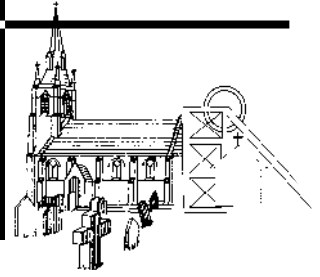


OUR COMMUNITY

www.st-thomas-keresley.org.uk



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
15TH TO 20TH MAY

MAY 2011

50P

Christian Aid in Nicaragua

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the western hemisphere after Haiti. The country is regularly hit by natural disasters including hurricanes and tropical storms that sweep across the Atlantic each year. These emergencies push back the country's economic development.

Climate change: Nicaragua is one of the three countries in the world worst affected by weather catastrophes, and the UN has warned that storms here will only get worse.

Economic justice: In Nicaragua, the poorest country in Latin America, 80% of urban jobs are in small or micro-companies, and 90% of rural businesses are linked to small, family-run farms.

But one of the biggest challenges for small producers is being able to reach a market where they can sell their products.

With limited access to transport, little bargaining power and no marketing or sales expertise, many struggle to earn a living.

Our work

Our partner MCM helps vulnerable communities prepare to face the annual storm season – and the floods that come with it – by finding ways to protect their homes, families and food supplies.

Our partners Nochari and Soppexcca help hibiscus, coffee and cocoa producers to organise themselves into cooperatives and provides training that helps them improve production, marketing and sales skills so they can reach new customers and earn a better living.

The farming cooperatives supported by Soppexcca are now earning more for their coffee and exporting coffee in the Fairtrade market.. See more on p4.

*Today is the
oldest you've
ever been,
yet the
youngest
you'll ever be,
so enjoy
this day
while it lasts.*

Inside this issue:

St. Thomas' Calendar and Notice Board	2
Local news	3
Christian Aid	4
Spring Harvest Family Album	5
Keresley Village Community Church Calendar	6
What's the big idea	6
Parish Register	7
Mouse page	8
Please wait . . .	8

A right Royal do – St Thomas' Street Party



The Church Hall car park was full on Friday 29th April as we threw a party to celebrate the royal wedding. More pictures inside.

ST. THOMAS' CHURCH CALENDAR

May

Sunday 1st

9am Holy Communion and hymns
10.30am Family Service. Ministry Team

Sunday 8th

9am Holy Communion. Rev Alison Evans
10.30am Family Communion. Rev Carol Newbon

Sunday 15th

9am Holy Communion. Rev Buff Stone
10.30am Family Worship. Ministry Team
Christian Aid Week 15th–20th May

Sunday 22nd

9am Holy Communion. Rev Buff Stone.
10.30am Family Communion and Baptism. Ven Maurice Rodham

Sunday 28th

9am Holy Communion. Rev Alison Evans
10.30am Family Communion
Schools half term this coming week

June

Sunday 5th

9am Holy Communion and hymns. Rev Elizabeth Kerr
10.30am Family Service. Ministry team

Parish Natters

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Sunday 27th March after morning worship. Twenty two members of the congregation attended and apologies were received from three.

The following people were nominated and elected to positions:

Church Wardens - Margaret Potter and Claire McArthur

Deanery Synod - Claire McArthur and Janet Ashley
Parochial Church Council - Margaret Bosworth, Jean Peabody, Andy Quinn, Gary Owens, Janet Wilkins, Janet Talbot, Pete Hudson, Claire Fletcher, Adrian Cramp and Sarah Potter.

If you have any comments, enquiries or suggestions to make, please see any one of them and they will do their best to help you or find someone who can. Any offers of help are always gratefully received.

The Annual Report was circulated. Our current Electoral Roll stands at 102 but not many attended church regularly. Claire felt we should contact

(Continued on page 3)

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

First Steps . . . with Jesus

For babies and pre-school children
with their parents and carers

Meets in the Galilee Room, weekly
in term time

Mondays 1.30-2.30pm

Thursday at St T's

For 5-11 years
Meets in the Galilee
On Thursdays
From 6pm to 7pm



Youth Essence

new flavour

Thursdays
7.30pm to 9pm,
Galilee Room,
School year 9 upwards

Uniformed Groups

Meet in the Church Hall :

