

The Grapevine

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ST LAURENCE CHURCH ALVECHURCH

JUNE 2012



Online at www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org

St Laurence Church Alvechurch

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00.am Holy Communion

9.30.am Family Service

***with Holy Communion on the 1st Sunday
and Baptisms on the 4th Sunday***

11.00.am Parish Eucharist

6.00.pm Evensong

At Rowney Green Shared Church

9.30.am Methodist/Anglican Service

with Holy Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month

DAILY SERVICE

9.00.am Monday to Friday

In St Laurence Church

ORGANISATIONS

Sunday Club	Sundays at 9.30.am in the church and Ark (445 1854)
Forget-me-not	Alternate Mondays at 1.30.pm in The Ark (445 3620)
Choir	Thursdays at 7.45.pm in church (445 3569)
Bellringers	Sundays at 10.30.am and 5.30.pm Tuesday Practice at 7.30.pm (01527 64077)
Women's Fellowship	4th Wednesday of the month at 2.00.pm in Tanyard Lane Community Centre (445 2125)
Mum's the Word	Thursdays at 9.30.am in The Ark (07876390154)
Ark Café	Thursdays during term time at 12.15.pm (447 7017)
Home Group	Thursday, 7.30.pm at the Coach House (445 2547)
Messy Church	Bimonthly on a Saturday in The Ark (445 1985)

THE ARK

Enquiries to Ian Price 0121 447 7955

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The Rector Writes...

My dear friends

Hanging in the downstairs cloakroom of The Rectory is a framed chart showing the comparative length of reigns of the Kings and Queens of England. My wife and I placed it there in the hope of instilling a love of history in our children. It was a forlorn hope.

The chart dates back to 1967 and was produced by "The Department of the Environment" at a cost of 7½p. In 1967 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had been reigning for a mere fifteen years. The column above her name looks insignificant compared to that of King George III who reigned for sixty years (1760 - 1820) and Queen Victoria who towered over all other monarchs with her sixty-four year reign (1837 - 1901). Now our own Queen is up amongst the great long-reigning monarchs. This month we celebrate her Diamond Jubilee.

Many of us have known no other monarch. Although some of the old church copies of the *Book of Common Prayer* have the versicle *O Lord, save the King* printed in them, I have never sung anything at Evensong except *O Lord, save the Queen*.

The Queen is not just the Head of State she is also the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. She is not the Head of the Church – that is Jesus Christ, but she does act as a figurehead and an encouragement to other members of the church. In a recent speech she said: "The concept of our established Church is occasionally misunderstood and, I believe, commonly under-appreciated. Its role is not to defend Anglicanism to the exclusion of other religions. Instead, the Church has a duty to protect the free practice of all faiths in this country."

Her sense of dedication and service to the nation comes from a deep religious conviction that God has called her to this task and she will

God Save The Queen

do all in her power to fulfil her duties to the very best of her ability. She attends church each week, distributes alms on Maundy Thursday in imitation of Christ's washing of his disciples' feet and always includes a spiritual refecton in her Christmas Day broadcast to the nation and Commonwealth.

Her reign has not been without its problems. Like most families, she has experienced the ups and downs of family life. Living in the constant glare of publicity it must be especially difficult for her and her family to deal with their problems in the way most of us do. Nevertheless, she has weathered the storms of family life and retained the love and affection of her people.

Being a constitutional monarch, she never says anything that is controversial. She has to keep her own thoughts and opinions to herself, and that must put a great strain upon her. (Even Rectors feel impelled to speak out from time to time!)

Celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II is a great opportunity for our nation to come together and revel in all that is good about Britain. There is an impressive range of events taking place in Alvechurch over the Jubilee weekend and I do encourage everyone to get involved.

Looking at the chart in The Rectory cloakroom, I am glad to have lived through the reign of Queen Elizabeth II rather than, say, the reigns of Edward III, Richard III, Henry VIII or Charles I. May Queen Elizabeth II live to see her column on the chart of Kings and Queens of England grow higher than even that of Queen Victoria!

With all best wishes
Yours in Christ

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Wedding Joy

Although there were no bells in the church tower to peal out over the village on Saturday 5 May, the sense of joy and happiness inside the parish church was palpable as Duncan Vernon and Deborah Foulds exchanged their marriage vows and embarked upon their new life as husband and wife.

The bride is the daughter of Keith and Ros Foulds of Christchurch. She was escorted up the aisle of the church by her father as the organist played *Spring* from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. She wore a long cream dress with a champagne sash. She was accompanied by five bridesmaids – Nadia, Vicky, Holly, Emma and Amelia – who wore forest green dresses with pink and white flowers.

The groom chose his life-long friend Owen Hart as his Best Man. Unusually, they both share a common birthday. The ushers were Paul Foulds (brother of the bride), Stuart Fletcher and Daryl Johnson.

