

Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No: 1134

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Price 30p



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Rev John's Jotting – Can anyone restore the lost year of 2020?

That is a question you might be asking. There are many who think that it is within our human power to restore everything, especially with the past year. However, God can restore much more than we can imagine. Take for example the following, using each letter from the word 'RESTORE':

Reason – There are those who have been and may still be 'at their wit's end'. This expression actually originates in the Bible from Psalm 107 verse 27. However, in the context of storm-tossed people, God is able to bring them to a 'haven' of peace and tranquility.

Energy – There are those whose energy may feel completely 'sapped'. Again, this is described in the Bible in Psalm 32 verse 4. However, God can restore our strength so that 'they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength'.

Soul – What do all these things mean when we are faced with external forces beyond our control? It is that great Psalm 23 where we are reminded that The Lord is our Shepherd and He is able to 'restore our souls', our inner being.

Time – There are those who find losing time a major issue. However, Job, the troubled man in the Bible whose crops were destroyed by a plague of locusts after all the time and effort he had put in to grow his business, discovered when he called upon God that 'God was able to restore the years the locusts had eaten.'

Opportunities – Young people at school and colleges must wonder about how their futures have been affected by events. It was the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes, which means 'teacher' in the Bible who said, 'Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the times of trouble come.' God is a solid foundation for life.

Relationships – Being unable to speak face to face and hug others outside a bubble has been very painful for most of us. Maintaining and sustaining relationships at a time of lockdown, with those in the UK and abroad has been hard. One thing we can be sure of is that God's love has always been there, if we would but reach out to Him. During this past season we have been reminded that 'God is love and in Him there is no darkness.'

Equilibrium – having a perspective and a balanced view of life may have been lost during this year of pandemic. However, God can bring a focus into our lives which can create stability, hope and faith.

What will 2021 bring? Thankfully whatever happens, our times are in God's hands – and that's the best place to put them!

Wishing you a time of restoration and peace.

Reverend John Langlands

Please see below an update on church services for January 2021
(As at 23rd December 2020)

Planned January Services

3 rd January	Christmas 2	Joint Benefice at St Wilfrid's	10.30am
10 th January	Epiphany 1	Joint Benefice at St Laurence	10.30am
17 th January	Epiphany 2	Joint Benefice at St Wilfrid's	10.30am
24 th January	Epiphany 3	Joint Benefice at St Laurence	10.30am
31 st January	Candlemas	Joint Benefice at St John's	10.30am
7 th February	2 before Lent	Joint Benefice at St Laurence	10.30am

All the above are subject to government guidelines and may be changed at short notice.

January to March 2021

Regular services, venues and activities were agreed in early December 2020. The list has been distributed online or by post. Please speak to a churchwarden if you have any questions about the above rota.

Funerals, burials, cremations, interment of ashes and other requests will be dealt with as they arise and will follow the latest government regulations.

From the Registers

Interment

Mavis Rose Wood died on 13th November 2020 at the age of 88 in Saffron House, Barwell, where she had spent the last few years of her life. Her cremation service was held on 3rd December. Her ashes will be interred at St Laurence Church, Ansley, where she once lived with her husband and where she will be finally laid to rest.

Those who have been especially close to Mavis are her brother, Ron with Joan and their family; daughters Heather, Diane, Christine, Amanda and sons Ian and Brian along with their families.

Anthony Fallows died on 26th November 2020, aged 69. His ashes were interred on 16th December 2020 with Hilda and Arthur Fallows in St Laurence Churchyard. Anthony lived in Ansley Common until he went to live with his daughter in Nuneaton.

Funeral

Tom Jones, beloved husband of Beryl for 60 years from Plough Hill Road Nuneaton died on 1st December last year, aged 80. His cremation service took place on 21st December 2020.

Those who have been especially close to Tom are his beloved wife, Beryl, daughter Ann with husband Martin and their children Rachel and Ben plus Tom's grandchildren, son Mark and Heather in Australia. The family offer their thanks to the staff of Drayton Court and the doctors and staff at George Eliot Hospital.

All at St Laurence and St John's extend their condolences to each of the families mentioned above.

Fifteenth Christmas Tree Festival 2020 (Virtual)

This festival, our second virtual event of the year, was ready for virtual visitors on time. During the first weekend there were over 40 hits on the site. We have also had some very pleasing feedback.

"The Virtual Tree Festival is super, such a lot of work to put it together but it looks great and hopefully donations will be made."

"I watched the tree festival earlier-well done to those involved! I like the way the information pages are done- very clear and well paced page changes."

"I hope you enjoy this as much as Ray and I have. (Lots of ideas for decorating your own trees!"

The amount raised in donations was £494.14.

Virtual Concert by Jess and Richard Arrowsmith plus Jo Maher

We are very grateful to the above for organising this year's concert as a virtual event. Not only was the concert very enjoyable but it also raised a total of at least £1349 which will be shared between St Laurence Church and Sheffield Food Bank.

