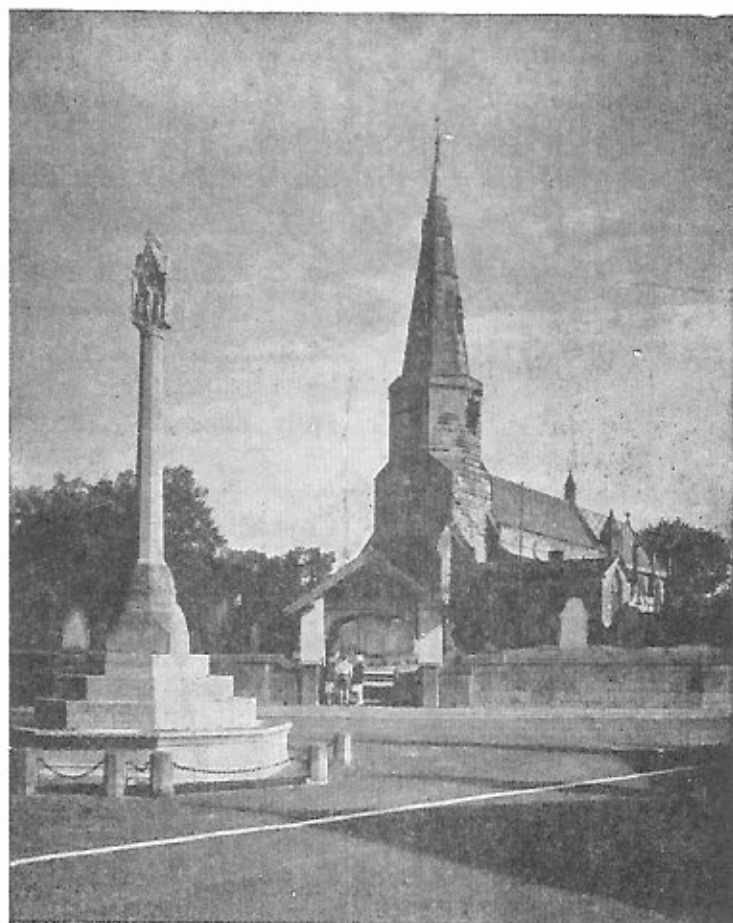


HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



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Rural Dean of Ormskirk
The Rectory, Halsall. Tel. 321.

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Services at St. Cuthberts

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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The Rectory,
Halsall.
June 21st, 1973

My dear Friends,

Since the notice on the Church notice board announcing the showing of the film "Godspell" may raise certain questions in the minds of our people, I propose this month to write about the Jesus Movement.

Often, I see a car sticker which says "Honk if you love Jesus", or a lapel badge which says "Smile if you love Jesus." To most religious people in England and certainly to most members of the Church of England this kind of thing is not quite nice. We are inclined to say that religion is such a private affair that it should not be talked about. This is a totally different attitude from the earliest followers of Jesus. The Jesus People have something of the enthusiasm of the New Testament Church.

They hold their faith with confidence. It is something which recreates life in its totality and is not a mere recreation.

The young members of the Jesus movement put most of us to shame by their conviction that lives can be changed through faith in Jesus and by the changes which are being brought about in themselves. Like St. Paul they are 'not ashamed of the Gospel.' They believe that it is, 'the saving power of God for everyone who has faith.' There is not the same conviction amongst most of us that people can be converted and that lives can be made new. This is illustrated by the crucial issue of drugs. A nun belonging to the Wantage Sisters and a Church Army captain, along with a few others, have done a striking work of redemption in this country, but most of us see drugs as a problem to be dealt with by education, punishment, and respectable family life. In many instances addiction can only be cured with the aid of psychiatric treatment, but the Jesus People see many of their contemporaries won out of drugs through being caught up into love for Christ. They talk to them about Jesus with the conviction that this revolution will happen. They see faith transforming many other areas of personal life and they see it reconciling people who without it would be bitterly divided from one another.

The Jesus Kids illustrate the expulsive power of a new perfection—love for Jesus casts out evil. Theirs, however, is not an uninstructed affection. They give a great deal of time to the study of the Gospels and of the Bible as a whole. They 'instruct and admonish each other with the utmost wisdom'. They 'sing thankfully in their hearts to God with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.' The fact that they do this with guitars does not mean that they are different from the New Testament Church, because first they have followed Paul's injunction, 'Let the message of Christ dwell among you in all its richness'. Surely it is encouraging to note that this strong devotion to Bible study, and to Jesus through it, is happening at a time when we ministers as well as you lay folk are feeling that this sort of thing these days seems quite beyond us.

