

The Journal of The Church of England Continuing

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever” Hebrews 13:8.

Issue No.7

November 1997

From Bishop David Samuel

81 Victoria Road,
Devizes, Wiltshire,
SN10 1EU.

Dear Friends,

I am sure it is an encouragement to you, as it is to me, to know that there are now four young men in training for the ministry of our church, three at the London Theological Seminary and one at the Independent Theological Academy, Wolverhampton.

Please pray for them; they are Edward Malcolm, Ian Budgen, Richard Mortimer and Andrew Price. The calling of men into the ministry is the gift of God to the church, for its edification, and we rejoice to think that the Lord has blessed us in this way and given us this token of His good pleasure.

Conversely, the decline of candidates for the ministry must surely be seen as a mark of God's displeasure, for then He withholds that which is so important to the well-being of the church. Let us, then, thank God for

His goodness, and pray that as a church we may so walk that we may please him in all that we do, that He may continue to pour out upon us the riches of His grace and built us up in holy faith.

Recently, I sent out a pastoral letter calling upon you all to pray for our nation

We must be deeply conscious of the great spiritual need of our nation at the present time. The spiritual darkness that now afflicts our people is, in large measure, due to

“The great need of the hour is for dedicated men to perform again by God’s Spirit, that Apostolic work in our land”

the failure of spiritual leaders and pastors to sow the light of God's Word amongst them. We have seen in recent months crowds of people gathered in London and elsewhere, presenting us with an affecting picture of the nation "as sheep without a shepherd". In the proper preface of the Prayer Book Service of Holy Communion for Whit-Sunday there are some moving words about "the boldness with fervent zeal" given to the apostles, "constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations;" and it adds,

"whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ". The great need of the hour is for dedicated men to perform again, by God's Spirit, that apostolic work in our land. Only so can the darkness be lifted from the soul of the nation. Please pray for all ministers of the Gospel that they may be lights in their generation to point men to Christ, who is the Light of the World.

O Spirit of the Living God,
In all thy plenitude of grace
Where'er the foot of man hath trod,
Descend on our apostate race.

Give tongues of fire, and hearts of love,
To preach the reconciling Word,
Give power and unction from above,
When'er the joyful sound is heard.

Be darkness at Thy coming light;
Confusion order in Thy path;
Souls without strength inspire with might;
Bid mercy triumph over wrath.

Yours sincerely,
David N. Samuel.

Through The Looking Glass

By Bishop David Samuel

The crisis in the Church of England - the need for the Church of England (Continuing).

(An address given at a public meeting at Wimbledon, 22nd March 1997)

My talk falls into two parts (1) The crisis in the Church of England, (2) The need for the Church of England (Continuing).

First: The crisis in the Church of England.

Somebody may say, what crisis? I see no crisis. I am reminded of Mr. Callaghan when he was Prime Minister, it was during the "winter of discontent" and he had just returned from a trip to Guadeloupe. The government was in crisis, rubbish was piled high in the streets, the dead were lying unburied. The journalists gathered round him and asked about the crisis. To which he replied "What crisis?

We are experiencing a little local difficulty."

I will set aside for the moment the financial crisis and the difficulty the church is experiencing in paying its clergy, and also the drop in attendances at places of worship - 36 000 in one year 1994/95 the biggest this century. These are merely symptoms. Let us address the real cause of the malaise, which is the moral and doctrinal incoherence of the Church of England.

Stealing not sinful

The other day a clergyman from North

London said that stealing is not sinful. It made the headlines. He was by the way instantly dismissed, and almost as instantly reinstated! I do not want to attach too much importance to this particular incident, but it is significant in its way. It tells us something important.

When I see a solitary bee buzzing about, as I did the other day in the garden, it tells me something. It is the harbinger of change. It registers the changing climate and tells me that Spring is coming and the weather is getting warmer. Very

soon the air will be buzzing with innumerable bees. So it is a sign of things to come.

