

The Grapevine

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ST LAURENCE CHURCH ALVECHURCH



FEBRUARY 2016

Online at www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org

St Laurence Church Alvechurch

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Holy Communion

Book of Common Prayer Communion Service, will take place on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. On the other Sundays there will be an 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Communion Service at St Leonard's in Beoley

9.30am Family Service

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

11.15am Parish Eucharist

6.00pm Evensong

On the 4th Sunday of the month at 6pm there will be Sacred Space, a quieter more reflective space for worship

At Rowney Green Shared Church

9.30am Methodist/Anglican Service

with Holy Communion on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month

DAILY SERVICE

9.00am Monday to Friday

In St Laurence Church

ORGANISATIONS

Sunday Club	Sundays at 9.30am in the Church and Ark (445 1854)
Choir	Thursdays at 7.45pm in Church (445 3569)
Bellringers	Sundays at 10.30am and 5.30pm Tuesday Practice at 7.30pm (01527 64077)
Women's Fellowship	4th Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm in Tanyard Lane Community Centre (445 2125)
Mum's the Word	Thursdays at 9.30am in The Ark (07773509390) Tiny Tots Service 10.15am 1st Thursday of the month
Ark Café	Thursdays during term time at 12.15pm (447 7017)
Home Group	Thursdays, 7.30pm at the Coach House (445 2547)

THE ARK

Enquiries to Ian Price 0121 447 7955



Philippa Brakes writes.....

Most of us try, with varying degrees of success, to give up something for Lent – usually chocolate or alcohol.

In Medieval times, people had just struggled through winter when there was very little to eat anyway, only to be confronted with all the restrictions of Lent – no meat, no dairy and often no meals in daylight. The New Testament does recommend fasting as part of the Christian life, but not as a way of earning God's forgiveness or approval any more than we can win approval by doing kind things or giving money to charitable causes. All these things are good but if we try to find God through doing them, we are likely to experience only a one way relationship, that of pleading child trying to placate or please a distant and demanding God. It is such a shame that so many people who have very little experience of faith, still see God in this way, as someone who demands certain standards of behaviour before he will have anything to do with us.

Jesus showed us in every aspect of his life and death that we are loved anyway, regardless of what we are or have done. He met people where they were. The woman coming to a well in the heat of the day to collect water must have been despised and rejected by everyone in her village to be alone in such a task. Somehow Jesus knew all about her – and her life story would fit neatly into an Eastenders storyline. Yet he spoke to her as someone worth meeting, worth taking the time to reach out to – and this at a time when an honourable Jewish man would not normally address a woman he didn't know and certainly not a Samaritan and one of dubious reputation

too. Jesus constantly cut through the expected norms and hypocrisy of society to meet the person inside, not the public face we all display. Just by being accepted, this woman's life was transformed and she raced back to her village to tell everyone of her meeting with Jesus. I've often thought it strange that her neighbours who had ostracised her were suddenly willing to listen to her and, what is more, they came to Jesus. I can only think that she must have been so lit up inside by her meeting with Jesus that everyone wanted what she had found! In this story, in John chapter 4, Jesus says of the well *"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

As a child I was blessed to have a wonderful earthly father who, when we went for walks together, always put me on the inside of the pavement and took his place on the outside. He did this partly because he was being an old fashioned gentleman, but I also knew that should any danger appear, he would put himself in the way and save me. That's how we are all loved by God. In Jesus, he put himself in the way of danger, of judgement, so that all of us could be safe. He did it out of love. We do not need to earn that love – it's just there for us to accept. Such things as fasting, helping others and changing aspects of our lives that are not bringing ourselves or others happiness can flow from that accepting love as an act of love, thanks and praise for a wonderful heavenly Father.

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**St Laurence
Women's Fellowship**



Jill Woolley writes...

This is the first chance I have had to thank the members of the Committee and everyone who helped to make our Golden Jubilee buffet such a success back in December. A happy afternoon of celebration for us all. My thanks too to Gen Hancocks and Brenda Davis for their help in decorating our Christmas tree in the Festival held in the Baptist Church.

We look forward to another year of fellowship with a talk about the history of pearls by Janis Waldron on February 24th and an Amish talk by Dawn Nex on March 23rd.

