



Ansley Church News



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MARCH 1984

Price 10p

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WORSHIP ?

1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays

11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

3rd Sunday

11.00 a.m. Family Worship.

6.30 p.m. Holy Communion.

Holy Communion also on 1st Sunday at 8.00 a.m.

St. John's Hall—Family Worship at 10.00 a.m., March 25th.

TRANSPORT ?

A bus runs for the evening service. Leaves Ansley Corner at 6.00 p.m., picks up through the village, leaves Ansley Common at 6.10 p.m., and Birchley Heath at 6.15 p.m.

Songs of Praise at St. Michael's, Arley on Sunday, March 25th at 6.30 p.m. Bus, Ansley Common 5.50 p.m., Birchley Heath 5.55 p.m., Village 6.05 p.m.

Dear Friends,

HONEST TO GOD REALLY ?

There's been a bit of publicity recently about weddings and funerals which show that ideas are changing about the role of the church at these turning points in our life.

WEDDINGS COME AGAIN ?

The Church of England produced an entirely unworkable measure for the remarriage of divorced people in church. It is called 'Option G' (horrible, unchristian title). If it became law, those seeking marriage where either or both of the parties were divorced would have to undergo a searching interview procedure, followed by referral to the bishop and a supposedly independent panel of assessors. The verdict of the 'panel' would be yes or no, and there would be no appeal.

What's wrong with this ? Well, in the first place it places parish clergy in an impossible position pastorally. We are the ones that have the pastoral relationship with people, we are the ones who will be faced with the practical application of the law of the church. Secondly, such 'panels' are an expensive and superfluous addition to the already numerous committees which are the curse of the Church of England. I don't understand how a Christian pastoral decision can be reached by outsiders who have no personal knowledge of the people. It is another example of decision at a distance which is slowly sapping the strength of the Church of England. Can you imagine Jesus doing this sort of thing ? Thirdly, the procedure would have cost about £40 which was non-returnable. If this were not so tragic it would be laughable. How on earth can you charge for Christian pastoral advice ? Fourthly, the theology of the procedure is questionable to say the least. The Church has traditionally held a high view of marriage, 'for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part.'

GUARANTEED ONE YEAR ?

It would seem that some people only make vows for when they are 'richer' and 'in health.' And it seems that the changes in law which are now going through Parliament make divorce after only one year a possibility. What is the use of defining marriage in civil law as 'till death us do part' if you then say that the marriage certificate the vicar or registrar gives you only has a one-year warranty ?

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP

We need to be much more specific about preparation for first marriages. It is sheer hypocrisy for the church to make such a fuss and bother about second marriages when it is theoretically possible for anyone 18 or over to get married in a parish church according to their legal rights with no questions asked.

I do detect signs that those who seek a 'church wedding' are those with real commitment. We are gradually losing people

who just want the pretty traditional surroundings because it looks nice—always a trap with country churches. I for one would rather people made their vows in a Registry Office if they don't hold to the traditional view of Christian marriage as permanently binding. In any case, the Church of England recognises a civil ceremony in a Registry Office as being as binding as vows made in church. It might save me the experience of watching a couple come up the aisle one year and seeing them getting divorced the next.

FUNERALS DO IT YOURSELF ?

The media this week have made something of the comments of the Revd. John Linford of Cannock, who has made the suggestion that unbelievers arrange their own funerals without bringing in the services of the local Christian minister or vicar, etc.

It would take courage for someone to do this but it would bring more integrity to the words we sing and pray and read at funerals. I don't mind in the least if a person dispenses with a Christian service because they are not willing to subscribe to the Christian faith. In my view this decision would show great consistency and courage and I wish more people would take the option of a non-religious ceremony. It would make us all think a bit more about the meaning of being a Christian and of what it means to believe in Jesus Christ.

USE YOUR HEAD !

The purpose of the Church is to make people think about what they believe and why. The age of 'institutional' religion is dead; there is no coercion now placed on people to be seen in church. Worshippers come because they want to. If there are fewer of them, then it is true to say that their reasons are more positive. Membership of the Church should give us a challenge, something to think about, something to form the shape of our lives and a hope for ourselves which is real to us in this life and the life beyond the grave.

Are we being 'Honest to God ?'

TIM GOULDSTONE

A Jumble Sale in the Village Church Hall for the Arley Kidney Machine Appeal raised £16.

Mrs. Lavinia Mercer, who died aged 96 in Berkshire last month was a link with the Mercer family that used to live at Birchley Heath Farm. Although Mrs. Mercer had not lived in the parish for nearly seventy years, she always maintained contact and took the magazine regularly.

