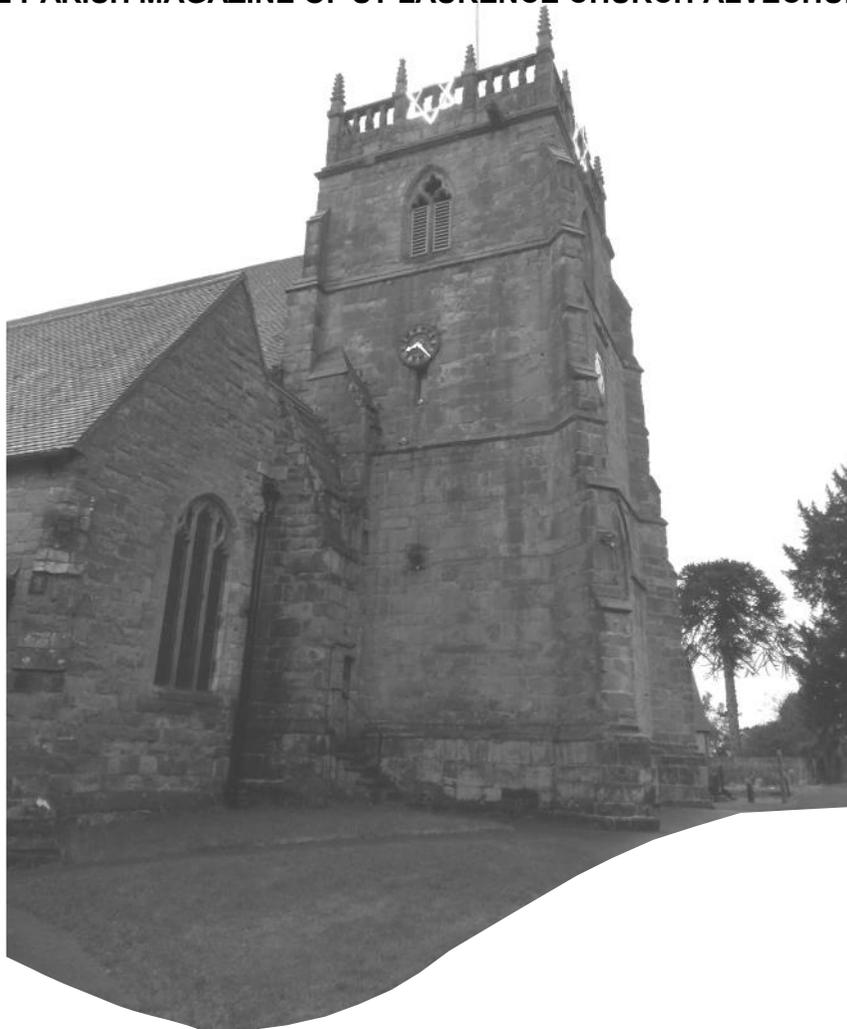


The **Grapevine**

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ST LAURENCE CHURCH ALVECHURCH



FEBRUARY 2020

Online at www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org/monthly-magazine

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

On the 2nd Sunday of the month (4th in January), there will be a United Service (Churches Together in Alvechurch and Rowney Green), rotating between Alvechurch Baptist Church, St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Rowney Green Shared Church and ourselves

At Rowney Green Shared Church

9.30am Methodist/Anglican Service

DAILY SERVICE

9.00am Monday to Friday in St Laurence Church

ORGANISATIONS

Sunday Club - Sundays during term time 9.30am Church & Ark

Choir - Thursdays at 7.45pm in Church (445 3569)

Bellringers - Sundays at 10.45am

Tuesday Practice at 7.30pm (01527 64077)

**Ark Tots and Toddlers (Mum's the Word) - Thursdays 9.30am to 11.10am in The Ark
Tiny Tots Service - 10.45am 4th Thursday of the month (sarah100work@gmail.com)**

Ark Cafe - 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

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Finding the Good News

Philippa Brakes writes...

Fires in Australia, murders in British cities, war in Syria – sometimes it seems as if we only hear bad/sad news. What about the good news?

In no particular order : Renewable energy could well expand by 50% over the next 5 years, mountain gorilla numbers in Eastern Africa are growing, a church and a mosque in New York joined forces to spread good cheer this Christmas serving a meal and health screening to struggling neighbours. Also only 150 years ago almost no one had access to clean drinking water, now 87% of the world's population do; we're getting there!

