

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No. 887

MAY 1999

Price 25p



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MAY NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends,

As I write, NATO is dropping guided missiles on Serbia and Kosovo in an attempt to prevent President Milosevic from killing, maiming and driving from their homes the people of Kosovo. It is an appalling prospect, and Christians differ in their opinions.

There are the pacifists. They do not believe that war is ever justified, and that progress should only be made through negotiation and non-violent opposition. Pacifism is a courageous principle, and people have been imprisoned for being conscientious objectors.

Other Christians say that despots like Milosevic continue to terrify and murder people even while they are negotiating for peace. Therefore they believe that there is such a thing as a **'just war.'** This means that some Christians justify going to war if the following principles are true:

- 1—There should be a **proper authority** making the decision to go to war. In the case of Kosovo, that is NATO.
- 2—There should be a **good reason** for going to war, and a right intention, such as preventing innocent people from being killed and hounded from their homes simply because they are a different nationality.
- 3—Every effort for **reconciliation** should be made: war must be a last resort.
- 4—**The force used must be minimum**, and civilians may not be targeted. This is difficult in Kosovo, as civilians are being put around military installations as human shields.
- 5—There must be a reasonable chance of the war **achieving its aims**, in this case the peaceful resettlement of the Kosovo people.

You must judge for yourself what you think is right on this subject, when it is a complicated and difficult issue.

There are two things all Christians can do, whatever their opinion. Firstly, whether we think war is justified or not, it is always a terrible and tragic event, and **it is our duty to pray earnestly for peace.**

Secondly, as the Bishop of Oxford said recently, all government have the responsibility of weighing up the pros and cons of going to war, and making a decision. It is easy to be an armchair general, and much harder to have real power and have to make real decisions involving real people losing their lives. **Let us pray also that they are given great wisdom.**

And finally, in our own smaller concerns, let us always try to be peacemakers.

In God's love,
Gill and Geoff.

SERVICES FOR MAY. Theme for the month: **God's building and, from 16th May, Come, Holy Spirit!**

Family Services at St. John's Hall will be on 9th and 23rd May at 10.15 a.m.

At St. Laurence services are at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

May 2—am Morning Prayer, when there will be a **guest speaker from the Gideons.**

pm BCP Holy Communion.

May 9—(Rogation Sunday) am Holy Communion.

pm Evening Prayer (BCP).

May 16—am Family Service with Baptism.

pm Holy Communion (ASB).

May 23—(Pentecost) am Holy Communion.

pm Evening Prayer (BCP).

May 30—(Trinity) am Songs of Praise.

pm Favourite Songs of Praise.

Mid-Week Services

Tuesday, 4th May 9.30 a.m. Quiet Holy Communion in St. John's Hall.

Tuesday, 18th May 9.30 a.m. Shorter Morning Prayer in Village Church Hall, followed by meeting of Senior Citizens.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May 5th—7.30 p.m. Youth Leaders meet at Don's house, 135 Tunnel Road.

May 6th—Archdeacon's Visitation at St. Paul's, Stockingford.

May 10th—The Monday group continues to meet at the Community Centre in Ansley Common, and every Monday fortnightly (this is the group that has completed an Alpha course recently).

May 13th—is **Ascension Day. There will be a service jointly with our Methodist friends at St. Laurence at 7.30 p.m.**

May 19th—Wednesday Fellowship group continues to meet at different venues, and every Wednesday fortnightly.

May 22nd—2.00-5.00 p.m. St. Laurence's church will be open and every Saturday afternoon fortnightly. Stewards will be on duty. You are welcome to pop in and look around or just have a few moments of peace and private prayer. There will be a prayer box available; if you would like someone to be remembered in the church's prayer, please write your request on the pad of paper and put it in the box.

Please remember in your prayers all youngsters who are going through exams this month. Also Geoff Kimber, who will be away for a week leading a team on the Walk of a Thousand Men in Kent. Pray that many will come to know our Lord Jesus Christ.

FROM THE REGISTER

We send our sympathy and prayers to the families of Sheila Tedds (66), who lived at Kingsbury, but was a regular worshipper at St. Laurence with her sister Betty Palmer;

Margaret Keeling (57) of 9 St. Laurence's Road; and
May Watson (70) of 13 Bretts Hall Estate, Ansley Common.

