

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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It is the month of Easter. Lent has been a new wilderness experience for us all one way or another, as the whole world goes through this coronavirus pandemic. Just as Lent gives way to Easter, so the darkness of these days will bring new beginnings. But how much of Easter is relevant to you in these days? It's the greatest message of hope the world can know.

Can you recount the Easter story? Sadly, our nation is losing its grip on its Christian heritage.

Holy Week marks the time leading up to Jesus' death.

Palm Sunday was when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey proclaimed as a king by the crowds shouting, 'Hosanna!'

Thursday night and the Last Supper was when Jesus shared his last meal with his disciples – and this became the institution of communion. Then there was Jesus praying sweat like blood in the garden of Gethsemane and his arrest.

Good Friday was when Jesus was mocked, tried, crucified and then he died and was buried.

Easter Sunday came and his body could not be found – the tomb was empty, 'Hallelujah!' and the supernatural appearance of two angels declared, 'He is not here, He is risen.'

It was an event that has changed the course of history and the lives of millions of people ever since.

Because many folk will no longer have access to this magazine, the congregations in the Benefice of Ansley and Arley have been creative in finding new ways to communicate with each other as well as trying to help those around the villages in practical ways where possible.

In the Anglican liturgy we sometimes have these words: 'This is His (Jesus) story, this is His song' and we go on to say, 'This is my story, this is my song.' I am suggesting that if you can, get access to the churches' websites: ansleychurch.org & arleycofechurches.org.uk

As well as having regular updates of church news and helpful items, you will begin to see stories from our congregations about 'their story and their song'; either of how they came to discover the Lord in a personal way or what their Christian faith means to them today. Don't miss any of it! You'll also find out more about myself if you wish to know.

In the meantime, have a very blessed Easter, keep well and safe. God bless you.

April The Church's Year

		Readings	
Sunday 5 th	Palm Sunday	Isaiah 50:4-9	John 12:12-19
Sunday 12 th	Easter Day	Acts 10:34-43	John 20:1-18
Sunday 19 th	Easter 2	Acts 2:14a+22-32	John 20:19 to end
Sunday 26 th	Easter 3	Acts 2:14a+36-41	Luke 24:13-35

Coronavirus Update 27th March 2020

We are living through an unsettling and scary pandemic. Although the church building is closed we, as individuals and as a group, form the church of God in our community. We pray for all who are especially anxious for their own health or for the health of those they love. We pray too for the safety of all whose work puts them in danger, medical and other hospital staff, carers, emergency service staff and those whose job is essential for our nation's health and well being. We ask for God to be with them, to protect them and uphold them as they continue to provide a service with great courage. We remember in our prayers those whose financial situation has changed so suddenly as a result of the Government's efforts to reduce the spread of the virus. Please contact the church whatever your difficulty and we will be there to listen and help if we can. Contact details are on the front of previous copies of the magazine and on the web at www.ansleychurch.org.

Our aim is to continue to produce the magazine, although with some differences. We will distribute them when appropriate but until then most of the pages can be seen on the web at www.ansleychurch.org. This part of the magazine will be in the news box to the left of the Home screen with the Reverend John's message and Marie's article. The list of our planned services for April has been included above to give an overview of what would normally be taking place during the month. You may wish to use this section as a focus for prayer and contemplation as the church's year unfolds. The palm crosses will be made and will be distributed at a later date.

Changes to the schedule of meetings and activities

The church building is closed until further notice. There are opportunities to join in worship through television (Songs of Praise, Radio 4's Sunday Worship or on the Church of England or Diocese of Coventry websites www.thechurchofengland.org, www.dioceseofcoventry.org).

Meetings for groups which use the Annexe, Ansley Village Church Hall and St John's Hall are suspended until further notice. The Christianity Explored meetings are also suspended.

This month's items

From the Register

Funeral

The funeral service for Margaret Fellows took place at St Laurence on 28th February. She had been at The Boot in Ansley for many years and a gathering of 240 mourners in church reflects how much she was appreciated in the community. Her family was very important

to her; about eighty of them followed her coffin into the church. Her burial took place in St Michael's churchyard in New Arley. We send our sympathy to her husband, Alan, her children, grandchildren and great grandchild. The service was taken by Peter Allan.

Report - World Day of Prayer

A small group met at St Wilfrid's on Friday 6th March for a service prepared by Christians in Zimbabwe. We were greeted by the sound of African singing, drums and lively rhythms. As we worshipped together we learnt more of Zimbabwe, its past and present problems and its hopes for the future. Refreshments were served in the Barn after the service. Thank you to those who prepared the material and all who took part in the service.

The churchyard

The PCC at their recent meeting decided to continue to have the car park open each day for ease of access to the churchyard.

Earlier in the year visitors to graves reported seeing holes and tracks near last year's molehills. A n operative from Rugby Pest Control made a visit and assures us that these are signs of the presence of bank voles. They have moved in following the wet weather over the winter and should move on of their own accord in due course. They are a protected species and it is an offence to harm them. If there are problems with recognised pests they will be dealt with by professionals who are trained to consider hazards to other creatures and human visitors.

Gifts

The members of the congregation at St Laurence are very grateful to the family and friends of John Toon for their donations in his memory. A total of £130 has been placed in the Churchyard Fund.

The donation of £275 by the family and friends of Mrs Nancy Meades is also much appreciated. The church family wishes to thank all who gave in her memory. Part of this, a sum of £90, has been given to the Churchyard Fund and the remainder to the Fabric Fund, as her family wished.

Keeping in Touch

Readers who would like us to keep in touch by email, should send their details to admin@ansleychurch.org. This would be to keep up to date with church news. Details will be removed at any time if notified. They will not be visible to others on any communications. If you have phone contact with someone who would like to be kept up to date with church news but who does not have internet access, please send a message via the above site.

A Prayer-The Collect for the Third Sunday in Lent

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:
mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer during this time of disruption, please make contact as suggested above, or phone one of the following,

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April, 2020

How life has changed for millions of people worldwide in the past couple of months due to the pandemic. Almost from day one of 2020 we have had devastating floods caused by torrential rain, rivers overflowing and people unable to pursue normal lives. We are having to self-isolate due to our age and Dave's health problems. Fortunately we have family members who willingly do shopping for us. It has been said that the Virus doesn't like the sun or warm weather, so let's hope for a hot summer.

When I see the adverts on T.V. I realise how times have changed. All washing used to be dried outside, ironed and aired. Then I saw this lady who put her blouse in the washing machine, dried it and put it straight on to go for an interview.

As we watch Spring unfolding, it is a miracle to see Snowdrops struggle through grass and last year's dead weeds. I am particularly thrilled this year to see the Celandines in abundance and the Camellia bushes in bloom, in spite of ill health this winter not letting us look after the garden so well. At school we used to sing –

Daisies are our silver, Buttercups our gold,
these are all the treasures we can have or hold;
Raindrops are our diamonds and the morning dew;
While for shining Sapphires, we've the Speedwell Blue.

What a lovely thought.

Marie Cove.