

The Grapevine

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ST LAURENCE CHURCH ALVECHURCH



MARCH 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

Registered as a Charity in England and Wales: Charity Number 1131783

Martin Allen writes...

Do you knit or know a knitter? Do you understand knitting?

I have little experience of knitting (youthful attempts at “French” knitting produced snake-like woollen ropes which were impossible to do anything with) but have seen female relatives achieve amazing things with needles. Then as a young adult there was the surprise of meeting the (male) president of my University Christian Union who was an accomplished knitter....

There is something satisfying about taking the raw material from an animal and it being carefully cleaned spun, dyed and prepared as a ball. There’s also the wonder (to me) in that wool being transformed by the knitter into a garment that keeps us warm and is appreciated.

You may know of the broadcaster/media person/ordained minister Revd Richard Coles. He has recently been bereaved and his husband was a knitter. In a very short moving tweet, he said “*I have just found his knitting and it has unravelled me #grief*” posting a picture of his husband’s knitting basket.

I found the metaphor extremely powerful, echoing what I and others have experienced whilst gaining a new insight into what grief is like. We come from elemental things, are refined and fashioned into something that is wound together and knit as a human being by the Divine Knitter. If lucky our wool may be interwoven with the different wool of another. The two make a life together, provide comfort and can be of service. If we are blessed our relationships may be seen and admired just as a good jumper or garment.

How hard it is then when the wool gets snagged, pulled and the garment comes apart - the Divine Knitter’s knots coming undone. How painful the separation and how hard to

become unravelled from the one we have loved. The unravelling and mess of the wool reflects the way we may feel in grief. There is only confusion a tangle and mess. There is no longer coherence in the thread making something of meaning and value. If a garment is unpicked the wool is still wool but is often imprinted with the shape of the knots and not as it was before.

What can we say about grief and this metaphor from our faith? In Psalm 139 we read “*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother womb*”.

So God is in the start of our lives and is knitting to a pattern long before we meet the person for whom we may later grieve. He knows us intimately and knows our future relationships and times of grief. Furthermore, the psalmist assures us that we are “*fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful I know that full well. My frame (shape) was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth*”. Even in the unravelled mess he has his knitting pattern in mind.

As we journey through Lent, may you sense God knitting you with your loved one(s) and see the Divine Knitter’s pattern for you. In grief may you know His ability to unravel, unpick and be created anew. Amen.



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Parish Prayers

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

4 March – Alvechurch Road

11 March – Aqueduct Lane

18 March – Ash Lane

25 March – Bear Hill



Singers required!!

- for the Gemini choir

We rehearse at the Parish Centre in Barnt Green usually
every other Saturday afternoon at 2:30pm for about 2
hours.

The Gemini choir is a well-established mixed group of
singers formed some 30 years ago following the creation
of the twinning association between Bromsgrove and
Gronau in Germany. Initially performing more serious
musical items, under the stewardship of the present
conductor Philip Morris we now concentrate on lighter
music and a more varied programme, including numbers
from West End shows. We present evenings of enter-
tainment from time to time where we create friendly,
relaxed atmospheres and perform numbers from our
considerable repertoire of songs including spoken word,
solos and duets.

We currently have 18 singers, covering soprano, alto,
tenor and bass lines, but we would ideally like to
increase this number.....so can you help? You do not
have to sight read and there are no auditions, but you
have to enjoy singing. Come along and give us a try;
we're a very friendly group and you will be made most
welcome.

In the first instance give me, Philip Morris, a call on
07969 741137.....I'd really like to hear from you.

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Alvechurch WI

Pam Horsfield writes...

Our February meeting was held at Barnt Green Cricket Club where we held our annual evening meal on a cold and blustery night.

Inside the club it was warm and cheerful and Geoff and his team produced an excellent meal as always. There was a friendly relaxed feeling to the whole evening and after the meal we were entertained by Melissa Hollick from Redditch. Melissa looked lovely and has a beautiful voice, singing us songs which a lot of us remembered from the 70s; although she also sings more recent ones too.

