

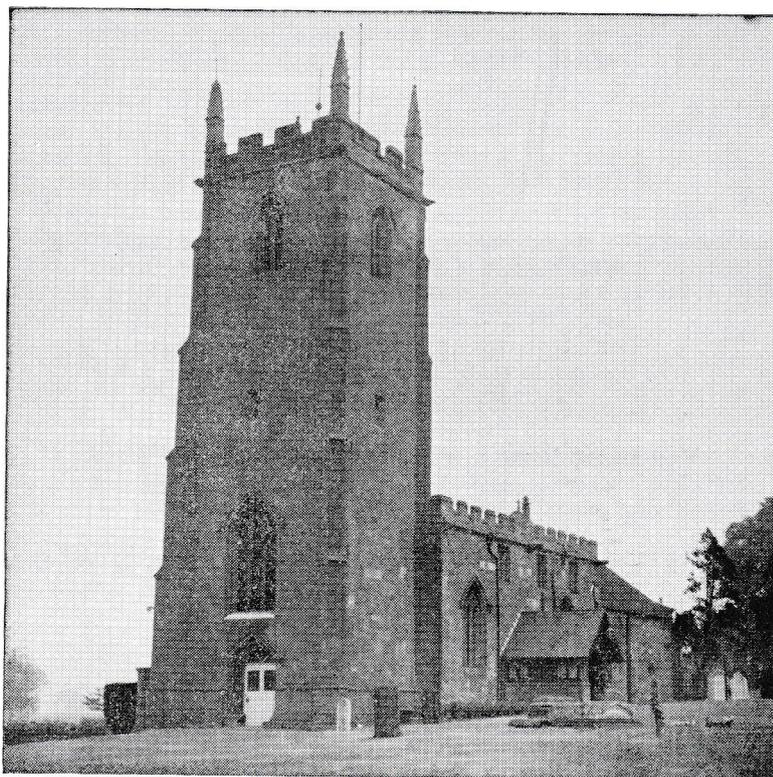
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No. 914

AUGUST 2001

Price 25p



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AUGUST NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

Real or just pretending ?

This month on Sunday evenings, David Frost is presenting a series of programmes looking at Alpha courses. He will, I am sure be asking, if the faith they claim is real, or just pretending. This week I also read something about a national figure who had recently done Alpha. He was reflecting on his life before he became a real Christian. Can you guess who ?

"I called myself a Christian without actually being one. I was strong on the externals. I went to church fairly regularly, I supported Christian causes, and was even a church warden. However I do not think I had fully appreciated the simple truth that being a Christian has little to do with external appearances and everything to do with the internal commitment of my heart. I think I bore a disturbing resemblance to that Pharisee in the story of the Pharisee and the publican who go into the church to pray."

The writer is Jonathan Aitken, the disgraced Tory politician, who after his life fell apart, his crimes were discovered, and his marriage in trouble, turned to Jesus and found someone on whom to build a whole new, and very different life.

A good question for all of us—both church attenders and others is, "How real is our Christian faith?" If we go to church we may need to ask ourselves whether we live the life of Jesus day by day—inwardly as well as outwardly. If we do not attend church, we may need to ask ourselves, how we can claim to love our heavenly Father, and yet not enjoy his company? Why are we so reluctant to spend time with Him and sing his praises !

God is wanting each of us—wanting our love, our attention, our time, our lives. The Christian life is about a relationship with God, our loving heavenly Father, who loves us and waits for us to love him in return.

Last night we finished our latest Alpha course, in which eighteen people have been learning about the Christian faith. The course stresses that the Christian faith is about a relationship—a relationship with God. All felt at the end that they were a lot closer to God than at the beginning. David Frost is going to be asking if Alpha, and their experience of Jesus, is real or just pretending. I know from experience that it is real. We pray that David Frost, like Jonathan Aitken and thousands of others, will also discover that the Christ we preach in Alpha is

Real, not just pretending.

In God's love,
Geoff and Gill Kimber

SUNDAY SERVICES IN AUGUST

The theme is taken from the book of James—hurray! For my money, the most down-to-earth book in the Bible.

Only one service at ST. JOHN'S this month, on August 12th at 10.30 a.m.

Services at St. Laurence's are at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

August 5—am All Age Worship.

pm Holy Communion.

August 12—NO MORNING SERVICE.

pm **United service to celebrate the life of St. Laurence**, and to dedicate a new altar frontal and Common Worship altar book.

If you can't make the evening, there is a 9.00 a.m. Communion service at St. Wilfrid's in Old Arley.

August 19—am All Age Worship with Baptisms.

pm Holy Communion.

August 26—am **FLOWER FESTIVAL** Holy Communion.

Theme: Power.

pm Festival Evensong with the Rev. Nick Clarke, vicar of Fillongley and Corley.

Home Communions on Tuesday, August 21st.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday, 1st August—Prayer time for all at 10 Nuthurst Crescent. Please let Gill know if you would like a prayer for anything.

Saturday, 4th August—You are welcome to join us for a short service of blessing on the marriage of Geoff and Gill's daughter Hannah and her husband Mauricio. This will be at 1.00 p.m. at St. Wilfrid's. Sadly we can't invite you all to the Reception, as there is room at home for family and close friends only.

Saturday, 11th August—Church open 2.00-4.30 p.m.

Monday, 13th August—Please come and help tidy the churchyard.

Sunday, 19th August—We welcome Catherine Elson and Aiden Todd into the family of Jesus through Baptism.

Thursday, 23rd August, 7.00 p.m. — Muscles needed to put up the marquee!

