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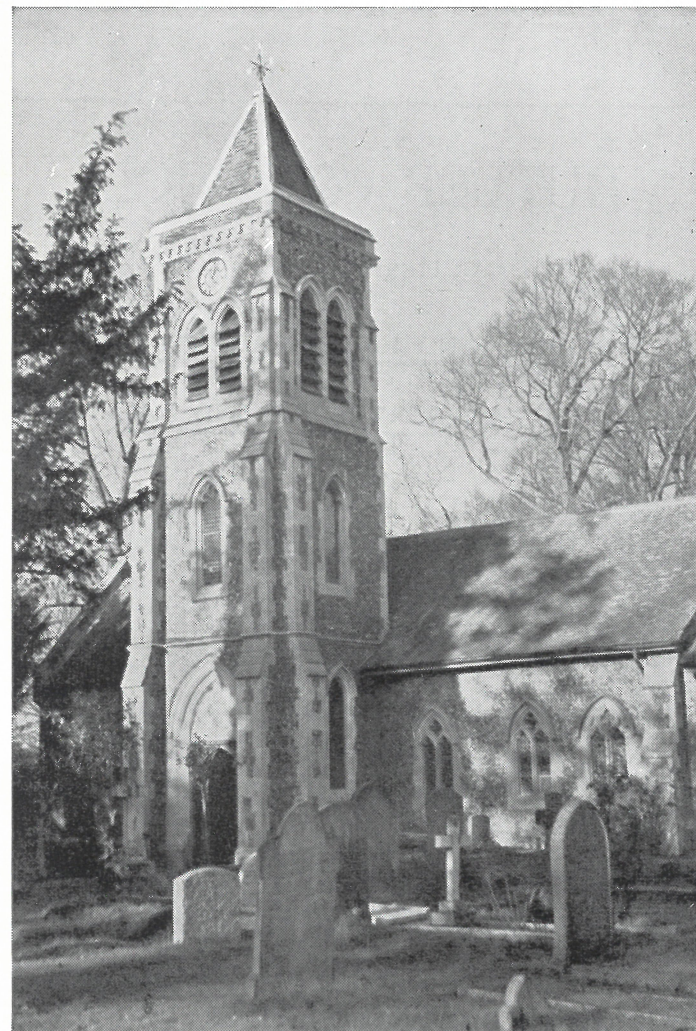
St. LEONARD'S

FEBRUARY, 1968

CHURCH NEWS

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Mr. C. W. MARSH, 26 Highfield Close
Telephone: AMERSHAM 1179

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SERVICES AND MEETINGS

St. Leonard's

HOLY COMMUNION:
8 a.m. Every Sunday
Noon 1st and 3rd Sundays

MORNING PRAYER, 11 a.m.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH, 3 p.m.

EVENING PRAYER, 6.30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
Holy Communion, 10.30 a.m.

HOLY BAPTISM AND CHURCHINGS.—After arrangement with the Rector.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE.—Forms to be filled in for Notice of Banns are to be had at the Rectory.

ST. LEONARD'S HALL
SUNDAY.—Crusaders' Bible Class, 3 p.m.

For details as to meetings of Prayer and Bible Study Groups, Kneeler Sewing Group, Mothers Union, Young Wives' Group, Youth Group and other organisations see Diary for the Month

St. Leonard's Church Room

SUNDAY
Evening Service, 6.30 p.m.
Holy Communion, 1st Sunday
of the month

TUESDAY, 4th in month:
Women's Meeting, 2.45 p.m.

THE RECTOR'S LETTER

I WANT to say something this month about reasons for belief in God. Many people today have little or no faith in God, and the contemporary decline in moral standards is directly due to this loss or lack of faith. There are those who deride belief in God as an irrational superstition. Christian people, on the other hand, are convinced that there are sound reasons for belief in the existence of God. What are they?

Our first reason is this—that when we examine the universe, we find everywhere the presence of law, order, method and principle. It is only because there is this rational order in the universe that science can function at all. If science were confronted by a universe which was chaotic, where things happened without rhyme or reason, it would be helpless. Scientific experiments are carried out and deductions drawn from them because scientists believe they are dealing with a universe in which law and order operate. Now law and order are the product of mind and reason, and are never found where these do not exist. To imagine that the universe, as revealed to us by science, is the outcome of chance (a fortuitous concurrence of atoms) makes far bigger demands on our credulity than the Christian belief that it is the product of a living and reasoning mind.

But the universe does more than witness to the presence of mind—it witnesses to the existence of a Mind that is akin to our own. It is this that makes it possible for us to understand and interpret the universe. Scholars, who could never have made any kind of sense out of the haphazard scratchings of a gorilla, have been able to decipher the hieroglyphics of ancient civilizations. Why? Because these hieroglyphics emanated from minds of **the same order** as our own. Behind the phenomena of the universe there must be a Mind akin to our own; otherwise we could make no possible sense of what we see. And so we are driven to believe in a personal God Whose Mind is infinitely greater yet of a similar kind to that which we ourselves possess—a God with whom we are able to commune. It was this conviction that led Kepler, when he was making his famous discoveries about the planets, to exclaim, "O God, I am thinking Thy thoughts after Thee."

