

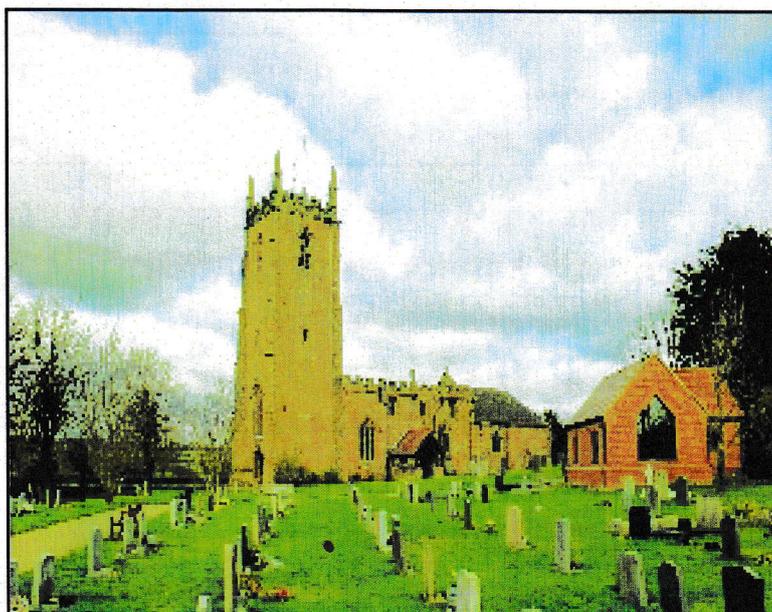
Church of St. Laurence Magazine

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

No: 1137

April 2021

Price 30p



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Rev John's Jottings - A year from one Easter to another

Since March 2020, a year ago, when the first lockdown started, the congregations in the Benefice of Ansley and Arley have been doing their best to communicate and support each other, as well as trying to help those around the villages in practical ways where possible.

Unlike this time last year, we are moving forward with hope in our hearts that Covid19 will be less of a threat. However, will the hope in our hearts also be one where we have drawn nearer to God than we have ever before? This Easter is a good time to renew our Christian convictions and commitments. Why not come along to our special joint benefice Easter Sunday service 10.30am at St Laurence, Ansley.

It is the month of Easter. Lent has been another wilderness experience for us all one way or another, as the whole world continues to go through this coronavirus pandemic. Just as Lent gives way to Easter, so the darkness of these days will bring new beginnings. But how much of Easter is relevant to you in these days? It's the greatest message of hope the world can know.

Sadly, our nation is losing its grip on its Christian heritage. Can you recount the Easter story?

Holy Week begins the time leading up to Jesus' death.

Palm Sunday was when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey proclaimed as a king by the crowds shouting, 'Hosanna!'

Thursday night and the Last Supper was when Jesus shared his last meal with his disciples – which became the institution of communion. Then there was Jesus praying sweat like blood in the garden of Gethsemane and his arrest.

Good Friday was when Jesus was mocked, tried, crucified and then he died and was buried.

Easter Sunday came and his body could not be found – the tomb was empty. 'Hallelujah!' the supernatural appearance of two angels declared, 'He is not here, He is risen.' It was an event that has changed the course of history and the lives of millions of people ever since. Easter reminds us that death is not the end of life, there is the resurrection and the promise of eternal life. It could be your greatest discovery this Easter.

Wishing you a very blessed Easter and month ahead. Keep well and safe. God bless you.

Please see below an update on church services for April 2021
(As at 26th March 2021)

The church community is delighted to have received confirmation that a Joint Benefice Service can be held at St Laurence Church, Ansley at 10.30 a.m. on Easter Day, under the same restrictions as before the current lockdown. It is especially significant as seven candidates from the Benefice are to be confirmed at a dawn Easter Day service at Coventry Cathedral, (John, Avis, Megan, Katrina, Jimmy, Mandy and Bill.) Your prayers are requested for the candidates as they make this significant commitment to the Christian faith. We welcome them warmly to the church family in Arley and Ansley.

At the time of writing, the Churchwardens and PCC members of Arley and Ansley have decided against restarting a regular service in the Benefice following Easter Sunday. This decision has been circulated online, by post and is posted on the web, www.ansleychurch.org. It will be reviewed later in April. Meanwhile e-mail services and mid week updates will continue to be circulated. 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.

April Calendar

As well as services mentioned above it is possible to worship at home using the Church of England website www.cofe.org or with radio or television.

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Thursday 1 st April | Maundy Thursday | |
| Friday 2 nd April | Good Friday | |
| Sunday 4 th April | Easter Day | Joint Benefice at St Laurence 10.30 a.m. |
| Sunday 11 th April | Easter 2 | |
| Sunday 18 th April | Easter 3 | |
| Sunday 25 th April | Easter 4 | |

Palm crosses will have been blessed and will be available to collect on Easter Day or do phone to ask for one.

(Track and Trace, face masks, social distancing, no singing and no celebration of Holy Communion will apply. Please take special care when entering and leaving the building. Once seated keep movement around church to a minimum.)

