

MARSTON NEWS

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

A LETTER FROM THE VICAR.

It's very strange that rain on Sunday
Seems so much wetter than on Monday ;
And weekday pains that we ignore,
On Sundays seems to hurt much more,
'Till we decide to stay in bed,
When we should go to church instead.

My dear Friends of Marston,

When Alfred L. Tooke wrote the lines quoted above, he hadn't seen the way in which little companies of Marston people faithfully make their way to St. Nicholas Sunday by Sunday, whatever the weather and despite the pains and coughs and colds! This month I want to share with you **An Encouragement** and **A Challenge**.

An Encouragement. It is heartening to see our Congregations and Communicants and various church organisations grow in size and enthusiasm. Bless you for the way in which you feel that your presence is something you can 'give' to us, and may you in turn feel that fellowship in Christ in His Church is something you **must** have to make life complete. Now that I have been with you for over a year I am comparing this year's figures with last year's. On Sundays our Communicants and collections are showing a steady 50% increase on last year, which itself was a real advance on the year before that. But in October this year the collections were more than **double** last year's, and I believe that with God's help we shall see a continued forward movement through the winter, though it will be the weather which will see what we are made of! We for our part will spare no effort or expense in keeping our ancient church as warm as possible for you Sunday by Sunday.

A Challenge. This effort is necessary, for if we do continue our progress and are enabled next year to double it yet once again, the gap between our giving and the cost of running the church will be bridged, and then (and only then) can we prayerfully consider new developments. This we must do, for I have already indicated the great challenge of the new housing area. Some of us have been thinking hard about the possibility of the erection of a simple building near Mortimer Drive for use as an auxiliary Sunday School and for the many ways in which the Church seeks to serve the community. Important and practical suggestions have been made, and a site considered. This comes as a Challenge for further hard thought and prayer, for any venture of this sort must be the result of people being clearly led in their planning and giving to produce a worthy building adequately endowed. That is an aim whether it is fulfilled next year, or the following, or several years hence. What comments have you?

Your friend and Vicar,

GORDON D. SAVAGE

Handbell Ringing and Carol-Singing. One of the very old customs of Marston is the ringing of hand-bells round the village at Christmastime. Thanks to the Choir and Bell-Ringing Fund, which did much to keep Choir and Bell-Ringers together when the parish had no vicar, the Church now possesses a first-class set of handbells. During the ten days before Christmas these will be used for pealing out Carols in all parts of the parish. It is not difficult to learn how to use handbells, and those who would care to learn and to ring them at Christmas are invited to come to the Church on Friday evenings from 7.15 to 8 p.m., November 6th onwards, when Mr. Eaton will be giving instruction.

Visit of the Bishop of Oxford. Our Bishop (the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Oxford, Dr. K. E. Kirk) has kindly promised to visit us on the last Sunday evening of this year, Dec. 27th, at 6.30, when he will preach and will also dedicate the Gifts given to St. Nicholas Church during the Coronation Year. We value this privilege of a visit from "our Bishop," who is the Patron of this living, and we shall pray that his presence with us on the evening of St. John's Day, coming as the climax of our Christmas services, may bring spiritual blessing and encouragement to the whole of our Parish. We shall specially appreciate this visit at a busy season for our Bishop in addition to bearing the heavy and varied responsibilities which fall on a Diocesan Bishop in these days, has the care of an exceptionally large number of parishes—over 600—scattered over the two thousand and more (2165 to be exact) square miles of the Counties of Oxford, Bucks and Berks which comprise this Diocese.

Coronation Gifts. The Gifts which the Bishop will dedicate are those given to St. Nicholas Church during the Coronation Year, some of them to mark the Coronation itself. They include the following which have already been given or promised: An Alms Dish, Elizabethan Service Books, Bruce Rogers Lectern Bible, Silver box for Communion Bread, Hymn Board, Notice Board, Hassocks, Chancel Carpet, Flower Vases. Various Organisations of our church are contributing a gift each; and any gift, regardless of the value, will be very welcome. Several families hope to provide a hassock each, and the Vicar is glad to discuss any suggestions at any time by arrangement.

A Church "on the move." Four-year-old: "Mummy, is this really a church?" "Yes, dear." "But it doesn't move." "No, dear, churches don't move." "Oh yes they do, Mummy, for John always sings, 'Like a mighty army moves the church of God.'" Thank you to all the boys and girls and men and women who help to make St. Nicholas Church a 'moving' part of the living Church!

