

# **Church of St. Laurence Magazine**

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

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## Christmas Editorial

One of the most wonderful things about Christmas is that we all share in the celebration together. Regardless of age, gender, wealth or race we unite in joy, fun and laughter.

Sadly, sometimes Christmas doesn't always work as it should. For some people their poverty feels so much more painful as they save or borrow in order to give themselves, their friends and families as good a Christmas as anyone. For those who are no longer able to share their Christmas with the one they love, it is loss and sadness that come to the fore.

Whether you look forward to Christmas with hope or anxiety, remember that on this day we celebrate the birth of a baby who can not be bought but only enjoyed as a gift. We celebrate the baby who came to be a light in our darkness to share in our pain and sorrow. We celebrate the baby who came for each one of us, who came to earth for you.

It is this same Jesus who has asked us to deliver to you His invitation to worship Him. We invite you to join with us at St. John's or St. Laurence's this Christmas as we worship the baby who is now Lord and King.. We hope that in our wide variety of services you will be able you to share with us in celebrating the coming of the light that nothing and no-one can ever put out.

Now to a few more mundane issues-not inappropriately for Jesus is very much Lord of the ordinary things of life. I shall be visiting in Ansley Village and Church End on Tuesday December 8. Offers of tea, coffee and lunch would be greatly appreciated. Finally, our Community Police Officer Chris Smith has asked me to pass on to you his thanks and to encourage you all in your continued vigilance and support for one another. Because of this crime levels in Ansley are significantly below that of neighbouring areas. Keep up the good work!.

I pray that this Christmas you discover even more of the peace, joy and the love that Jesus came to bring.

Your friend and Vicar,

Peter

**St John's Hall Ansley Common Services.**

Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday Dec 14 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Advent 3	Family service.
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	9.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	10.00 p.m. Christmas Eve	Holy Communion
Sunday Dec. 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Christmas 1	Holy Communion.

**St. Laurence's Church services 10.30 a.m. & 6.30. p.m.**

Dec. 7 <sup>th</sup> Advent 2	a.m. All Age Worship. p.m. BCP Holy Communion.
Dec. 14 <sup>th</sup> Advent 3	a.m. Holy Communion. p.m. Holy Communion
Dec. 21 <sup>st</sup> Advent 4	a.m. Jesus' Birthday Party p.m. Traditional 9 Lessons and Carols.
Dec. 28 <sup>th</sup> Christmas 1	a.m. All Age Worship. p.m. No service.

Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> 8 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup>	Links group meet.
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> 9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion In the Village Church Hall. Followed by Senior Citizens, Carols and mince pies everyone welcome.
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Prayer group meets at 10 Nuthurst Cres. at 2.p.m.
Tuesdays	Alpha Course St. Wilfrids upper room 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday Fellowship meets
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup>	Ansley Common Fellowship meets
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Fayre Church Hall. 7.30p.m.
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> 9.30 a.m.	Decorating Church.
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Brass Concert 7.30 p.m.

**Christmas Services**

Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	10 p.m.	Holy Communion at St. John's
	11.30 p.m.	Midnight Communion at Church
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m.	Family Holy Communion.

**Christmas**

Most of our December arrangements have Christmas at the centre. This year we start with the Christmas Fayre on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Church Hall. There will be all the usual stalls with gifts, games, refreshments, tombola raffle with Carols and a Christmas message. Come and start your Christmas on an enjoyable note and help raise funds for the Church.

Christmas Holly Wreaths, as in the past Margaret Antill will be making holy wreaths. If you would like to place an order please ring 01827 874520 and leave a message. They will cost £5 per wreath plus 50p for ribbons if required.

This year we will be selling 2004 calendars featuring arrangements from the 2003 flower festival. They will be £4 each and available from P.C.C. members of by ringing Margaret Oliver on 024 7639 5674. All profit will go towards the Annexe fund.

On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> the Church will be decorated ready for the celebrations. Any help from 9.30 a.m. onwards to decorate and then clean the Church will be much appreciated as it is a busy time for everyone.