Join us at these or any of our meetings held in The Tanyard Centre on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 2pm. You will be most welcome.

**The Macular Society -
A New Venue For A New Year**

The Macular Society Barnt Green Support Group, will be moving to the Parish Centre (behind St Andrew's Church), Sandhills Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NR.

Members come from a wide area – Alvechurch, Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Redditch and Rubery as well as Barnt Green. New members are always welcome.

The group usually meets on the last Friday of the month but there are some variations. For more information ring Wendy on 0121 445 1585 or Alan on 01527 877864 or contact the Macular Society on 0300 3030 111 www.macularsociety.org

Thank You

A very big thank you to Alvechurch Baptist Church for their very kind donation towards the running costs of The Grapevine.

Alvechurch Village Society

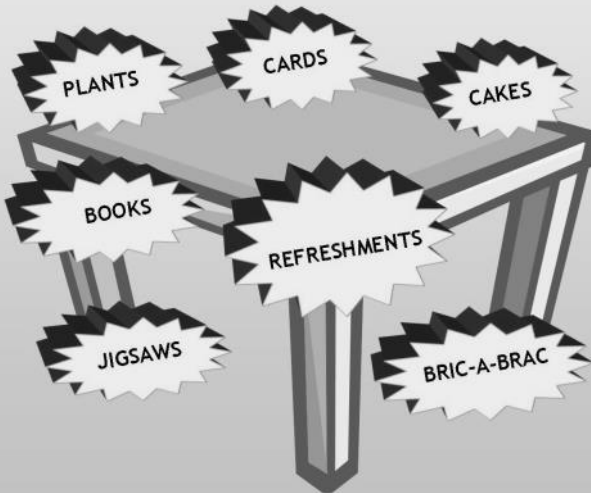
Ray Yarnell writes...

The February walk will be "Martin and Maria's February outing", led by Martin and Maria Clarke (07742 10007). The walk will start at 2.30pm on Sunday 7th February from Tanyard Lane car park.

Our February event is an opportunity to "Meet Alvechurch Community Choir" on Wednesday 24th February at 7.45pm in The Alvechurch Village Hall .Come along and enjoy a "sing a long" evening with your local choir. Admission is £1.00 for members and £2.00 for non - members which includes a drink and a biscuit.

ANNUAL TABLE TOP SALE

Saturday 2nd April 10.30am – 3pm
The Ark, St Laurence Church, Alvechurch
FREE ADMISSION



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Rowney Green Horticultural Society

Lindsay Smith writes...

Rowney Green Horticultural Society meets at the Peace Hall on the second Thursday each month at 7.30 pm. At the meeting on 11th February 2016 our guest speaker will be John Pullen and his subject is "Cactus". John has been a cactus grower and enthusiast for many years.

Guests are always welcome - £3.50 including refreshments. For more information please contact Lindsay Smith on 01527 592874.

News From The Tower

Geoff Franklin writes...

We hope that you all enjoyed the bells over Christmas. We couldn't manage to ring the full eight bells but the good news is that we've had a couple of people interested in joining us so we should be able to do better next Christmas. We've still got plenty of space if anybody else would like to try ringing. It's excellent exercise and for teenagers it can even count towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Come up any Tuesday night between 7:30pm and 9:00pm.

Advance warning of the ringers' Table Top Sale; a regular feature and the biggest and best in the village. This year we're in the Ark on April 2nd and we'll be starting to gather the stock together in March. Now is the time for everyone to take a look round the house (and garage and garden) and to have a general tidy up; we'll take almost anything except livestock and food. More details next month.

Christmas Thanks

Mick Fletcher writes... I would like to thank all those involved in the Christmas celebrations, to all those involved at the Ark Christmas meals, to Sue, Dick and David, the choir, the singing groups, to the Mitchell family for donating the tree, Lynda for decorating it and John Spreckley for donating the lights. All the parents of the children in the Christmas play for all their hard work in helping the children learn their lines, Peter, Alice and Hannah, Steve Thompson for his help fitting the lights and controlling them during the play, "all the cast" who were brilliant, Charlotte for her prompting, Graham for the projection scenes, Lynne and the ladies for their help with the costumes, Mark and Lynda and all those parents looking after the children between scenes, Andrew who helped with the stage, all those who helped clean away after the play, and last but not least, "Lysandra", a dear friend without whom it wouldn't have happened. If I have forgotten anyone please forgive me. Many many thanks. God Bless.