Next month we'll be back in the Village Hall on Monday 9th March at 7:30pm when we'll have a talk by a speaker from Johnsons Coaches. As several of us have enjoyed holidays and days out with Johnsons, it should be interesting to hear the other side of their stories! Do come and join us if you feel like it.

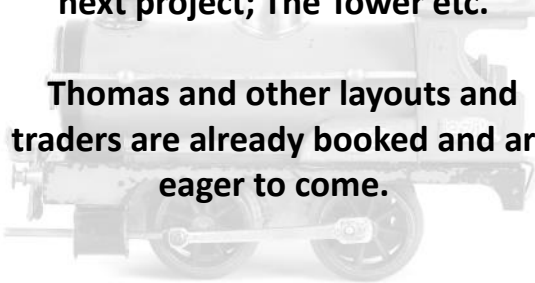
ADVANCE NOTICE

MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

11th July 2020

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Thomas and other layouts and traders are already booked and are eager to come.



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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 walks are -

Sunday 1st March

A walk starting from Tanyard Lane car Park at 2.30pm, lead by Nickie Thomas described as *'There and Back Again'*, but really its Walk No 2 from the AVS set of walks.

Sunday 5th April

A walk starting from the Green Dragon Inn, B96 6NU at 2.30pm, lead by Mariea and Martin Clarke which will be *'A Walk around Sambourne'*.

Christmas Thanks

Mick Fletcher writes...

All at the church would like to give their belated thanks to all those who given up their time and skills to help make Christmas special for us all.

To Lorena and Colin Bennett for their donation of the Christmas tree, to Tim for transporting the tree to the Church, to Gareth, Tim, Mark and Tom for their help in erecting the tree, to Lynda for dressing the trees.

To Richard for the *'Christmas without the tinsel'*, to all involved in the Nine lessons and Carols. For all those who helped with the Christmas Nativity, Steve controlling the lighting, Mark on the sound desk, and to the singers.

Especially then the children who were all great, their parents for helping with the children's lines and costumes, and lastly to Lysandra who worked tirelessly in all aspects of the play.

To everyone who helped clean and tidy everything away, thanks to Gareth, Steve, James, Sally, Lynda and Charlotte.

Finally all the ladies for their skill in their arranging of the Christmas flowers, thank you Ann. If I have missed anyone please forgive me. God bless.

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 12th March we once again welcome Hilary Twigg who this time will tell us all about "*Easy Rules on Pruning*" including a demonstration. Hilary is a most entertaining speaker, and happy to answer your questions. Guests are always welcome - £3.50 including refreshments.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay Smith on 01527 592874.

DeSSERT Island Discs

Saturday April 18th 7.30pm
Alvechurch Baptist Church Hall
£10

This is a new, and hopefully FUN SOCIAL EVENT for everyone in the village churches, plus anyone else who wants to come, and is to help replenish the funds borrowed for the new kitchen at ABC.

Nick Dale, Jane Lavery and Sue Phillips-Wardle - representing all our village churches and who have led varied and fascinating lives - will each play 4 'discs' and talk briefly how they reflect their life journey. THE TWIST is that between each person and at the end, scrummy DESSERTS will be served!
Drinks provided too!

Tickets available from Barbara Parker at Baptist Church or email:
barbaraparker2016@btinternet.com

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The Ark Cafe



The menu for the Ark Cafe for the months of March
and April is as follows:

March 5th - Roast Lamb

March 12th - Beef Casserole

March 19th - Roast Pork

March 26th - Roast Beef Lunch - Ticket Only

April 2nd - Closed for Easter Break

April 9th - Closed for Easter Break

April 16th - Closed for Easter Break

**April 23rd - Beef Lunch to Celebrate St George's
Day; with entertainment - Ticket Only**

April 30th - Somerset Chicken

The tickets for the two Beef Lunches cost £12 each
and are available at the Ark on a Thursday
lunchtime or during the week Monday to Friday
9am until 2pm from the Ark Office 0121 447 7955.

