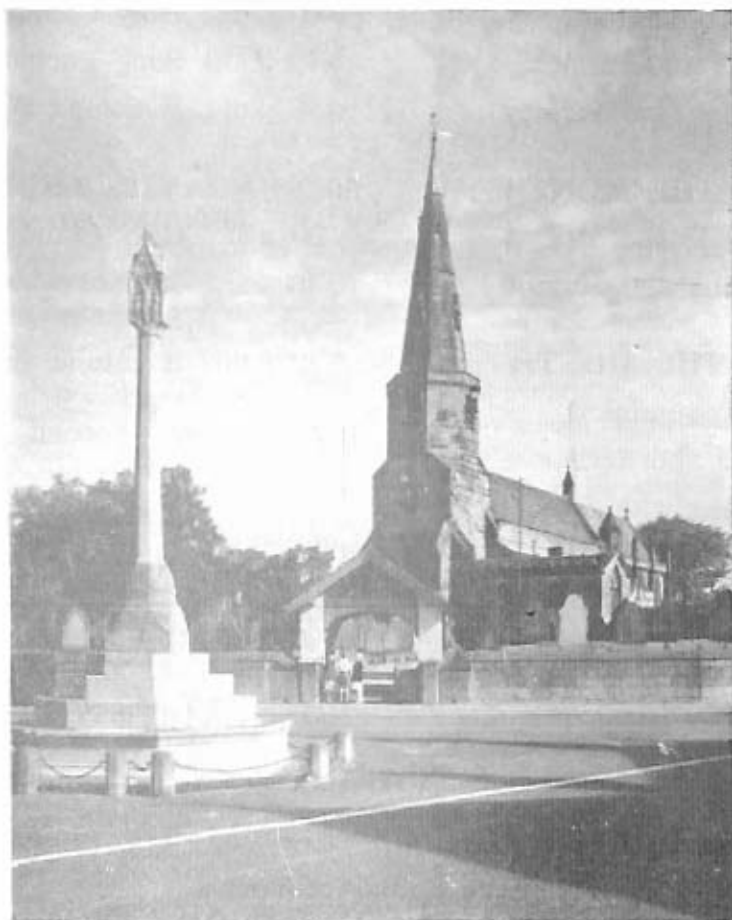


# HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



Rector: The Rev. Canon W. H. Bullough A.K.C. (Surrogate)  
Rural Dean of Ormskirk  
The Rectory, Halsall. Tel. 321.

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# Services at St. Cuthberts

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## 1st SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion  
10.30 a.m. Mattins and Sermon  
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

## 2nd SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

10.30 a.m. Family Eucharist  
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

## 3rd SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion  
10.30 a.m. Mattins and Sermon  
6.30 p.m. Evensong with Holy Communion

## 4th SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion  
10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist  
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

## 5th SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion  
10.30 a.m. Mattins with Holy Communion  
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

**Holy Baptism:** Second Sunday in the month at 3.30 p.m.

**Churchings:** By appointment

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# A PASTORAL VISIT

will be made by

## THE LORD BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL

The Rt. Revd. Stuart Blanch

## ARCHBISHOP OF YORK DESIGNATE

on

WEDNESDAY 4th DECEMBER

PROGRAMME

- 3.00 p.m. Children's Service in School for children and parents.  
3.30 p.m. School staff meeting with the Bishop.  
4.00 p.m. The Bishop will have tea with the senior citizens and any others able to attend in the School Hall.  
7.00 p.m. **THANKSGIVING EUCHARIST**  
PREACHER—THE BISHOP.  
8.30 p.m. PRESENTATION TO THE B'SHOP AND MRS. BLANCH (In Church)

The Rectory,  
Halsall,  
November 14th, 1974

My Dear Friends,

There can only be one truly great day in the life of a Parish and that surely when the Bishop comes to join us in the day to day life and work of the church. Such a great occasion we have on Wednesday 4th December. It is my fervent hope that all those who have been Confirmed during the Episcopate of our Bishop will join us at the Eucharist along with their families and friends. I hope every family in the village will be represented. This service should involve us all from our youngest brownie or cub to our oldest senior citizen. Please will you all make a big effort to join in our Thanksgiving Eucharist at 7 p.m. on this night. The village has supported me magnificently in all my appeals in the past and I shall look forward to the greatest response ever on this evening.

