

St Thomas
Ploughshare

Volume 29
Issue 5

October–November
2022

£4 per year

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Comments and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors, The PCC or the clergy of St Thomas'

Please could any articles for the December - January edition be sent to Cassie Wainwright via email to ploughsharesttoms@outlook.com before Saturday 12th November

Service Information

Full details of services at St Thomas' can be found on page 5

More information online at www.stthomasbrampton.com

A year of fear?

Robin Dawson

Do you remember the spring of 2020? The time when the whole world seemed to stop. When the sun shone and the birds sang so loudly beside a deserted Chatsworth Road. And we were afraid. We didn't know how this would all end. It was a year of fear.



We gradually worked our way out of it. By the middle of the next year we were looking forward to 2022 as the year when things would get back to normal. And so it seemed until--- Russia invaded Ukraine----Prices started going up so fast and we don't know where the money would come from---And then our Queen died. The one who had always been there. Now we set out with a new King and a new prime minister. 2022 is turning out to be a year of fear.

What do we do with this fear? We can stop watching the news, bury our head in the sand, try to distract ourselves. But these things will not go away. The fear will always be there. We can do what we did in 2020 and draw together in care and concern for one another. And we can again discover what are the really important things in life.

What can we as Christian people in St Thomas' church do about the fear? We follow Jesus Christ who said many times "Don't be afraid". But we also know that Jesus was afraid. When he knew that his time was up and that the temple guard were coming for him, he pleaded with God the Father to be let off this ordeal. But he continued on the path of obedience and endured crucifixion. Why? Because he knew that everything was in his Father's hands.

It is like when I learnt to rock climb. I was scared. My knees were like jelly. But as I learnt the ropes I realised that the man who was belaying

me was keeping me safe. So now there is enjoyment standing on small holds on an airy crag face, going where I would never have thought I could. The fear was still there but I was also confident that somebody was keeping an eye on me.

Many Christians have that reassurance at least some of the time. We feel we know that God has an eye on us. And when we do it gives us confidence to step out where before we have held back. It is my prayer that we may all be convinced that God has his eye on us.

Samaritan's Purse and Operation Christmas Child



It is shoebox time! National Collection Week is 14th – 21st November and your shoeboxes can be dropped off at St Thomas Church Centre during the collection week.

This year Operation Christmas Child's goal is to send two-thirds of the shoeboxes from the UK to Ukraine or neighbouring countries, that are hosting Ukrainian refugee families.

Shoeboxes for filling can be purchased from St Thomas Church Centre and can be filled with personal care items, clothing and accessories, crafts and activities, toys, and a personal note. You can also support Operation Christmas Child by building a shoebox online. For more information visit www.samaritans-purse.org.uk.

New Service Plan for St Thomas

Marie Witham

Following on from consultations and prayer earlier in the year our new service plan has been launched from September.



There is now a 9.15am more traditional service of morning prayer (with Holy Communion most weeks) followed by coffee in the centre at 10:15am. We hope that people who have attended 9.15 will stay and those coming for 10.45am service will come early to meet friends and to share fellowship and refreshments.

10.30 morning worship at St Mark's – this will usually be Holy Communion.

The 10.45am service will be more contemporary – with an opportunity to engage intergenerationally as part of this service. The focus for the next few weeks is the Gospel of St Mark.

The 6pm service will focus on looking at themes more deeply and being a place of equipping and teaching leading to growth in the context of worship. Into October there will be a series on Prayer. As there is a lot happening, we also need people to continue to come forward to serve at the various services, doing various tasks that help everything run smoothly. If you would like to offer your services, please contact the church office.

This service plan will be followed for six months after which the pattern will be reviewed. We will also hold a Zoom prayer meeting monthly for

anyone who would like to join. For the link please contact prayer@stthomasbrampton.com

The next Zoom will be on 18 October at 7.30pm
It would be great to see you and for you to join our church family to pray, study, have fellowship with one another and share God's love.