9th Rainbows, Mondays, 6-7pm
13th Brownies, Mondays, 6.00 - 7.30pm
9th Brownies, Wednesdays, 6.00 - 7.30pm
9th Guides, Thursdays, 6.30 - 8.30pm

Meet in the Scout Hut:

41st Cubs, Mondays, 6.45 - 8.30pm
41st Scouts, Tuesdays, 7.00 - 9.00pm
41st Beavers, Fridays, 6.00 - 7.30pm
(for 6-8 year olds)

Sunday Morning Activities at St. Thomas'

10.30am (during term time)

1st Sunday Family Service in Church
2nd Sunday 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room,
11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall.
All join the service around 11.25am
3rd Sunday All ages start in Church
4th & 5th 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room,
11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall
All join the service around 11.25am

This pattern may change occasionally for special services.

(Continued from page 2) Parish Natters

members who no longer come, check they are well and encourage them back. Thanks were expressed to Claire McArthur, Margaret Potter, Steve and Jo Medley and Gary Owens for all their achievements in forwarding the work of the church. We look forward to continuing this next year despite the need to keep a tight reign on our finances. A brief income/ outgoings balance sheet was available and it is clear that our outgoings still exceed our income. A tight reign is being put on spending but we also need to find ways of increasing our income.

There is still no sign of a new vicar and the process is slow. The profile has been agreed and there is a copy for people to view if they wish. The position at Keresley Village Community Church will need to be **sorted first as we still don't know for sure if we are** looking for one or one and a half posts.

A volunteer was requested to co-ordinate the teams of cleaners for the church and ensure the church is clean and welcoming. The vicarage is not likely to be let during the interregnum but we do need to keep it

clean and tidy. The office cannot go back into the vicarage but we do hope to create office space out of the ladies toilet. The gents will become unisex. The resurfacing of the paths has been put on hold because of cuts in City Council spending even though we now have the Faculty. We will try and get this through and done on the grounds of Health and Safety. Probation Service has been working hard in the churchyard and around the Church Hall throughout the year.

The next Annual Parish Meeting has provisionally been scheduled for Sunday 22nd April 2012.

WANTED - Cleaning Teams Co-ordinator

A volunteer is needed to co-ordinate the teams of cleaners for the church and ensure the church is clean and welcoming.



Please see Margaret Potter or Margaret Bosworth for more details about what this will involve.



Royal Wedding Street Party

Top left: A full car park!

Top right: Everyone tuck in

Lower left: The entertainment—band, barbershop and children's activities

Above: the Mayor drops by



Daring to dream the impossible

Christian Aid partner Soppexcca (pronounced so-pecks-ka) is an organisation with a vision. It is passionately committed to helping poor Nicaraguan coffee farmers to beat poverty.

Ten years ago, when Soppexcca was established, this seemed impossible. But now Soppexcca is a thriving collective of small cooperatives which helps farmers produce good-quality coffee, market it and put funds back into their own communities. It works with communities to understand their needs and empowers them to make their own visions a reality.

Gustavo Adolfo Talavera, an illiterate coffee farmer, had few prospects until Soppexcca gave him a loan, allowing him to expand his farm and build a small and environmentally sound processing plant. He had a dream of his children being able to read and write, and be educated. His dream became a reality when Soppexcca helped members of the community get enough resources together, and a group of parents built a school themselves.

Ten years ago, education would have seemed an impossible dream for Gustavo. But Soppexcca is enabling his community to dream dreams – and then to do what seems to be impossible.

The Christian life sets us within a story that speaks of transformation where it seems to be impossible; where life is brought to the world. And the gospel stories are clear that life is about more than just survival. The life that Jesus speaks of is abundant life, rich with possibility and hope and promise. For people in Gustavo's community, it's about education and prospects.

Cooperative living is about this abundant life. It's about seeing something achievable beyond oneself and working together to make life better for everyone. Fátima Ismael, Soppexcca's director, says: 'We're not just about bread for today, but also for tomorrow. But we don't just want bread, we want bread and honey and milk.' People like Fátima and Gustavo are seeing the bigger picture – going beyond what seems initially achievable and working together to make it a reality.

