

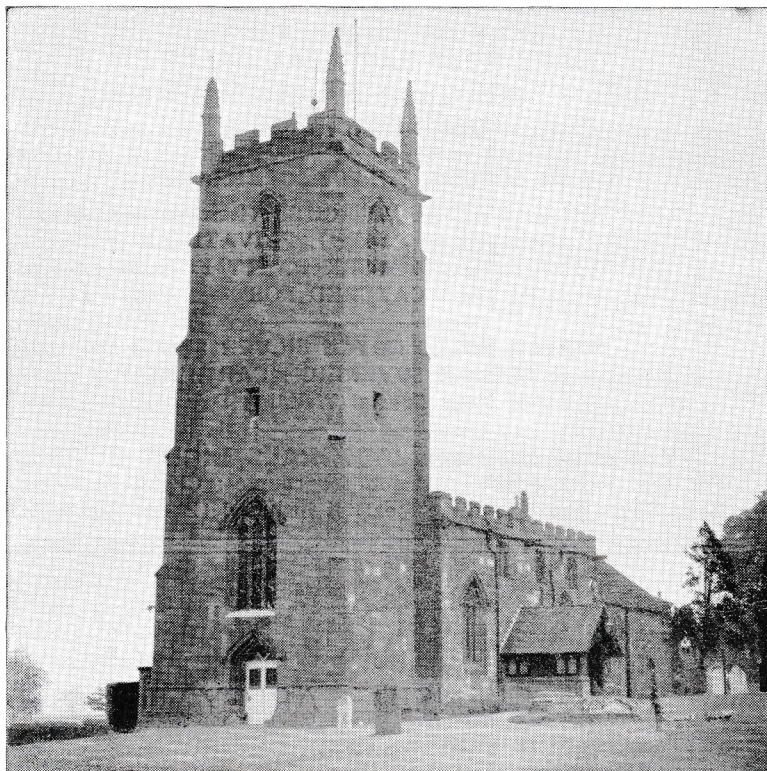
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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MARCH NEWSLETTER

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Dear friends,

During this month Geoff, with delegates from Arley and Ansley churches, will be 'travelling light' to Swanwick for 5th-7th March for the **Diocesan Conference**.

While they are there they will be attending a choice of 8 Workshops. These include:

- **Church for the under 30's** (not too many of those in our churches!);
- **The future's worship and the future's mission** (people don't want to come to church much these days; how can our worship become irresistible?);
- **Lost for words!** (it's hard sometimes to talk about our faith to others—how can we do so without putting them off?);
- **Understanding and helping our community;**
- **Eleven o'clock on Mondays—where is the church?** (how does going to church on Sundays help us in our Monday-Friday work?);
- **Small and in place** (the Christian faith has survived through the centuries by means of small Christian communities. That's what we are here—how can we be more effective?);
- **Grow in groups** (outward-looking and mission-minded);
- **Where the shoe pinches** (it's not easy for an established, traditional church to change! How can we respond to the challenge and pressures of our present society?)

The Church of England in general, and our diocese in particular, have been looking seriously at the needs of society and asking some fundamental questions about how we need to change, so that we have a relevant role to play in the next Millennium. This is an urgent question in a country where most people no longer go to church, and many do not respect what the church stands for. Please pray for the Conference, the speakers and the delegates, that they would be open to God's voice and bring some fresh thinking and encouragement back to the parishes.

In Ansley we have not been idle. We have for some months been working on our own vision, asking ourselves in PCC '**what does God want for us as a church and as a community?**' What are our priorities? Why are they important? How should we develop what we do? We hope that the Conference will throw fresh light on our discussions.

By the time we reach some conclusions over the next few months, we hope to have a vision for each aspect of church life, and some plans for implementing that vision in very practical ways.

So please pray for us too.

Yours in God's love,

Gill and Geoff.

SERVICES FOR MARCH

Theme for the month: Bread for mankind

Services at St. John's are at 10.15 a.m., 14th and 28th March.

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

March 7—a.m. Family Service,
p.m. Traditional Holy Communion.

March 14—a.m. **Mothering Sunday** service,
p.m. Traditional Evensong,

March 21—a.m. Morning Prayer,
p.m. ASB Holy Communion.

March 28—a.m. Holy Communion—**Palm Sunday**.
p.m. Traditional Evensong.

Mid-week services

At St. John's: March 2nd 9.30 a.m. Quiet Holy Communion, followed by Communion to the sick and housebound.

At Ansley Village Church Hall: March 16th 9.30 a.m. Shorter Morning Prayer with hymns, I will be taking round home Communion for Easter on Tuesday, March 30th, during Holy Week. If you would like Communion, please let me know.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Alpha continues at St. John's each Monday evening until Easter.