"I liked the variety of instruments played and that familiar words were fitted to less well known tunes and vice versa. It was fun picking out familiar faces from the many fans on Zoom."

Carol Services

Those present at St John's in the morning and St Laurence in the evening on Sunday 20th December had a very different experience this year. Each congregation was much smaller than usual, which was not a surprise considering the news of a mutant strain of the corona virus. As we listened to the familiar readings and had the novel experience of listening to the carols instead of singing them, the Christmas message was especially poignant. We remembered those who would have attended if they could. We were especially pleased that the Reverend John was able to lead the services and send our good wishes to Frances who continues her recovery at home.

Christmas Wreaths

The total income from the sale of Christmas wreaths was £276.

Samaritan Shoebox Appeal

Thank you to all who managed to send a box this year.

Spurgeons Children's Charity

An email has been sent, thanking us for our donation of £260.

"Thank you so much for your donation. Every donation enables us to bring hope and a positive change in all that we do. We really do appreciate your kindness.

On behalf of the whole team at Spurgeons, I want to wish you all, at St. Laurence Church Ansley, a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year." Karen Logan, Donor Care Administrator.

Census 2021 Recruitment

I am sure many of you will know that 2021 is a Census year. People may not, however, be aware of the temporary job opportunities that will be available before and during the

census and that will be both part time and full time. Active recruitment will be from 1st January to 28th February 2021. If you know anyone who may be interested please let them know they can get more information from any of the websites below.
<https://www.censusjobs.co.uk/> or <https://www.census.gov.uk/>
isobel.pemberton77@field.census.gov.uk – 07452943162.

Finance

Ride and Stride

The church has received £80 from the Warwickshire Historic Churches Trust as our contribution from the money raised by Phil Rees in September. This will be added to the Fabric Fund which will help with the ongoing costs of maintaining an old building.

Bequest

We are very grateful to the late William Arthur Salisbury, who died at the beginning of 2020, for his very generous bequest of £5000 to the church. After discussion with his daughter this sum has been placed in the Fabric Fund.

Arthur and his late wife, Margaret, did a lot for the church while they lived in the parish. Margaret was part of the sewing circle which raised the funds for the first septic tank in the churchyard, enabling us to have a flush toilet. Arthur was well known for his carpentry skills. He made quite a lot of items for the early flower festival displays.

Car Park

We were very sorry that the car park gates had to be padlocked during the November lockdown. This was done under the advice of the police because of misuse earlier in the year. The car park has been open during December to allow access to genuine visitors. If you do find the car park locked at any time please do remember that the churchyard is always accessible via the pedestrian gates. (In particularly bad winter weather the invisible gate monitors may not be out and about!) •

Services

The end of the second lockdown coincided with the Reverend John needing to be ready to care for his wife after her return home from hospital. In spite of his personal worries he provided service and sermon material so that church worship could continue smoothly in the Benefice. We would like to thank him for his commitment at that time. We are also delighted that Frances is recovering steadily at home now.

We would like to express our gratitude to our five regular organists, whose circumstances have prevented them from playing for us during the pandemic. We thank them for their faithful contribution to our worship in normal times.

A HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

Prayer Requests

If you would like someone or a particular situation remembered in prayer during this time of disruption, please make contact by email or phone one of the following.

Rev. J. Langlands	024 7667 5236 email jjanlands@sky.com
Margaret Antill	018 2787 4520
Moreen Freestone	024 7638 1833
Margaret Oliver	014 5582 2822
Diana Kealey	02476395089

January 2021

As I write this letter it is the middle of December and we are all looking forward to a very different Christmas but I hope children everywhere will enjoy it. They have lost Halloween and Bonfire Night, so let's all hope they can celebrate Christmas and look forward to 2021, as 2020 must have been the worst, saddest and most fearsome year anyone can remember. Let us pray that with the arrival of the vaccine and people being sensible, we can defeat this virus.

December has so far had its ups and downs. You may think I'm mad but it was lovely to see a couple of crisp frosty mornings kicking out the dark, damp and foggy days. However, the scientists and meteorologists are predicting that we may never see any more snow due to climate change. Let us hope and pray that the snow will be with us for a while.

Many years ago the arrival of snow set into action men, women and children in Nuthurst Crescent to get out their sledges and black bin liners and go sledging on the banks in Tunnel Road. My sister-in-law (Ann) would take my lads with her own and, if anything, she loved it more than the children. I always worried for their safety.

A new year just beginning who knows what lies ahead?

Will there be love and laughter and some sadness along the way?

Whatever life throws at us, remember those who have no-one to care,
The homeless, the unloved, the sick the suffering and the bereaved
everywhere,

A card, a kind word or telephone call will show someone you're there.

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Marie Cove.