The Ark Café

The menu for the Ark Cafe for February and March up to the Easter break will be as follows:

February 4th Gammon with Parsley Sauce

February 11th Somerset Chicken

February 18th Closed for the half term break

Feb 25th Roast Lamb

March 3rd Roast Pork

March 10th Somerset Chicken

March 17th Roast Beef Carvery Lunch - Ticket Only

The Roast Beef Carvery is a Ticket Only Event and the tickets will cost £10 for a very good value three course lunch. Tickets are now available on a Thursday lunchtime or from Ian Price Mon - Fri at the Ark 9am to 2pm - 0121 447 7955.

Please come and support our lunches and please remember that they are available to everybody and are always at a very reasonable price.

Alvechurch Historical Society

Hilary Taylor writes...

Our first meeting of the New Year will be held on **Monday 1st February 2016**. This is our AGM, which will be followed by a slide & audio presentation on the Worcester & Birmingham canal, which runs through Alvechurch.

We have a varied programme of speakers for 2016, ranging from the Black Country to garden restoration, via the Titanic and the humour of retirement. Something for everyone, watch this space for details.

AHS meetings are held on the first Monday of the month, at 7.45pm, in the museum on School Lane. The next two meetings will be held on 1st February & 7th March.

Parking is available behind the Catholic Church, with their kind permission. New faces are always welcome, just come along, or contact our chairman, Anne Humphries on 0121 445 5955.

Ex-Service Association

The Ex-Service Association meets on the second Wednesday each month at the Sports and Social Club in Alvechurch at 12.30pm.

We are looking for new members to join us, so if you have ever served in any branch of the forces and are free at a lunchtime please come and join us.



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Events at Alvechurch Library

Alvechurch Library will be holding a Computer Drop in Session in February. If you're having trouble with your emails or editing your photographs then pop in on Tuesday 23rd February between 10.30am - 12.30pm and see if our volunteer can help.

We also provide free one to one basic computer lessons on Tuesday mornings. Please enquire at the library for availability for one to one lessons. For more information call The Hub on 01905 822722 email -

AlvechurchLib@worcestershire.gov.uk or pop into the Library on the Birmingham Road.

Health and Wellbeing Week

Alvechurch Library will be hosting a Health and Wellbeing Week starting on Monday 1st February.

Local fitness tutors will be available throughout the week to let you know about their classes and be able to answer any questions you may have. So if you're interested in starting something new then this is your chance to find out more. For more information pop into the library on the Birmingham Road, call the Hub on 01905 822722 or email - AlvechurchLib@worcestershire.gov.uk

Monday 1st February 10-12pm: **Sally Smith from Chasamba**. Partner Free dance classes that create an atmosphere that is non-intimidating, friendly, welcoming and will feel more like a fabulous night out. **Disco Duck Classes** a Pre-school dance classes for children from 18 months to 4 years. Contact Sally on 07948972657.

Monday 1st February 2.30-5.00pm: **Lee-Ann's Fitness** aims to deliver exercise in disguise with engaging classes for a wide range of fitness levels. There is a class for everyone in my timetable and each class has an emphasis on fun and enjoyment. Contact Lee-Ann on 07888841034.

Friday 5th February 9.30-12.30pm: **Donna from Pyjama Drama**. Sing, dance, pretend, play. Unique drama and creative play classes for children from 6 months to 7 years. Contact Donna on 01527 908 935.

Friday 5th February 2.30-5pm and Saturday 6th February 11-12.30pm: **Alison from Piloxing**. Piloxing is an empowering interval fusion of Pilates, non-contact boxing moves and dance which is suitable for all levels of fitness. Contact Alison on 07790916947.

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School Governor Vacancy

A vacancy has arisen for a new co-opted governor at Crown Meadow First School, Alvechurch, the term of office is 4 years.

The Governing Body are looking to appoint someone with connections within the local community, ideally with expertise and skills in human resources, finance or business management.

