

GRAPEVINE

ST LAURENCE CHURCH, ALVECHURCH

September 2025

ST LAURENCE CHURCH AND THE ARK
SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER
11.00AM TO 2.00PM
FREE ENTRY

JOIN US FOR OUR 2025
**HERITAGE
FUN DAY**

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF FAMILY FUN
WITH CHURCH AND TOWER TOURS,
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SURPRISES AWAIT!

St Laurence Church and The Ark, Alvechurch, School Lane, B48 7SB

St Laurence Church and The Ark, Alvechurch, School Lane, B48 7SB

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LOTTERY**

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EARTH
TRUST**

Between light and dark,
we find beauty everywhere.

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Deadline for Grapevine October 2025 Edition

If you wish to submit an article or advert the deadline is -
Monday 13th September

REVD GAIL WRITES...



Dear friends,

September always feels a bit like a new year, doesn't it? The school calendar sets the rhythm for many of us, and there's often a fresh energy in the air. After the slower pace of summer, we find ourselves ready to begin again—organising diaries, rediscovering routines, and making space for new possibilities.

At the same time, the days are shortening, and the early signs of autumn are all around us. There's a beauty in the changing colours and a stillness in the cooling evenings. This in-between time—between seasons, between light and dark—can be a moment to pause and notice where God might be at work. And perhaps the answer is: everywhere. In the bustle of new beginnings and in the quiet of early dusk, in laughter, in reflection, and in community.

Here at St Laurence and The Ark, there's much going on as we step into this new season. One highlight is our Heritage Fun Day—a chance to celebrate village life, history, and community. Groups from Alvechurch and beyond will be joining in for a day of fun and connection centred around our beautiful church building. Although the scaffolding on the tower won't quite be down in time, we're very much looking forward to offering tower tours later in October. Keep an eye on this edition of Grapevine for more details!

We're also introducing something new inside the church: our "Be Space". It's exactly what it sounds like—a space to be. Be curious, be calm, be creative, be noisy, be present. Whether you're a child who needs to move, an adult who listens better while doodling, or someone who prefers a quiet moment of prayer—this space is for you. It celebrates the many ways people engage with worship, faith, and community—without pressure or expectation.

There's a lot happening at St Laurence and The Ark this autumn, and you are warmly invited to be part of it. Come just as you are.

With every blessing for this season of change,

Revd. Gail

FAITH, FRIENDSHIP, AND FRESH PASTRIES—EXPLORE TOGETHER AT CAFÉ CHURCH!

3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Looking for a different way to explore faith? Café Church at St Laurence might be just what you're after.

We begin with breakfast pastries from 8.45am, before moving into an hour of relaxed and interactive worship from 9.15am. Together, we explore a Bible story or theme in ways that are engaging for all ages—through discussion, storytelling, reflection, and activities. There's always a craft to get creative with, and plenty of space for questions, conversation, and laughter.

Café Church is designed for everyone: whether you've been in church your whole life, you're curious about God, or you're simply not sure what you believe. It's a welcoming space to share, learn, and wonder together.



Think of it as church around the breakfast table: informal, friendly, and open to all.

Why not come along, enjoy a pastry and a coffee, and see what it's all about?

You'll find a place where community and faith come together in a fresh and meaningful way.

HERITAGE FUN DAY – COME AND JOIN THE CELEBRATION!

SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2025 | 11AM–2PM |
ST LAURENCE CHURCH & THE ARK

Step into history and community at this year's Heritage Fun Day—a day full of music, laughter, delicious food, and activities for all ages, set against the beautiful backdrop of St Laurence Church and The Ark.

Entertainment All Day

Enjoy a wonderful mix of live performances, including:

- Crown Meadow First School Choir
- The Community Choir
- Paddywack Ukes
- Tango Unplugged
- Amy Greaves School of Dance
- Aelfgythe Border Morris
- Local singers and the ever-popular Karen Marsh

Food & Refreshments

- Café in The Ark serving cakes and refreshments
- Manny's Eats for savoury treats
- Ice cream from BB King Whippy

Family Fun

There's something for every age:

- Children's crafts (free!)
- Face painting
- Games, hook-a-duck, lucky dip, tombola, horse racing, and archery
- Bournville Boats display

Heritage & Displays

Explore the story of St Laurence through:

- Self-led and guided tours of the church and churchyard
- A portrait exhibition inside the church
- Heritage Land Rover on display
- Restoration videos and displays sharing the progress of our tower works



Stalls & Community

Browse and connect with:

- Handmade crafts, Puddleduck, Idle Hands Crafty Cards, pet accessories, and more
- Community groups including Better Together, Belmont Healthcare, and Creative Carousel

Grand Prize Draw

Win fantastic prizes donated by generous local businesses, including:

- £100 (1st Prize)
- £50 (2nd Prize)
- A Virgin Hot Air Balloon Ride for Two (Thomas Brothers)
- Hampers, vouchers, dance sessions, cupcakes, and more!

