

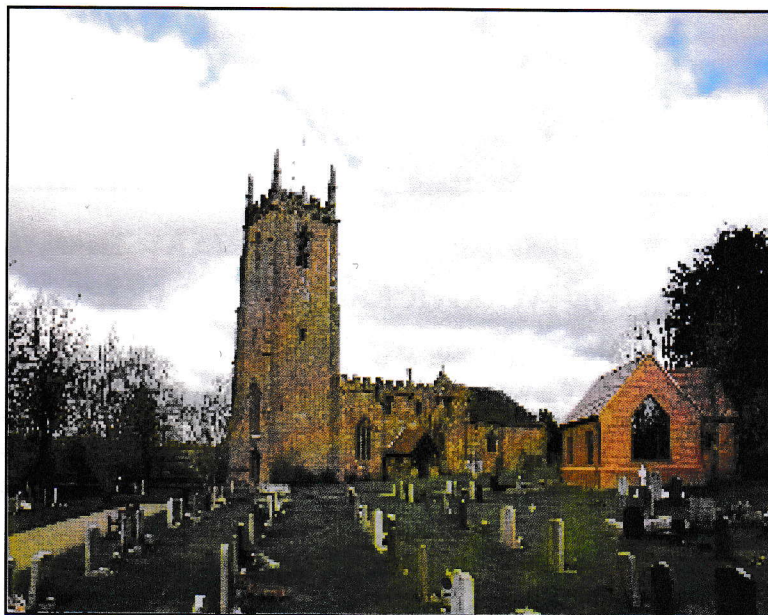
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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What's happened to the Church?

For the first time in centuries it is anticipated that in 2016 the majority of children will be born outside of marriage. In 1979 that figure was just over 10%. The change reflects very different attitudes to family life in less than forty years.

It also reflects the fact that the Church is no longer seen as the moral authority in this area. Far fewer people look to the pronouncements of Bishops or to the views of the Church of England General Synod. Discussions within the Church on gender, sexuality and family life are almost in-house discussions of little interest to the general population. Few newspapers have Religious Affairs Correspondents any more.

In one way it is all rather depressing, but look again. Organised religion has taken a battering but there is increasing interest in faith and spirituality. I was intrigued by the front cover of the last Radio Times. The main feature was The Ashes (how could it have been anything else?). But the second and third features both involved clergy trying to live their faith in a changing world. One was the tragic story of the Vicar who lost her daughter on 7/7. The other, totally different, story was of a Vicar who was involved in a marriage set up for a TV programme. The stories could not have been more different - except that they both concerned clergy working through and struggling with the demands of faith.

What can we learn from this? We don't have to suggest that faith gives the answers and that living as a Christian is always straightforward. Nor do we need to despair at a world that has no interest in faith. Rather we need to try to live out our faith in words and actions in an uncertain world and to realise that the individual without power or status has a stronger message to proclaim than any church hierarchy or authority.

Yes we do look back with nostalgia on a world in which the Church spoke and most people listened but we can also look forward with hope. Don't forget that Jesus was not part of a hierarchy but worked out his faith and calling through his personal authority and his struggles of life. And that is what he calls us to do today.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER

Your friend and Vicar,

Peter

August St. Laurence's Church Services

Sunday 2 nd	Trinity 9	10.30 a.m.	Ordinary Time [Screen]
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 9 th	St Laurence	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 16 th	Trinity 11	10.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 23 rd	Trinity 12	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 30 th	Flower Festival	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Songs of Praise

St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Sunday 2 nd	Trinity 9	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 9 th	Trinity 10	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 16 th	Trinity 11	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 23 rd	Trinity 12	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 30 th	Flower Festival	10.30 a.m.	Jt at St Laurence's

From the Registers

The funeral of Tony Allton took place at St. Laurence's Church on Friday, 10th July and was followed by committal at the Heart of England Crematorium. As a boy he lived with his parents and his younger brother Robert at Ansley Filling Station. In those years he displayed remarkable skills in all things practical especially gardening, woodwork and art. His working life was divided into two parts. First in the mines and second running the tool hire business in Atherstone. He met Joyce at the youth club in Chilvers Coton, married, moved to the house he built with Robert in Birchley Heath and delighted in the birth of his children, Damien and Matthew and later of his grandchildren, Isaac and Selina. A quiet man full of kindness and wisdom he will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

Open Church

The church continues to be open on summer Sundays from 12.00 noon to 6.30 p.m. This has been encouraged by our insurers and with their advice. There have been visitors most Sundays during the first six weeks. Three very appreciative comments have been entered in the visitors' book, including ones from people with addresses in the Netherlands and Spain.

Installation of Window

It is expected that the newly designed small window behind the Vicar's chair will be installed the week beginning 27th July. The dedication will be arranged for a later date.

Repair of roadside wall

If everything runs to plan we expect work to begin on Monday 3rd August to repair the churchyard wall opposite Manor Farm. Traffic lights will be in operation, possibly for the whole week, to protect the workers and enable access for machinery. These works may create some noise and inconvenience, to visitors and road users. Please accept our apologies.

Flower Festival Preparations

Practical help is needed in the churchyard. The main work will begin on Monday 17th August from 9.00 a.m. Paths need to be swept, hedges cut, trees trimmed, weeds on graves cleared and the churchyard spruced up generally. Please do come and help if you can, bringing your own tools.

We would be grateful for donations towards the cost of flowers for the displays.

Donations of cakes for refreshments, vegetables, fruit, jams, pickled onions, chutneys etc for the produce stall will be much appreciated during the weekend of the festival.

Please let us know if you can welcome visitors into church, serve refreshments, sell produce or raffle tickets. All help is welcome. We especially appreciate your prayers for the success of this event, both in encouraging people in their faith and financially.