TIME FOR TEA

at St Marks Church

Games, conversation, music and friendship.

Sandwiches, cake, crisps, tea and coffee. No charge but donations welcome

2-4pm

Wednesday 19th October
Wednesday 16th November
Wednesday 21st December



St Mark's Church, St. Marks Rd, Brampton, Chesterfield S40 1DH

Ten Questions with....

This edition's Ten Questions With has been answered by Centre Manager Beth Robson-Smith

**Who are you and what is your role?
What do you do as part of your role?**



I oversee all operations that go on in the St Thomas Church Centre. I ensure that the Coffee Bar and Centre run smoothly. I also oversee all bookings in the centre, such as birthday parties and funerals. I also organise special events at the Centre, like the Cheese and Wine night that was recently held and the upcoming Advent Market.

Are you a morning person or a night owl?

I don't think I'm really either of them, I tend to peak at lunch time! I do try and get up early to be proactive before my daughter wakes up.

What is your favourite worship song and why?

Do It Again by Elevation Worship or The Stand by Hillsong. I do love worship though.

What keeps you motivated in your role?

I work with some great staff, have a supportive family, the love of the Lord and Gin!

If you could learn a new skill what would it be?

I would love to play the drums.

What are you most thankful for?

I am most thankful for my family that give me so much love and sanity.

How would you spend your ideal day?

I love being out and about, fresh air, a nice walk (not up a big hill).

Do you like your cereal crunchy or mushy?

It has to be super crunchy with the milk straight out of the fridge, I then attempt to eat the whole bowl in about 5 seconds flat.

What song is guaranteed to always get your feet tapping?

Anything by Sir Elton John or a bit of Hall and Oats, got to love the 80's.

If you could live in a book, film or tv series what would it be?

It would have to be Harry Potter. I'd love to live in a magical world like that.

What is your favourite meal?

I love food! Seafood is so high up on the list but it has to be mashed potato! I live for mash. My favourite is mash with hot sauce and cheese— I know, I feel the shame and disgust from you all. I should have just said tapas shouldn't I?

Hope House Update Hope House Trustees

*Photos taken from the Hope House
Facebook Page*



We have had a good summer at Hope House with the residents working hard to improve the outdoor space. They have built planters (with the help of a volunteer) and planted flowers and vegetables which are doing well - this is in addition to work on our nearby allotment plot. Do check out our Facebook page for photos. We've also had a few barbeques, celebrated some more birthdays and hosted a table tennis tournament, using equipment on loan to us, which has been a great team-building activity.



A recent focus has been on resident activities – ensuring that each resident is involved in at least 20 hours of training/education/volunteering each week. As examples: some residents have taken part in Chesterfield Football Club's A Spire Right course, others volunteer at Gussie's Kitchen Pantry Cabin, and the majority access on-site education on Mondays with a specialist

volunteer. During these literacy sessions, each resident has been assessed and now receives required support. By reading books, that have been donated for this purpose, we are seeing weekly improvements in literacy skills and confidence.

Between May and August the house was full for the first time. Recently

however, one resident moved on to residential training, which is a wonderful opportunity for him.

With regards to the house, we are doing our best to keep the contents up to a good standard. Last month we realised that some of the mattresses we had been given second-hand needed replacing, so we put out a plea to our sponsors for help with this. Consequently, we have managed to buy two new ones and will buy more when finances allow.

In terms of general finance, we are stable, and continue to be very grateful to our regular donors who are keeping the project going. Please do keep spreading the news of the good work taking place here, as more regular givers will help us with increased energy bills as the weather gets colder. To help with finances, we have signed up to smile.amazon.co.uk and we are encouraging supporters to log on using their usual Amazon log-in details, select Hope House as their charity (finding it through our charity number 1183254 is easiest) and then using that 'Smile' section of the Amazon site to make all their future orders – Amazon then donates 0.5% to Hope House.

