

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

Parish including Birchley Heath, Ansley Common,
Ansley Village, Church End.

No, 859

JANUARY 1997

Price 20p



Vicar:

Reverend JAMES R. JASPER

Honorary Church Army Evangelist:

Mrs, CATHERINE A. JASPER

The Vicarage, Ansley Village, Nuneaton CV10 9PS
Telephone: Chapel End 396403

Sunday Bus Timetable for 6.30 p.m. Evening Service

Ansley Village turn 6.00 p.m.

Ansley Common St, John's 6.20 p.m.

Return Journey from Parish Church 7.45 p.m.

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1st January, 1997

Our Dear Friends,

An advertisement appeared in a newspaper: 'Farmer seeks lady with a tractor with view to companionship and possible marriage. Please send picture of tractor.' I don't think the farmer had his priorities quite right.

A new year resolution could be to aim at getting our priorities in the right order. Our number one priority is our relationship with God. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, 'Love God with all your heart.'

I recently heard of one lady who was put to the test about her love for God to a point that we hope none of us would ever be called to do. She lived in an eastern country and had confessed her faith in Jesus as her personal Saviour. Because of her faith she was arrested and imprisoned. Whilst in prison she gave birth to a baby daughter. The baby was taken from her and put into the next cell where she could hear her cry. She was told that if she denied Christ she could have her baby. She would not disclaim her Lord and the baby died.

Number two priority is of course that we love our neighbour as ourselves. Dr. Brackett, a medical practitioner, lived in a small town in the southern part of the United States. He specialised in serving people who had no money. He would get up on the coldest night and go for miles to help a needy person. His office was on the main street over a clothing store, and there was a plate at the doorway announcing the office.

He never married. He fell in love, but on the day of his wedding he was called out to deliver a Mexican baby. I suppose he had to go out to save the life of the mother and child, as there were no other doctors nearby. But his bride gave him up. She said that a man who would fail to appear at his wedding for the sake of a poor person's child would not be any good as her husband. A lot of people agreed with her—but not the parents of the little Mexican child.

Dr. Brackett was over seventy years old when he died. After the funeral the townspeople discussed the best tombstone they should erect to this wonderful man. Nothing was done except that afforded by the parents of the boy he had delivered so many years earlier.

They were too poor to put up a tombstone. So they took the brass plate announcing the office from the door of the building and placed it on the tomb. Embedded in a mass of flowers was the old inscription "**Dr. Brackett Office Upstairs.**"

Most people would have thought the doctor was a fool for sacrificing earthly success for the sake of service to the poor. But he had—what most genuinely want—an office upstairs, and that made the price he paid worth it all.

A very happy New Year,

James, Catherine, Mark & Rebekah.

DIARY FOR JANUARY 1997

Sunday, January 5th

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer),
- 10.30 a.m. Morning Prayer (Alternative Prayer Book),
- 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer (Book of Common Prayer).

Wednesday, January 8th

- 7.30 p.m. Dinner—Launching Alpha Course Number Two.

Sunday, January 12th

- 10.30 a.m. Family Communion (Alternative Service Book).
- 6.30 p.m. "The Happy Clappy Service." (Informal Service).

Wednesday, January 15th

- 7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Thursday, January 16th

- 7.45 p.m. Parochial Church Council Meeting.

Sunday, January 19th

- 10.30 a.m. Family Service. (Informal Service).
- 6.30 p.m. Parish Communion (Alternative Service Book).

Wednesday, January 22nd

- 7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Sunday, January 26th

- 9.45 a.m. Family Service at St. John's, Ansley Common.
- 10.30 a.m. Family Communion (Alternative Service Book).
- 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer (Alternative Service Book).

Wednesday, January 29th

- 7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Friday, January 31st

- 7.30 p.m. Film Evening with Refreshments.

Every Week in the Village Church Hall

- Tuesday 10.00 a.m. Senior Citizens. 6.00 p.m. Children's Club.
- 8.00 p.m. Youth Club.

Thursday 10.30 a.m. Mums and Toddlers.

Every Week in St. John's Church Hall

Tuesday & Thursday 9.30 a.m. Playgroup.

Wednesday 7.30 p.m. Youth Club.

Thursday 6.30 p.m. Explorers.

Meet for Prayer in Church every Friday at 6.45 p.m. and 10.00 a.m.,
each Sunday morning; 6.00 p.m. each Sunday evening.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS OF 1996

Holy Baptism

"Parents and God-Parents, are you willing by your prayers, example, and your teaching to bring these children up to love the Lord?" "I am willing."

Dec. 1—Callum Andrew Hall, of Ansley Common.

Hayley Marie Smith, of Galley Common (and on our Electoral Roll).

