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| Sunday 3 February | Final service of thanksgiving at Emmanuel Hall, 3.15 pm |
| Monday 4 February | Phoenix New Year Social, Church Hall, 7.30 pm |
| Wednesday 6 February | Ash Wednesday Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by lunch |
| Sunday 10 February | Christian FAQs: The end of the world? 8 pm |
| Monday 11 February | Churches Together Lent courses start |
| Monday 18 February | Anchor: David Wiltshire, Elmbridge Boro Council, 7.30 for 8 pm |
| Tuesday 19-21 February | "Going on Safari" Holiday Club |
| Wednesday 20 February | Together in Prayer, Church Hall, 8 pm |
| Sunday 2 March | Ember Choral Society provide music at 6.30 service |
| Wednesday 5 March | Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch |
| Saturday 15 March | Handel's Messiah in church, Claygate Choral Society, 7.30 pm |
| Friday 25-27 April | Parish Weekend Away |
| Monday 2-6 June | Senior House Party at Pilgrim Hall |

REGULAR SUNDAY SERVICES

| | 8 am | 10 am | 6.30 pm |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1st Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | Morning Praise | Evening Prayer |
| 2nd Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | Morning Praise | Holy Communion Ord 1 |
| 3rd Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | All Age Service | Evening Prayer with prayer for healing |
| 4th Sunday | Holy Communion BCP | Holy Communion Ord 1 | Evening Prayer |
| 5th Sunday | Holy Communion BCP | Morning Praise | Evening Prayer |

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monthly on a Wednesday (see diary above): Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
 Alternate Wednesdays, at 10 am: Toddlers' Praise (in Church House)
 Every Wednesday, at 7 am: Prayers for 30 minutes (in the Quiet Room)
 Every Thursday, at 3.45 pm: Intercessions (in the Quiet Room)
 Monthly on a Thursday, at 11.45 am at Wingham Court: Holy Communion
 4th Thursday in month, at 11.30 am at the Day Centre: Holy Communion

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 YOUTH
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and a great deal more
 to keep you in touch
 with life at Holy Trinity

RECRUITMENT OF YOUTH MINISTER IS LAUNCHED

Advertisements have appeared in the national church press for a Director of Youth Ministry at Holy Trinity. The advertisement seeks someone with a proven track record in youth ministry and assures them of a senior role within our ministry team. The closing date for applications is Friday 29th February. The full text of the advertisement is reproduced on page 4.

Fuller information, including the job description, a person specification and background details on Holy Trinity and its youth work, has been added to the church website for the guidance of those considering applying for the post. We are seeking someone with gifts which include a committed evangelical Christian faith, a passion for, and experience of, mission among young people, and an ability to communicate with, motivate and lead both young people and adults.

VICAR: PHILIP PLYMING
 CURATE: TOM DARWENT
 ASSISTANT MINISTER: VALERIE BAGLEY
 ASSISTANT MINISTER: LINDA MORGAN
 DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES MINISTRY: ANDREW COWIE

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I am very grateful to all those who have taken the time to give feedback on the Vision Update that I shared at the services on 6th January. I thank God for the positive tone of virtually all the comments, including those that recognised that stepping out in faith will be demanding for us all. I have also had a large number of encouraging comments about the PCC reports which we have made available; as someone who had only a tangential role in their writing, I can endorse the view that they are really fine and helpful pieces of work. Do take the chance to read them if you can, and pray through their implications for, as I said on 6th January, it will demand more of us all to make the vision a reality as God leads us in 2008.

We will also need to continue to pray that God leads to the right staff to be with us at Holy Trinity. It was sad saying goodbye to Stuart and Suzie on the 20th January, but it was a great send-off and we are excited about the chapter opening up for them in north London. In the other direction it has been really good to welcome Matt Knight and Mike Harle onto the team in their respective roles, and the advert has already appeared for the Director of Youth Ministry post. Please pray for the right person to be appointed here, as it is a key post for the future growth of Holy Trinity. As the Vicar here my heart and concern are for people of every age, but I also recognise that we can and should do more to see more, deeper and closer followers of Jesus among those who are at the start of their lives and careers.

Vision and staffing apart, I am much encouraged by how the year has started. Highlights include

- 30 people doing the new Alpha course
- small group leaders training starting well
- two new post-Alpha small groups
- 3 new Pastoral Assistants starting their training in Guildford

There is no reason to be complacent, but I am thankful for people who are stepping out in faith and trying new things for God. That is an exciting place for us to be.

