

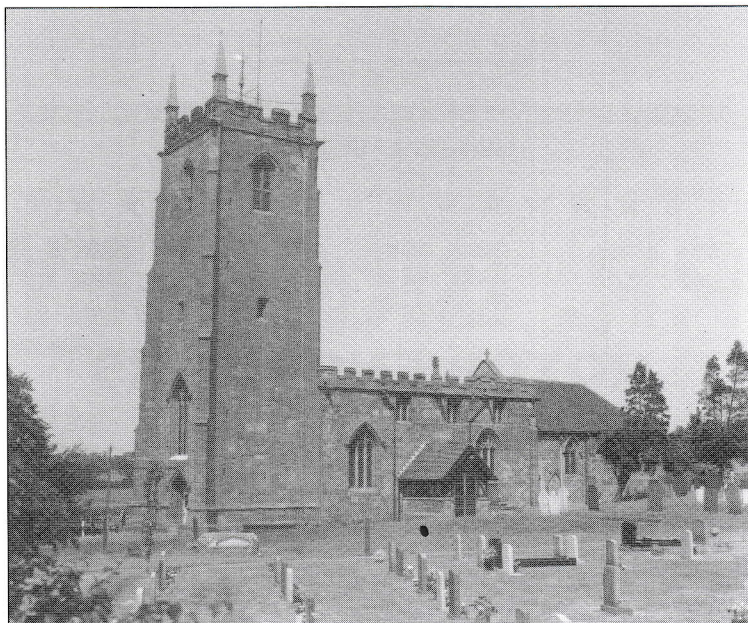
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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Vicar:

REV. PETER ALLAN

Tel: 024 7639 9070

Wardens:

MARGARET ANTILL

Tel: 01827 874520

MOREEN FREESTONE

Tel: 024 7638 1833

St. Johns Leaders

DAVID & MARIE COVE

Tel: 024 7639 4114

Lay Reader:

MANDY WATTS

Tel: 024 7639 7654

www.ansleychurch.org

Print Centre 0800 389 4089

May Editorial

Sometimes when we talk about faith we make things so complicated. We somehow give people the impression that faith is agreeing to every sentence in the Creed (or every word in the vicar's sermon!), that unless you can do that you might as well forget it. Oh dear! Let me try to make it all a bit clearer.

Take a chair

Any sort of chair will do.

The main question is: Is it safe? Will it take my weight?

Of course not all chairs or church pews are safe. I remember as a curate how at the parish confirmation service the Bishop's wife chose the only wonky pew in the whole church and it collapsed under her weight. Fortunately no one was hurt but embarrassment all round!

Not all chairs or pews are safe so how do we decide whether or not to sit down?

Maybe we have seen someone seated on that chair before-and they did not fall through.

Maybe someone we trust has put the chair out for us and invited to sit down.

Maybe we have looked at the chair and it looks sturdy enough.

More likely we didn't even check.

Faith is a bit like that.

Maybe we have faith because we have seen others trust in Jesus.

Maybe someone has encouraged us to try.

Maybe what we've seen and heard sounds good.

Maybe we simply got on with living as a Christian because that's what we have always done.

Take the chair. We didn't ask for a detailed proof. We did not commission a careful analysis.

We do not require a risk assessment. We just sat down.

We can spend ages examining the chair from every angle. But the point comes in the end when we have to decide. Will we sit down?

We can think about the Christian faith-and so we should but in the end the decision has to be made by each of us. Will I take the risk? Will I trust?

The choice is yours.

If you say YES I don't think for a moment that you will be disappointed. BUT you'll never know unless you try!

Your friend and vicar,

Peter

St. Laurence's Church - Services

Sunday 6 th	Easter 5	10 30 a.m.	Morning Worship
		4.00 p.m.	Family Service
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion & Ministry of Healing
Tuesday 8 th		7.30 p.m.	Archdeacons Visitation
Sunday 13 th	Rogation Day	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion & Ministry of Healing
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 20 th	Sunday after	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship
	Ascension	6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion & Ministry of Healing
Sunday 27 th	Pentecost	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6 .30 p.m.	Evensong

St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Wednesday 2 nd		9.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Sunday 6 th	Easter 5	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 13 th	Rogation Day	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Wednesday 16 th		9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
Thursday 17 th	Ascension Day	7.30 p.m.	Special Service
Sunday 20 th	Sunday after	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 27 th	Pentecost	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion & Sunday School
Wednesday 30 th		9.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer

Other regular activities

These continue as normal full details on the notice boards.