We hope you will be able to support us.

The Beef Lunch price includes lunch, dessert,
cheese and biscuits and tea or coffee and will
include some entertainment for the St Georges
Day lunch when we will all be able to participate
in the relevant singsong for St George's Day.

We look forward to seeing you there.



News From The Tower

There is an advert for our Table Top Sale on page 11 so this is just a quick reminder.

The ringers ran the first sale twelve years ago as part of our efforts to raise funds for the restoration but it proved so popular that we've carried on ever since. There's always something needing to be done in the tower and the money we raise here helps to take some of the pressure off Church funds.

The Sale is in the Ark on Saturday March 28th. Doors open at 10 am and entry is free. We'll have all the usual features; the ringers' table of bric-a-brac and books with a variety of other stalls and we'll be serving refreshments all day. As well as raising money, the Sale also helps to recycle odds and ends around the village. It's a good opportunity for some Spring Cleaning. Sort out the clutter and we'll pass it on to somebody who can make use of it.

Phone Michael on 0121 447 7709 if you'd like to book a table. Some of our posters might show a different number but Michael's the best person to ask. Talk to any ringer or phone Colin on 01527 64077 if you've got anything for the ringers' table.

Come early and bag a bargain and help us to keep the bells ringing.

Beauty in Brokenness - Praying Together **Saturday March 14th**

Bromsgrove Methodist Centre

Beauty in Brokenness is an on-going conversation between women whose faith has been nurtured by a variety of Christian traditions.

We are delighted to be able to invite you to an afternoon of discussion, exploration and prayer, from 12 noon.

Cost £6.00, including lunch

For more information or to book, please contact Ann Smith on 0121 445 1374 or at nooey98@gmail.com

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Film Afternoon at Alvechurch Baptist Church
Saturday 7th March at 3.30pm

We will be showing the new
DOWNTON ABBEY FILM

Tickets are free but a £2 donation for refreshments
would be appreciated

Tickets available from The Lounge or ring Alyson on
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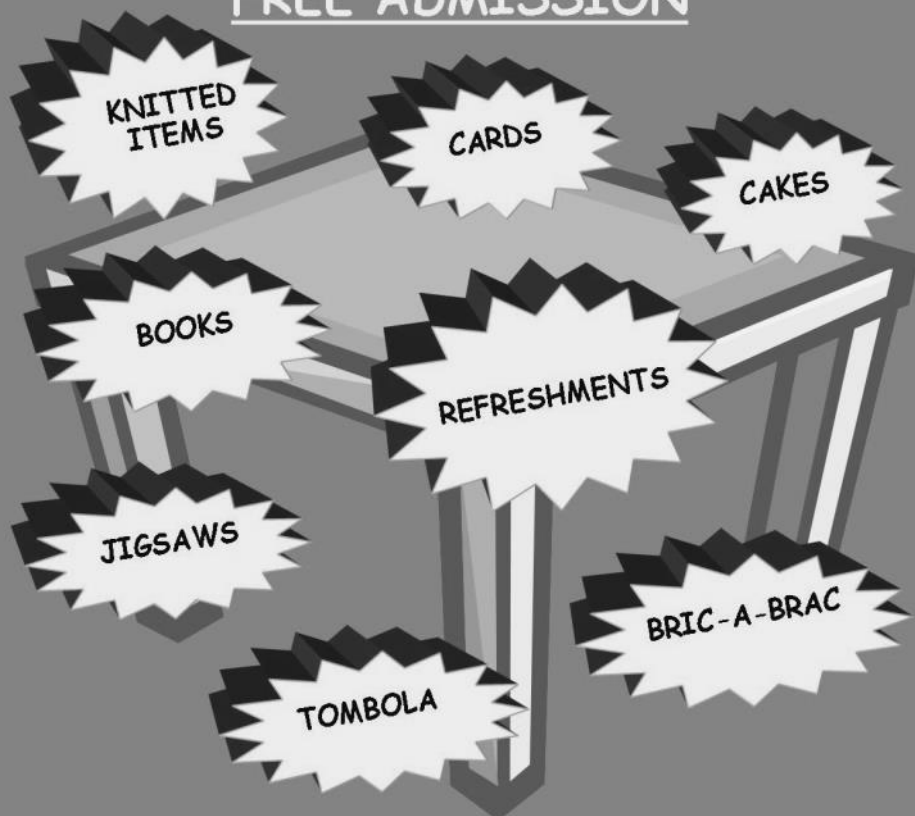
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ANNUAL TABLE TOP SALE