If you would like to find out more about this rewarding role, please contact Jane Faulkner, Chair of Governors via the School Office on 0121 445 4050 or office@crowmeadow.worcs.sch.uk

Table Top Sale & Coffee Morning

at Hopwood Village Hall

In aid of the restoration of the Village Hall to take place on Saturday 13th February 2016 from 10am till 2pm. £7.00 per table. To book a table please contact Peter Joannides on 0121 445 4022.

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FOR FURTHER INFO

Parish Prayers

Prayers will be said at St Laurence Church for the residents of the following roads:



Sunday 7th February – Jays Crescent
Sunday 14th February – Kingfisher Court
Sunday 21st February – Latimer Road
Sunday 28th February – Lea End Lane

Oswald - The Saint for Leap Year

There is a saint for Leap Year: St Oswald of Worcester, who died on 29th February 992. His family story was extraordinary, and full of some surprising 'leaps', all by itself. It provides a tantalising glimpse of what happened to at least one of those pagan Viking warriors who settled in Anglo-Saxon Britain.

For Oswald's great-uncle had come to England c 865, as part of the '*Great Heathen Army*' of Viking invaders. But his son, Oswald's uncle, Oda, forsook paganism, and not only converted to Christianity, but actually ended up as Archbishop of Canterbury. From there, Oda was in a position to help his nephew, Oswald, which he did.

Oda sent young Oswald to be educated at the abbey of Fleury, then a great centre of learning. There Oswald absorbed the Benedictine ideals which would guide his later life and work. Back in England, he became bishop of Worcester in 961, and with the support of King Edgar, eagerly joined in major reforms of the Anglo-Saxon church. In 972 Oswald was made Archbishop of York, and seems to have taken a great interest in renewing the church in the Danelaw. He founded Ramsey Abbey, which became one of the great Fenland monasteries.

Oswald was a popular Archbishop, who was in the habit of washing the feet of the poor every day in Lent. On the 29th February 992 he had just completed this service at Worcester, when he collapsed and died. Later Oswald and his successor at Worcester, Wulfstan came to be the two chief saints of Worcester. You can see them together, for instance, flanking the tomb of King John before the high altar of the cathedral.



Lent Hard Word Search

T G P W Z P C B E G W P P Y I R T V J P
B G O D T R I D U U M S A C R U M Y Y J
Y T N G K I L V H O L Y S A T U R D A Y
A T O N E M E N T F O R S I N D M R T E
D Y I I G S N S T Q N P I G D F R L L C
S I T T C T T E D I T N O I S S A P P N
E B A S R Q A P R F E C N E N I T S B A
N B C A L U P T P C Y Q S P U I P M W N
D C I F K I E U R Y P M U B P A X G Y E
E Z F M U N L A A A T Y N I W H N Y R P
W J I P O Q C G Y D Y A D I R F D O O G
H I T W D U H E E N C N A M F O L L A F
S T R R Y A D S R U H T Y L O H K D K V
A Z O Z T G Q I X S K T E O A L E H Z D
D J M L R E C M A M I S E G A X E S Q E
T O W K O S T A Q L G H N G M P W I S I
Y S T K F I J G A A P O Y T L D Y S Q K
Y K W H H M W K B P N F O S K Q L L V F
Y H K D X A G R J Z E I X G Q C O H I W
O I M P C T Y R U T J V C A W G H I F E

Abstinence

Ash Wednesday

Atonement for Sin

Fall of Man

Fasting

Forty

Good Friday

Holy Saturday

Holy Thursday

Holy Week

Lent

Mortification

Palm Sunday

Passion Sunday

Passiontide

Penance

Prayer

Quinquagesima

Septuagesima

Sexagesima

Triduum Sacrum

“Dust and Glory”: The Ecumenical Lent Course for 2016

CTARG (Churches Together in Alvechurch and Rowney Green) are arranging another Ecumenical Lent Course, beginning from Ash Wednesday on 10 February. Everyone is welcome to whichever group meets at the most convenient time for them.

This year we are using the book of daily Bible readings and reflections, *“Dust and Glory”*, by David Runcorn, who is a popular writer, speaker, teacher, retreat leader and spiritual guide.

