

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No. 857

NOVEMBER 1996

Price 20p



Vicar:

Reverend JAMES R. JASPER

Honorary Church Army Evangelist:

Mrs. CATHERINE A. JASPER

The Vicarage, Ansley Village, Nuneaton CV10 9PS

Telephone: Chapel End 396403

Sunday Bus Timetable for 6.30 p.m. Evening Service

Ansley Village turn 6.00 p.m.

Ansley Common St, John's 6.20 p.m.

Return Journey from Parish Church 7.45 p.m.

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November 1st, 1996

Our Dear Friends,

On the tenth of this month we gather at the War Memorial to remember those who suffered and those who fell. That is always a solemn moment, nevertheless it is vital and essential that we do that because it enables us to face reality and commit ourselves to God.

A question people ask very frequently, and especially in times like this, is, 'If there is a God of love in charge of the world, why is there so much suffering?'

There is no complete answer to that question so we may have to say 'I don't know.' However it is often through suffering that God speaks to people. Many of us feel self-sufficient until we find ourselves almost drowning in waves of suffering; only then do we realise that we are frail and needy. It is at this point that people often start asking about God, life and death.

People react to suffering in different ways. Those who stop asking, "Lord, why did You allow this?" and ask instead, "Lord, what are You saying to me in this?" are really inviting God to show them the good that He can bring out of their suffering situation.

A friend of mine, who was for 3½ years a prisoner of war in Japanese hands, was the other week, telling me of the notorious Burma-Siam railway on which he amongst about 61,000 Allied prisoners of war were forced by their Japanese captors to work in the most horrifically, inhuman conditions.

More than 16,000 died—one to every 28 yards of track—from sickness, malnutrition, exhaustion, or because they lost all hope and the will to live.

John showed me a small cardboard box in which he keeps mementoes of his years as a prisoner of the Japanese including one of the thin cotton rectangular loincloths which he and his fellow captives wore; and also a black-covered Bible which, after losing his own, he traded for 23 cigarettes on April 12th, 1942. The transaction is recorded in pencil inside the front cover.

That Bible, needless to say, was a source of daily strength when being at the mercy of his captors; and daily light as the darkness of uncertainty surrounded him. So many prisoners had to face the harsh treatment meted out by the Japanese to workers on that notorious railway, particularly to those with the appalling job of digging the ground on which the tracks were to be laid.

Why did God allow it? We don't know. But John knew that in the suffering, God spoke to him. Now 78 years of age his faith is as strong as ever.

From his mementoes box are his call-up papers which bear on the back his pencil notes for a Thanksgiving Service he held for fellow prisoners at the end of the War.

James, Catherine, Mark & Rebekah.

DIARY FOR NOVEMBER

Friday, November 1st

8.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. Day of Prayer.
9.15 p.m. Concluding Service of Worship.

Sunday, November 3rd

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
10.30 a.m. Family Communion.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

Tuesday, November 5th

3.00 p.m. Mothers' Union.

Wednesday, November 6th

7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Saturday, November 9th

Alpha Course away day at King's Lodge.

Sunday, November 10th

10.30 a.m. Remembrance Day Service.
To include two minutes silence at the War Memorial.
6.30 p.m. Evening Service.

Wednesday, November 13th

7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Thursday, November 14th

7.30 p.m. Children's Society Coffee Evening.

Sunday, November 17th

10.30 a.m. Family Service.
6.30 p.m. Parish Communion.

Wednesday, November 20th

7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Thursday, November 21st

7.45 p.m. Parochial Church Council Meeting.

Sunday, November 24th

9.45 a.m. Family Service, St. John's, Ansley Common.
10.30 a.m. Family Communion.
6.30 p.m. Evening Service, A.S.B.

Monday, November 25th

7.45 p.m. Ley Group Leader's Meeting.

Wednesday, November 27th

7.30 p.m. Alpha Course.

Every Week in the Village Church Hall

Tuesday 10.00 a.m. Senior Citizens, 6.00 p.m. Children's Club,
8.00 p.m. Youth Club.

Thursday 10.30 a.m. Mums and Toddlers.

Every Week in St. John's Church Hall

Tuesday & Thursday 9.30 a.m. Playgroup.

Wednesday 7.30 p.m. Youth Club.

Thursday 6.30 p.m. Explorers.

Meet for Prayer in Church every Friday at 6.45 p.m. and 10.00 a.m.,
each Sunday morning; 6.00 p.m. each Sunday evening.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals 'In Christ death is swallowed up in victory'

Sept. 30—Marion Ward, 80 years, of Merivale Grange, formerly of Croft Mead.

