

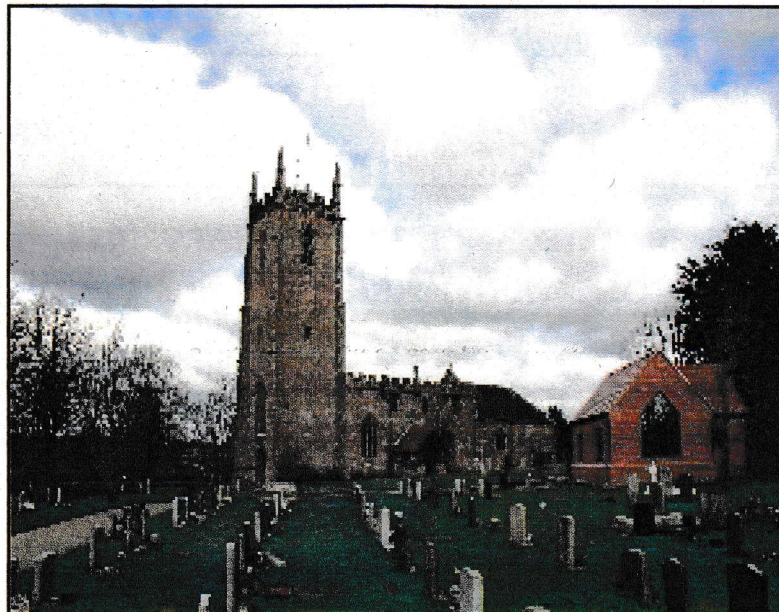
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No: 1125

MARCH 2020

Price 30p



Vicar:

Rev. John Langlands

Tel: 024 7667 5236

email: jlanglands@sky.com

Wardens:

MARGARET ANTILL

Tel: 01827 874520

MOREEN FREESTONE

Tel: 024 7638 1833

Deputy Wardens

Diana Kealey

Tel: 024 7639 5089

Margaret Oliver

Tel: 01455 822822

St. Johns Leaders

MARIE COVE

Tel: 024 7639 4114

JOHN COX

Tel: 024 7639 4802

www.ansleychurch.org

Print Centre 024 7638 6017

Rev John's Jottings – **water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink!**

Dear Friends,

The words of that well quoted line come from the "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The speaker is a sailor on a becalmed ship, surrounded by salt water that he cannot drink.

In many parts of the countryside and towns, floods have hit people and property hard. For those of us who have not been affected in such a devastating way, we cannot imagine what it must be like. No matter how much advance warning and modern technology there is to predict such things, we see how powerless we can be against such elements as wind and rain. We all need help and protection at different times in life – dare I say, throughout all of our lives!

It was the Reverend Augustus Toplady in 1763 who wrote the great hymn 'Rock of ages':
*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee.*

His father was a Royal Marine who died on duty soon after Augustus was born, leaving him to be raised by his mother. Augustus himself died at the young age of 38 from tuberculosis. There is a common story about the hymn being inspired by, and even written from within, a rock cleft that Augustus once took refuge in during a storm. The particular rock is in Burrington Combe gorge in North Somerset, England, and it has a plaque on it with this claim to fame.

The words have been of comfort and strength to many over the centuries and still today in St Laurence and St John's, Ansley. Why not join us this time of Lent leading up to Easter, to share in the peace amid our present storms and discover there is a Rock on whom we can lean!

Wishing you safety and calm in the storms of life,

Rev John

March St Laurence's Church, Ansley Services

Sunday 1 st	Lent 1	10.30 a.m.	Screen Service
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 8 th	Lent 2	10.30 a.m.	Lent Screen
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 15 th	Lent 3	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 22 nd	Mothering	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 29 th	Passion	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Songs of Praise

St John's Church Hall, Ansley Common Services

Sunday 1 st	Lent 1	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 8 th	Lent 2	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 15 th	Lent 3	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 22 nd	Mothering	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 29 th	Passion	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship

From the Registers

Funeral

The funeral of John Toon took place at St Laurence on Tuesday 4th February. He died on 8th January 2020, aged 75. John grew up in Ansley and returned to his family home after some years away. He worked in several local businesses. His deep love for his Labrador dogs is remembered in the village. We extend our condolences to his family, friends and former colleagues.

World Day of Prayer

All are invited to St Wilfrid's, Old Arley on Friday 6th March at 10.30a.m. for a service prepared by the church in Zimbabwe. The theme is 'Rise, take your mat and walk.'

Exploring Christianity

The next meetings are on Tuesday 10th March at 7.00 p.m. in the Barn, Old Arley or on Thursday 12th March at 7.00 p.m. in the Annexe, Ansley. Please pray for our confirmation candidates and all who have been attending these meetings.

Mothering Sunday

St Laurence will be open to visitors on Saturday 21st March. Special services for Mothering Sunday will be held on Sunday 22nd March at 10.30 a.m.

Prayer Meeting

The next prayer meeting for St Laurence's and St John's congregations will be on Tuesday 24th March at 2.00p.m. in the Annexe. All are welcome.

Lent 2020 No weekly meetings will be held during Lent this year. The Diocese's link to providing wells in Kaduna Province, Nigeria has ceased involvement in the project. The PCC decided to give donations made during Lent this year to Water Aid instead,

St Laurence Parents and Toddlers

The next meeting will be on Thursday 26th March from 10.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. in Ansley Village Church Hall. The cost is £2 per family per session and includes refreshments.

Memorial Service

Last month's memorial service was well attended. Refreshments after the service were much appreciated by those who could stay, chat and support each other.

