



# Ansley Church News

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## EASTER

**PALM SUNDAY** (March 31st)

11.00 a.m. **Parish Communion** with presentation of Palm Crosses.

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

**MAUNDY THURSDAY** (April 4th)

7.30 p.m. Holy Communion.

**Good Friday** (April 5th)

7.30 p.m. Devotional Service.

**EASTER DAY** (April 7th)

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

11.00 a.m. Parish Communion.

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer, followed by Holy Communion.

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The Churchwardens would appreciate gifts for the Easter Flower Fund.

Dear Friends,

The arrival of Easter should remind us of one great truth—that the prophets of doom don't have the last word !

This is tremendously important for each one of us—as one sees and hears all sorts of people with their problems it is apparent that our life is largely determined by the attitude we take towards other people, towards our family and friends, towards our neighbours, towards the future, and towards God.

Easter reminds us of what it means to be a Christian. When talking to people about baptism I often say that this Christian sacrament means saying 'yes' to the Lord Jesus Christ, means saying 'yes' to Good Friday and 'yes' to Easter Sunday.

**When we say 'yes' to Jesus** we are saying that we 'believe and trust in him,' that his life and his words are the guide of our life and our deeds.

**When we say 'yes' to Good Friday** we are saying that we recognise the reality of evil in ourselves and in the world. We don't turn away from the bad things about us and the world, but we recognise that they are real. We also recognise that it was these dark forces of evil and power and rivalry which put Jesus on a cross and left him there to die. It was dark at the cross with the darkness of our sin and failure to live as God wants us to live.

**When we say 'yes' to Easter Sunday** we are saying that in Jesus Christ God overcame this darkness and took away our fear of death. By 'death' I mean not just some major event in all our futures, but the failures and sins that so easily overcome us. In Easter Sunday, God says to us through Jesus Christ that hope and light and life are his intention for the world. We are also saying that God did all this through Jesus Christ so that everyone who reads this might know his love and live a life in obedience to his commands.

Most readers of this magazine are baptised. This Easter think about your baptism, that it really means:

- saying 'yes' to the Lord Jesus Christ
  - saying 'yes' to Good Friday and the Cross
  - saying 'yes' to Easter Sunday and the Resurrection
- To God be the glory ! great things He hath done !  
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,  
Who yielded his life an atonement for sin,  
And open the life-gate that all may go in.

TIM GOULDSTONE

#### ETHIOPIAN APPEAL

Have you any BLANKETS or WARM PULLOVERS (any size) which you could donate to the above. If so could you please take along to Ansley Vicarage, as when we have a good quantity, then National Carriers will collect.

If you are unable to take them to Ansley Vicarage, then ring one of the following and collection will be arranged:—

Rev. Gouldstone	392240	Marie Cove	394114
Jean Martin	393489	Frank Arnold	392055

The concert with the Daw Mill Band on March 8th proved to be very enjoyable but I must say I found the attendance rather disappointing. Considering that the event was advertised all round Arley and in Ansley an attendance of sixty was not great, but all who went thoroughly enjoyed the music. It was very sad to hear of the theft of three instruments worth collectively over £2,500 from the band while their cars were parked at Ansley Social Club afterwards. At the time of writing nothing has been heard about their whereabouts, but I gather that a Coventry band has also had some instruments stolen.

The concert raised £35 for the fabric repair to the church.

I am glad to say that the windows of the church hall in the village have now been replaced at an insurance cost of £160. Certain shadowy young figures have been observed throwing stones at this building and if they are caught they will be reported to the police. It is in the interest of everyone in the parish to keep their eyes open for vandals as these buildings are maintained by parishioners for our use and convenience. A very enthusiastic Play Group has been started in this hall. It runs on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays—long may it continue. (10.45 to 11.45 is a "Toddlers Group.")

A Rummage Sale in the village church hall raised £41 for hall funds for the painting of the outside of the building. We would like to acknowledge a generous grant from the Parish Council for the redecoration of the inside of this building.

The churchwardens wish to thank all those who have been giving so generously to the 20p restoration fund, which now stands at £236.

Our 'Songs of Praise' at St. Michael's was enjoyable, apologies for the lateness of the bus, it took an unexpected route, different from the one in the magazine.