I read recently a comment that most religions seem to spend a great deal of time fasting while Christians seem always to be feasting! An over simplification perhaps, as fasting does have a place in Christian worship and tradition, especially during Lent; but perhaps the main reason we spend so much time celebrating is because we are the receivers and givers of the good news, and it's worth celebrating.

It's the simplest good news in the world. God isn't a grumpy old man up in the sky sending thunderbolts and grumbling endlessly about the deterioration of modern manners and behaviour. He's... well, words fail me – extraordinary, phenomenal. When you let him into your life, the brightest moments become incandescent

with joy and the deepest, darkest times become safer and more bearable, because the person who loves and knows you best of all is right there with you, wanting to help.

Judgement is a frightening word and so often bandied around by those who seek to put God in a box marked 'rules'. Jesus was a consummate rule breaker. When he met people, he simply didn't care what they looked like or what they had done. He just looked straight through all the surface stuff we so often use to sum people up and dismiss them, and saw what could be. Oh the joy of meeting someone who just gets you. God gets us; he made us didn't he? He wants to get really close if only we could stop being so determined to push him away and do it all by ourselves. The truly good news is that he was willing to give everything to make sure that we could have that close relationship. So...Jesus came and he exemplifies the good news. His first miracle was to turn water into wine at a wedding. The time for celebration was here; light and joy had come into the world. Although he came to suffer and die, Jesus is the good news because he loved us too much, he chose to put himself through all the bad stuff so that we could be close to God, just as we are. We can bask in the joy and freedom of being enough for God. He, in Jesus, did the hard work of reconciliation. All God asks of us is that we accept that perfect, accepting, transforming love and reflect it to others, so that they will know that they are enough – they are welcome to join the feast – they don't even have to dress up.

Joyful and blessed 2020 folks!

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Rowney Green Horticultural Society

Lindsay Smith writes...

Rowney Green Horticultural Society meets at the Village Hall on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30pm. On 13th February 2020 we welcome Simon Gulliver, one of the garden advisors to the National Trust, and his topic will be "The Making of the Midlands Landscape".

Guests are always welcome - £3.50 including refreshments. For more information please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay Smith on 01527 592874

Alvechurch Village Society Walks

Walks are held on the first Sunday of the month, unless this conflicts with a Bank Holiday. Weather conditions occasionally mean a walk has to be cancelled; check with the leaders if necessary.

Our next walk is on 2nd February.

Walk: **Via the Canals and Back**

Leader: Hilary Taylor

Meet: Tanyard Lane car park

Time: 2.30pm

Parish Prayers

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

2 February – Withybed Green

9 February – Withybed Lane

16 February - Woodpecker Close

23 February – Altheston Close



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Alvechurch WI

Pam Horsfield writes...

Well what a night/meeting that was!

Julie our president welcomed members and several visitors, of whom some have already signed up to join us. Brilliant news! She also thanked Jean for the lovely cake brought for us to enjoy for her special birthday.

Angela was collecting subs for the year and also money for February's meal she's coming up with excellent ideas for making the process of paying more simple instead of standing in a long queue waiting for the receipt.

Several members have been cheered up by friends visiting them or texting, and Julie is trying to create a video collage of this month's meeting to help absent members see what we've been doing. It's a different way to show care and keep them involved.

It was certainly a good month to video, as we had Vijay to teach us bhangra dancing, and what a lot of fun we had! Forty of us were taught bhangra moves which kept us totally involved for an hour and we all agreed that we'd had a fabulous time.

Vijay then gave a demonstration of how a professional would perform (which was very impressive!), after which Denise thanked him for all the fun we'd had.

Next month we meet at Barnt Green Cricket Club at 5:30pm for our 6 o'clock meal and this will be followed by entertainment from Melissa Hollick.

ADVANCE NOTICE

MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

11th July 2020

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or email

thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk

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Ark Tots and Toddlers Group at St Laurence church

Sarah Linton writes...

Are you a Parent, Grandparent or Carer looking after a baby or little ones who are not yet in full-time school?

Would you like a friendly play environment to bring them along to?

A warm welcome awaits you and your Little Ones, for our Stay and Play group at St Laurence church. Held in the Ark from **9.30am – 11.00am** on Thursdays during school term times. It's a relaxed and friendly time to chat and to play with your Little Ones with a wide range of toys and activities and on-going refreshments. At the end of each session we finish with a singing time.

Although we don't make a specific charge, we welcome your contribution towards the facilities, refreshments and new toys/equipment.

