

# Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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## CHRISTMAS LETTER

Don't just sit there .....  
Do something.....  
Eat something.....  
Get on with something.....  
Get busy.....  
Don't waste time.....

especially at Christmas. There is so much to **DO**.

It needs to be done before Christmas is the constant cry - the presents, the meals,, the decorations, the painting, the building work.....

The list never stops.

Funny that really because our image of Christmas is one of Mary and Joseph contemplating the baby in the manger.

In much of his life Jesus was busy - preaching, teaching, healing; facing demands interruptions, pressures; strong, powerful, captivating, exciting. Yet the two pictures of Jesus that we remember most are when Jesus appeared at his weakest - on the cross and in the manger. When Jesus looked weak and vulnerable, his life in other people's hands then he was strongest.

We don't like to be too busy but we are glad, that we can get about doing. If we can't **DO** we feel a burden. The message of Christmas is quite the opposite.

When we appear weakest we are stronger channels of love. And if we can be busy we need times to be still, so instead of saying

Don't just sit there **DO** something why not just for once turn this on it's head?

Be like Mary and Joseph as they gazed on Jesus.

Don't just do something **SIT THERE**.

***Have a very happy christmas***

Your friend and Vicar

Peter

### St. Laurence's Church - Services

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Advent 1	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship
		4.00 p.m.	Family Service
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion & Ministry of Healing
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Advent 2	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion & Ministry of Healing
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Advent 3	10.30 a.m.	Family Carols
		6.30 p.m.	Traditional Nine Lessons and Carols
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Advent 4	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship
		11.30 p.m.	Midnight Communion
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Day	10.30 a.m.	Family Holy Communion
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Christmas 1	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship

### St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Advent 1	10.30 a.m.	Family Service & Sunday School
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Advent 2	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion.
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Advent 3	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Advent 4	10.00 p.m.	Holy Communion & Sunday School
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Christmas 1	10.30 a.m.	Carol Praise

### Other regular activities

Most of these will continue as usual until Friday 15<sup>th</sup> with the last Senior Citizens on the 19<sup>th</sup> and Krazy Kettle Kafé on 21<sup>st</sup>. Please see notice boards for details.

### From the Registers

#### Baptisms

At 4 p.m. on October 15<sup>th</sup> we were delighted to welcome in baptism Steven Dennis Murphy (from Arley) and Holly Elizabeth Bell (from Ansley). Please pray for Steven and Holly's parents as their children begin their journey of faith.

#### Weddings

On 14<sup>th</sup> October Ian O'Callaghan and Hannah Burgess were married in Church. This was the first service to be held in Church following the confusion of earlier in the week when the road works were causing so many problems.

The afternoon of 4<sup>th</sup> November was warm and sunny and it was on this day that the blessing of the marriage of Yener Oncul and Sian Hall took place in Church. Their stretched "Limo" looked so very long when parked in the lane.

#### Funerals

Anthony John (Tony) Williams 68. We were all shocked at the news of the sudden death of Tony Williams from Bretts Hall on 10<sup>th</sup> October. His funeral took place at St. Laurence on 24<sup>th</sup> October. Tony originally from Rugby lived all his married life in Ansley Common - Tony's wife Mary died November 2004. Our prayers continue for daughter Gemma as she comes to terms with her sad loss.

We apologise to the family and friends of Ray Smith for confusing the details of his funeral. We should have stated that he was buried in the Church yard on 31<sup>st</sup> August.



## Christmas

This year as mentioned briefly in the November magazine, we are having a Christmas Tree Festival in Church over the weekends of 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> of December. The church will be open on Saturdays 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Sundays 12 noon – 6 p.m. Admission will be £2 (accompanied children 12 and under will be free). There will be mince pies and a drink available in the annexe through out the event.

There will be a prayer tree to bring your supplications, these will be brought to God at the first available opportunity.

There will also be a memory tree where you can place the name of a loved one on a star and place it on a tree. (Cost £1 proceeds to the Church yard fund.)

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> we are welcoming Sutton Brass for a festive concert commencing at 7.30 p.m. suggested donation of £3. There will also be light refreshments.

The festival will close with the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols service at 6.30 p.m. on the 17<sup>th</sup>

This new community event for St. Laurence should, we hope, give everyone a wonderful, enjoyable, peaceful, thoughtful and prayerful time in the run up to Christmas.

## Christmas services

Following the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols on 17<sup>th</sup> and the Christmas Tree Festival there will be an opportunity to make your Christmas Communion on Christmas Eve at St. John's at 10 p.m. At St. Laurence at the Midnight Communion commencing at 11.30 p.m. and 10.30 a.m. on Christmas Day. The trees will still be in place and should help us to appreciate the true meaning of Christmas. That is our gift from God of His only Son, Jesus.

## St. John's

On Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October those who attended the "Vicars and Tart's" fancy dress dance in St. John's hall had a really good time. Many thanks to all who helped with this event which made a total of £95.50 for hall funds.

The people of St. John's had a wonderful display of items for their Christmas Fayre on 4<sup>th</sup> November. There were decorations, preserves, a wide variety of knitted goods, ornaments and watches etc for sale there was a good number of local people who supported this event which made £183 for hall funds. Thank you to all who worked so hard and to those who supported this event.