Mavericks

The maverick behaviour of some clergymen does the same. The service for the so-called Lesbian and Gay Christian Fellowship held at Southwark Cathedral, the divorce and remarriage of clergy, all these things are indicative of a changed climate in the church, a "paradigm shift" in its thinking and ethos.

"The real cause of the malaise is the moral and doctrinal incoherence of the Church of England"

How did this become possible? When did the change begin to take place? It is not always easy to locate exactly the point. For example, a great change took place in this country thirty years ago with the introduction of the "permissive society" There was a profound change of custom and ethos, but it is difficult to pinpoint the transition. However, I think we may say in the case of the church that the change is associated with the introduction of Synodical government which came about in the 1970's. The idea was established that the church could be changed by voting procedures, that majority votes were what counted. That was the paradigm shift. It was the change from the notion of a church committed to "eternal truths" to that of a church which could be changed by majority vote.

“Fundamentals could be changed by a two thirds majority vote. Nothing was sacrosanct any more”

Enabling Act

At first it seemed that the powers of General Synod were limited. The Enabling Act of 1919, which had established the old Church Assembly, the forerunner of the General Synod, appeared to exempt doctrine. It looked as if the powers of the Church Assembly were limited to administrative matters.

Randall Davidson

Randall Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the time of the passage of the Enabling Act through

parliament, reassured parliament that they were not dealing with deeper spiritual things but only with the framework, "the outer secular rules within which our work has to be done" (Bell, II, 975). This was no doubt taken, at the time, to mean that the fundamental doctrines of the faith were secure and there would be no constitutional change in the Church of England. But the Act itself used language that was capable of a much wider interpretation, it spoke of "matters touchin gthe Church of England", without qualification. The words of the Archbishop may have reassured people at the time, but with the passage of years they were forgotten, and by the time the General Synod came into existence it was ready to

assume power to change not merely the framework but the deeper spiritual things.

Church Society and High Court

That was the truth that was brought to light in the appeal of Church Society in the High Court over the Ordination of Women Measure. Church Society claimed the measure was a fundamental, doctrinal matter and that the General Synod had no power to change the doctrine of the Church of England. But Mr. Justice Lightman ruled that the General Synod is competent "in all matters touching the Church of England". It can therefore initiate any change, whatever, and parliament, which is sovereign, can endorse it.

Shifting sand

This for many people was a revelation for it gave to the General Synod and to parliament power to change anything, power to change not merely the "outward secular rules of the church" as Archbishop Davidson had assured parliament in 1919, but doctrines, the creeds, the 39 Articles of religion. Fundamentals could be changed by a two thirds majority vote in General Synod. Nothing was sacrosanct anymore. The power had been wielded once and it would be exercised again. The doctrines of the established church were shown to rest on shifting sand. By this ruling the Church of England had been metamorphosed.

“That is the reason why there has been no effective opposition to liberalising trends from Evangelicals in recent years”

Croquet mallets and flamingoes

It may be likened to the familiar story of Alice passing through the looking glass. You may remember that when Alice passed through the looking glass nothing was the same. She moved into a strange, unpredictable world; moral laws did not operate, anything could happen, croquet mallets would suddenly become flamingoes and crying babies turn into squealing pigs.

Destabilised

The Church of England has passed through the looking glass. It has moved into an unpredictable, unstable situation. The doctrines of the faith are no longer ring-fenced as many people thought. Anything can, in principle, be

changed by lobbying and political manoeuvring. It has been done and it will be done again. The Church of England is now in crisis because it has now been destabilised. It has set itself over the Word of God instead of under it. It is no longer, as Article 20 Of Authority in the Church puts it, "a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ" but it has now assumed the role of judge and arbiter of its doctrines. That is a position it ought not to occupy, nor can it occupy, without drawing down upon itself the judgement of God.