So do come and join us as often as you wish. We look forward to welcoming you. PLEASE NOTE - no session on Thursday 20th February 2020 (half term).

Tiny Tots in Church

Once a month we have an opportunity for you to bring your Little Ones through into the church.

At the end of our Ark Tots and Toddlers session, instead of our usual singing time, we invite you to our Tiny Tots Service. You are welcome to come and join in this short, very relaxed and informal time of singing and interactive Bible story, designed especially for babies and toddlers to move around in in their own way!

During the normal Ark Tots and Toddler session that day, there is a craft activity available, which relates to that month's Bible story. So do come over to our craft table and have a go at the activity with your Toddler or Child. Our Tiny Tots Services are usually on the **4th Thursday at 10.45am**. This month's Tiny Tots Service will be on **Thursday February 27th**.

Sunday Club at St Laurence church

Sarah Linton writes...

Do you have children and young people and would like to bring them along to a church Family Service?

As part of the **weekly 9.30 Family Service** St Laurence provides a range of activities for Toddlers and children of all ages. The beginning and end parts of each service are spent in the church with their families. During the middle, more adult-focused part of the service, activities for the different age groups are available through in The Ark, with adult leaders.

Each Sunday we have our Jack-in-the-Box Group for **children aged 7 and under**. Jack, the loveable Labrador puppet, introduces the Bible story and theme for that Sunday, with songs, interactive Bible story and craft activity.

Parents are also welcome to bring **babies and toddlers** through into The Ark during Sunday Club time, to join in with Jack-in-the-Box or just wander around and play with the toys provided. There is also a toy area within the Choir Vestry at the back of the church, which can be freely accessed at any time during the service, as well as activity backpacks to take into the pews with babies and young children.

For Young People aged 8 and over a different and varied range of fun and interesting activities are planned week by week.

For young people aged 11 to 14, we are running an Alpha Youth course on Sunday evenings in the Ark from 6 pm to 8 pm, beginning on 12 January and running through to 29 March (apart from half term), exploring life, faith and meaning. For more information, please contact Richard Bubbers, our Rector.

So come along and join us as we worship together Sunday by Sunday.

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The Ark Cafe

The menu for February is as follows:

February 6th ~ Beef Casserole

February 13th ~ Roast Pork

February 20th ~ Closed for Half Term

February 27th ~ Somerset Chicken

Please support the Ark Cafe.

News From The Tower

Geoff Franklin writes...



The bell ringers will be holding their annual Table Top Sale in the Ark on Saturday March 28th. All the usual attractions; jumble sale, lots of individual stalls, plenty of tea and cakes. Come and get your bargains. More details next month.

We're also starting our annual recruitment drive. We've got a good core of regular ringers at St Laurence but only nine of them and that doesn't leave much leeway for holidays, illness, and the like. Ringing isn't difficult but it's good exercise for mind and body. You don't need to be strong, you don't need to be musical, and you don't need to be a member of the church. If you're fit enough to climb the stairs to the ringing chamber and tall enough to reach the ropes then you qualify.

But what do you get out of it? When you start ringing you'll be getting an hour of gentle exercise every week and that's a good start to the New Year. Physically you'll be standing and stretching, mentally you'll be listening to the sound of the bells and making sure that you're ringing in the right place in the sequence. At its simplest that's a straightforward 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8 but it becomes more interesting when we vary the order. You'll be part of a long history doing this. The unique sound of English Change Ringing goes back to the 17th Century.

Get in touch or just come up the tower on a Sunday morning or a Tuesday evening. All that we ask is that you don't walk in whilst we're actually ringing; it'll be noisy and we'll be too busy to talk to you. Wait a couple of minutes until we pause for a breather.



ART EXHIBITION @ The Ark

St Laurence Church, School Lane,
Alvechurch, B48 7SB

Tuesday 11th February 2020
11.30am to 1.30pm

Come along to The Ark to see all the wonderful work our talented students have created!