There is something natural and unaffected about the Jesus People. They are joyful in themselves and spread joy around. The Christianity of our denominations is so often dull and stunted and savouring of a burden. Somehow it fails to set

people free into deep joy. The joy of these young believers may well be somewhat superficial. Few of them may yet have learned what a fine Christian came to realize in a great bereavement, that 'the opposite of joy is not sorrow, but sin. Pure joy and pure sorrow can live together.' At least they realize clearly that the opposite of joy is sin and they want this sinful world to know that truth.

For the most part the Jesus Kids stay outside the Church. They attach little importance to tradition and liturgy. They see in the Gospels that Jesus did unpredictable things and they live in ways which indicate that the Spirit of Jesus shows the same characteristic in his followers now. It seems to them that our demoninations stifle the spirit and prevent this life and power working through them. These young disciples have still to learn that 'the God who inspires them is not a God of disorder but of peace.' Could it not be, that many of us have still a lot to learn about divine disorder as well as going on accepting divine order in the Church? One way in which we may learn may well be to open our hearts and minds to the Jesus People and accept them, before we begin to criticise them.

Godspell and Jesus Christ Superstar which do not spring out of the Jesus movement are saying to us what the Greeks said to Philip. What the Movement shows is that Jesus is making an appeal through it which the Churches representing Him are often failing to make. We need to come back to Him so that He can renew our Church life as well as our personal discipleship. To many of us it appears that the Jesus Kids misunderstand and misrepresent Christ. Some of their attitude to the Bible may be unscholarly and they may appear indifferent to many social and political issues, but their acceptance of Christ as the truth has in it the seeds of correction of many wrong ideas. We ourselves need to make sure that our own understanding of Christ is not faulty. Our understanding must not be of the mind only—that is something which the Jesus Movement says to us very clearly. It could help if we were to pray slowly, line by line, some of the most familiar hymns of devotion to our Lord. Our Christianity is surely inadequate if we fail to put Him at the heart of faith and life.

Here is a prayer—

"Lord we pray for the Jesus Movement. They seem to be searching for the meaning of life, and for you, though they may not know it clearly. Help us, who try to serve you, to show them the way to you by being self-giving and self-sacrificing. Keep us from being smug and superior. Give us your grace so we may 'live loving' as they try to do, and so in this way may be able to guide them truly to Jesus who lived completely loving.

AMEN.

Please think on these things,

God Bless you all,

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH

A YOUTH'S PRAYER

God, who touchest earth with beauty
Make me lovely, too;
With Thy Spirit recreate me,
Make my heart anew.
Like Thy springs and running waters
Make me crystal pure;
Like Thy rocks of tow'ring grandeur
Make me strong and sure.
Like Thy dancing waves in sunlight
Make me glad and free;
Like the straightness of the pine trees
Let me upright be.
Like the arching of the heavens
Lift my thoughts above;
Turn my dreams to noble action,
Ministries of love.
Like Thy winds from far-off shores
Sweeping sea and sod;
Cleanse my heart of fear and doubting,
Clean, strong winds of God.
God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too;
Keep me ever, by Thy Spirit,
Pure, and Strong, and true. AMEN.

COVENANTING

Last month you read a full description of what covenanting means to all charitable organisations. As a result of a determined effort to increase the income of the church many parishes have been successful in receiving many new covenants. One parish reports as many as 142. Have you decided to covenant your weekly gift yet? The decision is yours. Covenanting is commonsense. If you have paid the tax you may either

LEAVE IT ALL TO THE TREASURY
OR
GIVE SOME OF IT BACK TO YOUR
CHURCH

What are you going to do?

A STORY FOR THE CHILDREN

The animals of the forest decided many years ago that it was time they made peace among themselves. There was too much contention, and most of them wanted peace. So they organised a United Animals Council, which they called the UC.

The owl was made chairman, and all went well. They voted unanimously to make peace. The fox would quit molesting the rabbit. The hawk would let the field mouse rest in peace. There would be harmony in the forest, and no animal could belong who would violate the rules.

Then one of them moved that the animals build a large place where they might hold their meetings for comradeship. The motion was carried with cheers. Then the question arose where and how to build the place.

