



... Though your sins be as scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow...

Isaiah 1:18

St. Nicholas News

January 1979

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30 BARRACK LANE
THE PARK

411383

january

Our dear Friends,

We write this at the tail end of Christmas just before going into the Derbyshire hills for a break and so it is a good time to look back as well as to look forward. For us, this has been one of the happiest Christmasses at St Nicholas'. It started with the marvellous celebration of the "Feast of St Nicholas" on the Monday afternoon nearest December 6th. The Women's Fellowship had made small gifts for one another (no-one spending more than 6p!) and we enjoyed that simple and loving exchange of gifts as well as having great fun together as we celebrated Mrs Smith's 90th Birthday. Once again the Carols by Candlelight Service was a highlight, preparing us for the week leading to Christmas Day. It was a great joy to us on Christmas Eve to have fellowship in our home with several members of the congregation before going off together to the Midnight Service of Holy Communion - a service which was memorable for many of us. Was it the candlelight? Was it the deep consciousness that many friends all over the world were praying for us at that moment? Was it the childlike anticipation of welcoming the Christchild into our hearts once again. The challenge to receive Him afresh as we received the sacrament did not go unheeded

one felt. One of the special joys this year has been to share the services with many of the fellowship who have remained in Nottingham this year instead of joining the usual mass exodus from the city for the Festival, so we have had the immense pleasure of worshipping with those who belong and to whom we belong and that has felt very good. It has also been a great encouragement to be able to share the various ministries with so many people. Our thanks to George Dobbs and Martin for sharing the preaching; thank you those who decorated the Church; our thanks to George Ingram for assisting at the Communion and to Anne and her various musicians for all they have added to the depth of the worship. All this help has left us much more free to fulfill our own ministry and undoubtedly one of the highlights for us was to take the Holy Communion to our dear friend Miss Townend. What a joy that was on Christmas Eve.

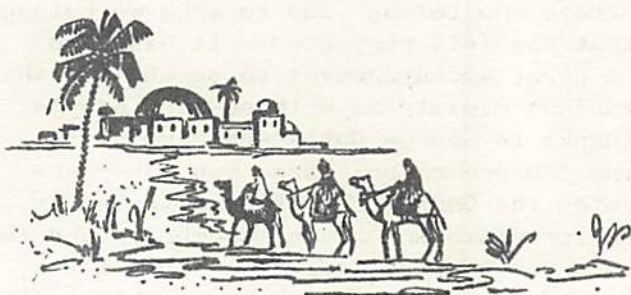
The Swanwick Weekend became part of the spiritual preparation for many of us as we studied the Magnificat together. By the time you read this, most of us will have made and broken our new year resolutions. There are some words of Scripture, however, which we would like to bring before you and ourselves for this New Year. They are more words spoken by Mary:

WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOUDO IT!

As we learned at Swanwick, Mary's obedience to the Divine command was instant and unquestioning and led her to the heights of joy and the depths of pain. As for her, so for us. Obeying Jesus is our privilege and duty if He is our Lord. Such obedience will sometimes seem a delight and at other times it will be the necessary painful pruning of the growing plant. Are we prepared for both in our love and service of Him this year? We stray out of His perfect plan at our peril and cost.

But the other side of that coin was expressed so aptly by Dante:

IN HIS WILL DIVINE IS FOUND OUR PEACE.



One of the priceless thoughts for us this Christmas was that our God and Saviour came as a tiny Babe to this earth because He wanted to be found and because He wants to be held by us. What an amazing truth! The God of the universe desires to be found and held - by me! We move into the time of Epiphany when the Church remembers the quest and search of the Kings for the Christ child and the wonder of their discovery. May we enter 1979 with a similar sense of anticipation, curiosity and wonder, expecting to discover the Saviour at each cross-road and at each bend in the path for He is there and delights to be found by us.

Warmest greetings

David and

Joyce



"I think he's carrying 'shared leadership' too far!"

ESTRI

EDITORIAL

Have I detected a note of despair in the voices of my single friends who have asked me how many more articles on marriage are going to take up valuable space in the magazine? For your encouragement, you will find that there is no such article this month because it seemed more appropriate to devote the space to material from Swanwick. I hope this will be a help and encouragement to those who were not with us as well as being a helpful reminder to those who were helped by that weekend.

