

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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Rev John's Jottings

It's almost that time of year again – preparing for Christmas!

It was Ebenezer Scrooge, the old miser, who regarded Christmas as humbug! You might be inclined to agree when you listen to the 'I wants', the aggressive marketing, the whirr and beeps of the cash dispensers and the tills. It can seem a far cry from the real meaning of Christmas and the sentiments of 'Peace, good news and goodwill to all people on earth'. In actual fact, good news, good will and peace have nothing to do with material things.

If you could have anything in the world, what would it be?

Surprisingly most people, whether rich or poor, young or old, male or female desire such things as inner peace, contentment, making sense of personal suffering and knowing the secret of happiness.

If you find yourself caught on the frantic conveyor-belt of Christmas, wondering what it's all about and is it worth all the effort, why not step back and join us at church for a time of quiet and peace in the run up to Christmas – you might be surprised to find some of your questions answered! One of the many popular Christmas carols, as opposed to Christmas jingles, is 'It came upon the midnight clear' and how appropriate are the words:

With sorrow brought by sin and strife, the world has suffered long,
and since the angels sang have passed
two thousand years of wrong.

For man at war with man hears not

The love-song which they bring:

O hush the noise, you men of strife,

and hear the angels sing.

(Words by Edward Sears - American reformer and slave abolitionist)

With all good wishes as you prepare for the run up to Christmas,

Rev John Langlands,

(Together we are with you on life's journey.)

November St Laurence's Church, Ansley Services

Sunday 4 th	All Saints	10.30 a.m.	Ordinary Time Screen
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 11 th	Remembrance	10.30 a.m.	Special Service
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 18 th	2 nd before Advent	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 25 th	Christ the King	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong

St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Sunday 4 th	All Saints	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 11 th	Remembrance	10.30 a.m.	Joint at St Laurence
Sunday 18 th	2 nd before Advent	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 25 th	Christ the King	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

From the Registers

Baptism

The baptism took place on the 16th September of Carter Lee Faulconbridge, who was supported by his parents, Bethan and Christopher, his Godparents, family and friends. We ask for God's blessing on Carter Lee as he steps out on the path of faith.

Funerals

The funeral of Derek Asbury aged 87 took place at St Laurence's church on Friday 12th October. He was a loving husband, brother, uncle and great uncle and was also much loved by his neighbours and friends. He was always a good listener and loved being an uncle.

Mona Moore's funeral was held at St Laurence's church on Monday 15th October, following her death at the age of 89. She was born in Ansley and grew up in the village with her three brothers and two sisters. She was a loving wife to Horace and mother of Sean, Kevin and Anita. She had five grandchildren and six great grandchildren. She was also an aunt, great aunt and great, great aunt. She was well known in the village as, prior to her retirement, she worked mornings in the village shop for 20 years. She was always busy and never refused to help others.

Remembrance Day – Sunday 11th November 2018

St Laurence's congregation is looking forward to welcoming members from St John's church to a special service of commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the end of the First World War. The church bells will be rung at 12.30 p.m. and you are invited to stay after the service for light refreshments before listening to them.

Shoe Box Appeal

If you would like to fill a shoe box with gifts for children to be distributed over Christmas, please ask for the form that explains what is appropriate and return the box(es) to church by 10th November. This will allow them to be taken to the local centre for collection and distribution in time for Christmas.

Marie Cove has some forms and there are some at St. Laurence's and St. John's. It is important that the instructions on the forms are followed as there are particular needs and

differing age related requirements, as well as restrictions as to what can be sent into the various countries.

St John's Christmas Fayre

You are warmly invited to this event in St John's Hall on Saturday 17th November from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. There will be toys, a raffle, knitted items and bric a brac, plus tea, coffee and cakes. Come along and enjoy a chat and a catch up with friends.

Spurgeons Coffee Evening

The Coffee Evening and Bring and Buy for Spurgeons Children's Charity will be held at Diana Kealey's house, 34, Nuthurst Crescent, on Wednesday 21st November from 7.00 p.m. Please bring along cash donations and/or some items to sell.

Spurgeons have been working with disadvantaged children and families in the UK since 1867. Martin and Margaret Oliver hosted a coffee evening annually from 2000, until they moved away from the village. More details about the charity and its work can be found by searching 'Spurgeons Children's Charity' on the internet.

St John's Christmas Bingo

This fun event is to be held on Monday 26th November with eyes down at 7 p.m.