As the author says of the book, *“Dust and Glory”* acknowledges both the dust of our mortality and the glory that keeps breaking in with unexpected life, hope and new beginnings. The aim is always to draw us to authentic faith, a way of living and believing that is real and vulnerable, strong in knowing its limits, rooted in joy and wonder, and blessed with the healing and merciful presence of God.

The groups are listed below. Please choose a group and then contact the leader of that group to tell them of your interest and to check details.

Day	Time	Start date	Leader	Venue
Wednesday	7.30pm	17th February	Fiona Shea. 07870 915892 fk Shea@gmail.com	13 Athlestan Close
Monday	11am or 7:30pm depending on demand	15th February	Sue Phillips. 445 3620 sue@suephillips.org	The Lounge (There will be a small charge for this group)
Wednesday	10.15am	17th February	Felicity Rixon. 445 2371 felicityrixon@hotmail.com	St Mary's, School Lane
Wednesday	2.00pm	10th February	Dick Russell. 445 3083 russell2gothic@btinternet.com	32 Callow Hill Road
Thursday	7.30pm	11th February	Graham & Lynn Clark. 445 2547 clarkalvechurch@sky.com	The Coach House, School Lane

“Dust and Glory”: A BRF Quiet Day with David Runcorn

House of the Open Door, Childswickham House, Broadway. WR12 7HH

Thursday 11 February, 9.45am – 4pm £30.00 (including lunch)

This will be day for quiet, prayer and reflection. Suggestions will be offered for the use of the time through the day - so no prior experience of quiet days, silence or prayer is necessary. It will be led by the Revd David Runcorn, writer, retreat leader, conference speaker and spiritual director. He is Associate Director of Ordinands and Warden of Readers in the Diocese of Gloucester. He is the author of the book, *“Dust and Glory”*, which we are using in our ecumenical Lent house groups this year.

Book by calling **01865 319700** or visiting: **www.brfonline.org.uk/2016-programme**

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There will also be a OneFitMama Toddlers Class also on a Monday starting at 10.45am.

Contact Marie for this class on 07875498316.

Pancake Afternoon

Meryl Hill writes...

Avoid the February gloom by coming in for a pancake, tea and chat at the Baptist Church on Shrove Tuesday which is on February 9th. This year, with Easter being early it is not taking place during half term.

We will be open 2.30p.m.-4.30p.m. so hope to see you then.



The Midland Sinfonia presents Brass Delights

St. Lawrence Church, Alvechurch

Saturday 6 February 7 for 7.30pm

Back again after a most wonderful evening last year are the
Holborne Brass Ensemble

The splendid, talented and entertaining performers of the group are:-

Trevor Jones and Greg McEwan, trumpets

Tim Stidwill, horn, Philip Green, tuba and

Les Whitehouse, trombone

The evening has a mixed programme of classical and popular; in all something to suit all tastes and ages and will include the music of Bach, Dvorak, Ewald, Handel, Gershwin, Lennon and McCartney, Joplin and Previn.

Tickets: on the door £13, in advance £12 from The Village Green Grocer,

Alvechurch or book online at www.midlandsinfonia.co.uk

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For more information: marian@midlandsinfonia.co.uk or 0121 447 7040

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Sally teaches classes all day on a Wednesday at The Ark:

9.30 – 10.45am – Mindfulness **Yoga** (New class)

12.45 – 2pm – Mindfulness **Yoga**

2.10 – 2.55pm – Mindfulness **Meditation**

7 – 8.15pm – Mindfulness **Yoga**

She also teaches classes in the evening at Blackwell First School, small group and one to one sessions, as well as regular day-long Retreat Days.

To book, contact Sally on 0790 366 3085, classes@MyYogaMind.co.uk or visit www.MyYogaMind.co.uk



A Letter From Bishop John

By Bishop John Bishop of Worcester



Lent falls very early this year – there were even some Easter eggs in the shops before Christmas. Sadly, the pattern of the Christian year is lost on many people in today’s society in a way that it wasn’t a few generations ago.

It struck me when re-reading some of Thomas Hardy’s novels that in the mid-nineteenth century Christian festivals were part of the stuff of ordinary living even among those who would not have considered themselves ‘*religious*’. Things have changed greatly.