For more details please come along or call - 0121 251 0080

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10th March 2020

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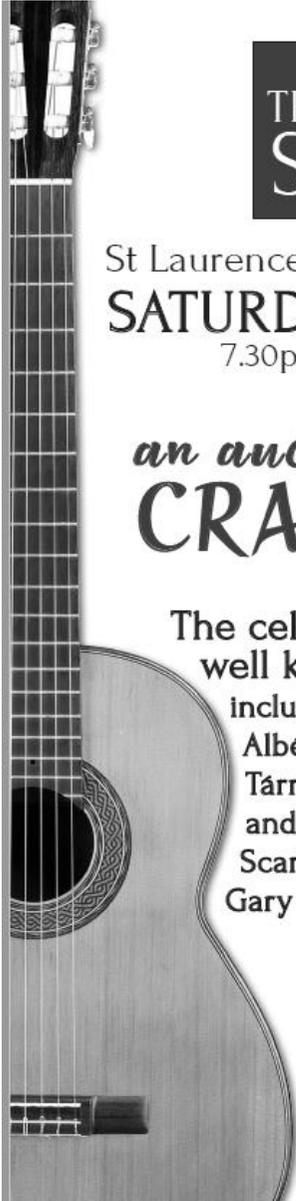
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The Midland Sinfonia - GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2020. Doors & bar open at 6.45pm for 7.30pm start

Our annual fundraiser - an entertaining general knowledge quiz plus fish/spring roll and chip supper. Teams of up to six with singles accommodated. £10pp to include supper. Usual bar available or corkage payment. **Booking essential** - contact details same as the above concert or call Marian on 0121 447 7040.

LABOUR EXPLOITATION IS MODERN DAY SLAVERY

A morning sponsored by Faith at Work in Worcestershire, to raise awareness of the current issue of modern slavery and human trafficking. Modern slavery and exploitation is found throughout our economy, including in rural areas. This event will be of interest to anyone concerned and wanting to learn how to respond safely and effectively, should they ever find themselves coming across signs of such exploitation. The morning will be led by Vicki Ridgewell and Karen Perry of West Mercia Police, Exploitation and Vulnerability Team.

Saturday 8th February 2020

**9:45am for teas & coffees. 10:00am start.
1:00pm close.**

The Ark St Laurence Church Alvechurch
School Lane, Alvechurch. B48 7SB
Event is Free and venue is fully accessible.

Tickets available from

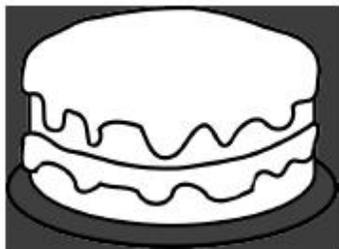
Online: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/slavery-and-human-trafficking-in-our-economy-tickets-83980123811?aff=affiliate1>

Email: comms@faithatwork.org.uk

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2.30 - 4.30pm

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St. Valentine's Day Word Search

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Y O U R A L T S F H
P R A Y S N T S T E
T B N G E R E I E V
R C O L U M W R V O
A D A E O L Q U O B
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Valentines Special

Couples Massage Workshop

Treat yourselves this Valentine's Day to something special for the both of you.

Come and join our 4 hour massage workshop for loving couples on Sunday 9th February 2020.

A developed routine that will not only make you give a great massage but something you can call upon time and time again.

In this relaxed but fun environment you will learn how to give each other an amazing shoulder, neck and head massage.

Learn to connect physically with your partner in a romantic way

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**Sunday 9th February
2020
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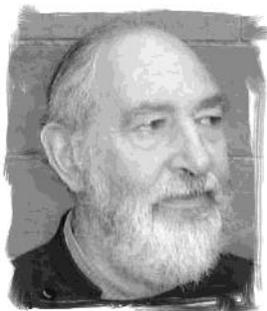
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Dick Russell's Series of vignettes No 2

Settling in to Alvechurch in 1959. Once I had settled into my new 'digs', the first service I attended at St Laurence Church in Alvechurch was an 8 o'clock service of Holy Communion where I introduced myself to the rector, Patrick Blakiston. It was held in the Lady Chapel. There were no chairs up front as there are today, the foremost seating being the front pews. Occupying the end of that pew was a man who had entered carrying his bowler hat and attired in a pin-striped black suit. This gentleman, I learned was a Mr Higgins, known to his close friends as '*Bunny*' Higgins I believe, I later learned that he was Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the County of Worcestershire. He attended this service every Sunday, and was always the first person to the altar rail to receive communion, and the first to be out of the church at the end, and I never ever spoke to him nor he to me. I later that day attended Evensong, which was on that occasion led by the curate, an elderly, gentle, and very intelligent, man who had been a coalminer but worked his way from the coalface into a position of some authority at the mine and also in the NUM, and had made a study of communism in Russia under Stalin, He had been ordained to the clergy at a later age than usual at that time.

