to be rebored at 9000 miles. Its top speed was about 50 mph but once on a long downhill I managed 60 mph. What a thrill.

My parents insisted on me going to private school when I was 12 years old. The reason for not going to grammar school was that you had to stay there until you were 16. They were mostly farmers' sons at this school and we were needed at home when we were 14 – as cheap labour! The school was run by an old man and his daughter and it was really hopeless. I feel sure my education ended when I left Christleton with headmaster Tom Solloway who did not want me to leave.

Farming was not very profitable, output was very low and it depended on farmworkers whose wages were very low. They moved to different farms quite often. I always regret that we did not respect our employees more. One of our workers in his sixties walked a mile to work and was always on time at 5.30 am for the hand milking. All the family joined in and water was pumped by hand to cool the milk. It was collected twice daily for retailing. A cow in those days would produce about four gallons a day at peak – now it can be 10 or 12 gallons. We eventually had a petrol engine to pump the water.

Throughout the winter we ploughed about 12 acres to grow oats, marigolds, turnips and kale to feed the cows the following winter. We took many top prizes at the Cheshire Show for turnips; it was held for many years on the Roodee. King George V once came to open it. We school children went to Vicars Cross to see him pass.

Grass was not cut for hay until the end of June and by then the corncrake, skylark, partridge and peewit, which nested on the ground, had hatched their young. But now grass is cut several times a year starting in April and ground-nesting birds in this area are very scarce. In the autumn starlings would come on the fields in what must have been millions on the way to roosting in nearby woodlands. Now these too are very few. Wild geese used to fly over to Dee Marshes in the morning and back to Ince marshes in the afternoon, starting about Christmas until mid March. They flew in a lovely V formation and if there was a head wind they were very low and made easy targets for locals to shoot.

### **CHRISTLETON 2000 YEARS OF HISTORY.**

If you don't have a copy and would like one or would like to buy another copy, please contact David Cummings as soon as possible as there are only a few remaining. Inside you will find many more interesting facts about life in bygone days in Christleton and see some fascinating photographs.

### **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CHRISTLETON**

#### **FRUGAL LUNCH**

Wednesday 2nd April, 12 00noon – 2 00 pm at Methodist Church

ALL WELCOME!

Donations to Christian Ai

### **CATHEDRAL LINK**

Chester Cathedral by Candlelight

The first tours proved so successful that another one is planned for April 8th at 8 30pm. These tours give a remarkable insight into the living faith, which has sustained this great church for almost a thousand years. Tickets £8 per person including a glass of wine. Purchase from cathedral shop (311586)

**Champagne and Pirates**

Wednesday 2nd April at 700pm. Champagne in the Undercroft, Pirates of Penzance at the Town Hall. Chester Musicals performance of Pirates of Penzance. £10 per person Tickets to be ordered and paid for by March 24th. Apply to Nick Fry, 12 Abbey Square, Chester CH1 2HU.

**A Walsingham Pilgrimage**

From 5 – 9th May. For details contact Mrs Gamon at the Cathedral Office (324756)

**The Annual Spring Outing**

Is on Saturday 17th May, leaving the Cathedral at 9 00 am, arriving back at 6 30pm, goes to Gwydir Castle, lunch in Llanwrst and Bodnant Garden. As Bodnant is National Trust, the entrance charge is not included in the price.- however lunch is included! Tickets £19.15 (non members £25). Apply to Christine Long, 50 Lowerfield Road Chester CH4 7QF.

**Overnight Visit to Lincoln**

5-6th September. All travel by coach, visit to Haddon Hall Derbyshire, Dinner, Bed and Breakfast at Edward King House, Lincoln. Guided tour of the Cathedral, tea and evensong at Lincoln cathedral. Tickets £70 members, £80 non-members. Apply with sae to Christine Long, 50, Lowerfield Road, CHESTER CH4 7QF. Leaving Chester Cathedral 9 000 am Friday September 5th and returning same location 1100 pm Saturday 6th.