Despite the restrictions it will be wonderful to join together in worship and to acknowledge together that:-

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, Hallelujah!

From the Registers

Interments

The ashes of Susan Mary Allen and Pauline Skell-Taylor were interred in family graves at St Laurence during March. We express our condolences to their respective families and friends.

Lent Water Aid Collection

It was decided to support Water Aid as our charity through Lent again this year. It seems appropriate to enable people worldwide to have access to clean water when we remember that Jesus used the image of water when he said, "Whoever is thirsty should come to me and drink. As the scripture says, 'whoever believes in me, streams of life-giving water will pour out from his heart.'" (John 7:37,38.)

From the PCC

Finance

Bequest

We are all very grateful to the Late Dr. Ernest Davies for the Bequest of £4928.54 which has been put into the Fabric fund.

Dr Davies for many years supported the church by a generous donation each Easter for Easter flowers and for the fabric fund. This was given in memory of his sister Kathleen Hughes.

It was very unfortunate for all, especially his executors and close friends, that he died early in 2020 (not of Covid19). His wishes for his funeral arrangements that had he had planned meticulously were not able to happen because the lockdown had been imposed. Only 6 people could attend his funeral and his close friend who made all the arrangements was stuck overseas at the time.

Our sympathy continues to the families of all those whose funerals have been impacted by the necessary rules that have been imposed.

The Easter lilies on the altar this Easter are in memory of Dr Davies.

Church yard

The daffodils given in memory of David William look a picture now.

The following message was received recently.

"Just want to say Thank You!

Popped across to see mum & dad and leave some flowers on their grave for Mother's Day today.

Haven't been able to visit much owing to shielding and lock down (I live in Rugby) and it was an absolute pleasure to see the churchyard looking so lovely.

I'm so pleased that they're at rest in such beautiful surroundings and many thanks again for keeping it so tidy and well maintained.

God bless."

This positive comment is much appreciated.

Unfortunately we do have two concerns to bring to your attention. There have been further incidents of dog fouling, especially near the path to the stile. Signs have been put

back to remind people to clear up after their dogs. It causes great distress when mess is found near a loved one's grave.

Secondly, we would like to remind visitors that grass mowing has now resumed. Normally the grass over a grave is expected to be kept free of flowers so the grass cutter can get close to the stone to allow easy access and to maintain the neat appearance of the area. Floral tributes should be placed in a suitable container incorporated in the memorial.

News from abroad

The following e-mail has been received from Dr Richard Baker which we thought would be of interest to those with long memories!

Dear Rev. Langlands

Re Ansley Flower Festival 1967 & 1968 I was the local GP in Ansley in partnership with Dr John Bland from 1962 to 1969 when I left for Australia. I recently unearthed a box of 8mm film that I had transferred to CD. Amongst these was a short documentary that I made of the discovery of the extensive damage to the bell tower timbers, the need to raise funds for the repair and the birth of the Ansley Flower Festival. There was a commentary by my friend Rev Stanley Marriot and organ music by Miss Vesey but unfortunately these did not survive the transfer process.

I emphasise that this is no work of art, just an amateur film but I thought that it might be of interest to yourself or members of your congregation. Should you wish to receive a copy please email a postal address and I will send one over.

Kind regards, Richard Baker

Looking to the future

The Reverend John Langlands and the churchwardens are aware that people will be wondering what will happen in the parish from June 2021. Over the next few weeks the Archdeacon Missioner, the Area Dean, the Assistant Area Dean with the churchwardens of Ansley and Arley will be continuing the process of exploring together a sustainable future for our parishes. Please pray for all involved in planning the witness and work of our churches over the next few years, that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit in their discussions and decisions. We will keep you up to date with developments.

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 |

April, 2021

As a sports fan I have been amazed during football games during the winter months to see the players in short sleeved shirts. It makes me feel cold for them, but worse still is seeing managers and staff drinking cold water. I suppose it is my age but I would rather have a flask of tea or hot chocolate.

When I was working (I've been retired 18 years) the theme that went through our office was that we must work towards a paper free office. This was the aim but it never happened and now when I watch T.V. just as much paper is used, even though they have laptops, mobile phones etc.

I have been reading about Franklin Delano Roosevelt, president of the U.S.A. during World War 2. During the Great Depression unemployment hit 25% of the American population, savings accounts were wiped out as banks failed, farmers lost their land in repossessions, and people were having trouble just feeding their families. During this dark time Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed the nation in these words – "Let me assert my belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyses needed effort to convert retreat into advance." I suppose the people thought he didn't know what fear was but he did as he had polio when he was 13 years old. He was severely disabled but in time he regained the use of his hands and even learned to walk with the aid of braces. He became one of America's greatest presidents.

This story reminded me of how vaccines have wiped out many terrible illnesses such as Smallpox, Measles and Polio, so let us pray that the Corona virus vaccine will be just as successful.

As the April showers come swiftly through followed by sunshine we see hope in the lighter nights, the Spring flowers. This is a month to enjoy and look forward to sitting in the garden – take care and enjoy the fresh air.

Marie Cove