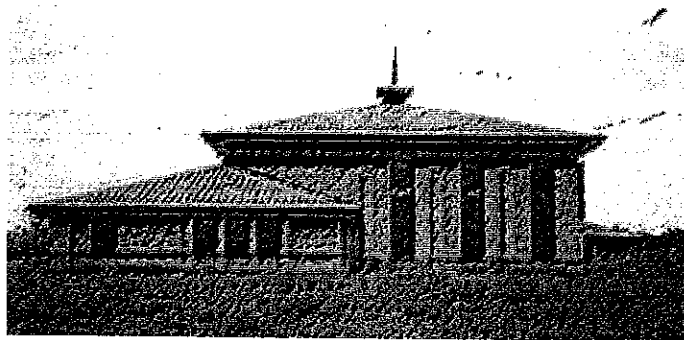


Christ the King

Deeble Road

Kettering



Church History 2009

40th Anniversary Edition

PREFACE

65 years ago this estate was just fields—wonderful fields where I played. Also from Junior School, we were given one field to study for a year. Mine had a spring in it, where I was fascinated watching the wildlife. 44 years ago a road and houses were built here and 42 years ago we moved into our new house, only to find that we had a spring across the road, and I worked out that it was 'my' spring from all those years ago.

Life on the estate was very peaceful as we had no shops, schools or buses (and not many cars either). The estate was separated in two, the bottom being Ise Village and the top Lodge Farm, only being accessible via Barton Road or a dirt track between the two estates. Sunday mornings found my three daughters aged 4, 6 and 10, and myself, walking to St Andrew's Church, which was a long way for a 4 year old who has always had little legs—and they were getting shorter by the week! So when I saw that St Botolph's were thinking of starting a monthly service at Henry Gotch Infants School we decided to go, especially as the girls went to school there, and I had been there too.

There were very few of us at those services but we all enjoyed them. John Phillips, the St Botolph's Curate, said they prayed a new church would grow on the estate as the estate grew. This didn't seem very possible as churches were closing, not building new ones, but we were very happy to join them in praying for a new church.

When Millbrook Infant School was built we moved there, then to the Junior School, which wasn't very satisfactory, as we wanted a church 'home' and 9 Churchill Way couldn't have coped with the growing numbers—so great joy when the Diocese allowed us to have the Wooden Hut! We continued to pray for a 'proper' building and started a Building Fund—we had two collection plates, one for the Building Fund and the other normal one.

We could all multi-task in those days and thought nothing of doing Sunday School and getting the coffee ready at the same time. Wouldn't be allowed now! Or doing Crèche and doing a reading—but I drew the line at doing the Sermon, although members of the Youth Group did!

CHRIST THE KING The Early Years

'This short history is dedicated to the Glory of God, who by His grace has made all this possible.'

Standing at the top of Deeble Road and looking up towards Warkton Lane in 1965, an idyllic scene of meadows, a stream, and farm buildings would have met your gaze, but in one short year this vista was destined to change into what was to become the largest estate in Britain.

The land at the bottom end of the estate had been purchased by Dares builders, and before a brick was laid to the proposed new houses a metalled road and a bridge capable of supporting heavy traffic had to be built. This was duly constructed, the road reaching as far up as Churchill Way. The new houses fronted the lower part of Deeble Road, and for a short way along St John's Road.

In 1967/8 Drury's the builders purchased the site at the top of the estate, and their first priority was the houses. The road construction followed later and vehicles used the cinder tracks to get to Warkton Lane for their exit from the estate as there was no egress between the two halves of what was then called Ise Village and Lodge Farm because the builders had erected bollards to define territory.

After Dares and Drurys several other builders appeared on the scene and although there were many houses, there were no amenities. Shopping still had to be ferried from the town, there was no bus service, no pub, no school, and **'NO CHURCH!'**

In the early days children attended either Barton Seagrave or Henry Gotch Schools, and it is to the latter that we owe our humble beginnings of the Church we know today as 'Christ the King.'

Because of the convenient train travel between Kettering and London, many commuters had bought houses on the estate and so had left their home churches. It became apparent, that having fulfilled physical needs for a home, it was time to look towards the spiritual needs also.

Some of the newcomers had already found a home in other churches in the town, but the staff of St Botolphs, Barton Seagrave, led by Rev Michael Farrer, realised that with the growth of the estate a church would be necessary to proclaim God's word and serve the people, and it would be well to establish a nucleus of worshippers for when that time should come.

But where to hold a service? There was no building on the estate large enough. The nearest largest building was Henry Gotch Infant School and it was to them that St Botolph's turned.



