

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No. 872

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Dear Friends,

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Changes! Well, you must have been expecting some, with a change of clergy. You know what they say about new brooms . . .

Most of us find change difficult. We organise things the way we like them, then someone comes along, or something happens, and we have to think again. Changes can make us feel insecure or angry. Then again, some changes are good. They come as a breath of fresh air, and we can feel relieved and hopeful.

Change for its own sake is no good at all. We need to know why we're making changes, and what purpose they serve. We hope the changes we propose will help to build the spiritual life of the church and a good relationship with our communities.

This month we're starting a **weekly service on Thursday mornings**. At present St. John's only gets one Communion service a year, at Christmas. Because Geoff is not able to be at St. John's on a Sunday, he and I will be taking a Communion service on the first Thursday of each month at St. John's at 9.15 a.m. All are welcome. On the second Thursday, there will be Morning Prayer at St. Laurence. On the third Thursday, Morning Prayer at St. John's. On the final Thursday of each month, we have an evening service of Night Prayer at St. Laurence at 7.30 p.m., so that people who are working can get there.

All the services will be short, said services with no sermon. Please feel free to contact us if you would like prayer, either for yourself or for someone else, and we will pray for you.

Lent also begins this month. 25th February is **Ash Wednesday**, when we will be holding a morning Communion service at 9.30 a.m., at St. Wilfrid's in Old Arley, and an evening Communion service at 7.45 p.m. at St. Laurence.

The following Wednesday, 4th March, we will be starting our **Lent group** in the church hall called 'Secrets of Prayer Together,' and once more all are welcome.

Sometimes there are changes we don't want to make. We are sad to have to announce that, with our increased responsibilities and 4 places of worship to care for, we can no longer offer the 8.00 a.m. Communion service on the first Sunday of each month. Instead, we hope you will either join St. Wilfrid's at 9.00 a.m., or come along to the traditional Communion at 6.30 p.m. at St. Laurence. Arley is having to make changes and lose a service too, and none of us finds it easy.

The strange thing about God is that he is always making changes, always challenging us to move forward. "Do not cling to events of the past," he says in Isaiah. "Watch for the new thing I am going to do." He is a God of positive change and development. But He Himself never changes. "I am the Lord, and I do not change," says Malachi. He is our security in all that happens, and we can rely on his love and care.

May He lead us in all we do together.

Gill and Geoff.

SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Theme for the month: The Question of Science

At St. Laurence:

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

February 1: Family Service.

Evening: Traditional Communion.

February 8: ASB Communion.

Traditional Evensong.

February 15: Morning Prayer.

ASB Communion.

February 22: ASB Communion.

Evening Prayer.

At St. John's:

Family Service February 8 and 22.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

February

5—9.15 a.m. Holy Communion at St. John's.

12—9.15 a.m. Morning Prayer at St. Laurence.

19—9.15 a.m. Morning Prayer at St. John's.

26—7.15 p.m. Night Prayer in Ansley Village Church Hall, because:

7.45 p.m. PCC.

19—7.30 p.m. All parishes attend special deanery event to hear Bishop Anthony at Holy Trinity Attleborough.

25—Ash Wednesday. 9.30 a.m. Communion at St. Wilrid's, Old Arley.

7.45 p.m. Communion at St. Laurence.

27-28—Walk through the Bible at Fillongley.

Details from Rev. John Law: 01676 540320.

Future events to look out for:

March

14—**Pause for Thought Quiet Day** in Church Hall with Rev. Michael Simpson, Diocesan Adviser on Spirituality. Topic: "Lord, teach us to pray."

29—**A Bereavement service** will be held at 6.30 p.m., at St. Laurence for all those who have lost a loved one.

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.

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.

The Next Millenium meeting will be on Tuesday, 3rd February at 7.45 p.m., at St. John's Hall.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Marriages

The marriage took place on Saturday, 27th December, of Joanne Natalie Phillips and Ross Daniel Humpage. This was a lovely service with lots of family and friends in church, in a traditional Christmas setting. We wish Joanne and Ross good health, happiness and God's love with them always.