Christmas remains very much in the public consciousness - perhaps, because the birth of a new baby is a ‘*good news*’ story. Easter, however, with death at its centre, is not so palatable. So, when it is remembered in our society it is sanitised and the shops stock only saccharine reminders like Easter bunnies and eggs.

However, to contemplate death is not, in fact, macabre. As Denise wrote: *‘Contemplating mortality is not about being prepared to die, it is about being prepared to live. And that is what I am doing now, more freely and more fully than I have since childhood. The cancer has not made life more precious – that would make it seem like something fragile to lock away in the cupboard. No, it has made it more delicious.’*

Time and again, those faced with the brevity of life talk of cherishing it more as a result. I was asked some years ago what I thought the function of the Church is. I replied that it is to prepare people to die. That might sound strange, particularly since we have dedicated ourselves as a diocese to be a Kingdom people, committed to promote love, compassion, justice and freedom in the here and now.

However, understanding and accepting the finite nature of life and its brevity is likely to make us appreciate it more and live it better. It will enable us to see our lives in a wider and more glorious context: the fulfilment of God’s great plan to reconcile the whole creation to himself in Jesus. I am not expecting that to happen in your lifetime or mine, though I’d be delighted if it did. If it doesn’t, we shall all have to experience death as Jesus did.

I suggest mediating upon death this Lent, in order that your life might become more delicious – and godly. May you be enabled to draw close to the crucified Lord of Life this Lent and experience his grace, his truth and his love.

John

Ash Wednesday:

A Good Time To Admit You Are Sorry

Have you done something which haunts you? Which makes you feel restless and defensive, every time you think of it? Why not deal with it this month, and put it behind you? Whatever your mistake has been, consider what the Bible has to say to you:

'I have not come to call the virtuous but sinners to repentance' (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' (Isaiah 55.7)

'Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.' (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to him this Ash Wednesday. What a wonderful offer! Make the most of it, and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

Alvechurch WI

Pam Horsfield writes...

Alvechurch WI rounded off 2015 with an excellent Christmas meal at Barnt Green Cricket Club where Geoff Hickman and his brilliant helpers as usual served delicious food. The room looked welcoming, as we went in and it was special for committee members to be able to relax and enjoy their evening by being looked after along with their friends, instead of being concerned with the organisation. Nigel Strong was our entertainer and we rounded off the evening with his music and

carols.

January began with Denise wishing members and visitors a healthy and happy new year, after which we sang '*Jerusalem*'. Members were told of the sad loss of a past member, Beth Hopton, who many years ago used to be in our Drama Group and also entertained us with her rendition of '*Albert and the Lion*' Never to be forgotten by those who heard it!

The evening then consisted of members putting in bids for items brought by members and raising money for our funds, while having a chance to catch up news with friends. We also had a bran tub of presents to raise money for the ACWW, a charity which WI supports and which helps women worldwide to become independent. It was a relaxed evening and enjoyable.

February's meeting is on Monday 8th (the second Monday of the month, in the Village Hall) when our speaker will be talking on '*The Secret Life of a Magician*'. Do come along and meet us. Our information is always on our board by the traffic lights in the village, or you can phone me on 445 4631.

Rowney Green Flower Club

Clare Kenny writes...

The Flower Club meets at Rowney Green Village hall every 4th Thursday of the month, at 7.45pm.

We welcome back on Thursday 25th February, Joy Gill who creates lovely displays with a theme of '*Spring Forward*'. The competition title is '*Green and Yellow*'. All arrangements are raffled at the end of the demonstration, with refreshments also served.

Members pay an annual subscription of £18 with visitors paying £3. Raffle tickets are £1. For more info please contact Celia on 0121 445 4824.

Obituary

Finlay Church

Local schoolboy, Finlay Church lost his brave battle with brain cancer on 27th November 2015. He passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his family, aged just 11 years old.

Although a sad occasion, Fin's funeral, which took place on December 7th at St Laurence Church, Alvechurch, was a celebration of his short life - one that was lived to the full. The streets of Alvechurch were lined with mourners all wishing to say good-bye to a much loved little boy, with the service attended by over five-hundred people. A police escort and guard were in attendance, to honour Fin's dreams of becoming a Police Officer, and his coffin was carried by his Karate instructors, all wearing their distinctive white gi's. Family members held orange flowers, Fin's favourite colour. Fin leaves behind a phenomenal legacy, that will be remembered always.