Finally, could I invite as many of you who can to join us for Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday, 6th February? These monthly services are followed up by a lovely lunch, and the combination of teaching, food and fellowship is much appreciated by those who come. Speaking personally, the chance to spend good quality time with the more senior members of the church is something I really value. I am praying for a really good start to our celebration of Lent, and hope you will be able to join us.

With my love and prayers

Philip



From the Parish Registers

We welcome into the family of the Church:

George Rowe
Colette Ruse
Andy Clifton
*(adult baptism / reaffirmation
on 20th January)*

We offer congratulations on the marriage of:

James Edward Cornthwaite and
Judith Clare Bell
(married on 22nd December)

We offer sympathy to the relatives and friends of:

Joan Longmuir
(15th December)
Lesley Curry
(18th December)
Christopher Fernando
(2nd January)
Pamela Habermel
(10th January)
Sarah Westerway
(10th January)
Marie Ellen Mears
(10th January)



Congratulations

to Dr David Barnardo on the award in the New Year Honours of the OBE for services to disadvantaged children and their families.

Parish Personalities

John Amos is this month's subject for the Insight Inquisition.

Where were you brought up?
In Ashford, Kent.

How long have you lived in Claygate?
Thirty seven years.

What do you like most about it?
Although growing, it retains its friendly village atmosphere.

And if there was one thing you could change?
Declare Claygate a development-free zone.

Where would you locate your ideal home?
Somewhere in the Yorkshire Dales.

What is the least welcome part of your daily round? Clearing up after cats that think our garden is a feline loo.

Which personal trait do you struggle most to overcome? Obsessive tidiness.

What food are you most partial to?
Basic, simple and English - ie. traditional roast, shepherds pie etc

And leave on the side of your plate?
Any food polluted with garlic.

What do you watch on television?

I haven't had a TV for a number of years - there is life without it!

What would your desert island book be?

Either Survival by Ray Mears or Boat Building for Beginners.

What is your favourite music?

Big band music of the 40s and 50s.

And your favourite hymn?

"How great thou art".

Which passage of the Bible is most telling for you personally?

In my pre-Christian life I was a compulsive worrier, therefore Matthew 6. 25-34.

Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?

To be able to iron double size fitted sheets without losing control of them and me.

TEXT OF OUR ADVERTISEMENT

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Holy Trinity Claygate is a large evangelical Anglican church with a vision for further growth. We believe that youth ministry is central to this growth; this new position will involve the development and implementation of our strategy for ministry among young people, including the formation of a youth congregation.

We are seeking a person with a proven track-record in youth ministry who can demonstrate

- clear leadership and strategic gifts
- a passion for evangelism and discipleship among young people
- the energy and ability to lead and develop volunteer teams

We can offer the successful candidate

- the chance to lead and shape new forms of church for young people
- a committed and passionate volunteer team, and young people who want to grow in faith
- a senior role within the ministry team
- a generous remuneration and housing package

Closing date for applications:

Friday 29 February

For more information see our website www.holytrinityclaygate.org.uk.

For an informal chat, call Philip Plymington on 01372 463603.

Magazine distribution

Merle Liddiard, *Insight's* Chief Distributor, who has coped for many years with the task of getting every month's issue out to its subscribers and gathering in their subscriptions, has now retired. Our warm thanks go to her for all her work, and also to Alex McJannet for taking over from her.

Stuart sent off in style

As this issue of *Insight* was being finalised, a large gathering met to send Stuart Wright on his way, with a lunch of soup and puddings served in the Church Hall to two sittings, to cater for the large numbers, a bouncy castle for the young and a gladiator pit for the young at heart, a presentation and tributes. Stu's eight years with Holy Trinity have been notable, and our prayers and good wishes go with him to St Mark's Tollington Park.

Response to Alpha is encouraging

Holy Trinity's new Alpha course started last month, with thirty guests taking part in it. As a consequence of the last course, which finished in November, two new post-Alpha groups comprising its participants are now meeting regularly.

New Pastoral Assistants

Caroline Fish, Jill Marsden and Clare Porter have just begun their Diocesan training with a view to being commissioned as Pastoral Assistants at Holy Trinity.