Tickets are just £1 each, supporting the ministry, maintenance, and community work of St Laurence Church.

Celebrate the heritage, enjoy the music, sample the food, and soak up the atmosphere. With so much to see and do, there's something for everyone at this year's Heritage Fun Day—come and be part of a very special day in the life of our village.



PORTRAIT COMPETITION – SHOW US WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE!

How do you see the people you love?
We'd love to see them through your eyes!

As part of our Heritage Fun Day, we're celebrating the people who make our world brighter—with a Portrait Competition open to all ages. Whether it's your grandad or your best friend, your next-door neighbour or even your dog—we want to see them come to life through your artwork.

Use paint, pencils, collage, pastels—whatever helps you show us what love looks like to you. The more creative, the better!

Competition Categories:

- Pre-School
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Teenagers
- Adults

Prizes to be won!

Every entry will be displayed at Heritage Fun Day in the Upper Room, transforming St Laurence Church and The Ark into a gallery of love, colour, and imagination.

**Deadline for entries:
Monday 8th September**

Drop them off at The Ark or bring them to church on a Sunday morning. So if you haven't entered yet—there's still time!

Get creative, have fun, and help us fill the space with the spirit and joy of our community.

We can't wait to see your masterpiece!

Margaret and Terry will be in the Upper room showcasing some fabulous portraits Margaret has painted of some of our church family.



A NEW BISHOP FOR WORCESTER

Downing Street has announced that His Majesty the King has approved the appointment of Hugh Nelson as the 114th Bishop of Worcester.

Bishop Hugh is currently the Bishop of St Germans in the Diocese of Truro, a position he has held since 2020, serving as the Acting Bishop of Truro from Sept 2023 until May this year. He is also Bishop to the Armed Forces, providing spiritual and pastoral leadership to Anglican Chaplains serving in the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force, a role which he will continue to hold as Bishop of Worcester.



Ordained in 2008, Hugh served his curacy in six rural parishes in East Kent before serving for eight years as the parish priest of Goudhurst with Kilndown, two village churches in the Diocese of Canterbury. Before ordination, Hugh spent 13 years living and leading the community of L'Arche London, part of an international network of ecumenical Christian communities where people with and without learning disabilities share life together.

Bishop Hugh said:

"It is an enormous privilege to be appointed as the next Bishop of Worcester. I am so looking forward to joining you in Worcestershire and Dudley on your journey as Kingdom People; getting to know the different communities across the Diocese and finding out what God is up to in its villages, towns and cities."

"The Diocese of Worcester is full of so much that is good and holy, with plans to double the number of young disciples, to create 100 new worshipping communities, to renew churches right across the area and to underpin all this by resourcing clergy and lay leaders. And all of that building on the faithful, generous service of people in churches of every size, tradition and place from Dudley to Bredon, and from Malvern to Redditch."

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BE SPACE: A PLACE TO SIMPLY BE

At St Laurence Church, we've created a new space that is already welcoming and alive—a place where everyone can engage with worship, faith, and community in the way that suits them best. The Be Space, located in the side aisle near the organ pipes, is designed for movement, creativity, fidgeting, wondering, and simply being.

With a clear view of the service via the screen and side view, the space is equipped with creative materials, tactile resources, soft furnishings, and thoughtful layouts that make it accessible to children, families, and adults alike. It's a space where you can draw, fidget, wiggle, reflect, or just take a quiet moment, all while still being part of the wider worshipping community. The basket of coloured overlays and fidget items provides additional support for sensory engagement, helping those who may find certain environments overwhelming or challenging to feel included, supported, and valued.

The Be Space is more than just a physical area—it is a celebration of difference and diversity. Inspired by our journey with Inclusive Church, it recognises that each of us is fearfully and wonderfully made, with unique ways of being, thinking, and experiencing the world. Some worship best through quiet reflection; others through movement, touch, or creative expression. Here, there is no expectation or pressure—just freedom to engage in the way that nourishes your spirit.