The couple have known each other for six years and met through a shared love of music. A reception was held in The Ark, which looked resplendent for the sumptuous sit-down meal followed by an evening band. The couple are honeymooning in Japan and then making their married home in Old Rectory Lane.

Alvechurch-Arequipa Concert

You are invited to support San Lucas School Arequipa by joining with the children and parents of Crown Meadow School for a Concert for Peru being held in St Laurence Church on SATURDAY 23 JUNE. The concert begins at 6.30.pm.

Children and parents from Year 4 will be performing, plus Alvechurch Community Choir, the St Laurence Singers and – technology allowing – two songs from the children of San Lucas School. Two Peruvian teachers will also be present.

During the interval there will be stalls run by the children and the PTA. Refreshments will be available. Tickets can be bought either through St Laurence Church (call Ian Price Monday to Friday mornings on 0121 447 7955) or Crown Meadow School. All proceeds will be given to our visitors to take back to San Lucas School.

Election Results

The Rector writes...

I, being the Acting Returning Officer for the Parish of Alvechurch, St Laurence, do hereby declare that the votes cast in the recent election held on the seventeenth day of April 2012 were as follows:

Mr Graham Clark and Mr Michael Fletcher were duly returned unopposed as Churchwardens for the ensuing year.

Mr Andrew Humphries, Mr Colin Bennett, Mr David Richmond and Mrs Alison Smith were duly returned unopposed as Deputy Churchwardens for the ensuing year.

Churchwardens are officers of the Bishop "They shall discharge such duties as are by law and custom assigned to them; they shall be foremost in representing the laity and in co-operating with the Incumbent; they shall use their best endeavours by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote unity and peace among them. They shall also maintain order and decency in church and churchyard especially during the time of Divine Service."

The following were elected to serve on the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for a period of three years:

Mrs Lynne Clark, Mrs Rosina Spreckley, Mr Jeremy Roberts, Mr Dick Russell, Ms Margaret Haste, Dr Martin Allen and Mrs Barbara Scane.

"It is the duty of the PCC to cooperate with the Incumbent in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical."

The independently examined annual accounts for 2011 were received and thanks were expressed to the PCC Treasurer, Mr Bob Dale, for his sterling work. Reports were received from the PCC Secretary, the 3 church representatives on the Deanery Synod, the organist and choirmaster, the Ringing Captain and the Rector. The Electoral Roll Officer reported that numbers on the church membership roll increased from 159 to 164. The Electoral Roll is now open for new names to be added. Please contact Mr Jeremy Roberts on 0121 445 2041.

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Legal At Last

The little church in Chapel Lane, Rowney Green has served as a shared church between Methodists and Anglicans for many years. This month, it will become a new legal entity: a Local Ecumenical Partnership.

The Bishop of Dudley, the Rt. Rev. David Walker is coming to the little chapel in the valley on SATURDAY 23 JUNE at 11.00.am to inaugurate the new ecumenical enterprise.

Because the church is so small, and can only accommodate sixty people, the event is by invitation only.

The new legal instrument governing the Shared Church in Rowney Green acknowledges what has been taking place there for many years.

The building still remains the property of the Methodist Church and the Methodist Church is responsible for the ministerial oversight of it, but a joint board of Anglican and Methodist trustees will deal with the day to day running of the church.

Roses Are Blooming

Rowney Green Horticultural Society's Annual Rose Show at Rowney Green Village Hall is being held on SATURDAY 16 JUNE at 3pm.

Schedules will be included in the June *Calling Oak* Magazine and also from Alvechurch Post Office. Members, non-members and children are invited to enter.

Further enquires can be made to Andrea Halse on 0121 445 1929.

Jubilee Walk

As part of the Jubilee celebrations, Mary Green is leading a walk on SUNDAY 3 JUNE around Alvechurch looking at the history and wildlife of the village.

Walkers should meet at Tanyard Lane Car Park for a 2.30pm start. Further details can be had from Mary on 0121 445 5957.

Ark Angels W.I.

A new Women's Institute is described by Rachael Colclough.

Ark Angels WI was established in September 2010 with the original name Bookends Late Edition WI. We have successfully transferred our home from the Library to the Ark at St Laurence Church, Alvechurch. Following this change of venue, the group re-launched as Ark Angels to reflect its new location.

The membership has a youthful and vibrant approach to WI whilst upholding its core values. We boast a wide age-range and welcome all who are seeking to try a fresh and modern WI. We feel we complement the other local flourishing WIs by offering something different rather than competing with them. We are proud to be associated with the national WI, but are pushing to bring WI into the modern age. If you want to join us and share some fantastic company with other local women, then please come and see what we get up to.

So far the group has enjoyed events including a Zumba exercise class, a Tai Chi taster session, A Stars at Night, a taster of Flamenco Dancing, Bottle and Board Game night, Bowling, How to research your family history, and a Charity night for St Basil's - a fantastic local charity supporting young homeless adults.

Next month we will be enjoying a walk around our village and a good old natter in the pub.

