

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No. 871

JANUARY 1998

Price 25p



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JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

I wonder what you remember about the past year? There were certainly some momentous events. Most of us will always remember it as the year that the Princess of Wales was so tragically killed. Maybe some of you had sad events in your family too.

Then there are the happy memories. For us the highlight was the wedding of our daughter in August, and maybe some good things happened for you too.

Some of us will be saying 'I hope 1998 won't be as bad as 1997.' Others will be wondering if this year will be as good as the last one, because who knows what the future holds? Some of us are optimists—we expect life to turn out all right in the end. Others are pessimists—if anything can go wrong, it will! But all of us hope for the best—happiness, good health, good relationships with family and friends. Geoff and I hope for a happy, co-operative and forward-looking year with you all.

None of us can guarantee what the year will hold. That's what makes life so uncertain. We can only hope, and sometimes hope is disappointed. That makes some folks angry and bitter. Others pick themselves up, dust themselves down and start again, battered and bruised, but stronger.

We all long for certainty, and Christians find it in love of God. Whatever happens to us, Jesus says 'I am with you always,' in good times and bad—someone to turn to, someone to thank, someone who shares our joys and sorrows, who can transform our lives from within. I hope that for you, 1998 will be the year that you discover just what a difference Jesus can make.

Eternal Father,

Thank you for bringing us through the changes of time to the beginning of another year.

Forgive us the wrong we have done in the year that is past,

And help us to spend the rest of our days to your honour and glory. Amen.

May God bless you,

Gill and Geoff.

SERVICES FOR JANUARY

At St. Laurence:

Every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

January 4: Family Service.

Evening: Traditional Evensong.

January 11: Holy Communion.

Evening: Traditional Evensong.

January 18: Morning Prayer.

Evening: Holy Communion.

January 25: Holy Communion,
Evening Prayer.

At St. John's:

January 11 and 25: Family Service.

Please note

After an extensive survey about the worship in all of our services, the PCC agreed a policy which affirms all types of worship. **Sunday evenings** will continue with traditional services. **Sunday morning Communion**s will stay the same. **A small team** will be trained to help lead and develop the other two morning services.

St. John's will continue as before, but we are offering a **mid-week Communion** service as from February, once a month. We will also have weekly mid-week services, alternately at St. Laurence's and St. John's. These will be short, said services and will be an opportunity for a time of quiet prayer and reflection. Everyone is most welcome. More details next month.

PCC — January 15 at St. John's at 7.45 p.m.

Bus Details 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 7.30 p.m.

The Next Millenium meeting will be on Wednesday, January 21st, at Ansley Village Church Hall, at 7.30 p.m.

St. John's Children's Club. Every Tuesday 6.30 - 7.30 p.m.

To book St. John's Hall: Contact Pat Barnes, 69 Ansley Common.

Christmas Evening. Many heartfelt thanks to all who worked so hard at the event itself, to others who contributed to the stalls, and to all those who came along to give such generous support which ensured the success of the "Christmas Evening." The half-hour "Quick-Sell" plan seemed to work well, and after some refreshments everyone stayed for some Christmas songs and carols—ably accompanied by Rev. Geoff Kimber—before the drawing of the Door and Raffle Prizes concluded the evening.

The lovely atmosphere created, coupled with Geoff's appropriate message for the occasion, began our Christian Christmas Season for us all in a most convivial and meaningful way.

After a most enjoyable evening the biggest surprise was the realisation that £720.40 had been raised for Church Funds! This total is likely to be further increased when the money—from some extra orders for Margaret Antill's superb holly wreaths—is added.

Many thanks again for all your combined efforts to make the Christmas Evening such a social—and financial—success! !

Happy Christmas,

Moreen Freestone, Margaret Kimberley.

Sponsored Sing. The final amount raised at the Sponsored Sing-a-longs is £429. Thank you! Margaret Kimberley.

