

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No. 884

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FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends,

Many of us think of February as a gloomy month. Winter seems to be going on and on. There are a few signs of Spring, but it still seems a long way ahead. Praise God for warm homes and clothes to shut out the cold and the rain!

Even though everything can look grey and depressing, new life is not dormant. Under the surface of the earth plants are growing, putting down roots, getting ready for the warmer days when the flowers and leaves return.

Our faith is very much like a plant. If we neglect it, it withers and dies. But if we want our faith to grow stronger, then the winter is a time we can use to make sure that we are putting down deeper roots. When the cold and storms of life come along to make us depressed, a strong faith will see us through, and become active in love for God and for others when the hard time is over.

But we need to work at it! It won't just happen by itself. For this reason we are offering **two opportunities to people who want their faith to grow.**

On Monday, 1st February we start a new Alpha course in St. John's church hall. This will run until Easter, from 7.30-9.30 p.m. Most people thoroughly enjoy Alpha, which is very popular throughout the country with hundreds of churches taking part and thousands of people attending.

What happens is that we get together and have a drink and some cake (very important, this bit!) Then Geoff gives a lively, illustrated talk on one of the basic aspects of the Christian faith, e.g. Who is Jesus? Why did He die? What about evil? Does God guide us?

After the talk there's a break, then everyone has a chance to discuss the subject and ask questions. People can ask anything they like—all questions are respected. Be warned though—Geoff has a stock of terrible jokes.

All are welcome. If you would like to give it a go, please contact us for more details.

Then Wednesday, 17th February is Ash Wednesday. We will be having a united Ley Group service at St. Laurence at 7.30 p.m., using a form of service specially for the occasion, based on the Litany. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the six weeks of Lent, a time to do some spiritual stock-taking and give God room to make changes in our lives.

Every Wednesday evening in Lent there will be a study course on the theme of healing, tackling such subjects as What do we mean by healing? What do we mean by faith? What is happening when people don't get healed? Again, all are welcome.

This Lent course will take place in Ansley Village church hall, also at 7.30 p.m.

Hope to see all of you at some of these events! They will help us to grow in faith together, becoming a church with deep roots in Christ, and strong branches bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

In God's love,
Gill & Geoff.

SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Theme for the Month: My God and my life

Services at St. Laurence are at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

February 7—a.m. Family Service,
p.m. Traditional Holy Communion,
February 14—a.m. Holy Communion.
p.m. Traditional Evensong.
February 21—a.m. Morning Prayer.
p.m. ASB Communion.
February 28—a.m. Holy Communion.
p.m. Traditional Evensong.

At St. John's Hall, Ansley Common Family services will be held on February 14th and 28th at 10.15 a.m. We look forward to trying out the new floor, thanks to Ron Morewood.

Mid-Week Services

At St. John's: Tuesday, 2nd February 9.30 a.m. Quiet Holy Communion.

At Ansley Village church hall: Tuesday, 16th February 9.30 a.m. Shorter Morning Prayer with hymns, followed by Senior Citizens.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

February 1st—7.30 p.m. Ansley Church Hall Committee.
Also **Alpha begins** at St. John's Hall, and every Monday until Easter.
February 3rd—Stepping Stones group meets.
February 4th—7.45 p.m. **PCC meets** in Ansley Church Hall.
February 5th and 6th—Walk through the New Testament at Fillongley. Details from Rev. John Law.
February 10th—7.45 p.m. Fellowship groups get together at 10 Nuthurst Crescent.
February 17th—7.30 p.m. **Ash Wednesday** service for the Ley Group at St. Laurence.

February 24th—1.00 p.m. Prayer for the church and parish at 'Wayside,' Birchley Heath.

Also 7.30 p.m. in the Village Church Hall: **Lent study course begins on the subject of healing**, and every Wednesday until Easter.

February 26th—**Ansley 2000** project invites you to an evening with Rita Colewood, who will be showing slides and illustrating the history of Ansley. February 26th in Ansley Village Hall and March 12th at St. John's. Adults £2.50; Children £1.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Diocesan Conference will take place again at Swanwick, March 5th-7th. Please pray for the conference and for our delegates, as we look at new patterns of church life and ministry for the next Millennium.

March 14th—Mothering Sunday.