In August 1969 a service was started with, at first, a small congregation of nine adults, and a Sunday School with eleven children under the auspices of Rev John Phillips, a curate at St Botolph's who himself lived on the estate.

Some of the original members still worship with us at Christ the King.

In 1971 we were happy to welcome the erection of a new school in Churchill Way, and the Church was allowed to move into this new building.



On October 10th 1971, the first Harvest Thanksgiving service was celebrated in the new school, conducted by the Rev Graham Bell, who had succeeded Rev John Phillips as curate. The produce given at the service was sent to 'Homes for the Elderly' and the collection amounted to £5.39.

Word about the church spread, and soon the congregation grew from the original twenty to around one hundred members. Sunday School expanded into two classes and a CYFA group which met in one of the homes on the estate was also begun.

Services at the new school were fortnightly events due to the fact that the school was only available for these periods. Communion services were celebrated on alternate Sundays at St Edmunds, Warkton. Our first weekly service in the school was on February 4th 1973, which was a Communion Service with twenty five communicants.

Baden-Powell groups were not forgotten in the church, and parade services were monthly events adding colour and praise to our worship.

During Graham Bell's time with us he organised 'House Groups', a new concept to some of us who had only known teenage Bible Classes, and these groups were instrumental in helping us to deepen our faith in God.

We also had a Central Group where we met together with Warkton members, and enjoyed a lively time of praise, fellowship and worship at 9, Churchill Way, which had been purchased by the Diocese in 1971 as an incumbent's residence, but was almost an annexe of the church.

One of the many events held at No. 9 was a Pram Club which attracted several young mums to the church.

Fellowship and worship were prominent activities in our church life. As well as our own Central meeting with Warkton, all three churches met at St Botolphs Church house and many long lasting friendships were forged between us.

As we grew together at Millbrook School it became obvious that we were feeling restricted. We wanted a 'home of our own'; somewhere we could use during the week as Churchill Way was bulging at the seams. We needed more space.

In October 1974, while we were still at Millbrook School, we held a Tent Mission called 'Your Life in Hi Hands'. To many of us this was a new idea. We had activities for the children after school, plenty of free literature, and last, but not least, excellent speakers. This mission, although very wet and muddy, was well attended. However, many who came said that they did not know that there was a church on the estate, mainly because they had been looking for the usual type of building!

These comments made us more determined to show the presence of God on the estate, and they were helpful in teaching us to look at the way we showed Him in our lives.

We realised that people wanted to see actual visible buildings. Worship in a school was too reminiscent of 'Assemblies'. To this end a Building Committee was formed to investigate suitable sites, land prices, architects etc., and a Building Fund was started.

The Diocese of Peterborough was informed of our need and kindly provided us with a Porta-Kabin and Kettering Council allowed this to be situated adjacent to Millbrook Infants School in Churchill Way. The amenities of water, sewage, electricity etc, were our own responsibility. We became known as 'Millbrook Church' simply because we met in the school and in the Centre.

One stipulation by the Diocese was that the Church building (Porta-Kabin) should be used not only for church services and activities, but that the estate might also benefit in other ways. This would show that the church was part of the community, and the revenue for lettings would help to defray the running costs.



At last the great day arrived!

On February 9th 1975, we moved into our new home.

This was a successful venture. The Centre was let to the Rainbow Play Group on a daily basis, Monday to Friday; on Saturday mornings to a Dancing Class, whilst evenings were taken up by Womens Institute, Bicycle Club, Central Meeting and Youth Club. (The latter had already been started much earlier at Warkton Village Hall, but transferred to the estate where we often had ninety to one hundred children attending during the course of the evening. Two stalwarts, took the sevens to nines, while others battled with the tens to teens. It was a huge success – especially with parents!)

Birthday parties occupied Saturday afternoons and evening sessions, leaving Sundays free for our own worship.

On May 18th 1975, a short time after the Centre was set in place, Bishop Douglas Feaver in all his regalia came to dedicate the building. It was a really great day for us. The culmination of much hard work of fund raising, donations, and, of course prayer.

Each family had bought a chair, and some had given sums of money to buy bibles, service books, and hymnals. Of course we had not neglected the other important items for fellowship – the tea cups and pots!

Sunday School classes, including a Pathfinder group, were moved into the new Centre, but we had reckoned without the increase in numbers.

The crèche children sat on a large carpet, screened off by a curtain in the main worship area. The fives to nines occupied a space between the entrance hall and the toilets, and the tens to teens, (all seventeen of them!) were squashed into the kitchen area.

