

# Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

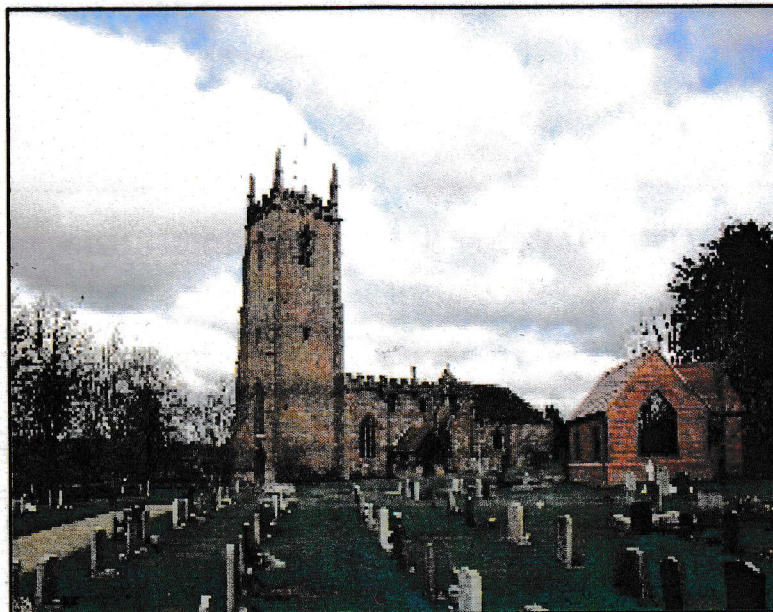
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## Rev John's Jottings - What does "church" mean to you?

I have been in the parish for over 18 months, and during that time, I've had many conversations with different people about church. Some of these conversations have taken place at sad times, when preparations are being made for funerals; others are at times of celebration, such as christenings and weddings, and some conversations take place when people are visiting the churchyard.

Everyone has their own idea of what "church" means, and what the place of the church should be in the community. For some, the church is a special historical building which should be preserved, but that is all it is. Other people feel that the churchyard is actually more important than the building itself, especially when it comes to upkeep! For yet others, it is a monument to past generations, often part of their own family history, with relatives who were baptized, married and buried there, and who had stories to tell about their times as choir members, for example.

Whatever people feel about the physical church building, it is sadly true that for many, faith and God seem to have slipped from being relevant to the extent of not attending church anymore on Sundays.

Our church buildings are loved by all in our regular congregations, and we strive to keep them in as good an order as possible – not an easy task, especially when there is no huge income received from outside the parish. However, the church first and foremost is people and relationships.

In our church, people find friendship, comfort, peace, and the presence of God – why not come back to your roots and join us! As one modern hymn says:

Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

*All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.*

With best wishes for February.



### February St Laurence's Church, Ansley Services

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Screen Service
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Next before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong

### St John's Church Hall, Ansley Common Services

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Next before Lent	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

Feb 26<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday 7.30 p.m. Joint Benefice Service  
at St Wilfrids

### From the Registers

#### Baptism

On 12<sup>th</sup> January Ivy Elizabeth Allton was baptised at St Laurence Church. Her parents, Peter and Charlotte, godparents, family and friends gathered to celebrate this happy occasion. The Reverend Peter Allen was pleased to be able to return to St Laurence to officiate at this service. We welcome Ivy into our church family and wish her much love and joy in the years ahead.

#### Funerals

The Late Adrian Tatum died on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 aged 72. A celebration of his life was held at St Laurence on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019. His wife, Pat, was supported by her daughter and her son with their families, his brother and by many members of the wider family. Close friends and former colleagues were there too to share memories of Adrian's working life, interests, hobbies, his sense of fun and above all his close relationships with family and friends.

Cars had always played an important part of Adrian's working life as well as his hobbies.

Adrian especially liked watching 'Only Fools and Horses'.

In the last months of Adrian's life, his health and life slipped away due to Motor Neurone Disease. Adrian Tatum's ashes are buried in St Laurence churchyard.

The Late Patricia Beale died on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 aged 91. Pat lived in Hinckley Road and then Ambleside Way, Nuneaton until John, her husband, passed away, after which she moved to Wiltshire to be close to Rosalind her daughter and her family. Pat was a friend of St Laurence Church for many years and treasured her friends here.

Her daughter, son, their families and many other relatives were at the church to remember Pat. The cremation service was taken by the Reverend Phillip Wells, the vicar of Polesworth Abbey and a close friend of the family.

### Exploring Christianity

The next meetings are on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February at 7.00 p.m. in the Barn, Old Arley or on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 7.00 p.m. in the Annexe, Ansley.

If you've not been before and would like to come along you will be very welcome.

Prayer Meeting – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February in the Annexe at 2.00 p.m.

### Ash Wednesday

This service to mark the beginning of Lent will be held at St Wilfrid's this year at 7.30 p.m. on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Everyone in Ansley and Arley is welcome to come along and we invite our Methodist friends from Arley to join us too. The new Archdeacon of Coventry, the Venerable Barry Dugmore will lead the service.

