

# ANSLEY CHURCH MAGAZINE

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

Dear Friends,

## **MORE OR LESS PEOPLE . . . .**

Quite often older people in the parish say to me, "It's not the same as it was in the old days." Well, of course it isn't ! The other day I was watching a film made in 1950 (when the vicar was four) and it seemed to be set on another planet although only thirty years ago. It is true to say that the rate of change of our lifestyle has been very rapid since the war—but there never was a time when things were static. That is an illusion, born of childhood memories in later life. But there have been changes in Ansley in the way people live. In 1921 there were 2007 people in the parish; in 1971 there were 2314. Not a great increase over fifty years compared with our big cities, but a great difference in **how** people live.

## **HOUSES**

Look more closely at the figures—in 1921 there were 397 houses in the parish—about five people in each house ! In 1971 there were 735 houses—about three people in each house. In earlier years of this century it was common for more than one generation to live in the same house. Now a good many elderly folk in Ansley live on their own, often separated by many miles from their children. This is one of the main reasons why people feel 'things have changed' — it is social change, the break-up of old family ties and the scattering of children as they seek work.

## **IS ANSLEY GETTING OLDER ?**

When work patterns change, the tendency is for younger people to move away whilst the older folk stay behind. The result is that the average age of the community increases. This is certainly true of Arley, where the closure of the coal mine caused a decline in population. The reason for the creation of the community of New Arley in the 1920's and 1930's was removed.

## **PEOPLE UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

In general terms, the older generation has been given a foundation of Christian teaching which was more widespread than that given today. In many cases, the Christian foundations laid fifty or sixty years ago have been a help in time of trouble and formed the basis of a living and active faith for today. But are foundations enough ? They are not much use for day to day living without something built on them. In writing to the Christians at Corinth, Paul warns them that they have to put

some effort into building up their faith—and not only that, but make sure it is strong :

For God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid. Some will use gold and silver or precious stones in building on the foundations; others will use wood or grass or straw. And the quality of each person's work will be seen when the Day of Christ exposes it.

(1 Corinthians chapter 3 verses 11-13).

Life does buffet people. It is a mystery why some use suffering and failure as a stepping stone to maturity whereas others become bitter and self-centred and turn in upon themselves. We can have a spirit of gloom :

Change and decay in all around I see

Or the confidence of :

Through all the changing scenes of life

In trouble and in joy

The praises of my God shall still

My heart and tongue employ.

God asks a living response of you and me to his revelation in Jesus Christ. Christmas might seem a way off yet, but we must remember what it means—God is not absent from his world, but comes in Jesus Christ to show us what he is like and make us respond to him. What is our response ?

#### MEDITATION AND ACTION

First, prayer—often forgotten, but most important. In prayer we begin to see people and problems from God's standpoint and understand what his will for his people is. But it is difficult. Perhaps this could be one subject for our next series of Lent Meetings ?

Secondly, see to it that the elderly folk in our community have adequate pastoral care. This cannot be done by one or two people but must involve the whole church. In addition many folk need to have their faith in Christ strengthened. There is a lot of spiritual confusion. Our Christian life is never complete—we've never 'got it all' and need always to be building ourselves up by prayer, Bible study and mutual care and encouragement.

Thirdly, we need to teach Christianity to younger people. There is a saying that 'Christianity is caught, not taught' and there is some truth in it; a life lived for God is a fine witness. But the basic foundations of Christian belief must be laid. So in January we propose to start a 'Pathfinder' group for children in the 11/12 and 14/15 age group. These years are crucial for forming opinions and making decisions, not least about what it means to be a Christian. 'Pathfinders' is not a separate youth organisation. It is the group within the local church where Christian teaching and pastoral care can exist for this age group. There are local groups at Chilvers Coton and Attleborough. More details in next month's magazine.

With all best (even if early) wishes for Christmas,

TIM GOULDSTONE.



## NOTES AND NEWS

The dates of events for December, together with all the worship services for the month will be found on the back page.

Last month we marked the founding of the GFS group at our Family Service, admitted junior members and commissioned leaders (Valerie Whitworth, Micheline Bond and Joan McParland). Please remember this work and that of the Sunday School.