Mrs. Clarice Darroch and her husband James had only lived in Ansley for a few years since their retirement from Bedworth. Mrs. Darroch will be missed by her friends in the village and her relatives in Scotland and Cornwall.

Patrick Carroll's death was a great shock and our thoughts are with Mary and their family far and near, as they are with

Walter Atkins' family and friends in Ansley Common and Stockingford.

At the 'Family Service' in February we welcomed Lee Ellard in baptism and the Sunday School made their contribution to the service, lessons were read by Paula Newcombe and David Roberts; Lee was welcomed in their prayers and a song was sung! By the way, restoration work on the old St. John's Church font is proceeding and it should be available for use in such services soon as well as at St. John's Hall.

PLEASE NOTE:

ANNUAL MEETING of St. Laurence's will now be held on TUESDAY, MARCH 13th at 7.30 p.m., in the VILLAGE CHURCH HALL.

Please aim to be there—as many as possible, please, not just the PCC and the Vicar.

The accounts for 1983 show that we managed to pay all our bills but the total income showed an increase of only two per cent. This is not really enough to meet our increasing everyday costs of heating, insurance, quota, etc. I take the view that if a village and congregation want a church they will pay for it, if they don't, they won't, so it's up to us.

Expenditure:	£	Income:	£
Heat, light, insurance, water rates, cleaning, organ tuning, services	2063	Planned giving	1515
Magazine, transport, sundries	1437	Collections and box	2504
Diocesan quota	3110	Fund raising	1360
Donations to Hospital League of Friends	200	Magazine	573
British Legion	10	Donations	741
Decorating church, boiler repairs, etc.	1487	PCC fees	596
The ministry	613	Transfer from Fabric Fund (net)	125
		Insurance claim	275
<hr/> We spent £8920 or £172 per week		<hr/> but our income was only £7689 or £148 per week	

The deficit was made up by withdrawing from our reserves, but we cannot go on doing this. Our accounts are part of our spiritual commitment to the Lord's work; in the words of our weekly prayer—'We pray O Lord, that you may accept these our gifts and that we may use them wisely in your service.' Thank you to all who have contributed and made the continuing life of our church possible this year—we look forward in faith and assurance to this year, knowing that if we are realistic then God will be faithful to us.

Don't forget that there is no service at St. Laurence's on Sunday, March 25th—on that day people from all four parishes in the Group Ministry will be meeting at St. Michael's, Arley for a SONGS OF PRAISE at 6.30 p.m. Bus as usual.

LENT 1984

March 7—Ash Wednesday, Holy Communion at St. Laurence's.
March 13—Church AGM in Village Church Hall.

March 21—'Parents and Teenagers'—Corley Village Hall.

March 28—'Tearcraft'—Slides and talk by Mrs. Jane Gouldstone at Fillongley Vestry.

April 4—'Birth Babies and Baptism—Off to a good start?' St. John's Hall, Ansley Common.

April 11—'Towards R.I.P.'—problems of later life. Held at Spring Hill Clinic and conducted by the Health Centre Staff.

ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 7.30 p.m. Questions, transport problems, etc., see the Vicar.

The Village branch of the Mothers' Union will meet on Tuesday, March 6th (Shrove Tuesday) at 3.00 p.m., in the Village Church Hall.

St. John's Mothers' Union meets on Wednesday, March 21st at 7.00 p.m., and the speaker will be Mrs. A. Harris. On Thursday, March 22nd there is a Deanery MU service in Nuneaton Parish Church at 3.00 p.m. The coach will leave the village at 2.30 p.m., and travel via Ansley Common.

Next service in St. John's Hall is on Sunday, March 25th at 10.00 a.m.

Please note that in churchyards 'no artificial flowers are allowed' and that 'wreaths or cut flowers may be laid on a grave or kept in pots . . . but any person authorised to look after the churchyard may remove them when they appear to be withered or untidy.' Any artificial flowers placed in the churchyard will be removed after Sunday, March 25th, 1984.

FUNERALS

February 10—Lavinia Mercer, aged 96, formerly of Birchley Farmhouse (interment of Ashes).

February 17—Patrick Carroll, aged 68, of 76 Birmingham Road.
Clarice Everill Darroch, aged 71 of 95 St. Lawrence Road.

February 23—Walter Atkins, aged 67 of 11 Ansley Common (Cremation).

BAPTISMS

February 19—Lee David Ellard, 46 Bretts Hall Estate.

Sarah Louise Judge-Porter, 403 Tunnel Road.

WEDDING

February 25—Stephen Rory Palmer and Lynn Jakeman.