If this group sounds like something you might be interested in please come and join us as a guest for an evening. We meet on the Second Monday every month – usually at the Ark at 7.30.

If you would like to know more about us please email Rachael Colclough at : Rachael.colclough@sky.com

We really look forward to meeting you.

President: Kate Glover

Treasurer: Helen Stockdale

Secretary: Rachael Colclough

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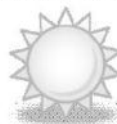
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Alvechurch Gardens 2012

Ten Garden Owners will be opening their gardens to the public under the National Garden Scheme on Sundays 10 JUNE and 15 JULY from 1 - 6 pm. It has been two years since any of the gardens were last seen and there are a lot of changes on show.

The National Gardens Scheme raises money for charity through ordinary people allowing the public into their private gardens to see what is usually out of sight to all but the homeowners.

Gardens range in size from tiny backyards to huge estates. The money collected goes to 10 national charities including McMillan Nurses, Marie Curie and the Gardeners' Benevolent Society.

There is a new garden on show this year: Tudor Cottage in Meadow Lane. Also, the new owners of The Barn, Old Rectory Lane have agreed to continue the tradition started by the previous owners of opening their garden.

Alvechurch Gardens range in size from cottage gardens to gardens covering several acres and demonstrate a wide variety of approaches to gardening. The other gardens open are Rectory Cottage, Old Rectory Lane where teas will be served, 9 Swan Street, The Shrubbery, 11 Bear Hill Drive, Hill Cottage, 8 Tranter Avenue, 28 Callow Hill and Primrose Cottage.

Refreshments will also be available at the Baptist Church Hall.

There will be plants for sale and other items of interest. If you would like to visit Alvechurch Gardens just go to the address nearest to you where you will be able to buy a ticket for £5. This gives entrance to all gardens throughout the afternoon. As well as a ticket, you will receive a map to help you find the other gardens. You can visit all ten gardens or spend longer in just a few. Children under 16 accompanied by an adult are free, but dogs, except guide dogs, cannot visit. Many of the gardens are not accessible by wheelchair so please check beforehand to avoid disappointment.

Any enquires can be made to Janet and Martin Wright on 0121 445 4335

More Than A Pinch Of Salt

Margaret Gardner tells of a talk about salt and several forthcoming outings organised by the Alvechurch Historical Society.

Our speaker in May was Mr Neville Billington who told us about the travellers on the Upper Saltway between Worcester and War near Lichfield. This road was first constructed by the occupying Roman Army who marched between Worcester and War and then on towards Derby.

It went through Droitwich, Wychbold, Bromsgrove, Barnt Green, Lickey, into what is now Birmingham and then on to Metchley, Sutton Coldfield and War.

Two forts were built on this section. The foundations of the first lie under The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the second is at War where certain remains can be seen and there is a little museum. Mr Billington illustrated his talk and told us about the Wayfarers who had used this way since the Romans. It is called the Saltway because it was used for transporting salt from Droitwich northwards. It was a very interesting and informative talk.

Our June meeting has been cancelled as it falls on the same day as the Jubilee Celebrations in the village. We will have a display table in The Meadows with photographs of the Village Coronation celebrations.

Our summer outing will be to Winterbourne House and Gardens at Edgbaston on THURSDAY 12 JULY with a tour of the gardens booked for 11.00am. Refreshments can be purchased there.

The outing to Hellen's Country House in Herefordshire has not been finalised but the organiser will be in touch with the interested members when she has more information.

We are doing an Autumn Clean of the Museum on Wednesday morning, 29 August, ready for our September speaker, Mr Richard Churchley who will tell us about Alcester and Feckenham farms and their history.

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Ring Out New Bells!

This month the Church Bells Project reaches its conclusion. Geoff Franklin looks back over the past six years and Bob Dale looks forward to the future.

The project to restore the bells at St Laurence officially started in 2006 but we had known about the need for several years before that. Our bells have always had something of a reputation in the local Ringers' Association as being difficult to ring, and the tenor in particular would make some very unusual noises rather than striking cleanly. We knew from the regular tower surveys that the clappers were wearing a hole in the side of the bells and that the frame was flexing as the bells swung from side to side. These were all things that needed attention, but not urgently. There were always more important things on which to spend money.

The situation changed in 2005 when we received the more serious warning that the main beams supporting the bells were rotting and that the tower would have to be closed unless we did something about it quickly. We were given an estimate of £60,000 for remedial work but, as there was no money available, the bellringers decided to start a fundraising campaign.

The main reason for starting the work was the need to take the load off the rotten beams by replacing the wooden bellframe with one that would be supported by a new steel grillage. Whilst the bells were out, we decided to do all the other maintenance work that had been building up over the years. Getting the bells out of the tower is a major exercise and it would have been madness to have saved a couple of hundred pounds by re-using the old bearings this year only to have to spend thousands getting the bells out again in a couple of years time. In the end we decided to replace everything except the bells themselves. The idea was to get the tower as close as we could to "as-new" condition so that it would not need any major work for another hundred years.