Posters and flyers are available from churchwardens if you wish to help to advertise this event – but word of mouth invitations to family, friends and acquaintances probably work best!

Flower Festival 2015 August Bank Holiday Weekend

This year will be our 51st festival. Plans are well advanced and will, we pray, ensure that it will be another festival when people will write in our visitor's book that it is the "best ever," or words to that effect.

This year the theme is "Bring" and the various arrangers will be displaying in flowers such titles as "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling.", "They brought children to Jesus.", "I bring you glad tidings of great joy.", "Bring the best robe.", "The grace of God that brings salvation." and "Bringing all my burdens."

The festival will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday 28th August and will be followed by a service of Dedication at 7.00 p.m. The church will be open from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday. The Sunday services will be 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion and 6.30 p.m. Songs of Praise. The theme for the evening service will be the early years of the Flower Festival. The festival will close with a service of Thanksgiving at 6.30 p.m. on the Monday evening.

During the event there will be refreshments available in the annexe, a produce stall and as usual we will have a raffle for the fruit cake.

Ansley Morris will be dancing on the Monday afternoon in the churchyard, weather permitting. If it is inclement the dancing will be in the church.

As In previous years we will be supporting the Nuneaton Hospital League of Friends and the Acorns Children's Hospice as well as raising money for church funds. Entrance will be free, but we do say, "Please place a gift here not only to thank God for the joy of the Flower Festival, but for all the joys that God has brought to you.

After the Flower Festival

The displays will be cleared on Wednesday 2nd September from 9 a.m. Do come and help if you possibly can. We will be taking bunches of flowers to the bereaved and those who are ill.

If you know of anyone in the parish who would appreciate a bunch of flowers please let us know the name and address. If you would like to collect a bunch for someone, please do so. Let us know so that we have the right number of bunches.

Sponsored Cycle Ride – Advance Notice

Mr Phil Rees will be taking part in this sponsored cycle ride to raise funds for the Warwickshire Historic Churches Trust on Saturday 12th September. Half of his sponsorship money will be returned to St Laurence Church funds. You can still join him on his ride. Even if you cannot cycle with Phil, we hope you will be generous in sponsoring him.

St John's Tea and Cake Afternoon

This event proved to be a great success. People were treated to a delicious range of cakes and there were stalls, games and a raffle to enjoy. The sum of £238 has been added to St John's Hall funds.

Welcoming People into Church

The members of the Parochial Church Council are aware that people coming into church for a service may not be familiar with the routines of when to stand, when to sit etc. A leaflet is now available giving a general welcome into the church, with practical information. Another leaflet entitled "Welcome to Worship" gives information on what to expect during the service itself. We are also arranging for clearer signs for the location of the toilet to be displayed. We have colouring materials, books and soft toys available for children and we do not expect them to remain silent at all times! The annexe is available with baby changing facilities if needed. We hope these measures will help new members of the congregation to feel at ease, but you are very welcome to ask if you are unsure about any matter.

Cremation Area Garden

For many years now David Morley has tended this garden in the part of the churchyard allocated to the interment of ashes. He has worked hard to improve the soil quality and make the area attractive for visitors to the memorials. He will, however, be taking a less active role in future. If you have loved ones in the cremation garden, or time to spare, please do just come along with your tools and do what you think best to keep the garden well-tended. You may find it easiest to wheel a green bin to the site when you are doing the work and then return the bin to the top of the car park rather than carrying rubbish back to the bin. If you have any queries please do have a word with one of the wardens. May we take this opportunity to thank David for all his hard work over the years. We hope he will feel able to make an occasional contribution to this area, without any pressure or obligation.

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer at our Sunday Services both at St. Laurence's and at 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

August, 2015

Well, they have chosen the National Bird, and as we all thought, it is the Robin, with the Barn Owl in second place. It is no surprise that the Robin won, but I was surprised that the Barn Owl was second, as I doubt whether many children have ever seen one, but I suppose it is easily recognised from cute pictures.

I used to wonder why my mother 'stock-piled.' When rationing finished her pantry was stocked up. Also she had tablets of soap, disinfectant etc. She even had spare bedroom slippers and dressing gown (although she never wore one), also towels and tea towels. It amazed us and we wondered why. Then as we grew older we understood why – as a young girl she had been very poor, then came the war and as a mother of 7 she struggled to feed and clothe us. Then when she could afford it, she must have decided she was never going to be poor and needy again. To some small extent I have inherited this, as I always have reserves of toiletries etc, as well as tea bags and coffee, and I now understand her thinking.

As we start to taste the fresh picked fruit and vegetables this season, it is amazing how different an English Strawberry tastes to others we eat through the year. Also cucumbers and tomatoes – the taste is unbelievable and if you haven't had newly picked potatoes, believe me they are delicious.

I have just read an article entitled 'Why tap water is bad for your complexion.' What a load of rubbish. I have washed my face in soap and water, never used any sort of make-up, no conditioner, except in the cold weather when I put Ponds cream on my face to guard against harsh winds and hand cream for the same reason. None of us sisters ever had spots, Acne or any other skin complaint. Anyway, we are further advised against a long soak in a scented bath, as this will make your skin flake - how long afterwards I ask because I have been doing this for over 60 years? You are advised to use toner and when you remove it with cotton wool, 'micelles' (whatever they are) attract the dirt and deliver it to the cotton wool. I must admit, though, that in my younger days I loved a face pack which did make your face feel and look cleaner.

They say 'An Englishman's home is his castle' and it made me think of this when I read the following words, "My house is small, no mansion for a millionaire, but there is room for love and there is room for friends – That's all I care."

Marie Cove.