

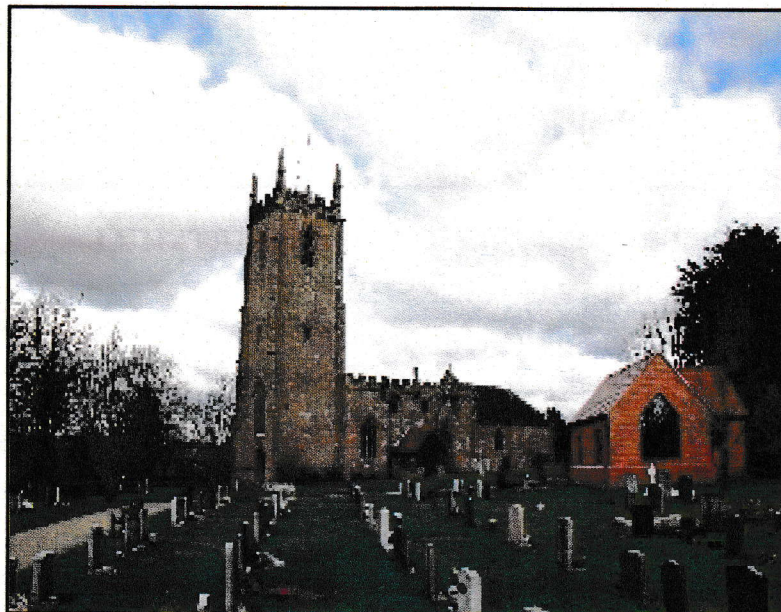
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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Vicar:

Rev. John Langlands

Tel: 024 7667 5236

email: jlanglands@sky.com

Wardens:

MARGARET ANTILL
MOREEN FREESTONE

Tel: 01827 874520

Tel: 024 7638 1833

Deputy Wardens

Diana Kealey
Margaret Oliver

Tel: 024 7639 5089

Tel: 01455 822822

St. Johns Leaders

MARIE COVE
JOHN COX

Tel: 024 7639 4114

Tel: 024 7639 4802

www.ansleychurch.org

Print Centre 024 7638 6017

APRIL NEWSLETTER 2019

Rev John's Jottings - Spring is in the air and Easter's round the corner!

Dear Friends,

Coming out of winter into Spring is always quite invigorating. The days are getting lighter and longer, the temperature is rising, plant shoots are beginning to push through the ground, birds are building their nests and lambs and calves are being born.

Spring is a season of hope and new life. It is also the season of Lent and Easter. Lent is a very needful time of the year for a number of reasons. When so many people today have little time to take stock of their lives and slow down, Lent is an ideal time to do so. It can be like a spiritual spring clean where there is the opportunity for a time of reflection, rest and confession by addressing our shortcomings and dealing with bad habits and attitudes. Instead of pretending we are never at fault, it's always the other person, Lent gives us the occasion to face up to ourselves in the light of God's truth. Lent also helps us to prepare for Easter.

Often Easter is merely seen as a time for holidays. Yet for the past 2000 years around the world, Easter is still regarded as a major Christian celebration. In actual fact, the message of the Christian church hinges on the truth of Easter.

What does Easter mean to you? And why?

In a way, Easter is about the spiritual dimension of the physical nature of Springtime. On the one hand, Good Friday is about the death of Jesus on the cross. On the other, Easter Monday is about the empty tomb and of Jesus rising from death.

If you want to know more about the true meaning of Easter, why not join us at church on our Lent journey at one of the joint Benefices Lent courses leading up to Easter. You would be most welcome. Don't let the real meaning of Easter keep passing you by.

Wishing you all a very happy and meaningful Easter time.

Rev John

April St Laurence's Church, Ansley Services

Sunday 7 th	Passion	10.30 a.m.	Lent Screen
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 14 th	Palm	10.30 a.m.	Special Service
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 21 st	Easter	8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 21 st	Easter	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 28 th	Easter 2	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong

St John's Church Hall, Ansley Common Services

Sunday 7 th	Passion	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 14 th	Palm	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 21 st	Easter	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 28 th	Easter 2	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

Holy Week

Thurs 18 th	Maundy Thurs	07.15 p.m.	At St John's	Details below
Friday 19 th	Good Friday	12.00 -5.00 p.m.	At St Laurence's	Details below

From the Registers

Baptism

On 17th March, the family and friends of Penny Morewood celebrated the joy of welcoming Penny into the family of God's people.

Funerals/Interments

We remember the families of the following members, or former members, of our community whose bodies or ashes were laid to rest at St Laurence's during February and early March.

Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted."
Matthew 5 verse 4.

Josephine Mary Fairbairn died on 13th January 2019, aged 70 years. Her remains were interred in her parents' grave (William and Joyce Fallows) on 6th February 2019.

Barbara Kathleen Brockwell died on 21st April 2017, aged 85. Her interment took place on 19th February 2019, when she was reunited with her husband, Dennis.

Kathleen Mary Hartshorn, from Ansley Common, died on 27th January 2019, aged 95. Her remains were interred in a family grave on 19th February, where she is re-united with James and John Saunders. Kathleen was a long standing member of St John's Church, Ansley Common and will be remembered fondly by the congregation there.

