

FATHER HUGH LAURANCE

At last, after two years of uncertainty, my wife Judith, daughter Katie and I have now settled into the new vicarage in Chapel Lane. It will, of course, take me some time to meet all of you but I will be out and about. Please do not hesitate to make yourselves known to me. I have been parish priest of Clifford and Branham now for almost a year and it is time to put the anxieties of the past behind us and look positively to the future.

St Luke's stands on a hill which is both an advantage, and disadvantage. Whilst it is on a prominent site and is a symbol of the village, I am sure that on occasions it can seem rather remote. Perhaps people sometimes wonder what we're up to in there. We have plans for St Luke's: it is your parish church and we want to put it at the heart of the village, even if geographically it stands outside. Ultimately we would like to extend the building to make it more "user friendly" for events like weddings, baptisms and the children's group. Many of you will know how cold the church can get and I know that some find it hard to concentrate on even my most riveting sermon when their toes appear to have dropped off! The Parochial Church Council has agreed as a matter of urgency to put in a new boiler and heating, to dry out the plasterwork and to redecorate, to improve access for people with disabilities and to install toilets. This work, which I see as being Phase I of our plans, should begin shortly.

Then we will be able to develop St Luke's strengths. We have a marvellous children's group for over five years run by Glennis Allan whom you all know. At the moment, it meets once a month in the Village Hall at 10:30. From October, it will meet on the third Sunday of each month, the fourth Sunday, the service at St Luke's will be a Children's Mass in every aspect of which the children will participate. All children are welcome at all services and these in particular. Please don't be deterred from bringing little children to church. We love to see them and have a special children's corner.

St Luke's Music Group has been a valuable resource for the church for many years. We are always looking for new recruits and are currently rehearsing for Christmas and the other major festivals. We meet in church at 6.15 on most Sundays. You will always receive a warm welcome if you come along then.

There is always something happening at St Luke's. We have social and fundraising events throughout the year. Like everyone else, we want your money! But much, much more than that, we want you to feel part of the family of St Luke's. We want your input in what we do. That is why we are having an Open Day between 10:00 and 2:00 on Saturday 6th October in the Church which will be decorated for Harvest. Here you will be able to meet me, to see our plans for the future, express your views about what the church should be doing and to see what we might offer you. I look forward to seeing you there. *Hugh Laurance*

STLUKE'S CHILDREN'S GROUP

How quickly time does pass — our older children are moving on and we need new recruits for our Children's Group. Do you have children between 5 and 10 years who would like to join?

We meet on the 3rd Sunday of the month in the Village Hall and tell stories, draw pictures, all the usual "Blue Peter" type things with a Christian theme. Later we join in the church service at St Luke's. There is also a Family Service on the 4th Sunday of the month when all the family can worship together. For more information contact Glennis Allan 845348 or Mary Botsaris 845860.