

MARSTON NEWS

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

A LETTER FROM THE VICAR.

My dear Friends,

Have you noticed that near the Vestry there is a pew which is sinking in the ground? Think of the head-lines that would make, "Congregations cause Church to Sink!" Quite seriously, the sinking is probably due to the fact that the seat has never in recent times been used so much as it now is. And now, some of you who helped at Christmas to pack 300 or more into a nave built to seat 200 may begin to wonder whether the Church is quite safe. Yes, it is, and its 800 year-old foundations are as sound as ever. But the problem of accommodation is before us, at any rate on the big occasions, and we hope soon to acquire our own supply of additional chairs kept ready in the Church.

But in the meantime, what about "the ordinary occasions" of our Church—(though in God's sight every time we worship is important)? Do you know that you are missed—and not only by me—every Sunday you do not come? It's as though a member of the family is absent when there is a family reunion. Next time a cosy fire wants to keep you at its side on a Sunday evening, don't forget that you will be missed. Missed by the ringers, who for the love of the job come two or even three times a day to call you to church, some of them from outside the parish. Missed by those men who have given their Saturday evening (and back again at midnight) stoking up the fire lest you should be cold when you come on Sunday. And missed by a number of others too. We all know how inspiring it is when a service is well-attended, so when you are away, we miss the bit which you give to make the Service an "uplift." Besides which, you may miss a great deal of blessing too. However, this is not meant to be a "beat up," but just a friendly reminder that Sunday by Sunday we need your help! Our congregations are steadily growing, but they are still incomplete whilst any member of the family is away. Think about that!

On another page you will read of the special remembrance of Mr. A. C. Carter at Evening Prayer on Sunday, February 7th, at 6.30. I hope you can be present. I hope too that you will take the opportunity of hearing Professor Harlow on "East Africa To-day" on the following evening. It always seems to me to be a natural sequence to worship in the Church on Sunday for us to meet together socially and informally on a week-day, and "Monday Night at Eight" is arranged with that in view.

Your friend and Vicar,

Gordon D. Savage

Church Band? Who would be interested in the formation of a Church Band or Orchestra? We understand that some years ago a set of instruments for a brass band was purchased for the use of a group of St. Nicholas people. It would be good to hear where these instruments now are, so that they might be brought together again and used. We heard the other day of one of the bugles being found in a backroom, dusty and unused.

The Late Mr. A. C. Carter. It scarcely seems possible that we shall no longer see the familiar figure of Mr. A. C. Carter in our midst. He died peacefully in his sleep on January 21st. As the builder of the great major of houses erected in Marston since the end of the war, he also had a deep concern for the social and spiritual welfare of the people brought to live in Marston through his building activity. He enthusiastically supported the idea of a church building in the Mortimer Drive area, and with characteristic generosity he had offered a key site as a gift to the Church in perpetuity and had also expressed a readiness to help forward the plans and building in every way; to that end he had visited the County Architect with the Vicar and successfully argued why the particular site should be used in that way. As many people in Marston knew Mr. Carter in one way or another, it has been thought suitable to include in the Evening Service on Sunday, Feb. 7th, an Act of Remembrance and Thanksgiving. The Sermon, which indicates the theme of the Service, will be on "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance."

"Wants." "Why ever didn't you tell me you needed that? I could have got it for you" is the remark which sometimes greets us when after much thought and discussion, it has been decided to buy something for the Church or one of its various organisations. The answer is that sometimes we do not mention our needs in case the mentioning is mistaken for asking or begging. But we are always ready to say what is needed, in case someone feels led and able to help. Some present needs are: an electric clock for the church vestry (a "must"), a table-tennis board and trestles for the youth club, two cart wheels for the scouts and cubs (for trek cart), a cupboard and/or big box (for storing equipment, cleaning materials and Sunday School paraphernalia), a wheel-barrow for the churchyard and for carting fuel, and a water supply near the church! If none of these is "up your street," just pass to the next paragraph, and don't feel offended that we have mentioned these needs. Incidentally, with the growth of the Bible Classes, the Vicarage could make use of some strong, plain wooden chairs on loan. The Vicar can always make good use of illustrated papers and magazines (however old!) when visiting.

Personalia. Congratulations to **Martin Hathaway**, on his being chosen for the Choir of St. John's College. The College's gain is our Choir's loss. And to **Roy Jones** on successfully completing the necessary parts of the General Certificate of Education. Thanks to **Mr. Halstead**, **Mr. Darby** and **Mr. Marshall** for their practical advice over the seating and woodwork of the Church, and especially to the two latter for their hard work, sometimes late at Saturday nights, over the heating of the Church. And also to **David Wilson** for his expert help in showing films, both silent and sound, at the Christmas parties. There are also many others, not named here, whose work and labour of love is greatly appreciated.

The Vicar would like to take this opportunity of thanking, not least, the half-dozen or so people who have unfailingly helped him by driving him to various hospitals, or other engagements, or by lending him their cars. Without this help it would have been impossible for him to undertake some of the tasks which fall to him, and this help is deeply appreciated.

Village Shop. The opening of Latimer Cottage, 15 Oxford Road, as a village shop on January 18th, has been welcomed. Is it not something of a record that until that date this parish of some 1600 to 1800 souls has for a number of years had no shop whatever not even a post office? There is still only one small pillar-box for this large area, though we now hear that from February 1st the Village Shop has also a Post Office counter, run by Mr. Rumbold's daughter, Mrs. Charlett. Incidentally the Village Shop is owned by Mr. Haysle, of the White Hart.

Understanding The Bible. During Lent, there will be a course of Sermons on Understanding the Bible, which presents many problems to a number of people. The Vicar would be glad to hear what it is that puzzles various people about the Bible. So write down your problem, or say what you would like explained, and send it to the Vicar sometime during this month, ready for an answer to be given during Lent.