I was to discover that a number of people in the village thought he was the '*vicar*', and the newly appointed rector was his curate. His favourite task was ministering among the Rowney Green Mission Church congregation. This small building which had been built in Victorian times, but was well-equipped, as was a similar one in Hopwood, (and both had proper pipe-organs). The former was to be discovered along a path running from one side of the road leading to Lower Rowney Green, about one quarter of the way down, to the same road as it wended its way back again to the upper village. From late April to early May the church was surrounded with a carpet of bluebells in its peaceful sunny glade.

Both churches were decommissioned some time later. That at Rowney Green is now an attractive house, easily recognised for what it had been. I conducted Matins there twice a month, as a rule, once I had been licensed as a Lay Reader.





World Day Of Prayer 6th March 2020



Rise! Take up your mat, and Walk!

An ecumenical event with materials produced by the Christian
Women of ZIMBABWE

11:45 am Alvechurch Baptist Church:
Bible Study John 5: 2-9

6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

St Mary's Church:

World Day of Prayer Service with supper, activities, prayer and
worship featuring young people from St Laurence church.

The World Day of Prayer is an ecumenical event that takes place on the first Friday in March every year. Each year the service is produced by Christian women from a different country. On the day itself 120 different countries participate in a wave of prayer spanning the globe. This year leadership will be provided by St Laurence church, with the two events taking place at Alvechurch Baptist Church and St Mary's church. Both events are open to everyone. The evening event will include a simple meal inspired by the children of Montgomery Heights Orphanage in Zimbabwe. This will be followed by activities, songs, prayers, worship and a meditation prepared for us by women from Zimbabwe.

Come, taste, and share in heartfelt prayers of peace, reconciliation
and love.

The Ecumenical Lent course for 2020

CTARG (Churches Together in Alvechurch and Rowney Green) are arranging another series of Ecumenical Lent Housegroups, beginning from **Ash Wednesday on 26 February**. Everyone is welcome to whichever group meets at the most convenient time for them.

This year we are using the Archbishops' Lent Book for 2020, "*Saying yes to life*," by Ruth Valerio, which lifts our focus from every day (and perfectly natural) concerns to issues that are impacting millions of lives around the world. As people made in the image of God, we are entrusted to look after what God has made - to share in the joy and creativity of God in making a difference for good. Ruth Valerio imaginatively draws on the Days of Creation (Genesis 1 - 2.2) in relating themes of light, water, land, the seasons, other creatures, humankind, Sabbath rest and resurrection hope to matters of environmental, ethical and social concern.

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
Monday	10.30am	2 March	Roger Wardle & Sue Phillips Wardle 445 0505 rogerwardle1944@gmail.com sue@suephillips.org.uk	55 Birmingham Road
Wednesday	10.30am	4 March	Jane Lavery and Felicity Rixon 445 2371 felicityrixon@hotmail.com	St Mary's, School Lane
Wednesday	2.00pm	4 March	Dick Russell 445 3083	32 Callow Hill Road
Thursday	10.15am	5 March	Judy Lakeman 445 5251 thelakemans@btinternet.com	35 Hollington Road
Thursday	7.30pm	27 Feb	Graham and Lynne Clark 445 2547 clarkalvechurch@sky.com	The Coach House, School Lane



A funeral at St Laurence's

Planning for a funeral is an emotional experience especially for close family and friends. It involves many decisions at a time when much of our energy is already consumed with coping with the impact of the loss of a loved one. If the death is unexpected then the pressure is even greater. It matters that everything is done well. It matters that the wishes of the deceased are carried out, it matters that the diverse wishes of the family are taken into consideration, it matters that expectations of friends are to some degree fulfilled, because each person is on their own journey of grieving. The time needs to be convenient for loved ones to attend, the venue needs to be appropriate and the service, of whatever kind, needs to be conducted with dignity.

It's a big ask. Not everyone wants to turn to the church for help, but for those who do, what is it that they can expect? Without doubt our local parish church, St Laurence's, can provide a beautiful and tranquil environment. The liturgy of the Church of England funeral service is dignified with plenty of opportunity to make it personal, customising the service to include personal details of the deceased, their interests, passions and talents.

In the introduction to the Anglican Funeral Service five aims are listed: to remember and celebrate the life of the deceased; to give thanks to God for the gift of their life, to entrust them to God for eternity and commit their body to the ground (whether by burial or cremation), and that family and friends can come together to comfort one another in their grief.