The ladies of the Krazy Kettle Kafé and their helpers were kept very busy on 9<sup>th</sup> November when the Mayor invited his guests to attend a breakfast on behalf of Mayor's Appeal Fund. Adrian Edgington ran a tombola in aid of his fund and the Kafé also gave their takings for the week amounting to £200.

Christmas Prize Bingo on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December in St. John's Church Hall commencing at 7 p.m.

Christmas Evening to be held in St. John's on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December entrance will be £1.50. there will be refreshments and tea and coffee provided, but if you would like to bring a bottle please do so.

There will be a raffle and Christmas music.

## Spurgeon Child Care.

As in previous years everyone was made very welcome by Margaret and Martyn Oliver to their home for the coffee evening, bring and buy and box opening. Margaret exchanged

recipes for the cake she had made which everyone enjoyed. Martyn sat at the table and counted all the boxes, which included many 1p and 5p pieces. These may be laborious to count, but each coin did add to the total of £375 raised on the evening for Spurgeon Child Care. If anyone has not handed in their box, please do so, it is not too late.

#### Church Hall

We are pleased to say that at the time of writing the new toilets had been installed and now working, and new doors fitted in the ladies. The decorating completed and all that was required was the tiling and new floors, which should be completed in the next few weeks. The improvements have already smartened up the hall. The next part of the project is to complete the work outside the hall. There will be a barrier at the front to prevent children running into the road and improved access for cars, then the area will be tarmaced.

We hope early in the New Year to be in a position to decorate the interior, if anyone has time or knows of anyone who would be willing to assist with painting please do have a word with the wardens.

There will be prize bingo in the hall on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> commencing at 7.30 p.m.

#### Youth Club

Vicky Odams our youth worker has started a youth club in the Village Church Hall on Monday evenings from 7 – 8 p.m. which is open to all children of school years 4-7.

#### Church Fabric

During heavy rain this autumn water came through one of the nave windows. The cause being that the downspout could not cope with the quantity of water. When the architect looked at this and all Church drainage it became apparent that we have to carry out a considerable amount of work to keep the water from causing further damage to the fabric. At the present time we are applying for permission to have this work carried out as soon as possible. When this work has been completed we will have very little in our accounts to meet any further expense to the fabric. If we are to be able to keep the Church in good repair for the future we will have to endeavour to continue to raise funds for the work to be carried out.

#### Civic Service

At this special service in the presence of many civic leaders we were all reminded by the Archdeacon that we should treat everyone with respect and provide for everyone equally. Afterwards many of the congregation went to the Working Men's Club in the village for a buffet lunch. The collection from this service amounted to £364 this was equally divided between Church funds and the Mayor's Charities. The cheque for £182 and was presented in the Mayor's parlour on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

#### Aberfan

On a lovely sunny October morning the pupils and staff of the Old School led a very poignant service in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the disaster 40 years ago. Then while the music of 'All things bright and beautiful' (The last hymn sung by the children that tragic day) played the pupils led the procession to the Aberfan Garden where short prayers were said and everyone present planted a bulb to the memory of those who lost their lives.



December, 2006

Well, we are to the last month of 2006 and hasn't it flown by? Well, you know what they say "Time flies when you are enjoying yourself." We must have had a whale of a time!

The younger generation may be bored with or wonder why the elderly love to remember the past. I am one of the culprits because certain things bring back memories. Whenever I open a bottle of milk I miss the cream; also what happened to the sizzling sausage, or bacon so crispy you can eat the fat and the rind? Fried bread or a slice of bread dipped in the fat in which the steak had been cooked - everything cooked in lard, and bread dripping with lots of salt. Just think of all that cholesterol! We were, however, so thin and healthy. We walked to school and up until we were 11 years old, we walked back for dinner too. For tea we only had sandwiches and home made cake with a cup of tea, and then we played out until bedtime, no supper and no fizzy pop, except one glass on Sunday. I always tell my grandchildren they will look back when they are grandparents and tell the next generation about the best things in their young days. Perhaps they will remember French fries, beef burgers, chicken nuggets and coca cola, or their favourite football teams, but one thing is for sure, they will reminisce just like the elderly of today, and who knows they might even retell the stories told by their grandparents.

I was absolutely flabbergasted the other day to see on the television a Nursery where they had a miniature exercise bike with a calory counter and a treadmill. Can you believe it? They said it would get them in the habit of keeping fit. If they visited Schools they would see lots of children from two years upwards running about, skipping, jumping, everything so hectic it makes you tired yourself. Even the older children in our crescent play out at every possible moment and get plenty of exercise, and the recreation grounds and sports fields throughout the country are packed with football teams in all weathers. No need for fancy keep-fit gadgets!

As we enjoyed some mild weather, even into November, we could appreciate just how beautiful the countryside is with the grass so green, the return of lots of different birds and, of course, the trees as they turn colour, but we are also reminded that Christmas will soon be here again. I am looking forward to putting our Christmas tree up especially this year as we bought a new one in the January half price sales, after our other one had fallen to bits from age. In fact, I think Christmas is a magical time of year and our street is like a winter wonderland with all the lights, and we are reminded that this is a very special time as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Saviour, the light of the world, who shines throughout our lives every day of every year.

We wish you a very happy Christmas, but especially a healthy and peaceful 2007.

Marie Cove.