**“Not the Plant Sale 2003”**

With regret the plant sale advertised for Sept 2003 has been cancelled due to the timescale of the Song School building works. Next plant sale = May 2004

**Grand Crafts Cakes and Conserves event**

19th – 20th Sept 2003 in the Visitors Centre. Please start making your craft and conserve contributions now. Further information, offers or enquiries to Caroline Dennis on 314408

**NATURE NOTES**

January showed some remarkably early signs of Spring, with daffodils in flower along Littleton Lane, and even yellow and white crocus on the Village Green. Catkins could be found in many places along the hedgerows, hares were boxing in the wet meadow, and many species of birds were seen mating and showing signs of nest building. No doubt the cold snap at the end of the month with the snow put an end to this behaviour, but it is remarkable how much earlier each year that creatures show us signs that spring is coming. My bird of the month was a Lesser spotted woodpecker. These tiny woodpeckers, beautifully coloured and marked like their cousins the Greater Spotted, are not much bigger than a great tit, and it was delightful to see one again after a gap of twenty years or so. Other rare bird visitors to the village were redpolls, siskins and a marsh tit, seen in the churchyard, and black caps, fieldfare and redwing, seen in several gardens.

Battles for the territory at the Pit continue between the two main swan pairs, and the cygnets from 2002. Several times in January we had calls from worried passers by, to visit the Pit and try to rescue one cygnet or another. Both cygnets CD9 and CD10 were usually sitting on the road, because they were not allowed onto the water, or even the ice on some days by the adults. In the end the icy conditions forced both adults and cygnets down to the river, and CD10 and adults CB35 and C181 were at the Groves, whilst CD9 was seen in Southport. The resident Christleton Pit pair C175 and C852 (the swan with a limp), are still flying up and down the canal between Christleton and Waverton. I'm certain they will return shortly to regain their territory.

DC

Saturday March 8th at 7.00pm in The Parish Hall.

Spectacular Wildlife in Close Up by David Cummings

Featuring orchids, dragonflies, butterflies, mammals, swans, ducks and geese.

(A talk with slides in memory of Roy Fisher)

Tickets £6 including buffet supper, from 332410 or Christleton Post Office.

Proceeds to purchase trees for the village.

**Hospice Letter Cards.**

Letter Cards of a watercolour painting of Christleton Pit and the swans by Roger Stephens are now available, and are priced £1.50 for five. Organisations such as the Hospice have to raise thousands of pounds each year to survive, and get little government support, so by using these cards you can help a very good cause. They are available from the Christleton Post Office or myself.

DC

**Christleton Local History Group.**

Wednesday 19th March. 7.30pm at The Primary School.

**The Art of Milling. Alf Croston**

A fully illustrated talk on the story of milling, from the earliest windmills to the fully automated machines of today.

Wednesday 9th April. 7.30pm at The Primary School.

Llangollen to Chester via the Shropshire Union Canal. David Cummings.

The history and wildlife of the various waterways in our region, from the Llangollen and Montgomery, to the Ellesmere and Chester Canals, which later became the Shropshire Union Canal System, and the links with some of the greats in the canal era, Telford, Brindley, Rolt, etc; It passes through some beautiful countryside and has great features, structures such as tunnels, bridges and superb aqueducts making it one of the most interesting sections of the canal system in the UK.

**Christleton Golden Jubilee Cook Book**

These are available for sale priced £3, with all proceeds going towards refurbishment of the Parish Hall. They are available from the Post Office, Margaret Croston or David Cummings.

**Three Peak Challenge.**

Plans are underway to enable a group of walkers from the village to tackle the three major British Isles peaks of Snowdon (N Wales), Scafell (Lake District) and Ben Nevis (Scotland) as a sponsored event to raise funds for St James' Roof Restoration Appeal. We aim to complete this exciting challenge on the weekend of June 14/15th with a team of friends from the village. If anyone is interested in joining the team, as a walker or a member of the back up team, please contact David Cummings on 332410.