Christmas Raffle

The Christmas Raffle prize winners' tickets will be drawn in the annexe after the morning service at St Laurence's church on Sunday, 2nd December. If you are selling tickets, please remember to put the buyer's details on the back of each ticket. There will be plenty of prizes to win! If you have any suitable prizes to donate please do so.

Ride and Stride

It is pleasing to report that Phil Rees' sponsorship for his cycle ride came to £150. Thank you to all and especially to Phil.

Harvest

Thank you to the small team that decorated the church so beautifully and also to all who contributed produce and flowers. The harvest supper was much enjoyed – thank you to Leigh and Richard from Ansley Fish Shop for the tasty suppers. The desserts of apple crumble, pineapple mousse and lemon tart were also much appreciated. The auction of fresh produce made a sum of £107 for church funds while suitable items were sent to the local food bank.

Safeguarding Presentation

Following the Safeguarding Presentation last month, a number of church members will be completing C0 training, with help from the diocese. Some will then go on to C1 training. Do contact a church member if you feel you should do this too and you will be sent the information.

Apology

The editor wishes to apologise for the wording of last month's baptism entry and puts it down to a senior moment! The corrected entry is in the 'From the Registers' section above.

Christmas Tree Festival 2018

Do please ask for a form from a church member if you would like to buy and decorate a tree for our festival. The cost of a tree is £14.00 and it will be in place ready for you to decorate. One socket will be available to you if you wish to bring lights. Decorating the trees will take place on Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th December from 2.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. The Festival will be open to the public from 11.00 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the three Saturdays before Christmas Day and from 12 noon to 6.00 p.m. on the three Sundays before Christmas.

Parish Share

Each year each parish is allocated a figure that is required to be paid to the diocese to meet the cost of clergy, training and the upkeep of vicarages. This has been a requirement ever since the parish priest relinquished the income from glebe land and clergy pay was equalised many, many years ago. The figure has been allocated so that each parish shares the costs of the work of the church.

For the first time in the memory of any PCC member it is highly likely that Ansley will be unable to meet this obligation in full this year. The requirement for 2018 is £24,594. Over the years there have been many times when we have only just been able to meet the payments or have used surplus funds from other years but in 2016 there was a deficit of £917 and in 2017 one of £2000.

There is no one reason for this shortfall but some of the factors are, fewer weddings and funerals at church, fewer people attending church and the financial restraints that are affecting so many in the current economic climate. However costs continue to increase particularly electricity which provides all the heating in church.

It should be noted that money given for other funds (i.e. Church Yard and Fabric Funds) are, as required by law, restricted and cannot be used for any other purpose.

Please also note that Ansley Church does not receive any financial help for running and maintaining the church building or for the work carried out in the Church Yard.

What are the implications of not being able to meet this payment? If it is not for a great amount and we can meet the full payment next year, probably not a lot, but if it were to continue then it could mean a reduction in the number of clergy to minister to us. If we are to keep the level of clergy cover the payments have to be met.

Please pray for the PCC and the church authorities as they struggle with this situation.

From the Treasurer and the PCC.

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 a warden. Phone numbers are on the front cover of this magazine. Please remember that a visit can be arranged to anyone who is sick, but the wardens do need to know, so again please ring.

Please pray forwho is.....

I found a programme called "Moving Pictures" and it shows films from the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, and for people of my age it brings back some lovely memories. It hardly seems possible how these film are so dated – the clothes, the hair styles, but also they are all black and white. What a different world we lived in – even at the seaside men wore suits and tie, plus a cap or trilby. There were no casual clothes and all the men and many women smoked. It certainly is great to watch these films which portray life before technology took over our lives.

When I see all the adverts for insurance and funerals, I remember my Dad told us when we were getting married, that even if we can't save, we should get an insurance policy in case the worse happens, and he was so right. However, I wish we could have more cheerful adverts.

We can still see the rewards of the hot summer in our garden towards the end of October. We are still picking tomatoes and runner beans and cutting Dahlias with Chrysanthemums waiting in the wings. The rain came just in time and we also have ten heads of sunflowers to feed the birds in the winter. What always puzzles me is the Michaelmas Daisy. They lie dormant as other flowers grow beside them and then in October we have two large patches of them in full flower, but come the winter they will disappear again.

I have been to weddings when you are given sugared almonds wrapped in little packages with lace and ribbon but didn't attach any significance to them. I now learn that they started off as an Italian tradition and it seems the Almonds are bitter and the candied shells are sweet and they represent the good and the not-so- good times the couple might come across during their married life. The ribbons tied round them represent the devotion that holds everything in place. I will look at these little packages differently from now on.

Marie Cove.