

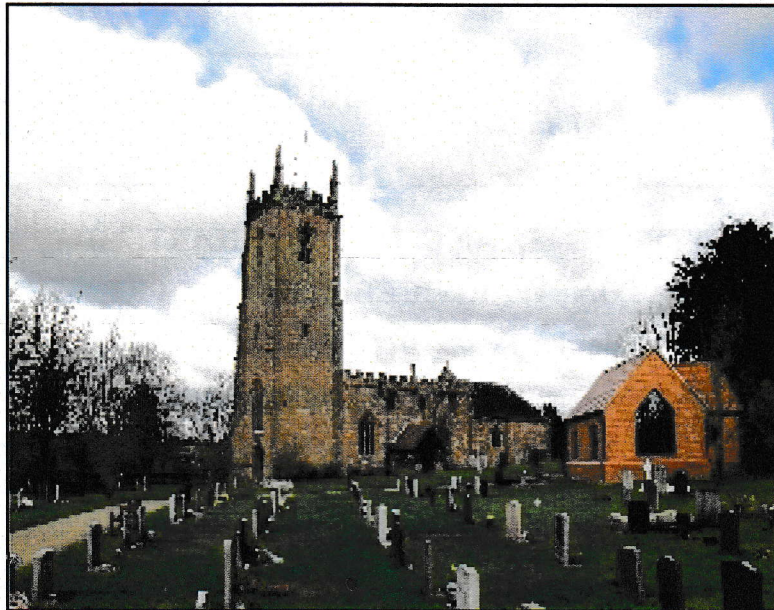
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

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Rev John's Jottings

It's coming to the end of one year and the beginning of another. At such a time, I like to take stock and reflect on the past year. Then I think about any new resolutions I may need to take on board in the year that lies ahead.

How quickly time flies!

What special and important things have happened to you in 2018? Has it been a good or a bad year for you? With hindsight would you have done things differently?

Whatever your answers, there are two things we cannot stop – time and change! It has been said,

'Don't count your years, but make your years count!' and 'finishing something is more important than starting it.

I always find strength by finding time to be still and pray. One of the great passages in the Bible says this – 'They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they will rise up on wings like an eagle, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint.' (Isaiah chapter 40 verse 31)

I trust you will find much to be thankful for as you leave 2018 behind and have bright hope for tomorrow as 2019 unfolds so that you can indeed rise like the wings of an eagle!

With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Rev John

(Ansley churches motto: You will not walk alone. Together we are with you on life's journey)

December St Laurence's Church, Ansley Services

Sunday 2 nd	Advent 1	10.30 a.m.	Advent Screen
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 9 th	Advent 2	10.30 a.m.	Advent Screen
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong
Sunday 16 th	Advent 3	10.30 a.m.	Christingle
		6.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 23 rd	Advent 4	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	Carol Service
Monday 24 th	Christmas Eve	11.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Tuesday 25 th	Christmas Day	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 30 th	Christmas 1	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
		6.30 p.m.	No evening service

St John's Church Hall Ansley Common Services

Sunday 2 nd	Advent 1	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 9 th	Advent 2	10.30 a.m.	Christingle
Sunday 16 th	Advent 3	10.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 23 rd	Advent 4	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Monday 24 th	Christmas Eve	9.30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday 30 th	Christmas 1	10.30 a.m.	Joint at St Laurence

From the Registers

Baptism

The baptism of Lily Susannah Ward was held on 28th October 2018, in the presence of her parents, Timothy and Jessica and her godparents. Other family members and friends were also there to support her on this special day.

We ask for God's blessing on Susannah as she steps out on the path of faith.

Christmas Services

We hope you will be able to join us to celebrate Christmas at St Laurence's or St John's. Please check the list at the top of this page to ensure you know when and where services are being held. The Christingle services and the Carol Service are especially enjoyable for families.

Help needed

The success of the festival detailed below relies heavily on lots of volunteers being willing to help as Stewards in church or by serving refreshments in the annexe. Donations of home-made or bought mince pies are also needed. If you can help in any way, please let us know.

Christmas Tree Festival

The festival this year will be our thirteenth! Each year we are amazed by the ingenuity and skill of the many individuals and members of organisations who take part in this community event. The sixty trees around the church and other Christmas themed displays give a truly festive atmosphere.

The event will be open on the three weekends before Christmas, starting on Saturday 8th December. It is open from 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on the Saturdays and from 12.00 noon to 6.00 p.m. on the Sundays. Hot drinks and mince pies will be on sale in the annexe. It may be possible to open the church by arrangement during the week – please contact 01827874520.