A water animal arose and said, "We should build it of twigs, and bark and rushes, in the middle

of a stream. That's the way I've built my home for years. That's the best way."

The groundhog didn't like that.

"How do you expect me to climb a tree? Let us build a tunnel in the ground. I've always done it that way, and it's the safest and best."

Instead of meeting in the forest and letting each animal adapt his own ideas to his living, the animals fell to arguing.

The squirrel wanted the meeting place in a hollow log; the wolf wanted it in a cave. No two could agree. None would admit that perhaps his was not the best for the group as a whole.

The meeting broke up in a riot. The squirrel chased the mouse to exhaustion; the bees swarmed ferociously at the bear; the fox drove the rabbits wildly to a shelter. And there was tumult and strife, and many animals were killed.

And the animals of the forest have been warring ever since—just like human beings.

Well, boys and girls, this story reminds us of a verse in the Bible which we must take to heart. It says, 'Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.'—Romans, chapter 12, verse 16.

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IF GOD GUIDES US, HOW DO THE CONSCIENCES OF CHRISTIANS DIFFER SO OFTEN, FOR EXAMPLE, IN POLITICS?

We often have to ask ourselves how God guides people. The idea of guidance is not the same as dominance. We do not imagine that God so completely takes charge of the will and intelligence of the Christian that the person becomes a mere passive instrument in His hands. If that were the case, the acts of a person so dominated would not be his acts at all in any intelligible sense; he would have become a puppet. If we reject this conception of divine guidance, we must think of some way in which the guidance could be given without reducing the person to the status of a mere instrument. This is really not difficult: we can suppose that the grace of God, instead of annulling the faculties of man, makes them keener, raises them to a higher level of efficiency, and, above all, directs them to a worthy end. One of the chief causes of our wrong decisions and blindness to the duties and opportunities which

present themselves is our self-centredness. We tend to look at every question from the angle of our own personalities, as if we were the centre of the world. In very subtle ways, therefore, self-interest distorts our judgement. The man who really seeks the guidance of God is taking the first step to overcome the bias of self-centredness and moving towards the true and sane position of God-centredness. But he is only moving towards it; he has not fully achieved it. Thus most of us who genuinely desire to be guided by God are still very imperfectly delivered from prejudice. And, of course, the possibilities of self-deception are almost unlimited. We know how often men have thought that something they desired very much was the will of God, when all the time they were simply affirming their own egoism and pride. Not everyone who claims to be guided by God is really guided by Him.

Further, we have to draw a distinction between ends and means. The most important consequence of becoming a sincere Christian in the sphere of conduct is that our values for life are changed and we have a new idea of what purposes we ought to promote. I do not see how any Christian who is not either a hypocrite or a very foolish person can fail to see the implications of Christ's law of love. We cannot confine this precept to our personal relations; it extends to the social life of the community. Thus there can be serious disagreement about what kind of community we ought to desire. It will be one in which all persons have the opportunity to develop their potentialities, bodily, mental and spiritual, and where the living together in society is, so far as may be, creative, i.e. where the development of one person does not hamper or restrain the development of any of his neighbours but facilitates it. No doubt the full realization of this ideal cannot be achieved in this world. There never will be a perfect society on this earth, but there is no reason why we should not approximate much more closely to the ideal than has ever yet been done. Unless we are blinded by self-interest, we shall see that we ought to promote progress towards the Kingdom of God by all the means in our power.

By what means? Here the source of differences between good and sincere men may often be found. Obviously, my friend and I may both want to go to the same place but may have quite different opinions about the best way of getting there. This is true, I think, in the sphere of political action. Without disagreeing fundamentally on what we should regard as a good society we may differ profoundly on the next steps. And here, probably, temperament plays its part. Some of us have a sanguine disposition. We don't think much about the risks; we imagine that things will turn out pretty well if we go straight for the goal. But others see the dangers very clearly. They are of the realistic or even pessimistic type, and they believe that society may run down into barbarism or disrupt unless the changes are slow and carefully considered. They have too little belief in the essential goodness of mankind. Of course I have been describing extreme types. There are all kinds between the two extremes. But surely it is evident that good and intelligent men may disagree on the practical questions of politics because they estimate the actual situation differently.