Saturday 28th March 10.00am to 2.30pm
The Ark, St Laurence Church, Alvechurch, B48 7SB

FREE ADMISSION



Tables £5 available from
Michael on 447 7709



THE MIDLAND SINFONIA

St Laurence Church, Alvechurch B48 7SB
SATURDAY 7 MARCH 2020
7.30pm - doors/bar open 7pm

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The Midland Sinfonia

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'Mozart and his Mentors'

Mozart – Horn Concerto No.4

Boccherini – Symphony No.26

Haydn – Symphony No.67

Mozart – Adagio and Fugue in C minor

Conducted by Nic Fallowfield with guest James Topp, horn

Tickets: £16 / in advance £15

from: www.midlandsinfonia.co.uk or 'Gin & Pickles', The Square, Alvechurch
accompanied children & students free

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Ark Tots and Toddlers Group at St Laurence church

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 **9.30 - 11.00 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.

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 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 March 26th**.

Sunday Club at St Laurence church

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 all time through 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.

Currently, our **Young People aged 11+** are also meeting on Sunday evenings with others from local churches, eating together and exploring life and Christianity through the **Alpha Youth Programme**.

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

Mothering Sunday 2020

*Would you like to join us at St Laurence Church
to thank God for and celebrate all that is done
by those who Mother us?*

Do come along to our special
Mothering Sunday Family Service
March 22nd
9.30am - 10.30am

It will be a service suitable for all ages:
babies, children and adults.

An opportunity to join together in a friendly and welcoming environment, with songs old and new, drama Bible readings, prayers, other worship activities and of course flowers for giving to (or taken in memory of) anyone who we wish to thank for being a 'Mother' to us.

We look forward to welcoming you.



Alvechurch Historical Society

Hilary Taylor writes...

We have two meetings in March, our first talk of the year and our annual party and quiz evening. Both these events will be held at the museum hut in School Lane, from 7.45pm.

Monday 2nd March 2020

Speaker Vanessa Morgan will be returning with another talk on a Worcestershire subject, ***Local Murders of the 19th Century***. Come along for a chilling evening of mystery and intrigue!

Monday 23rd March 2020

Our annual ***Party and Quiz Evening*** with good food, good company and excellent questions, plus our popular raffle & tombola. This event will also be our celebration of 70 years of Alvechurch Historical Society, which was founded in 1950. Tickets £6 each from Anne Humphries on 0121 445 5955.

Looking ahead to spring; on the evening of

Monday 6th April we will welcome George Gascoyne who will tell us about ***The History of the Lickey Hills***. The venue for this meeting will be published in the April editions of *The Village & Grapevine*, as well as on posters around Alvechurch

Alvechurch Historical Society Museum

Anne Humphries writes...

Alvechurch Historical Society committee members have recently been discussing the future of the Museum in School Lane, a building which has housed the Society's

collection and hosted meetings for around 50 years. The building itself was originally a classroom when the village school was in School Lane and dates back to the 1940s. The Society was given use of the building in 1969 although it was never envisaged that the arrangement would last this long.