Day School Teacher-Parent Association. Welcome to the "St. Nicholas' School Teacher-Parent Association" which was born on 29th October, to foster understanding and co-operation between the parents and teachers of the Primary School here. The Committee consists of Mrs. Horsington, Mr. Frost, Mr. Hales, Mrs. Woodward, Miss Sinclair and Mr. Penny, with the Head Master as Chairman and the Vicar as President. Mrs. Woodward has been elected Treasurer, and Mr. Frost the Secretary. Two dates to note: Friday, Nov. 13th (Educational Brains Trust) and Sat., Dec. 5th (Bring and Buy Sale for Christmas Party).

Church Working Party. Thank you to all who worked for and gave to the Rummage Sale on Oct. 17th, when £11 11s. 4d. was raised for the purchase of material for the use of the Church Working Party which commences its task on Nov. 5th. All who would care to sew or knit, either at home or at a working-party, are asked to tell Mrs. Savage; the articles when finished will be sold for the benefit of the Church's commitments at home and overseas.

Children's Society. Mrs. Vernede, of Manor House, held a social afternoon with tea, puppet show and "Bring and Buy" Stall, on Oct. 24th. As

a result some £10 is being sent to the Church of England Children's Society (formerly known as the "Waifs and Strays Society"), of which Mrs. Vernede is the local Secretary.

Visit of the Rev. J. H. Mortimer. It was a great disappointment that owing to his having a heavy cold the Rev. J. H. Mortimer was unable to visit us in October as expected. However, he has suggested a visit for the week-end of November 22nd, which is very appropriate, for this is St. Cecilia's day. He hopes to be present at the Services on the Sunday, and then on the Monday evening at 7.30 he will unveil the tablet in the Vestry (see note on back page). Many of his friends will wish to greet him, and it is hoped that as many as possible will come to the short service on the Monday evening, stay to tea and biscuits in the Reading Room afterwards, and then with him enjoy the films to be shown at "Monday Night at Eight" by the Rev. E. Barnes.

Sickness. Our prayers and sympathy to many who have been laid aside in recent weeks. It is good to have with us again Mrs. Bert Ward, Mrs. Hazel Bleay, Miss Drewitt, Mrs. Marsh, Roy Marsh after their time in hospital. We remember Mrs. Comley, Mr. Pope, Mrs. Barratt and Mr. Plumley, who are still away at the time of writing, and also the "shut-ins" who for various reasons cannot leave their rooms. Our remembrances and prayers also go out to our neighbours, the Rev. Dr. Hope, Vicar of New Marston, and to Canon Swainson, Vicar of Beckley, who have been laid aside with sickness.

Squash for 'Teenagers.' What is a "Squash"? Boys and girls of thirteen to sixteen inclusive are invited to come to the Vicarage after Church at 7.45 p.m. on Nov. 15th to see. There will certainly be something to eat, something to sing, something to hear and something to think about!

Sermons on Hymns. The series of sermons on well-known hymns, their writers and their meaning, seems to have interested people and to have set them talking. The hymns to be taken on November are: Nov. 1st, "Peace, perfect peace?"; Nov. 8th, "Abide with me"; Nov. 15th, "There is a green hill"; (Nov. 22nd, the Rev. M. A. Malik); Nov. 29th, "From Greenland's icy mountains"—and on Dec. 6th, "When I survey the wondrous Cross." The Vicar will continue with the series on the Sermon on the Mount on Sunday mornings.

The Lord's Prayer. The question on the back page asks why there are two forms of the Lord's Prayer. See St. Luke II, verses 1 to 4 and St. Matthew 6, verses 9 to 13. The longer form, with the Doxology ("for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory") occurs only in some early MSS. of St. Matthew, probably through liturgical use. It will be noted that in the Prayer Book the longer form is used when the context is praise, and the shorter version is used when the Lord's Prayer is in a context of, or leading to, intercession.