Change of Plans! A slight change of plans—and date—regarding the previously announced event for January 16th has had to be made.

There will be a cheese and wine (or fruit juice) evening on Friday, January 30th—7.30 p.m. till 9.00 p.m. or just after!—which will be

another opportunity for all to meet together again! Hopefully some members of the Nuneaton Amateurs will come and entertain us for the latter part of the evening.

As we shall have to know approximate numbers for this occasion it would be helpful if you could get a ticket from any member of the P.C.C. giving in return a donation of around £2 for each person. They will be available during January. The evening will hopefully be something "different" for us to sample! Do come if you can!

Margaret Kimberley.

The Christmas Fayre held on Saturday afternoon, December 13th, was a very happy occasion and raised £106.

The following was given for the magazine by May Stain. She doesn't know the author but it certainly gives food for thought:

POEM FOR LIFE

Money will buy—

A bed but not sleep,

Books but not brains,

Food but not appetite.

Finery but not beauty.

A house but not a home,

Medicine but not health.

Luxuries but not culture.

Amusement but not happiness,

A church pew but not heaven,

Wonderful isn't it? The best things in life really don't cost a penny.

JANUARY by Marie Cove

The wind is cold and bleak and chill,

Snow lies heavy on mound and hill.

The birds are cold, hungry and lose,

Searching for food in fog and frost.

The days are dark and long the night,

Making the robin take early flight,

Sun rays are few and thin and weak,

Our mouths make patterns when we speak.

But in our beds on nights so cold,

We snuggle up warm as winds howl cold,

What a gorgeous feeling in blankets warm,

Winter's not so bad when sheltered from storm.

This is January, loved by few,

But still buds are peeping green and new,

Spring will be here before we know,

And soon forgotten the ice and snow.

George Ponder gave me the following which is very appropriate for a New Year:

AT THE GATE OF THE YEAR

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

From "God Knows" by Louise Haskins.

Notes from December P.C.C.

A. Hall News

- (1) Smoke alarms will be fitted in both halls.
- (2) Dave Cove will be retiring from Ansley Church Hall Committee as from the end of the year. He was thanked for all his hard work. Ray Hobbs offered practical help.
- (3) It was agreed that the Youth Clubs were doing an excellent job. More support was offered.

B. Worship Discussion

See Gill's note on the issues discussed.

C. Ansley Common

Dave Marsden is hoping to set up a drop-in centre for teenagers in Ansley Common. Help will be on hand with form-filling, general advice and finding employment.

EDITORIAL

1st January, 1998

Dear Friends,

"We make our plans but God has the last word," Proverbs 16, v 1.

How apt the above proverb is and especially at this time of the year when many people make resolutions for the new year to come. I always write at the back of my new diary each year "I will try to be more tolerant, cut out sweets and have more exercise." I don't seem to succeed with two out of the three and the tolerance only seems to come not from my own efforts but with age which makes me more placid.

As we see in the New Year I always remember when we were young my parents never treated New Year's Eve any different to any other day, and we were never, even when engaged to be married, allowed to stay up even until 11 o'clock. When we asked about seeing the New Year in my mother said "The New Year comes in whether you wait up for it or not," which of course was true.

I always think as we sing 'Auld Lang Syne' as the New Year comes in, this is the moment when we remember all the last year and what has happened. We also think of loved ones who are no longer with us, and when our family party is over we sit with the children who are still awake, and we remember Grandad's and Grandma's and relatives who are no longer here but we always remember the happy times and the funny things they said and did. Those memories are always with us; we still play the party games they taught us and the songs they sung. Our grandchildren and nephews and nieces love to hear the stories they told and they live on in their hearts and minds.

God has given us a marvellous computer—our brain where we store all the memories of life, happy or sad, but He has also give us His promise that all who believe in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

May 1998 bring you many happy memories to store and to share, good health and especially the presence and the blessings of God always.

Marie.