The Museum has been showing its age for some time and discussions on its future date back at least to 2009. No suitable replacement property has ever been identified and in the last 2/3 years, the building has deteriorated significantly due to the weather and its wooden construction. It is becoming a safety risk and is uneconomic to repair given its age.

The Historical Society is therefore putting a plan in place to close the museum and arrange for the collection of local archives and artefacts to be re-housed. This will mean returning some items to local people who originally donated them and transferring others to The Hive in Worcester and museums around the county. It is hoped to have a display case in Alvechurch library for smaller Alvechurch specific items.

The Society's Committee has considered the situation and future options very carefully. We know that the Society and its monthly meetings are still popular and we should stress that giving up our current home should not be seen as the end of the Society as a whole. The Committee values the efforts of its members and others who have given their support over many years. Plans are already in place to hold future Society meetings in The Ark; meeting venues will be advertised in *The Village* magazine, *Grapevine* and on our monthly posters.

Free Concert



Alvechurch Community Choir are working with the **Choir With No Name** from Birmingham (a choir which supports and includes homeless people) and will be putting on a joint concert.

Some of our readers will remember the Choir With No Name from the Christmas before last at the Baptist Church, where they really impressed the audience.

Alvechurch Community Choir are looking forward to singing with them and are sponsoring the concert on :

Saturday 14 March at 7.30pm at St Laurence's Church, School Lane, Alvechurch, B48 7SB.

The concert is free and open to all, with donations to the Choir With No Name welcomed.

Come along and enjoy inspirational live music, and contribute to an organisation in which homeless people can find their voice.

Hillside WI

Our post Christmas meal at the Red lion was a huge success and a very jolly occasion, probably to be repeated soon!

The first meeting of the New Year was held on February 3rd. Our president welcomed us all including a guest who has recently moved to the village.

As our speaker was unable to come, We held a silent Auction and enjoyed a social evening. There were some lovely gifts, and a good sum was raised for funds.

In April we will be joined by Alvechurch WI in the Ark. It will be a social evening and Ginny Davies will be entertaining us with her flower arrangements, which are usually superb, not to mention her humour.

Our yearly audit showed we were nicely in

profit. Work is in hand to put our members on Facebook. This years resolutions were presented and a vote taken as to which should go forward for further discussion.

Plans are well underway for the group meeting in October which we are hosting this time; it will be held in Rowney Green Peace Hall, details at a later date.

We are looking forward to a trip to Tissington in Derbyshire to see the well dressings on May 21st. On past experience it should be a good day out.

Our next meeting is on WEDNESDAY March 4th, our speaker is Karen Tomalin and her talk will be on '*Tales from the Fitting Room*', sounds interesting!

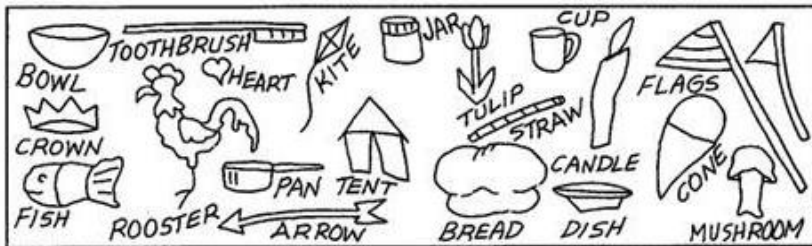
We will look forward to meeting up with our friends then.

All visitors are welcome.

Contact Pat McDonagh on 0121 628 4121.



I like that coat.



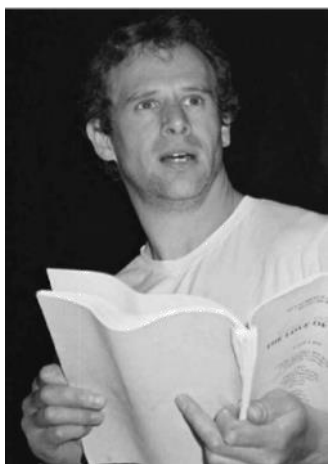
Find the hidden pictures above in the puzzle.

Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and his special coat.
(Read the story in Genesis 37)

Dick Russell's Third Vignette

One of the early things I did on coming to Alvechurch was to join the Church Choir, as a bass singer. The choir-master was Richard Burman, who was also the Clerk to the Parish Council. However the week after I joined he was replaced by Lesley Armstrong-Smith. He and his wife were a recently retired couple who had lived in India, where he had been a businessman, They invited me to lunch on a number of occasions, and I remember either playing Handel's recorder sonatas with him afterwards, or going for a walk over the Lickey Hills or round the Bittel reservoirs. When, four years later, I married Cathy, in St. Laurence Church, his then recently bereaved wife volunteered to put her up on the previous night, and help her get ready for her wedding, (for Cathy had no mother or father to assist her). Her mother had died when she was still a baby, and she had no memories at all of her mother and very few of her father who married again but suffered a breakdown in health, and later died.

Going back to my joining the church choir, though, in my bachelor days: choir was considerably larger, with always a number of children being trained in it, and could attempt larger works such as Stainer's Crucifixion, or sections of Handel's Messiah, or Haydn's Creation. Among the younger generation were a number of children of older members. There were twins Jean and Jane Aston. Their father Hiram, sat next to me in the bass section. Jean is still with us, in the choir stalls, but her sister sadly died of cancer when very young. Another such young chorister was a girl Lorina, whose mother and uncle were also members. She later married Colin Bennett, and their children Richard and Annabel were to become members later, as were our own children, Richard, Clare, and Matthew. Richard still occasionally visits us and dons his cassock and surplice to sing along with us, whilst Clare directs the choir in a church where she lives. Richard was later to star as Laurence in an improvised musical called *'The Love of Larry'* which featured the martyrdom of St Laurence, to whom our church is dedicated of course. He moved away from home soon after, but sang in the church choir where he lived. He has never had any children of his own.



One has to mention here the contribution made to the choir by John Hanks whose numerous progeny over some years fed the choir with a steady stream of child soloists, he himself also was a tenor soloist.

Sadly, the policy, on re-introducing a Family Service, after a considerable lapse, was that children no longer were to be admitted to the church choir, as a result of which we have recruited few new choristers. This has been repeated across the Church of England, and by the National Curriculum, the result being that 4-part singing is dying out across the country, except in cathedrals, music colleges and universities, as has the supply of organists to lead them. So too has the String Quartet, the most intensely moving form of serious music for over two centuries, become neglected by audiences and attracts few amateur players today. So I end this month's contribution on a rather a sad note; G flat, perhaps!

Funerals and interments

In last month's edition of The Grapevine my wife, Sue Phillips Wardle, wrote about funeral services at St Laurence Church and the pastoral care that can be made available to close relatives of the deceased. It goes without saying that the death of a loved one, whether expected or totally unexpected, is likely to be a traumatic experience for their closest family and friends. My task, on behalf of the P.C.C. and Rector, Reverend Richard Bubbers, is about making the arrangements for a church service, and/or a burial or ashes interment in the churchyard as straightforward and stress free as possible. I thought it might be useful to explain just what that process is and how we can help.

The formal notification of the death of a loved one can be received from a close family member, a Funeral Director, or the Executor of the deceased persons Will. This can be by telephone on the church's landline, 0121 445 1087 (with an answer-phone facility), or by email at - stlaurencechurch@yahoo.co.uk Further details can be obtained via the church website.

Usually a request for a funeral service and burial or committal for cremation, or in some cases the interment of ashes following a committal service at a crematorium, is received from a local Funeral Director. Once a request is received the following actions need to be taken:-

1. To identify a preferred date and time for the service.
2. To check the availability of the church.
3. To establish who is to conduct the service.
4. To organise a Church Warden to be present to assist with the service.