This space also reflects our understanding of God's presence. God meets us where we are, embracing every form of curiosity, creativity, and expression. Be Space reminds us that worship is not limited to one way of engaging—it is alive in every movement, every doodle, every whispered prayer, and every shared smile. Here, in the midst of colours, textures, and soft furnishings, we encounter God through our senses, our imaginations, and our community.

If you would like to support this project, your donations would be hugely appreciated. Your generosity helps us continue to create a space that makes room for every body, every mind, and every way of being. Thank you for helping us make church a place where all are welcomed, all are celebrated, and all can simply be.

St Laurence Church and The Ark, Alvechurch

ARK TOTS AND TODDLERS

A friendly play environment for babies and little ones under 5, with their parents or carers.

A time to play and chat, with each session ending in singing time.

Thursday 9:30am - 11am - Termtime

£2 per session, per family, with as many drinks and biscuits as you like

For more information contact sarah100work@gmail.com.



CELEBRATING HARVEST: A TIME FOR COMMUNITY, GRATITUDE & TOGETHERNESS

As the wheel of the year turns and autumn's golden hues settle in, many communities pause to celebrate Harvest—a season rooted in tradition yet profoundly relevant today. It's a time when we reflect on abundance—be it produce, shared meals, or the support we offer one another.

A Shared Feast and the Tradition of Harvest Suppers

Across the UK and beyond, Harvest Suppers—sometimes called bring-and-share meals—have long united people in gratitude and conviviality. Traditionally held at the end of the harvest, they invite everyone to contribute a dish and come together in community spirit. These gatherings honour the rhythm of the seasons, bringing stories, food, and laughter to the table.

Historical customs go further back still: the “last sheaf” of the harvest might be woven into a corn dolly, symbolising the spirit of the grain, kept until the next planting. If you've felt the warmth of a shared song or enjoyed regional festival fun, you're connecting with a centuries-old heritage.



Harvest: Gratitude in Action

Harvest is more than a meal—it's an expression of gratitude. While churches have long hosted such festivals, today Harvest often reaches beyond worship to embody community, generosity, and support for those who need it most.

In modern Britain, it's common for surplus donations—produce, meals, or essentials—to support local charities or food banks. It's a powerful way to spread that spirit of abundance where it's most needed.

Supporting Local Good: New Starts

Your Harvest offerings will benefit New Starts, a Bromsgrove-based charity and social enterprise with a practical, compassionate mission: equipping individuals moving into social housing with household furniture and food, reducing social isolation, and protecting the environment through furniture re-use initiatives.

They also operate a busy food bank offering essential parcels of fresh and pantry items, and a tech refurbishing service providing affordable IT equipment. By bringing your gifts to Harvest Sunday, you're giving more than produce—you're fortifying a community in its journey toward stability, dignity, and belonging.

Harvest Sunday & Community Gatherings

Harvest Sunday

Sunday 12th October at 10:30 am

Bring your Harvest gifts—be they vegetables, canned goods, or other thoughtful offerings—and join us in celebration. All donations will go toward supporting the work of New Starts.

Shared Harvest Supper & Talent Show

Friday 17th October at 7 pm

Come together for a warm, bring-a-plate shared supper—a modern echo of the traditional Harvest feast. Afterwards, enjoy a lively talent show! Performers, sign up in advance for a 5–7-minute act—either via the sign up sheet in church or contact Penny in the church office.

Why a Shared Supper & Talent Show?

Shared meals are universally welcoming—they're inclusive, unpretentious, and rooted in gathering. They echo the essence of traditional Harvest suppers while welcoming the whole neighbourhood. Alongside this the talent show highlights the gifts each person brings—creativity, laughter, stories—just as the harvest reflects nature's abundance. It turns the idea of "giving thanks" forward: we share our strengths with each other.

A Harvest Message

Harvest isn't just about crops; it's about recognizing and celebrating the abundance in people, friendship, and shared purpose. The supper and performance bring that message to life in a way that resonates with everyone, regardless of faith or background.



HARVEST GATHERINGS

Harvest Sunday

Sunday 12th October at 10:30 am

Bring your Harvest gifts—be they vegetables, canned goods, or other thoughtful offerings—and join us in celebration.

All donations will go toward supporting the work of New Starts.

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Harvest in Brief

- Harvest is a season of gratitude—honouring food, nature, community, and generosity.
- Traditional Harvest suppers are communal feasts where everyone brings something to share.
- Corn dollies and harvest customs celebrate the cycle of growth and renewal.
- Modern Harvest often supports charities, connecting celebration with compassion.
- Your Harvest Sunday supports New Starts, aiding those transitioning into homes with essential support.