Next month, however, I hope to continue with a few more articles on marriage without apology! There is a great need for teaching on this subject in these days in which we live. The articles which appear in St Nicholas News are to be submitted for wider publication at a later date. So please forgive me if I continue to do one chapter at a time. It would be of great value to me if married couples would come back with comments. Someone said to me just before Christmas: "I am longing to say yes but.....!" Please do..... it would be a help to me in my thinking and counselling and doubtless in our own marriage too! If you are unmarried, may I gently suggest that you DO read the articles. What they have to say about relating within marriage is not entirely irrelevant to the single state and we who are working at producing Christian marriages need your prayer support. And yes - the idea of a series for single people has not been unheard. Any offers for writing one?.....*





(A message from the Bishop of Pontefract)

"Our present situation is one of transition from a Church sustained by a homogeneously Christian society and almost identical with it, to a Church made up of those who have struggled against their environment in order to reach a personally clearly and explicitly responsible decision of faith. This will be the Church of the future or there will be no Church at all".

This is a quotation from "The Shape of the Church to Come", by the eminent Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner, and the truth of what he says is being brought home to us with increasing clearness. There was a time when if you swam with the tide it would wash you in through the church door on a Sunday morning; now it will wash you onto the golf course or into the WMC. Christians are learning again what it means to be salt in the soup, lights in the dark.

To many of us this points to the need to declare ourselves to be Christians, in a way that is not so strident as to be off-putting, nor so pietistic as to imply that we have arrived rather than just started to travel hopefully. It is for this reason that many people, all over the world, have started to put the FISH sign on their doors. It was the sign of the first Christians, used to identify themselves to each other in days when to be a Christian at all was to risk persecution. It was chosen because the Greek word for fish was made up of the initial letters of the slogan 'Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour': and because it was easily drawn in the sand, or chalked on the wall of a house.

Today there are a number of houses with fish on their doors. They are not all Anglican houses: "Other fish I have which are not of this shoal," the Lord might have said, and one of the attractive features of this sign is that it is used by Roman Catholics, Baptists, Anglicans, and all sorts of more or less undifferentiated Christians. There are many places where you can go into a car park and find cars with the outline fish on the back windscreen - with no way of telling what is the denominational allegiance of the owner.

Having a fish on the door does not make yours a Christian home. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another" was the Lord's criterion, and we must never attempt to substitute any other standard. All the same by having a fish on your door, or by identifying your allegiance to Christ in some other open way, you declare what it is you are hoping to achieve, with the Lord's help. To say that yours is a Christian home does not put a halo round your head, and tell your neighbours that you are better than them: it does say something about the relationships you are asking the Lord to help you form within your home, and between your home and the other homes round about you - with fishes on them and without.

Fish for sale in the Church Bookstall.



1979



Family Pages



It was with great sadness that we said goodbye to Coralie Allen at the pre-Christmas Communion on the Tuesday of Christmas week. Coralie returns to Ireland after working in Boots for some time. We have enjoyed her fellowship and her music. The children have loved her as a Sunday School teacher and we have rejoiced as we have watched her grow in the Lord during her time here. Our prayers as she returns to Ireland.

Jane Gooden used to be a student worshipper at St Nicholas'. She was married just before Christmas.

Paul and Mary Zahl sent a most beautiful Christmas letter with greetings to all their many friends at St Nicholas'. The lovely photograph of them on the letter makes them look as well and happy as they sound in their letter. What a joy to keep in touch.



baby's arrival

Don and Elizabeth Wright

were especially rejoicing this Christmas in the birth of their first son, Nicholas. Elizabeth, better known as Liz Bond used to be a Pathfinder leader here some years ago.



Thank you to those who worked so hard to make the Church look so lovely for the Christmas services. There is so much artistic talent in the Church. The Flower Rota is up for 1979 and Kathleen Robinson would be delighted to see new names and old entered on it.

uganda



Fay Rumley flies to Uganda on January 19th. She is in much need of our prayers during this time of preparation and then as she settles in that troubled country. Her Valedictory Service is to be held on the morning of January 14th.

A Flat in the Park is available from early January. There is room for threecontact Malc and Irene Offord if you are interested.

Party Plans

The New Year Party is being held in the hall on January 20th, at 7.30pm. It would be lovely if we could all be there!