It was obvious that we would have to remove the Sunday School back into the Infant School, so each Sunday, hail, rain, or shine, about forty or more children and teachers could be seen haring along Churchill Way to their activities.

We spent many happy hours worshipping in the Centre. Services were still formal, but more and more choruses were being sung, and the arrival of a guitarist added zest to the music. He recalls the many times he was playing at services in the Centre, that a stray ball from the tinies behind the curtain area would appear between his legs, to be surreptitiously fielded by one of the 'front row forwards' in the congregation.

In 1976 Graham Bell left us for pastures new, and for a few weeks Rev David Seccombe from Australia led our services, but shortly afterwards we were joined by a curate, also from 'Down Under', the Rev Bill France.

During this time the Friday Youth Club was closed to those children who did not attend the church, bringing it down to a more manageable size.

The church congregation was itself increasing and when Bill France left us in November 1978, we temporarily moved, with the consent of the Kettering Council, into the Junior School for a few weeks, then back again into the Infant School.

During the interregnum, while we were waiting for a new minister, we were led by the staff at St Botolph's and other visiting preachers until the arrival of Rev Paul Kirby in July 1979.

In December 1979 Paul found a new home for us in Kingsley School, Churchill Way, where we stayed for several weeks.

Kingsley School was ideal for us in terms of space for we had room not only for an adult worship area, but also for a Junior church and a swimming pool for Baptisms.



Our Central meetings and other activities were still held for a time at the Millbrook Centre, but later on these were also transferred to Kingsley.

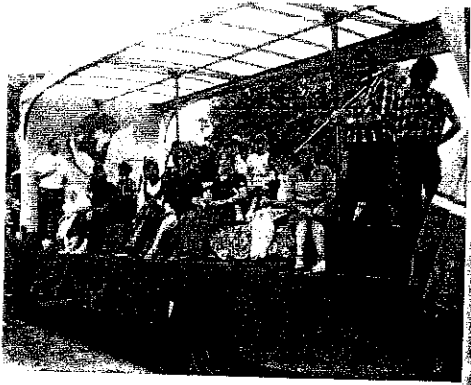
The number of communicants had now risen to eighty members.

One highlight of our Church activity was the Harvest Supper. This was started by Paul Kirby and enjoyed by all as we shared together, not just a meal but the Lord's Supper also.

About this time a Dance and Drama group was formed and playlets and dance took place during some of the services in line with the theme of the sermon. These proved helpful especially among the younger members of the congregation who often found the visual impact easier to understand.

During 1982 we held a mission weekend. One of our speakers was Rev Colin Urquhart whose books have been a help to many of us, and the chief speaker was Canon Harry Sutton.

In August 1982 the church entered a float in the Kettering Carnival. The theme was 'Christianity throughout the World'. Members dressed in the costumes of various countries, and together with the music group, guitars, electric piano, and singers, they proclaimed the word of the Lord in hymns and choruses and handed out literature as they rode along, enjoying the camaraderie and witnessing to their faith.



August 1983 saw the departure of Paul Kirby and his family to Bidston, Liverpool, and once again we were left without a minister.

The attendance at services had risen to an average of one hundred and fifty with nearly one hundred communicants, and collections had soared to £150 per week.

The Building Fund too had not been neglected, although with no permanent building on the horizon, contributions had been slower to arrive.

After yet another interregnum, the Rev Ian Blake joined us in February 1984 and we had yet another 'Mini Mission' in July 1984, taken by Rev Keith de Berry.

1985 was a year of great excitement!

In March most of the church congregation spent a weekend away together at Hothorpe Hall, near to Market Harborough. It was an enjoyable time of getting to know God and each other better.

July saw our first big venture in combining music with drama when a production of 'Daniel' written by two members of the congregation was performed to all three churches, Barton, Warkton, and Millbrook in Kingsley School Hall.



The greatest happening however, was the start of the new, long awaited,

CHURCH BUILDING!

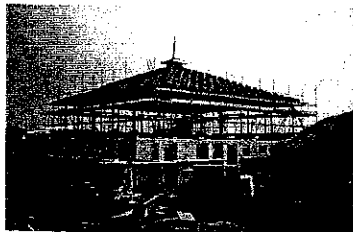
The site of 'Christ the King' owes its all to Warkton. In the early 1970's Warkton Poores Field Trusts granted permission for a church to be built on the site, but almost immediately a snag arose. The land was considered 'Green-Lands' by the Country Commission and the erection of a building would change the definition into 'White and Green-Land'. It was not until 1983 that permission was granted for a change to the definition. The Church Commissioners would allow us to build a church only on the understanding that the church should be of the old style with a bell and a steeple. The members of the Building Committee were dismayed by this news, and also by the fact that they could not get access onto the Church land because the front strip was owned by a builder who also wanted some of the church land for his own use.