The launch

Julie Kirkbride, the Alvechurch MP at the time, launched our campaign with a birthday party in the Ark on April 29th 2006. Our oldest five bells date from 1711 and were first rung in the Spring of that year. Our party was as close as we could get to their 295th birthday. The aim was to raise £60,000 in five years and to have the bells restored in time for the bells' 300th birthday in 2011. We reached that original target on schedule but by that time the cost had risen considerably and it took us an extra year to catch up.

Planning the work

In parallel with finding the money, we had to plan and organise the work. First we had to gain permission to alter the structure of the church. We applied for a faculty and this was granted in August 2011 by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Worcester Consistory Court. Negotiating the details of the faculty involved multi-way discussions between the church, the Diocese, English Heritage, the Church Architect, the bell hangers and the bell founders - not to mention various outside bodies interested in Victorian churches and the work of architect Butterworth. It has probably been the hardest and least rewarding aspect of the project because everyone involved had their own priorities and everyone had their own ideas on various aspects of the work. At one point there was a requirement for us to keep so much of the old structure that the project would have been unaffordable and the bells unringable. In the end we reached a compromise.

We have kept the main beams that supported the bells and their framework. These were unsafe for the weight they were carrying but we have added a steel grillage above them and this new steelwork will take all the load. The beams will only have to support their own weight now and will no longer be a hazard. The Victorian timber framework above the beams had been designed to hold six bells but had an extension bolted on 1891 to carry two extra bells.

It wasn't really strong enough for the job and was rocking in the tower during ringing, and so this has been replaced with a new set of cast iron frames bolted to the steelwork.

The bells themselves were badly worn and needed more work than at first realised. Bells 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are the oldest in the tower and cannot be altered. The set of eight bells had drifted out of tune over the years and the only way to bring them into harmony was to recast the other three bells so that they are close to agreement with the middle five. This raised the cost of the project. Recasting the tenor was, in the end, the only way of improving the tonal quality without tuning the preserved bells.

Fundraising

Over the past six years we have run a variety of fundraising events culminating in the Promises Auction last year. We are grateful to everyone who has supported us. Some events worked very well. We remember the Curry and Quiz Night when the Dilshad supported us by supplying the dinners, the Royal Wedding where the BBC reporter refused to leave St Laurence until she'd seen the dress, and the night in 2007 when Elvis visited the Ark. Other events worked less well but we learnt from our mistakes and settled down to a regular set of fundraisers that have brought in a steady stream of money.

The village events have only been the public face of our fundraising though. We were also raising money behind the scenes by applying for grants and asking local businesses for their support. *BlueBox* software of Worcester gave a good start to our campaign by designing and supporting a web site where we could publicise and document our progress. *Signs Express* of Bromsgrove built our funding thermometer and *The Village* magazine has been a continual source of publicity throughout the campaign.

One of our largest sponsors - and the contribution that in the end made the project possible - was an offer from JCB to build the

steel grillage that was going to support the bells. Lord Digby Jones is a director of JCB and arranged for our steelwork to be designed and made as a training exercise at their factory in Rocester. This took a substantial sum off the total cost and came at a time when we were wondering if we were ever going to catch up with an estimate that was rising every week.

We've also had a lot of support from non-commercial organisations such as the Village Society, the Alvechurch Morrismen and the Worcestershire and District Change Ringing Association. Some have given money, others have offered their services for free to support our own events. The final source of funds has been through personal donations - often anonymous. These local contributions have perhaps been the most important to us because they've reminded us that there are a lot of people in the village who enjoy the sound of the bells and who have genuinely missed them whilst they've been away. We are very grateful to everyone who has supported us and made the project possible.

What next?

If everything runs according to plan, the bells will be back in the tower as you read this article. The steelwork is being fitted into the tower in mid-May. Then the mortar has to set for a week before the frames and bells can be installed. That should have us ready in time for the Jubilee. But, after that, we've still got a lot of tidying up to do and then we've got to learn how to get the best out of our new bells. Over the longer term we still have to continue to raise funds as we are some £9,000 short of the overall figure of £90,000.

The bells will ring out over Alvechurch for the first time on **SUNDAY 3 JUNE** to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen.

Footnote from the Treasurer, Bob Dale

In the February edition of *The Grapevine* I set out the financial situation, which was that the cost of the Bells Restoration project had increased to £90,000 and that funding had already been raised or promised for £75,000, leaving a shortfall of £15,000.

Since then, more fundraising effort and sales of old timbers and mechanical parts has raised a further £6,078,. Our funding gap is now less than £9,000: we are down to the last 10% of the total project cost.

This itself is a great achievement, but we feel we cannot rely on any more grants from Trusts

and similar bodies. We would like to have the satisfaction - and the certainty - of ringing the £90,000 bells through the efforts and generosity of the local community.