Thank you

Last November we were praying as a fellowship for Matthew Offord as he faced an operation on his ear.

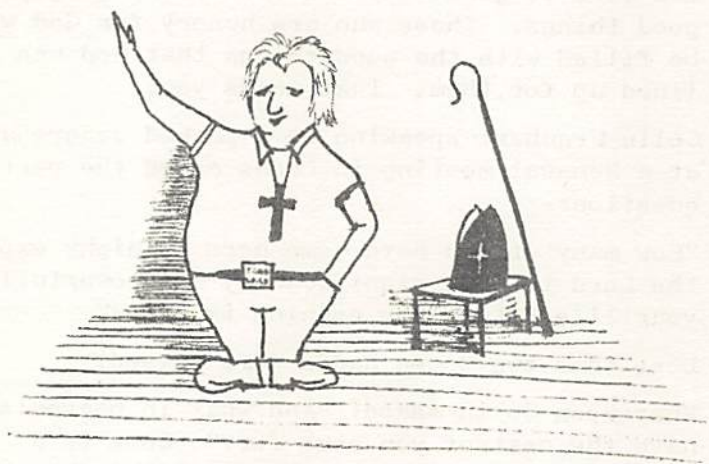
Malc and Irene record their thanks.....

"How does it feel now that Matthew can hear?" is the question everyone is asking. For Matthew it means not having to sit next to the teacher in the "naughty boy's" chair, being able to understand conversations without concentrating on the speaker's lips, a freedom and joy that "Jesus and the doctor have made me better." as he, with his six year old's straightforward faith, was sure they would. Kirsty is still ending her graces at mealtimes with "and thank you God that Matthie is better". Dominic, with his mathematical mind, tries to work out what proportion of the healing belongs to the specialist and what to the Lord!

We ourselves are deeply thankful for such a result from the operation. To move from being unable to hear a large lorry thundering past to 100% hearing was almost more than we dared to pray for. May we here record our grateful thanks to all those who provided food, did shopping, baby sitting etc during the week Matthew was in hospital and above all, to every one who prayed for the five of us. To see the hunted look, the shut in look falling from Matthew's face and the old, cheeky sparkle returning is our daily joy. Please share our happiness as we indeed praise the Lord for the wonder of His healing.

Impressions

PRaise THE
LORD



A Bishop

Swanwick

CENTRE PAGE
PULLOUT

The Bishop of Pontefract shared a wealth of insight on a variety of subjects. Some of these appear on the next few pages: more next month!



On Expectancy

The Lord is good! He has filled the hungry with good things. Those who are hungry for God will be filled with the good things that God has lined up for them. That means you!

Colin Urquhart speaking to a packed congregation at a Renewal meeting in Leeds asked the pertinent question:-

"How many of you have come here to-night expecting the Lord to work significantly and powerfully in your life before the evening is over?"

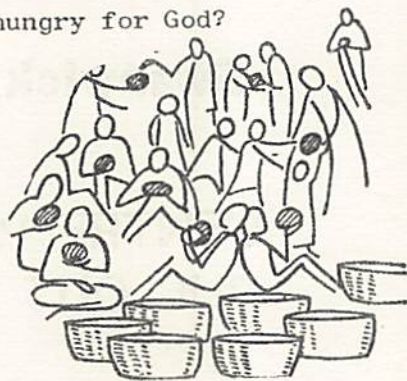
Less than two dozen hands were raised!

Whereupon Colin asked: "And what in heaven's name have the rest of yo' come for?" Come to a Renewal meeting and not expect anything to happen!

Of Francis McNutt's parody of the beatitudes!

"Blessed are those who do not expect anything to happen. They will not be disappointed"!.!

Are we expectantly hungry for God?





The Secret of Jesus' Ministry

Jesus: flooded with the Spirit is immediately led into the wilderness to be tempted. Driven away from friends political enthusiasts, creature comforts into silence and solitude to resolve all trace of conflict and tension within Himself - - -

BECAUSE:-

"The secret of our Lord's ministry, of His attractive power, lay in the fact that people are drawn to Him and are at ease with the man who is at ease with Himself".