Seize the moment with Gift Aid

As *Insight* pointed out after the last Budget, the reduction in income tax rates from April will reduce the value of Gift Aid, meaning that Holy Trinity will lose over £7000 from the money it can reclaim from the Revenue. If you are a taxpayer and contemplating a donation to support the work of the church, remember that it will be more beneficial to do it before April!

Who are the Chosen People of God?

At January's Christian FAQs meeting, Stephen Sizer, Vicar of Christ Church Virginia Water and author of "Zion's Christian Soldiers" spoke about Israel and God's chosen people, discussing what the Bible really told us.

By way of introduction, Stephen commented that most of us tended not to question the oft-quoted assumption that the Jews were God's chosen people, and that this led many - and he quoted the political influence of some American Christian Zionists - to suggest this was good reason for the church to honour Israel and support it, receiving God's blessing in return. It was salutary to examine what the Bible actually said, in both Old and New Testaments.

Starting with Genesis 12.3, and considering a host of Old Testament references, Stephen argued that there was an inclusivity in what was said about the people of God, their inheritance and even the Temple. The right to a relationship with God

was open to all. The 'remnant', the minority called to be God's, were not only Jews. It was difficult to argue that God's promises were restricted to a particular race.

The New Testament was even clearer that racial descent gave no rights. The only references to the chosen were to Jesus and those who followed him. We all, Jew and Gentile, become the children of God through faith and trust in Jesus Christ. By his death, Jesus had broken down the wall between Jew and Gentile, and we should avoid all actions and attitudes which effectively re-erected it.

If you were unable to be present and are interested in the detail of Stephen's talk, you can listen to the recording on Holy Trinity's website.

Holy Trinity reaches around the world

Over Christmas, Philip found himself talking after a service to a family who were visiting back home after having moved to Australia. But, Down Under, they were able to keep in touch with Claygate and assured Philip that they still listened to Holy Trinity's sermons, courtesy of the recordings which are placed on our website.

Hearing such comments brings home the magnitude of the changes we have seen over recent years. With the church website now attracting 2000 visitors every month, we can only wonder in what other locations our sermons are heard - and how far afield *Insight* is being read!

A contemporary Gospel

*The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
Are read by more than a few.
But the one that is most read
and commented on
Is the Gospel according to you.
For we write a Gospel,
a chapter each day,
By the things we do
and the things we say.*

The next issue of Insight will cover Easter, and contributions should reach the Editor please by Saturday 16th February.

Phoenix arises

Since the former Men's Fellowship discontinued its meetings, a small "men's events" group has continued working behind the scenes (with the vicar's blessing) to discuss and plan possible activities for the coming year. The result is a new group named Phoenix.

The first event under the Phoenix banner will be a New Year Social, at which we will have a fish and chip supper and entertainment. This will take place in the Church Hall on Monday 4th February at 7.30 pm. The cost of the evening, including the supper, a non-alcoholic drink, a dessert and tea or coffee to conclude, will be £8 a head.

The supper will be followed by entertainment, which will include a slide show by Bob Burgess, and a surprise.

All former Men's Fellowship members (who should already have been contacted), their partners and friends will be most welcome to attend this event, plus any others who may be interested. Any enquiries may be addressed to Ken Hibberd (0208 398 7979) or Keith Have-lock (01372 464716).

Claygate Music Festival

The second Claygate Music Festival runs for two weeks from Saturday 1st March. All local residents should have received the full programme of events, twelve of which will take place in Holy Trinity.

Please note particularly that Ember Choral Society will be joining in the 6.30 service on Sunday 2nd March; and that

Handel's Messiah will be performed by Claygate Choral Society on Saturday 15th March at 7.30 pm (tickets £12.50).

FAQs (dv)

The February evening of Christian FAQs deals with the subject of "Is the end of the world going to happen" and will take place, God willing, under the leadership of Tom Darwent on Sunday 10th February at 8pm.

Emmanuel Hall

Representatives of Holy Trinity will be present at the final Service of Thanksgiving at Claygate Evangelical Church in Common Road at 3.15 pm on Sunday 3rd February, and all will be welcome. The service will celebrate exactly 75 years of Christian witness there, as well as the original vision of Philip Elliott in founding it.