We would therefore ask you to do all you can - as we install the bells and celebrate the Diamond Jubilee - to make your friends and neighbours aware of the financial position, so that one last push from as many people as possible in Alvechurch will bring us to our target.

Pilates At The Ark

New Pilates classes started at The Ark last month.

Pilates helps to reshape the body, which then becomes longer, leaner and more toned.

It also improves posture, achieving the perfect balance between strength and flexibility. It is a great way to relieve unwanted stress and tension.

Those wishing to experience Pilates can have their FIRST SESSION FREE!!!

Classes are held in the upstairs room of The Ark on Mondays from 6-7pm and on Fridays from 9.30-10.30am. As there is a maximum of 12 people at any one session, booking is essential.

For more details contact Jenny Bird on 07968 363529 or e-mail jennyjanebird@gmail.com

New Church Website

St Laurence Church was one of the first churches in the Diocese of Worcester to have its own website. It was designed and built by two young boys at South Bromsgrove High School in 1999. It has served the church well over the past twelve years.

Now, with advances in technology, and as more and more people make initial contact with the church through the Internet, the church website has been re-designed and re-built. It is now possible to watch slide shows of former Messy Church meetings, zoom in

and out on photographs of Alvechurch people, read *The Grapevine* magazine in exactly the same format as the printed version, and be able to contact The Rector or Parish Administrator much more easily.

The church website has links to other local websites to help village groups and so make it even more useful to those living in the parish.

If you haven't explored the new website yet, go to www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org and find out what is there.

Sue's Visit To Peru

Sue Phillips writes about her recent four-week visit to Peru

The links between St Laurence church and the Anglican Diocese of Peru are longstanding. This year I've just returned from a four-week visit to Peru. I had the opportunity to see a range of creative projects based in the different shantytowns of Lima - a new experience for me

- and also to revisit two places where a team from St Laurence Church worked in 2007. My whole month in Peru was a wonderful experience. If you missed my talk on 23 May, do feel free to invite me to repeat it for your group. I'm always willing to share my enthusiasm for this country.

Peruvian Teachers Come To Crown Meadow

Crown Meadow First School has been pursuing its own link with a school in Arequipa, Peru. Veronica Porter and Ann Russell, who teach Year 4 children at Crown Meadow School, have been working hard to find funds to enable two teachers from San Lucas School in Arequipa visit Alvechurch. And they've done it!

The British Council and Westhill Endowment Fund have agreed to grant funds to contribute to the airfare for two teachers from Arequipa to come to Crown Meadow School for the opportunity of equal professional development between teachers from Arequipa and Crown Meadow. They will be in school, working especially with Year 4, for a week in June - that's this month!! Members of St Laurence Church will then host them for a second week. In August, during their school holiday, Ann and Veronica will make a return visit and teach for a week in San Lucas School, Arequipa.

The exchange provides a fantastic opportunity for our local children to learn about the way of life in a very different culture. San Lucas School is run by the Anglican Diocese of Peru. It endeavours to provide children from poor

backgrounds with as good an education as is available in the private sector in Peru. State schools only provide the bare minimum level of education.

Teachers at San Lucas School only receive the minimum wage but choose to work there because they are attracted by the philosophy of the school. Carmela and Yeimi have worked there for many years and have been chosen by their colleagues for this wonderful experience. Indeed, the day after the staff elected these two very special colleagues, they began a fund to enable Yeimi and Carmela to equip themselves (clothes, suitcases etc.) for the journey.

We would love to give a gift to these two women to take back to their school. When I was at the school in April it was in desperate need of new computers. Their machines were so out of date. It would be lovely to help headmaster Jorge, and ICT teacher Victor, by kick-starting their upgrade with a substantial gift. Please support the Concert being given in St Laurence Church on SATURDAY 23 JUNE and make this possible.

Tiny Tots Service

Parents who are fearful of bringing their boisterous toddlers to church need have no fear at the monthly Tiny Tots Service. All the worshippers are boisterous and keen to explore the church and add their own singing line to the songs! The monthly Tiny Tots Service is

specially designed for parents with pre-school children. Do come along to this month's service and hear a story about a little boy who got lost.

This month's service is on THURSDAY 28 JUNE at 10.15.am on the carpet in the church. Please enter via The Ark.

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FREE ESTIMATES

Forget-Me-Not Group

*Jayne Burgess writes about a special group for those who
are bereaved.*

Losing a loved one can prove a difficult and lonely time for those left behind. Some people find that talking about their feelings and experiences with others can be helpful and is also a way recalling fond memories of those sadly missed.

The forget-me-not group meets twice monthly on a Monday afternoon and is for anyone who has been bereaved who would like the opportunity to talk to others in the same situation as themselves. It is a relaxed, friendly, informal gathering with the opportunity to contribute as little or as much as each person feels comfortable doing.