Spiritual danger zone

The situation of crisis is now endemic in the Church of England. By moving away from the position of Holy Scripture as supreme

and authoritative, it is open to the assault and battery of parties and lobbies and special interest groups. Whoever can muster sufficient numbers can change the Church of England by railroading its motions through Synod, and that relates to both doctrine and morals. Consequently the national church is now a spiritual danger zone.

Salisbury Plain

I now live near Salisbury Plain and as I drive along I see War Department notices saying "Keep Out". If you are foolish enough to venture in you will find out why. You may be surrounded by a company of tanks or subjected to a barrage of artillery. You have left the area where normal life prevails,

and you are in an area where different rules obtain. In the past the church believed in certain given doctrines, truths of Scripture, given by revelation of God, "the faith once delivered to the saints", given and revealed for all times. The Church of England has moved away from that position. It has introduced into this area majority voting and democratic procedures. It has defied the "Keep Out" signs and it is now in hazardous and dangerous territory.

We must do something

So much for the crisis, now a word about the need for the Church of England (Continuing). In this situation we cannot stand still and do nothing. We must do something to contend for the faith. It is enjoined upon us in Scripture. We must bear witness to the true position, to the eternal Gospel, to "truth unchanged, unchanging". But how best can we do this and where best can it be done? Can we do it best by simply staying inside the Church of England, or by moving outside it? There are those who maintain that we must remain inside if we are to be most effective. Those who take that view must acknowledge that they have had a long time to prove it, and it has not been a great success, otherwise things would not have come to this pass.

Side lined and ignored

The problems of trying to maintain a witness within are very great, and we may now say insuperable. Either you refuse to co-operate with the changes and developments and to conform in any way to what is going on, that is, you will make no concessions; in which case you

are sidelined and ignored, not elected to synod, passed over for preferment, and so on. Or you show a willingness to go along with things and compromise, and then you become a part of the system, you become neutralised and ineffective. This is the way in which Evangelical witness has been emasculated over the years. It happened on a grand scale at the Keele Congress, and that is the reason why there has been no effective opposition to liberalising trends from Evangelicals in recent years.

Canon A4

So I think a more effective witness can be borne outside. But it is really not a pragmatic question at all. It is in fact a question of principle and conscience. We have to be outside for this reason: the Church of England by its new legislation has made it a matter of conscience. The new canon A4 declares that the ordination of women "is not repugnant to Scripture" and "that those who are so ordained.... priests or deacons, according to the said ordinal, are lawfully... ordained.... and ought to be accounted both by themselves and others, to be truly.... priests and deacons". I do not believe these things, I cannot set my hand to them, therefore I cannot hold office in the Church of England. It is as simple as that.

Small minority

On the other hand, I do believe all the articles of the Christian faith. I do hold to the Holy Scriptures, the 39 Articles, the Catholic creeds, and to the Book of Common Prayer. I do not intend to give these up or to depart from them. So I

must hold to them outside. I am constrained, compelled, to hold to them outside. That may make us feel rather lonely, isolated, and uncomfortable. Nobody likes being in a minority and in a very small minority at that. Nobody likes being separate from the main body and we would not choose it for its own sake. But it may help us to know that we are not the first who have been compelled to make that choice. That there have been others who have had to endure this in the past, for the sake of truth.

Athanasius and Philpot

Athanasius was bishop of Alexandria in the fourth century. He believed in the doctrine of the Trinity. At that time the Arian party was becoming strong in the church. They denied the full deity of Christ and were anti-Trinitarian. The result was that eventually Athanasius was driven out and he had to go into exile. Or take the case of Archdeacon Philpot. Philpot was a Reformation martyr. He held to the doctrine of Scripture - the supremacy of Holy Scripture, justification by faith alone, election, and so on. But the church in this country under Mary Tudor had become once again Roman Catholic. He was therefore an outcast. He was arrested and tried as a heretic. In his examination, the Archbishop of York questioned him about the nature of the church. York maintained that the Catholic church was universal in the sense that it consisted of all who were called Christians. Philpot maintained that it consisted of all who held to the truth, that "the catholic church is that which believeth aright".