We, the Lord's people, who have been given a portion of the Lord's varied grace: if we are to minister effectively it will be because we similarly, are at ease with ourselves. If we are not, we will surround ourselves with barbed wire which will hurt when people attempt to come too close.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

On Compassion

The prime Christian virtue that dwarfs all the others and whose absence makes the others meaningless is the virtue of compassion.



On Despair -

"God is never closer to us than when we're scraping the bottom."



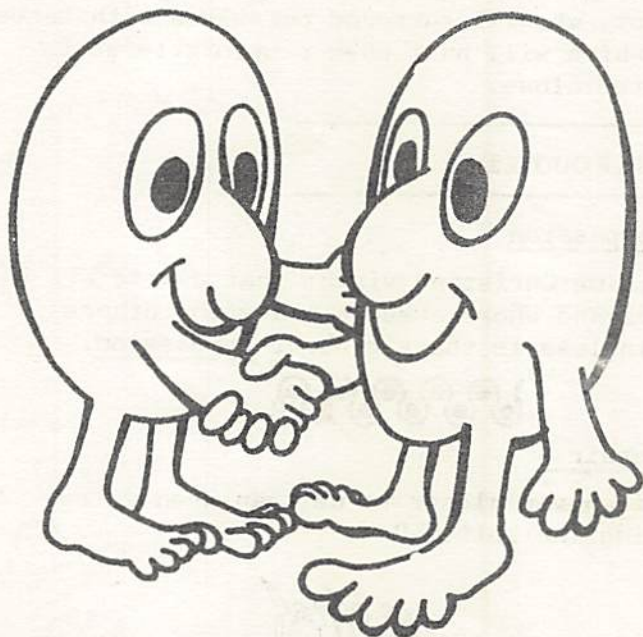
On Communion

When you receive the Bread of Life - Christ's Body - go out to be Christ's Body in the City of Nottingham where men might not realise that they are hungry for God. You are going out fed with His Body, filled with His spirit to be GOD to others by building real relationships.



On Evangelism

The vehicle for evangelism is genuine relationships, finding the real you without your masks. We can then show that we have found Christ to be true.



Salvation is meeting a person

The Good News

On the Good News -

The Good News is not that it is possible to evade reality and withdraw into a spiritual realm where everything is nice. The Good News is that God has not withdrawn, has not written off the world, but that Christ CAME and identified Himself with us and with it and became totally involved in our concerns without any limit at all. That is Good News!

God knows -



He knows what stage
of the Christian
faith you've
reached.

He knows the sham
you put up for the
sake of others.

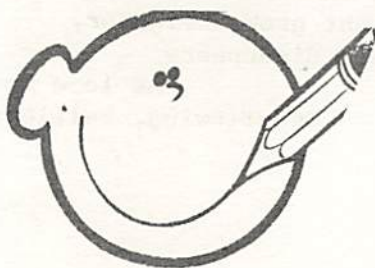
He knows the poverty
of your prayer life.

He knows your unacknowledged sins.

He knows the needs you have.

He knows how superficial much of your life is.

And He is aiming to meet each of us in a
significant way.



He has filled the hungry with good things

Most people spent some time during the Swanwick weekend meditating on the words of Mary above.

Here are some of the fruits of that time of quiet reflection. There are others worthy of publication.

Life is dark,
Search for the light.
A gnawing pain -
The need in me.
A voice at the door,
A step in faith.
The light grows brighter,
The pain disappears

As love moves in
Overflowing, selfless, God in me.

"Hungry for God"

He has filled the hungry with good things
Lord, it's You who fill the hungry with good things.
Lord, God, my Heavenly Father, it's You who gives
to me everything good in the Lord Jesus.
Jesus said, 'I am the bread of Life. He who comes
to me will never hunger and he who believes in
me will never thirst'

He has filled the hungry with good things
You come to those who are in need, to those
who are hungry for You.
You know I am hungry, Lord,
My heart is so often cold.
I doubt what you say
I'm afraid. I'm inhibited,
But I want more of You, Lord. I want You to
satisfy those longings, to remove those blockages.
I don't understand it completely, but I know
You do.

He has filled the hungry.

He has filled the hungry with good things.
It's good, Lord. Why do I struggle so much
when I know You fill the hungry with good things?
'If you who are evil know how to give good
gifts to your children, how much more will your
Father who is in heaven give good things to
those who ask Him'.