We meet in the upper room of The Ark from 1.30.pm through to 2.45.pm for a cup of tea, biscuit and plenty of chatting. If you feel that you would be interested in joining this group, we would be very pleased to see you. Either contact one of the co-ordinators listed below or simply turn up on one of the following dates. You will be made to feel most welcome.

Next meetings: June 11th and 25th and July 9th and 23rd.

Co-ordinators: Sue Phillips 445 3620; Jayne Burgess 447 7468; Annette Thomas 445 5180 or Philippa Brakes 445 3983.

Open For Business

*Michael Davenport explains the opening hours and menus
of The Ark Café*

The Ark Café will reopen on THURSDAY 14 JUNE after the Half Term break. It will then be open every Thursday after that until 19 July. A varied, constantly changing menu will be available.

In late July and August, the Ark Café will change to a light lunch menu, as has happened in previous years. Then, in September, the Ark Café will revert once more to its usual menus. A warm welcome awaits you on Thursday lunchtimes from 12.30.pm until 1.30.pm

Jubilee Big Lunch

As part of the national celebrations to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, communities the length and breadth of the land are being encouraged to share a Big Lunch together on SUNDAY 3 JUNE.

This is very much a do-it-yourself affair. Families, friends, individuals simply turn up at 12.30.pm at The Ark where tables will be set up. Everyone places food on the tables. Coffee and tea will be on sale, but if you want something stronger, bring it along yourself.

At one o'clock, the Big Lunch commences. Having obtained some of the shared food, luncheon guests can either sit inside The Ark to eat or, if the weather is favourable, on the grass in the churchyard. But The Big Lunch is not just about eating. It is more an opportunity to meet and talk with neighbours, friends and complete strangers: an opportunity for Alvechurch residents to come together over a plate of food! It could be a very big lunch indeed!

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Her Majesty the Queen officially celebrates her Diamond Jubilee with a service of thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral on TUESDAY 5 JUNE at 10.30.am.

The service will be relayed to St Laurence Church and shown on the big screen (in the same way as the Royal Wedding was shown last year). An order of service will be produced so those in the church can join in the hymn singing.

After the service, people will move into The Ark where a Buffet Lunch will be served and a loyal toast to Her Majesty the Queen proposed.

Tickets for the combined event (including a glass of bubbly) cost £5 and are available from Ian Price, The Ark Office 0121 445 7955 on weekday mornings, or Lynne Clark (0121 445 2547) or the Rector (0121 445 1087).

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Obituaries

ALFRED JOHN PUGH

Alf was born on 1st January 1930 and was brought up in Lozells, Birmingham, one of 6 children. At the age of 9 he was evacuated along with a brother and sister to Gloucestershire and like most of the other evacuees from inner city Birmingham saw open fields, sheep and cows for the first time. This left a lasting impression and his love for the countryside never left him.

At the age of 17 he joined the Royal Marines with whom he served in 40 Commando on *HMS Sheffield* and *HMS Belfast*. He loved the marines and the lessons learned helped shape his personality. He never lost the ethos of hard work and discipline – he was rarely seen out without a suit, shirt and tie and shoes you could see your face in due to hours of ‘spit and polish, the exception being when he was working in the garden when his marines’ green beret would always be worn.

He married Jean in 1951 and last year they celebrated sixty happy years together. They had two children, Robert and Lynn and three grandchildren, Andrew, Dawn and James. He was a real family man and adored all his family. Soon after his 80th birthday he learnt how to use a laptop so that he could e-mail Andrew who lives in America and he became quite a whizz on the computer.

In 1979 Jean and Alf moved to Alvechurch living in Station Road, Warbank Close and, for the last 22 years in Lewkner Cottages where Alf’s garden was his pride and joy and his lawn like a bowling green.

Alf died on April 12th at the age of 82. His funeral was held at Redditch Crematorium and afterwards many friends and family from all over the country joined Jean for a reception at the Ark. He will be hugely missed by all his family.

NOREEN DELIA RICHARDSON

A lady who lived in Witherby Close for twenty-five years, and was an active member of the

Alvechurch Sport and Social Club, died on 19 April at the age of 69.

Noreen Delia Richardson was one of a family of four born at Wythall. She is survived by her brother, Terry, and her sister, Lyn. She married Roger Richardson and had one daughter, Rebecca. For the past twenty-nine years she has been living with her partner, Carl. She was aunt to Donna, Denise and Kerry and a great-aunt to Molly and Leanne.

After an initial spell at Sainsburys as a check-out supervisor, she turned to her life’s love – dog grooming and training. She devoted her life to animals. She owned four dogs, twenty-one rabbits, guinea pigs and gerbils. She was working with her animals to within a few months of her death.

Before moving to Alvechurch she lived in Shawhurst Lane, Wythall, but, for the last twenty-five years, she has been a well-known part of the Alvechurch community. She loved nothing more than socialising and dancing and will be greatly missed by fellow members of the Sports and Social Club.

She will be remembered as a forthright person, who spoke her mind; a colourful character who, once met, was never forgotten. She may have been small in stature but she was big in personality.