The Lent course, which looks at some of the mysteries of healing, continues every Wednesday at St. Wilfrid's church room in Old Arley at 7.30 p.m. (Please note, not at the village hall!)

March 4—PCC at St. John's hall at 7.45 p.m.

March 5-7—Diocesan conference at Swanwick.

March 8—Fashion Show at Oakridge in aid of the Acorn Children's Hospice. Details and tickets from Marie Cove.

March 14—Mothering Sunday.

(Gill will be away 15th-17th March on a national conference for Deacons).

Saturday, March 20—'Healing in his wings' Quiet Day in Ansley village hall. Speakers: Drs. David and Heather Dukes. Tickets £3 from Rev. Gill Kimber and others, please ask. This includes mid-day meal.

March 25—Another PCC to get ready for the AGM, Ansley village church hall at 7.45 p.m.

March 27—Don't forget to turn on your clocks!

March 28—Palm Sunday.

LOOKING AHEAD

Maundy Thursday, April 1st at 7.30 p.m. Please join us for soup, bread and a glass of wine as we remember the Last Supper together in St. John's Hall.

Good Friday, April 2nd at 7.30 p.m. Good Friday Vigil at St. Laurence.

Holy Saturday, April 3rd from 10.00 a.m. Decorating the church for Easter. We would be grateful for your help.

EASTER SUNDAY, April 4th

8.00 a.m. Traditional Holy Communion,

10.30 a.m. Family Communion. Guests: Rev. James and Sr. Catherine Jasper.

6.30 p.m. Ley Group Easter Songs of Praise. Guest: Venerable Ian Russell, Archdeacon of Coventry.

FROM THE REGISTER

Our prayers and sympathy go to Margaret Wykes and her family on the death of her father, George Hill, of 41 Birchley Heath Road at the age of 88. George, brought up in Arley, had been an expert bootmaker and a very keen musician, forming his own band and playing the cornet.

The following is a poem of Mrs. Doris Wilson of Ansley Common.

QUIET TIME

I said "Master, where shall I work today?
And my love flowed warm and free
Then he pointed to a tiny spot and said
"There tend that for me."

I answered quickly "Oh no not that,
Why, no one would ever see.
No matter how well my work was done,
Not that little place for me."

And the word He spoke, it was not stern,
He answered me tenderly.
"Ah, little one, search that heart of thine,
Are you working for them or Me?
Nazareth was just a small place
And so was Galilee."

EDITORIAL

1st March, 1999

As I watch the world racing by I can understand why people call it a 'rat race' and this applies not only to business but to everyday life as no one seems to have time for a chat, a cup of tea or even a greeting sometimes. They are all so busy rushing about as if it is their last day or if their lives depended on it. The motorists dash about and overtake everything in sight as if it saves time, but when you draw up at the next 'Give Way,' there is the same driver who just overtook you sitting in his or her car just in front of you. There just seems the mad urge to be there first, to be in front or just to be in one all fired hurry. Wouldn't it be nice in this mad mad world to have back the seventh day as a day of rest and quiet where the world slows down just enough for people to catch their breath and to rest their minds.

The relaxing arts are also now disappearing such as knitting, sewing or reading. They have become 'old hat' as the computer age takes over. I was sitting with a small girl who was unwell and she had a programme on the computer called "Living Books" and instead of reading one of the old favourites such as "Robinson Crusoe," "Black Beauty" or some other classic, this programme told the story with pictures. Absolutely no imagination required, but I couldn't help thinking what a lot they are missing. It is the same with writing letters. I love receiving letters from my sisters and brother, as they tell me all about what has happened in their lives and their children's lives and vice versa as I write back. Not for me 'E mail' which seems so impersonal and withdrawn—no, I like to read their letters over and over again and when I do I can laugh and cry, but what enjoyment! I feel it is the next best thing to chatting to them instead of talking to a machine, and I love to see those envelopes come through the post and recognise the familiar writing.

As we watched images of the funeral of King Hussein of Jordan, it was amazing to see so many world leaders gathering together, who in normal circumstances would be sworn enemies, but they were united to honour a "peace maker." It was the first time in 50 years that Jews and Syrians had been together and it seemed this could be a spark of light for peace, as the leaders who hold so much influence in the world filed past and stood by King Hussein's coffin. Jordan is so small and so poor compared with her rich, aggressive neighbours, so it is a tribute to King Hussein that his life has been spent building bridges and striving for a lasting peace. May his death be the last piece in his dream to do just that.

As we look forward to spring, I would like to share this small poem with you by an unknown writer:—

"My Lady Spring," My Lady Spring is dressed in green. She wears a primrose crown, And little baby buds and twigs are clinging to her gown, The sun shines if she laughs at all, but if she weeps the raindrops fall.

Marie Cove.