The staff team continue to be a blessing to us, led by Dale. A couple of staff have needed to reduce their hours recently and another moved on so we have employed new staff members Ryan and Gert, who join us with experience of similar projects. It's a happy house and we are grateful for everyone's ongoing hard work and commitment.

In May, our Sunday evening worship service moved next door to St Augustine's church building for more space. We began in the chapel area but soon needed to expand into the nave. Many of the residents choose to attend at 6.30pm and we are blessed by some musicians who come periodically to support us. Some local people also come along and we pray that this congregation will continue to grow. Daily devotionals still take place in the house and continue the theme from the Sunday evening.

If you are a praying person, our prayer requests are:

- That the residents continue in their good habits and are not tempted by past ones,
- That the staff team continue to grow in confidence and are blessed with good health,
- That more financial supporters come forward to help with the winter bills,
- That more training/volunteering opportunities become available for the residents.

Our next prayer zoom will be on Monday 10 October at 7pm. If you'd like to join us please email contact@hopehousechesterfield.co.uk for the link.

That's all for now but thank you once again for your ongoing support and prayers.

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2023 will be published
in the next edition of
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Important dates for ST Thomas
A history of St Thomas' Church
Pam Brimelow



The foundation stone was laid for a new church at Brampton Over Moor on Candle-Mass Day, February 2nd 1830, in the reign of King William 1V.

Contemporary reports tell us that several thousand people braved the severe winter weather in order to witness this momentous event.

At mid-day, having assembled at the Angel Hotel in the Market Place at Chesterfield, a great procession of people, on foot and in carriages, set out to travel along New Road (now Chatsworth Road) to the site of the new church. The procession was, by all accounts, a very imposing affair, led by the Duke of Devonshire's carriage. Organised by Mr. Joshua Jebb of Walton Lodge, the procession included "trumpeters, bands of music, choristers, young children from the National Schools, clergy, gentry of the town and neighbourhood, magistrates, Freemasons, the Mayor and Corporation, members of the management committee and workmen who were to build the church.

His Grace William Spencer Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire (Lord of the Manor of Chesterfield) was to have the honour of laying the foundation stone. The Duke carried out the task of laying the stone with a silver trowel, a mallet and other tools given to him by Mr. W. B. Thomas, Chairman of the management committee, "to enable him to go through the ceremony of the day." After the ceremony the procession reformed to return to the Angel Hotel and, contemporary accounts tell us, "the festivities were kept up for the remainder of the day." The management committee and other gentlemen sat down to dinner and later "appropriate toasts, speeches and sentiments" were delivered.

Before returning to Chatsworth, the Duke addressed the assembly and

according to reports expressed his satisfaction at the great increase in the population and importance of Brampton which, he said, had made the erection of the new church absolutely necessary.

THE CHURCH IS OPENED

The church was opened by licence in July 1831 by The Right Rev. Henry Ryder, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. At that time Chesterfield was part of the Diocese of Lichfield. A Derby newspaper recorded that the Bishop delivered an “excellent and appropriate sermon”.

In the summer of 1831 the first incumbent, the Rev. Matson Vincent arrived at St Thomas’. He lived at Brampton Manor House and it is recorded that the income of the Brampton Living then totalled £150 a year derived from pew rents and an augmentation grant from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The year 1832 saw several major events in the history of Brampton Church. The Parish of St Thomas’, Brampton was formed by an order in council dated 1st August 1832 and the church and church yard were consecrated on 9th August 1832 by the Bishop of Lichfield. The National Day School connected with the new church (known as St. Thomas’ School) was opened on Chatsworth Road in the same year.

The Rev. J. B. Jebb became the Incumbent of St Thomas’ Church in 1846 on the death of Rev. Matson Vincent. Rev. Jebb had previously been curate at St Thomas’. He lived at Walton Lodge and travelled around his parish either on foot or on horseback. John Berridge Jebb was described as “a person decidedly above the average in ability who held strong and settled opinions on life, religion and other leading questions.” The Jebb family link with St. Thomas’ began with Mr. Joshua Jebb, Squire of Walton who gave his whole hearted support to the building of a new church in Brampton.