**Life in the Big House.**

In the next few issues of the magazine I am going to write a series of articles about life at The Old Hall through the 17thC taken from material deposited at the Cheshire Record Office in the papers of the late Rector A. A. Guest Williams. They relate to life at the Hall at the time when it was occupied by Robert Townsend, Recorder of Chester, and his family. It is a fascinating account of this period and contains previously unpublished material gathered by the Local History Group in its research for the book Christleton "2000 years of History." To set the scene for the articles, I reprint a piece about the history of the Old Hall itself.

**Part 1. The Old Hall.**

The Old Hall would seem to be the natural place for the Lord of the Manor of Christleton to live. However this hasn't been the case. It was built soon after 1603, by a member of the Egertons who had their main family seat at Tatton Park. It was originally an elegant half timbered building. John Egerton was described as a husbandman in a will of 1667 and possessed a coat of arms of six quarterings. The building was later purchased by Gerard Townsend a "Merchant of Chester" around 1710 and he was succeeded by his son Robert Townsend, a Lawyer and Recorder of Chester. In later years the house was occupied by The Ince Family, Mrs Mary Legh, J Verney Lace, and Major & Mrs Currie. It was purchased in 1946 by the Guest Williams brothers, but they were themselves related directly by marriage to the Ince, Legh and Currie families going back to at least 1747, and possibly earlier. Following the sale of the property in 1974, it has been substantially restored.

Although the Old Hall itself was built in 1603, there is some evidence of buildings of an earlier period on the site. Above the Tudor looking fireplace in the main hall, the original grate for which is still preserved, there are on the right oval of plaster, the emblems of the English Rose, the Unicorn and the Thistle of Scotland - hailing no doubt the Stuart Dynasty. On the left oval panel is a curious device of a crest, or badge of an oak tree, with an eagle preying upon an infant. There is no doubt that house was originally built in black and white timber frame style, but was encased in 1890 in red Ruabon Brick by Rector Lionel Garnett, possibly to help preserve it from decay. Parts of a tunnel still surround the building, giving rise to the legend that the tunnel was used by the Parliamentary forces during the civil war, when the Old Hall was occupied by Sir William Brereton the commander of The Parliamentarians in Cheshire. It is said that the tunnel running east to west carved under the sandstone ridge allowed troops to move easily between the Old Hall, Manor House and Church where the main garrison would have been stationed.

David Cummings

**Mothers' Union**

Cathedral visit

This will be on 10th March 2003 starting at the Cathedral at 2 00 pm. Could we have the name of anyone wishing to go, who has not already put their name on the list, and an indication of whether you will require a lift? This should be a very enjoyable outing. Contact Margaret Penner 332005 or Janet Brown 3357785  
Coffee Morning (for details see also advert!)

Can helpers please come at 10 00am? Please come and support our coffee morning which is our main

fund raising event for Mothers' Union.

Wave of Prayer

This will follow our Coffee morning, starting at 12 00 noon in the Parish Hall.

In February Mrs Beryl Davies came to our meeting and gave a very clear description of her work with Mothers' Union Indoor Members. Started in 1921, the Indoor Members Prayer Circle makes sure that members who can no longer attend meetings are kept in touch with Mothers' Union matters

### **MOTHERS' UNION COFFEE MORNING**

SATURDAY 15th MARCH 2003 IN THE PARISH HALL,

1030am to 1200noon

Bring and Buy Stall

Cake Stall

Raffle

Refreshments

Admission 50p includes coffee and biscuits

Please come and support us – all are welcome!!

### **Parish Ramble, Sunday March 9th, 2003**

#### ***Marford Quarry.***

This will start at 2.15 pm from the church car park to allow sharing of lifts and be green from the transport point of view.

We shall be walking in Marford Quarry (SJ 357 560), only 10 mins away by car, just outside Marford Village, close to the Wrexham / Rossett bypass. This is an area of SSI, and is definitely a level 1 walk, i.e. easy for anyone, only 2-3 miles at the very most, but has a scrambling option for the energetic.

If you can do this one, the next will be more difficult!!

It would be best to wear boots or stout shoes, and the terrain is too sandy/gravelly for pushchairs.

Ideal for dogs.

I don't feel it could take as much as 2 hours so we would definitely be back by 4.30.

Picnic optional!

### **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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