The church was catholic in the apostles' time, yet it was not universally received of the world. But because their doctrine which they had received

of Christ was perfect, and appointed to be preached and received of the whole world, therefore it is called the catholic faith, and all persons receiving the same, to be counted the catholic church. (The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot BCL, Parker Society., p 136.)

The numbers game is a very dangerous one to play. If truth is determined by the greatest number, then I suppose the Roman Catholics world-wide must be right, and we had better all join them. But I see nothing in the Bible to suggest that the matter must be determined in this way. Let us therefore hold to the truth revealed in Scripture. Others have set us an example of how we ought to walk. We are not alone, we are surrounded by "a great cloud of witnesses".

There is a need for the Church of England (Continuing). It is necessary in these times. What is the good of merely grumbling about the church where we are, of being miserable and unfed spiritually? Let us act and do something positive. Our Lord said to the church at Philadelphia, "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name". Which seems to describe our condition in the Church of England (Continuing) exactly. We have only a little strength, but what strength we have we shall devote to keeping God's word and not denying his name. And then the passage goes on, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation" (Revelation 3: 10.) This is indeed, a time of testing for Christians, but if we keep God's word we shall be kept by him. We have His promise to assure us.

The Reformation in Ireland.

by Dr. Clive Gillis

The recent meeting of Sinn Fein and the Ulster Unionists across the same conference table comes in the same year that we celebrate the 1400 year anniversary of the death of Columba in Iona. It reminds us that the battle for the Gospel in Ireland rages as fiercely as ever.

We revel in the stories of the Reformation in England, the exploits of Knox in Scotland and the great accomplishments of the continental reformers spearheaded by Luther and Calvin. But what of the Reformation in Ireland and its unsung heroes? Sadly this is a subject which the popular histories seem to cover less well, perhaps because of the greater resistance to the Gospel in that land and the less striking outcome.

Arrival of the Gospel

The dissemination of Gospel truth was well advanced in Ireland by the end of the seventh century. At this time "Muirchu writing his Life of Patrick" was able to rejoice "in the triumph of Christianity over paganism". Patrick had lived to see "those wretches who adore the sun" turn in multitudes to worship the Son of God. Furthermore, there is evidence the Irish church was at this time independent of Rome, despite the church of Armagh having recognised her as the supreme court of appeal. Ireland was reluctant to accept the Roman date for Easter. Contemporary accounts make it clear that the theoretical primacy of Armagh was largely overruled by the independent local Abbots. Some

monks -"manaig" - remained legally married within the church, and even had children and grandchildren rise to the same office.

“A yearly payment of a denarius to the blessed Peter out of each house.”

Adrian IV and Henry II

The Irish church had its periods of secularisation and spiritual revival, but the main features of its organisation remained constant from the seventh century to the twelfth. However the Norman conquest brought the church in Ireland into line with the general pattern of Western Christendom by the creation of parishes to enable tithes to be collected. But Rome desired a firmer grip on the land. Adrian IV was the only English pope. Henry II, King of England, was the most powerful prince in Europe. With an eye to his own advantage Adrian granted Henry the right to annexe Ireland in the Bull "*Laudabiliter*" in 1156. The authenticity of this document is no longer doubted. The text runs "...you have signified to us, my dear son in Christ, that you wish to enter the island of Ireland...to reduce that people to law...and to make a yearly payment of a denarius to the blessed Peter out of each house... We, therefore,... giving a kindly assent... hold it... good and acceptable that you should enter that island..." This grant was confirmed by

Pope Alexander III in three letters on the 20th September 1172, "and there is ample evidence that he annexed Ireland with the entire approbation of that pope".

Henry VIII

Laudabiliter resulted in the growth in Ireland of the anti-scriptural errors of Rome. But the English invasion, remained only partial because "of news of a most disquieting nature: the papal legates were threatening an interdict...for Becket's murder... Clearly much that Henry might have done had to be left undone".