### ST LAURENCE PARENTS AND TODDLERS

We have received funding for this venture from the Big Local. The group will meet for the first time on Thursday February 27<sup>th</sup> in the Village Church Hall, Birmingham Road, Ansley, from 10 – 11.30am.

The cost is £2 per family per session, and includes refreshments.

We will meet on the last Thursday of each month. The group is open to all, with priority given to families from Ansley and Arley.

World Day of Prayer Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March in St Wilfrid's at 10.30am Zimbabwe

### Christmas Tree Festival 2019 Report

This now annual community event has once again proved a great success. It enjoyed a wonderful atmosphere, everyone working together to both set up and clear away, as well as during the three weeks of the event itself.\*

This year we had more new people decorating trees than we have had for some years and we also had the same number of applications as we had trees, something that doesn't happen often. We were also extremely lucky with the weather, despite all the rain over the last few months, we only had the odd short shower over the three weekends, which encouraged people to make the effort to pay us a visit. In all there must have been well over 1,000 people through the church door in December, especially if we include the two school visits and the Melrose concert, as well as normal services.

There were some wonderful comments in the visitor's book e.g.

"Beautiful and calming, very healing."

"Absolutely beautiful and heart-warming."

"Tree-mendous !!! xx"

The amount of time that some people spent in making their decorations was evident. Of particular note (and often thought to be machine made) were the handmade decorations of Hardanger embroidery on the "White Tree". Each decoration took 4-5 hours to make. Then there was the fun that the children of the nursery must have enjoyed while making their "Glitter Explosion" tree. The children of Kettlebrook School showed ingenuity by



making stars out of old Coke tins for their "Ghost of Christmas" tree which received many positive comments.

There were two recipients of the fruit cakes that were raffled. The first was won by someone who said,

"I never win raffles and see them more as a donation. If you could donate it to a local group on my behalf that would be lovely."

Having consulted the person who made the cake, the decision was taken to donate it to the Salvation Army, who used it at the Night Shelter on Boxing Day.

The second cake was won by 7 year old James who, rather than use his mother's money, paid for the ticket out of his own pocket money.

The final financial result was a record at £3016 of which £605 was donated to the Mary Ann Evan's Hospice in Nuneaton.

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard in so many different ways to make this festival such a wonderful community event which was greatly enjoyed by so many.

#### The Melrose concert

All the tickets for the concert on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. were sold out some days earlier. Every one enjoyed the wonderful performance. The idea to use the words of "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer" and to put it to 12 different tunes (along the lines of the radio programme "I am sorry I haven't a Clue") and for the audience to guess the tune being used was great fun. You will be pleased to hear that Jess and Richard were able to donate £220, plus £10 which came in afterwards, to the church. They have already booked the church for December 18<sup>th</sup> 2020. We are very grateful to them for their continued support.

#### From the PCC

Please note that items left in the churchyard, such as Christmas wreaths or extra tributes will need to be cleared away before volunteers check the graves on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February in preparation for the first grass cutting a few weeks later. It is especially important that you remove any items of sentimental value that should not be in the church yard. This is partly a practical matter, so the mowing is not impeded. It is also carried out because Coventry Diocese expects its guidance for church yards to be followed so that this space for reflection may retain the character of a traditional Christian burial ground. Flowers should be placed in non-glass containers, set into the stone.

#### 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 for .....who is.....

February brings the rain, thaws the frozen dykes again. Well, there was no need to wait for this month to bring the rain, as it has been with us most of Autumn and into winter.

This following article I read recently reminded me that everyone is worth loving and caring for: In times of hardship and hunger, a man was offered good farm land in exchange for one of his seven children. When he and his wife discussed it, there was one child too dear to her, one child too dear to the father, one was still a baby, one was too much help to them and one who couldn't bear to be parted from another. Then there was their wayward son, the one who gave them the most trouble. Mother and father decided nobody else would love him and he was the one who needed the most love. So they decided to do without the land and keep their family.

As I fetched out my Christmas trimmings in December I thought how old and shabby they were, so I was surprised when the younger children loved them. One 6 year old spent quite a while setting out the figures in the Nativity, others loved the Snow Lady who is much older than them and other items too and here was I thinking I should buy new next year, but I won't because it seems the old ones are still the best.

As I watched the forest fires in Australia it was unbelievable to see so much heartache as people lost their homes, their possessions and some their lives, and although there was a little rain, it was not enough. It is heartening to know that in this disaster different countries like Canada , U.S.A., and island nations have given support, vehicles, men, to help the weary fire fighters and others in need.

I was surprised to hear baby Hedgehogs called "Hoglets" which I had never heard of. It seems there is a new name for everything.

February is not my favourite month as the excitement of Christmas is over and the days are dark and dull but this month heralds new birth, Snowdrops, Lambs and of course Valentine's Day. So welcome February bringing new life and the promise of Spring.

Marie Cove.