

# Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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## JULY NEWSLETTER

The Rectory,  
Old Arley

01676 540378

Dear friends,

In our garden we have fruit trees and rose bushes, including a hedge of pink roses alongside the path that leads up to the door from the front gate. Some of you will remember Mrs. Knifton, who was churchwarden for our first few years in Arley. She used to potter up the path in her slippers, scolding me as she went. "You ought to deadhead these roses—that way they will bloom until Christmas!" I remember her fondly.

We are not much cop as gardeners, I'm afraid, but we do know that bushes and fruit trees have to be pruned if they are going to produce even more fruit and flowers next year. Jesus tells us that it's the same in our lives. He says "I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit . . . A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me."

He is saying that if we are to have fruitful lives, we have to love and serve him. That way, his life flows through us, like sap through the plant. He can use the difficult things in our lives to make us more fruitful, like the gardener prunes the trees. In his hands even sadnesses and problems become valuable. He can take us, just as we are, and make us a special part of his loving purposes.

A prayer from Mexico sums it up:

I am only a spark;  
Make me a fire.  
I am only a string;  
Make me a lyre.  
I am only a drop;  
Make me a fountain.  
I am only an anthill;  
Make me a mountain.  
I am only a feather;  
Make me a wing.  
I am only a rag;  
Make me a king!

Yours in His love,  
Gill and Geoff.

**SERVICES FOR JULY. Theme for the month: Life with Jesus  
(looking at the book of Colossians)**

**At St. Laurence: (at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.)**

5th July: a.m. Family Service

p.m. 1162 Holy Communion

12th July: a.m. ASB Communion

p.m. 1662 Evensong

19th July: a.m. ASB Morning Prayer

p.m. ASB Communion

16th July: a.m. Holy Communion by Extension (Geoff at St. Michael's)

p.m. ASB Evening Prayer

**At St. John's: (at 10.15 a.m.)**

Family Service on 12th and 26th July.

**MID WEEK SERVICES**

**Please note that these will now be on TUESDAYS at 9.30 a.m. twice a month.**

7th July at St. John's: A said service of Holy Communion.

21st July at the Village Church Hall: Shorter Morning Prayer. All welcome.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

2nd July 7.45 pm. PCC at St. John's Hall.

4th July at the church crypt in Berkswell: a second chance to see the exhibition of paintings by Mrs. Kathy Priddis, wife of Bishop Anthony.

The Alpha course continues on Wednesdays until 15th July.

Fellowship Group will be on 8th and 22nd July at 7.45 p.m. Venues to be announced.

27th July: A quiet day at Offa House, open to all. Details from Michael or Sharon Simpson: 01926-423309.

**And dates for your prayers:** Bishops from all over the world meet in Kent this month for the Lambeth Conference. Their decisions will eventually affect us all, so please pray for them.

Also, our daughter Juliet flies out to Lebanon on 16th July to work in a children's home with Tear Fund for 6 weeks. Many thanks to all those who sponsored Geoff on his 'slim' for her. At the time of writing, he has lost 9 lbs. and still going down!

**Very many thanks to** all those who gave their time and energy to spring-cleaning St Laurence's. It was well worth it, not only because the church looked so good, but also for the fun and camaraderie enjoyed by those who took part.

An "official" welcome to **Donald Parr**, a Lay Reader of many years' experience, who has been seconded to Arley and Ansley by Hartshill parish. Don has been helping us out this year, and was welcomed on Father's Day when he spoke at the Sunday School celebration service.

Don is married to Sue and they have two daughters, Amy (10) and Emily (7). He also has a son, Simon, aged 18, from his previous marriage. Don, Sue and the girls live in Tunnel Road, Galley



Common and the girls go to school in Hartshill. Sue is a full-time night nurse, so Don is a house-husband, who also does occasional driving for social services. He also sounds good on the 12-string guitar!

(A Lay Reader is someone who has been selected by diocesan staff for training. After a 2-year part-time course, lay readers are licensed by the Bishop and they are able to preach and lead services in any Church of England church. They often do pastoral work as well, if time permits, and some are licensed to take funerals).

**From the Registers:**

We extend our sympathy and love to the families and friends who mourn the loss of Kenneth Yardley (77), Carol Rowley (36), 'Toddy' Rollason (60) and Tom Holland (67).