Happy Birthdays! (Do please tell the Vicar of omissions, errors and future birthdays!) Nov. 1st, Hilary Jackson, Linda Mansell, Marion Douglas; 2nd, Louis Williams, Linda Mutton; 4th, Alan Florey, Judith Tasker; 5th, Robin Pratt; 9th, David James; 10th, Ann Paine, Graham Taylor; 11th, Judy Ward; 12th, Barry Hutcheon; 13th, Gillian McGinn; 15th, Andrew Barnsley, Catherine Barnsley; 16th, Paul Palmer, Carole Ireson; 18th, Janet Rawlings; 20th, Roger Lofthouse; 23rd, Michael Bowen; 24th, Irene Taylor, Janet Lafford, David Parsons; 27th, Pamela Poppick; 28th, Yvonne Henderson, Loraine Wise, Howard Washbrook; 30th, John Walton, Valerie Ballard.

Cost of "Marston News." Thank you to the following who have also contributed to the cost of the "Marston News" since the last issue: Mrs. Carter, Miss C. Drewitt, Mrs. Earl, Mrs. Bing, the British Legion; also collected by Mr. Oliver, 6/4; by Mrs. Derby, 10/2; in Church Porch, 1/9. Others have given to collectors or contributed in other ways.

FOR YOUR DIARY, NOVEMBER 1953.

Pin this list up. For further details of Services and Meetings, see "The St. Nicholas Guide to Marston" (free) and the Notice Boards, or ask 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.

1. S. **All Saints' Day. Trinity XXII.**
2. Tu. Marston Parish Council.†
4. W. Oxford Diocesan Conference (Sheldonian Theatre). *7.45, Women's Open Meeting (R.R.). Mrs. Stallworthy: "Does Christian Home Life Matter?"
5. Th. 4.0, Church Working Party (Vicarage).††
8. S. **Trinity XXIII. REMEMBRANCE DAY.** 8.15, H.C.; **10.55, M.P.** (A SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE attended by the British Legion).†† *6.30, E.P.; *7.30, H.C.
- 9 to 13. Church Assembly (Westminster).
9. M. 8.0, "Monday Night at Eight" (R.R.): the work of the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief.
10. Tu. 2.30, Women's Institute, Demonstration of Icing.†
13. F. St. Nicholas School Teacher-Parent Meeting.†
15. S. **Trinity XXIV.** 8.15, H.C.; 11.0, M.P. (Preacher: Mr. A. W. Cunninghame, of Dr. Barnardo's Homes); *6.30, E.P. ("Bring a Friend" Service, and at R.R. afterwards); 7.45, "Squash" for 'teenagers' (Vicarage).††
18. W. *7.45, Young Wives' Group (Alan Court); Miss Wood: "Mothercraft." Bring and Buy Sale.
22. S. **Trinity XXV (Last).** 8.15, H.C. (M.U. Corporate). 11.0, M.P. (Scouts and Cubs parade. Preacher: The Rev. E. Barnes); *6.30, E.P. (Preacher: The Rev. E. Malik).
23. M. *7.30, Unveiling by Rev. J. H. Mortimer of Bell-Ringing Tablet in Church, followed by tea in Reading Room, 7.45 to 8.15.†† At *8.15, "Monday Night at Eight" (R.R.), the Rev. E. Barnes will show films on Crypt work at St. George's, Leeds, and Youth Camps in the North.
24. Tu. 2.30, Mothers' Union (Alan Court). Film strip on "The Bible in Africa."
- 25 to 28. Diocesan Missionary Exhibition (Reading).
27. F. 8.0, Finance Committee of P.C.C. (Vicarage).
29. S. **Advent Sunday.** 8.15, H.C. 11.0, M.P. *6.30, E.P. (Subject: "Why Foreign Missions?")

DEC.

1. Tu. **St. Andrew's Day.** 11.30, H.C. and Address.
2. W. *7.45, Women's Open Meeting (Alan Court). Rev. D. Nicholson.
3. Th. *7.45, Parochial Church Council (R.R.).
6. S. **Advent II. ST. NICHOLASTIDE WEEK-END.** Watch for details.

This Month's Puzzle: Why are there two forms, longer and shorter, of the Lord's Prayer? (Answer on previous page).

This Month's Laugh: "Why is singing in the Choir like reading a thriller?" The official answer is "Because it gets more breathtaking every minute," but a boy in one parish is said to have given as his version, "Because we murder haunting melodies."

A Text to Treasure: "Thy Word is a lantern unto my feet; and a light unto my paths" (Psalm 119, 105).