Her funeral was held at Redditch Crematorium on Wednesday 2 May. The two hymns sung were *Morning has broken like the first morning* and *All things bright and beautiful*.

RUBY FLORENCE LINES

A much-loved resident of Hopwood Court Residential Home for the past eight years died on 1 May at the age of 91.

Ruby Florence Lines was the last surviving member of a family of five born at Hockley. In 1941 she married Horace Everill and they shared twenty-four years together before his premature death in 1965. She had one son, Colin. Then, in 1967 she married George Lines and they shared thirty-seven years together

until his death in 2004. She was grandmother to Dawn and Wayne and a great-grandmother to Sam, Thomas and Katie.

She had a number of jobs during her working life. First she worked as a press operator in the Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham. Then followed one week in the WRAF at Wellsbourne. (It only took her one-week to realise that the WRAF was not for her!) Then she worked on the Birmingham Corporation trams and buses as a conductress or “clippie”. Her final job was as the mender of saucepans, affixing washers and rivets to saucepans that had sprung leaks!

She lived in George Street, West Hockey, Park Road Handsworth, Brookfield Road, Hockley and in Redditch near *The Mayfly*. In 2004 she moved to Hopwood Court where she has been a much-loved resident.

She will be remembered as someone who had to battle with an inherent nervous disposition but was very affirmative in her expressions of thanks and love to those who helped her. She had a great love of children and would often be seen cuddling dolls.

Her funeral was held at Lodge Hill Crematorium on Tuesday 15 May. The two hymns sung were *Morning has broken* and *There is green hill far away*.

KENNETH WATSON BELL

A man who moved to Alvechurch in 1952 and was known as “The Friendly Neighbour” died on 10 May at the age of 84.

Kenneth Watson Bell was born at Lickey End, Bromsgrove. He had an adoptive brother, Roy, with whom he was very close. He became seriously ill in his early twenties and it was thought he would not live. But his love for Audrey, his wife-to-be, pulled him through his near-death experience. They were married in 1950 and shared 62 years together.

He was the father of three sons – Christopher, Gary and Andrew – and grandfather to Craig, Richard, Jamie, Paul, Gemma and Katie.

He left Watt Close School at the age of

fourteen and worked for a short time as a butcher’s apprentice. He then transferred to the Austin Car Company at Longbridge where he remained for 36 years. Then followed employment with the Enfield Motorcycle Company in Redditch, Delsons Automotive Engineers in Latimer Road and finally H.S. Engineering, Redditch.

He moved into Latimer Road in 1952 and remained there until 1992 when he moved to the Lewkner Houses in Station Road. Here he acted as handyman and general factotum to all the other residents and gained the sobriquet “Friendly neighbour”.

He had a very artistic temperament and excelled as an artist, oil and watercolour painter and model-maker. His matchstick model of St Laurence Parish Church was exhibited in the church some years ago. He annually constructed either a dolls house or a cowboy’s fort for children in Dr Barnardo’s Homes. His other leisure time interests were snooker at Barnt Green Club, darts and table tennis.

He will be remembered for his kindness to others, his goodness as a father and husband and the faith that under-girded his life and conduct.

His funeral service was held in St Laurence Church on Friday 18 May and the hymns sung were *Abide with me* and *The old rugged cross*.

EILEEN MARY SCHAANNING

A lady who moved to Rowney Green in 1971 and devoted her life to her family and her horses, died on 7 May at the age of 82.

Eileen Mary Schaanning was born in Harborne as one of two children. Her brother predeceased her. After attending George Dixon Grammar School she went to Birmingham University as secretary to the Registrar. It was whilst she was at the university she met Christian Schaanning, a Norwegian student. They married in 1955.

She was the mother of three children – John, Simon and Kate – and grandmother to six grandchildren – Matthew, Timothy, Rachel, Emma, Isobel and Callum.

She lived for five years over a draper’s shop in High Street, Harborne and then elsewhere in Harborne. But, in 1971 she moved to Rowney Green because she wanted land where she could keep horses. She was never happier than when she was with her horses. She had six at one time. She also undertook work for the Riding for the Disabled Charity that helps blind and disabled children and adults. She will be remembered as a happy and smiling person, who was honest, strong-willed, humble and loyal.

Her funeral was held at Redditch Crematorium on Wednesday 23 May. The two hymns sung were *Morning has broken* and *The Lord’s my shepherd*.

