

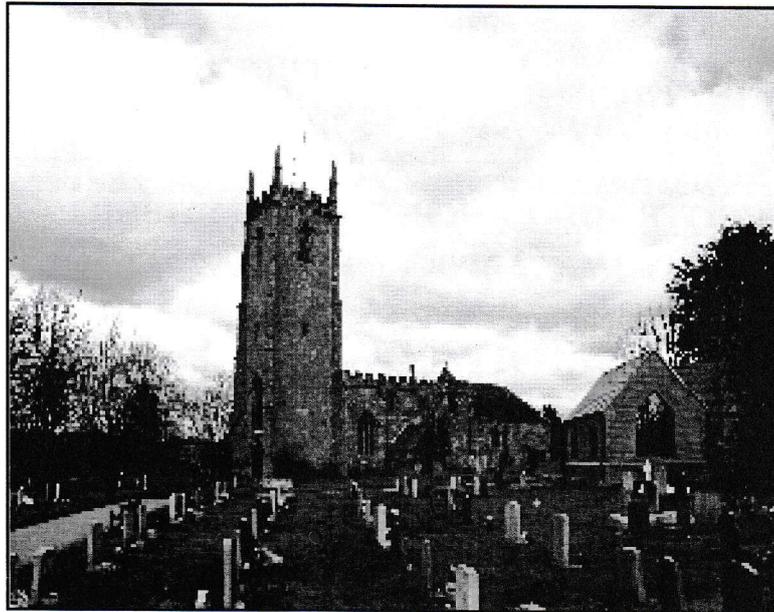
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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Ansley Village, Church End

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Rev John's Jottings – What do hymns mean to you, especially as Easter approaches?

For many people the music and songs they know will not include even a hymn. One thing about great hymns is that they never disappear and they are very good at awakening our consciences. Take for example the hymn, 'When I survey the wondrous cross' written by a man called Isaac Watts. Isaac Watts is frequently referred to as the father of English hymnody. He died in 1748 at the age of 75 and on his monument appears this line, which is a tribute to his greatness. "Ages unborn will make his songs the joy and labour of their tongues."

Sadly today, many will never have heard of this great hymn, or its writer. However, this hymn has been regarded as one of the greatest if not the greatest hymn since the early 18th century. It is a masterpiece that has influenced millions of people throughout the ages.

Watts was a self-taught man and learned Latin at the age of five, Greek at nine, French at eleven, and Hebrew at thirteen. He began to write verses of good quality when he was very young. His lifelong ambition, according to his own words, was to be a servant to churches and a helper of Christians. Watts held the hearts of a large share of the English-speaking world over a long period of years. Despite the fact that as a child he was never strong and for the last thirty years of his life being more or less an invalid, he devoted himself to writing as many as 600 hymns, including 'When I survey the wondrous Cross' and also 'O God our help in ages past'. His age was an age of great hymn writers, being a contemporary of Doddridge, the Wesleys, Newton and Cowper. Their great hymns have lasted the test of time.

"When I Survey" is a hymn like a statement of faith that crosses denominational lines and generations. "Survey" is defined as "to examine with reference to value; to view with a scrutinizing eye; inspect." The majority of people never survey the cross. It holds no value to them and hence, it is not the "wondrous cross"! It is important to see, understand and appreciate its value to our life. Without the cross there would be no reconciliation and no resurrection.

Perhaps during this lead up to Easter, known traditionally as Lent, it is the opportunity to read, reflect and respond to a type of music that gets so easily forgotten and yet has some life-changing challenges presented to us. As the hymn states:

"When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride."

Wishing you times of space and reflection as Easter approaches.

Please see below an update on church services for March 2021
(As at 23rd February 2021)

At the time of writing Public worship is still suspended in the Benefice during the month of March. This decision was circulated online or by post towards the end of February. The church web page www.ansleychurch.org will have the latest position in the news section. The pattern of services given below is for information in the unlikely case that the situation improves unexpectedly. Regular reviews are taking place and services will be resumed when possible. Funerals, burials, cremations, interment of ashes and other requests will be dealt with as they arise and will follow the latest government regulations. Please speak to a churchwarden if you have any questions.

Service Pattern (See above)

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 7 th March | Lent 3 | Joint Benefice at St Wilfrid's | 10.30am |
| 14 th March | Mothering | Joint Benefice at St Laurence | 10.30am |
| 21 st March | Passion | Joint Benefice at St Wilfrid's | 10.30am |
| 28 th March | Palm Sun | Joint Benefice at St John's | 10.30am |

From the Registers

No entries this month.