In short, our harvest supper & talent show are inclusive expressions of community, echoing centuries of tradition in fresh, joyful ways.

Come and join us! All are welcome.

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CREATION SUNDAY

SUNDAY 19TH OCTOBER

On Sunday 19th October we'll be marking Creation Sunday across all our services: at Café Church, at 9.15am worship, and at 11.15am Morning Worship.

Creation Sunday is a chance to pause and celebrate the beauty and wonder of the world around us. From autumn leaves underfoot to star-filled skies above, it's a reminder that our lives are part of a much bigger picture. It invites us to appreciate nature's rhythms, to give thanks for its richness, and to reflect on how we can care for the earth for future generations.

It's also a time to recognise that "creation" is ongoing—new ideas, fresh starts, and shared acts of kindness are all part of the life we build together. By coming together as a community to mark Creation Sunday, we affirm both our gratitude for what we've been given and our shared responsibility to nurture and protect it.

All are warmly welcome to join us for this special day of worship, reflection, and community connection



THANKSGIVING AND GRATITUDE FOR DAVID RICHMOND

This autumn we will be giving thanks for the remarkable contribution of David Richmond, who is retiring after serving as organist at St Laurence for an extraordinary 40 years.

Throughout those decades, David has offered not only his musical skill but also his steadfast commitment to the life of our church. Week by week, season by season, he has enriched our worship with music that has lifted hearts, deepened prayer, and given voice to our faith as a community. Alongside him, his wife Elizabeth has been a dedicated member of the choir, making their service a true partnership in music and worship.

David's leadership of the choir has been a cornerstone of our choral tradition here at St Laurence. He has guided singers of all ages and abilities with patience and encouragement, ensuring that worship was always offered with beauty and integrity. His outstanding knowledge of the organ—an instrument so central to our musical life—has brought depth, dignity, and joy to countless services, festivals, and special occasions.

Even through times of personal health challenges, David has continued to serve faithfully, showing resilience and devotion that inspire us all. His ministry is one that has touched generations of worshippers—creating memories through music that will live long in the story of our church.

To mark David's retirement, we will hold a special Songs of Praise service on Sunday 5th October at 10.30am, followed by drinks and cakes in The Ark. This will be a joyful opportunity to celebrate his service and to offer our thanks for his many years of dedication.

For anyone who would like to join the choir for this special occasion, there will be two rehearsals:

- Thursday 11th September, 7.45pm, St Laurence Church
- Thursday 25th September, 7.45pm, St Laurence Church

All are warmly welcome to come, sing, and share in this celebration of music, ministry, and gratitude.

Songs of Praise Celebration

Celebrating 40 Years of Music Ministry and David Richmond's Retirement

Event Details

Join us for a joyful celebration honouring our beloved organist and the rich history of our music ministry.

Date & Time

Sunday 5th October
at 4 PM

Location

St Laurence
Church,
Alvechurch
B48 7SB



All are welcome to join us!

Refreshments will be served afterwards in The Ark

S4F SILVER SHOTS

SENIORS' SHOOTING DAY

WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 2025

TRY SOMETHING NEW!

**S4F presents Silver Shots:
A Seniors' Clay Shooting Day
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CONFIRMATION

Worcester Cathedral

Sunday 23d November, 5.30pm

“Confirm, O Lord, your servant with your Holy Spirit”

*Are you thinking about being confirmed?
Are you wondering, “Is this the right step for me?”*

We warmly invite adults and younger people to join our preparation sessions.

**Session will be led by Revd Martin at 6pm in The Ark on the following Sundays -
28th September
5th, 12th and 19th October**



Interested or have questions?

Talk to Revd Martin, or let us know if you would like to come along to the preparation sessions.