Troubled history

Thus began the troubled history of English rule, for the English Crown only exercised true authority in a small area around Dublin, the Irish Pale. In 1533, on the eve of Reformation, Henry VIII's agent was informed "that noither the Inglish order, tonge, ne habite been used, neither the Kingis lawes abeied above 20 miles in compasse". The rest of the land was controlled by ancient families, the Earls of Kildare, Desmond, Ormonde and others to whom the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V had sent agents that he might "stir up the Irish princes against Henry VIII".

George Browne

It was against this background that the legislation of the Reformation Parliament in 1534 saw acts passed not only to make Henry VIII supreme head of the Church of England but of Ireland also. Henry's man to promote the Reformation in Dublin and the Pale and beyond, should the Lord enable, was George Browne, the first Archbishop of Dublin. Like the later Bishop Bale his detractors called him

"harsh and arrogant", but he had been handed a monumental task, which a lesser man would have been unable to carry through. A contemporary chronicle states that, "there is no archbishop nor bishop, abbot nor prior, parson nor vicar, nor any other person of the church ... that useth to preach the Word of God saveing the poor friars "beggars", whose sermons clouded Gospel truth with Medieval superstition.

Reformation

George Browne was an Augustinian friar and nothing is known of him until he had to administer the oath of royal supremacy to the friars as their Provincial. He was appointed Archbishop of Dublin in 1535 and the zeal with which he pursued reform suggests that the doctrines of free grace had opened his eyes to Gospel truth.

Foundation

He vigorously suppressed the Irish monasteries, even occasionally outside the Pale. He introduced the use of the Prayer Book in 1549 and the English service. He oversaw the payment of fair pensions to the displaced monks which, ironically, Queen Mary later begrudged. He "had a conscientious hatred to images, which he called idols, and destroyed them wherever he could". He faced stout opposition from pro-papal clerics and nobility. The papal party called him " a poll shorn knave friar", and Browne reported of one of them, Lord Deputy Grey, that "it was no safer to speak against Papal usurpations than if the Pope had been present". Despite the eclipse of his authority with the beheading of Thomas Cromwell in England he had laid a small but firm foundation for the future growth of Protestantism in Ireland.

A Short Way with Dangerous Sects

We hear fresh accounts of the persecution of Protestant Christians every day. These stories pour in from all over the world. Most Christians in this country seem unaware of the scale of the violent, world-wide anti-Christian crusade which is sweeping the globe like a tidal wave. As the new millennium approaches, the world is undoubtedly uniting against Bible Christianity.

What about Europe? Mr. Torquil Dick-Erikson writing in the Sept/Oct issue of *The European Journal* quotes the Treaty of Amsterdam as saying, "The Union will respect and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations and communities in the Member States". What more could we ask than that? Well, he points out that this form of words guarantees, for instance, the privileges of the Church of Rome in its concordats with certain states. However according to this statement, religious associations that are restricted by law in a member state, or even prohibited, as the Scientologists are in Germany, will find that the European Union will uphold their status under national law whatever that status is. Its status might be complete prohibition.

Thus while Article FI makes such a show of guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms, with frightful penalties for not doing so, it turns out that this does not mean religious freedom for any religious association that an individual state chooses to legislate against or prohibit. Rather the EU will uphold that prohibition.

Torquil Dick-Erikson then points to the campaign in the European Union against "religious sects, ...specifically men-

tioned as one of the areas of criminal activity, together with drug-running, Mafia and organised crime, by the President of the European Parliament in his message to the seminar in Spain on Corpus Juris, that will need to be tackled by the future European system of criminal justice."