Another signpost that points in the direction of belief in God is the fact of conscience. Human minds are so constituted that they take different views about almost everything; but there is one thing about which all men are agreed, and that is that there is a fundamental distinction between right and wrong. We believe this so strongly that we treat as abnormal those who do not know the difference between right and wrong, and arrange for them to be cared for in mental hospitals. The very name "conscience" which the Stoics gave to this awareness of the difference between right and wrong, means knowledge shared—**knowledge shared with Someone Else**, that "Power not ourselves, which makes for righteousness."

There are other reasons which could be brought forward as arguments for the existence of God. But many of those who read this letter will have far better reasons than the ones I have mentioned. They know from **personal experience** that faith in God works. It is faith in God that has kept them straight and true in times of temptation; it is faith that has helped them through times of great sorrow and difficulty; it is faith that has given them a clue to the meaning and purpose of life and made life worth living.

Faith of that quality is more than just an intellectual belief in the existence of God—it is **trust in a personal God** who loves and cares for each one of His children. It was Christ who told us that God is like this and taught us to call Him “Our Father.” And when Christ says to us, “Follow Me,” He is challenging us to do what He did—trust God absolutely. Those who trust Him wholly find Him wholly true. They find themselves upheld by the same faith that has inspired all the great Christian heroes and saints of every age. They are able to say with St. John, “This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.”

May God help each one of us to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold of the life that is life indeed.

Your sincere friend and Rector,
LEONARD HICKIN.

NOTES AND NEWS

The following will be in charge of **children in the vestry** on Sunday mornings in February: Mrs. Colles (4th), Miss Cox (11th), Mrs. Hickin (18th), and Mrs. Turner (25th).

The **Women's World Day of Prayer** falls this year on Friday, March 1st. A special service will be held at 3 p.m. in the Baptist Church, Old Amersham. Speaker: Mrs. Brooker (Little Chalfont).

Congratulations to the following members of the **Kneeler Sewing Group** for the kneelers they have completed: Mrs. Rowden (18), Mrs. Stanley (3), and Mrs. Tidd (1). We have been glad to welcome several new members in the past few weeks.

If you would like to **help with the flowers** (one vase on the Cheyne tomb, and two small vases over the Book of Remembrance), please put your name (and telephone number) on the list in the porch—against the Sundays when you will be responsible for them. Any information you may require can be obtained from Mrs. Newth (Amersham 818).

Weather conditions made it impossible for **Mothers' Union** members to meet on January 9th. We shall look forward to seeing Mr. Alliot's films on some future occasion. The short business meeting that was to have been held on January 9th has been postponed till our meeting on February 13th. The special speaker at this meeting will be Miss Betty Osborne who gave us such an interesting talk a year ago.

Two members of our congregation have recently been **in the news**. On December the 31st Mr. Francis (“Rex”) King retired as District Commissioner of Chesham after 52 years with the Scout Movement. During his 29 years as District Commissioner, one of Mr. King's main interests has been the training of leaders. This was recognised by the Scout Movement, when, in 1946, he was appointed a Deputy Camp Chief of Gilwell Park, the national training centre for Scout Leaders, and Assistant County Commissioner for Training. The highest award in British Scouting was bestowed on Mr. King in 1962 when he was presented with the Silver Wolf by the Chief Scout. His retirement marks the end of an era in the local scouting world and we congratulate him on the unique contribution he has made to this great movement, whilst at the same time being busily engaged in voluntary work in the civic and educational worlds. Mr. Arthur Rodgers has also been in the news. The Bucks Advertiser in its issue of January 4th contained a most interesting article about his collection of old maps. In this collection he has many maps of Bucks and from them a great deal of fascinating information can be obtained. For example, Agmondesham (Amersham) in 1741: Market, Tuesdays; fair, Witsun Monday; sends two members (to Parliament). Chesham in 1741 had a market on Wednesdays, but had no individual representation in Parliament. Many of these old maps are quite remarkable works of art.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH AND BIBLE CLASS

OUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING—16th December. St Leonard's Hall was almost full of parents and friends who joined in the Carols which accompanied the scenes, beautifully written and produced by Mrs. Maud Sims. The procession of children representing “ALL THE WORLD” to the singing of “How far is it to Bethlehem?” completed our Offering. Thanks to the generous giving of those who were present £7 2s. 9d. was sent to the Children's Society.

