

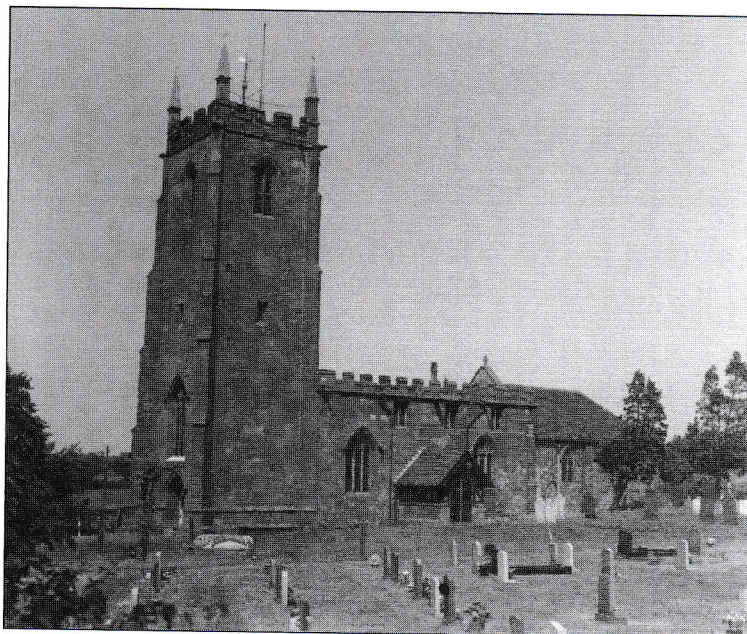
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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How much does it cost?

Occasionally when I am driving on a Friday morning I listen to Desert Island Discs. It is a unique and clever format which unlike most programmes has stood the test of time. Stranded on the island last week was Martin Sheen who, among other acting roles, played for many years the U.S. President in the series 'The West Wing'. What particularly caught my interest was when he spoke about his discovery of faith and how in 1981 he became a practicing Catholic. Since then his commitment to regular worship has gone hand in hand with a commitment to social justice. He spoke of how much his faith had changed his life for the better. The sentence that really hit home was this: "If your faith costs you nothing it is not worth having." So what does faith cost me? What does faith cost us? We remember and perhaps even rehearse the advantages and privileges of faith but let's ask ourselves this question: "What does faith cost me?"

As you know I like to take the opportunity of the Sundays of summer and early autumn to read, preach about, explore and discover books in the Bible that we do not normally think about. This year I am being more ambitious and taking the book of Acts. It is one of the least read books in the New Testament. But it is really exciting and enthralling. At morning and evening services we shall be reading from this book. If you want to hear sermons on every passage you will need to come to both services! But if you can only come to one, I have organised the readings to provide continuity.

We tend to look back on the early church with a sense of nostalgia. It was alright for them. There was a sense of excitement and expectancy and didn't the Church grow! But like us they had their problems. There were disagreements, challenges, mistakes, uncertainties. There were threats from within the church and threats from outside. It was not easy. It was often costly. But it was also joyful and, most of the time, deeply loving. So in the next few months let us journey with the early Church through the book of Acts. Let us pray that we shall be willing to share in their sufferings that we may also share in their joys. And let us remember that we are blessed with the same Holy Spirit that blessed them.

Whatever we remember about the book of Acts, I hope we shall be thrilled by the power of prayer. At the end of our Lent group, three things came across loud and clear - the need to make our PCC meetings more prayerful, the need for a regular prayer meeting and the need for a regular day of prayer. Having presented this to our annual meeting I will be sharing more about this in the next issue. It will make demands upon our time but it is we believe worth paying that cost.

