

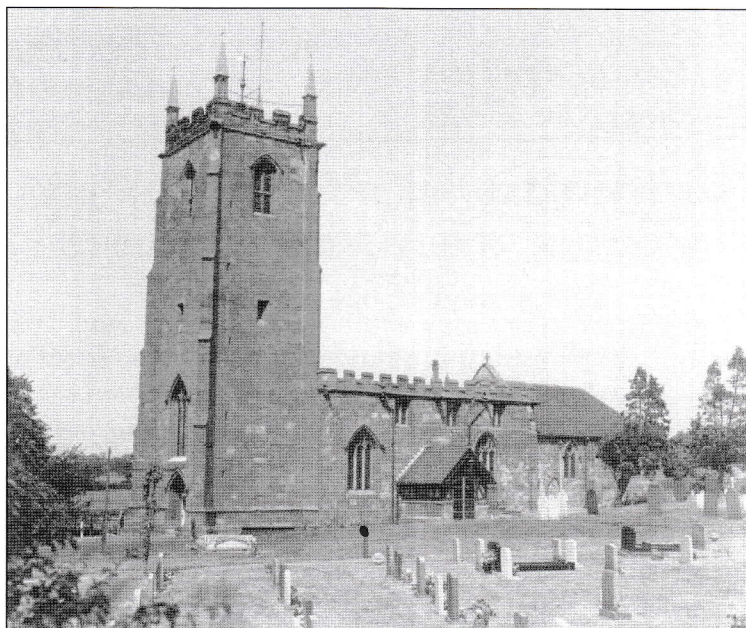
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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'Let us go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened.'

So said the shepherds to each other as they decided to respond to the angels' call and journey to the stable.

We hear these words read so often at our Carol Services that we fail to notice one tiny word. See.

The shepherds had heard in a dramatic version the good news of the birth of Jesus.

Was that enough?

No. They had to go to see for themselves.

Early in Jesus work he invited two enquirers to 'Come and See'

Hearing about Jesus was not enough. Even listening was not enough. They had to see for themselves.

As we have tried to follow Jesus this year we have seen God at work. We have seen it in our worship. We have seen the water of baptism. We have seen the bread and wine of Communion. We have seen St. John's Hall transformed. We have seen lives changed. We have seen for ourselves.

The shepherds could have stayed where they were. They could simply have delighted in the angels. And years after told everyone of their amazing experience. And left it at that. It would have been the shepherd's equivalent of 'The fish that got away'. But they didn't stop in the field. They went and they saw.

So don't just experience the joy second-hand.

Come and worship with us this Christmas season.

'Let us go in heart and mind even unto Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened.'

I invite you to come and see for yourself the joy of the first Christmas.

HAVE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS,

Your Friend and Vicar,

December, St. Laurence's Church – Services

Sunday 6 th	Advent 2	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship
		4.00 p.m.	Family Service in Village Church Hall
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 13 th	Advent 3	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 20 th	Advent 4	10.30 a.m.	Christingle Service
		6.30 p.m.	Nine lessons and Carols
Thursday 24 th	Christmas Eve	11.30 p.m.	Midnight Holy Communion
Friday 25 th	Christmas Day	10.30 a.m.	Christmas Communion
Sunday 27 th	Christmas 1	10.30 a.m.	Joint Service at St. John's

St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Sunday 6 th	Advent 2	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Wednesday 9 th		9.15 a.m.	Morning Worship
Sunday 13 th	Advent 3	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		4.00 p.m.	4 O' Clock Club
Sunday 20 th	Advent 4	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Thursday 24 th	Christmas Eve	10.00 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 29 th	Christmas 1	10.30 a.m.	Joint Holy communion

Discussing the parables Monday 7th - 7.30 p.m. 46 Nuthurst Crescent

Other regular activities

Full details on the notice boards.

From the Registers

Confirmation

The confirmation of Sarah Ralph took place on Saturday 21st November at Coventry Cathedral she had a long but amazing day and received her first Communion at our service the next day. Please remember her in your prayers

Christmas Coffee and Crafts at Dave & Marie's

On Tuesday 8th December Marie and Dave will be hosting a new venture running from 2-4 p.m. and from 6-8 p.m. Marie is making small Christmas gifts, stocking fillers and preserves. There will be a Bring and Buy and a raffle. Coffee/tea and cake will be £1 and proceeds will be in aid for St. John's Church Hall.

St. John's 'Soup and Sweet' Social

On Friday 18th the people of St. John's are holding a social with the title 'Soup and Sweet' those buying the £3 tickets will be provided with a bowl of soup and a choice of sweet. Entertainment will follow and there will also be a raffle. Proceeds will be for the hall funds.

Christmas and the Christmas Tree Festival

This year we will be holding our fourth Christmas Tree Festival, There will be 60 decorated Christmas trees placed all round the church. Each tree will be decorated by an individual, organisation or a business with the title of their choosing. Some examples are "and a partridge in a pear tree" 'conker tree' 'belfry tree' etc..

On the altar will be a crib to remind all, that the gift to mankind of the baby Jesus is the true meaning of Christmas

The festival will be open as follows

Saturday 12th December 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Sunday 13th December 11.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Saturday 19th December 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Sunday 20th December 11.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Admission will be £2.00 per person, accompanied children under 12 will be free. The proceeds will be in aid of church funds, and Northamptonshire and Warwickshire Air Ambulance.

There will be the opportunity to place a star bearing the name of a loved one on the 'Memory Tree' for £1.00. The proceeds will be towards the cost of cutting the grass which at present is £250 each cut. There will also be a 'Prayer Tree' and everyone will be able to peg their own prayer to the tree. Each one will be brought before God during our Christmas services.