5. To arrange for an organist and, where required, the church choir, to provide appropriate music.
6. To deal with a request for the church bells to be rung.

While every effort is made to ensure that the service takes place on a date and at a time most convenient to the deceased persons family, this is not always possible and it may take several days for details to be finalised. The service will be conducted by the Rector, Reverend Richard Bubbers, or Sue Phillips Wardle, who is one of our Lay Ministers. When both are unavailable, occasionally we can call on the assistance of clergy from a neighbouring parish. It is perfectly in order for the service/interment to be taken by a minister of another Christian denomination, with the prior agreement of the Rector.

It should be pointed out that a request for a burial or ashes interment in the churchyard, can be met provided the deceased lived in the parish of Alvechurch at the time of their death, or previously for at least 2 years. In other circumstances, please refer the matter to us.

Requests for headstones to be erected are dealt with by a churchwarden who should be contacted by using the church landline or email. There are local regulations over the type and style of headstones/ plaques and most of the stonemasons in the area are aware of these and will be able to advise you accordingly.

It may also be useful to point out that although many people have Funeral Plans with specific Funeral Directors, it is not possible ahead of time to book a particular grave or plot within the churchyard.

I hope you find the above helpful.
Roger Wardle

Events at Alvechurch Library

Our third meet up of Green Shoots and Tips is on Tuesday 3rd March 11.30 – 12.30.

We have had a lovely donation of seeds for our group, so thank you very much and looking forward to seeing the colourful results. For gardeners and growers to come and share experience, ideas, and spare bulbs! Don't miss the opportunity to meet likeminded people who enjoy gardening. Don't forget we have a great selection of gardening books to borrow whilst you're here!

Andrew's on-going watercolour class starts again at the beginning of April. The group meets up on a Tuesday afternoon. 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.

Patrick our language tutor has a few spaces on his on-going Spanish class on Thursday afternoon. Please email Patrick at vdlt52@hotmail.co.uk or call 07708027372 to see if the level the class is being taught at would allow you to join in.

Our Crafty Kids meets up monthly on the 3rd Monday of the month. For crafty kids, who are interested in crafting, learning to sew and knit. Currently the Crafty Kids are working on a collaborative piece which will be on display in the library for all to enjoy. 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 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 23rd March straight from school, 3.30-4.30. Free of charge.

The Library Readers Group meets up on the last Tuesday of the month, 2.15 to 3.15. New members would be very welcome.

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.

ST Laurence Church, Alvechurch

*Maintaining churchyard plots -
requirements of the Parochial Church Council*

INTRODUCTION

The Diocese of Worcester has issued a booklet, *Churchyard Memorials - A guide for the bereaved*, which shows what a gravestone and monument should look like, what wording it should contain and the process by which approval can be obtained. The booklet (which includes an application form) is available from local funeral directors and monumental stonemasons.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) uses this booklet as the basis for approving headstones on plots. Many gravestones predate the latest version of this booklet but their existence cannot be used as a precedent.

PLOT MAINTENANCE – YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES....maintenance of graves and gravestones is a family responsibility which includes ensuring that headstones and plinths are safe and secure. St Laurence's churchyard volunteers are responsible for the maintenance of wider grassed areas, trees and pathways in the churchyard.

GRAVE SURROUNDS....kerbs around graves are NOT permitted whether solid stone, wood, plastic, loose stones or any other material. Chippings or gravel must not be used on any plot, as they can be dangerous when mowers or strimmers are being used nearby. The PCC reserves the right to remove these materials from a plot to enable safe maintenance of the churchyard.

POWER TOOLS....mowers and strimmers must NOT be used to maintain plots or their

surrounds. Hand tools should be used to prevent damage to surrounding headstones.

PLANTINGtrees or large shrubs must NOT be planted on any plot. Small plants are acceptable but must be kept tidy. Flowers, wreaths and other floral tributes should be removed when they have died.