The good news is that we can be a part of this bigger picture too. When we give our time, money and



Thanks to funds from Christian Aid partner Soppexcca, Gustavo's community has been able to build a school, which he proudly shows here

energy this Christian Aid Week, we are looking beyond ourselves and enabling others to do what seems impossible. This bigger picture is the world as it could look if we allowed the kingdom of God to be a reality, if we really believed in abundant life for all. **It's the world that Jesus showed us in his life and ministry: a world where we stop living for ourselves and start living for others, a world where we don't put limits on love and justice, a world where the concept of our neighbour is startlingly redefined.**

It's a bigger world and it's an unsettling world. But it's a world that allows for transformation in ways that we may never have imagined, to dream dreams and to do what people tell us is impossible. Of course it's about transformation for people like Gustavo. But it's also a world that offers huge transformation to ourselves and to our churches, as we place ourselves in the frame of a bigger picture where the power of love has no limits.

Christian Aid Week is a time to celebrate transformation, and an opportunity to put ourselves **in the frame of God's kingdom. Join us, and we'll give you the resources to make the impossible happen.**

Help people in poverty out of poverty

To give to Christian Aid Week, visit www.caweek.org

UK registered charity number 1105851 Company number 5171525 Scotland charity number SC039150 Northern Ireland charity number XR94639 Company number NI059154 Republic of Ireland charity number CHY 6998 Company number 426928

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KERESLEY VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

May

Sunday 1st

10.30 Family Service, Tony

Sunday 8th

10.30am Family Holy Communion Rev Buff Forbes-Stone

Sunday 15th

10.30am Songs of Praise, Mary Coles

Sunday 22nd

10.30am Holy Communion, Rev Andrew de Ville

Sunday 29th

10.30am Morning Worship, Brian Hickford (Gideons)

June

Sunday 4th

10.30am Family Service, Mary Coles

Regular Meetings

Mondays 5-6pm

Trailblazers Children's Club

Tuesday afternoons 1.30-2.45pm

First Steps, for babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers, during term time

Wednesday 7.30-9pm

'Drop-in' Centre for teenagers

Fridays 5-6.30pm monthly.

Friday Church, usually meets on the first Friday of the month.

What's the Big Idea? -

An Introduction to the Books of the Old and New Testament: **Esther and 1 Thessalonians**

The Book of Esther is unique in Scripture, as it reads **much like a novel**. However it's not just a piece of fiction, as historical evidence would suggest. For the Jews it provides the basis for the Festival of Purim. The events of the book took place during the reign of Xerxes 1 (486 - 465 BC) and fit historically between Ezra 6 and 7.

The story tells how Queen Esther, with the help of her **uncle Mordecai, thwarts Haman's plot to eliminate all the Jews living in Persia. Haman casts lots ('purim') to determine the best day on which to massacre the Jews. He convinces King Xerxes to issue an edict to kill all the Jews in the empire; however Mordecai persuades Esther to appeal to the king at the peril of her life.**

Esther invites the king to a series of banquets, while Haman is building a large gallows for Mordecai. One night, when the king cannot sleep, he reads how Mordecai saved his life. He resolves to honour **Mordecai, much to Haman's displeasure. At Esther's next banquet, she pleads with the king for her people and reveals Haman's treachery. The king has Haman hanged on the gallows intended for Mordecai, and issues a new decree allowing the Jews to defend themselves when attacked. When the day arrives, the Jews defeat their enemies, and then follows a day of celebration called Purim.**

The unique characteristic of the book of Esther is that God is never explicitly mentioned; however he is clearly at work in the events described in the story. This is providence at work, ie God provides for his people by working behind the scenes in the circumstances of daily life. Like the world in which we live, God's name is often nowhere to be found, but his hand is everywhere.

'For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place,

but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?' (4:14). The book of Esther is primarily known for this verse. It reminds us that God uses ordinary men and women to overcome impossible circumstances to accomplish his gracious purposes. Whoever we are, we too are born **for the time in which we live, in order to fulfil God's plan for our lives.**

1 Thessalonians

'The way we conceive the future sculpts the present, gives contour and tone to nearly every action and thought through the day.' (Eugene Peterson).

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul helps his readers to understand the importance of the Second Coming of Jesus to the Christian Faith. It is the earliest of his letters, written when Paul was staying in Corinth during his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-18) in 49-51 AD.

Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, as well as a flourishing centre for trade and philosophy. The city was committed to the Greco-Roman gods and Emperor Worship, and contained a sizable Jewish population. After founding the church (Acts 17:1-9) Paul was forced to leave, when he was falsely accused of speaking against Caesar. As the new Christians were left with little spiritual support, Paul wrote this letter to encourage them.

Paul addresses a number of issues through this letter. They were not expecting persecution, so Paul explains that this is normal Christian experience (3:3-4). He also challenges those members of the community who were bringing the church into disrepute by living off wealthier Christians rather than earning their own living (4:9-12; 5:14).

(Continued on page 7)

PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISM

10th April
Amelia Rose Brown

WEDDING

23rd April
Wendy Elizabeth Graham and Andrew McClean

BURIALS

28th March
Sheila May Clarke aged 84 of Walton Road,
Warrington
8th April
Anne Miller aged 67 of Bennetts Road North
14th April
Patricia Blodwen Milanovic aged 71 of Prescelly
Close Stockingford

ASHES INTERRED

16th April
Thomas Gamble aged 88 of Thistley Fields West

(Continued from page 6) 1 Thessalonians

However, the most prominent theme in letter is the second coming of Jesus. It is mentioned in every chapter of the book (1:10; 2:19–20; 3:13; 4:13–18; 5:1–11, 23–24). The Thessalonian were unclear about the timing of the day of the Lord (5:1–2). Some members of the church had died (4:13), and **they weren't sure what would happen to them at Christ's return** (3:10; 4:13). Some thought that they would miss out on the second coming. However Paul assures them that when Jesus returns, the dead in Christ will rise and be caught up with the living to meet the Lord (4:15–17). **Therefore, believers don't need to fear God's wrath, but rather are assured of inheriting his salvation.**

Living in the light of Christ's return calls for holy and blameless lives (3:11–4:8; 5:23). Let's make Paul's prayer for the Thessalonian Christians our own, as we too await Jesus' return: 'May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (5:23).

Happy 400th Birthday, King James Bible!
On 2 May it will be exactly 400 years since the King James Version of the Bible was first published. The Authorised Version, as it is also known, has sold more than one billion copies since it was first published in 1611. It is arguable that there has been no more important single publication, as its impact on culture and language over the last 400 years has been huge around the world. Not only has it inspired great art, music and literature, but it has changed lives and shaped whole societies.

The Bible in our Community

I saw a Bible in a charity shop the other day. It was a thick-as-a-brick Family Bible, a bargain at only £4.50. It was in immaculate condition with each page corner still as chiselled and gold-edged as the day it was printed. No sticky fingers had sullied these pages. No disrespectful hand had broken its spine.

But oh dear, it was a tragic sight.

That book had never had verses highlighted, Post-it notes stuck in its margins or dates pencilled **alongside passages in it. It hadn't been opened. It hadn't been read! It was a parable in miniature: was that Bible better kept safe as a collector's item, or brought into the hurly-burly of life to risk being creased or battered?**

Is God's word supposed to be kept untouched by the grubbiness of daily life or, like the Word himself, should it be part of our everyday existence, working in our communities like yeast in dough? Jesus wasn't afraid to risk mixing with people with infectious diseases and infectious lifestyles; he knew he could bring only healing and wholeness. His word, surely, is also meant to bring healing and wholeness, not kept on a shelf?

What might it mean, to bring the Bible out into the communities we live and work in? For some it might mean finding ways to open up the Bible as a family and allow its challenge and comfort to get to work in family life. The new website www.faithinhomes.co.uk has some friendly easy ideas to help families enjoy the Bible together.

For others, it might mean thinking about what the **Bible says in a different way: not just 'How can the passage I'm reading help me through today?' but 'What might God need me to bring to my office, school, factory floor or hospital through this passage? Who might I need to bring this message to today?' and having our eyes and ears open to recognise opportunities to share some appropriate and timely story, thought or opinion that has been shaped by God's story.**

The main way the Bible will be shared is not through **writing its words on billboards but by 'gossiping' it as good news and living it out.** This is how our communities can be healed.

-
- Regular Activities in the Church Hall •
- NB the Church Hall is not usually available for late night •
- Discos •
-
- Pre-school Playgroup: •
- Mondays to Fridays, 9am - 11.30am and •
- 12.30pm – 3pm •
-
- Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts meet on •
- weekday evenings. See page 2 for details. •
-
-

Lucy Moore, Messy Church Team Leader