For several years it was stalemate, then in 1985 both Commissioners and builders relented and the new building could proceed in the style that we needed and which we see today.



What joy there was when the first turf was cut? How long would it take the builders? What would the furnishings be like? We pored over the plans and wondered.....

By 1986 the building, or rather the shell of the building, and the main services of gas, water, electricity and sewerage were completed, from money loaned by the Diocese. The interior decoration, furnishings, kitchen equipment, books and all other necessities required by a growing and lively church had to be provided by the congregation, who were very generous in their donations to God's house on the estate.



We now had to choose a name for ourselves, so with much prayerful consideration, the name of 'Christ the King' was chosen.

All was now ready and we looked forward to moving in.

Our church then was ready for occupation, but until the land had been finally ceded to us by the Church Commissioners, we could not move.

Unfortunately, we could not stay at Kingsley. The school had contracted for new floors to be laid, so we were homeless once again, yet in sight of our new home.

We were very grateful to Kingsley for our long stay there. Several of the members had been baptised in the pool, and the school hall had echoed to the activities of the Friday Night Youth Club. We took with us some very happy memories of our meetings there.



The Ise Lodge Community Centre took pity on us, and from July until November 1987 we held our services in their Hall.

Papers were signed at last, and a few Sundays before the building was dedicated on December 19th 1987 by Bishop Bill Westwood we moved into our new church.



Years of prayer, planning and preparation had come to fruition. We gave thanks to God for this new and exciting chapter in the life of our church. Several prophetic messages were given proclaiming us to be a 'light on the hill'. What would God have in store for us? We believed He would continue to bless and guide us as His body in this place.

Numbers attending Sunday worship continued to grow and it was not long before space was at a premium. The building was designed to seat a congregation of 250, but changes were now necessary to allow for further growth.

A decision was made, after seeking God's will, that two morning services were necessary. When there was an almost even split from the congregation between the two services, we believed God's hand was upon the chosen course of action. The two services began in September 1993.

So what now? Of one thing we are sure; by earnestly seeking God's will through prayer, we will continue to look forward to all that God has in store for us, as we continue to give glory and praise to His name.



Christ the King is part of the Church of England

Part 2

1994 to 2009

The Church in the Parish

**“Growing Together
Deeper in Discipleship,
Closer in Friendship and Further in Partnership”**

***I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and
I in you, you will bear much fruit. Apart from me you can do
nothing***

John 15:5

September 2009

CHRIST THE KING 1994 to 2009

I want to begin this further history of Christ the King Church by repeating the dedication that I used to begin the first:

"This short history is dedicated to the Glory of God, who by His grace has made all this possible."

In writing this history, I wish to state that it is, by default, a personal view. However, in reading it, I hope that you will understand, even if you are a relative newcomer to this church, how God, by His grace, has gently led us through both the difficult and the good times. From that first service in August 1969 to the present day, our faithfulness to Him, our reliance on Him and our expectancy of His Holy Spirit to be ever-present in our church, has been blessed by His love and care for us."

As a long-term member of our church remarked, "It has been so noticeable how, for each stage of our journey, the right P.C.C. was put in place to carry out that particular stage, and how, as our ministry needs have grown, so has God brought forward and blessed exactly the right people to lead that particular ministry."

The verse, in which Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful," has proved to be a guiding scripture that has stood our church well.

The Church

My first history ended in September, 1993, the time when, after we had moved into our present building, we had outgrown our original 10 o'clock service and decided, after much prayer, to split into the present format of 9 and 11 o'clock services. God's hand was evidently guiding us because on polling the congregation's opinion on who wanted to go to each service, we found that the split was almost exactly 50/50.

After being used to such a crowded building, how empty the worship area seemed after the split, but now, as we look around the crowded worship area during our services, we can see how God has blessed us with a steady, continued growth. We have now reached the position that we were in, in 1993, when we have begun to pray about and explore the various options regarding how to deal with this opportunity. At the moment, we have had various plans put forward by architects dealing with future extensions to the building. How these plans progress, and what time-scale they entail, are very much in God's hands at the present, but we know that when it is right, God will ensure that they will bear fruit.

In June 1994, we were asked by the B.B.C. to host the Radio 4 Morning Prayer. This obviously caused great excitement and so we gathered in good time to take part in sound checks etc. in preparation for the service. Then the moment arrived when we were 'on air'. Our concern was to put across the gospel message of the love of Jesus, His forgiveness and His saving grace.