Your friend and Vicar,

Peter

May St. Laurence's Church – Services

Sunday 1 st	Easter 2	10.30 a.m.	All Age Worship
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 8 th	Easter 3	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 15 th	Easter 4	10.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 22 nd	Easter 5	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 29 th	Rogation	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong

St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Sunday 1 st	Easter 2	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 8 th	Easter 3	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 15 th	Easter 4	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 22 nd	Easter 5	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 24 th	Easter Day	10.30 p.m.	Songs of Praise

Discussion Groups

Discussing the parables – Tuesday 10th at 7 p.m. in St. John's Church Hall.

'The year through the Bible' Thursday 12th at 7.30 p.m. 128 Birmingham Road.

Other regular activities

Full details on the notice boards.

Plant Sale

This year our annual plant sale will be on Friday 20th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Saturday 21st from 10 a.m. till 12 noon. We have ordered more plants to ensure that there will be sufficient for everyone, although to have the best choice do come early, especially on the Saturday.

There will, as usual be a selection of bedding and trailing plants as well as a stall of various items that are perennial or shrubs etc. There will also be advice on the best way to grow the plants, to exchange tips with other gardeners and a cuppa and biscuit will be available.

Church Security

As you are no doubt aware church security is a big issue all across the country, Ansley PCC again ask everyone visiting the churchyard or car park to continue to look out for anything suspicious e.g. broken glass and to advise the wardens as soon as possible. You may have noticed that we have made some further repairs and taken measures to reduce the risk to the building and its surroundings. However, again if you visit on a regular basis it would be much appreciated if the wardens could be told so that they are aware at what time there would be someone in the grounds this would enable an informal rota to be drawn up. Please do help with this as the church and churchyard belongs to you all, and everyone, both now and future generations are the losers when such incidents occur.

Please remember everyone is most welcome, as mentioned, the church and churchyard are there for you.

St. John's Events

There was a good crowd for the Easter bingo session on Monday 28th March which was great fun and half the prizes as you could imagine were Easter Eggs. A total of £170 was raised, £50 of which has been donated to the Red Cross and the remainder for hall funds.

The results of the 'Pie & Sweet' evening on 15th April (which at the time of going to press had all tickets sold) will be in next months issue.

There will also be another bingo session on May 23rd when again £50 will be donated, this time to 'Water Aid', everyone is welcome.

Sponsored Hymn Sing 29th May

We will be having a Sponsored Hymn Sing following both the 10.30a.m. and 6.30 p.m. services on the 29th May and hope we can be as well supported by our electoral roll and our usual congregational members as in the past.

Our last "Hymn Sing" was held in 2007 for the re-wiring of the church. This time the money will go towards the cost of added Security measures which have to be implemented following further vandal/burglar break ins.

History Workshop

Just recently Dr John Hunt who specialises in medieval history visited the church, he spent over two hours looking at the various parts of the church and some of our documents. He was very impressed with the variety of architecture displayed in the building with each of the last ten centuries represented. He has offered to do a work shop about the history of the fabric and the local area and this has been arranged for Wednesday 29th June at 7 p.m. Some members of a local group will also be displaying artefacts that have been found in the local area.

As this will be a work shop places will be limited to 30, they will be £5 each and reserved on a first come first served basis. There will be a drink and biscuit part way through. It is planned that if there is demand for a further presentation it will be arranged. After paying Dr Hunt his expenses the surplus will be for the benefit of the church fabric fund.

St. John's Heating.

Having been aware that the system had a leak but not knowing where, the hall committee knew that something would have to be done soon. However events overtook the situation when the floor covering in the kitchen started to bubble. The leak had been found but in probably the worst possible place, it meant that the pipe work would have to be re-routed as the kitchen floor was concrete.

The problem was fixed and with further work to the boiler completed then the bill was awaited with trepidation - over £1850 - having spent so much money on the refurbishment in 2009 and then the new hot drinks water heater and notice boards to complete the refurbishment the budget was very tight. The possibility of an interest free loan was discussed, but the hall users were concerned to be in debt.

However we should all have had more faith as Marie mentioned last month £100 cash was put through her door. Then in answer to prayer a further £1,000 has been given anonymously. There was enough money to pay the bills. Thank you so very much to that person and we thank our wonderful God who has provided for our need.

