

December, 1955

MARSTON NEWS

The News-Letter of St. Nicholas Church, Marston, Oxford

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF MARSTON
FROM THE VICAR, THE CHURCHWARDENS AND THE
CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. NICHOLAS

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

What do "Christmas Arrangements" mean to you? Plenty of hard work, and plenty of expense, to be sure, and also plenty of fun, I hope. But we miss the best of it all unless we pause to let the joy of Christ's Coming enter into our lives, unless we put "Christ" into our "Christ-mas". After all, without Him the observance of Christmas is pretty hollow, and in the end unsatisfying.

Could we between us make sure that not a single child of this Parish is robbed of the thrill of finding Christ, our Saviour and Friend, as the source of our Christmas joys?

Our Christmas Arrangements, as a Church, are as follows (for further details see within):

Decoration of Church: Sat., Dec. 17th, 10 a.m. onwards.

Sunday School Carol Service (Children only): Sun., Dec. 18th, at 3 p.m.

"Carols by Candlelight": Sun., Dec. 18th and Christmas Day, at 6.30 p.m.

Carols for Mothers, Young Wives and their Children: Tues., Dec. 20th, at 2.45 p.m.

Carols and Hand-bells in the streets: Dec. 16th to 23rd.

CHRISTMAS DAY, Dec. 25th: 8.15, 11. 12 and 6.30.

Hospital Visits, with Gifts, Carols and Hand-bells: Dec. 26th and 27th.


Then, after Christmas, various parties, including M.U. and Y.W.G., Jan. 4th and 7th; Sunday School, Jan. 21st; Cromwell Club, Jan. 10th; Choir, Jan. 27th.

May God bless your hearts and homes with His joy and His presence, and make this Christmas the happiest you have ever known!

Your sincere friend and Vicar.

GORDON D. SAVAGE.

P.S.—A special invitation to the Parish Breakfast and Ringers' Service next Sunday.



Bell-Ringers' Service. The progress and skill of our Bell-ringers is noteworthy. We are proud to have the news of their ringing in other towers in Oxford and other parts of the Diocese as well as at our Church. And we are specially thankful that our ringers are keen members of our Church. There will be a special service, at which we dedicate their efforts and ask for God's blessing on their skill, on Sunday evening, Dec. 4th, at 6.30. All ringers of the parish, past and present, are invited to be present and then to join with them and the other members of the Congregation in the Reading Room for a time of social intercourse after the Service. On that occasion we shall have a demonstration of hand-bell ringing.

How the Church Gives. There is a variety of ways in which the Church is giving and spending in your name, and there would be exclamations of horror if it ceased to do so. A full record of this appears in the accounts which come before the Annual Meeting at Easter. But it may be of interest to know that this month the Church completes its payment to the Diocese of Oxford of its quota of £52 19s. 3d. for the present year, this being about three times the amount expected from us last year. Our contribution joins those from other parishes and is used for the maintenance and extension of work which people expect of the church, for instance, work among the Deaf and Dumb, Moral Welfare, Missionary Council, new Churches, Sunday Schools and Training Colleges, and in turn through the Church Assembly in London towards work among refugees and a whole variety of good causes in our Church, in our country generally and overseas. Our contribution of over £1 a week from collections is in all conscience small enough, but it would be made easier if forty of our well-wishers promised to give 6d. (or even 3d.) a week. This Church does not beg for money; but the need is put before you, and if you wish to be associated with the work which is done in the name of all who call themselves "C. of E." why not offer to contribute a little sum each week? The Vicar and Churchwardens can supply envelopes, so what you give is unknown to anyone other than yourself, unless you wish otherwise.

Carols by Candlelight. This popular Service will be repeated this year, and we specially hope that all newcomers to the parish since last Christmas will come along. The Church is illuminated only by candles and the lights on the Christmas Tree. Lessons are read by various members of the Church, and there are carols for all to sing. The newly-formed Marston Choral Society will also take part. Note the dates: Sunday before Christmas, Dec. 18th, 6.30 to 7.30 p.m. And also at the same time on Christmas Day, Dec. 25th. Arrive early!

Women and Children. The Carol Service for the Mothers' Union and Young Wives' Group will be held in Church on Tuesday, Dec. 20th, at 2.45 p.m. All women and their children are invited. Illuminated Christmas Tree. It is hoped that mothers who wish to do so will bring their prams right into Church.

Sunday School. This year the children will have their own Carol Service, on the Sunday before Christmas (Dec. 18th) at 3 p.m. This Service will be for children only, and they themselves will read the Lessons, say the Prayers and sing the Carols. All children of the Parish are invited.

Decoration of the Church. This will be done on Saturday, December 17th, from 10 a.m. onwards. Offers of help by men and women, gifts of ever-green for the decoration, and a Christmas Tree, or decorations for it, will be welcome!

Carols and Hand Bells. It is our privilege each year to bring the Message of Christmas to every door in the parish by means of carols and hand-bells. In order to cover the whole parish, roads will be visited as follows:

Fri., Dec. 16th: St. Nicholas Park, Wardsfield, The Butts, Church Lane and Mill Lane.