But what is a sect? We heard a missionary from the open Brethren in France speaking recently about the severe problems caused as a result of their being described by the authorities as a sect. People who wanted to attend their meetings were afraid to do so. Terrible stories circulate of the persecution of a French Protestant Church with removal of their children. In Belgium the Ministry of Justice recognises the smaller

Orthodox Church and United Protestant Church but not the much larger Belgian Federation of Evangelical Churches. The Belgian Baptist Union has called for a protest campaign throughout Europe.

So might we one day be forced to flee to another European state as the Huguenots fled to England or British Protestants to Holland? But will it do us any good? The Spanish Government has proposed to the European Union that the Maastricht Treaty be amended, "to establish the clear principle that no citizen of a member state of the Union may apply for asylum in another member state"

"Sects...One of the areas of criminal activity"

On Every High Hill and Under Every Green Tree

Some thoughts on the excavations at Arad

The fall-out from Princess Diana's funeral continues. The Church of England cannot get over the fact that people actually behaved en masse in a religious sort of way and even wanted to come to church.

It is desperately analysing the situation to find the magic ingredient, the clue to the psychology of the crowd, that has evaded the Church of England in all these long years. Archbishop Carey recently spoke in Ashby De-La Zouche of the candles, scattered services and of course Elton John's performance in Westminster Abbey, as evidence that the nation is still searching for deeper spirituality. He feels that this need should be allowed to express itself in more 'spontaneity and variation' in worship. The Archbishop sees this as a way of getting the masses worshipping again.

Two-tier religion

Most religions tend to operate at two levels. There is the popular, superstitious and degraded worship of the masses. There is also a sophisticated philosophical form for the educated few, who tend not to hide their cynical contempt for the vulgar sort. Textbooks of religion written for the benefit of Westerners always insist that the sophisticated form is the true one and that it is quite unfair to judge a religion by what the overwhelming mass of its adherents believe and practise and are taught every day.

Central sanctuary

God forbid such a two-tier system in Israel. There was to be a single central sanctuary, the tabernacle or temple, where

all sacrifices were to be offered under priestly supervision strictly according to the pattern revealed on Mount Sinai and laid down in the law of Moses. Israel was not to set up local altars or sacrifice outside the central sanctuary because such places would inevitably degenerate into heathen shrines. Nevertheless Israel inaugurated "High Places", worshipping on every high hill and under every green tree and they were her downfall. The practice seems to have received official sanction from Solomon's provision of idolatrous shrines for his heathen wives and later, of course, in the Northern Kingdom from Jeroboam's golden calves.

“Aharoni had no doubt that this was an Israelite sanctuary, one of the notorious High Places”

Arad in the Negev

Interestingly, when Yohanan Aharoni was excavating Arad in the Negev (Joshua 12: 14, Judges 1:16) he found one of these High Places built on the plan of the temple and with the same dimensions. There was a courtyard with an altar of burnt offering made of plastered unhewn stones, a porch with evidence of two pillars, the equivalent of Jachin and Boaz, standing before it (II Chronicles 3:17), a Holy Place, a Holy of Holies and stores round about. It faced Westward as did the temple and not East or North as did Canaanite temples. So closely did the builders at Arad follow the design of Solomon's temple that the dimensions seem subsequently to have been

Continued page 15

Allan Bowhill Fund

Income is not keeping pace with expenditure as regards funding for the training of ordinands. We are now eating into our limited general funds and this process cannot continue indefinitely. We trust that members will make this a matter of urgent prayer. God will supply our needs. Anyone requiring further details of our financial position should write to the treasurer: Mr. D. K. Mansell, 17 Greenfels Rise, Oakham, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 7TP

Covenanted Giving.

If you contribute to the funds of the Church of England (Continuing), or are thinking of doing so, I would like to encourage you to covenant, so that the church receives the benefit of the tax which would otherwise be deducted. It is also possible to make single payments with tax benefits. The Treasurer would be pleased to advise. We are taking on a number of commitments as the work grows, but especially the very important commitment of training our ordinands.