He died in 1845 and John Berridge Jebb was his third son. The Rectory at

408 Chatsworth Road was commissioned by the Rev. J. B. Jebb, probably in 1848, as a Parsonage House for the Perpetual Curate.

RAISED TO A RECTORY

The development of Brampton as an industrial area continued and as more businesses grew up and new homes were built, the new Parish Church found itself catering for an ever-increasing population. As a result, new status was granted to the Parish of St Thomas', Brampton when the benefice was raised to a Rectory by order of the Queen in Council in August 1867. The Rev. J. M. Mello, Incumbent since 1863 became the first Rector.



**COFFEE
MORNING**

AT ST MARKS

10AM-12 NOON
Saturday 8th October
Saturday 10th December

OCTOBER MEETING TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE BISHOPS HARVEST
APPEAL

DECEMBER MEETING TO RAISE FUNDS FOR LOCAL CHRISTMAS
SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

The Three Peaks Challenge

Charlotte Law

Ashgate Hospice is there for the people of North Derbyshire and beyond. They work together with energy, care and compassion so that people can have a peaceful and comfortable end of life in a place of their choosing and know that their loved ones are important to the Hospice.



Ashgate Hospice is not an NHS hospice. So, while extra funding has recently been announced by the Government for health and social care, charities like Ashgate Hospice rely on the donations and goodwill of supporters to provide care as much as ever.

When I signed up to the challenge, the Hospice asked that each participant raise at least £300 each. £300 is good but I thought, surely we can do more.

To help raise more funds I arranged a fundraising event for Saturday 21st May. I'd had 5 months to plan, prep and organise this day, but I wasn't alone in doing this. I cannot tell you how much it means to have had great friends and family who helped me along the way. So many people have invested their time, energy, and ideas into such a worthy event. I organised a raffle that saw some amazing prizes being donated from local businesses and restaurants. On the day a community came together to join in with all the fun, to spend money (no one ever uses cash anymore!), to buy raffle tickets and purchase homemade cakes, win on the Tombola, to play Water or Wine?, to grab a bargain in the clothes sale, to name the teddy bear and buy from the knit stall (thank

you Knit and Natter Ladies) plus more!

The event came to a close and the money was counted, over £1800 raised from the day. Wahoo! I cannot thank the supporters, helpers and donators enough for coming to play!

12th June was challenge day and my gosh, what a day! Black Hill, Bleak Low and Kinder, 22 miles and over 3000ft we climbed. What a team we had, all ages from 19 to 59, all different stories to tell whilst a few of us fell. The Rangers were great leaders and just what we needed to get us to those trig points for a selfie and group pic.

Achey legs and sore feet had me today but nothing a spot of Radox can't help keep at bay.

So how much have we raised I hear you ask and I'm ecstatic to tell you we have, so far, raised over £2300. How fantastic and awesome are you all for the support, kindness and money donated.

The Hospice will be so grateful for everyone's effort- because this will make such a difference for those who need it the most.

THANK YOU
EVERYONE.



Blood Doning – 100 not out Marie Witham



The photo below was taken on 28 July at The Owlerton Stadium Sheffield. Tony was receiving his award for having donated 100 pints of blood. This was achieved during the pandemic but the ceremony was delayed. (His score is now 105).

There were many people there receiving awards for blood and platelet donations. We had attended a similar ceremony when Tony received his 75 award. These events are inspiring due to the number of people who have donated many times but also the speaker at the event who has a remarkable story to tell. The lady pictured was the speaker and she has Sickle Cell Anaemia. She told us how blood transfusions every 6 weeks allow her to work, to be a mum and to enjoy life.

I am a blood donor too and for short time donated platelets – which you have to go to Sheffield to do. I particularly like the fact that when you have donated now you receive a text message to say to which hospital your blood has been issued - this happens very quickly.

We would both like to encourage you to consider donating – there are a number of venues in Chesterfield and you can book online www.blood.co.uk.