Ryan Cooper, of Ansley Common.

Sarah Cooper, of Ansley Common.

Funerals "I will cling to the Old Rugged Cross"

Nov. 29—Edith Sarah Grubb, 70 years, of Birchley Heath.

Dec. 6—Edward (Ted) Sidney Pethick, 53 years of Ansley Common.

Children's Society. I thank all those who have collected change and regularly saved throughout the year in their boxes. Thanks to your generosity £180 has been sent to the Children's Society to help in their valuable work supporting the growing number of children who need love, a listening ear and sometimes the bare essentials of life in order to survive. Many thanks for your continued support.

Margaret Oliver, Nuthurst Crescent.

The Happy Clappy Service. This was requested at a recent Church Council Meeting and several members offered support to David Cove who volunteered to arrange it, Sunday night January 12th at 6.30 p.m., was chosen. Friends from neighbouring Arley are invited to help and a warm invitation is given to all who would like to join in this "Worship with a difference" service.

The Parochial Church Council meets on Thursday, January 16th in the Village Church Hall at 7.45 p.m. Items for the agenda should reach the Chairman at least three days before the meeting. The need for adequate security is a continual challenge, and the most effective ways of teaching this is regularly being sought by the Council. Please pray about this with us—together with the decision to employ the most fruitful method of making the Good News of Jesus Christ known throughout the parish.

The Film Evening will be on Friday, January 31st in the Village Church Hall at 7.30 p.m. This is being arranged with Vee Robinson who has a good selection of local places screened. Many expressed appreciation of her films at a similar evening some time ago. We look forward to this occasion. Refreshments will be served in the interval which will include apple pie. There will be a plate to receive your donations which will go towards the running costs of the Church and Church Hall.

Alpha Course Number Two commences with a dinner on Wednesday, January 8th in the Village Church Hall at 7.30 p.m. The after-dinner speaker will be Dawn Watterton from Coton Parish Church. Others will also speak who were on the autumn course. Those who have already done the course are invited to come again and, if possible, to bring a newcomer. The Course which is for ten weeks is open to everybody to join. Please book in advance for the dinner, we need to know the number of persons to cater for.

Many thanks for the lovely Christmas Cards we were so pleased to receive from our parishioners. We very much appreciate that token of your kindness, love and prayers.

Edith Sarah Grubb was well liked and respected in Birchley Heath. She loved her home and family, and suffered much in recent years. We offer our sympathies to Dink, her husband and to all the family and that they will know the Lord Himself to be a very present help in this time of need.

Edward Sidney Pethick died very suddenly after being taken ill whilst at work. Ted, as he was always known, only recently moved to Ansley Common with his wife Joy. We offer her, and all the family, our condolences at this time of shock and bereavement and that they may know God's all sufficient grace.

Verse of the Year. Do please ask for a card if you missed having one. Like last year, this has no cord with which to hang it up. You will need blu-tack. A little on the four corners will ensure it stays on the wall for the year.

Stan & Romaine Forryan left our parish for Wiltshire just before Christmas to live near their family. We trust that they will enjoy their new home and Church. We shall miss them very much, but perhaps we shall see them occasionally when they return to see family and friends.

SHARED BLESSINGS

We met and were married a long time ago,
We worked long hours, and wages were low,
No TV, no wireless, no bath—times were hard,
Just a cold water tap, and a loo in the yard.

No holidays abroad, no carpets on floors,
We had coal fires, and we never locked doors,
Our children arrived, no Pill in those days,
We brought them up, without any state aid.

They were safe going out to play in the park,
And old folk could go out for a walk in the dark,
No valium, no drugs, no LSD,
We cured our ills with a nice cup of tea.

No vandals, no muggings, there was nothing to rob,
And we felt we'd be rich with a couple of bob,
People were happy in those far off days,
Much kinder and caring in so many ways.

Milkman and paper boys would whistle and sing,
A night at the pictures was our one night fling,
We all got our share of trouble and strife,
We just had to face it, that was the pattern of life.

Now we are old and look back through the years,
We don't think of hard times, troubles and tears,
We remember the blessings, our hope and our love,
And we shared them together and we thank God above.

Writer unknown—passed on to us by Doris Wilson.

Please pray for me dear friend—I need your prayers,
For there are burdens pressing hard and very many cares.
Pray too that Christ will make of me the Christian that I ought
to be.

Do pray for me dear friend at morning hour
That I might not be overborne by Satan's power.
That 'mid the whirl and maze of things
My soul may deeply drink of hidden springs.

(Anon)

Just a Thought . . . The devil doesn't care how much good we do,
as long as we don't do it TODAY.