Now to turn to my Advent message.

Our Advent reading includes Gospel passages in which Jesus warns His disciples that they must be ready to face powers of evil whose main weapon of offence against them is fear. He describes these powers as they are seen in wars, persecutions and famine. We are to expect such things to happen, and to be sure that beyond them there is to come a final overthrow of all these powers in a final "Coming" of our Lord.

Some Christians have fixed their attention too narrowly upon this second Advent, and busied themselves with curious speculations about its date, and the signs of its approach. But Christ discourages such an interpretation of His warnings. To questions about the final event His answer is not "calculate," but "take heed." We are to prepare ourselves to meet fear, and to expect fearful events, in the light of ultimate victory over them, but not to anticipate their sequence in our time. In every generation there are "signs of the end." They are not lacking now. How shall they teach us not to be afraid?

Most of us are often afraid. We don't confess it. That makes it worse. We hide our fears and drive them in. But they are there. We are afraid of ourselves, of forces within us which frighten. What will happen if they break loose? Or we are faced with work too difficult or heavy. We are oppressed by fear of failure. We are afraid of what may happen to us. "Suppose I die or lose my job, what is to become of my wife and children?" We are afraid of each other. We see ourselves surrounded by unfriendly people. "So-and-so does not like me, he will get the better of me if he can. Therefore, I must be beforehand with him, and attack him first. I will shew him I am not afraid of him." But, as a matter of fact, we are, and that is why we quarrel with him. And every quarrel spoils our best.

The Psalmist says, "I sought the Lord and He

heard me, yea, He delivered me out of all my fear." And the Great Teacher says, "Be not anxious for your life." He declares it to be possible to live, as He did, calmly and serenely, and therefore at our best. How? By seeking the Lord, that is, by understanding Him, and seeing Him as He is, as Jesus saw and shewed Him. When He came He found men thinking of God in terms associated on the whole with fear. He was the Almighty Ruler whose power, when He chose to exert it, nothing could resist; the watcher of men, the judge of all the earth, waiting to requite and avenge. Our Lord did not contradict these ideas. There is truth in them all. But He set them in the background. Whatever else we think about God, we are to think of Him first as a Father, who has a plan of life for his children including risks and dangers, which He shares with them; including work which they are to share with Him. Therefore, they face their difficulties and adversities not as accidents thrust on them by unknown chance. Their Father knows them. They can face life like children playing in a dangerous street, fearlessly, because Father is behind them somewhere, guaranteeing security enough.

May the love of this Heavenly Father and the Peace which passes all understanding surround you this Christmas, and make it a very happy one for all of you.

Your sincere friend,  
HERBERT BULLOUGH.

### SERVICES FOR CHRISTMAS

#### SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER

- 9.00 Holy Communion.
- 10.30 Mattins.
- 2.30 Childrens Carol Service for day and Sunday School, followed by Holy Communion.

**THERE WILL BE NO SERVICE AT 3.45 ON THIS DAY.**

#### SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER

- 9.00 Holy Communion.
- 10.30 Sund Eucharist.
- 3.45 Parish Carol Service.

#### TUESDAY CHRISTMAS EVE 24th DECEMBER

- 11.30 p.m. Christmas Eucharist.

#### CHRISTMAS DAY 25th DECEMBER

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
- 10.30 a.m. Short Christmas Morning Service followed by Holy Communion.

#### SUNDAY 29th DECEMBER

**NO CELEBRATION AT 9.00 a.m.**

- 10.30 a.m. Mattins with Holy Communion.
- 3.45 p.m. Evensong.

### "LOVELY SERVICE, RECTOR"

Over a period in the same parish every clergyman will get to know his "oncercs." They consist of people from all sections of the community who, in the course of the year, make a single appearance in their parish church; and they are remarkably consistent in their habits.

I saw, for instance, a number of them on Remembrance Sunday, and so too have most parish priests in the land. In October some were visible at the Harvest Festival, Easter or perhaps Good Friday will bring more, and there are always the individuals who are drawn to church by a particular anniversary with personal memories. They come and go, having in the time-honoured phrase "enjoyed your service, Rector" — making it sound as if you have provided a private one-man stage show. They then cheerfully depart for another twelve months.

Yet, without doubt, the great high festival of "oncercs" is the Midnight Mass at Christmas. A service of great antiquity. In many places it continues to draw crowded congregations, and indeed for many Anglicans it is the only time in the year at which they will make their Communion.