In my experience there is also something else that many people are looking for. They want to end well. They are conscious of the finality of death and are often aware of unfinished business with the loved one who has died; ends that haven't been tied, words of love or forgiveness that have not been uttered during the lifetime of their loved one. The Christian faith is one where forgiving and being forgiven is a central theme and figures in regular worship

and I find forgiveness is a theme that often has a place in a funeral.

So, the funeral service aims to meet many needs. Music plays an important part whether in song, with traditional or modern hymns, reflective music played during the service or the important choice of music to accompany incoming and outgoing processions and to settle the congregation as they assemble. Memories of significant events and well-loved personal characteristics form an important part of the giving of tribute on behalf of or by a member of the family or close friend. There is the sharing of a favourite or well-loved passage of scripture and the sharing of prayers, both for the deceased and for those present.

If the deceased lived in the parish and expressed a wish to be buried in our churchyard, the funeral service ends with prayers at the graveside, if their wish has been for cremation the service ends at the crematorium with a brief ceremony of committal (often followed at a later date with an interment of ashes in the churchyard).

So how can you make sure you or your loved one has the type of funeral they hoped for? Step one is to talk about it with them well in advance and then if possible, record your/their wishes in a Will. Some people find it a subject that crops up naturally, but for others it's a difficult topic to raise, there are still taboos in talking about death. All I can say as someone who regularly takes funerals is that it is so helpful to those charged with organising a funeral to know the wishes of their loved one. Parting is painful and at times of loss people need help and assurance that they are reflecting their loved ones wishes in the decisions they make.

We at St Laurence's are here to help you when it comes to planning and leading a funeral, and offer spiritual support and care to members of our parish, whether or not you are a regular church goer.

Sue Phillips Licensed Lay Minister St Laurence Church, Alvechurch Next month Roger Wardle writes about the process involved in organising a funeral for your loved one.

Events at Alvechurch Library

Caren Battle writes...

From "*little acorns grow*" - join us on Tuesday 4th February 11.30 - 12.30 for Green Shoots and Tips. For gardeners and growers to come and share experience, ideas and seeds. Don't miss the opportunity to meet likeminded people who enjoy gardening. Is it time to lift, split and share your snowdrops? Should you start chitting early spuds? Have you got brown spots on your hellebores? For the answers to these questions and more, see you on the 4th of February and don't forget, we have a great selection of gardening books to borrow whilst you're here!

Andrew's ongoing Watercolour Painting class on a Tuesday afternoon has a few spaces. This is a relaxed class for people wanting to give it a go. Don't rush out and buy all of the kit, just in case it's not for you, as Andrew is always happy for you to borrow his brushes and paint etc. Please contact him on 07942293574 or email andrew.clacher@hotmail.co.uk with any queries or questions.

Our Crafty Kids meet up monthly, usually on the 3rd Monday of the month unless it's the school holidays. For crafty kids, who are interested in crafting, learning to sew and knit. We have space for 4 more children. Suitable for children aged 7 and upwards. Straight from school, 3.30 - 4.30, and costing only 50p!! Please pop in to the library to confirm the next date.

Our Chatterbooks group meets monthly, usually on last Monday of the month. A

junior book club for children aged 8-12 years. Each session aims to inspire and develop a love for books, reading and the library. Our next session is on Monday 24th February, straight from school, 3.30 - 4.30.

Your local library is now the place to go if you need to complete any county online applications and need IT assistance to do so. We can help you complete and submit online applications such as Blue badge parking permits and concessionary bus passes. We have dedicated volunteers, Carl and Maria who are happy to help you between 10am and 12 noon Tuesday morning.

Did you know we offer 'Library Service at Home'? If you, a neighbour, friend or relative can't get to the library due to health or mobility issues our friendly volunteers will deliver books to your door on a rolling monthly basis! If you would like to rediscover your local library from the comfort of your home please get in touch for an application form. All users of the service will need to become a library member.

Do you find our opening hours too restrictive? Worry not – you can access our online audio and e-books 24/7, free of charge by downloading the borrowbox app. Visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/libraries to discover more.

Any enquiries about any events at Alvechurch Library please pop into the library on the Birmingham Road, contact The Hub on 01905 822722, email - alvechurchlib@worcestershire.gov.uk and check out our Facebook page.

Obituaries

June Border

25th March 1928 to 16th December 2019

June Marcia Border was born June Hanks on 25th March 1928, and died at home at the age of 91 on 16th December 2019.