Many readers will remember Philip Elliott, who founded, and ran for 50 years, the Claygate Bible Fellowship which met in Holy Trinity's Church Hall. In 1928 he established a new church community which at first met in the Girl Guides hut then in the Causeway. He subsequently purchased a plot of land in Common Road and got John Laing (later Sir John, of the building firm, and a man of strong Christian faith) to agree to build a hall on it at cost - a mere £512! It opened in January 1933, and John Laing himself conducted the first evening service.

Holy Trinity is taking over the premises, and will be developing its own Christian work there.

London Men's Convention

Philip will be taking a group to the Convention on Saturday 29th March. Its theme is "Recharged for maximum impact", and it is being held in the Royal Albert Hall from 10 am to 5 pm. Tickets cost from £25 to £30. If you are interested in going, please contact Maureen Webb in the Church Office.

Vision update

At all three services on 6th January Philip reported on Holy Trinity's vision process and outlined what we can expect to see happening over the next few months. The details are set out in *Insight's* centre pages this month.

Philip emphasised three subsidiary points: - that the whole process needed to be enveloped in prayer and that church members should continue to pray for what we were doing;

- it was important for Holy Trinity to be properly organised to achieve the vision, with a new Director of Youth Ministry, the appointment of Matt Knight (see last month's *Insight*) and Mike Harle (see right), and a well-focused staff team (see below);

- and that there was a challenge to church members to fund the vision.

The specific responsibilities in a revised leadership structure are as follows:

Philip is Director of Evangelism

Tom Darwent is Director of Discipleship

Valerie Bagley is Director of Pastoral Care

Andrew Cowie is Director of Children and Families Ministry

Linda Morgan is Director of Worship and Mission

Janet Watkins is Director of Central Support.

Lent begins

Ash Wednesday is on 6th February, and we have Holy Communion at 11 am. There is (see right) no pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, the 5th.

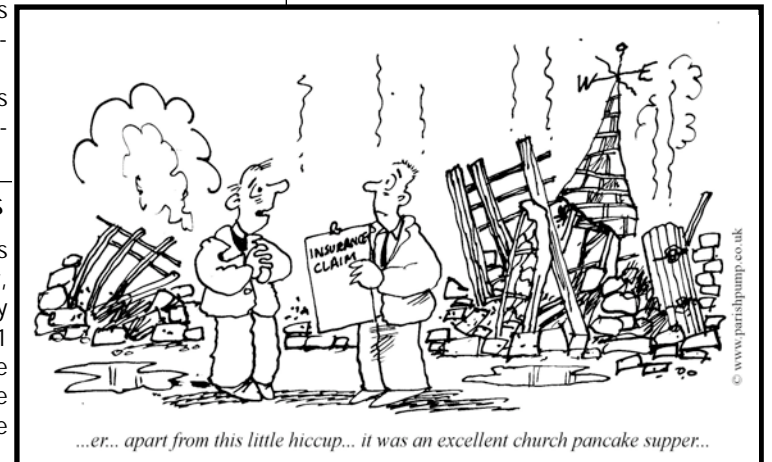
Mike joins the staff team

Mike Harle, who has recently taken early retirement, has taken up a new part-time and unpaid role with Holy Trinity's staff as Small Groups Coordinator. Mike commented to *Insight* "Small groups have been an important part of life at Holy Trinity for many years. Nonetheless, our recent Vision exercise showed us all that there is more potential for growth in our Small Groups programme - in numbers, diversity and making our groups more central to our Christian identity. Small groups give every one of us a great chance to grow in our discipleship to Christ and support others closely in their journey."

If you are not currently a member of a small group, why not have a word with Mike?

Christmas appeals

Holy Trinity's Christmas Appeal for the benefit of Crisis resulted in a sum of £2,326.56 being given. The Christingle services on Christmas Eve raised £1,120.50 for the Children's Society.



Learning from the Bible

"If you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one."

Luke, chapter 22, verse 36.

We can sometimes be surprised by what the Bible says, even in the words of Jesus himself. They can seem at odds with what we have otherwise understood of his message, contradictory of what we heard him saying on a different occasion. Was he not sure of the teaching he wanted us to hear? Did he think one thing one day and something different on another?

We can discount any uncertainty on Jesus' part about the path that his followers needed to tread. What is easier to believe, because we see much evidence of it, is that his disciples did not always grasp Jesus' meaning, just as we sometimes fail to cotton on to what is said to us, especially if we miss the wink, the raised eyebrow, the intonation that glosses the actual words.

