

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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Did you know that a recent report in a national newspaper said that this year's UK harvest is the worst one for 40 years! This means that the price of bread will go up. On top of this, our nation is contending with all the predictions about Covid-19 and Brexit.

However bad things may seem to you, as the saying goes, 'there is always someone worse off than you.' It's a phrase that doesn't really offer much better hope or comfort! But, pause for a moment and consider this – we have so much to be thankful for. That is why every year at church we always celebrate a time of Harvest Thanksgiving. Despite the difficult time the farmers have been having, we will still have a lot more in our food chain than many other countries. The desire to consume and possess more and more leads to greed and taking so much for granted. As someone once said, **'There are many people who know the cost of everything and the value of nothing.'**

Living in a rural area, surrounded by many farms, should help us to appreciate and value where food ultimately starts – in the soil. Jesus told many stories about farmers and the soil. Even if you are a non-church goer you will have heard from early years about the farmer whose seed fell in four different types of ground: the roadside, the stony ground, soil where weeds grew up unchecked and finally the good soil. The ground represents a person's heart.

First, there is the hard heart, the seed that falls along the roadside. This represents people who hear the Word of God, but never really believe.

Then there is the shallow heart. That is the seed that falls on stony ground. This signifies the people who hear the Word of God and receive it with joy, but because there is no root to sustain them, they wither. Next, there is the crowded heart. That is the seed that falls on ground where weeds choke out its growth. Slowly and surely, these people, busy with the cares and riches of the world, just lose interest in the things of God.

Finally, there is the fruitful heart that receives the Word. The seed falls on good ground and the plants produce a rich harvest.

Only you can determine what type of ground your heart will be. However, life brings us many experiences and happenings that cause us to change our outlook and understanding of how God can bless us with a richer life, with true value and meaning, and with those things that money cannot buy, such as love, joy and peace. Why not join us at one of our Harvest Thanksgiving services this October and discover some of the real things that matter!

Do continue to take care and have a month of peace and blessing.

Rev John

Please see below an update on church services for October 2020
(As at 24th September)

October services are as follows:

- 4th October at St Wilfrid's 10.30am HARVEST
- 11th October at St Laurence 10.30am HARVEST
- 18th October at St Wilfrid's 10.30am (Rev John on holiday)
- 25th October at St Laurence 10.30am

Sunday services will continue in October as joint benefice services held in different churches at 10.30am to celebrate, offer thanksgiving and encourage one another.

- A. No services at St Michael's at this stage** due to the health - related issues of the building, especially damp and mould, and the sharing of premises with the community centre. A plan will need to be discussed with the Community centre: church members needed to help with this.
- B. Hygiene:** Entering and leaving the church, hand sanitiser, social distancing, cleaning and other issues have been addressed, as well as organising stewards to officiate.
- C. Organists:** Frances is able to play the organ at the churches, if the usual organists do not wish to attend due to age and health restrictions.
- D. Service books and hymn books:** Instead of using these, printed sheets will be placed on the pews at correct social distancing for attendees. These can be kept or left after each service.
- E. Communion:** Not permitted at the moment. This may not happen for a while.
- F. Offertory:** Separate plates will be made available for Ansley and Arley. They will be suitably placed at entrance and exit points.
- G. A list of volunteers** has been sorted.
- H.** After one of the services, it would be good for the **PCCs to meet outside to update** each other on how things are going.
- I. Baptisms and weddings** may go ahead from October, but they will be strictly regulated in line with the latest guidelines.
- J. Funerals** will be dealt with on an individual basis in line with regulatory guidelines.

Finally, the inside of each church will be checked, cleaned and prepared in advance, ready for services. If anyone feels uncomfortable about the arrangements during the service please feel free to leave the building, everyone will understand. Much of what is planned is subject to change, depending on the latest government updates.

From the Registers

Funerals and interments of ashes

The ashes of Ernest Smedley, MBE, were interred in his wife's plot on 4th September 2020. He died on 3rd November 2019 at Attleborough Grange Nursing Home, aged 85.

On 10th September the funeral service for Monica Bannister was held at Nuneaton Crematorium. She died on 6th August 2020 aged 87. Although she lived at Barton in the Beans she was well known at Ansley, joining her great friend Marcia Sutton in helping out and serving refreshments at church events.

The ashes of John Berridge were interred in his father's grave on 24th September 2020. He died on 25th April 2020, aged 75. (See Church Magazine June 2020.)

Diana Blockley's ashes were placed in a family grave on 24th September 2020. She had died in July 2019.

Harvest Festival

Please note that there will be the one service at St Laurence at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday 11th October. There will be no Harvest Supper or Produce Auction. It is hoped that a donation plate to help the hungry may be placed in church for those who wish to contribute..

