

Marston times

PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT NICHOLAS

England's Green and Pleasant Land

Yes, thank God for it! Thank God for the peace we enjoy, for the social services that minister to us. Thank God for the best hospitals in the country that are on our doorstep. Mothers now have their babies in a hospital which is more like the Ritz Hotel! Thank God too at this time for the best Harvest in years.

But let's not forget those who this October have been turned out of their country without a penny, who have lost all their savings and material possessions . . . the Ugandan Asians.

Of course there are some who would like to change the words to "England's white and pleasant land", and who are quite prepared to say "Send them anywhere, but don't let them come here!" They forget that it is only by chance that they have been born Englishmen with white skins, and others have been born in warmer climes with brown skins.

A friend in London writes: "I've never been to so many parties for a long time! It's all so multiracial here, and I must say, never before have I considered the different ethnic groups of people as individual people regardless of colour, etc. I suppose I've never really got to know them before in any depth. Perhaps my education is just beginning!" Perhaps it is!

At any rate, let us thank God for so many people who have been doing so much to welcome these people in our midst. The Oxford Resettlement Committee have done valiant work, and is backed by the Oxford

Council of Churches.

If you would like to help as well, and as Christians this is certainly OUR responsibility, there are four main needs:-

1. Accommodation for a period of three months. What is required for each family is self-contained accommodation, i.e. a couple of rooms with cooking facilities included. This is for a limited period and a number of people have offered this.
2. Furniture. A little of this is required.
3. Warm clothing. The W.C.S. have accepted responsibility for distributing this.
4. Cash, which is always needed and can be used in so many ways to help the plight of these people, either by furnishing their homes or providing transport. Cheques or cash (no matter how small) may be paid to the Oxford Resettlement Committee, (Treasurer: Mr. C. T. Eddy, 13 Chawley Lane, Cumnor. OX2 9PX)

Further information about the Uganda evacuees can be obtained from Mr. Kandola, OCRI, 14 Cowley Road, Oxford. Tel: 50576

However, whether you can help materially or not, there's one thing we can all do, and that is be kindly, and open-hearted in our attitude to these, who through no fault of their own, have had to abandon everything, but have been welcomed to the peace of "England's green and pleasant land".

John R. Rumbold

Vicar and Rural Dean.

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OPEN MIND

It is a matter of historical fact that all the important movements for the reform and renewal of the church have either been inspired or sustained by the re-discovery of some important biblical truth. The Reformation, for example, was inspired by Luther's re-discovery of what St. Paul meant by "justification"; the modern ecumenical movement was sustained by a re-appraisal of the meaning of the doctrine of the Body of Christ undertaken by both Protestant and Catholic scholars. The impetus of Vatican II was almost entirely due to a fresh evaluation of the importance of the Bible in the Worship and Theology of the Roman Catholic Church.

On the other hand it is also true that slavish adherence to traditional way of interpreting Scripture has often prevented Christians from appreciating truth in other fields. Insistence on the literal truth of Genesis I, for example, precluded one of my most distinguished predecessors even from attempting to understand what the pioneers in the theory of evolution were trying to say. And, for the same reason the legislature of the State of Tennessee made it an offence to teach evolutionary theory in State Schools, (it was still an offence when I visited the State ten years ago!)

It seems to me that the Bible invariably liberates and renews those who approach it with an open mind and a genuine desire to learn more of the truth about God revealed in Jesus Christ. To that end we must use all the help we can get from the discoveries of the experts. Archaeological digs have revolutionized the study of both the Old

and the New Testament during the last 20 years; literary study of the Gospels has given us a much better understanding of the origin of our faith. We need to capture something of the enthusiasm of our guides, the teachers and scholars and perhaps, too, something of their openness to the truth wherever it is to be found. And fortunately a great deal of literature, attractively produced for beginners, is now available. I hope that you will make use of it, for if the Bible is studied with a closed or incurious mind, it causes hardening of the heart and tends to confirm human prejudice rather than introduce new visions of God's truth.

(From the Bishop's Quarterly Letter)

WINNERS AND LOSERS

A WINNER says, "Let's find out".
 A LOSER says, "Nobody knows".
 A WINNER goes through a problem.
 A LOSER goes round it.
 A WINNER makes commitments.
 A LOSER explains.
 A WINNER explains away.
 A WINNER feels responsible for more than his job.
 A LOSER says, "I only work here".
 A WINNER says, "Let's find a better way to do it".
 A LOSER says, "That's the way it's always been done".
 A WINNER wants to be judged on results.
 A LOSER wants to be judged on effort.
 Well, which are you; a winner or a loser?

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Christianity - Dope or Dynamite!

That's the title of the first session of the new Christian Youth Fellowship in St. Nicholas Church Hall, on Sunday, 8th October at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: The Rev. Colin Bennett, of St. Aldate's. All young people especially those recently confirmed, from 13-17 years are invited.

The first half of the evening will be for table tennis, records and canteen.