Her funeral was held on Thursday 2nd January 2020 at St Laurence church. June is survived by her younger sister Diana, their younger brother Stephen having sadly died at the age of 18. Diana and June had beautiful voices and from about 13 years of age sang on the radio and performed at the Palace Theatre in Redditch. The family lived in Alvechurch where their father owned the garage opposite the Red Lion.

June left school at 15 and went to art college. Later she worked in a Furriers where she would be given fur coats to redesign into new items of fur clothing. She was an accomplished needlewoman.

In 1950, when she was 22, June married John Border. As a wedding present June's father gave the couple a plot of land in Rowney Green. They lived in a caravan on the land while they built their house, Three Meadows, brick by brick. June loved her home and her garden. June and John went on to have three boys, Mark, Julian and Jonathan. In his 50's John was diagnosed with lung cancer, and June nursed him throughout his long illness. He died in 1988, aged 62. June was very proud of her sons but sadly each died before her. Jonathan died in 2010, then Julian in 2016, with Mark losing his battle against cancer in 2018. Julian was well known in the village where

the Incredible Edibles plot in the Square has been named after him.

June was a very caring person and her happiest job was working at the Lawns, she had a lovely tuneful voice and used to sing in St Laurence church choir, though eventually laid aside both of these interests to care for John.

Her funeral was planned as a joyful expression of her Christian faith. It was led by Sue Phillips Wardle with St Laurence choir leading the congregation singing *"Morning has broken"*, *"How great thou art"* and *"Thine be the glory, risen conquering son"*.

Tributes to a much-loved aunt, friend and neighbour were given by her niece Melissa Noton, her friend and boss from The Lawns, Veronica Rogers, on behalf of St Laurence choir by Elizabeth Richmond and her neighbours Jacqui Grandfield and Mike Brendan-Penn.

Her body was laid to rest in the churchyard alongside John, her late husband.



Doreen Moore (nee Hazlewood)
3rd December 1937 to 29th November 2019

Lived in Ash Lane Hopwood for 37 Years.

Doreen was born in Oldbury on 3rd December 1937 and was the second youngest of six children - her brother Fred and sisters Betty, Barbara, Joan and Janet. The family were close-knit and a lifelong bond was forged between Doreen and her sisters.

Doreen's first job was as a shop assistant at the local post office and tobacconist shop, whilst still at school. She left school aged 15 and went to work at Lawrence's Haberdashery Shop in Warley.

She was just 18 when she attended the dance where she met her future husband, 19-year-old John. They courted for 3 years and they were married on 2nd January 1960 at Christ Church, The Quinton. Doreen was looking forward to celebrating her 60th wedding anniversary in 2020.

After they were married, Doreen and John set up a business, a grocery store called Mr Value which was the first self-service grocery store in Oldbury. Within 5 years another 3 shops were added to the business. When these businesses were eventually sold Doreen went to work in a Tobacconists as a manageress and trouble-shooter.

Over the years Doreen was fortunate to have had the opportunity to travel – from early trips to Spain, Majorca and Cyprus, to cruises to the Azores, Canaries and the Caribbean and trips to parts of China, Thailand, South Africa, America and to The Cayman Islands.

Doreen had lived in the parish for 37 years, having moved to Ash Lane Hopwood in 1982 and was very outgoing and sociable, taking genuine pleasure in the company of her wide circle of friends and family – she played Bingo weekly, read, listened to a wide variety of music, played cards and loved regular trips to the theatre. However, her favourite hobby was gardening, and she took great pride in the many beautiful flowers she grew and spent many happy hours pottering around in the garden.

She was such a special lady who will always be loved and missed by all the family, husband John, children Sarah and Ian, grandchildren Cassie, Nathan, Hannah and Thomas and great grandson Noah.

Doreen was cremated following a service at Redditch Crematorium which included the hymns *"All Things Bright and Beautiful"* and *"Jerusalem"* and a reading of the poem *"God's Garden"*.

In lieu of flowers a collection for the West Midlands Air Ambulance has so far raised £400.



Flowers for FEBRUARY

	2 February	9 February	16 February	23 February
Sanctuary	Monica Clarke	Virginia Davis		
Lady Chapel		Virginia Davis		
In memory of	Her father Felix Ward	Her mother Mrs Catley		

I am indebted to the two Alvechurch Angels - Helen Jones and Linda O'Malley who helped me with the festive Christmas arrangements. It's a busy time for us all but they gave of their time willingly and we enjoyed working together. I have to mention the 'other' angel, my Tom, who came along and helped me tidy the church and take foliage debris to the bins. Lots of lovely comments were made by those attending the Christmas services.