Ronald (Ron) Sperrin, of The Lord Nelson Public House and Restaurant, died on 31st January 2019, aged 83. His remains were re-united with those of his wife Marlene on 28th February 2019. The church was filled with family members and many of his friends as they gathered to share memories and support each other.

Lent

Lent Collection

During Lent, a plate will be placed at the cross aisle in St Laurence's church for those wishing to contribute to the provision of clean water wells in Kaduna Province, Nigeria.

Lent Reflections

The Reverend John will be leading a series of reflections during Lent. The April meetings are detailed below.

At St Wilfrid's on Wednesday 3rd April at 7.15 p.m.

At St Wilfrid's on Wednesday 10th April at 7.15 p.m. with Arley Annual PCC AGM.

You will be very welcome at any of these venues, whether you can attend them all or not. As there are some changes to these venues and dates, compared to last month's entry, you may wish to check the information above with one of the contacts on the front cover of this magazine.

Holy Week and Easter 2019

Palm Sunday 14th April

The congregation at St Laurence's will meet in the Annexe for the start of the special Palm Sunday service and then progress to the church.

Maundy Thursday 18th April

You are all invited to St John's Hall at 7.00 p.m. to join in remembering this special day. A simple meal will be shared to mark the Last Supper, when Jesus and his disciples met to celebrate the Jewish festival of Passover. •

Good Friday 19th April

The church will be open from 12.00 to 5.00 p.m. You are warmly invited to come along when you wish during this time and to stay for a while, as suits you. Suggestions for Bible readings, meditation and prayer will be available, or you may wish to rest in the peace of the church with your own reflections.

Holy Saturday 20th April

Volunteers are needed to help with decorating the church for Easter Day. Come when you can from 9.00 a.m. Cleaning will also need to be done, once the arrangements are in place. It is always a joy to see the church "spick and span" for Easter Sunday.

Easter Flowers

Any donations towards the cost of flowers to decorate the church for Easter will be very much appreciated.

Easter Sunday 21st April

There will be Holy Communion at St Laurence's at 8.00 a.m., followed by services of Holy Communion at St Laurence's and St John's, both at 10.30 a.m. Evensong will be held at St Laurence's at 6.30 p.m. You are very welcome to join us in worship on this special day.

St John's Bingo

The next session will be on Monday 8th April at 7.00 p.m.

PCC AGM

This meeting will be held in the Annexe at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday 9th April. Members of the church are welcome to attend as well as PCC members.

Advance Notice – Velo Birmingham 12th May 2019

This event is planned to take place on Sunday 12th May and will have an impact on local routes and roads. Access to St Laurence's Church will not be possible between 05.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. The 10.30 a.m. congregation are invited to join St John's congregation that morning, although some members may not be able to reach St John's either! St Laurence's church will be accessible for the evening service as normal. Visitors to the church yard will also be affected during the hours mentioned above. A search on "Road closures near Ansley 12th May" brought up a page showing a detailed map of the route and timings for road closures.

Report - World Day of Prayer

Frances Langlands organised this service, which had been prepared by the women of Slovenia. The theme was "Come – Everything is Ready! Come to praise, thank and proclaim the kingdom of love.

The passage from Luke 14 verses 15 to 24 were at the core of the service. Jesus tells a parable about a great dinner which was attended by people called from the streets as the invited guests excused themselves. Those who met at St John's heard about issues affecting the life experiences of particular women from Slovenia, which were also relevant to our society. We were left to reflect on who is missing from the table within our community.

The members of the congregation contributed to the readings. Refreshments were enjoyed after the service and £30 has been sent to the organisation. Thank you to Frances and to all who helped in any way.

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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 forwho is.....

April, 2019

April is my favourite month as we see Spring coming out but also it is getting so much lighter at night and there is so much for the less fit among us to do – finish clearing pots, set seeds or transplant. Everyone seems happier when you can stop and chat to neighbours without freezing.

I always wanted a Monkey Puzzle Tree because there was one in a front garden near us. When we went to or from town on the bus, we would look for it. It is still there but enormous now but I didn't know how it got its name. Apparently it was introduced to the U.K. during the Victorian era and got its name when it was still very rare. The owner of a young specimen at Pencarrow Garden near Bodmin in Cornwall was showing it to a group of friends when one of them said, "It would puzzle a monkey to climb that," referring to the spiralling branches. As the species had no existing popular name Monkey Puzzle stuck.

I love plants but had never heard of the Calvary Clover. Traditionally sown on Good Friday it produces a prickly green pod which can have up to 11 seeds representing the 11 faithful Disciples, never 12. It grows in Mediterranean countries and the south of England. Each leaf has a blood red mark and legend tells us that it grew at the foot of the cross and the leaves were spotted with the blood of Christ. I would like to see one of these plants.

Being of the older generation, I am completely flummoxed by the latest technology. Now at the end of the year we are going to have 5G, whatever that is. You can download a film in seconds - why? What I would say to the younger generation is that they should enjoy these years; they shouldn't want time to flash by because it only comes once. There is also a folding 'phone which is a tablet which folds up to turn into a 'phone.

Fair April, a month to stir the soul. A month when Spring begins to unfold.
Sun and showers and lighter days. Rainbow shining through watery rays.
Flowers appear in wood, field and lane. Trees show bud and shoots again.
This is why April is loved by all, as the Cuckoo starts his familiar call.
And now this month gives promise anew. A herald of summer for me and you.

Marie Cove.