On November 22nd at Fillongley we had a very good "Sunday Half Hour" recording session. There were about 200 in the congregation. It is good to see so many together, a reminder that although village congregations can be small on an average Sunday in Britain about four million people attend a place of worship. The service will be broadcast at 8.30 p.m., on Advent Sunday, November 29th on Radio 2.

This past month has also seen the passing of Mrs. Martha Parker of Ansley Common, for many years a member of St. John's. Her life and witness was appreciated by many. Our sympathy goes to her large family at 'The Common,' Hartshill and elsewhere, as it does to the relatives of Mrs. McCulloch and Mr. Sherriff of Croftmead.

Some of you may receive this magazine before November 29th, Advent Sunday. I propose to make this Sunday, in common with many other churches, a special day when we consider our commitment to God's work in terms of our stewardship of time, finance and commitment to serving the Lord.

In January we shall be saying goodbye to Geoff and Daphne Nichols. Geoff has been appointed as verger/caretaker to the church of Charles King and Martyr in Tunbridge Wells. This is a full-time job and he and Daphne will be able to play a full part in the work and ministry of the congregation there. Our prayers are with them as we say a big thank you for their work for us and for many other local churches in the area. They expect to move in the first week in January.

As most of us know, Miss Veasey feels that the time has come for her to reluctantly relinquish the post of organist at the Parish Church. This has been a labour of love that she has cherished for many years. In the thirties she was deputy organist; when Mr. Haydn Jones retired at the end of the war she took over and has carried out the work with great care and seriousness until very recently. This is a very long spell of devoted and loyal service and the church congregation has always been very appreciative of her work—twice on Sunday and once for Choir Practice each week and a host of weddings and funerals. For her Sunday work she received no salary. This is a fine example of Christian service which most of us would wish to copy.

The congregation has presented her with a nest of tables which will suitably adorn her new home at Abbeyfields, Ansley Road, Stockingford. We send her best wishes from the congregation for a long and happy retirement.

Thank you Miss Veasey.

## **CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOXES**

A number of church members have these in their homes. Rather than come round and collect them, we are asking all those who have boxes to **BRING THEM TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20th** so they can be emptied. There are a few boxes available for any who wish to start contributing to the needs of this society.

### **BAPTISM**

We welcome into the family of the Church (November 15th) :  
Tracey Copson, 191 Birmingham Road.

### **FUNERALS**

October 28—Martha Parker, 26 Ansley Common.  
October 30—Francis McCulloch, 10 Croftmead.  
November 4—Samuel Elijah Sherriff, 9 Croftmead.  
Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies." (John 11 : 25).

### **DIARY FOR DECEMBER 1981**

- 6—(Advent 2). 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.  
11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.  
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- 7—8.00 p.m. P.C.C. Village Church Hall.
- 9—3.00 p.m. Mothers' Union Combined Service. Coach leaves depot at 2.30 p.m., picks up at Ansley Common at 2.35 p.m.
- 11—7.30 p.m. Christmas Concert, Village Church Hall. Refreshments. Admission 25p. Proceeds for Christian work overseas via TEAR fund.
- 13—(Advent 3). 11.00 a.m. Holy Communion.  
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- 16—7.00 p.m. St. John's Mothers' Union, Mrs. Varden's.
- 17—7.30 p.m. Beetle Drive at Village Church Hall. Admission 50p. Tea, Squash, Biscuits, Crisps.
- 20—(Advent 4). 11.00 a.m. CHRISTMAS FAMILY SERVICE.  
3.30 p.m. Baptism.  
6.30 p.m. CAROL SERVICE with readings. Collection for Church of England Children's Society. (Please return your boxes).
- 24—(Christmas Eve). 11.30 p.m. MIDNIGHT COMMUNION.
- 25—(Christmas Day).  
11.00 a.m. CHRISTMAS FAMILY COMMUNION.
- 27—(Christmas 1). 11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.  
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- GFS — every Monday evening at 5.45 p.m., Village Church Hall.
- Toddlers — every Wednesday at 1.15 p.m., Village Church Hall.  
(Contact Mrs. Wilson, Chapel End 394433).
- every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 9.15 a.m. to noon,  
St. John's Hall. (Contact Mrs. Charnell, Chapel End 392061).