

ANSLEY CHURCH MAGAZINE

No. 687

SEPTEMBER 1982

Price 10p

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Arrangements for Baptisms, Banns, Weddings and Funerals should now be made with the Vicar.

'CRY GOD FOR ENGLAND ' or should we ?

'Dr. Runcie Angers Tories' (**Daily Telegraph**, 27th July, 1982).

The Archbishop of Canterbury got himself into trouble over the Falklands service. Apparently the service did not reflect the voice of the people. The press had got up a campaign of 'God on our side' — and surely everyone believes that ? The voice of the people must be the voice of God ! Or is it ?

In his sermon the Archbishop calmly pointed out that deaths had taken place on both sides—that the price of war included teenage conscripts killed against their own wishes. This simple fact about war proved impossible for some politicians to accept. There was the inevitable counterblast and downright rudeness of those who ' . . . on all the people shove, and bawl allegiance to the state.' Political opportunism now includes accusing the Archbishop of 'liberal wetness' and of associating with 'cringing clergy.' That this was said to a man who himself holds the Military Cross is not only insulting; it proves that there are some guilty consciences in the political camp.

We ought to learn the lessons of history. In 1956 we tried the old imperialistic line at Suez. The last great act of a class and empire even then long in decline. The 1956 'Daily Sketch' said 'Let the Crybabies Howl ! It's Great Britain Again.'

Now, again, a generation later, we still seem unable to see questions of morality and conscience except in terms of a simplistic appeal to patriotism and nationalism of 'my country right or wrong' type. It was thought good by some to drag the Church of England in at the last moment to sign, seal and deliver the Falklands war as the 'will of God,' a great triumph for the nation 'under God' against the forces of evil.

The Church refused to give unqualified acceptance—and made us think. Think about God and think about the Church.

THINK ABOUT GOD

Do we have to bring 'God' in to support national crusades ? Both Britain and Argentina tried this. The Israelis are doing it now. The Ayatollah in Iran. Is God a tribal God ?

No one can fail to be moved by the pictures of the fighting men which came to us from the South Atlantic; the bravery, the heroism and the sense of common purpose that tragically so often needs a war to bring out; the dark, empty, frightened, vacant look on the faces of the prisoners. Thousands of men were sent to do the job of war—and the military did it well, did what they were told to do. A thousand million pounds is the immediate cost. But what about the cost that has already gone from the news? The rehousing of those who have lost husbands in the war? The family problems resulting from it? Where is God? He does not take sides. He is quietly doing his work through his people on both sides of the war, behind all the politics and empty verbal posturings of Whitehall and Buenos Aires. His is the still small voice that we like to shout down. We like to make more noise than God to prove that we are right.

THINK ABOUT THE CHURCH

The reaction to what the Archbishop said shows that the Church and the State are drifting apart. Centuries ago Parliament was almost the 'lay synod' of the Church of England. Only Anglicans could be MP's. Today it is very different. Parliament has become a secular body, despite the existence of official religion attached to its proceedings. Yet the Church of England is still 'established' — subject in the last analysis to Parliament.

The Church of England as a 'national church?' It seems to be a fact in law, but a fiction in practice. Do we want the Church of England to become disestablished, to become a sect or religious club? Do YOU want this?

WHOSE CHURCH?

The challenge to the Church of England is that it lives with this tension. An immense number of people regard it as 'their church.' They never darken its doors, except for baptism, weddings or funerals—but they (and perhaps you, the reader) like to think of it as 'their church.' The Church can and must question such a claim. She must continue to point to genuine commitment to Jesus Christ, to repentance and faith, to the life of the living church. The Church cannot exist solely on the basis that it provides ceremonies at life's crises and turning points. The Church is not ours, but God's—it is 'The Body of Christ,' his faithful people.

NOTES AND NEWS

The 'Fun Day' on August 21st proved very enjoyable. It seems about 200 people came. Rain threatened, but stayed away. The band played, 'wellies' were thrown, not always in the right direction. Food was eaten (thanks to all who did the practical provisions). Races were run, games were played. It would have been nice to have seen even more people there. About £200 was raised for the church fabric restoration and redecoration.