From the Registers

Baptism and First Communion.

On Palm Sunday at our evening Holy Communion we were delighted to share in the joy of the baptism of Daniel Smith. Having requested this himself, Daniel aged nine thoroughly appreciated the occasion in the company of parents, grandparents, family and friends as well as the family of the church.

The following Saturday Daniel was joined by Jessica Cartmail from St. Laurence's (and Heather and Kyle from St. Michael's) and welcomed to receive communion at the Service of First Light at St. Michael's.

We were pleased both Daniel and Jessica were able to join us for our Easter morning communion service and we look forward to sharing with them in the family meal as they grow in Christ.

Blessing of Marriage

The blessing of the marriage of Damian and Jinnipa Allton, took place on Saturday 31st March. They were married in Korat, Thailand at Christmas. It was lovely for many of their family and friends who had been unable to attend their wedding to have an opportunity to celebrate the occasion. Having met on the internet their love for one another shows how the barriers of different cultures are overcome.

Funerals

The funeral of George William (Bill) Gill took place at St. Laurence's on March 14th followed by cremation at The Heart of England Crematorium and interment in our churchyard. Brought up in Ansley becoming a carpenter and builder by profession, Bill was a man with a

great sense of humour and a real commitment to doing things right (even when no-one but him could possibly have seen the short cuts). He is greatly missed by his wife June, his son John, daughter-in-law Deborah and his grandson Bradley.

We wish Mandy a safe and enjoyable trip to Central Asia to see her son and his family, which she is undertaking from the 22nd April.

Annual General Meeting.

The results of the elections at our annual general meeting will come too late for inclusion in this issue of the magazine, but will be included in the June issue.

The account for the year ended 31st December 2006 reflects the vast amount of activity that took place during 2006 from sales and a concert to the Flower and Christmas Tree Festivals. The repairs to the tower and a major part of the work on the Village Church Hall both had an impact on our balances.

It was disappointing to note that the total collections in church were slightly down on 2005, and if this trend continues, the increase in our parish share from £18,681 to £20,538 will be difficult to meet. The parish share is paid to the diocese towards the vicar's stipend and other central costs. The electricity bill has also been increasing rapidly, along with everyone's heating bills, the P.C.C. at the meeting in March had to increase its monthly payments to £200 per month. It is important that we endeavour to keep increasing income from our collections, and ask that everyone who considers themselves a member of Ansley Church contributes as best they can to the day to day running of the church. Please remember if you pay Income Tax on any form of income, Gift Aid provides a great boost to our receipts. Last year we received £2998.87 from the Inland Revenue on Gift aid giving. If you are able to use this way of giving please have a word with the wardens or Margaret Kimberley.

Plant Sale

This very popular event will take place on Friday 18th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Saturday 19th from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. There will be the usual array of bedding plants and trailers for sale, together with cuttings etc from gardens. The Allotment Association will have their usual vegetables and produce for sale at the same time. If you wish to place an order before the event please contact David Cove on 024 7639 4114. There is always a wonderful selection (see the church's web site for photographs of 2006 sale). If you have any pots or plant trays that you no longer require we would appreciate them for use in future years.

House Groups

Please remember that the fortnightly house groups will meet at the home of Hetty Sharman 189 Ansley Common on Monday 7th May and on 21st May at the home of Dave and Marie Cove 28 Nuthurst Crescent, and alternating fortnightly thereafter.

Archdeacon's visitation

Each year the Archdeacon visits the deanery for a special service, at which the Wardens of all the parishes of the deanery, who have been appointed at their respective A.G.M.'s, take their oath of office for the coming year, are given their charge and thereafter take office. This year we have the honour of hosting this service at Ansley on Tuesday 8th May at 7.30 p.m. It is usual to provide refreshments after the service and we would appreciate any help to serve the drinks and provide cakes etc. for this event. We will be expecting many people who will not know their way around and it would be helpful if we could have people to help with the

- car parking and in church. If you could help with this service in any way please contact one of the wardens.