In June 2014 Finlay was diagnosed with a Grade 4 Glioblastoma malignant brain tumour and underwent major brain surgery at Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH) before undergoing radiotherapy, chemotherapy and a clinical trial. Approximately half way through this treatment plan, it was discovered Fin's tumour had returned - devastating news for the family who were now told they faced a 'terminal' prognosis. Fin underwent a second operation at Alder Hey in Liverpool, where 90% of his tumour was removed, and chemotherapy Gliadel wafers inserted directly into the tumour cavity to try to slow the spread of his disease.

Despite this horribly traumatic time, Fin, with lots of help from wonderful family, friends, local and national businesses and even some celebrity support, channelled his energy into raising £100,000 for Birmingham Children's

Hospital and Brain Tumour Research, two charities that were very close to his heart. One of the most memorable events was Operation Teddy Bear, which saw Finlay break a Guinness World Record for the longest line of teddy bears – smashing the previous record with a whopping 15,534 bears! A phenomenal achievement, accomplished just three days after major brain surgery.

Throughout his illness Fin has shown incredible strength, courage, kindness and positivity. He will be remembered for his wonderful smile and cheeky sense of humour. He has been extremely grateful for some phenomenal experiences with West Midlands Police, gaining his 1st and 2nd Dan honorary black belts, riding Europe's longest zipwire, meeting Chelsea players, being mascot at an England Cricket match and even getting a private home screening of the latest Hunger Games film, just days before he died.

Finlay leaves behind devastated parents Penny and Wayne, younger siblings Mackenzie and Tegan, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins, not to mention his close friends. Fin's family have vowed to continue his fundraising and would like to provide a memorial that the local children of Alvechurch can enjoy or visit to remember the amazing achievements Fin made in his short life, and as a lasting legacy to his courage and bravery.

Donations can be made care of Thomas Brothers, 494 Evesham Road, Redditch, B97 5JF. Telephone number: 01527 547777

Follow us at:
www.facebook.com/finlaysjourney



Flowers for FEBRUARY

	7 February	14 February	21 February	28 February
Sanctuary	Virginia Davis	LENT No flowers	LENT No flowers	LENT No flowers
Lady Chapel	Virginia Davis	LENT No flowers	LENT No flowers	LENT No flowers
In memory of	Her mother Mrs Catley			

What a wonderful response I had asking for help at Christmas. Along came Elizabeth, Janet, Ruth, Jen, Ann H, and Helen. Although unable to help on the day Monica very Kindly produced the window arrangements 'greened up' in advance for us to add the flowers on the day. It was a joyous time which was enhanced by the children in church rehearsing for their nativity play and so the atmosphere was hectic, noisy and delightful. We even treated ourselves to coffee and Stollen Cake!

We are now entering into the season of Lent where traditionally the church is without flowers until Easter. It is during this time that I produce my new Rota for the church year beginning at Easter. If you would like to do flowers at any time or would like me to arrange to have flowers dedicated to a loved one or to celebrate an occasion please get in touch so I can include as much detail as possible on the chart.