Sat., Dec. 17th: By invitation.

Mon., Dec. 19th: The Close, Lamburn's Close, Boul't's Lane and Oxford Road from the Red Lion southwards.

Tues., Dec. 20th: Beechey's Avenue, Rippington Drive, Cromwell Close, Fairfax Avenue, Salford Road, Cavendish Drive.

Wed., Dec. 21st: Mortimer Drive, Lewell Avenue, Nicholas Avenue, Ashlong Road, Marsh Lane.

Thurs., Dec. 22nd: Raymund Road, Arlington Drive, Cotswold and Windsor Crescents, Haynes Road and Cherwell Caravans.

Fri., Dec. 23rd: Old part of village (Red Lion to Cross Farm, and Elsfield Road).

This is no light task, now that the parish has grown so much, but we rely on the practical interest and support of our many friends. You are invited to join the carol-singers one or two of the evenings, and anyway to encourage those who share in this labour of love. After two hours' walking and singing every evening, whatever the weather, the singers and players are tired by the end of the week, so we hope you will particularly encourage the young people who do this.

Please note:

- (a) When you hear us, do please turn on your lights and sing with us.
- (b) We will gladly come and sing your favourite carol outside your house if you will kindly send the Vicar a request in advance.
- (c) We shall be dividing the proceeds of the collection equally, thus:
 - (i) The Cromwell Youth Club;
 - (ii) the Choir and Bell-Ringers Fund;
 - (iii) the Restoration Fund of the Church.

The Bell-ringers, who are so keen and regular in their work, are about to start a fund of their own, to help with the expenses of visiting other towers and towards the equipment of our own, and we shall contribute to that fund when started from (ii) above.

CHRISTMAS DAY

The Christmas Communion. The people of God make a special effort to gather as His Family at His Holy Table on Christmas Day, and our main family celebration of the Holy Communion will be at 8.15 a.m.

There will also be the Holy Communion after the 11 o'clock Service on Christmas morning, and the Vicar will on request be glad to arrange other services in Church or in private homes for those unable to manage these times.

The Family Hour of Worship. There will be a Family Hour of Morning Prayer, with Christmas Hymns, from 11 to just before 12 on Christmas morning. Children are invited to place a small present each on the Christmas Tree during the first hymn, and these presents will be taken on Monday to children in the Oxford Hospitals. This Service will be followed by the Holy Communion at 12 o'clock.

"Carols by Candlelight" at 6.30 in the evening.

Marston Church Charities. A statement as to how these are administered will be on the Notice Board in the Church Porch from Dec. 6th to 13th and from Jan. 3rd to 10th. The Trustees would be glad to receive as early as possible names of parishioners thought to be eligible. The Charities referred to in this paragraph are administered by the Vicar and Wardens of the Church; they are entirely separate from the set of Charities (including the "Marston Common") administered under the supervision of the Parish Council. One of the Church Charities provides by its terms the sum of one shilling to be handed to each of the five bell-ringers who ring the midnight peal on Christmas Eve!

Scripture Union. It is regularity of certain practices which is so helpful to the one who practises as well as to others intended to benefit. As with regular giving, so with regular reading of the Bible. The reading of a few verses or even one verse each day helps to brighten life's way. The local secretary of the Scripture Union is David Woodward, 5 Ouseley Close, and the subscription to the S.U. is 2d. per annum, in return for which you receive a card with the list of portions for each day. There is also an attractive range of magazines and booklets for young and old. See the display in Church on Dec. 4th and 11th. You are asked to accept and read the little leaflet called "Where to find Help", which will reach you between now and Christmas.

Thank You to the students from Keble College, Pembroke College, Wycliffe Hall and St. Michael's House for all their work for our Sunday School, Bible Classes, Youth Club and Church Services during the past year.

January 1st comes on a Sunday in 1956. Come to Church that day and dedicate the New Year.

Restoration of the Church. Estimates for the restoration of the flaking stonework on the outside of the Church have now been received and are before the various bodies whose consent and approval are necessary. It is likely that the first stage of restoration will be put in hand in the spring of 1956 and that the cost will be £2,000. Further details will be given in January.

DECEMBER DATES

- 4. S. *St. Nicholas-tide.* H.C. at 8.15 and 12. 11, M.P.; 6.30. E.P.
- 6. Tu. 2.45, Pram Service.
- 11. S. H.C. at 8.15 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. 11, M.P.; 6.30. E.P.
- 17. S. Decoration of Church.
- 18. S. 8.15, H.C.; 11, M.P.; 6.30. "Carols by Candlelight".
- 20. Tu. 2.45, Carol Service (M.U. and Y.W.G.).
- 25. S. CHRISTMAS DAY:
 - 8.15. The Christmas Communion.
 - 11.0. Family Hour of Morning Prayer.
 - 12.0. Holy Communion.
 - 6.30. "Carols by Candlelight".

Please note for Sunday, Jan. 1st, 1956:

8.15, Holy Communion; 11, M.P.; 12, H.C.; 6.30, E.P.

The Vicar will preach on two mottoes for 1956 at the Morning and Evening Services.