A Personal Appreciation of Queen Elizabeth II

Robin Dawson

On 6 Feb 1952 I trotted home from school for lunch. As I sat down my mother told me that the King had died. After lunch I scampered back to school quite rapidly and told my year five class, who didn't believe me. Then the headmaster called all the children into the school hall and confirmed my news!



From that day until 8 September Elizabeth has been our queen. Now she has gone.

I remember the feeling of optimism as I went to secondary school. The drabness of the post-war years was being replaced. We'd had the Festival of Britain. Things were coming off the ration. We were the new Elizabethans. The young Elizabethans. We were going for it. As I became a middle-aged Elizabethan things didn't look so shiny. My political opinions moved to the left and I associated the Queen with privilege, ceremonial and stultifying protocol. It seemed to me at the time that her association with Christianity was purely because of her formal position as head of the Church of England.

Now I'm an old Elizabethan. And I have come to see that her faith is much deeper than I had thought. With each succeeding Queen's Speech at Christmas over the last couple of decades or so she became more personal as she talked about her relationship with God.

And over these 70 years Elizabeth was our Queen. She was there in the sixties when we lived under the threat of nuclear bombs, and we won the world cup. She presented the policies of her governments of very different flavours in the Queen's Speech to parliament every year and managed to keep a straight face. She has presided over the change of our economy from domination by heavy industry to a predominantly

service economy. She has reigned through a period of the most astonishing change in the way information is transmitted and received. She has seen the Church of England, of which she is head, shrink in size and influence.

And through all this change in the country and in her life she has been a constant, dependable presence. Always there. Just doing her job. How could a person in her position appear so modest? Yet she was. Was it because she knew she had a God given vocation? Did she know her place because she was serving a greater master?

We will miss her.

Books That Make an Impact

Charlotte Baldwin

The Contemporary Woman - Can She really have it all?

Michele Guinness

‘At a time when the status of women is still being debated and challenged, how can women play a leading role in society, the workplace and the Church?’



When I read an article about Michele Guinness and her new book *The Contemporary Woman in Woman Alive*, I ordered it straight away....and I wasn't disappointed!

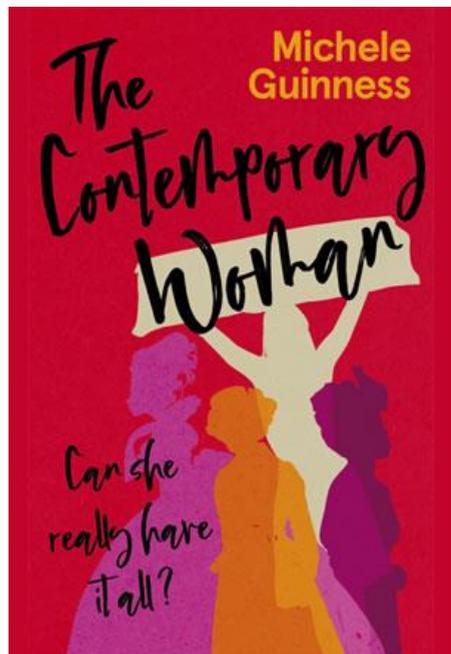
The Hebrew Woman, The Christ-following Woman and The Contemporary Woman; this book is set out in three parts exploring the many different roles of women's lives under sub-headings including

The Life-giving Woman, The Submissive Woman? and The Working Woman....Can women really have it all?

Guinness reflects on the lives of women in the Bible as well as those throughout history to discuss the many challenges women have overcome in a continuing patriarchal society. She continually offers up her own life experiences which adds an interesting personal touch.

I really enjoyed reading this book. I particularly enjoyed the initial chapter that explores God's creation of women and their intended role living alongside man, which has been and is still very much in conflict with how the world views women.

Guinness also explores God's relationship with Biblical women, often empowering them to make changes in their world which wouldn't have been possible through man. The many, many quotes and stories of the women discussed have left me feeling inspired by the characters and the actions of those who have gone before us.