Many thanks

Ann Thurrell 0121 447 7668 or
email: annthurrell@hotmail.co.uk

From The Registers



Funerals and Cremations

May they rest in the peace of Christ

2 February

Robert 'Bob' Jones

Who's who

Rector	Revd Richard Bubbers, The Rectory, School Lane, 445 1087 stlaurencealvechurch@yahoo.co.uk
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mr Dick Russell, 2 Gothic Cottages, Radford Rd, 445 3083 Ms Sue Phillips, Withybed Green, 445 3620
Authorised Lay Ministers	Mrs Helena Allen, 117 Birmingham Road, 445 5605 Mr Martin Allen, 117 Birmingham Road, 445 5605 Mrs Philippa Brakes, 56 Callow Hill Road, 445 3983 Mr Graham Clark, The Coach House, School Lane, 445 2547 Mrs Lynne Clark, The Coach House, School Lane, 445 2547 Mr Michael Fletcher, 13 Red Lion Street, 447 8451 Mrs Annette Thomas, 8 Snake Lane, 445 5180 Ms Gloria Wilson, 11 Bear Hill Drive, 445 1854
Churchwardens	Mr Graham Clark, The Coach House, School Lane, 445 2547 Mr Mick Fletcher, 13 Red Lion Street, 447 8451
Deputy Wardens	Mr Colin Bennett, 122 Redditch Road, 01527 64077 Mr David Richmond, The Ferns, Chapel Lane, 445 3569 Mrs Alison Smith, 12 Hollington Road, 447 7293 Mr Andy Notley, 38 The Buckleys, B48 7NF
PCC Secretary	Mrs Enid Brumsen, 32 Callow Hill Road, 445 0663
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Susan Seeley, 40 Bear Hill, B48 7JX
Organist & Choirmaster	Mr David Richmond, The Ferns, Chapel Lane, 445 3569
Electoral Roll Officer	Mrs Janet Wright, 28 Callow Hill Road, 445 4335
Tower Captain	Mr Colin Bennett, 122 Redditch Road , 01527 64077
Singing Group	Mrs Lynda Wolstencroft, 49 Hinton Avenue, 445 3212
Mum's the Word	Mrs Kate Grove, 07773509390
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) & Grapevine advertising) Grapevine Editor)	Mr Ian Price, The Ark, School Lane, 447 7955 thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk

PCC Special Responsibilities

Finance and Standing Committee

Graham Clark	Mick Fletcher
Alison Smith	Bob Dale
Janet Wright	Susan Seeley

Children and Youth Committee

Martin Allen	Mick Fletcher
Thomas Birchall	Lynne Clark

Buildings, Fabric and Churchyard Committee

Mick Fletcher	Colin Bennett
David Richmond	Jill Woolley
Janet Wright	Lynne Clark
Andy Humphries	

Task Committee

Mick Fletcher	Dick Russell
Graham Clark	Sue Phillips

Peru and Missionary Committee

Sue Phillips	Dick Russell
Gordon Parsons	Margaret Haste

Calendar for FEBRUARY



Monday 1	7.45pm	Alvechurch Historical Society: AGM followed by a presentation on the Worcester & Birmingham canal: Museum, School Lane
Wednesday 3	7.30pm	Hillside WI: The Ark
Thursday 4	9.30am	Mums The Word
	10.00am	Tiny Tots Service: St Laurence Church
	12.30pm	Ark Café: Gammon with Parsley Sauce
Saturday 6	7.30pm	The Midland Sinfonia presents Holborne Brass Ensemble Concert: St Laurence Church
Sunday 7	2.30pm	Alvechurch Village Society: Martin and Maria's February Outing: Meet at Tanyard Lane Car Park
Monday 8	1.45pm	Forget-Me-Nots: The Ark
	7.30pm	Ark Angels WI: The Ark
	7.30pm	Alvechurch WI: Talk ' <i>The Secret Life of a Magician</i> ': Alvechurch Village Hall
Tuesday 9	2.30pm	Pancake Afternoon: Alvechurch Baptist Church
Thursday 11	9.30am	Mums The Word
	12.30pm	Ark Café: Somerset Chicken
	7.30pm	Rowney Green Horticultural Society: ' <i>Cactus</i> ' talk by John Pullen: Peace Hall, Rowney Green
Saturday 13	10.00am	Table Top Sale and Coffee Morning: Hopwood Village Hall
Sunday 14		MARCH GRAPEVINE GOES TO PRESS - <i>Articles to thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk</i>
Thursday 18	9.30am	Mums The Word No café today
Monday 22	1.45pm	Forget-Me-Nots: The Ark
Tuesday 23	10.30am	Computer Drop in Session: Alvechurch Library
Wednesday 24	2.00pm	St Laurence Women's Fellowship: Talk by Janis Waldron on the history of pearls: Tanyard Centre
	7.45pm	Alvechurch Village Society: Meet the Alvechurch Community Choir: Alvechurch Village Hall
Thursday 25	9.30am	Mums The Word
	12.30pm	Ark Café: Roast Lamb
	7.45pm	Rowney Green Flower Club: ' <i>Spring Forward</i> ' displays by Joy Gill: Rowney Green Village Hall
Sunday 28	1.30pm	The Midland Sinfonia: Young Musicians Showcase: St Laurence Church: FREE admission