Shoe Box Appeal for Samaritans Purse

This is one thing that we can still do even in these difficult times. Shoe boxes are filled with small wrapped gifts and sent to children who receive few presents. Forms can be collected from church that give details of box size, what sort of gifts are appropriate and the procedures that need to be followed. The boxes do need to be returned by 15th November so they can be distributed to the children in time for Christmas.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting for St Laurence Ansley

This meeting, postponed from earlier in the year, will now take place on 28th October 2020 from 3.15 pm to 5.00 pm at the latest. The meeting will be at St Laurence church. This is when PCC members, Churchwardens and Deanery Representatives are elected. If you are on the current Electoral Roll you are entitled to vote at the meeting and to nominate people for posts. The Diocese of Coventry has informed us that the Visitation service at which Churchwardens are officially confirmed in their posts will be held in some way before... You can join the electoral roll by completing, signing and returning an application form to Diana Kealey.

Ansley Village Art Group Ninth Exhibition and Sale (Virtual)

To view pictures on Facebook, you are invited to Google Arley and Whitacre Ward or Ansley Village Community, then scroll down for the event. If you would like to purchase any of the artwork that is marked for sale, please private message your contact details and they will be forwarded to the artist.

Report on Flower Festival so far.

The Virtual Flower Festival went live as planned in time for the 28th August. This being a totally new thing for us, we were not sure just how things would work. It was good that we

tried it a day earlier because for some reason, and we are not sure why, it became detached from the web site. This was rectified and we are not aware of any other issues. At the time of writing over 450 people have viewed the presentation via the church website and an additional 70 have gone directly to the You Tube page.

For a totally new venture this is very encouraging. We have also raised over £470 directly from the presentation for Acorns Hospice and Nuneaton Hospitals League of Friends. We are very grateful to all those who went to such great lengths to provide a picture for the festival and we have had some very encouraging, and rewarding, comments which alone have made the whole thing worthwhile.

"Really enjoyed watching the virtual flower festival. Although not in the physical space of church and walking around the beautiful displays, this was a fantastic display. The theme was so apt. In these difficult times, we must remember those who have cared, supported and loved those close to them and the community. Well done! and thank you."

"I've just watched the flower festival montage and I just want to say how amazing it is. You have really created something beautiful and touching. It brought a tear to my eye. As always very well done and congratulations."

Finance

We are very grateful to all those who have continued to support the church financially either monthly by standing order, by sending BACS payments, cheques or by other means. This has ensured that we have been able to pay our bills so far. However we do still have to pay the largest part of our Parish Share of £20,400. This will be very tight and may use all our General Account reserves. The loss of the income from our usual events including the Harvest and the many Christmas activities will all have an impact.

As we are still going to be facing uncertain times ahead if anyone is able put by their usual weekly collection and get it to us before the end of the year it will be very much appreciated, especially in the event of another lockdown.

Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust

Mr Philip Rees successfully completed a 25 mile cycle ride around local churches on Saturday 12th September. Sponsorship money can be sent to our treasurer. Funds raised help to keep church fabric in good order, with half of the sum Phil receives for his efforts being returned to Ansley Church PCC.

Daffodils

The 500 daffodil bulbs in given in memory of David Williams as mentioned in last month's magazine will be planted over the next week or so. They will be placed to the inside of the hedge in the area around and below the Aberfan Memorial Garden. Do contact Margaret Antill if you can help with some of the planting.

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer during this time of disruption, please make contact by email or phone one of the following.

Rev. J. Langlands 024 7667 5236 email jlalnglands@sky.com

Margaret Antill 018 2787 4520

Moreen Freestone 024 7638 1833

Margaret Oliver 014 5582 2822

or Diana Kealey

024 7639 5

October, 2020

What strange times we are living in. Every day for the last 6 months we have looked at the news and prayed that Covid is going away, but it now looks as if more patience and praying are needed. However, it is not only the virus but what it brings – to the elderly and the sick or those awaiting operations or test results, unable to see a Doctor or go to hospital. It is so sad.

I saw an advert in a magazine for an "Easy read, date, time and temperature at a glance clock." That's not all. It has accurate advanced digital timing to one second in a million years. It also puts the clock right to jump forward an hour in Spring and back in Autumn. It makes my little clock by the side of my bed look like something from the ice age. It cost £1.50 about 10 years ago and it is good enough for me.

My son showed me a video on his 'phone of his son scoring a great goal. It was lovely to see but most of the photos and videos on mobile 'phones are never printed, whereas an ordinary 'photo is forever. In fact our son had our wedding 'photo (62 years ago) put on a canvas to display on the wall. It is beautiful.

Kris Kristofferson, the singer/songwriter who is now in his seventies, was talking about the good times and bad times. He described what had sustained him, saying, "The faith of my father got me this far. The smiles of my children will take me the rest of the way."

Marie Cove.