The 'Family Service' experiment at Ansley Common is working quite well although numbers were down in July and August. Was this a forgetfulness or was it holidays? Perhaps a bit of both. We will continue with this service at least until the end of the year. The next one is on **Sunday, September 26th** at 10.00 a.m. In future these services will be on the **fourth** Sunday of the month.

The Luncheon Club in St. John's Hall is flourishing in numbers. The one at the village has settled down to about 12 on average. There is a possibility of a 'Pop In' club at the Common but as is so often the case it depends on people to run it.

Confirmation—this is to be held on Wednesday, November 17th at Arley. Several adults have expressed an interest in confirmation and I will be arranging confirmation classes beginning in the middle of September. If anyone else is interested in taking this step of Christian commitment will they please contact the Vicar.

Don't forget—St. John's Autumn Sale on Saturday, September 11th at 3.00 p.m., in St. John's Hall. Your support would be valued as we are converting the central heating there to gas-fired. Gifts of all kinds would be very welcome.

Don't forget—GFS starts in the Village Church Hall on **Monday, September 6th** at 6.45 p.m. A note from Mrs. Whitworth :

The members of Ansley GFS would like to thank all parents and friends who came to their concert and open evening on July 12th. The main idea was that the children round off the GFS year by entertaining their families but at the same time all those who attended helped to raise £11 for GFS funds. We hope to buy more games equipment in the Autumn.

COACH TRIP—Saturday, October 2nd—The trip to Dovedale in May was a success, so we are 'repeating the offer' of a coach trip in October. This one will be rather different—a half-day in **Cambridge**, possibly with the opportunity of attending Evensong in King's College Chapel. Approximate time of departure 10.30 a.m.; arrive Cambridge approx. 1.00 p.m., and depart 6.30 p.m.; arriving back in Ansley at 9.00 p.m. Cost : £2.25 for adults, £1.25 for 14 and under, but we should say that this trip will not really be suitable for small children. 53 seats, first come, first served !

STOP AND EXAMINE

What is the evidence of **our** faith and the evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit in **our** lives? It is only our nearness to Christ and his work of grace in us that will produce a true Christian character. It is said that a rose doesn't preach, its fragrance is its own sermon. Some of our Christian testimony of the saving love of Jesus will be by what we say. But most of it will be by the lives we live.

If we were arrested and charged with being a Christian and then put on trial, would there be enough evidence to convict us?

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DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 1982

AUGUST

31— 8.00 p.m. PCC, St. John's Hall.

SEPTEMBER

4—11.30 a.m. Wedding of Paul Belcher and Kim Flowers.

5—**TRINITY 13—'The Family of God'**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (said).

11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.
Epistle : Ephesians 3 : 14-end.
Gospel : Luke 11 : 1-13.

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
OT — Proverbs 31 : 10-end.
NT — 1 Corinthians 1 : 1-18.

6— 5.45 p.m. GFS begins again at Village Church Hall.

8— St. John's Mothers' Union.

11— 3.00 p.m. Sale at St. John's Hall.

12—**TRINITY 14—'Those in Authority'**

11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.
Epistle : 1 Timothy 2 : 1-7.
Gospel : Matthew 14 : 1-12.

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
OT — Isaiah 45 : 1-13.
NT — Matthew 22 : 1-33.

19—**TRINITY 15—'The Neighbour'**

11.00 a.m. Family Service.
Luke 10 : 25-37.
6.30 p.m. Holy Communion.
Epistle : 1 John 4 : 15-end.
Gospel : Luke 16 : 19-end.

26—**TRINITY 16—'True Faith'**

10.00 a.m. Family Worship and Baptism at St. John's Hall.
11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.
Epistle : Galatians 2 : 15-3 : 9.
Gospel : Luke 7 : 1-10.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
OT — Joshua 14 : 6-14.
NT — Acts 19 : 21-end.

28— 7.30 p.m. Coffee Evening and 'Bring and Buy,' Village Church Hall.

OCTOBER

2—10.30 a.m. Trip to Cambridge.

BAPTISMS

We welcome into the family of the church :

Aug. 15—Laura Jane Costin, 11 Nuthurst Crescent, Ansley.
Craig Ashley Smith, 160 Birmingham Road, Ansley.