Oct. 4—Kathleen Mary Berridge, 86 years, of Ansley Village.

Oct. 16—Annie Hall, 94 years, of Ansley Village.

Marion Ward came to Ansley in 1937 after her marriage to Charles. She worked at Ansley Common Co-op collecting orders on her bicycle. They lived in the Village and were members of the Parish Church where Charles sang in the Choir. Marion was a regular member of the evening congregation until about five years ago. We offer our condolences to the family, especially Ann and Judith, her daughters.

Kathleen Mary Berridge was born at Manor Farm in 1910 and has lived and worked on farms until retiring to the Village nine years ago. She loved Ansley Church and always took an active role at the social occasions, being especially responsible for the refreshments. She was a member of the P.C.C. for many years. We offer our sympathies to her son John.

Annie Hall was the oldest and last surviving member of her family of five sisters. She was also the oldest person in the Village. The family moved to Ansley from Lancashire before the first world war. Annie was the soloist in the Church Choir in her younger days, and was always at the evening service until illness prevented her in recent years. We join the family in giving thanks to God for her long life.

Organ Recitals. Coventry Cathedral, every Monday at 1.00-1.30 p.m. Admission free, programme details available from the cathedral's information office: 01203 227597.

With the proceeds of the generous donations given it was possible to purchase a Presentation edition of the Bible which was suitably inscribed and an anthology of some 700 poems on a Christian theme for Marie. For Margaret a collection of famous prayers from over the centuries with a little about each author also a book on long distance walks in Britain. Both have expressed their thanks to all concerned.

Margaret Antill.

Holly Wreaths. Once again we shall be making holly wreaths for sale in aid of Church funds. If you would like some, please order them by contacting David Morley on 01676 540298 or Margaret Antill on 01827 874520 with your requirements. The price will be £5.00 for holly and £5.50 for holly with ribbon. Evergreen wreaths will also be made to order if required.

Margaret Antill.

Children's Society Coffee Evening. Everyone will be very welcome to come and join us for coffee and cakes on Thursday, November 14th at 7.30 p.m. Please bring along any boxes you may have for the Children's Society so that your donations can be sent off to help the many homeless, unloved and troubled children in Britain that need our support with prayer and thoughts as well as the gifts you so generously give throughout the year.

Margaret Oliver, 33 Nuthurst Crescent, Tel.: 395674.

50th Wedding Anniversary. Our most sincere and warmest congratulations to George and Winnie Ponder for their Golden Wedding on November 16th. We thank God for them both, and pray that they will have a very happy day, and that the Lord Himself will bless all their future; with many more years of service at Ansley.

Donations to the Churchyard fund are always appreciated. This year the trees have been pruned at the cost of £800 and further £800 has been spent on keeping the grass neat. Please help us to have a tidy Churchyard.

Some young people are going to help paint inside the Church Hall under the supervision of David Morley. The main colour will be shades of magnolia in emulsion paint. If you have any half used tins of this paint and would like to make a gift of it to this project or a donation it will be gratefully received by David.

A Coffee Evening with a bring and buy stall is arranged for Friday, December 6th in the Village Church Hall. This event will have a Christmas flavour added to it, and you are invited to give it your enthusiastic support.

The Day of Prayer is today from 8.00 a.m. November 1st. With an eager team of praying people the Church can be open all day, giving those who can only spend 'a minute' the opportunity just to drop in. Andrew Bromley, one of the song leaders from Bedworth Christian Centre will be leading the closing worship from 9.15 p.m.

MEDITATION

Psalm 84 : 11 (NIV) "For the LORD is a sun and a shield."

The LORD is a sun

—There is no darkness when the sun shines, even the darkest and dirtiest streets are enhanced.

When the LORD shines in our dirty lives, we become more beautiful.

—The sun is warm. In it we can feel relaxed and comfortable.

In our heavenly Father's presence we can feel relaxed and secure.

—Green plants find their source of energy from the sun, make food and are nourished.

When we dwell on Jesus, our spiritual energy is restored and we find nourishment for our souls.

—Our bodies are enhanced by the sun as we develop a tan.

Being with Jesus enhances our lives. We can be His witnesses to the people we meet. The more time we spend with Jesus, and the more control we give Him of our lives, the more beautiful we become.

The LORD is a shield

—We can be protected by the LORD from the evil one. When we delight to dwell in God's presence and walk in His perfect ways, the devil cannot defeat us. Though he may attempt to.

"The LORD will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm 84 : 11

Rebekah Jasper