So when we read the quote at the top of the page, did Jesus, the man of peace, who taught his disciples to turn the other cheek, really urge his followers to arm themselves? His disciples plainly thought so - "See, Lord, here are two swords", they said (verse 38). We shall be all right: we're properly prepared. And Jesus said "That is enough", which sounds as if he might have been expressing approval.

But let us look at the context. It was the Passover supper on the night Jesus was arrested. Jesus had been saying solemn things to his disciples which they had not really understood. He had likened the bread and wine to his body and blood. He had promised them places in the future

kingdom. He had told Simon Peter that despite his protestations of loyalty to the end he would soon deny he even knew Jesus. And he asked his disciples to confirm that when he had sent them out empty-handed, without even purse, bag or sandals, they had in fact lacked nothing.

But things were changing. With Jesus' destiny looming, the disciples would face trouble. They needed to be prepared. It was then that Jesus said they should sell a cloak and buy a sword. There is general agreement that he did not mean this to be taken literally. Some see the words as ironical. Others see them as metaphorical, meaning that the disciples would need the courage that might come from being armed with a sword. And when, shown two swords, Jesus said "That is enough", he meant not that two would be sufficient, but "Enough of such talk!"

That Jesus did not intend to be taken literally is clear from verse 51. When Peter, faced with the arresting party, drew his sword and used it, Jesus said "No more of this!" and quickly restored the damage by healing the servant's severed ear.

If the disciples missed the point, there is no cause for us to do the same. The difficulty emphasises to us that we need to study the Bible with both care and guidance - and that we should be wary of those who use a Bible quotation literally without regard to its context.

Scribatius

"Much violence is based on the illusion that life is a property to be defended, not a gift to be shared" - Henri Nouwen

Youth update

Andrew Cowie reports

If January is anything to go by, 2008 will prove to be an exciting year for the youth at Holy Trinity. January saw the departure of Stuart to the role of Outreach Curate at St Mark's Tollington Park. Although we were all sad to see Stuart go, we are looking forward to retaining contact with him in his new post, and I'm sure we will meet up on Falcon camps in the future.

But as the Lord takes away, the Lord also gives, and January saw the arrival of a new Assistant Youth Worker at Holy Trinity. Matt Knight, who heralds from Durban, South Africa, has agreed to take on this role for a six month period. Matt has already made an impact helping to lead at the Hub over the 2007 Autumn term. As the Assistant Youth Worker, Matt will not only lead the Hub but will also lead at YF and Pathfinders. Matt has a number of years experience working with young people in his home church in South Africa, which often has 150 young people attend youth services. We are fortunate indeed to have Matt come to us at this time of transition and change. We will be able to draw extensively on Matt's experience as we look to set up our own Youth service later in the year.

January also saw the publication to the wider church of the PCC papers on Youth Ministry as part of the Vision update day. One of the key findings of the report was that Holy Trinity should hire a director of Youth Ministry who would have oversight of both the Hub, whose focus is on unchurched young people, as well as Youth Fellowship and Pathfinders which focus

on young people who are already part of the church family. The recruitment for this post has already started, with advertisements being placed in relevant Anglican newspapers and Youth work magazines. We are due to interview in March, and are hopeful that the post will be filled by the summer. Your prayers that we would find the right candidate for this key role would be appreciated.

Another headline finding from the PCC report on Youth Ministry is that we should look to set up a Youth service. All the other churches that were reviewed as part of the report had provision for a Youth Service, which was the primary focus for collective worship, prayer and teaching for the young people. It was also noted that the young people themselves often lead at those services, giving them an opportunity to use and develop their gifts, and to serve others.

Giving the young people a sense of ownership also allowed them to feel more involved and empowered, and would in turn lead to them inviting their friends or encouraging others to attend. Whilst we don't envisage setting up a Youth service until the Director of Youth Ministry is in post, we are keen to move in this direction, giving young people the opportunity to lead more at our Youth events.

Please continue to pray for the young people, and for all those involved in Youth Work at Holy Trinity through 2008.

Grandma: "Daisy, I hope you were a good girl at church today."

Daisy: "Oh, yes. A man offered me a big plate of money, and I said 'No, thank you' very politely."

