



Ansley Church News

No. 708

JUNE 1984

Price 10p

Vicar: THE REV. TIM GOULDSTONE, M.Sc.,
The Vicarage,
Birmingham Road,
Ansley. Chapel End 392240

WORSHIP

1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays
11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
3rd Sunday
11.00 a.m. Family Worship.
6.30 p.m. Holy Communion.

Holy Communion also on 1st Sunday at 8.00 a.m.

St. John's Hall—Family Worship at 10.00 a.m., June 24th.

BARN DANCE

SATURDAY, JUNE 9th at Sutton's Farm, Ansley, 8.00 p.m.
Music by: Kurly Kale Group. Licensed Bar Refreshments
ADMISSION BY TICKET £2.00, available from Mr. F. Arnold,
Mrs. M. Sutton or the Vicar. ALL WELCOME

SUMMER SALE, etc.

At the Church Hall and Vicarage on SATURDAY, JUNE 16th
at 2.30 p.m.

Dear Friends,

On May 31st we celebrated 'Ascension Day,' one of the major festivals of the Christian Year. Some of us remember our school-days when we were allowed time off on this Thursday to attend church services; I never went, and was puzzled why anyone should want to do such a thing as attend church on a weekday! But what does the Ascension mean and what is its relevance to us?

First, the Ascension means that **Jesus Christ is Lord**. At Easter we remember the resurrection; but we need the Ascension to understand the full purpose of Easter. It is as if at Easter Jesus set out on a journey—the Ascension tells us where he went! In the picture—language of the Bible, we are told that Jesus is Lord, not just Saviour, for '... God has highly exalted him ... that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow' (Philippians 2 : 9-10). We also read that Jesus is head over 'all things' (Ephesians 1 : 22). That includes all the things mentioned in the wonderful chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians, where Paul mentions seed, corn, bodies, men, animals, birds, fish, sun, moon and stars.

He is of course Lord of the church—but so often we are overcome by bleak pessimism and wrong agendas and an inward looking boredom that can't or won't see beyond the parish pump. That isn't making Jesus Lord!

Second, the Ascension means that **Jesus Christ is Forerunner**. That is, he has gone to prepare a place for those who love him and have believed in the Easter message. Jesus said to his worried disciples before his death, 'And when I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself' (John 14 : 3). God accepted Jesus Christ; Christians are 'in Christ' and we are acceptable to God **only** because of Jesus. The Ascension therefore means that the Christian's faith is a **secure** faith.

Thirdly, the Ascension means that **Jesus Christ prays for us**. He has known temptation, suffering, even the experience of death himself. 'Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us' (Romans 8 : 34).

Christians believe in the Resurrection and Ascension. When our eyes move away from the central facts of our faith and we try to solve the problems of the church in our own ways, we get bogged down in committees and even waste time discussing and planning what we are going to discuss (I have spent hours having this sort of thing commended to me in the name of 'good management'). All this activity so frequently covers up a lack of vision and lack of spiritual confidence in God.

Last Sunday I heard Billy Graham preach on the radio from Roker Park football ground in Sunderland—a 40 minute sermon with about sixteen points in it—but **POSITIVE, CLEAR** and

CHALLENGING. That is what the Christian message is about. It does not give simplistic answers to life's unknowns; it does not promise an easy life; it does not promise protection from misunderstanding; it does not promise a church which becomes a hobby and an escape-route from facing the challenges of life. The Christian message is about Jesus Christ and about faith in him. Begin there, and the rest will come !

TIM GOULDSTONE

SCHOOL NEWS

The Vicar went to a meeting of the Diocesan Education Committee on May 16th to put the case for retaining the school. Briefly, the reasons given were these:

- (1) The proposal that education standards could not be maintained in small village schools was held to be false.
- (2) The smaller scale of rural communities need institutions of similar scale to match their size.
- (3) The standards at Church End School have risen over the past ten years.
- (4) Alternative church schools to Ansley are too far away. In any case under the 1980 Education Act, wider choice of schools was encouraged and promoted. Parents still feel that the Church can have an important part to play in the education of their children in an increasingly secular world.
- (5) The County Structure Plan has no vision for Ansley and the withdrawal of educational facilities would only hasten the run-down of a parish already threatened with decline.