ST LAURENCE CHURCH DIARY

SEPTEMBER 2025

What's going at St Laurence Church, The Ark and Alvechurch Community

Open Church Wednesday 3rd September 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome Wednesday 3rd September 10.00am - 11.30am

A BCP Service of Holy Communion

St Leonard's Church, Beoley Thursday 4th September 10am

Wedding Preparation and Bookings at St Leonard's, Beoley
Thursday 4th September 6-7.30pm

Family Communion with Ark Time Sunday 7th September 9:15am

Morning Worship Sunday 7th September 11.15am

Open Church Wednesday 10th September 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome Wednesday 10th September 10.00am - 11.30am

Ark Tots and Toddlers Thursday 11th September 9.30am-11pm

Heritage Fun Day Saturday 13th September 11am -2pm

Family Worship with Ark Time Sunday 14th September 9:15am

Celebration of Holy Communion Sunday 14th September 11.15am

A BCP Service of Holy Communion

The Ark, Alvechurch Wednesday 17th September 10am

Open Church Wednesday 17th September 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome Wednesday 17th September 10.00am - 11.30am

ST LAURENCE CHURCH DIARY AUGUST 2025

What's going at St Laurence Church, The Ark and Alvechurch Community

Ark Tots and Toddlers followed by Tots Worship

Thursday 18th September 9.30am-11pm

Wedding Preparation and Bookings at St Leonard's, Beoley

Thursday 18th September 6-7.30pm

Café Church

Sunday 21st September, 9.15am
Breakfast Pastries served from 8.45am

Morning Worship

Sunday 21st September 11.15am

Open Church

Wednesday 24th September 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 24th September 10.00am - 11.30am

Ark Tots and Toddlers

Thursday 25th September 9.30am-11pm

Family Worship with Ark Time

Sunday 28th September 9:15am

Celebration of Holy Communion

Sunday 28th September 11.15am

REMEMBERING THOSE WE LOVE...

Each year, we come together at St Laurence Church for our Commemoration of the Departed—a quiet, reflective service to remember and give thanks for the lives of those we have loved and lost. This year, we will gather on Sunday 2nd November at 6pm.

During the service, we will read the names of everyone whose funerals we have taken in the last three years, and light a candle in their memory. There is also the opportunity to add the names of loved ones who have died outside this period, so that all who are dear to us may be remembered.

These moments of remembrance can bring a mixture of emotions—sadness, gratitude, longing, and love. In the midst of this, we are reminded that God holds us tenderly in our grief, offering comfort, presence, and hope. Our gathering provides space to mourn, to reflect, and to celebrate lives lived, knowing that we are not alone.

Whether you have recently lost someone, or wish to remember those from long ago, we warmly invite you to join us. Together, in candlelight and prayer, we honour those who have gone before us, and find solace in God's loving embrace.



TOWER RESTORATION UPDATE BEHIND THE SCAFFOLDING

By the beginning of August virtually all of the defective stonework has been prepared. Stones needing replacement have been measured and cut out. Those which just needed loose surface debris removing have been 'de-frazzed'. Lots of joints have been re-pointed. All these activities have been a little more extensive than at first hoped.

Some stones which had worked loose over the years have been re-secured with stainless steel dowels and re-pointed in.

As you can imagine, when you get up close you can see more flaws than were originally visible from ground level. This extra work will mean that the total project will take a little longer than first hoped but the extra cost is within the contingency in the budget.

We have found evidence of previous repair works, but have no real clue as to when these happened. But we have found where a previous mason has signed his name on the tower. Whether he was one of the Victorians working on the rebuilding of the church in the 1860s or from some previous repair activity we don't know. Maybe the style of the lettering will give a clue, something to investigate later.



180 pieces of stone have been purchased, some delivered ready to install, some which need shaping to mimic those they are replacing.

Work has started on installing the new roof, to replace the felt roof which was put in as a temporary measure a couple of years ago.

Because the weather has been kind, without any extensive rain, work has been proceeding well. So, despite the additional stones needing work we are still confident of completing the work in time for Heritage Open Day, although it may be touch and go!



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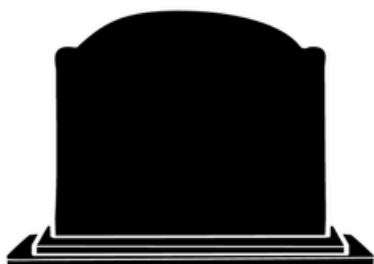
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Metchley Manor is managed by award-winning provider Care UK - one of the UK's most highly successful care home operators* with over 40 years' experience delivering high quality care to older people.

Metchley Manor stands out from other care homes with its large apartment-style living and luxury facilities. The home offers a choice between two room types, each with their own ensuite bathrooms, private dining areas and kitchenettes. Our one bed suites are ideal for individuals, whilst our companion suites offer an additional room, perfect for couples to enjoy as an extra living area. Offering residential and dementia care, including short-term respite stays, the grand facilities and lovely grounds at Metchley Manor will change your view of care homes for the better.

The lifestyle teams at our home organise a huge variety of group and one-to-one activities, with plenty going on each day, and residents can enjoy trips out and visits from the local community too.