Annual General Meeting

Because of the fall of the bank holidays in April this months issue has had to go to press earlier in the month than normal therefore it will not be possible to put the results of the AGM elections in the May issue. However there is a copy of the accounts and annual reports in the church porch.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who supports and contributes to the life of the church in any way without this support the church would not be able to carry on in it's present form. Whether you are able to help financially, by helping, providing provisions, or just praying for the work of the church – Thank You.

Know Your Rights! Advice from Warwickshire County Council Trading Standards Service

Don't be conned - beat the scammers!

February was scams awareness month when Trading Standards Service highlighted the problems of scam mail e.g. prize draws, fake lotteries, clairvoyant predictions, get rich quick schemes and miracle health cures. The one thing they have in common is that they ask you to send money up front in order to claim your fabulous prize. However, you are unlikely to ever hear from them again and any "prize" you do receive will be worthless.

If you send money you are likely to be bombarded with further scams because your name has been added to a "sucker" list. We discovered one Warwickshire resident who had received 63 such letters in just a few months.

Many letters look very professional and are very persuasive - the recipient is often addressed by their first name, making it sound as though it is a personal offer just for them.

To reduce unwanted mail register, free, with the Mailing Preference Service on 0845 703 4599 or www.mpsonline.org.uk. Registering will make it easier to spot a scam in your mail.

Most importantly, if something sounds too good to be true, then it probably is - put the letter in the bin!

If you are not sure if a letter is a scam, contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

'From tiny acorns mighty oaks do grow'.

It has been decided to continue with this small change collection and anyone who would like a collecting tin please ask and one can be organised. The total paid into our Fabric Fund in February was £6 bringing the total to £66 so far this year all from the small change collection. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer at our Sunday Services both at St. Laurence and St. John's please hand the slip below to a member of the Church congregation or contact the Vicar on 024 7639 9070. Please remember the vicar would be pleased to visit anyone who is sick, but he does need to know, again please ring.

Please pray forwho is

May 2011

What a glorious time of the year it is. It was quite a thrill to see the first Butterfly which, as usual was a Cabbage White followed by an Orange Tip, and then we had a huge Hornet in our house. The winter did it's worst but the plants and trees have hit back and are showing their Spring colour. We are now getting used to Buzzards flying over Ansley, but I was quite amazed and surprised to see this huge bird gliding low over our garden. It really was a sight to behold.

The question was asked on T.V. 'Why don't we eat more fruit and vegetables when they are so good for us'? One answer is that some medical conditions don't allow lots of fruit especially to be eaten, but also they can be very expensive, e.g. Cauliflowers £1.30 each. I know these can be obtained cheaper but this means going from shop to shop and with the price of petrol this can make them just as expensive. However, supermarkets still persist in covering some vegetables in thick plastic, which I avoid as it is difficult to remove, and I cannot believe it is necessary e.g. to cover a swede in plastic.

We have all heard of Super Glue, but I never realised just how long it had been around. Harry Coover was proud that a spray version of his glue was used to close wounds in the Vietnam War. He worked for Eastman Kodak Company and they patented Super Glue which hit the market under that name in 1958, but Harry Coover appeared on U.S. television to show just how strong this product was when the host of the show was lifted into the air supported on a metal bar connected to a hoist with just one drop of glue. Last year Barack Obama awarded him the National Medal of Technology and Innovation. He died in March of this year aged 94.

Some clever person has concluded that women feel they are growing old at 29 and men at 58. I can honestly say I felt really young at 29 and even younger when I had my youngest child at 34. If growing old is just about appearance, or how many grey hairs or wrinkles a woman has, then forget it. When men start going grey, they are described as distinguished; women on the other hand are said to be growing old. General McArthur once said "Years may wrinkle the skin, but giving up interest wrinkles the soul. When the wires are down and your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and icy cynicism, then and only then, have you grown old".

Marie Cove.