Please think and pray about the support for this work and if you would like a covenant form please write to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. D. K. Mansell at 17, Greenfels Rise, Oakham, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 7TP, and please be sure to complete any gift or bequest in the registered name of the *Association of the Continuing Church Trust*. Charity No. 1055010.

Bishop Samuel.

The *Association of the Continuing Church Trust* is now a registered charity, number 1055010 and is responsible for the custody and management of the funds of the *Continuing Church*.

We are not permitted by the Charity Commissioners to raise or accept money in the name of the *Church of England (Continuing)*. For instance, a legacy left to the *Church of England (Continuing)* is most unlikely to be paid to us as there is no such body in law.

Therefore all cheques, gifts and legacies must be made to the *Association of the Continuing Church Trust*. If you wish the gift to be earmarked for a special fund such as the Bishop's Fund, Allan Bowhill Memorial Ministry Fund or the Journal Fund please make this clear at the time.

Member churches of the Continuing Church are responsible for setting up their own trusts for the custody and management of their own funds. Gifts intended for member churches must therefore be made out to the particular church trust concerned.

News of the churches

READING

Mr. Richard Mortimer and Mrs. Marjorie Stranc were confirmed at St. Mary's Episcopal Chapel, Castle Street, on 23 november 1997.

The ordinands and their wives met together in Reading on the weekend of 16 November.

A Special Sunday School event will be held on 14 December, the 199th Anniversary of the Chapel.

WOLVE RHAMPTON

Mrs. Anne Margaret Sayers was baptised on 16 March and confirmed by Bishop Samuel on 23 March.

Robert Hamilton Budgen, born 16 February 1997, was baptised on 27 April.

The church has recently had visits from Bishop Samuel and the Rev. Maurice Handford and a deputation from the Society for the Distribution of Hebrew Scriptures.

The church asks for prayer for the "Sunday" School held on Tuesdays.

A Carol Service is planned for 18 December at 4 PM.

NUFFIELD CHURCH

The Rev. John Shearer has issued the following statement:

"There may still be people who do not understand how I can be a minister of the Continuing Church and yet still living in the Rectory. The simple explanation is that for the purposes of spiritual and pastoral oversight I am under the authority of Bishop Samuel but in matters relating to earthly goods and chattels I am under the Bishop of Oxford simply because we do not ourselves own these temporal necessities.

"For some time I have been seeking to re-house myself but because of the high price of property in this area even the most modest dwelling is beyond reach. Understanding the problem and that I wish to remain in this locality to continue to minister to the church here, the Bishop of Dorchester (Suffragan) has suggested that, as the Rectory is surplus to diocesan requirements and will therefore be placed on the market for sale, consideration be given to its purchase for use by the Continuing Church.

"In some respects this is an attractive proposition but the cost of purchase might be more than can be realised. No price has yet been suggested (or offered!) but we have received one or two promises of help. However it is as yet too early to say what the outcome will be. We can only look to the Lord for his direction and help in this matter."

The Continuing Church

(The Association of the Continuing Church Trust: Registered Charity No.1055010)

The Right Reverend Dr. David N. Samuel, M.A., Ph.D. Presiding Bishop
The Right Reverend Albion W. Knight, M.A., M.S. Bishop

Committee

The Rt. Rev. Dr. D. N. Samuel, M.A., Ph.D. (*Chairman*)
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The Rev. E. Malcolm, B.A.
The Rev. J. F. Shearer, B.Sc.
Mr. D. K. Mansell (*Treasurer*)
Dr. N. Malcolm, M.A., M.B., F.R.C.P. (*Secretary*)

Churches

St. Mary's, Castle Street, Reading. Sunday Services: 11 a.m. Morning Prayer (First Sunday, Lords Supper), 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer (Third Sunday Lords Supper). Enquiries 01734 - 595131.

Former Congregation of St. John the Baptist with Mary-le-Port, Chapel of the Three Kings, Fosters Almshouses, top of Christmas Steps, Colston Street, Bristol 1. Sunday Service 11 a.m. Morning Prayer. Enquiries 01934 - 712520.