In March we had a very enjoyable Quiet Day, when the theme was the ministry of healing. Our speakers, Drs. David and Heather Dukes, were lively and thought-provoking—and the food was good too! The Dukes nominated Red Hill Christian Centre as an appropriate charity for the day. It is located near Stratford and provides spiritual and physical refreshment by providing short breaks. We sent a donation of £56.64. Many thanks to those who worked so hard and so generously to make the day a success.

In Appreciation

We would like to invite those who lose their loved ones to write a short piece for the magazine in appreciation of them. They should be about 50 words, and need to be given to Marie by the 3rd Thursday of each month.

Thanks to Dave and Marie for hosting the Maundy Thursday Last Supper at St. John's, a relaxed and happy occasion.

Easter Flowers: Many thanks to all who contributed so generously for the Easter Flowers for church and to those who arranged them so beautifully in time for the Easter Day Services. As there was some money left over from the £123.74 given I hope no one will be offended to learn that the residue was shared between the forthcoming Flower Festival and the General Flower "kitty" which enables us to have flowers in church throughout the year. Your help is greatly appreciated. Margaret and Miriam.

Finances: It is the time of the year when the published Accounts draw our attention to the importance of regular giving to keep both St. Laurence's and St. John's on a viable financial footing.

The support and generosity of those who contribute through the Free-will Offering and Covenant Schemes is greatly appreciated by the P.C.C.

However, as we can re-coup more revenue from the Tax on Covenanted giving it does make sense to try to get as many as possible in the Covenant Scheme, particularly if they are regular contributors to our church. Even a small yearly Covenant of £20 allows us to re-coup a further £5 or so.

The 1997/98 Tax Year gained us a further £1412 which certainly helped to pay some of our bills without anyone having to dig deeper into their pockets. Hopefully 1998/99 will give us an estimated £1736. This increase is due to the fact that several others last year changed over to Covenanted giving and others, already in the scheme, renewed and increased their Covenants.

Are there any more amongst our readers or congregational members who could seriously consider making such a move to help Ansley in the early 2000's? If you think you can then please take and fill in the appropriate green form from church (or telephone 01203 384680 for one) and return the completed form to me in a sealed envelope. The amount each person gives is strictly confidential.

Margaret Kimberley.

Donations to the Churchyard Fund in memory of Mrs. Hilda Raven amounted to £232.50. Many thanks to all who donated. Marcia Sutton. It was with regret we heard of the death on 22nd February of Mrs. Ada Ellen Morton (nee Batts), known as "Nell," aged 88 years. Mrs. Morton lived all her life in Ansley before moving in later years near her son in Bishops Tachbrook. She and her husband Bob (now deceased), were loyal supporters of Ansley Church, where they had been married and also regular members of the morning congregation. We send our condolences to her family.

EDITORIAL

1st May, 1999

This next few months will be the end of an era for me, as after 16 years of painstakingly putting everything by hand into the books at work, we are now going computerised and the machine will do this work for me. I must say I am very sceptical, at the risk of being called old fashioned but, on the other hand, they say the computer is only as accurate as the person who puts in the information. However, after seeing some of the antics which my computer gets up to for no reason, I am not very confident that this is true, as it seems to have a mind of its own.

Although machines and gadgets seem to be the thing of the age, the weather still defies even the most prestigious scientists and up to date computers. God in His Heaven must sometimes laugh at us as we listen to the weather prediction, make plans and then out of the blue He decides we are going to have something entirely different. Even the prediction of major upheavals such as volcanoes is still not possible as a very eminent expert admitted, that after many years studying this phenomena although there may be signs, they could panic people unnecessarily by saying a certain volcano might erupt, as there is no certainty. So as the saying goes, "man supposes but God disposes" is still as true now as 2000 years ago.

I was wondering just what memories the present generation will pass on to their children and children's children. People say we shouldn't live in the past but for elderly people the past was their golden age when they did strenuous things, reared children, got on in their careers, made friends who would last for the rest of their lives, and although they can look forward or enjoy the present, those past memories are dear to them, and there is nothing better than sharing these with friends or even the present generation. The children of today already look back on past holidays, when they started different schools or other memories and they too love someone to share with.

As I watch the children playing in Ansley 'Rec' as the nights get lighter, you can almost sense that Spring is here with everything awakening. As it says in the Gardeners' World Yearbook for May "Borders are filling up with herbaceous plants growing so fast you can almost see them move, all competing for the climax next month." How true these words are as the gardens are transformed and bluebells and wood anemones make carpets of blue and white on woodland floor. Let us soak in the beauty and enjoy the ever changing face of God's wonderful world.

Marie Cove,