If you have read a book that has inspired you?

We would love to hear it

**In Conversation with.....Janet
Bradbury
Julie Barton**



For more years than even Janet can remember, we have all been blessed by Janet's quiet, generous and loving spirit here at St. Thomas. She has worshipped and served our church family in many ways over the years, most recently stepping in as Centre manager to cover Beth's maternity leave and then agreeing to stay on as Co-ordinator of the Coffee Bar on Beth's return. At the end of August Janet retired from all her roles as she steps forward into an even more exciting future. Just before she left working in the Centre Janet kindly agreed to chat about life in our church family and her future plans.

What does your faith mean to you?

I became a Christian in my late teens, while at teacher training college and an early realisation was that God is with me all the time. Knowing that God loves you and that you can trust him completely is very special. God has certainly challenged me over the years but when I look back, I see how he has prepared me for the roles he has set out for me to embrace and how he has sustained me in these roles.

What have you most enjoyed about life in St. Thomas' church?

There have been so many highlights over the years it's hard to choose. Most of all I love being part of our St. Thomas' family and enjoy so many wonderful friendships, spending lots of good times together. I

love the variety of services and the opportunity to meet together to worship God. Covid was such a difficult time for everyone, and I very much missed our congregational get togethers as well as shared times with friends.

In which roles have you served over the years?

When I first came to St. Thomas' I helped at Pathfinders and more recently I have found myself helping out again. Being a teacher and teaching for many years has helped me in talking with, teaching and supporting young people in coming to truly know God and in developing their relationship with him.

When Messy Church first started I led a craft activity each time. The biggest role I have undertaken is to go on to lead Messy Church after Karen Herrick stepped down. That's a role I undertook for nine years. The chance to serve with a wonderful, committed team has been a great privilege.

I have also served by manning the visuals during services; serving coffee; cooking for marriage courses; helping at holiday clubs and children's clubs. Together with Ruth Bird, I've led a house group. In each and every role I have felt privileged to serve and have received so much in return that has drawn me into closer relationships with others and with God.

Tell us about working in the Centre

I have been a director at the Centre for four years and have always felt passionate about ensuring the vision and values of our church are reflected in service to both our church family and local community. It

felt a real privilege to be able to cover Beth's maternity leave, stepping into the role of Acting Centre Manager in January 2020 even though very soon the challenges of Covid closures hit. That year was a most testing time for us all. The furlough scheme was a huge relief to me as I was very worried about the staff and their jobs. Organising the reopening of the Centre also brought its challenges, but it was good to be working towards restoring our Centre activities and everyone was appreciative of the actions we took to "get back to business." Having the opportunity to continue working at the Centre as the co-ordinator has enabled me to see through many of the post covid plans.

Every day is different in the Centre and it is a joy to see regular customers and get to know them, to welcome others and welcome the groups that meet in the Centre; the range of activities that take place is impressive. It's also amazing how many people arrive astonished to find there is such a wonderful community venue behind the church; we are too well hidden!

Most of all I have loved the laughter and teamwork with the absolutely lovely and committed Centre staff.

Why are you leaving?

For many years I have spent a lot of time in Keswick visiting my friend Sarah. When in Keswick I go to Crosthwaite church and through that church I met Tony. We are now engaged and plan to marry in St. Thomas' in November. We'll divide our time between our St. Thomas' church family and our Keswick church family. Tony has been a real blessing in my life.

He's very good at wining and dining me and is especially good at

teasing me!

While chatting with Janet so many customers came up to wish Janet well and express sadness at her leaving. Janet is such a self-deprecating lady, full of warmth and love for us all. I certainly couldn't stop smiling at her memories, the good wishes of the customers and most of all, the most wonderful news of her forthcoming marriage to Tony. While we will miss her dedicated work in the Centre it is good news that Janet is going to continue to be part of our church family and is going to share her wedding with us.

Thank you, Lord, with all our hearts for you have blessed us with Janet.