As a church that places much emphasis on seeking God's guidance through prayer, it is natural that this has played a big part in the life of our church. Over the years, we have had prayer days for specific purposes and days and periods of prayer solely to remain at the centre of God's will. An example of days of prayer for specific purposes was the day when we gathered together to pray about the purchase of a house to meet our need to house extra staff. After the church was built, 9 Churchill Way continued to be used as a home for Mike Talbot, our Curate-in-charge. When we became a parish in December 1995, Mike became our first vicar. Before our present vicarage was built, we were given a curate, Paddy McGlinchey. He needed somewhere to live, so we gathered together to ask God to guide us in making the right decision. At the same time, we held a gift day where, after much personal prayer, people were asked to give what they felt God was asking them, to contribute to the purchase of a house. Again, God blessed us in the generosity of those who gave, in that much of its purchase price was raised on that day. A house in Rannoch Close was bought and into it moved Paddy, our first curate.



Mike Talbot left us on Easter Sunday, 2002 and moved out of the vicarage soon after that. He had served us for twelve years, firstly as curate-in-charge and then as vicar.

Other prayer days for specific purposes followed. In January 2002, we held a prayer and fasting day, asking God for guidance in the choosing of our second vicar, Steve Benoy, who arrived in July and was inducted as our vicar in November.

In January and April 2006, a new sight met the eyes of those entering the worship area: a 24/7 prayer tent had been erected, suitably furnished both for adults and children. This proved to be a blessing to us for many different reasons, both personal and corporate. It was used by many to bring their own needs to God but also to ask God to continue to bless and guide us as His church on this estate. It was also used by many children for their own prayers.

As a church fellowship, we have always been concerned with tithing what God has given to us and so part of our giving has always been used to support mission in various parts of the world, including England. For several years, we have supported missionaries in South America, Nepal, Europe and Africa. It is exciting, too, to have been given the opportunity to support those who have left our own fellowship to follow God's leading to other countries and other situations in this country.



The appointment of both a parish administrator to help with all the every day office tasks and a site supervisor who is able to organise the constant moving of furniture as well as looking after the building have made the running of the day-to-day church activities so much easier.

Grapevine

For those who for whatever reason were unable to come to church on Sunday mornings, we began a service we called, "Tuesday at Eight". After a little over a year, the group behind this service joined with the work that was being developed on the Grange Estate. However, the need for an alternative to Sunday mornings on the Ise Estate remained, and so in Easter 2006, we began an all-age Sunday teatime service.

It was soon found that bigger premises were needed for the tea and so it was decided to approach "Kingsley School" on Churchill Way, where during the 1970's and 80's, we had held our services before moving into the church. We were so grateful to the school who demonstrated their faith in us by welcoming us again onto their premises. In Easter 2006, it adopted the name "Grapevine". A commemorative grapevine was planted beside the entrance to the church. After being led for many years by Peter Leech, our children's minister, it is now led by Paul Frost, our current curate.

Eagle's Wings

In 1999, after much prayer and deliberation, we began to develop links with St. Mary's Church, Kettering, with regard to developing a new ministry on the Grange Estate. This work grew out of the earlier work of one of our members, called "Take The Plunge", who had initiated and developed children's clubs there: "Jump" for teenagers and "Jump Start" for children, both after school and on Saturday mornings.

This developed to include building relationships with the parents of these children through home visiting, where practical help was offered for a wide range of family and social issues. As this work grew, some families from Christ the King felt led by God to move to the Grange Estate, so that they could make their home among the growing congregation, which had begun to meet in a building owned by St. Mary's. Currently, it meets in the Methodist church.

A new development in the life of the Grange church was the appointment, in 2005, of Richard and Mandy Priestley, both evangelists with the Church Army, as Grange Church and Community Workers. We saw how God was blessing this work when the Diocese agreed to both fund them and provide a home for them. Now, we await with anticipation for what God will do next, as Richard is moving into ordained ministry in Mawsley. Mandy is now commencing training for ordination, and new leaders for what is now called Eagles Wings will have to be appointed.

Outreach

Outreach has always been very important to us as a church. Historically, because so much of our energies have been focussed on winning souls for Christ, it is the reason God has blessed us with growth. For many of the people at Christ the King, it is "the very air we breathe." It is this concentrating on actively bringing God's word to those whom we meet, and since December 1995, especially to our parish, that has informed our thinking and our praying. Apart from individual witnessing, of whom very many at our church have been, and are, are a blessing to others, we have put on many events with the specific purpose of saving souls. As ever, prayer has been the foundation and corner stone of each event.