Friday afternoon—Flower Festival open from 6.00 p.m., and service of Dedication at 7.00 p.m.

Sunday, 26th August — Congratulations to Kelly Wilson and Ian Hobson on their wedding.

And welcome to Duncan and Helen Watts, here for a short time before going with the mission People International to Kyrgyzstan!

Monday, 27th August 8.00 p.m.—Flower Festival Finale.

Wednesday, 29th August—from 10.00 a.m. Clearing up after the Festival. Your support would be much appreciated.

CONGRATULATIONS!

We are delighted to welcome into the world Mark and Lynne Coulthwaite's baby John, and Sam and John Collins' son Benjamin.

Our prayers and thoughts are very much with John Harris and his family on the tragic loss of their son Robert.

Also with the families of 'Bert' Whittaker, aged 80, of 24 St. John's Road, Ansley Common.

Of George Perry, aged 69, of 48 St. Laurence Road, Ansley.

And of Muriel Crofts, of 57 Bretts Hall Estate.

GIFT DAY

The gift day that we held in June raised over £1300 over the weekend and with the benefit of gift aid (i.e. the reclaimed tax on some donations) this will be increased by a further £200—and there are still donations coming in from time to time. This was a wonderful effort and we are delighted with the response. It shows how much the new room, and toilets are needed. Incorporated in the Sunday services that weekend was the request for different people to pledge to do different things, inviting their own circle of friends and family thus broadening the net of people giving. Various ideas were suggested and they will take place over the next 12 months or so. However we do ask that the people who are having coffee mornings, evenings, etc., please have a word with Margaret Antill so that there is not a clash of dates. If you were not able to make a suggestion that weekend but have one now please go ahead. Another idea that was suggested and we have already adopted is that there be a jar for any odd donations be put in Church, and it is on the shelf by the door. Every penny will help. Don't forget £30,000 is a lot of money to find, but we are sure it can be done.

The Theme for this year's Flower Festival is "**Power.**" It is amazing what God can do!

FLOWER FESTIVAL

It was decided by the P.C.C. that the proceeds of this year's Flower Festival be split between the usual charities i.e. 25% to The Nuneaton Hospital's League of Friends, 25% to The Acorn Children's Hospice, Selly Oak, But the 50% usually put to Church general funds be used for the Building Fund instead.

Volunteers are needed to:—

Tidy the Church Yard e.g. cutting the hedges, tidying the trees, sweeping the paths, please come along even if just for an hour any time on Monday, 13th August or any day preceding the festival. Please bring your own tools.

To help put up the tent at 7.00 p.m., Thursday, 23rd.

Friday afternoon to clean the church ready for the 6.00 p.m., opening.

To serve refreshments—please let Marcia Sutton know on 024 7639 2488.

To act as steward in Church—please let Diana Kealey know what times on 024 7639 5089.

To provide refreshments and produce, plants and preserves for the stall.

And then of course to clear everything away on Wednesday, 29th from 10.00 a.m.

There will be a short service of dedication at 7.00 on the Friday evening.

On Sunday, 26th there will be no service at St. John's that day, but the taxi will run both in the morning and evening.

At 10.30 a.m. Family Holy Communion.

At 6.30 p.m. Festival Evensong with Rev. Nick Clarke the Vicar of Fillongley giving the address.

The Church will be open for visitors from 6.00 p.m. Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Please come and bring your friends and enjoy time in the tent, find peace in the surroundings and God's presence in the Church.

Tear Fund for July—St. Laurence was £10.25; and for May/June for St. John's it was £13.59.

Congratulations to Eileen Smith of Nuthurst Crescent who has attained a 2.1 Degree in Social Studies at Warwick University. Well done Eileen!

EDITORIAL

1st August, 2001

It is unbelievable—the U.S.A. are now sending a probe out into space for 2 years to find out how the world began. They are trying to find the age of the stars and when the world will die. Perhaps they would be better advised to read the Bible,

Whatever became of the art of setting the table for each meal. There was a place on the table for everything and everything in its place. The sugar basin, milk jug, butter dish, cheese dish, bread plate, cruet, cake stand—the list goes on and even the less well off knew how to set the table properly always with a thick under-cloth and a top cloth on top. Some people with large families had an oilcloth as we called it on the table which could be easily wiped after each meal. When school meals started at Hartshill School we were all sat down at long tables in the hall and shown how to set out the cutlery and how to use it, but it was only needed for very few. When I have been to school fetes, etc., I never cease to wonder at the items discarded, no longer needed but were necessities 20 years ago. Bread plates are now collectable items and celery vases are practically unheard of, so don't discard these items because perhaps one day a future generation will take a dislike to balancing a tray on their knees as they watch television, and once again appreciate the art of sitting at a properly set out table, but make sure they know what everything is for.

In a gardening magazine there was an advertisement entitled 'Vinegar—nature's secret weapon which has over 325 tried and tested uses.' They gave some examples which were amazing—soothes tired and aching feet, relieves headaches, lifts painful corns and calluses, fades age spots, cures hiccups, dissolves chewing gum, to name but a few. One really useful hint is to put vinegar on a cloth and wrap it around the tap to remove lime scale or put the shower head in vinegar for the same reason. Of course the advertisement was advertising a book which told you exactly which vinegar to use and how, but it does seem that vinegar has many more uses than with salt on fish and chips.

Why do we call drinking glasses 'tumblers.' I always thought it was a silly name but apparently when drinking glasses were first made they had rounded bases and couldn't stand up. I'm glad someone decided to make the bases flat—just think of all those tumbling glasses.