We wish Janet and Tony a life of love and happiness together.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 13: 34-35



One of my abiding memories of my early childhood is walking with my 2 brothers and parents to Church on a Sunday morning. In order to ensure that we were “properly equipped” for church we each carried our Bibles with us and as they were large and a distinctive black it was clear to everyone what was happening. I think my memory comes from having to pass the other children from our street and from their ability to use this as an opportunity for some name calling and micky taking. I know I really did wish that I could hide the fact that I was going to church and that I did not have to carry this Bible in such a public setting. I suppose I was ashamed of the families’ faith and such a public statement of where we stood.



On Sunday 4th September this year a video from CSW was shown at all the services that day. The story of the video was reporting a case in Iran involving Ladan.

She was born and raised in an Islamic family. At the age of 19 she went with a friend to a Christian Church service. She states in the video that whilst she had followed Islamic teaching and law she never found it satisfying and it did not bring peace and contentment to her. During the course of the Church service Ladan experienced an encounter with God and this completely changed her life. She committed her life to Christ and knew that she had found her spiritual home.

Ladan studied the scriptures and the impact this had on her life was

that she wanted others to experience the Christian relationship with God and find peace and stability in their lives. Ladan obtained a number of Bibles and started to give them to friends and others. She knew that possession of a Bible in Iran was an offence punishable by imprisonment but, such was her commitment to Christ she continued to share her faith and the scriptures with others. Inevitably, this brought her to the attention of the authorities and at the age of 19 she was arrested for seditious behavior. She was held in solitary confinement and subject to extended periods of interrogation. Ladan asked to be given a Bible and this was refused. During one period of interrogation she “stole” a pencil and took it back to her cell. Ladan used this pencil to write verses of scripture on her cell wall. She was surprised by the way God gave her verses to write that she did not recall from her earlier study of the Word of God.

In this way her cell walls became her Bible and her inspiration to endure the imprisonment. Ladan was never formally charged or brought to trial, she was never told how long she would be held or in solitary confinement. The uncertainty of the situation was designed to increase her anxiety and stress levels. Through all of this Ladan remained faithful to God and held firm to her relationship with Christ. Ladan’s situation was brought to the attention of a number of human rights organizations including CSW.

CSW mobilized their resources to highlight the injustice of Ladan’s situation, they challenged the Iranian authorities about the detention of an individual because of their beliefs, they publicized Ladan’s situation and asked the CSW supporters to pray and support Ladan by their interest, prayers and highlighting her position with Iran, via their embassy and through publicity. The result of the involvement of organizations like CSW was that Ladan was released. She now lives and works in this country with an organization spreading the gospel of Christ in Iran.

In order to try and find a small insight into how Ladan may have felt

there is a “mock” prison cell on the Mission Notice board. Members of the church have been asked to reflect on which verses of Scripture they would find encouraging and then share them with the church.

CSW’s commitment is working towards a position where everyone is free to follow their beliefs without fear of intimidation or persecution. It acts as a voice for the voiceless and used its contacts to challenge oppression and intimidation. Whilst CSW plays an active part with United Nations and world governments to highlight persecution of ethnic groups and individuals it also communicates well with its supporters identifying unacceptable situations and the intimidation of individuals. It asks its supporters to be active in prayer, petitioning authorities and supporting individuals via correspondence and cards of encouragement.



I don't know about you, but I am not sure how my courage would stand up to solitary confinement and interrogation. The early experiences of childhood do not bode well! I would be forced back to anchoring my faith in Jesus, reliance on his presence with me and find comfort and strength in my relationship with Christ. I would be encouraged to know that groups like CSW and Christians from all round the world were standing up for their faith and being active seeking to provide a safe and secure environment for me to worship God without fear.

You can find out more about CSW by going to their web page and by talking to Ann Small, St Thomas' representative for CSW.



COME ONE, COME ALL!

Advent Market

Craft stalls, food and drink

November 26th
12 Noon - 4pm

St Thomas Centre, s40 3AW