One of the first of these was "Make Way", where we took Graham Kendrick's musical around the estate from the back of a lorry. Because this took place in 1989, it is outside the scope of this booklet. However, it was such an important event in the life of our church, both for building relationships among us as a family, and introducing our church to the estate, that no mention of outreach would be complete with out it.



One of the most significant of these outreach events has been the "Jesus Video Project" which took place in the three years of 1997, 1998 and 1999.

It began in true Christ the King fashion with a prayer day, asking God to bless our efforts for Him. The Project was led for the first year by 'Agape' who ran a training programme in church for those taking part. After that, we ran our own training for those who had not been involved before. The Project very much gripped the imagination of the church during the three Saturdays each year in which it took part.

For the nearly fifty people who took part over the three years that it took to cover the parish, it was their first experience of door-knocking and taking God's word out to people in their homes. Although most were nervous to begin with, all came back with the knowledge they had been blessed by doing it. It also had, as a whole church effort, the effect of blessing us as a family with a shared experience that helped us in cementing relationships among ourselves.

Other events followed. Outreach events for men were held at a local snooker club and the "Rock and Bowl" where men were encouraged to invite friends and work colleagues to hear about Jesus from speakers with a national reputation.

The ladies also had their own events under the umbrella of "Community" where 'Link-up' evenings took place for those mums whose children came to the various mums and tots groups. At these evenings, the mums who came had the opportunity to not only hear a renowned speaker, but also to talk with other Christian mums.

It can be said that all of our children's and youth work, our over 50's work and our daily lives are pointed to bringing God's word to those who don't know Him, but these areas will be covered in turn.

We had a visit by "Salt Mine" for our Mission Week, launched by a special service in May 1994 where we held various events to encourage our neighbours to come to coffee mornings and evening events.

Doug Barnett spoke at Thornton House, at the Pram Club reunion, at a bring-and-share lunch and Pat-a-Cake Praise. At the same time Fiona Castle spoke to the ladies. Some of the other events during that week included an Over 50's tea party, a men's breakfast, a fun day, a magazine evening, a Colour-me-beautiful event, mission meals and a mission ramble. Lots of new people came to the under 5's groups as a result of the mission.

Our very first Alpha Course, which we called "The Assault Course" took place in June 1994. It was led by a couple who have been very active in mission during their life in church. Later, because the name "Alpha" had become so widely known in the country, we decided to use that name. Since then, Alpha has been a very important ingredient in the life of our church and has resulted in many coming to know Christ.

In September 1994, one of our members began to lead baptism visits, using a course entitled "Good News Down Your Street". Many of these took place over the years, resulting in commitments being made and babies being baptised. That same person, from November 1997 to 2009, became a Licensed Parish Evangelist.

Currently, one of the regular outreach activities we are involved in is "Door to Door". This takes place every three months and involves visiting homes in the parish to tell them about the church and its activities.

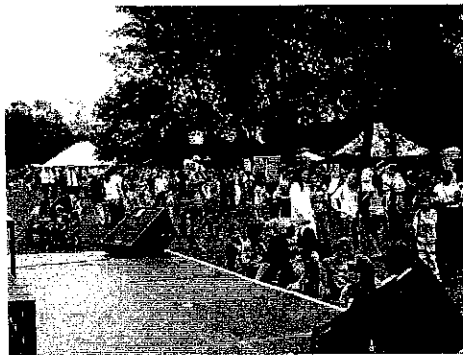
In March 1996, we delivered our first termly "Parish Magazine" to every family in the parish.

Two events became regular items on the Christ the King calendar: the children's Holiday Club and the Over 50's "Holiday at Home." The Holiday Club, beginning in 1994, grew out of various mum's-and-tots summer events. The first Holiday at Home took place in July 1996. In that same year, the first Luncheon Club began. We had twenty people at that first meeting!



As mentioned earlier, evangelism has always been an important and an integral part of Christ the King and much of our energies have been put into sustaining it. Much has gone on of which space precludes mentioning. However, it can be said that one of the reasons God has so blessed us as a church is because we have always been more interested in the salvation of others than in our own comfort zones.

In 2000, like many organisations across the country, we were wondering how to mark the 2000th anniversary of Our Lord's birth. We decided upon an event for all the parish. It would comprise a series of floats from parish-based organisations which would process through the parish and lead down to the field above the Ise Brook where fun events, stalls and games would add to the party atmosphere. The concept behind the event was that it would be to be a free occasion, put on for the benefit of the parish. From the numbers attending, it proved to be a popular decision.