Residents at Metchley Manor also enjoy award winning hospitality, with the home winning Best Dining Experience in 2022, and Head Chef Scott Tame recently being



shortlisted for the Public Sector Catering Awards in 2023 as Chef of the Year. Scott has been praised for ensuring that residents dine with dignity, have plenty of choice, and are served great food that looks, tastes and is of the same standard as fine dining.

Metchley Manor care home
5 Church Road, Edgbaston – Birmingham,
West Midlands B15 3SH
careuk.com/metchley-manor

Visit our website or call 0121 468 9344.



*As rated by the Care Quality Commission in England and the Care Inspectorate in Scotland.

A WARM WELCOME EVERY WEDNESDAY

ST LAURENCE IS PART OF THE NATIONAL PLACES OF WELCOME NETWORK

St Laurence is part of the Places of Welcome network.

This national initiative creates safe, friendly spaces where anyone can find hospitality, connection, and a listening ear—no pressure, no agenda.

At St Laurence, we open our doors from 10am to 11.30am, offering:

- Free hot drinks and toast
- Friendly, welcoming company
- Space to chat—or just sit and be

Whether you're new to the village, feeling a little isolated, or just fancy a cuppa in good company, you're warmly invited.

Find out more about the wider network at www.placesofwelcome.org.uk

Or simply pop in one Wednesday—we'd love to see you.

Because sometimes, a warm welcome is exactly what we need.



Places of Welcome is a network of safe places where people can connect, belong and contribute.



Wednesdays 10am - 11.30am

FREE Refreshments including toast.



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**Metchley Manor care home
Edgbaston**

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care UK

PHILLIPA BRAKES WRITES...

I saw a post in Instagram, or it may have been Facebook which portrayed God, if God existed, as a tyrant who demanded the worship of his followers to build up his own inflated ego. Worse still, he supposedly rejected all those who refused to worship him.

Hmm – where to go with that? It struck me that the basic misunderstanding here is about what worship is for and what it achieves. In earthly terms, if human beings worship another human being, it produces a monster like Hitler because we are not capable to receiving extreme adulation and still remaining rational or compassionate. Come to think of it, some celebrities struggle with the effects of the adoration of their fans. However God is totally different. God is not subject to the inadequacies, pride and selfishness we exhibit. God doesn't actually need our worship or indeed, us at all. Parents don't really need their children, they just want them. With good parents, the love flows in a two way process. Imagine a parent with a toddler at the park. The child will stand on a high surface and say "Catch me". She will then fling herself off knowing her father or mother will catch her. As she flies, she feels exhilaration, a touch of fear of the height and the joy of knowing she will be caught. The parent will revel in the fun, moved by the complete trust of the child. As child and parent connect, joy courses through both and their bond of love and trust is increased and becomes lifelong.

When we worship, offering God our songs and prayers of thankfulness and praise, we are overcome by a sense of utter awe that a being of such power and creativity who brought into being out of love, the world we see around us and so much more, actually loves and is interested in each one of us. When God sees our worship, we are viewed like a loving parent watching a nativity play, proud of their little one's efforts, however failing and hesitant they may be. God can take our pathetic offerings, magnify them and return them to us as joy, hope and peace which we can then spread to others. God doesn't need our worship for himself; God knows it is necessary for us to worship in order to grow into the people we were born to be. Worshipping God helps us to mature and enables us to cope with the difficulties we face in this world. When we see ourselves in relation to the perfection and purity of God, we know we have frequently failed to be the people we should be and yet we are loved and forgiven. This humbles us and should enable us to forgive others who fail; who are we to judge? When we worship with gratitude and wonder, our hearts lift, our mood improves and we are empowered to live our lives to the full.

PHILLIPA BRAKES WRITES CONT...

Also God doesn't actually reject anyone. Jesus never turned away anyone who came to him for healing and help. However, he did allow people to choose to walk away. The rich young man wanted to follow him (Mark chapter 10, verses 17-31) but he wanted his wealth, status and comforts more, so he walked away. God knows that these things will not satisfy us long term, but is willing to wait with infinite patience while we try out everything that isn't God, until we recognise that what we need, more than anything else is just him, no ego, no tyranny, no judgement, just love, pure, simple and eternal.

CHURCHYARD AND NATURE TRAIL

The hot and dry weather has impacted our gardens and churchyard alike. However, some trees have already fruited and seeded well and others, such as the holly and yew, are displaying their ripening berries. The lime trees are currently laden with seeds, but this year there appear to be fewer acorns on the large oak tree.

