

TEDDY BOYS AID CHURCH.

Teenagers are nowadays part of the congregation at St. Stephens, Snettton. They're helping the vicar, and every Sunday sees them in their places for the Evening Service. There used to be about fifteen worshippers until the Reverend John Tysen came to Snettton and breathed new life into St. Stephens.

The young Nottingham people had often noticed the Vicar on weekdays going to the Church, which he was obviously going to clean. He told them that there were no funds for the purpose so they volunteered to help. The Vicar accepted the offer at once. Some of the young people couldn't remember the last time they'd been in a church, but they couldn't resist the appeal of a Padre who was willing to take his own coat off. So the rock and roll enthusiasts became Churchgoers, the hard way. Very soon they were working with a will and St. Stephens's looked all the better for it.

In return for their work they were given a room in the Vicarage for use as a rock and roll club, open to anyone who had been to the Evening Service. The place looked like a first rate Espresso Bar by the time it was ready for use. One way and another the group displayed quite a lot of talent, and the same will to work they'd already shown in the Church.

It would have been easy for the Vicar to preach Sermons against Teenagers: The Reverend John Tysen had the sense to see that they're fundamentally a decent lot. He met them half way - or rather they met him - with the result that both the church and the young people have benefited.

It's an experiment many other churches may copy. If they do, they won't regret it.