

# ANSLEY CHURCH MAGAZINE

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Dear Friends,

For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4 : 6)

When the apostle Paul wrote this he had in mind the spread of the Good News of the gospel of Christ to the world. The difference between hearing and obeying the gospel and ignoring it is the difference between light and darkness—a very sharp contrast !

What does the light of the gospel do ?

First it **shines out of darkness**. There is a lot of darkness in the world, not just in what we see on our television screens, but in the hearts and lives of many people around us. There is a lot of 'looking after No. 1' (i.e. myself). In the lives of many families there is stress and strain and members go their own way without thinking of others in the same house. There are the problems of suffering and the sense of failure and human frailty that can overcome us when we feel we can't cope. There's also the background of strain and frustration that can overtake us when we feel our personal and family futures are uncertain. Yes, reader, there is plenty to moan about—but light shines out of darkness !

Secondly, light **shines in our hearts**. When the Bible uses the word 'heart' it means our whole person, our whole life—not just our emotions as in our modern use of the word. Christmas is about God shining his light into our lives—into an uncertain family security (for Mary and Joseph), an uncertain future (for Jesus) and a people who had lost their way (the Jews). God's light still shines into our world, leading us to rejoice and follow Jesus. For he is not a doll in a nativity play, or a sentimental reminder of family life but God taking upon himself involvement in our lives, in our world. Has the light of God shone in your heart ?

Finally the light is **the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ**. What does Paul mean by this ?

He means that we have the knowledge of God and his glory. 'Glory' is not something far away, up in a stained-glass-window view of Christ. As John says in his first epistle, 'We know that the Son of God has come.' As we contemplate the face of Christ, study his words in the gospels, and worship him, we begin to see God as he really is, Emmanuel, 'God with us.'

Has God's light shone in our hearts ?  
Do 'we know that the Son of God has come ?'  
Do we know 'Emmanuel, God with us ?'  
May the light of Christmas remain with us for ever.

TIM GOULDSTONE

#### **MEN AT WORK**

Over the past few weeks the church has been filled with a forest of scaffolding as Mr. Carter and his men got to work on the internal redecoration. The vicar took the opportunity of getting up to the roof beams and looking for any dates carved in them. There are three, 1786, 1818 and 1963. Clearly repair work is a continuous process ! The result is decidedly tidier than before, and the colours used make the atmosphere warmer. If you are in the church, take a look at the chancel ceiling with the two-tone blue and the white dove. I've only recently noticed that the dove of peace in this design is headless. I sincerely hope this is not a parable of the history of Ansley ! For two weeks we held services in the North Aisle—at least it made folk sit together instead of crowding at the back of the church. We must all remember those whose work, past and present, make the church building a tidy and worthy place of worship—especially those who have dusted, polished and swept after the work was done and enabled us to hold services during the period of decoration.

ANSWER—to last month's question. The list (Slate, Ell, etc.) was a list of coal seams found in Tunnel Pit Shaft, Galley Common.

#### **THINGS TO COME**

After the adult confirmation group stopped in November we felt that we should continue meeting informally in the new year. So altering the name to '**Thursday Group**' we shall be starting up on THURSDAY, JANUARY 6th at 7.30 p.m., in FILLONGLEY VESTRY for a service of Holy Communion to mark the Feast of the Epiphany. The plan is to use the order of service as far as the Readings, then break for a short Bible Study on John 1 : 1-15, then continue with the service of communion. No doubt there will be some refreshments. Please ALL are welcome to this, not just those who were confirmed last November. (The vestry is attached to the church).

The 'Thursday Group' will meet fortnightly from then on at the Vicarage. Subject for Thursday, January 20th—John 3 : 1-21.

Eleven Plus will meet at the Vicarage on Monday, January 10th and 24th at 7.30 p.m.

On Tuesday, January 25th there will be a social evening in the Village Church Hall, with competitions, cakes and other items. Admission will be 30p and proceeds will be for church funds. Further details—listen out and ask, watch for notices.

Mothers' Union meets in Village Church Hall at 3.00 p.m., on January 4th and in St. John's Hall at 7.00 p.m., on Wednesday, January 19th.



The next 'Family Worship' at St. John's Hall is on Sunday, January 2nd and Sunday, January 23rd at 10.00 a.m. Swell the numbers.

#### **NOTES AND NEWS**

The **Autumn Bazaar** on November 27th was attended by more people than usual and £375 was made for church funds for our redecoration and repair programme. Thanks to all who brought things to sell and attended to the practical running of this event.