PRECEDENCE....the existence of grave surrounds, trees or shrubs on older graves or elsewhere in the churchyard cannot be interpreted as a precedent.

CHURCHYARD WASTE....there are clear notices by the bins advising on the disposal of waste material. No plastic bags should be left outside the bins as this encourages birds and wild animals. The bins should not be overloaded as this damages them. St Laurence is part of the Cleaner Greener Alvechurch initiative and all recyclable material should be taken home for recycling as the Church is unable to do this.

DOGS....are welcome in our churchyard but they MUST be kept on a lead and owners must pick up after them. Horses must not be ridden or walked in the churchyard.

PLEASE RESPECT OUR CHURCHYARD AND THE WISHES OF OTHER FAMILIES AND VISITORS. Let us know any issues by reporting them to -
stlaurencealvechurch@yahoo.co.uk

We value your feedback and will do our best to make improvements if things go wrong.



Flowers

We are now in the season of Lent when traditionally we do not have flowers in church again until Easter Day. It is during this time that I produce the Flower Rota for the Church Year. If you could help by either providing or arranging the flowers on any given Sunday in the year, it would be most helpful for me to be able to include as much information as possible. I am hopeful that I will have more offers of help this year.

Many thanks
Ann Thurrell 0121 447 7668
Email: annturrell@hotmail.co.uk



From The Registers



Baptism

We welcome you into the Lord's family

26 January Oliver and Lucy Bell



Funerals and Cremations

May they rest in the peace of Christ

29 January Phyllis Greaves

3 February Ron Jones

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 MARCH



Sunday 1	2.30pm	AVS Walk: <i>'There and Back Again'</i> : Meet at Tanyard Lane
Monday 2	7.45pm	Alvechurch Historical Society: Talk by Vanessa Morgan <i>'Local Murders of the 19th Century'</i> : Museum, School Lane
Wednesday 4	7.30pm	Hillside WI: Talk by Karen Tomalin <i>'Tales from the Fitting Room'</i> : The Ark
Thursday 5	9.30am 12.15pm	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton Ark Cafe: Roast Lamb
Saturday 7	3.30pm 7 for 7.30pm	Film Afternoon: The New DOWNTON ABBEY FILM: Tickets are free but a £2 donation for refreshments would be appreciated: Alvechurch Baptist Church: (see page 10 for details) The Midland Sinfonia presents: An audience with Craig Ogden: St Laurence Church
Monday 9	7.30pm	Alvechurch WI: Talk by a speaker from Johnsons Coaches: Alvechurch Village Hall
Thursday 12	9.30am 12.15pm 7.30pm	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton Ark Cafe: Beef Casserole Rowney Green Horticultural Society: Talk by Hilary Twigg <i>'Easy Rules on Pruning'</i> : Rowney Green Village Hall
Saturday 14 -		April GRAPEVINE GOES TO PRESS: articles to - thearkalvechurch@yahoo.co.uk
	12 noon	Beauty in Brokenness: Praying Together: £6 including Lunch: Bromsgrove Methodist Centre (see detail on page 9)
	7.30pm	Concert featuring: Alvechurch Community Choir & The Choir With No Name: St Laurence Church: FREE ENTRY: donations welcome for The Choir With No Name
Thursday 19	9.30am 12.15pm	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton Ark Cafe: Roast Pork
Monday 23	7.45pm	Alvechurch Historical Society: Party & Quiz Evening: Museum, School Lane: Tickets £6 from Anne Humphries (0121 445 5955)
Tuesday 24	7.30pm	PCC Meeting: The Ark
Thursday 26	9.30am 10.45am 12.15pm	Ark Tots and Toddlers: Sarah Linton Tiny Tots Service in church: Sarah Linton Ark Cafe: Beef Lunch: ADVANCED BOOKINGS ONLY £12
Saturday 28	10.00am	Annual Table Top Sale: The Ark: FREE ADMISSION