The proposals will be made to the full Education Committee on June 6th. Moves after that are uncertain but should the school be recommended for closure the matter will eventually reach the Secretary of State in London and we propose to make a personal representation to him.

BEES are eating up our church stonework ! There are a good number of 'mason bees' in residence around the window on the south side of the chancel, taking advantage of the decaying soft sandstone at this point. There is a real danger that this decay will aid the penetration of moisture into the internal structure of the wall resulting in very serious damage to the whole. In addition the stone mullions in the Phillips memorial window were described as 'life-expired' by a reputable firm of masons and will probably have to be replaced.

Obviously we will all have to think very seriously and responsibly about this matter in the coming months. We will have to get professional estimates for this work and then talk about action in the PCC. I believe nothing is impossible to do

either structurally or financially to those who feel the church fabric is worth repairing.

I must add that the vicar is not going to spend time shaking a can round the parish raising money for this project once we know how much it costs. That's not what he was ordained for—there's nothing in the Ordination Vows about being a fundraiser, and I've seen some sorry parsonical states resulting from Christian ministers who've fallen into this trap. As a Church and as a community that is responsible for its irreplaceable heritage from the past, we must all work **together if and when** we go forward with any work on these matters.

The concert in the church last month by pupils from Coleshill School was very enjoyable, but it was a pity that not more people from the parish attended. There need be no complaints today about the number and quality of talented young people about musically. The lack of heating was apparently because the harpsichord was very susceptible to going out of tune—we just about got away with it but let's hope the weather improves for us all.

The Coffee Morning at Mrs. Truelove's was also enjoyable and this time the weather was kind. Many people met old friends and £136 was raised for church funds.

Another enjoyable event was the marriage of Julie Marshall of Ansley Common to Timothy Iliffe of Hinckley. Let us pray that they will know God's blessing on their marriage and that their many friends who came to their wedding will also be a support to them—there must have been about 200 there—what about 200 to Sunday services, eh?

The outing this year had to be cancelled because of lack of support. Only half the coach could be filled and this would have been a financial impossibility. Perhaps the 'Cup Final' had something to do with the poor response

JUNE DIARY

- June 5—Tuesday 6.45 p.m. School Governors' — Church End School.
- June 6—Wednesday 8.00 p.m. PCC, Village Church Hall.
- June 9—Saturday 8.00 p.m. till 12 midnight Barn Dance, Sutton's Farm.
- June 16—Saturday 2.30 p.m. Summer Fete at the Church Hall and Vicarage.
- June 28—Thursday 10.30 a.m. Joint MU Coffee Morning at Mr. and Mrs. Salisbury's, 4 Izon's Croft. Bring and Buy stall, etc.

June 30—Saturday. "Line of Coins," Birmingham Road, Ansley Village.

July 4—Wednesday. COACH to BILLY GRAHAM RALLY at VILLA PARK. This 'bus will depart about 6.00 p.m., but **watch out** for further details locally. This coach trip is FREE incidentally.

We would like to thank the Salisbury's for having the Coffee Morning at their house during the time of Mrs. Varden's illness.

We mourn the loss of Mrs. Winifred Groome of Birmingham Road. Mr. and Mrs. Groome had not long lived in the village and were already part of village life and activity. Our prayers and thoughts are with Alan and all other members of his family.

The churchyard is in serious danger of getting out of control ! Many thanks to those who have over the years enabled it to look tidy; but couldn't we perhaps have a working party of those of **all ages** who could lend a hand at this work and make it a bit easier ? After all, the churchyard is very much part of the parish heritage so there should be no shortage of helpers ! Ideas to the Vicar, please—we might have a regular evening when folk could get cracking on it, or arrange for people to do a bit of work as and when they can.

The St. John's Church font is now in use for Family Worship with Baptism at St. Laurence Church; it was dedicated on May 13th before the baptism of Andrew Hadley who appropriately enough lives in Ansley Common.

BAPTISMS

May 13—Andrew Sean Hadley. 134 Ansley Common.
Owen Richard Ian Cartwright, 8 West View.
Sian Verity Ann Cartwright, 8 West View.

WEDDING

May 26—Timothy John Iliffe and Julie Dawn Marshall.

FUNERAL

May 14—Winifred Groome, aged 61, 175 Birmingham Road, Ansley.