The Prayer Book rubric about Easter has been long since forgotten. For good or ill we are committed to "the Midnight"; and the same is true of the Anglican Church overseas, where the oncercs also make their annual appearance. It is in fact often the "done thing" to go, and almost a social routine.

Of course the popularity of this service is natural and the appeal understandable. There is the attraction and atmosphere of a darkened building with its visible reminder that Christ was born in the dark, so that the reading of the prologue of St. John's Gospel strikes home with dramatic relevance. There is a strangeness about being in church at that hour, which somehow matches the strangeness of the Incarnation. Moreover, a generation which has almost entirely lost the dimension of the supernatural and the transcendent can still respond to the story of Bethlehem with the message of God coming down among men in a way that it can no

linger respond to Easter and the Resurrection, let alone to Whitsun and the coming of the Spirit.

Few of those who this Christmas will make their annual encounter with Christian worship could articulate these reasons. They may not even be consciously aware of them, but they remain none the less real. Even making allowance for the sentiment and nostalgia something is communicated, though it is difficult to know exactly what it is. One hopes that it is at least that sense of wonder and mystery with which all religion starts.

Nevertheless, there is much about the service that makes for unease. Leaving aside the advent of the few drunks, who are likely to make their presence known in the porch when the pubs close, there is the feeling, indeed the certainty, that many people have come straight from parties and an evening's revelry without any thought of preparation. It is simply convenient to come at that hour.

The fact that the service happens to be the Eucharist matters not at all to many of the congregation. If it were just lessons and carols, they would still come. If there was no service at midnight, few of those present would bother to make their Communion on Christmas morning.

Again, there is the depressing sense of non-participation which is so tangible that it tends to overwhelm even regular worshippers. This is more than unfamiliarity. It is more than the fact that the majority are afraid to sing in case they look conspicuous. There can so often be the lack of any feeling of spiritual and personal involvement.

These are the kind of considerations which make some people openly wish for the end of the Midnight Mass and a return to a simple gathering of the faithful at a Parish Eucharist on Christmas morning. This in many churches is now a mere token, such is the appeal of nocturnal religion. But one suspects that few parishes would have the courage to withdraw what in many places has become a local occasion to which many folk look forward. This would cause distress to people who are sincere and genuine, as I believe all those who come to St. Cuthbert's are, even if they be only annual churchgoers. Although we may feel that it is all but one more example of the Church of England's ministering to the residual religiosity of a post-Christian age, we should not despise the opportunity. Our Lord can still work in His "encens."

So the parish churches of England prepare again

for their annual invasion as part of Christ's strange work. The clergy will wait for the inevitable "Lovely service," rector, with the underlying and unspoken implication, "See you again next year." The regular congregation may be tempted to be cynical about it all.

Perhaps the best thing to do is to avoid the introspective analysis and morbid self-criticism which is the curse of the Church of our time, and leave it to a God who, at least on this occasion each year, moves in a very mysterious way his wonders to perform—but yet a God who we still believe became man in Jesus Christ our Lord at Christmas-time.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We note in the "Free Will Echo" that Mrs. Prayer Meeting is dead. In the belief that friends of the deceased might be interested, we print the death notice.

Mrs. Prayer Meeting died recently at the First Neglected Church on Worldly Avenue. She was born many years ago in the midst of great revivals and deep spirituality. She grew up to be a strong and healthy child, fed mostly on Testimony and Bible Study. She was educated in the school of Christian Service, under the supervision and teaching ability of the famous world-wide teachers, the Holy Spirit and the Divine Scriptures. She soon grew to womanhood and was predominant throughout the world for a number of years and was one of the most influential members of this famous church family.

For the last several years, Mrs. Prayer Meeting has been in failing health and gradually wasting away until recently when she was rendered almost helpless by stiffness of the knees, coldness of heart, weakness of purpose, lack of will power, and inactivity.

At the last she was but a shadow of her former self. Her last words were whispered inquiries concerning the absence of her loved ones, now busy in the markets of trade and places of worldly amusements.

Experts, including Dr. Works, Dr. Reform, Dr. Joiner and Dr. Churchman, all disagree as to the cause of her fatal illness, administering large doses of organisations, socials, contests, and drives, but to no avail. A post-mortem showed a deficiency of spiritual food coupled with a lack of faith and of heartfelt religion. Also, shameless desertion and non-support hastened her death.