Sponsored Walk

For our holiday in July I will be walking with my husband from Robin Hood's Bay Yorkshire to St. Bees Head Cumbria. Following the Alfred Wainwright's classic coast to coast walk (although from East to West). A total of 190 miles and over 20,000ft. of ascent, over 14 days. No we will not be carrying all our supplies with us, but will be with an organised group, with accommodation arranged etc. We are looking forward to the challenge and are already getting plenty of practice. Why am I writing this? It has been suggested that we be sponsored on this challenge to help replenish the fabric fund after so many recent repairs. If any one would like to sponsor this venture please contact me (01827 874520). The knowledge of support will I am sure encourage us on the more strenuous days.
Margaret Antill

Marie's Coffee Morning

This year Marie will be holding her coffee morning on Wednesday 6th June from 10 a.m. There will be the usual bring and buy and a raffle, as well as an opportunity to sit in their always colourful garden enjoy a drink and a cake and have a chat. This year the proceeds will be for the Acorn's Children's Hospice.

Warwickshire Air Ambulance

The Air Ambulance were pleased to make £140 at their spring sale at the Boot on Saturday 31st March and thank everyone for their support. Sue Ricketts is also running a cryptic quiz and sheets are £1 each and are available from Sue or Margaret Antill. There is a cash prize of £15 for the highest score for entries received before 31st May.

The Arley W.I. now hold their meetings at Meadow Croft Old Arley. They meet on 1st Tuesday each month at 7.30 p.m.

The Old School - Memory Lane

As part of their education the staff of The Old School would like to invite present and former residents to come to the Annexe and talk to the students about their life stories, especially local ones. The project is in the planning stage and the school may be able to provide transport. If you would be interested to share some of your memories do please have a word with the vicar or one of the wardens.

Cleanliness a part of Godliness

Taken from 'The Midland Ancestor'

A novel church service is announced to be held at St. Laurence Church Birmingham. On Sunday last, the vicar, the Rev. T.J. Bass, invited the congregation to take part in a 'scrubbing service' which would be held in the church tomorrow, beginning at 3.30 and lasting until 9.30.

Soap, water and patent scrubbers would, he said, be provided, and all the congregation, male and female, were eligible to lend a hand in cleaning the church.

The Church of St. Laurence may therefore be said to have made cleanliness part of godliness, instead of merely allowing the one virtue to follow in the wake of the other.

(A 'Daily Mail' special from a 19th century scrapbook.)

It was in 2003 that the church last had a de-cobweb perhaps we should be thinking of doing the same at St. Laurence Ansley in the not too distant future!!

Into the fifth month of the year already, but what a wonderful time of the year, as we saw lots of sunshine in April, with gardens, parks, trees and hedgerows bursting into life. The birds have been very busy and it was a wonderful sight when we saw a Female Mallard with 8 ducklings, but all the other geese, swans etc. seemed to be at loggerheads. It must have been that they were protecting their eggs.

Do you know why we have Easter Eggs? Well the Romans believed all life comes from eggs and Christians consider eggs to be the seeds of life, so they are the symbol for the resurrection of Jesus on Easter morn. What about Easter Bunnies? Well they became symbols of new life as they give birth so often and to so many.

Someone said the other day that when someone walks into your home it reflects the sort of people who live there. When anyone enters our home, they see lots of books, which denotes my love of reading; there are paintings on the walls - Dave's painting skills, and lots of photographs starting with our wedding photograph to the present day which show our lovely extended family. The modern trend is for 'minimalism,' where the place looks like a pristine, characterless house with no personal touches, but not a home. Everything has either been thrown away or stowed away, so no memories are evident, and although it shows very tidy, clean individuals, give me a house any time that is a mirror image of our lives, loves and experiences, even if sometimes it can get a bit cluttered.

We have been noticing as we pass in the car and in our garden that pebbles seem to appear from nowhere, as if someone set a packet of pebble seeds, so I wrote:

Have you ever wondered how all the pebbles appear.
We see them on the seashore and in our gardens here.
So many different pebbles of every shape and size,
So many varied colours right here before our eyes.

There are tiny, shiny white ones, no bigger than a dot,
Huge ones so heavy they can't be moved a jot.
There are pretty ones with quartz that shine like twinkling stars,
And dull ones of grey or black that could have come from Mars.

Where do these pebbles come from of many varied hue?
It really is a puzzle not to be solved by me or you.
But still we love to see them in ever growing heaps.
And we can be sure the pebbles are really here for keeps

Marie Cove.