Burial

The funeral, followed by internment in the churchyard, of Mrs. Emily Martin took place on the 31st December. Many family members, friends and neighbours gathered to say their goodbyes. Mrs. Martin was well known in Ansley and I especially remember her as we were both avid knitters and when I took the magazine we would talk about wool and patterns. We send our sympathy to her sons Lesley and Brian and their families in their loss. "The Eternal God is your refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut: 33 v 27.

Internment of Ashes

The ashes of Stephen Noel Twaites of Nuthurst Crescent were interred in the churchyard on 9th December. Mr. Twaites has lived with his wife in Nuthurst Crescent for 14 years. He had served in the REME for 9 years as a Lieutenant during the 2nd World War where he was in the 8th Army in Africa. He also worked for 33 years at Jaguar Cars. We extend our sympathies to Elsie, his wife, and his family in their loss.

PARISH NEWS

It was with regret that we heard of the death of Barry Sharman who died suddenly at the age of 62. Barry was a member of St. John's Church Hall Committee and was just beginning to take an active part in the Community and the Church. We extend our sympathy to Hettie, his wife, and his family in their loss. May God bless them in these difficult days.

Leanne, Debbie and Kathryn Smedley held a Blue Peter Bring and Buy Sale in the Village Hall on Saturday, 10th January. Many thanks to all who came and bought the variety of items kindly donated by so many in the Village and beyond. It was a successful event and gave many the opportunity to sit and chat over coffee and biscuits. £85.50 was sent to the Blue Peter Appeal for sufferers of Cystic Fibrosis. Well done girls! Margaret Oliver & Diana Kealey

If you missed the above Blue Peter Bring and Buy or enjoyed it and would like a repeat, there will be another one on Saturday, 7th February, 1.30-3.00 p.m. at St. John's Hall, Ansley Common. Please come along and support our effort for this very worthy cause.

Marie Cove & Jean Wakeford-Davy

On Friday evening 9th January an invited audience enjoyed a very professional performance of "Bugsey Malone" by young people and Staff of the Old School, Church End. This was enjoyed and greatly appreciated by all who attended and congratulations to all who helped to work and make this such a successful event. Many thanks and we look forward to the next production.

If anyone has any contribution they would like to make to the magazine, please do not hesitate to either send it, give it or telephone. Any tips, poems, articles of topical interest or news would be welcome as we would like to make this your magazine and the more who have an input the better the variety of interest. Come on, let's hear from you.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

28 Nuthurst Crescent

Ansley Village

Tel: 01203 394114

1st February, 1998

Dear Friends,

"January brings the snow, makes our feet and fingers glow.
February brings the rain, thaws the frozen ponds again."

When I was at Hartshill Infants School, many years ago, we have the above on the classroom wall along with apt verses for each month of the year, but if we look at some of our weather now, we realise just how drastically the seasons and the times have changed.

We wore woollen scarves, jumpers, gloves, hat and socks for months from November through to the end of March or even April. We wore vests, liberty bodices with the rubber buttons, but we still had hot aches, chapped lips and chilblains as we walked to school through all weathers. If we had a very cold night my mother would wrap up the shelf out of the oven and we would use it instead of a hot water bottle, but it was not unusual for 3 or even 4 of us girls to cuddle together in one bed to keep warm. Now the youngsters of today wear thin anoraks, flimsy shoes and not a woolly in sight, and they hate sharing a bedroom, never mind a bed.

Our homes were havens, as they are today, to shelter from the storm and as winds howl outside and the rain lashes against the windows, we realise that the elements cannot be controlled by man. God's hand send the rain and sunshine; he makes the sun rise and set and all the technology known to man cannot change this. Man destroys the trees, erodes the land, causes grief to wildlife and to mankind, but God still controls when the snow will fall, when the land will be parched from drought and you only have to see pictures of blizzards, tidal waves, hurricanes and other weather extremes to realise man's utter futility.

One of the best loved stories in the Bible is when Jesus stilled the storm. If the disciples wanted an illustration of the power of Jesus, this was more than enough to prove to them that God's Son was with them in that fishing boat as he stretched out His hand and calmed the mighty ocean. No mortal man could control the elements, no mortal man could show such courage in that ferocious storm, and no mortal man could calm the storm with his own hand.

May we, as we pass through the storms of life, reach out for that healing and calming hand to bring us through to His peace.

"What kind of man is this?" they said. "Even the winds and the waves obey him!" Matthew 8 v 27.

Marie