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During March the vicar attended a meeting at Warwick of the Council's Rural Services Committee. It was disturbing to meet a representative of the Council's Planning Department and find that there is apparently no intention of viewing the Ansley/Arley area except as a recreation and leisure zone with no vision for jobs or employment. Ansley Common and St. Lawrence Road would never have been built if it had not been for the mining interests of the parish and it seems that some elements in national and local government want to forget about the communities that are left behind when the industry moves on. It is symbolic that the largest project in the parish in the past few years has been the burial of the remains of the Coal Mine at Ansley Common.

There have been hints at national level recently that the only positive results of government policy in many parts of Britain's industrial areas has been 'planned dereliction.' There is some truth in this; and when this happens we become a nation of 'haves' and a nation of 'have-nots' with little prospect of a more equal share of wealth.



The industrial revolution began 200 years ago in the West Midlands and then moved elsewhere. It is instructive to see what happened to the area around Ironbridge:

It became a museum !

Is that the fate of this part of the country ?

#### **THE SIGN OF THE FISH**

Those early Christians were a fishy lot !

Why was the fish such an important symbol to the early Christians and why does it often occur today on Church notice-boards and lapel badges ?

The fish is a symbol for Christ, because hidden in the Greek word 'Christos' is the phrase 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.' The first letters of the five Greek words for this phrase spell out the word 'ICHTHOS' — fish.

In times of persecution this was a password between believers.

On arriving in a new town a Christian would draw the sign of the fish (without an eye) on a wall. If any Christian believers lived there, they would add the eye and contact would be made. The sign of the fish is sometimes seen on ancient fonts, symbolising the Christian passing through the waters of baptism, dying with Christ and rising again with him.

Thank God that we can be free to be Christians without the secret signs—but do we use our freedom to spread the word ?

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During March the vicar spoke to some visitors to St. Lawrence Church from the U.S.A. It turned out that they lived very near the town of Haverhill, Massachusetts, which is mentioned on a small brass plaque in the nave of Ansley Church. One of the founders of this town in 1642 came from Ansley, and in 1912 one of his descendants, Mr. Percival Clement, gave The Revd. Chares Heaton £200 as a gift towards the buildings of the north aisle of St. Lawrence Church.

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#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Church A.G.M. this year was attended by 18 (eighteen) people and received the usual reports on fabric, finance, etc., and on activities in the parish. Here is a summary of the accounts:

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenditure</b>	
Planned giving	1649	Ministry	760
Cash collections	2327	Church upkeep	1484
Fund raising	1897	Magazine	606
Magazine	704	Church bus	758
Donations	264	Other	314
Fees	594	Parish share	2250
		Donations	697
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	£7435		£6869
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Collections in church remained the same as in 1984 (which means in purchasing power they fell by five per cent). Note that to run the church bus and keep the doors of the church open costs £43 per week before any considerations about ministry costs etc., are taken into account. The above does not take into account the cost of our two church halls.

Thanks are due to all those who have enabled the work of witness to Jesus Christ to go on in this parish over the past year. But we must not be complacent; otherwise 'want will come upon us like an armed man' (Proverbs 6 : 11).

Thanks are due to those who month by month deliver this magazine to your door. Their work is often overlooked and we thank them for their time and patience. There are signs that church attendance at major festivals such as Harvest and Easter is increasing again, but regularity is slow to grow! Family worship has proved enjoyable, especially for those with young children. A friend of the vicar's near Bristol said that his congregation had only 12 people who were in regular employment, a fact which may well be true of Ansley as well.

With the formation of the Ley Group ministry we have escaped the type of reorganisation which means wholesale closure of churches and loss of resident clergy, but we must not be self-congratulatory about this. We live in a time of rapid change when parish facilities in rural parts will only survive if they are supported by those who live there. This applies as much to the 'Club' as to the schools and the church.

#### **ANOTHER TIME . . . . .**

Laying around at the bottom of the church chest in the vestry was a report by the Archdeacon of Coventry for 1909! Concerning churchyards, he said that they should be kept tidy by the pasturing of sheep. What a good idea.

#### **ST. JOHN'S MOTHERS' UNION**

The Communion service will now take place on April 10th at 7.00 p.m.

The next P.C.C. meeting is on Tuesday, April 16th at 8.00 p.m., in St. John's Hall.

John Saunders of Ridge Lane died after a long illness and sadly did not have long to enjoy his retirement. Before moving to Ridge Lane his family resided at Birchley Heath.

#### **FUNERAL**

March 8—John Saunders, 52 Ridge Lane, aged 67.

#### **BAPTISMS**

March 17—Christine Jayne Hughes, 143 Coleshill Road, Chapel End.

Claire Louise Park, 79 St. Lawrence Road, Ansley.