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But, you may say, what then is the use of relying on the guidance of God? There is an answer to this. The really devastating and destructive conflicts of opinion in politics and elsewhere are those in which men are not really capable of judging the issue, because motives like self-interest, pride, self-assertion, and sectional loyalties distort their minds. If there were a nation in which the majority of citizens were whole-hearted in their prayer for the guidance of God—and knew what they meant by it—there would still be differences of opinion and probably parties, but every one would agree on the values which matter and would be eager to be enlightened, ready to learn from others, so that there would be no bitter faction. In the discussion of such men the truth would be brought out and the wise policy found. It seems to me that only in so far as there is some element in a society which acts like this can the society grow or even, in the long run, exist.

God, as I see it, does not put the right ideas into our heads, but if we are in communion with Him, He purifies our minds and motives so that we are able to arrive at the right ideas through the faculties which He has given us.

This does not mean that 'waiting upon God' is useless. Some people seem to suppose that if they say a prayer and then make up their minds a blank the first notion that occurs to them is the guidance of the Spirit. This, I believe, is dangerous nonsense. We have to use our minds and think as hard as we can. Then, when we have worked at the problem and perhaps are still uncertain what we ought to do, it is well to be quiet and still in the presence of God. When we are prepared and ready to hear, the word of God may come to us clearing up our perplexities.

There is one further consideration. The ultimate purpose of God is evidently so complex and so far beyond our comprehension that we can understand at the most what His will may be for us. We cannot be sure that the purpose of God does not involve what appear to us contradictions, so that the conflict between two honest men who see their public duty differently may be, in the end, better than their agreement.

ST. CUTHBERT'S GUILD

The Annual General Meeting and Beetle Drive will be held on Tuesday, 10th July at 7-45 p.m. in the school.

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

July 1st—J. Heaton, E. Orritt H.S., H. Huyton, A. Grimshaw.

8th—W. Pounds, C. Armstrong R.H., H. Grimshaw, M. Manners.

15th—E. Serjeant, D. Swift J.H., C. Shacklady, W. White.

22nd—P. Saunder, T. Grimshaw J.B., B. Heaton, J. Gaskell.

29th—E. Blackhurst, J. Rimmer H.S. P. Attwood, H. Rimmer.

Aug. 5th—J. D. Grimshaw, R. Dutton R.H., G. Porter, S. Park.

12th—J. F. Smith, H. Dean J.H., E. Grimshaw, D. Sephton.

SERVERS ROTA

July 1 9.00 a.m. Malcolm Serjeant.

July 8 10-30 a.m. Michael Lewis, Stephen Dutton.

July 15 9.00 a.m. Jim Heaton.
6-30 p.m. Colin Stopforth.

July 22 9.00 a.m.
10-30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Malcolm Serjeant.

July 29 9.00 a.m. Peter Balmer.
10-30 a.m. Keith Stopforth.

Aug. 5 9.00 a.m. Stephen Dutton.

Aug. 12 10-30 a.m. Tony Gaskell, Barry Gaskell.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

July 1: Mrs. H. Gaskell. 8th July: Mrs. J. Silcock. 15th July: Mrs. J. Pounds. July 22nd: Mrs. P. Saunders. 29th July: Mrs. H. Grimshaw. Aug. 5th: Mrs. Moorcroft and Mrs. McCoy.

HOLY BAPTISM

"Received into the family of Christ Church"

June 10th—Jennifer Christine, daughter of David and Susan Andrea Sephton of 24 Queens Drive, Haskayne.

HOLY MATRIMONY

"Those whom God hath joined together"

June 16th—Dennis William Pook of 25, Broadway Marine Park, Prestatyn, North Wales and Margaret Anne Wood of 64, Dover Road, Hillside, Southport.
June 16th—Barry Thomas Graham of Narrow Lane, Halsall and Isobel Mary Hargreaves of Narrow Lane, Halsall.

CHRISTIAN BURIAL

"In sure and certain Hope"

May 25th—Catherine Blundell Boddy of 10, Marshside Road, Southport. Aged 78 years.
May 29th—Dennis Stanley Markham of 56, Tithebarn Road, Southport. Aged 47 years (Cremation).
June 11th—Annie Higson of Renacres Lane, Shirdley Hill. Aged 68 years.
June 13th—John William Gaskell, 90, Summerwood Lane, Halsall. Aged 76 years.
June 13th—John Seddon Harvey of The Stores, Liverpool Road, Maghull. Aged 62 years.
June 23rd—Elizabeth Jane Taylor of Holland Lane, Lathom. Aged 65 years.

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