Saturday, 20th March—Our Annual Quiet Day. The day will be called 'Healing in His Wings,' taking up the theme of the Lent course. The speakers will be Drs. David and Heather Dukes, who are medical doctors and also long-term members of the healing team at Holy Trinity Coventry.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Our sympathy and prayers go to Ruth Salmon, who was not well enough to attend the funeral of Sam Johnson at the crematorium. Also to Dick and Kath Flowers and their family on the death of Dick's father, George, at the age of 86. We look forward to welcoming Courteney Wood on Sunday, 7th February, when Ian and Sheila bring her for baptism at the Family Service.

TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COVENANTS:

- 1—Last year the church received £1,412.30 from Covenants.
 - 2—Covenanting is the most effective way of giving to the church, because it increases the amount the church receives from your giving.
 - 3—For every £1 you give, the church receives an extra 30p from the taxman.
 - 4—If the average church person gives £5 a week, this would give the church an extra £1.50 a week and an extra £75 a year. It doesn't matter whether your covenant is small or large.
 - 5—The forms are very simple to sign.
 - 6—Signing does not tie you down. If you are unable to continue the covenants, you can stop at any time.
 - 7—Other people will not know if you covenant, or how much.
 - 8—Anyone who pays tax, whether they work or have a taxable pension, can covenant.
 - 9—Anyone whose partner pays tax can covenant if their partner is willing to sign.
 - 10—You can pay your covenant in several different ways.
- If you regularly give to the church, and you or your partner pays tax, please ask for more details—you could make your giving more effective! Speak to Margaret Kimberley (01203) 384680.

Geoff & Gill Kimber.

You are invited to a Fashion Show at Oakridge Golf Club, Arley Lane, Ansley on Monday, 8th March, at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are £3 each, available from Marie Cove and Pauline Gaskin. There will also be a raffle. All proceeds to Acorns Children's Hospice Trust. Look for the posters displayed throughout the Parish. We need to sell 100 tickets and then the Fashion Show organisers will put the show on free.

ANSLEY VILLAGE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

There will be a few plots vacant on the site of the above Society. Anyone wishing to cultivate one, or half of one, contact the Secretary at 69 St. Lawrence Road, Ansley, or phone (01203) 395001.

On behalf of the Church Hall Committee and P.C.C. we would like to thank Joyce and Tony Allton and family for the cups and saucers given by Albert at his 90th birthday at the request of the late Amy Allton.

My nephew wrote the following a few years ago on deafness.

In a world of their own they have to stay,
Some can speak in their own special way.
Talking without hearing, no sound can be heard,
You can scream and shout; they won't hear a word.
No joys of laughter, no cries of pain
The wails of a baby will just be in vain
Who could stand such DEAFENING SILENCE.

by Neil Phillips

EDITORIAL

1st February, 1999

They say we English are obsessed with the weather and that it is our main topic of conversation. Well, if January was anything to go by, this is no wonder, as during that month we had the full spectrum from muggy sunny days, torrential rain, sharp frost, followed by snow and then windy weather. In fact it seemed it was as if we compressed about six months weather in one month, as at times it seemed like April or May with sunshine and showers, then it could have been October or November when it was dull and misty and finally seasonal bitter cold weather for December and January. It is no wonder this is our main topic of conversation. Perhaps one of these days we will be sunbathing in January and sledging in June if the seasons get even more topsy turvy.

Then of course we had the flu bugs, not just one type but two, when nearly every family was affected in some way, and especially over the Christmas and New Year period. Many people said we needed some sharp frosts to kill off the germs,

It seems that no matter how much sophisticated technology emerges, colds, coughs and sneezes are still with us, every winter without fail. Do you remember the saying "Coughs and sneezes spread diseases." Well, years ago we never had boxes of tissues but we all had a handkerchief which believe me we (especially the girls) kept in some weird and wonderful places. We never went anywhere without a handkerchief and these were washed and ironed after use, sometimes in the big weekly wash and sometimes boiled in a large saucepan. Boxes of handkerchiefs were very welcome presents at Christmas and Birthdays, and sometimes if my mother had an old pillow case she would cut it up into squares and we would sit and hem them round, as 7 children needed a lot of hankies.

Writing about handkerchiefs made me think of the many items which at one time were in everyday use but are now almost things of history to the present generation, e.g. hooks and eyes, press studs, collar studs, darning wool and mushrooms for darning. Can you think of any more, or can you think of some items which have always seemed to be in constant use for many, many years, e.g. buttons and shoe laces.

I saw this prayer in "Our Daily Bread" and thought how appropriate it is to so many of us:

"So far today, Lord, I've done alright. I haven't gossiped; I haven't lost my temper; I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. I'm very thankful for that, but in a few moments, Lord, I'm going to get out of bed and from then on, I'm going to need a lot of help."

Marie Cove.