Throughout the event there will be tea, coffee, hot chocolate and mince pies available in the annexe. There will also be a raffle for a Christmas cake and a quiz.

With 60 beautifully decorated trees we feel this will be a wonderful way to add to your Christmas celebrations. So why not come along and enjoy the wonder of our Festival, which promises to be another lovely experience adding to the comments from our Visitor's Book from last year; 'truly beautiful', 'a splendid show', 'capturing the spirit of Christmas', 'lights of the world', 'as magical as ever', 'the church looks absolutely beautiful', 'what a wonderful start to the Christmas season', 'thank you God for people's talents'.

There are a few pictures of the 2008 festival on the church web site www.ansleychurch.org under the "what's on" section, but as with many photographs they do not give the full atmosphere and beauty of the event.

Please do tell people of this lovely family event.

Christmas Services

The Christmas trees give a wonderful setting for all the Christmas services particularly the special ones - Christingle, Nine Lessons Carols and Midnight Holy Communion. Full details of the services for both St. Laurence and St. John's are given in the services section.

1st Sunday after Christmas

On Sunday 28th there will be one Holy Communion service for St Laurence St John's and the Arley congregations held this year at St. John's at 10.30 a.m. There will be no evening service.

Spurgeon Child Care

We wish to thank Margaret Oliver for her hospitality and especially the lovely cakes she made for the coffee evening, box opening and bring and buy held in aid of Spurgeon Child Care. It was a very pleasant evening and a total of £310 was raised (with still more arriving) which will be sent to the charity for their very needy work.

Shoe boxes

A total of 16 boxes were sent to the children. Thank you to all who have provided them.

Comments from the Youth Club about St. John's Celebrations on 27th

Rachael Barlow - I enjoyed joining in with the Morris Dancing and having a go with the circus skills. I also enjoyed praying and singing the songs in the service.

Mathew Barlow - I liked the circus skill it was really good but I was not allowed on the jungle gym as I was too big and I would like to do the circus skills again.

Sarah Barlow - I really enjoyed the circus skills and the cake. I also enjoyed being flicked in the face by the holy water.

Lindon German - I liked the Chinese Dragon dancing it was really good and I also loved eating the cakes.

Charlotte Biddle - I liked the circus a lot because it was really good fun. I also liked the cakes and food.

Louis German - I liked the cakes, delicious and really tasty I also liked the circus because it was really funny.

Ashley Wilkinson - I thought that the little playground outside was really fun and enjoyable.

Lindon German - I thought that the Chinese dancing was really good and enjoyable and when they threw the cabbage it was really funny, it is for good luck.

Adam German - I liked the circus because they let us have a go at doing some of the stuff and I did really good at the blocks.

'From tiny acorns mighty oaks do grow'.

The total paid into our Fabric Fund in October was £62.00, and included a further £20 that had been received, increasing the total to £617.00 all from the small change collection. Thank you to everyone who contributed. The jars will be in Church for the rest of the year

Stressful Times Advice from the Arthur Rank Centre

Worried? Troubled? Stressed?

It can help to talk. We're here to listen.

Would you like specialised or local support?

We can find it.

Rural Stress Helpline 0845 094 8286

Email: ruralstresshelpline@rase.org.uk

www.ruralstresshelpline.co.uk

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer at our Sunday Services both at St. Laurence and St. John's please hand the slip below to a member of the Church Congregation or contact the Vicar on 024 7639 9070. Please remember the vicar would be pleased to visit anyone who is sick, but he does need to know, again please ring.

Please pray forwho is

Well, can you believe December is here already? The shops are buzzing and everyone is in the usual frenzy that comes with Christmas. It amazes me that so much food and drink can be consumed in about three days. The weather had been unusually mild for the time of year and then at the beginning of November we had the first really cold day and it was wonderful to see the children all dressed for the weather and blowing to see their breath in the cold air. It was great that at least the children love the winter.

We sprayed the kitchen floor with Dettol after everyone had finished their meal and someone said 'Doesn't that smell nice?' It reminded me of before bubble bath when our Mam always put Dettol in our bath and it got me thinking of how much cheaper the weekly shop would be without items not available years ago. Besides bubble bath, no washing up liquid, no fabric softener, only Camp coffee, no Latte etc., no ready made foods. It was all so simple even if less personal choice.

A senior school recently allowed their pupils to go into school later as the Headmaster thought teenagers needed more sleep. Then we had National Sleep in day. My dad always had the saying 'Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise'. so I can't imagine he would have thought staying in bed late a good idea. Then to compound the issue there was a suggestion that children should be taught how important sleep is, but I can't think why because everyone knows that sleep is for rest after a busy day and also for young people a time when they grow.

When we were small, even after all the sleep we had, we were bleary eyed and my Mam said we had 'sleep' in our eyes. Then it was explained as 'sleep dust'. When we are awake we blink which releases a tiny tear that spreads into a film of water to protect the eyeball, keeping it clean and moist, as tiny specks of dust and rubbish are washed away. When we are asleep, obviously we are not blinking, so the rubbish accumulates and collects in the corners of our eyes when it becomes sleepy dust.

After seeing the wind furiously blow lots of leaves from the trees I was interested to read the following 'When the wind is in the east, 'Tis neither good for man nor beast. When the wind is in the north, the skilful fisher goes not forth; when the wind is in the south, it blows the bait in the fishes' mouth; when the wind is in the west, then 'tis at the very best.'

Christmas fast approaching, food galore in store.
Children making lists for toys and presents galore.
But just remember Christmas is the birthday of our Lord.
A day when God's own Son came to this sad earth.
Have a lovely Christmas, with games and fun for all,
But let us all remember Jesus and worship Him one and all.

Marie Cove.