He has filled the hungry with good things.
You don't want to have just some parts of me,
Lord.
You want to fill me, take all of me, be my
Lord.
Filled to overflowing.
You can only come and fill me if I'm open
to You, Lord.
I don't understand fully, but help me to take
it in.
Help me to let You fill me.
He has filled the hungry with good things.

I WAS HUNGRY

Alyn Haskey

1. I was walking down the road to nowhere
When you took my hand.
I was crawling on my knees in the rain
And you helped me stand.

Chorus: And when I was hungry you fed me
You made me able to see
Your love has touched my spirit
And now I'm filled and free.

2. I was searching in the depths of frustration
For something I could hold on to,
And in the darkness I felt the warmth
I looked and I saw you.

Chorus

Refrain: And I was so hungry
And you filled my needs
Now I am your garden
Come and plant your seeds.
I want to show the World
You have done great things
My heart is free to worship you
And my spirit sings.

3. All the doubts that I have are now vanished
I know that you love me.
And I will serve you throughout my life
That's how it's going to be.

Chorus

Refrain: I am not hungry any more
But you've filled me with your peace
And I know your love goes on
And it will never cease.

Chorus

Prayer Diary



- January 7th Pray for our worship this year that the presence of the Living Christ might be felt among us.
- January 8th St John's students return today.
- January 9th Staff meeting today
- January 10th PCC this evening
- January 11th David speaking at Clifton
- January 12th Fay Rumley as she prepares to leave
- January 13th David speaking at Durham
- January 14th Fay's Valedictory Service
- January 15th Martin, Sue, Hannah and Ben
- January 16th Staff Quiet Day today.
- January 17th David at Trinity College, Bristol
- January 18th Anne and Judith and their work
- January 19th Mid-week lunch outreach
- January 20th New Year Party tonight
- January 21st That we might see His glory
- January 22nd Judith at Leicester CU Mission
- January 23rd Tuesday Fellowship groups
- January 24th Joyce speaking at Leicester Lunch time meeting on Depression
- January 25th The work of the CYFA group
- January 26th David and Joyce at Swanwick with the Nottingham CU
- January 27th Lizzie Robinson, James and Claire
- January 28th David McInnes preaching today.
- January 29th Women's Fellowship meet today.

Lizzie

Lizzie's treatment finishes on January 8th. Please continue to pray for the family as Lizzie recovers from the tiredness of this long period of radio-therapy.

THE KIDS ARE GETTING ME DOWN

Are you young, unmarried, with no children...?
Maggie Barwick has a new year message for you!

"If someone says to you, "Come to dinner on Friday" or "You will be coming to the New Year Party won't you?", you consult your diary, perhaps and then say "Ooh, I'd love to." Not so those with children.....

Can we get a baby sitter? Oh can we get a baby sitter? We can't possibly ask Mum/Aunt Alice/the lady down the road again. She's already sat for us three times this month. Oh well, dear, I suppose you had better go. I'll stay at home." So another repeat of the all too common sight of the single/married person attending social and Church occasions. "Goodness! Are you two married! I've never seen you together before.!!!

I wonder if, when we accept responsibility for a child who is dedicated to the Lord in our fellowship, that might include putting them to bed sometimes or sitting with them so that Mum and Dad can go out together occasionally?

If you feel called to the ministry of baby-sitting in 1979, Maggie Barwick would be delighted to hear from you. She says she won't mind being bowled over by the rush!

Maggie: Telephone: 395981



St Nicholas

(From notes taken from the colourful talk given by Tom Robinson to the Women's Fellowship as they celebrated The Feast of St. Nicholas)

Who was St. Nicholas?

Hardly anything at all is really known about the Saint, 'though there is much speculation and myths and legends have built up around him in abundance.

Two facts seem to be substantiated. The first is that he was the Bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, in the fourth century during the time of the Emperor Constantine. He probably died around 326 A.D. though some historians prefer the Date 346. The date of his birth is unknown. His supposed remains were brought from Asia Minor to Italy in the eleventh century and he was re-buried whereupon his tomb became a place of pilgrimage.

Tradition also maintains that St. Nicholas was present at the council of Nicaea and it is said that he died a martyr's death.