St. Valentine's Day. St. Valentine's Day is not a red-letter day of the Church; but this year it falls on a Sunday, the second Sunday of this month, and accordingly the Church is trying to make something of the day for young men and young women. In the afternoon there will be a "St. Valentine's Tea-party" at the Vicarage (or at the Reading Room), by invitation, at 5 p.m., for young people in their late teens who have left School and for those in their early twenties. If you have not received an invitation by Feb. 7th ask for one for yourself and a Friend. After tea there will be an honest-to-goodness discussion on friendships courting, and marriage. It is hoped that those present will come on to Church at 6.30, when the Sermon will be on "Men, Women and God." And incidentally if any of you want a quiet walk before tea, the Vicar would be glad to have a few young people in the congregation at Elsfeld at 3 p.m. that afternoon!

"Marston News." What items do you think the "Marston News" should contain each month or from time to time? Suggestions will be welcome. As indicated last month, it is hoped to be able to provide a suitable inset, but this was not possible for this year. However, if anyone would like to have further reading, it is possible to get a Church paper (4d. a week), or "World Christian Digest" (1/- a month—and please let the Vicar borrow it when you have read it!) or other occasional papers; please consult the Vicar.

Your Gifts. By request, the list of gifts given to mark the Coronation will not be closed until the first anniversary of June 2nd. Forms are now available for the convenience of those who wish to help the Church by signing a Deed of Covenant to subscribe a certain amount for seven years. Little envelopes are also available for those who care to set aside a regular sum each week for the Church whether they are present or not.

Happy Birthdays! (This list to include all children of school age or under. Please send corrections or additions to the Vicar! All new names are welcome). 2nd, Audrey Belson; 5th, Rose Heatley; 9th, John McGinn, Anne Holmes; 10th, Nigel Harris; 11th, Andrew Verne de; 16th, Cynthia Buckett; 18th, Noel Deam; 21st, Susan Jennings; 23rd, Michael Lambert; 25th, Andrew James; 26th, Pat Wiles, Brian Machon; 28th, Barbara Inness.

"Tickled to Death." Stanley Jones, the well-known missionary in India, was speaking through an interpreter when he happened to use the expression, "I was tickled to death." He noticed a somewhat puzzled expression pass over the audience, but not until after the meeting did he discover why. His interpreter had translated the sentence to mean, "I scratched myself until I died!"

A Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, who knew the cost of prayer, grant us the wisdom to know what we should ask, the courage to mean what we pray, the strength to face whatever answer Thou shalt send, and the love to pray such a prayer again. For Thy dear Name's sake."

Remember: "He was wounded for our transgressions . . . and with His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53).

FOR YOUR DIARY, FEBRUARY, 1954.

Pin this list up. For further details of Services and Meetings, see "The St. Nicholas Guide to Marston" (free) and the Notice Boards, or at Mr. Oliver's (Marston Road Post Office).

"H.C." denotes Holy Communion, "M.P." Morning Prayer, "E.P." Evening Prayer, "R.R." Reading Room. * indicates that a bus connects with the beginning and/or end of this item. †† indicates that there are further details inside. † indicates item not arranged by Church, which takes no responsibility for errors or omissions.

2. Tu. **Presentation of Christ in the Temple.**
†8, Marston Parish Council.
 3. W. *7.45, Women's Open Meeting. Mrs. H. J. Carpenter, "Use of money and leisure" (Comics and T.V.?).
 4. Th. 3, Working Party (Vicarage).
 5. F. 7, Social Evening for Choir and Bell-Ringers.
 7. S. **V. Epiphany.** 8.15, H.C.; 11, M.P.; 12, H.C.
*2.30, Family Service (Children and Parents).
*6.30, E.P. ("Youth on Service"). This Service will include ††An Act of Remembrance & Thanksgiving for Mr. A. C. Carter; title of Sermon: "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance" (Prov. 15, 13).
 8. M. *8, "Monday Night at Eight" (R.R.). Professor V. T. Harlow, C.M.G., "East Africa To-day."
 9. Tu. †7.30, Women's Institute (R.R.).
 11. Th. *7.45, Parochial Church Council (R.R.).
 12. F. Scouts and Cubs Outing.
 14. S. **Septuagesima.** 8.15, H.C.; 11, M.P. and Litany.
*6.30, E.P. *7.30, H.C. (††St. Valentine's Day).
 - 16 to 18. Church Assembly (Westminster).
 17. W. *7.45, Young Wives' Group (Alan Court). Mrs. Nicholas, "Enterprise in Furnishing."
 18. Th. 3, Working Party (Vicarage).
 21. S. **Sexagesima.** 8.15, H.C.; 11, M.P. Preacher, The Rev. R. B. Gorrie, M.A. (St. Clement's).
*6.30, E.P. ("Bring a Friend"—Favourite Hymns, and at the Reading Room afterwards).
 22. M. *8, "Monday Night at Eight" (R.R.). Rev. A. G. Whye, M.A. (Cowley), "Twenty-five years at Cowley."
 23. Tu. *2.30, Mothers' Union (Alan Court). Mrs. Drew, "Women of the Bible."
 24. W. **St. Matthias, Apostle and Martyr.** *11.30, H.C.
M.U. and Y.W.G. Training Day and Conference, 11—3.30.
 28. S. **Quinquagesima.** 8.15, H.C. (M.U. Corporate).
11, M.P. (Scouts and Cubs Parade). *6.30, E.P. Preacher
- Mar.
3. W. **Ash Wednesday.** *10.30, M.P., Litany and Communion.
*7.45—8.25, "The Meaning of Lent for the Family." A Service and Meditation (in Church).