For those who have walked in the churchyard in the last few weeks, the cherry plum trees have been full of small but delicious fruit (I can personally vouch for that), and in other areas there are blackberries. I recently inadvertently disturbed a toad, and this and other creatures will soon be preparing for autumn and winter.

Meanwhile work on creating the nature trail continues. Possible sources of funding are being explored, as is the involvement of children from our village schools in the final stages of preparing and displaying information about the flora and fauna that can be seen. Also, two specific areas are being prepared for the process of increasing the number of wildflowers growing in the churchyard, by a winter seeding of yellow rattle, a native plant used in many nature reserves for this purpose.

It is also hoped that bird feeders and nesting boxes will be installed during Autumn, with the intention of increasing the types and numbers of small birds frequenting the area. Increasing wildlife habitats and improving bio-diversity are two of the main goals for creating the Nature Trail.

Roger Wardle

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A QUIET SPACE TO BE HEARD: PRAYER MINISTRY AT ST LAURENCE

You might not consider yourself a person of faith. You might not pray, or even be sure how. But most of us—at some point—long for a quiet place to be listened to, or to make sense of something we're carrying.

That's why, every Sunday at St Laurence, we offer something gentle and simple: a half-hour of quiet presence in the Lady Chapel, from 10:30 to 11:00am.

Someone will be there—just one person, quietly available—to listen if you want to talk, or to pray with you if that would help. There's no pressure. No expectation. Just space.

What is prayer?

At its heart, prayer is about connection. It's a way of expressing hope, pain, gratitude, longing, or confusion—directed toward the mystery we call God. For some, it's deeply personal and faith-filled. For others, it's more a yearning than a certainty. Either way, prayer is not about having the right words. It's about being real.

Why does this matter?

We believe in a God who listens, a God who cares. Offering prayer in this way is one small way our church tries to mirror that—by simply being present to people, without fixing, preaching, or judging.

Whether you're facing something difficult, carrying something unspoken, or just needing a moment of peace before or after the busyness of life—this space is for you.

We may not have all the answers. But we offer a listening ear, a safe space, and the kindness of prayer—because that, too, is holy.

So if you're ever in church on a Sunday between the services, and you're wondering whether this quiet corner might be for you—the answer is yes.

Come just as you are.



Praying for Alvechurch

*“Prayer does not change God, but it changes the one who prays.”
— Søren Kierkegaard*

God of all seasons,
We thank you for the turning of time,
for the crispness in the air,
the golden leaves beginning to fall,
and the quiet rhythm of September days.

We pray for our village of Alvechurch—
for its schools and families,
its businesses and community groups,
its neighbours old and new.

As routines restart and new ventures begin,
bring peace where there is pressure,
joy where there is change,
and kindness in every shared moment.

Bless our community buildings and all who enter them—
may they be places of welcome, wonder, and warmth.
Bless our streets and green spaces—
that they may reflect your beauty and peace.

And bless us, your people,
that in this season of settling and starting again,
we may be rooted in your love
and open to all you are doing among us.
In Jesus’ name,
Amen.

We pray for all who live on Aqueduct Lane, Swan Street and Birmingham Road



10AM HOLY COMMUNION FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

**ST LEONARD'S,
BEOLEY**

1ST THURSDAY OF MONTH

July 3rd
August 7th
September 4th
October 2nd
November 6th
December 4th
January No BCP
February 5th
March 5th
April No BCP

**ST LAURENCE,
ALVECHURCH**

3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH

July 16th
August 20th
September 17th
October 15th
November 19th
December 17th
January 14th
February No BCP
March 18th
April 15th

**PRAYERS AND ANOINTING FOR
HEALING AND WHOLENESS**

Healing Eucharist

**St Leonard's Church,
Beoley**

3rd Sundays at 11.15am

20th July
21st September
18th January
19th April
21st June
16th August
18th October

**St Laurence Church,
Alvechurch**

4th Sundays at 11.15am

24th August
26th October
28th December
22nd February
24th May
26th July
20th September



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Alvechurch Historical Society

EVENTS

Wednesday Sept 17th 7:30pm at the Village Hall

Honey and cider tasting

Local producer Greg Hunt of Fruitfields Orchards. <https://fruitfields.co.uk/>

WALKS

Sunday Sept 7th 2pm

Cofton Common

Meet at St Michael's Church car park, Cofton Church Lane B45 8BD

Sunday Oct 5th 2pm

A Walk from The Peacock & Beyond

Meet at Peacock Inn, Icknield Street B38 0EH

For further information and membership see the AVS website: www.alvechurchvs.org



Quiz and Chips

Friday 7th November

2025

7:30pm start, doors open at 7pm

The Ark, School Lane, B48 7SB

Teams of up to 6 people max

£12 per person including fish and chip supper.