Lent 2021

Although services are not being held in church, the Reverend John Langlands continues to send the Sunday services by email or they can be viewed on the church website (see above). He also sends out a mid week 'pick you up,' also available on the church website, which has been much appreciated. Although we cannot meet for a Lent course this year the Rev John is including suggestions for Lent reflection and personal study in this lead up to Easter.

The Church of England website also has resources for Lent. This year the title is Live Lent and it can be downloaded as an app or sent to you by email on request. Search the Church of England website for details.

The Diocese of Coventry is also offering suggestions for personal reflection during Lent. The title is Leaning into Lent and includes videos, phone and radio resources which can be accessed when convenient to you..

Road Map for Coming Out of Lockdown

The government announced yesterday (22nd February) the prospective dates for easing lockdown rules in steps over a number of weeks. These dates are not definite but will rely on how things are before each measure can be relaxed. It would appear that it will be some time still before the church can be opened for Sunday worship. As the situation changes, please check the church website (see above) or phone a church warden to confirm the latest information. Once the government has announced its decisions it can

take a while for the Church of England to assess how they can be safely implemented in the parishes. As we look towards an end to this lockdown we remember all who have continued to work under uncertain or difficult circumstances. We pray for all who have lost loved ones or been unable to see and support family members or friends in the way they would wish over the last weeks.

Church yard

The annual removal of Christmas wreaths and general tidying of the church yard were successfully completed in February. The memorial stones have also been given their yearly safety check. Thank you to those who showed up on a rainy morning to complete these tasks in a socially distanced manner. It is lovely to see that the daffodils planted inside the road hedge below the path during the autumn of 2020 in memory of David Williams are beginning to flower. They are a very welcome sign of Spring and light at the end of the tunnel.

Green Waste

North Warwickshire recently notified holders of green wheelie bins of the decision to charge for emptying them from April 2021. This decision had been deferred for a year in Spring 2020. The PCC has decided to pay for the emptying of one green bin through 2021, which should be adequate. Arrangements will be made to dispose of any extra green waste in a suitable way as needed.

The PCC would like to remind everyone that the green bin is only for green waste and that no metal, plastic or other non compostable material is to be placed in it.

Jam Jars

Margaret Antill's customers for her Orange and Grapefruit Marmalade have been keen to continue to purchase it. She would be grateful for clean, empty jars to be returned to her so that she can keep up with the demand. You can contact her on 01827874520.

Lockdown Three

It seems strange to have so little to put in the magazine this month. Most people have found this period of lockdown more difficult than the earlier ones. Perhaps this is because it was imposed so soon after a very restricted Christmas or that it was through the short winter days. It was also dispiriting to have more cases of Covid than during the first lockdown and to have no set date for a return to a more normal way of life. It is a relief that the vaccination programme is proving to be effective and that second doses will be given soon. May the easing of lockdown progress smoothly, so we may meet again before too long.

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 janglands@sky.com |
| Margaret Antill | 018 2787 4520 |
| Moreen Freestone | 024 7638 1833 |
| Margaret Oliver | 014 5582 2822 |
| Diana Kealey | 02476395089 |

Week 1 Learn a verse of 'When I survey the wondrous cross' by heart.
Week 2 a) As above. b) Reflect on the thought that media consumption can be as detrimental as food consumption. See 'Listening to God – Psalm 86' on church website Midweek update 23/02/21.

When I survey the wondrous Cross

1 When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ, my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

3 See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

(By Isaac Watts, 1707)

March, 2021

After having a 'Grandma' book for Christmas another of my Granddaughters sent me another one. I have been busy writing and answering the questions and remembering – it is however a lovely idea and passed many an hour for me during lockdown .

Then I had a telephone call from my niece asking if she sent me a letter could I answer some questions about her mother (my sister Iris) and her mother and dad. It would seem that the younger generations are eager to learn about their past.

I couldn't believe it when I heard on T.V. that February 15th was the 50th anniversary of decimalisation. I can remember how hard it was to get used to the new currency, especially for older people, but younger people and children soon accepted it. They laughed at us when we referred to shillings and half crowns.

I never thought the day would come when money would be almost obsolete, but during the pandemic nobody wants to accept cash. I find it hard to have no money in my purse, but let's face it there are still times when you need cash as not everyone you deal with has a card machine, e.g. the window cleaner and the chiropodist.

I saw in one of my friendship books – Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them, and never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because you won't have a leg to stand on.

Take care of yourselves and as the nights are getting lighter, let us look forward to brighter times.

Marie Cove.