The **'Open Day' at Church End School** was also well attended. Over 100 people came which was good for an event at what is an isolated venue. It was interesting to see some older folk there who remembered the school 'as it was'—there have been quite a few changes in the building over the years. Thanks are due to Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Savage and all parents and helpers who made this event such a happy one. We might continue the idea of 'open' events at the school occasionally so that everyone can see what is happening there. £91 was made for school funds.

On Monday, November 29th over 200 Brownies and Guides from the Arbury and District group attended their Carol Service in St. Laurence's. There was a contribution on the meaning of Christmas from our own brownie group in Ansley Common. The readers were Heather Chesters, Sarah Morris, Claire Pearson and Tracey Morris.

The **Social Evening** at the Village Church Hall on December 7th was poorly attended but, just before it began, the village was subjected to hurricane-force winds which probably put you off. Some slides of the parish from unusual angles kept people guessing and some others evoked some humour! The **'Warehouse Party'** was truly an Aladdin's Cave; quite a few bargains were snapped up. These two events raised £31 for Hall Funds.

The Sunday School braved a cold wind and sleet on Sunday, December 12th to go Carol Singing around the village, accompanied by Keith McDonald on his trombone. A door-to-door collection for the Church of England Children's Society raised £17—a good effort, worth repeating next year, perhaps a couple of times. Collection at Carol Service in St. Laurence's for C.E.C.S. realised £66.

#### **ANSLEY COMMON POP-IN CLUB**

This has got going after the lunch in St. John's Hall on Wednesday. So far the members have been to Nursery Hill end-of-term play and have had a Carol Service in St. John's Hall. Perhaps when the days are longer and the afternoons warmer it will be possible to hold a visit to the church to look at its history.

The club meets on Wednesdays at 1.45 to 2.00 p.m., after 'the lunch.'

We hope that Miss Rhena Fisher will be well enough in next term to take up her job at Nursery Hill School again.

#### **ENVELOPE SCHEME**

These are now available for 1983, on a table at the back of the church for collection. They are an excellent means of ensuring that we have a **REGULAR** income to cover running expenses of

church and worship; our giving is part of our spiritual discipline and if we ignore it we've only ourselves to blame if we can't pay the bills !

#### **CECS BOXES**

The Vicar has undertaken to collect these for this year, but unless someone can be found to do this in subsequent years this scheme will have to cease.

#### **BEREAVEMENTS**

Mrs. Nadine Mellor of Oldbury Road, Hartshill, was well known to some of our parishioners as nurse, friend and visitor. We thank God that she is now at rest after her distressing illness and extend prayers and sympathy to the Mellor family.

The military figure of Major Rees was well known at Windsor Garage; his sudden death on December 4th after his customary golf game was a great shock to his family and friends. Major Rees came originally from Derby and before World War II served with the Royal Army Service Corps and the Manchester Police. On the outbreak of war in 1939 he rejoined the R.A.S.C. and apart from three years in civilian life after the war remained with them and the R.A.O.C. until coming to Ansley in 1970; he wished to settle in Northern Ireland but the recurrent troubles there meant that this was not to be. His familiar figure and friendly manner will be missed from the village.

Mr. John Morris formerly worked at Ansley Hall Colliery and for a number of years had been resident at the bungalows in Ansley Common—he and his wife had lived in the parish most of their lives and were married at St. Laurence's in 1924.

Mr. Harris had lived at Woodlands Cottage, Robinson's End for many years after coming from the Cotswolds. He was formerly bailiff at the farm there.

Mrs. Lucy Bradley died just before Christmas after a long illness which involved much suffering for herself and for her family. Our prayers and feelings must be with husband Les and daughters Nova and Joy and their families. Mrs. Bradley was involved in many village activities and was a regular member of our worshipping community.

Mr. Sidney Cart of Bretts Hall Estate has also passed away after a long period of suffering. Remember his wife and family this Christmas time.

We gratefully acknowledge gifts given to the church in memory of the above.

#### **FUNERALS**

'Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.'

Dec. 9—Nadine Mellor, 55 Oldbury View, aged 46.

Dec. 10—Maj. Norman Rees, Windsor Garage, Birmingham Road, aged 68.

Dec. 14—John Thomas Morris, 189 Ansley Common, aged 82.

Dec. 17—Ernest Harris, Woodlands Farm, Robinson's End, aged 78.

Dec. 23—Sidney Cart, 20 Bretts Hall Estate, aged 57.

Dec. 23—Lucy Bradley, 149 Birmingham Road, aged 65.

#### **WEDDING**

Dec. 31—Klaus Grasskamp and Carol Webb.