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY CAROL SERVICE—the church was full to overflowing! Our choir sang a carol to music composed by John Marsh who conducted, and then they joined forces with the adult choir. David Harborne and Elizabeth Holmes read from Luke 2 clearly and sympathetically. John Marsh, after his long and faithful service as our organist and choirmaster, left us at the end of 1967. Mrs. Joyce Flory has consented to take his place and we are most grateful to her. Mr. Basil Oliver has asked to be relieved for the time being on account of his wife's poor health. We owe him much for his long continuous teaching and example.

Our **TOY SERVICE** on January 7th brought many of our parents, younger children and friends, and an excellent attendance of our children. Mr. Martyn Bishop spoke to us of the aims of, and the help given by, the “Chesham, Amersham and District Society for Mentally Handicapped Children,” and thanked the

children for their presents. Our collection at the service has been given to the Society. M.H.S.

(We are all most grateful to John Marsh for the splendid way in which he has trained our junior choir. We shall miss him very much indeed. We wish him every success at the Trinity College of Music, and feel certain that with his talent and ability he has a bright future before him. We are glad to hear that Mrs. Oliver is making good progress and hope that Mr. Oliver will soon be back again with Children's Church.—Ed.)

CHESHAM BOIS SCHOOL

The children of our primary school really exceeded themselves this year under the very able leadership of their teachers. For they presented a delightful Festival of Folk Carols to a packed audience in the Pioneer Hall.

These carols formed a complete sequence against the background of the usual charming Nativity scenes with Joseph and Mary with the Child, the Shepherds, the Kings and a choir of diminutive white robed and tinselled angels.

Except for "O come, all ye faithful" and "Angels from the realms of glory" which were sung by everyone, the carols were all probably unknown to most of the audience. They were traditional ones from France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Hungary, Sweden and Poland, and were interspersed by readings from the Festial written by John Mirkus in 1482, the 16th century Nativity by William Dunbar, and an appropriate extract from the Compleat Angler by the English 17th century Isaac Walton.

The children augmented the piano accompaniments by themselves playing recorders, bells and other instruments.

L. ELGAR PIKE

DIARY FOR THE MONTH

February

- 1 Kneeler Sewing Party in Hall, 2.30 p.m.
- Meeting for Prayer at the Rectory 8.30 p.m.
- 3 Youth Group in Hall, 7.30 p.m.
- 7 Young Wives' Group in Hall, 8 p.m.
- "My Work" (An Amersham Policewoman).
- 8 Women's Bible Study at Rectory, 12.30 p.m.
- 10 Outset Club in Hall, 7 p.m.
- Youth Group members meet at Anne's Corner, 7 p.m.
- 13 Mother's Union in Hall, 2.45 p.m.
- Speaker: Miss Betty Osborne.
- Men's Bible Study at Hollybush House, 8.15 p.m.
- 15 Kneeler Sewing Party in Hall, 2.30 p.m.
- Meeting for Prayer at "Willowcroft," Copperkins Lane, 8.30 p.m.
- 17 Youth Group at Rectory, 7.30 p.m.

- 22 Women's Bible Study at Rectory, 12.30 p.m.
- 24 Outset Club in Hall, 7 p.m.
- 27 Intercession Group at Rectory, 10 a.m.
- Women's Meeting in Church Room, 2.45 p.m.
- Men's Bible Study at Hollybush House, 8.15 p.m.
- 28 ASH WEDNESDAY. Holy Communion, 10.30 a.m.

COLLECTIONS AND DUAL OFFERING SCHEME— DECEMBER

		Collections			Dual Offering		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Dec. 3	Diocesan Quota	21	7	0	8	10	0
10	Church Expenses	21	6	6	6	10	6
17	Vellore Hospital	26	2	2	14	2	0
24	Church Expenses	44	5	3	7	7	0
25	Ministry Fund	82	1	1			
31	Oxfam	25	2	8	13	15	6
	Diocesan Quota (extra)	10	17	9			
	Parochial Fund	13	18	0			
	Children's Church	5	3	3	£50	5	0
	Collections at Church Room—						
	Total for December:	5	5	3			

COLLECTIONS FOR FEBRUARY

- Feb. 4 Church Expenses
- 11 Commonwealth and Continental Church Society.
- 18 Diocesan Quota
- 25 Church Expenses

WELCOME

- Dec. 24 Kevin James Walker, Portelet, 24 Sandfield Road, Downham Market.
- Adam Neil Martin, 82 Woodley Road, Chesham.
- Jan. 7 David Philip Smith, 188 Bois Moor Road.

CONGRATULATIONS

- Dec. 16 Peter John Osborne and Elizabeth Mary Hansen.

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

- Dec. 30 Susan Caroline Rogers, 3 Woodley Hill, Chesham.

Number of Communicants for 1967	St. Leonard's	3,634
	Church Room	204
		3,838

The March "Church News" will be published on February 24th. Please send copy to the Rector by February 9th.

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