After a year without such an event, our Queen's Jubilee gave us the excuse to hold a similar event in 2002. In 2003, it was given its new name of, "Lark in the Park", again proving to be a popular event with our parishioners. It has been held every year since then, having become somewhat of a fixture in the church's calendar, and continuing to be held to bless our parish.

Growing out of "Lark in the Park" came, "Lark in the Dark". This is a youth-orientated event, held as its name suggests, in the evening, with the same philosophy: to bless those who come.

Other groups that operate under the auspices of the church are King Krafters, a group set up to cater for those who enjoy craft-making activities and King Fit, a keep-fit group for older people, run by a church member with many years experience in helping older people to maintain a healthy exercise regime.

Children and Families

Another integral part of our work has been our children's work. From those very early days in the Millbrook Centre, when only a curtain separated the Sunday School from the services, it has grown enormously, helped without doubt, by the dedicated work of so many over the years. Including the parents of these children, and especially the non church-going parents, was always seen as essential to the receiving of God's blessings. As such, from the very earliest days, events have been arranged to draw in parents.

Regular Link-up evenings with titles such as "Poetry and Pizza" and subjects like Christian beauty therapy , the first of which took place in 1993, were arranged to, as their title suggests, link up with these parents. Numbers were never less than fifty and often well over a hundred, showing that parents appreciated the opportunity to have some 'me time'.

In those early days in 1993, the groups were Pram Club (up to 18 months), Pat-a-cake (up to five), Pat-a-cake plus (also up to five but with a special slot for the adults) and Footprints which was a mid-week Sunday school. In conjunction with the children's clubs, services especially for the children were an important part of the work.

In 1993, an under 5's harvest service was held. Christingle services, Carols Round The Tree (changed to Carols round the Crib), Carols by Candlelight and carol services have taken place designed to appeal to the parents and families of those children who attend one of the children's clubs.

It was realised that all the children's work so far had majored mostly on mums, although dads were, of course, very welcome, and so, in May 1996, a Dads and Tots group began. This took place on a Saturday morning so that dads could have an uninterrupted time with their children.

The children's holiday club began in 1994. The name of the first club was "Chatterbox".

In 2004, our first children's minister, Peter Leech, was appointed. In his time work amongst children and families really grew. Holiday Club and Kings Club doubled in size, we provided space for a community pre-school Muppetts to meet in church, and our own under 5's groups grew immensely.

There has been a big increase in schools work, with participation in assemblies, taking lessons and taking the lead in developing a parenting course in partnership with the Infant School. Much of this work was built upon the ground work undertaken by a member who built this work up with a quality of presentation that was welcomed into many local primary and secondary schools and enhanced the reputation of Christ the King as a provider of trustworthy lessons.

Youth Work

In 1997, Matt Taylor, our first youth worker was licensed. He developed the work into the format that is generally in place today, with schools work, clubs, visits, activity holidays and residential stays. Steve Tennant replaced him in 2001. He has built on this work tremendously and has further enhanced the reputation of the youth work of Christ the King in the schools and across the town. Junction 7 draws together a wide range of young people at the Keystone Centre on Rockingham Road for socializing, worship and teaching.

Wide and varied are the activities undertaken through the work of the youth ministry: sports, residential visits, breakfast and after school clubs, canoeing and outward-bound activities etc.

This work has been further developed with the start-up, in September 2006 of "Kettering Perspective Trust", a school/church initiative in which both the church and "Ise Community College" have taken financial responsibility not only for the employment of a youth worker, but also for training of future youth workers. The list of involved schools has grown to include "Bishop Stopford School" and "Southfields School for Girls". What began as a breakfast club in I.C.C., now includes taking lessons, mentoring and supporting pupils, arranging activities and, of course, demonstrating through practical and spiritual means, the love of Jesus for His world.

Over 50's

This work grew from many and varied strands. From first moving into the building, in 1989, activities have been provided to cater for the Over 50's.

The church member who ran "Community", which was the umbrella name for all the work involving reaching out into the estate, ranging from services at Thornton House, an old peoples home, to liaising with the mum's and tots group, the community Centre over 50's group, in fact, anything that was going on, on the estate, realised that there was a growing opportunity to provide similar activities for those at the other end of the age spectrum.

The Over 50's Tea Party grew out an invitation to those who attended the Community Centre Over 50's group and to the grandparents of those children who came to the various Pat-a-Cake groups. It began in March 1994 with a Palm Sunday tea party where over a hundred came.

Services at Thornton House took place every fortnight, alternating between a communion service and a Sunday afternoon service.