Apart from the above, there appear to be no facts but legends abound and St. Nicholas has become one of the most popular of all the saints. It is amusing to recall that he is Patron Saint of:-

Russia,
Children,
Scholars,
Sailors,
Pawnbrokers,
Unmarried girls (!)
Thieves

and in England over four hundred churches are dedicated in his name. On the Continent, he is even more popular and over 2,000 churches bear the name of St. Nicholas!

Scanty facts engender prolific legendary

As with the plethora of stories surrounding King Arthur or the ever popular Robin Hood, most of the legends about - our saint - are of great interest but doubtful authenticity, as some of the following stories will reveal!

The Bishop

It is said that as a bishop, he was noted for his piety and deep devotion. This trait in him was revealed at the moment of birth. As soon as he was born, so the story goes, he was washed, placed in his cot whereupon he sat up, placed his hands together and thanked God for two hours for his safe arrival into the world!



(Where does Tom find these tales?

Merchants

It appears that he became the Patron Saint of merchants because it was a band of such men who supposedly brought his body back to Asia Minor because they were afraid it would be desecrated by moslems.

Patron Saint of Thieves (!)

It is mysterious that the Bishop who did all he could to prevent thieves from wrong-doing should be chosen as their patron saint.

Patron saint of pawnbrokers

The Bishop is often represented as the one holding three golden balls. There is a story behind this too - inevitably! There was once a poor man with three daughters. He was so poor that there was no chance of his daughters getting married because there was no possibility of him paying their dowry. One night, through an open window, a bag of gold was thrown in. To his arrangement, on the next night, the same thing happened. On three successive occasions this event was repeated so that the girls were able to be married. The mysterious, generous donor? St. Nicholas, of course!

There is a picture of this in the National Gallery painted by a Flemish artist from the sixteenth century. Here, St. Nicholas is seen tossing the famous bags of gold through the open window. And somehow those bags of gold became the three signs which used to be a familiar sight outside the pawnbroker's shop!



Patron Saint of children

The story is told of a gentleman who lived in Asia Minor. His great desire in life was that his three sons should receive the best possible education and so their wealthy father sent them to Athens. On the course of their journey they stopped at Myra (where, you remember St. Nicholas was bishop).

Sleeping in a dubious inn for the night, they were murdered - "for the sake of their luggage". The notorious inn-keeper, finding bacon was in short supply, cut the boys up and began to soak them to pickle them and eventually to serve them as bacon. In a vision this was revealed to the Bishop, who seemed to "see" the tub with the boys remains soaking inside. Forthwith, he took himself to the inn and demanded to be taken to the tub. As he prayed over them, the three boys rose from the water to life again. And the Bishop had earned himself the right to become the Patron Saint of children!

Sailors

Whilst travelling to the Holy Land on one occasion, a tremendous storm arose but in the Bishop's presence, all was well for his prayers quickly stilled the storm. There were other benefits from his presence. For example, when a sailor fell from a mast, because St. Nicholas was on board, he was not killed but was miraculously saved as were three other sailors, who fell overboard and might well have drowned. The Saint's very presence prevented yet another disaster!

St. Nicholas - Father Christmas - Santa Claus



How did the saint, whose Feast day is celebrated on December 6th become known as Father Christmas who traditionally arrives on December 25th? The Dutch Saint, Sancta Klaus was renowned for his generosity in giving presents to good children. When the Dutch colonised parts of North America in the seventeenth century, they took their saint with them. The English settlers in America quickly adopted this ever popular saint together with the custom of giving presents and he became known as Father Christmas! By the time he was transported to England, the giving of presents had been moved from the 6th - 25th December, combining the Feast of St. Nicholas with the Feast of the Birthday of Our Lord.

So, what can we learn from our Patron Saint? If the legends bear any resemblance to the truth, it would appear that he was a man of prayer, a man who believed in and expected the miraculous, a man who was generous and compassionate. Are we, I wonder, gaining a similar reputation for prayerfulness, power, generosity and compassionate understanding? Maybe as one of the four hundred churches dedicated to him in Britain, these are lessons we can begin to learn?!

