

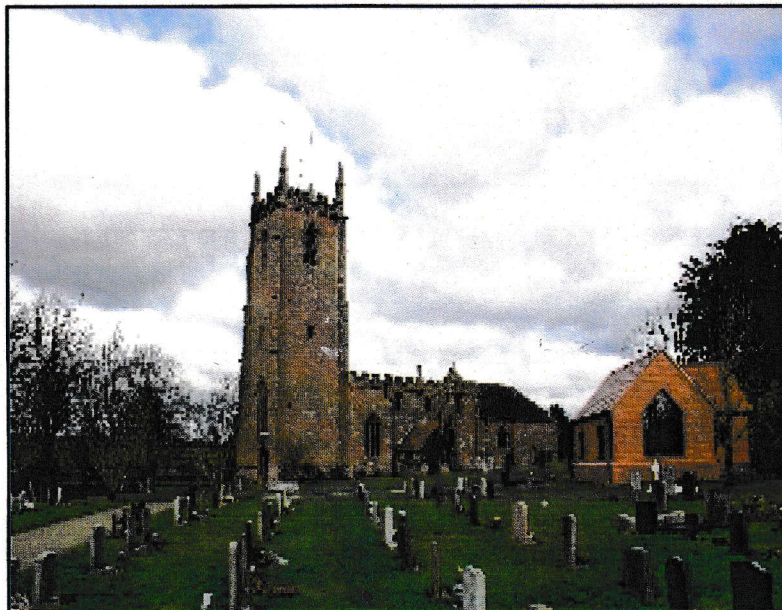
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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Rev John's Jottings – Taking stock as a new year begins

2019 has now gone. It can never be lived again. It will certainly go down in history for some very significant events. The question is now, 'What of the future?' Who's holding your life in their hands? Sadly, for some it can be either no-one or someone who shows no real care.

There's an old chorus whose words have a wonderful answer to, 'who can hold our hand through 2020?'

"I know who holds the future, and He guides me with His hand,
With God things don't just happen, everything by Him is planned.
So, as I face tomorrow with its problems large and small,
I'll trust the God of miracles, give to Him my all."

This year is a crucial year in the life of all our churches in the Benefice of Ansley and Arley, so your support is much needed as the work, witness and ministry continue during another year.

May the New Year bring echoes the words of the poem, 'The Gate of the Year', which reached its first mass audience in the early days of the Second World War.

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."

These words have remained a source of comfort to the Queen during her life and she had them engraved on stone plaques and fixed to the gates of the King George VI Memorial Chapel at Windsor Castle, where the King was interred. Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother was also buried here in 2002, and the words of "The Gate of the Year" were included in a reflection in her funeral order of service.

The words present a challenge for us too – it's a reminder that in life we need to hold a hand stronger than our own if we are to get through it. There's none greater nor more loving than God's Hand. At the same time, the churches in our benefice extend their hand of welcome to you all in 2020. You don't have to go through the year alone. Why not join us?!

Wishing you every good wish and blessing for the New Year.

Rev John

January St Laurence's Church, Ansley Services

Sunday 5 th	Epiphany	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 12 th	Epiphany 1	10.30 a.m.	Christmas Screen
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 19 th	Epiphany 2	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 26 th	Candlemas	10.30 a.m.	Joint at St John's
		6.30 p.m.	Memorial Service

St John's Church Hall, Ansley Common Services

Sunday 5 th	Epiphany	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 12 th	Epiphany 1	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 19 th	Epiphany 2	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 26 th	Candlemas	10.30 a.m.	Special Service

From the Registers

No entries this month.

Morning Worship

The PCC recently agreed slight changes to this service to improve its "flow". The previous leaflets were becoming worn, so it was a suitable time to review it.

Exploring Christianity

The next meetings, (Part 3) will be on Tuesday 14th January and also on Thursday 16th January. Choose whichever one suits you and remember that you are welcome to come to some if you cannot manage all. Unfortunately at the time of going to printing, the venues had not been finalised, so please check nearer the time.

Candlemas – Please note

On Sunday 26th January, St Laurence's congregation will join St John's for the morning service. There will be no morning service at St Laurence that day.

Memorial Service

You are warmly invited to our annual memorial service which will be held at 6.30 p.m. on Sunday 26th January. During the service individual names are said out loud. If you would like a name to be included, please add it to the list in church or speak to a church member before the service date. You may want to remember a recent loss or a past bereavement. It would be lovely if you could attend yourself but, if not, your loved one's name or names will still be read out during the service.

Prayer Meeting

The next prayer meeting will be in the Annexe on Tuesday 28th January at 2.00 p.m.

British Legion Remembrance Day Poppy Appeal

The total raised by selling poppies in church was £43.70.

Christmas Raffle at St Laurence

The sale of tickets for this raffle made a record total of £648 for church funds. Thank you to those who donated prizes, sold and/or bought tickets.

St Laurence Church Ansley Christmas Tree Festival 2019 Interim Report

We wish to thank the many people who set aside time to help prepare for this event. Trees had to be placed in pots and then into church. Also tidying and cleaning had to be completed once everything was in place. Many hours must have been spent in making decorations for the trees. "The White Tree," for example, was decorated with Hardanger embroidery. Clare estimated that each of the thirty plus designs took four to five hours to complete. It was lovely to see the decorations that children had made too.