Flowers

Rota for June 2012

	3 rd June	10 th June	17 th June	24 th June
Sanctuary				Jill Woolley
Lady Chapel				Jill Woolley
In Memory of				Ron Woolley

As you are aware, the Bells are being installed back in the Tower and we have limited access to equipment for flower arranging. However, I do not as yet have any volunteers for the first three weeks in June and would really like to be able to celebrate the Queen’s Jubilee with flowers in church. I know there are many calls for your help over this weekend of celebrations but if you can offer some assistance I would be most grateful. Please get in touch with me, Ann Thurrell on 0121 447 7668

From the Registers



Marriages

Those whom God has joined together

May 5 Duncan Vernon and Deborah Foulds



Baptisms

We welcome you into the Lord’s family

April 29 Tess Catherine Ricketts Snake Lane

*Photographs of the newly-baptized can be found on the church website
www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org]*



Funerals and Cremations

May they rest in the peace of Christ

May 2	Noreen Delia Richardson	aged 69
May 15	Ruby Florence Lines	aged 91
May 18	Kenneth Watson Bell	aged 84
May 23	Eileen Mary Schaanning	aged 82

Who's who

Rector	Revd David Martin, The Rectory, School Lane 445 1087 davidmartin@lynkservice.net
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mr Dick Russell, 2 Gothic Cottages, Radford Rd 445 3083 Ms Sue Philips Withybed Green 445 3620
Authorised Lay Ministers	Mrs Helena Allen, 117 Birmingham road 445 5605 Mr Phil Burgess Highlands, School Lane, 447 7468 Mr Graham Clark, The Coach House, School Lane, 445 2547 Ms Gloria Wilson, 11 Bear Hill Drive 445 1854 Mrs Philippa Brakes, 56 Callow hill Road 445 3983 Mrs Lynne Clark, The Coach House, School Lane 445 2547 Mrs Jayne Burgess, Highlands, School Lane 447 7468 Mrs Annette Thomas 8 Snake Lane 445 5180
Churchwardens	Mr Graham Clark, The Coach House, School Lane. 445 2547 Mr Mick Fletcher , 52 Callow Hill Road 445 6431
Deputy Wardens	Mr Colin Bennett, 122 Redditch Road, 01527 64077 Mr Andy Humphries, Sunnymead, Station Road 445 5955 Mr David Richmond, The Ferns, Chapel Lane 445 3569 Mrs Alison Smith, 12 Hollington Road 447 7293
PCC Secretary	Mrs Enid Brumsen 32 Callow Hill Road 445 0663
PCC Treasurer	Mr Bob Dale Weatheroak Farm 01564 822486
Organist & Choirmaster	Mr David Richmond, The Ferns, Chapel Lane 445 3569
Electoral Roll Officer	Mr Jeremy Roberts, 7 Redditch Road, Hopwood 445 2041
Tower Captain	Mr Colin Bennett, 122 Redditch Road 01527 64077
Singing Group	Mrs Lynda Wolstencroft 49 Hinton Avenue Tel: 445 3212
Mum's the Word	Mrs Bib Paterson, 57 Birmingham Road 07876390154
Flower Co-ordinator	Mrs Ann Thurrell, Top Barn, Scarfield Hill 447 7668
Women's Fellowship	Mrs Jill Woolley, 111 Birmingham Road 445 2125
Ark Booking Secretary)	Mr Ian Price, the Ark School Lane, 447 7955
& Grapevine advertising)	thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk
Grapevine Editor	Revd David Martin, The Rectory, School Lane 445 1087 davidmartin@lynkservice.net

PCC Special Responsibilities

Finance and Standing Committee

David Martin	Graham Clark
Mike Fletcher	Alison Smith
Bob Dale	Jeremy Roberts

Children and Youth

Martin Allen	Mike Fletcher
Marion Thompson	Pat Booth

Buildings and Fabric

Mick Fletcher	Colin Bennett
David Richmond	Jill Woolley

Development

Alison Smith	Jeremy Roberts
Margaret Haste	

Churchyard

Bob Dale	Andy Humphries
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Peru and Missionary

Sue Phillips	Dick Russell
Sue Brotherton	Margaret Haste

Worship

Barbara Scane	Martin Allen
Graham Clark	Enid Brumsen
David Richmond	

Calendar

JUNE



Saturday 2	7.30.pm	Royal Variety Performance: Village Hall
Sunday 3	12.30.pm 2.30.pm	Big Jubilee Lunch: The Ark Jubilee Walk from Tanyard Lane Car Park
Monday 4	11.00.am	Jubilee Picnic and Fun Day in The Meadows
Tuesday 5	10.30.am	Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving Service from St Paul's Cathedral: Church
Sunday 10	1.00.pm 6.30.pm	National Gardens Scheme Ecumenical Service at St Mary's RC Church
Monday 11	1.30.pm	Forget-me-not: The Ark
Thursday 14	12.15.pn	Ark Café reopens
Saturday 16	JULY GRAPEVINE GOES TO PRESS	
	3.00.pm	Rowney Green Rose Show: Peace Hall
Saturday 23	11.00.am	Rowney Green LEP Inauguration:
	6.30.pm	Rowney Green Church Peruvian Concert: Church
Monday 25	1.30.pm	Forget-me-not: The Ark
Thursday 28	10.15.am	Tiny Tots Service: Church
Saturday 30	3.30.pm	Messy Church: The Ark