**FLOWER FESTIVAL**

Our flower festival theme for this year is Food for Thought," and as usual there is plenty to think about. To ensure that the event comes together a lot of work will be required, by a great many people.

The event is over the Bank Holiday weekend and decorating will start in Church on Wednesday, 26th August. However before then there is work to be done in the Churchyard, trimming the trees on Monday 17th. Please just come at any time to help sweep the paths and tidy up, etc. Any help would be much appreciated, but please bring tools.

On Thursday evening at 7.00 p.m. the marquee will be erected and help for this task is always required.

A cleaning team is required on Friday 28th from 4.00-6.00 p.m. Any volunteers please come and help get the Church ready for our visitors. As usual we need stewards in church, while it is open. If you feel you would like to do this for an hour or so please contact Diana on 395089.

I know we have always had a wonderful team in the tent and a band of cooks who provide the refreshments, which seem to turn up when required. Please can you help again and any new helpers would be much appreciated. If you can help please contact Marcia on 392488.

This year the produce stall will be organised by Pauline and Ray. They will appreciate any produce for the stall. Please telephone Ray on 395723.

If any one has flowers, or wishes to contribute to the cost of bought flowers, please contact me on 01827 874520 or 01676 541105.

The profit will be apportioned as follows: 25% to Nuneaton Hospital League of Friends; 25% to The Acorn Children's Hospice at Selly Oak, Birmingham and the remaining 50% will be for Church Funds.

The event opens at 6.00 p.m. on Friday 28th with a short service at 7.00 p.m. The Church will be open from 9.30 a.m. to dusk Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

There are the usual Sunday services 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion and 6.30 p.m. Evensong when the preacher will be Canon John Philpott, our Rural Dean and Vicar of Coton. On Monday at 8.00 p.m. we will have our finale. You are all invited to come to any part of

the Festival and please let it be known to those you meet and invite them also. I hope that everyone will enjoy meeting in our lovely old Church and be able to "feed" on the team work, camaraderie and friendship as has been the case in past years. I look forward to seeing you there.

Margaret Antill.

#### EDITORIAL

Well, I would like to report on all the glorious sunny June days we have enjoyed, but alas all I can say is "it has been good growing weather," because one minute the ground was so parched and dry the allotments were like the Sahara Desert, and next minute we are having one rain downpour after another. I know everyone says "Flaming June," but as far as my memories are concerned they are of "Damp Chilly June." The year Dave and I got married (40 years ago) it rained solidly the week before our wedding, was drizzly on the day, and while we were on honeymoon enjoying glorious sunshine, Nuneaton flooded as the Anker overflowed. So, this is not by any means an unusual June, but after saying that we did have a few fine days.

I always listen for the cuckoo every year, but this year I didn't hear it until June 10th, which seems very late, as according to the poem—"The cuckoo comes in April, he sings his song in May, he makes a tune in the middle of June and then he flies away." Perhaps he doesn't like the rain either.

When I took Mr. George Hodgkins' magazine last month, I was surprised to find he had just celebrated his 90th birthday. What a milestone! It seems, however, that despite his age he has not lost his sense of humour. When I asked him how he felt he replied "Not a day over 100." He also told me that he first moved to Ansley Village in the 1920's when his Dad came to be Steward at Ansley Club, and he said it was like living in the back of beyond with no street lights and not many houses. However, it seems he must have settled in as he is now so well known and loved throughout the whole of Ansley Village and the Parish. I am sure that everyone would like to join me in wishing George (as he constantly tells me I should call him, and not Mr. Hodgkins)—MANY HAPPY RETURNS.

ANSLEY VILLAGE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY, After 3 years of uncertainty, N.W. Borough Council has now purchased the allotment site from British Coal, on the condition that the rent they will be charging has to remain the same as that agreed with British Coal. However, the Council does have the option of increasing the rates in the future. This must be an occasion for a vote of thanks for the hard work and effort put in by the Committee to secure this agreement.

TOP MARKS TO INFANT SCHOOL. Yes our very own Gun Hill School has been given ten out of ten by government inspectors. As you can imagine, staff and governors are delighted with their Ofsted report, and I am sure this applies to all parents and children on this magnificent achievement. It is so good to know that our children and grandchildren are having the best that education can give from such a happy, caring and successful team, and congratulations also go to the friendly children and their supportive families.

Marie Cove.