Titles of some of the sixty trees included

"Light the Path"

"Christmas Craft Tree"

"Puppy Time" and

"Moon Landing."

Our first day began well with a steady stream of visitors on a lovely sunny day. Visitors on the second day had to cope with wind and heavy showers but everyone seemed to enjoy their time in church. Hot drinks and mince pies were on sale in the Annexe.

The first weekend of the Festival raised £728.40. The people of St Laurence Church are very grateful to everyone who has or will be helping make the church look so special for this event. A full report will be given in next month's magazine.

Christingle Services

It was very pleasing to be able to send £47 from St John's and £67.76 from St Laurence's to The Children's Society following the Christingle services on Sunday 8th December.

Christmas Fair at St John's Hall

A warm welcome was given to all who came along to this event. The final total was £376 for Hall Funds.

From the PCC - Fabric Updates

Masonry bees had been nesting in the south wall of the church. Following advice given to us, the holes used by the bees were filled in once the larvae had matured and left the site. This time consuming work was completed using the recommended lime mortar by a volunteer. We would like to thank the person who took on this task.

An unsound area of chip board flooring beneath the bells in the tower has been replaced, again by volunteers. We are grateful to them as this ensures the safety of anyone working on the bells in the future.

Ansley Church Magazine

The church members would like to thank everyone who has collected and/or delivered this magazine over the past year. Thanks are due too, to those who have delivered it in earlier years.

However we would like to give special thanks to Marie Cove who has now retired from delivering some of the magazines. She took over from Mrs Faulkner over forty years ago, so she has certainly done her bit! We appreciate Kelly Shemman's offer to take on Marie's delivery list.

Marie has handed over her postal list to Margaret Oliver. We are very pleased that Marie will continue to write her page for the magazine each month.

We also thank Diana, our editor. Compiling the magazine is a time consuming task each month

We also wish to extend our thanks to our printer. He works hard to have the magazine ready on time, even though we may have been late sending it to him. We are especially grateful that he reprinted three pages one month at no extra cost when the wrong information was sent through to him.

Digital Giving

We all have to move with the times! Yes, digital giving has come to Ansley church. It is becoming expensive for businesses to handle cash and many more people rely on debit cards for their spending needs. Over the past few years this trend has been noticed at church events. Increasingly people no longer carry any cash with them, they just have their card. This is especially evident at baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Along with many other places of worship, we have recently purchased a card reader that will accept most cards and will enable funds to be placed directly into church accounts.

Help will be available to those using the card reader for the first time.

We are very grateful to the person who has donated the funds to purchase our card reader.

However do not worry! We will not be turning cash away. Many of you will be aware of the small change collection for the fabric fund and this continues. Last year this raised £55 before December.

Please remember that there are many ways you can give to the church, including Standing Orders, BACS, cheques and through Give.net.

The church members are very, very grateful and say a big THANK YOU for every penny donated, by whichever method.

Reports next month

St John's Christmas Social and Christmas Tree Festival.

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer at our Sunday Services, both at St. Laurence's and at St. John's, please hand the slip below to a member of the church congregation or contact a warden. Phone numbers are on the front cover of this magazine. Please remember that a visit can be arranged to anyone who is sick, but the wardens do need to know, so again please ring.

Please pray forwho is.....

January 2020

It's a strange feeling as we grow older to see the world changing from day to day and the world we knew disappears. I was reminded of this when I went into Lloyd's chemist and asked if they had any Lint. The young lady who was serving said, "Do you mean the chocolates?" I explained it's for dressing wounds. Then the following week I asked for Kaolin. The pharmacist said they no longer sell it and even he had to smile as the assistant hadn't heard of that either.

Christmas 2019 seemed to creep up on us without any warning. The weather and politics seemed to be the only subjects, as torrential rain in November was relentless causing devastating flooding in the North and North East of England. In fact it hardly stopped raining for the whole of November. Then we had a breather as December started with frost and sunshine.

As we go through life there are many signs and sounds which lift our spirits and which we never grow tired of. I love the sound of children laughing and playing; the sight of the first snowdrops; the Robin in our garden who rules the roost and likes human company. What I wish we still had is carol singers visiting us. However, it is a delight every week at St. John's as the Hall is filled with singing, not only at Christmas but all year round.

I can believe in global warming when I see the change in dress. When we were small as soon as Winter arrived, out came the jumpers and thick skirts and long trousers and jumpers for the boys. The summer clothes were put away either to wear the next year or to hand down. Jumpers which were too small were unravelled and re-knitted. Now I see little girls in flimsy dresses and perhaps a thin cardigan, and very rarely warm gloves and scarves. Is global warming to blame?

Two of our Grandchildren were visiting us recently. One was talking to us but the other was on his mobile 'phone. I said there should be one day a year when all mobiles are switched off, perhaps Christmas Day. They were horrified and both said they couldn't be without their mobiles for a whole day. Perhaps it was too much to hope for.

Let us pray at the beginning of a new year, new beginnings for those who need friendship and company, relief from pain for the sick and peace in every corner of the world.

Marie Cove.