The admission price has been held at £2.00 per person, with accompanied children under 12 having free entry. Proceeds will be in aid of church funds and a donation of 20% of takings will be sent to the Mary Ann Evans Hospice.

This is a festival to be appreciated by all ages. It has a big "WOW!" factor.

Visitors may like to write a prayer for the Prayer Tree in the vestry and/or light a candle.

In another part of the church there will be a Remembrance Tree. Names of loved ones, written on star shapes, can be hung on this tree, with a £1.00 donation to be put towards the cost of grass cutting in the churchyard.

On Friday 21st December, Jess and Richard Arrowsmith, with special guest Jo Maher, will present a concert of traditional English songs and carols. Tickets for this concert cost £10, payable at the door and light refreshments will be served at the interval. The audience can look forward with confidence to enjoying some high quality entertainment.

A crib scene on the altar will remind us all of the gift of the Baby Jesus to the world on that first Christmas Day.

Dismantling of the Trees

The date for dismantling the trees this year is Friday 28th December. Your help will be much appreciated as the church and annexe will need cleaning once they have both been cleared. Many hands should make light work of the task!

Remembrance Day

It was pleasing to welcome people to this special Remembrance Day service, marking one hundred years since the end of the First World War. A warm welcome was also extended to members of St John's congregation. Family medals were worn. Each person who lost their life during the First World War was named aloud and remembered individually.

Thank you to the Reverend Mervyn Roberts for leading this Remembrance Service.

Ringling Remembered.

As part of the nationwide commemoration of the signing of the armistice and cessation of hostilities on 11th November 1918, the bells of St Laurence, Ansley were rung from 12.30 p.m.

Taking part were,

1. Maureen Webb
2. Ian Antill
3. Christopher Guise
4. Margaret Antill
5. Anthony Truelove
6. Anthony Truelove

Methods rung were Little Bastow and Grandsire Doubles.

Shoe Box Appeal

Thirteen shoeboxes filled with gifts have been taken to our local centre. Thank you to everyone who has supported the Samaritans' Purse Charity in their work with underprivileged children by donating these presents.

St John's Christmas Fayre

This proved to be a great effort, with record takings of £344.33. Visitors commented on what an enjoyable afternoon it was. Thank you to the organisers and all who supported this social and fund raising event.

Spurgeons Coffee Evening

The Coffee Evening raised the sum of £288.22 which will be sent to this charity. Diana Kealey has some publicity material if anyone would like to find out more about the work of Spurgeons Children's Charity.

Christmas Raffle - Report next month

From the PCC

Occasionally during the past month it has proved impossible to find a vicar or reader to lead the morning service at St Laurence's. It has been agreed that, in this situation, a churchwarden and a deputy warden will share the roles of leading the service and delivering the sermon, which the Reverend John will prepare. This should be a temporary arrangement and is the result of a high number of parishes being without a vicar in Nuneaton Deanery at the moment.

THE CHURCHWARDENS AND THE PCC
WISH OUR READERS
A VERY HAPPY AND PEACEFUL
CHRISTMAS

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.....

December, 2018

Well, here we are on the countdown to Christmas and I must say this year it has taken me completely by surprise. For many years I have started preparing for Christmas early but this year I blame the lovely mild weather, as it hasn't seemed like winter but the weather has been absolutely great.

I have been watching a programme called 'Britain' over 2000 years. When the Industrial Revolution arrived, it was amazing how such a small island nation could achieve so much in such a short time. This meant that people were flocking to work in large towns, especially London and many in the late 1700's were starving. Especially fresh meat was needed. A sea captain heard how New Zealand had thousands of sheep, so he fetched carcasses to take to Britain. After one or two disasters with the freezing compartment, he eventually got the meat to Billingsgate Market. From then on people got healthier and taller.

When I was young our house was freezing in the winter, as we only had a coal fire with the oven at the side. It got so cold in our bedroom the window panes were white over with frost. On these really bitter cold nights we had two earthenware jugs, which had originally contained Jones' Ginger Beer, for hot water bottles. Sometimes also our mam would take a shelf out of the oven (which was always hot). She would wrap it in cloth. I couldn't have a hot water bottle or warm my frozen feet by the fire as I suffered from Chilblains and going from cold to hot aggravates them. Latterly, when I was in Dorothy Perkins in Atherstone Co-op, I saw these gorgeous cuddly toys called 'Hotties', which were equivalent to hot water bottles. They had to be put in the microwave. It seems that technology has caught up with the humble hot water bottle.

Christmas again so let us recall amid the rush and joy,
This is the birthday of a very special baby boy.
The day when our Saviour came to earth,
To save us all by his miraculous birth.

Marie Cove.