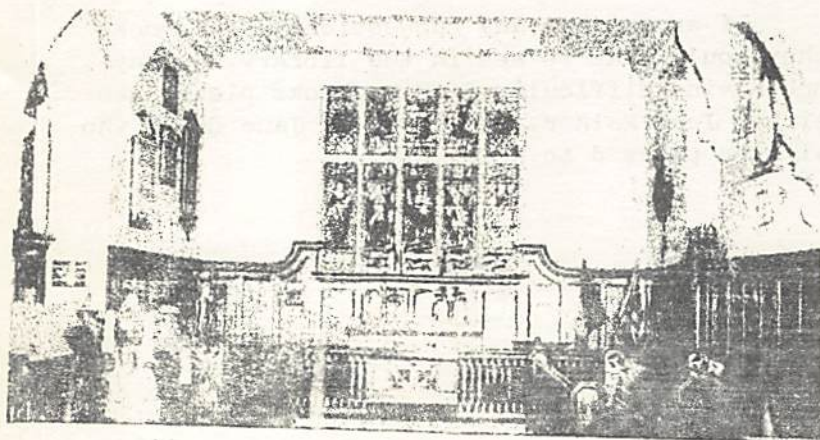


QUIZ

How often have you looked at the stained glass window at the East end of the Church? How observant are you? Can you answer these 8 questions?

1. How many glass panels are there in the East window?
2. Under the top row there are some words. What are they?
3. Is St. Nicholas represented anywhere in that window? If so, where?
4. Is he alone, or is there anyone with him? If so, whom?
5. Is his name there?
6. Is there anything else in that window which has anything to do with St. Nicholas?
7. One other word features in that East window. It is in the bottom left-hand corner. What is it?
8. What is on the central panel of the window - the central feature?

(If you get stuck, ask Tom Robinson: he knows it inside out!!)





The Lending Library

The Library has recently been re-organised so that there are only seven different sections. Each section is in alphabetical order of Author, each has its own colour (i.e. a coloured spot on the spine of each book), and books should be easy to find. There will eventually be lists for each section, and a complete alphabetical list of all the books to be found in the library is contained in the card-index system, again arranged alphabetically in order of Author; so there is plenty of reference material.

It would be appreciated if books could only be kept out for ONE MONTH, as some of the more popular ones are in great demand, so please consider other people who might also want to read the book.

Please do not forget to mark in the exercise book when you take out and return books. There is a shelf marked for returned books. When bringing books back please either use this shelf, or put the book back in the right section in the right place (i.e. in alphabetical order of author).

If anyone has any suggestions about books they would like to see in the library, or anyone having difficulty finding books please see either Jean Walker, Di Bratt, or Jane Bott, who will be pleased to help.



Subscription to 'St Nicholas News'

The magazine is now sent by post to:-
Japan; U.S.A.; Nigeria; Peru; Kenya; India;
Australia; S. Africa, as well as to many parts
of Britain! It is time to renew your order if
you receive it by post.

This also gives an excellent opportunity to
thank Miss JONES for her faithful work month by
month coping with an ever-growing mailing list.

I would like to renew my subscription
to "St. Nicholas' News".

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|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Name | ----- |
| Address | ----- |
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| | ----- |
| I enclose £1.20 plus 84p postage. | |

NewsFlash!

Congratulations to Gerald and Janet Kenwood on
the safe arrival of Alexandra Chloë Jane (9lbs 1oz)
on 3rd December.

... Also to Jane and David Brown on the birth
of Nicola Louise, on Christmas Day.

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH CHURCH NOTTINGHAM

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George Dobbs

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SUNDAY SERVICES AND WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

10.45 a.m. Morning Worship (Communion 1st & 5th Sunday)
Creche, Sunday School, Explorers. Pathfinders.

5.20 p.m. Hospital Ward Service.

6.30 p.m. Evening Worship (Communion 3rd. Sunday).
Coffee is served in Church after the Service.

Each Week

Parish Fellowship: For Prayer & Study: Tuesday 8 p.m. Lower
Lounge.

Choir Practice: Fridays 7.30 p.m. The Church.

Worship Workshop: Thursdays 8 p.m. Lower Lounge.

Mid-week Lunch: Wednesdays 12.30 - 2 p.m. Lower Lounge.

Fortnightly

House Fellowship

Meetings: Wednesdays & Thursdays 8 p.m.

Women's Fellowship: Mondays 2.30 p.m. Lower Lounge.

Coffee Club: Wednesdays 10.15 a.m.