**Christmas Concert.**

There is to be a concert of seasonal music in Church on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. This is being given by a 10 piece Brass Ensemble - Sutton Brass. Donations of £5, which includes wine and a mince pie, are requested, to help swell the building fund and cover expenses. Please come along if you can!!.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 10.30 a.m. the Jesus Birthday party. Invitations will be sent to the children who have been baptised over the past few years to this special informal service which will be designed especially for young children, but suitable for all ages. There will be refreshments in the annexe after with birthday cake for everyone.

Sunday evening 6.30 we will have the traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols. This year we will be using the King James version of the Bible for the readings. As in previous years the cash collection will be sent to the Spurgeon Child Care

**Christmas Communions.**

These will commence on 24<sup>th</sup> in St. John's Hall at 10 p.m. and at 11.30 p.m. in St. Laurence's.

Christmas morning in Church there will be a Lord is Here celebration which will be particularly suitable for all ages

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and look forward to welcoming you at our Christmas worship. We hope you will find that we have a service that suits your needs.

**Churchyard**

As we do not wish to cause any misunderstanding the P.C.C. bring to your attention again this year the requirements regarding the Churchyard. Whilst we do understand the desire to place on graves such items as cards, ornaments and toys, these are not appropriate in a consecrated Church of England graveyard, and will have to be removed.

Christmas wreaths will be removed at the end of February.

**Jumble sale**

The jumble sale held on 25<sup>th</sup> October at St. John's hall raised £167.50 for the kitchen floor. This was a wonderful effort by all concerned. Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way.

This event, together with the other hard work and events that has been organised to raise money over the past 12 months for the hall, means that the bill for the replacement kitchen floor will soon be paid.

**Free will offering envelopes**

The envelopes for 2004 are now available. These are for non tax payers who wish to give each week. These ensure that the gift is not forgotten if you are unable to attend. If you would like to know more about regular giving to the Church or how the Church can reclaim tax please have a word with one of the wardens or Margaret Kimberley our Gift Aid secretary.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

December, 2003

Have you noticed the beautiful Autumn we have enjoyed. The leaves especially have stunned us with their colours and the flowers have their seasons mixed up as they continue to flower and flower. In the churchyard in the middle of November there were two perfect Rosebuds blooming and in our garden scarlet Dahlias are flowering, but amidst all these summery scenes, the berries on the holly and other evergreens are abundant and colourful and to confuse us even more the Winter Jasmine is in flower and the Primulas are waiting to burst open. Let us hope this carries on and we can keep Winter at bay as long as possible.

As the 'experts' tell us that many people are overweight, it is easily explained with the foods which are available in the shops. When we were children we were asked at the local Co-op 'Does your mother want red or white cheese this week?' Now there are rows of different cheeses all waiting for us to try them. You could have white or brown bread but now the list is endless with white, brown, wholemeal, granary, cheese bread, fruit bread and all the bread originally from different countries. I was recently watching a cookery programme on T.V. and was amazed at the ingredients they used - double cream, sugar (caramelised) and Mrs. Beaton would have been horrified to see a bread and butter pudding (which contained Raspberry Preserve) cooked in 4 minutes. The main problem is that food now is made so attractive and very tempting, and also if you go out for a meal, the portions are so large.

So Mickey Mouse is 75 years old. What great pleasure Walt Disney has given to many generations over those years and what unforgettable characters he created breaking through age barriers and filling cinemas all over the world. Who can forget 'The Jungle Book', 'Cinderella' and my all time favourite 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs'. Walt Disney has left behind a legacy for young and old, as he has taken all the fairy stories told to us in childhood and brought them to life, and may his films continue to enchant future generations.

Christmas is very nearly upon us with all the glitter, presents, shopping, food and best of all family parties. I never tire of Christmas and just wish it could last longer, and that we could sing carols for longer. My Mother used to say 'Songs out of season bring sorrow without reason'. For a Christian lady she had some very strange anecdotes, but the Christmas season for us started with putting up the Christmas tree on the afternoon of Christmas Eve and ended with taking the tree down on Twelfth Night. She would have been horrified to see the shops decked out for Christmas at the beginning of November, but for all this she knew and taught us the true meaning of Christmas which is a celebration for the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.  
Marie Cove,