Nuffield Congregation meeting with Nuffield Parish Church, near Henley-on-Thames, the Rev. John. F. Shearer. Sunday Services: 11 a.m. Morning Prayer, 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer. Lords Supper 8 a.m. first Sunday, 6.30 p.m. third Sunday. Bible Study Wednesday 8 p.m. Enquiries 01491 - 641305.

St. John's Church, South Wimbledon, meeting at the St. John's Ambulance Hall, Kingston Road (Opposite Palmerston Road), Wimbledon. The Rev. B. G. Felce and Mr. Andrew R. Price. Sunday Services: 11.00 a.m. Morning Prayer, 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer. Enquiries 0181 - 642 - 7885.

St. Silas Church, Wolverhampton meeting at Bethany Chapel, Lower Prestwood Road, at junction with Blackwood Avenue, Wednesfield. The Rev. E. Malcolm. Sunday Services: 12.40 p.m. Morning Prayer, 4.00 p.m. Evening Prayer. Enquiries 01547-528815.

Associated Clergy: The Rev. J. N. Reid, B.A., B.D.. (United States of America)

Treasurer

Mr.D.K. Mansell, 17, Greenfels Rise, Oakham, Dudley, West Midlands, DY2 7TP. 01384-259781

Journal

The Journal is distributed free of charge on request but we invite donations. Any communications or enquiries in connection with the Journal should be addressed to the **Secretary:** Dr. Napier Malcolm, Kingswood House, Pilcorn Street, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4AW. Phone 01934-712520.

CONSTITUTION

- 1. Doctrine:** The doctrine of the Church of England (Continuing) shall be that of the 39 Articles of Religion understood in their original, natural and intended sense.
- 2. Worship:** The worship of the Church of England (Continuing) shall be generally according to the Book of Common Prayer (1662). The Authorised Version of the Bible shall be the only version used in the lectern and the pulpit and in public readings and expositions at all meetings of the Church of England (Continuing).
- 3. Ministry:** The consecration and ordination of ministers shall be according to the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer (1662). The Church of England (Continuing) believes in the ministry of women according to Scripture which does not permit them to teach or exercise authority, particularly as bishops, priests, and deacons.
- 4. Discipline:** The church shall be episcopally governed. A general assembly shall be held not less than once a year consisting of the bishop and the ministers of the church and representatives of the local congregations to transact the business of the denomination and for mutual encouragement and edification.
- 5. Membership:** New churches may apply for membership of the Church of England (Continuing) on the basis of their agreement with the doctrine, worship and discipline of that body. Membership of the local church shall be on the basis of baptism and confirmation and approval by the local presbyter.

Any matters incapable of resolution shall be referred to the Ordinary.

Aharoni: from page 11

changed when the cubit changed (II Chronicles 3:3) even though it made the building asymmetrical.

There the similarity with the temple ended. In the Holy Place before the Holy of Holies stood two altars with evidence of animal sacrifice. Worse still, in the Holy of Holies there were massebot, unsavoury idolatrous objects made of stone and associated with the male deity (Ex 23:24 and Deut 16:22).

Aharoni had no doubt that this was an Israelite sanctuary, one of the notorious High Places, dedicated to Jehovah and built in the time of Solomon. It seems to have

been neglected in Hezekiah's time (II Kings 18: 4 & 22) and destroyed after Josiah's reforms. It may well have been relatively pure in its worship at the beginning but then degenerated.

True religion is from above downward not from the bottom up. It is revealed from God in Holy Scripture not manufactured at the whim of the populace. It is taught by godly and learned ministers of the Word not devised in the human heart. This is the great lesson of the history of ancient Israel. Letting the godless, the ignorant, the man-pleasers, dictate the agenda might get the masses back to church, but to what sort of a church and to what purpose?

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English Churchman

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