The second half is for getting to grips with what it means to be a Christian today.

Mark the day and roll along!

The Falcons

Marston Wives are the 'with-it' group of the parish. Just look at their programme! The Falcons R.A.F. sky-diving team are coming and bringing a film about their hair-raising work. So 'Ladies of the Parish unite! and come along on Wednesday, 11th October, to the Church Hall at 7.45 p.m.

OLD AT 60?

Rubbish! And if you doubt that come along to the Over 60's Coffee Morning on Saturday, 14th October in the Church Hall at 10 a.m., where the Over 60's Club will sell you one of the best cups of coffee you've tasted. By the way, if you've got anything they can sell, please bring it along as its a Bring and Buy in aid of their outings to the Theatre and elsewhere.

PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST

When a boy gets up at four in the morning to deliver papers, people say he is a go-getter. If people were to hear he got up at six to come to Church, they would say, "that is asking too much of the boy".

If a woman spends eight hours working in an office or in her garden she is called energetic. If, however, she is willing to do the same thing for the Lord, they say, "Religion has gone to her head".

If one ties himself down in making £5 weekly payments for some item of personal enjoyment he pays willingly, but if that same person placed that much on the offering plate, people would say he was crazy.

It is a crazy world, indeed, where first things come last and last things come first.

The Episcopalian

ENCORE

Congratulations to Mrs. Iris Rathbone of Mortimer Drive, who is about to publish another book on the gentle and noble art of crocheting. She was recently invited to the publishing firm of Bartholomews to see the work in the Press. "I got quite a thrill to see the printed sheets rolling off the press, and to know that it was my book", she said. And who wouldn't?

This is Mrs. Rathbone's second book on the subject and it promises to have a good sale. We wish her well.

Parish Council Notes

BOULTS LANE RECREATION GROUND

The swings and roundabouts for the new recreation ground have at last arrived and will be brought into use as soon as the contractors can erect them. The equipment, before erection, has cost approximately £1000. The Parish Council hope that the District Council may make a grant of about £400 towards this.

The Marston Saints have been granted permission to use the ground for matches and practice. They have taken under their wing the "Marston Midgets", the team for younger boys. The "Saints" have asked the Council whether it is possible to provide some small changing room at the ground. The Council are looking into the possibilities. Leagues are getting stricter in their requirements and without such facilities the teams may not be able to join them.

harvest thanksgiving

The Druids held their Harvest Festivals in November - were English summers uncertain even then?

Roman worshippers of the corn goddess Ceres chose April - whether to celebrate that of the previous year or that to come, I do not know.

The Jews were told to make their sacrifices 50 days after the first sheaf was cut.

English churches used to keep Lammas Day, 1st August, for blessing a loaf of newly gathered wheat, leaving the end of harvest for feasting and dancing in farms and manors.

I.F.R.

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Are you sure it's the right choice?

Wedding hymns baffle some people. Very often the choice is made irrespective of the words which may be inappropriate.

After all is 'O Jesus I have promised' the best choice with words which say: "I will not fear the battle when thou art by my side". Whittier's fine hymn, 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind' is good, but do we really want to sing: "Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire, speak through the earthquake, wind and fire". One might think the honeymoon was going to be a camping holiday!

"Thine for ever, God of love" looks pretty innocuous, but aren't the bride and groom nervous enough without having to sing about 'us thy frail and trembling sheep'.

Some settle for Jerusalem. A good Socialist hymn about building a new world order in Britain. Well, that's good if the couple are keen on politics, but even here permissiveness creeps in with the phrase: "Bring me my arrows of desire". Perhaps it's a reference to Cupid!

Some people get landed with a hymn because the Vicar either hums or whistles the tune so badly they think it's something else when they agree to it in his study.

"A whiter shade of pale" has recently been the request during the signing of the registers, no doubt referring to the colour of the groom's face when he

realises what he's actually done! No doubt he soon recovers to 'skip a light fandango' down the Church path.

Did the couple who requested "We shall overcome" and the Battle Hymn of the Republic feel that they might have trouble with 'in-laws'? And did the bride who asked for the 'Entrance of the Queen of Sheba' at the end of the service, ever consider walking out backwards?

The rumour is not true that so many people have chosen 'Praise my soul', Crimond and 'Lead us heavenly Father', that the organ plays them automatically.

However, to all forthcoming brides and bridegrooms, we would say:-

1. Look through the hymn book and study the words as well as the tunes.
2. Begin with a hymn of Praise. End with a hymn of Dedication, ('We' not 'I').

Don't be afraid to ask for advice, and remember the 'familiar old tune' is not the same in Marston as in Merioneth!

people to hear

Sunday at Evensong on 8th October (6.30 pm)
Canen H. W. Treble of Bloester
Parish Communion on 22nd October (10 am)
Rev. James Naters, S.S.J.E. (Father
Naters used to work in South Africa)
Parish Communion on 29th October (10 am)
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