Holy Trinity's new vision begins to take shape

Philip's announcement to congregations on 6th January was of new initiatives aimed at achieving each of Holy Trinity's three objectives identified in the course of our vision process, of securing more followers of Jesus, deeper followers of Jesus and closer followers of Jesus.

MORE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

The main question under this heading was established last year to be how we could create more space for growth at Holy Trinity. A working group of the Church Council has been exploring this, including examining what other large churches do and researching the possibilities in Claygate, by questionnaires among other means. The outcome is a plan to expand the current provision for worship and meeting together, involving four different strands.

1. Messy Church

The idea of Messy Church was explained in *Insight* by Andrew Cowie two months ago. It is designed to be an appealing next step for those children who come to our Holiday Clubs but have no other connection with the church. It is now proposed to start a monthly midweek service of this kind, for children and their parents or carers, in the spring.

2. A Youth Congregation

A review of our existing provision for young people concluded that it needed to be developed more powerfully, and that Pathfinders (for the 11-14 year olds) and YF (for 14-18 year olds) should be transformed and made more accessible to young people without a church background. It is now proposed that a new worship-based Youth Congregation should be established every Sunday evening later this year, probably meeting in Emmanuel Hall. Crucial in this field is the recruitment of an experienced person to oversee Holy Trinity's youth ministry, as reported on *Insight's* front page this month.

3. Extra Sunday morning service

One of the constraints on the church's growth is the already crowded nature of Holy Trinity's main Sunday morning service, at 10 am. The means of finding space for expansion will be by

Last month the next steps on the path to Holy Trinity's vision were announced. A booklet was distributed to churchgoers, and PCC documents giving a fuller background were made available. Insight offers this summary of what is proposed.

replacing the 10 o'clock service with two services, at 9.30 and 11.15 am. Neither will be exactly like the existing 10 am service, enabling the church to cater more effectively for the varying preferences revealed by the response to questionnaires; the 9.30 service, which will have the main children's provision, will move towards greater informality, while the 11.15 service will move in the other direction, with a greater proportion of traditional, organ-based, music and a more formal feel. This change is expected to take place in September, though there will be further consultations about the detail in the meantime. The 8 am service will continue unchanged.

4. Review of the 6.30 pm service

If the 11.15 service is to cater for those who prefer a somewhat more traditional style - meaning that it might well attract some of those who presently attend Evening Prayer, particularly those who would prefer to go to church in daylight - there is a question whether two traditional services would be out of balance with the appetite revealed by the internal research for informal styles of worship. It is thought that an informal evening service would appeal to many, including those helping with children's work in the morning and those with children at the youth congregation, and indeed it is the practice successfully adopted by every other large church comparable with Holy Trinity. Subject to further consultations, particularly with the present 6.30 congregation, any change would also happen in September.

DEEPER FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

Three ways have been identified for encouraging the church to grow in discipleship. They are:

1. Small groups

The Church Council has endorsed the vision of a group led by Linda Morgan that Holy Trinity should move from being a church *with* small groups to being a church *of* small groups. The vision is that every member of the church be encouraged to be a member of a small group, whether of an existing homegroup or a different and more specialised kind of group, but always with the purpose of nurturing Christian discipleship and identity. Tom Darwent and Mike Harle (whose new role has been reported elsewhere) will be progressing this vision and leading training for small group leaders.

2. Enhanced teaching opportunities

The "Christian FAQs" evenings piloted in the autumn are continuing this year as a means of helping Christians to think about the issues that affect life in the modern world. The next takes place on 10th February.

3. Encouraging training

Holy Trinity's budget for 2008 reflects an increased commitment to training across the life of the church. Tom Darwent is overseeing all areas of adult discipleship including encouraging people to undergo training. Church members have already attended conferences on youth ministry, children's work and pastoral care; three members are starting diocesan training as Pastoral Assistants; and the current Growing Leaders course will be followed by a second one in the autumn.

CLOSER FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

The objective here is to better model a community of faith, but this is recognised to be an area which is harder to quantify. Two specific areas are however being worked on. One is the church's internal communications, where we have already seen the fruits of the revamped newsletter, the term card, the redeveloped website (2000 visits a month), the parish-wide Christmas card and the implementation of the church's projection system for prayer, worship and teaching. The other relates to welcome and integration, of which November's Come Home for Lunch Sunday was a part. This area is due to be reviewed further this month.