From the PCC

Finance -Yes we all need to be aware of this. The church, like every other organisation, has to pay its way -or -(Well we don't what to think of the consequence but in reality we must.)

Financially we have had a better year with some increase in our income but it is the reduction in our parish share of just over £4,000 that has had the most impact on our position.

Income - Many of our fund raising events showed an increase, as did our sundry donations. The total of our Sunday collections is being maintained but on a weekly basis they vary greatly. This shows members of our congregation are remembering that when they cannot attend they can ensure the church does not miss out financially by putting in extra the next time they come. One way to aid remembering is to use the free will offering envelopes. If you wish to know more please have a word. (Not to be confused with Gift Aid envelopes.)

What is especially apparent is that our occasional services (baptisms, weddings and funerals) can sometimes have very little if anything on the plate. People attending services often do not have any cash with them. To help remedy this, a card reader has been donated. It has already been used a few times.

The increase in sundry donations of £1,000 was a great help but these donations are by their name very erratic.

Expenditure - The parish share figure in the accounts does not reflect the £4,000 reduction due to £1,644 being paid in January of the 2018 allocation.

Also electricity has had a big impact in the final total because our suppliers had muddled our meter readings and we have paid a total of £7,221 in 2019, but we owed £4,552 at the end of 2019. (Please remember the church and annexe are both heated by electricity.)

We are now up to date.

The new alarm system has increased our maintenance costs but this has been balanced by the reduction in our insurance costs.

There were no disaster fund collections last year and this has had an impact on the amount we have donated to good causes.

The parish share for 2020 has a 3% increase to £20,600 which is almost in line with the cost allocated for Rev. John's time.

There are some occasional bills that will have to be met this year such as for work on our old photocopier which is in need of a service and some more toner.

Overall we are in a lot better state financially than we were at this time last year.

Fabric Fund - We have spent very little this year. The fund increased by just over £3,000. We received a bequest from the late Alan Cormack of £400 and donations in memory of M. Sutton and V. Ashton also helped boost the funds.

Churchyard Fund – This account did just make a small surplus, following the similar sized deficit last year. The 25% increase in the fees received was partly because of the higher number of interments etc. An increase in Gift Aided donations together with half the money given in memory of V. Ashton also help to explain the surplus.

The income received from the Salvation Army clothes bank amounted to £33.44. Please do remember this when you next have a clothes sort out.

St. John's Hall account and St John's Services account both had a good year. They both show a surplus of over £1,000. The increase in hall hire and no major expenditure on the building helped to achieve this. The services account surplus was around £2, the same as last year.

Village Church Hall accounts showed a very small surplus but there was quite a sum of hire fees awaited from the organisations that pay invoices at the end of the month.

Giving to others - Overall between the two congregations we gave away a total of 5.12% of the income received. Our aim is to give 5% to worthy charities so to be slightly over this year will help make up the short falls of the last few years.

We are very grateful to everyone who gives so generously to the various funds or those who help with events to raise funds in whatever form.

Thank you from all the members of the PCC.

Fabric News

At long last we have a date for the first stage of redecorating the church interior.

Starting on Monday 13th April we are going to paint the North Aisle.

We are looking for volunteers to do the painting and also some to help carry, clear and fetch as required. Help is also needed to provide refreshments. In other words there will be tasks to fit your skill set!

It is hoped that the work will be completed during the week. If you would be able to help in any way it would be much appreciated. Please contact one of the wardens and indicate what time you would have available in that week and the sort of things you could do.

First thing on the Monday it will be necessary to clear as much as possible from the north aisle, set up the scaffolding towers and all the necessary access to the ceiling level. Then it will be doing the work, ensuring there are plenty of refreshments etc. When the job is done there will be all the clearing up and putting away to complete. Hopefully Wednesday! Please do help if you can. As the proverb states, 'Many hands make light work.'

Apology

Finally the magazine production team would like to apologise for the late arrival of last month's magazine. We shall endeavour to do better in the future!

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

March, 2020

Our bathroom door started to creak. Dave said I needed WD40 but then I remembered when we were young our Mam would grease door hinges with Vaseline, so I tried it. It worked like magic – no more creaky door. In fact Vaseline was used for chapped hands, Grazes when children fell down and also lip balm.

When I see adverts for kitchen cupboards which are 'childproof', it makes me laugh as our daughter-in-law was very safety conscious. She had child locks on the fridge and the cupboards, and all was well with her daughter. Then along came our Grandson who worked very hard and finally removed all the cupboard locks and even took apart the stair gate after getting stuck in it a couple of times. Some children are just not 'childproof'.

I periodically like to read my favourite books over again. I was reading "The Little Woman," which is the story of Gladys Aylward who was the subject of the film, "The Inn of the 6th happiness," who took over 100 children over the mountains to safety. But the film does not tell the whole story. This makes you wonder at her resilience, her courage and her faith in God. I think she passed on these attributes to many of the children, who were also brave and kept those qualities learnt from Gladys, many throughout their lives.

Some years ago my friend bought me a Crossword Dictionary and it has been useful and interesting but now as the times have changed, many categories such as countries and capital cities have changed and it's hard to know what the countries and capital cities are any more. I suppose Google might be the answer but when I am doing a crossword I just like my pencil and my dictionary.

After church one Sunday we were talking about 'Squirrels'. It is strange how many of us love these mischievous, acrobatic creatures. They destroy our bird feeders, empty the contents and still we have an affection for them.

March can come in like a lion and out like a lamb or vice versa, but whichever it is, let us be thankful that this month of March brings lighter nights, Snowdrops, Crocuses and new life all around us.

Marie Cove