Only a few were present at her death, sobbing over memories of her past beauty and power. The body rests in the beautiful cemetery by By-gone Memories, awaiting the Judgment.

In honour of her passing, the church doors will be closed on Wednesday nights.

Source Unknown.

### THE GOOD GARDENER

Come, bud of joy, the driving rain  
Tha' all thy young green leaves doth wet,  
Is but a minister of gain  
To that en which thy heart is set.  
Come forth, O bud; awake and see  
How good thy Gardener is to thee.

And pass, my bud, to perfect flower,  
Dread not the blast of bitter wind;  
Thy Maker do'h command its power;  
It knoweth not to be unkind.  
Has't thee, my flower: unfold and see  
How good thy Gardener is to thee.

O fruit that cometh after rain,  
O fruit that ripeneth in the sun,  
Now praised be God that not in vain  
For thee the changeful seasons run.  
Thou art His fruit; let all men see  
How good thy Gardener is to thee.

And when the sap in me do'h fail  
And natural vigour of my you h,  
Lord, may Thy life in me prevail,  
That I may still show forth in truth,  
By flower and fruit on this my tree,  
How good my Gardener is to me.

Amy Carmichael.

### HALSALL FESTIVAL 1975

With every good intention the Parochial Church Council were eager and willing to organise a Village Festival for 1975. Such an event would entail careful planning and preparation. To this end two public meetings have been held and owing to the poor attendance on each occasion it has been decided to abandon the idea for 1975 and start preparations very soon for 1976. However a small Committee representative of all organisations will meet on Monday 25th November at 7 p.m. to arrange for one or two events in 1975. As these events are Church sponsored the Parochial Church Council will decide how any proceeds are to be disbursed. Need I remind you that at the present time we are involved in the heavy cost of providing toilet accommodation both at School and at Church. The total cost of these two projects is over £6,000 of which sum the Church and School will have to find a large proportion. Further details of the events will be made known as soon as the committee concerned have met. H.B.

### SERVERS ROTA

Dec. 1	9.00 a.m.	Stuart Simpkin.
8	10.30 a.m.	Malcolm Serjeant and Colin Stopforth.
15	9.00 a.m.	Barry Gaskell.
	3.15 p.m.	David Stopforth. (No service at 3-45 p.m.)
22	9.00 a.m.	Stuart Simpkin.
	10.30 a.m.	Maurice Core and Stephen Dutton.
24	11.30 p.m.	Brian Heaton and Malcolm Serjeant.
25	9.00 a.m.	Peter Balmer.
	10.30 a.m.	Keith Stopforth.
29	No Service	at 9.00 a.m.
	10.30 a.m.	Colin Stopforth.
Jan. 5	9.00 a.m.	Jim Heaton.
12	10.30 a.m.	Tony Gaskell and Simon Andrews.

### SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Dec. 1st: Mrs. L. Huyton. Dec. 8th: Mrs. N. Britnall. Dec. 15th: Mrs. N. Smith. Dec. 22nd: Vacant. Dec. 29th: Vacant.

### SIDESMEN'S ROTA

Dec. 1st: C. Shacklady, W. White, J.H. E. Serjeant, D. Swift.  
Dec. 8th: B. Heaton, J. Gaskell, J.B. P. Saunders, T. Grimshaw.  
Dec. 15th: P. Attwood, H. Rimmer, H.S. E. Blackhurst, J. Rimmer.  
Dec. 22nd: G. Porter, S. Park, R.H. J. D. Grimshaw, R. Dutton.  
Dec. 29th: E. Grimshaw, D. Sephton, J.H. J. F. Smith, H. Wood.  
Jan. 5th: T. Swift, T. Hunter, J.B. J. Critchley, R. Gaskell.

### HOLY BAPTISM

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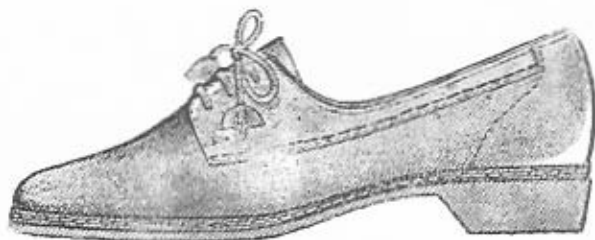
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