

THE RECTORY,
ABINGER COMMON,
DORKING,
SURREY.

My dear People,

When our beautiful old parish Church was destroyed by enemy action in August, 1944, most of us felt, I think; that we had suffered a personal loss, and during the last two years a sum of £2,700 has been raised for the Church Rebuilding Fund and this amount, together with the Government War-Damage Compensation and some help from the Bishop of Guildford's Challenge Fund, should be sufficient to pay the cost of the restoration of St. James' Church.

Unfortunately there seems little chance at present of this work being put in hand.

We have however, as you all know, been able to restore the North Aisle for use as a small Chapel for our church services.

I regret to say that at the present moment our church finances are in a bad way and we need additional subscriptions to Church Funds and the Free-Will Offerings if we are going to be able to carry on and pay our way. Our present overhead expenses are almost as large as they were before the Church was destroyed, and we need about £270 a year in order to keep us out of debt, but we are not receiving that amount annually by about £70.

What is the reason for this state of affairs you may ask? The answer is quite simple. There are two main causes:

- (1) During the past eighteen months some of our most generous subscribers have left the parish.
- (2) Owing to the destruction of the old church we do not get the large number of visitors to the services that we used to and who were very generous in their offerings.

This appeal is being sent to every house in the parish and thus it will, I know, reach many who are already subscribers to the Free-Will Offering scheme. If by any chance you are one of these and feel that you are giving all that you can afford, please take no notice of this letter. On the other hand there are many who have the greatest regard for their parish Church and are perhaps proud to have been baptized, confirmed and even married, in St. James, Abinger, and yet do not help financially in the upkeep of the Church and Churchyard. If you are one of these will you think the matter over and seriously consider becoming a regular subscriber?

Lastly, some of you are newcomers to the parish, in some cases replacing very generous supporters of our Church Funds, and I trust that you too will be prepared to pay your share.

Will you help to maintain your parish Church and Churchyard? If so, please sign the enclosed form, place it in the envelope and either send or post it to Mrs. Carpenter.

I have written this letter at the request of the Churchwardens and Abinger Parochial Church Council and sincerely trust that you will respond as generously as you are able.

May I take this opportunity of thanking those who have contributed so generously in the past and trust that they will continue to do so and that many more will be prepared to share this burden with them.

Yours affectionately,

LIONEL G. MEADE,
Rector.