The over 50's work really took off after this member attended a course in November 1994 at St. Botolph's church. It grew to include Link-Up evenings for the over 50's every half-term, where entertainment was provided, a luncheon club that began in 1996 with 71 attending the first lunch, a "Holiday at Home" which was an annual week of activities for older people ranging from craft work to film shows, yearly re-unions for members of the various clubs, a weekly "Friendship Club", beginning in February 2002, with 24 at the first meeting, a half-termly news letter that grew out of the realisation that so much information was going out to the over 50's that there was a need to organise it more.

Growing out of the "Help I'm a Parent" course, came "Help I'm a Grandparent". This course, held in June 2005, helped a group of ten grandparents to engage with their grandchildren.

It was realised that some of the over 50's preferred a more formal type of worship with older hymns, than a typical Christ the King style service, and so, in March 2005, the first "Songs of Praise" service took place with 71 attending. This grew to a fairly regular attendance of over eighty.

In January 2002, the over 50's work was all joined under the name E.P.I.C. (Each Person Is Chosen). Further development happened when we appointed our first Over 50's minister, Peter Simmons, in July 2006. He was licensed in Oct. of that year. In 2008, a further name change was decided upon. E.P.I.C. became H.O.P.E. (Helping Older People Engage) and the Holiday at Home became "Rendezvous".

Pastoral Work

It has long been recognised, and indeed forms part of our mission statement, how important it is to demonstrate the love of Jesus for each one of us in a practical and caring way. This emphasis on the deepening of meaningful relationships can be said to be, following after Jesus' example, the 'cement' that glues together the bed rock of our church. Too many to mention are the examples of this love: prayer, visiting, a welcoming smile, taking a meal around to someone's home, baby sitting, offering a friendly ear to listen, etc., etc

Another way in which the pastoral work of the church has grown has been the way that men's and women's ministry has grown.

"Ladies' Days" have been a part of our church for many years. They have provided a popular vehicle for ladies to meet together to listen to a speaker, worship and pray together, take part in discussion groups and share a meal. Recognising the importance of this, two women's groups have started to provide for this need. "Weff" (Women Enjoying Fellowship Together), which began in the "Isebrook School" but now meets in Kingsley School, is a weekly gathering for ladies that provides many and varied activities ranging from reading groups, sports activities, nature walks and craft activities to fun and friendship over shared meals. The other group is "Manna", a weekly Bible study and discussion group that takes place in the church, where issues arising from the passages studied can be explored.

It was realised that if the ladies could benefit from this, then so could the men. A men's group was begun to provide opportunities for men to meet together. Activities include Bible study, often helped by watching informative videos, sharing meals, generally in a local restaurant and country walking.

Developments

An exciting new (or should that be revisited?) development in June 2009, is the move from home groups being more pastorally-based to include the opportunity for continuing growth and development, with new leaders being developed from home-grown, God-called people. It is very much hoped that this will increase both the importance of home groups in the church, seen as very necessary as the church grows bigger, to relationship building which is part of our mission statement, and their ability to grow by providing a welcoming, loving environment for those who do not yet know the saving grace of Jesus.

The Future

The future for Christ the King, as always, is in God's hands. However, we know with absolute certainty, that we are loved and cared for by a gracious God who has our best interests in His heart. We know that as long as we remain faithful to His Word and His example, as show by His Son, He will continue to guide us along paths He has chosen. Through prayer, a close attention to the Bible and trying to live lives based on the example of Jesus, we know that our church will forever be built on the rock of a salvation people.

From the very earliest days of our church, we have thought of ourselves as a pilgrim people. This was demonstrated practically in those early days through our many moves from Henry Gotch Infant School, Millbrook School, the hut on Churchill Way known as the Millbrook Centre, Kingsley School, the Community Centre and then finally, our new church building where we adopted the name of Christ the King.

Although we are, at the moment, physically settled, we still consider ourselves a pilgrim people, not so much in where we meet, but in our readiness to move onwards to wherever God wants us to be, knowing that only by being that, will we continue to be blessed by God.

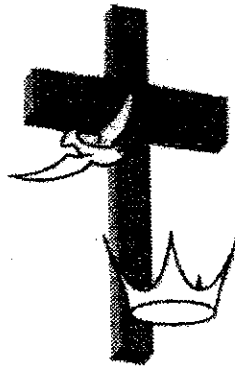
In ending, a reading that God gave one of our members from Deuteronomy 2 v 7 has shown itself to be very apt: "The Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched you over your journey through this vast desert. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything."

And the next forty years?

May we continue to be blessed by Our Lord, who by His grace, makes all things possible.



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By
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