I would also like to thank Lynda Wolstencroft and her little granddaughter, Daisy, who helped put away all the Christmas decorations and pine cones back in their boxes!

I have two Sundays in February available for dedication or celebration after which we will be going into Lent, where traditionally there are no flowers again until Easter Day.

Ann Thurrell
0121 447 7668
annthurrell@hotmail.co.uk

From The Registers



Funerals and Cremations

May they rest in the peace of Christ

2 January June Border
10 January Audrey Hammond

Who's who

Rector	Revd Richard Bubbers, Rector, School Lane, 445 1087 stlaurencealvechurch@yahoo.co.uk
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mr Dick Russell, 2 Gothic Cottages, Radford Rd, 445 3083 Mrs Sue Phillips Wardle, 55 Birmingham Road, 445 0505 Mrs Helen Ayling, "Tarncroft", Hewell Lane, Vigo, 445 6176
Authorised Lay Ministers	Mrs Helena Allen Mr Martin Allen, 445 5605 Mrs Philippa Brakes, 56 Callow Hill Road, 445 3983 Mr Graham 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
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 Mrs Janet Wright, 28 Callow Hill Road, Alvechurch, B48 7LP Mr Andy Notley, 445 5653 Mr Roger Wardle, 55 Birmingham Road, 445 0505
PCC Secretary	Mrs Lysandra Notley, lysnotley@icloud.com, 07989327043
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Sue Lambert, 7 Cygnet Close, B48 7PX, 07769110608
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Janet Wright, 28 Callow Hill Road, Alvechurch, B48 7LP
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
Ark Tots & Toddlers	Mrs Sarah Linton, sarah100work@gmail.com
Flower Co-ordinator	Mrs Ann Thurrell, Top Barn, Scarfield Hill, 447 7668
Ark Bookings Secretary & Grapevine Editor	Mr Ian Price, The Ark, School Lane, 447 7955 thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk

PCC Special Responsibilities

Finance and Standing Committee

Richard Bubbers	Mick Fletcher
Graham Clark	Alison Smith
Bob Dale	Janet Wright
Peter Freeman	

Buildings, Fabric and Churchyard for Mission Committee

Bob Dale	Colin Bennett
Graham Clark	Peter Freeman
Mick Fletcher	Andy Humphries
Janet Wright	Alison Smith

Children and Youth Committee

Martin Allen	Mick Fletcher
Thomas Birchall	Lynne Clark
Kate Birchall	Sarah Linton

Missionary Committee

Sue Phillips Wardle	Dick Russell
Gordon Parsons	Margaret Haste
Sally Bubbers	Sue Lambert

Calendar for FEBRUARY



Sunday 2	2.30pm	Alvechurch Village Society Walk: Via the Canals and Back: Led by Hilary Taylor: Meet: Tanyard Lane car park
Monday 3	7.30pm	Hillside WI: The Ark (upper room)
	7.45pm	Alvechurch Historical Society AGM: Museum, School Lane
Thursday 6	9.30am	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton
	12.15pm	Ark Cafe: Beef Casserole
Friday 7	7.30pm	The Midland Sinfonia General Knowledge Quiz: £10 to include supper: BOOKING ESSENTIAL : The Ark
	(door & bar opens 6.45pm)	
Saturday 8	10.00am	Modern day slavery awareness sponsored by Faith at Work in Worcestershire: Free event: The Ark (see poster page on 11)
	(Tea & coffee from 9.45am)	
Tuesday 11	11.30am	Art Exhibition @ The Ark: featuring work from the talented students from The Seasons Art Class held at The Ark
Thursday 13	9.30am	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton
	12.15pm	Ark Cafe: Roast Pork
	7.30pm	Rowney Green Horticultural Society: Simon Gulliver: <i>'The Making of the Midlands Landscape'</i> : Rowney Green Village Hall
Friday 14		March GRAPEVINE GOES TO PRESS <i>articles to - thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk</i>
Thursday 20		No Ark Tots and Toddlers: half term No cafe - half term
Wednesday 26	2.30pm	Crafternoon Tea, Cakes & Fun Crafting - Tickets £3.50p: Alvechurch Baptist Church
Thursday 27	9.30am	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton
	10.45am	Tiny Tots Service in church: Sarah Linton
	12.15pm	Ark Cafe: Somerset Chicken