Veggie option available, please request on booking.

Licensed bar on evening.

Booking in advance and payment of ticket

For tickets see Graham or Charlotte in the Parish Office

What's on at The Ark In September



Children's Recreational and Development Club
CREATIVE CAROUSEL
Spin! Create! Inspire!

Body development/ Dance & Movement

Voice Development/ Singing, acting

Fine Motor Development/ Arts & Crafts

Our program is designed to provide a fun learning experience and support children's holistic development in performing and creative arts.

We guarantee **2 hours** of fun, creative tasks, engaging challenges, and snacks!

Program Details:
Days: Thursdays
Ages: 7-11,
Time: 4pm - 6pm
Cost per session: £10
Special Offer: The first session is only **£2**
Sibling Discount: Families enrolling multiple children will receive a **20%** discount.

Contact Us:
creativecarouseluk@gmail.com
www.creativecarousel.co.uk
@Creative Carousel
@creativecarouseluk

St Laurence Church and The Ark,
School Lane, Alvechurch, B48 7SB

Scan QR code to Register!

Scan QR code to Donate!

NEW for September - Creative Carousel a fun learning experience for children. Thursdays 4pm - 6pm

Heritage Day

Celebrate the rich history and vibrant culture of our community at this year's Heritage Day Family Fete!

Join us for a day filled with live music, dancing delicious food from local vendors, and a variety of family-friendly activities. Explore craft stalls showcasing the talents of our neighbours, and enjoy traditional games and a nature trail in the churchyard.. It's a wonderful opportunity for all ages to connect with our shared heritage and create new memories together.

Saturday 13th September We can't wait to see you there!

Have you visited our website recently?

The easiest way to find details about everything that's happening here at the Ark is via the website - www.thearkalvechurch.co.uk

Contacts for class and group regular events

Alvechurch Historical Society - Anne - 0121 445 5955

Karate - Chris 0756 4604613

Adult Irish dancing - donnagriffinacademy.com

Places of Welcome - Charlotte - 0121 447 7955

Wednesday Yoga and mediation - Sally - myyogamind.co.uk

Hillside WI - Pat - 0121 628 4121

Tango - Andy - andy.adamson@coolpilates.co.uk

AGSOD - Amy Greaves -amygreavesschoolofdance@gmail.com

Sunday afternoon homemade cuisine - Yana - ianakol81@gmail.com

Creative Carousel - Tetiana - creativecarouseluk@gmail.com

Looking to hire the Ark ? Please contact Charlotte

Tel 0121 447 7955

admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

WEEKLY *Ark Schedule*

MONDAYS

**AVAILABLE TO HIRE FROM
1PM - 3.45PM**

AMY GREAVES - DANCE
CIRQUE 4PM-6PM

TANGO UNPLUGGED 7PM -
11PM (2ND AND 4TH OF EACH
MONTH)

TUESDAYS

AVAILABLE TO HIRE 9AM -4PM

AMY GREAVES DANCE
4.15 -7.30PM

KARATE 6.15PM - 8.15PM

ADULT IRISH DANCING 8PM -9PM

WEDNESDAYS

***NEW TIME *
PLACES OF WELCOME
10AM - 11.30AM**

AMY GREAVES DANCE
11.30AM -1PM

YOGA 1PM-2.15PM
MEDITATION 2.25PM-3PM
YOGA 7PM-8.15PM

THURSDAYS

CREATIVE CAROUSEL 4PM - 6PM

TOTS AND TODDLERS 9.30AM
-11AM

ADULT IRISH DANCING 8PM -9PM

FRIDAYS

**AVAILABLE TO HIRE
ALL DAY**

SATURDAYS

AMY GREAVES DANCE 8AM -
3.15PM

AVAILABLE TO HIRE FROM 4PM

SUNDAYS

AVAILABLE TO HIRE FROM 1PM

TOGETHER WE KEEP THE LIGHT ON

SMALL GIFTS, SHARED PURPOSE, LASTING IMPACT

When you walk into St Laurence, you're stepping into something shaped by many hands and hearts over generations. And what keeps the lights on, the kettle boiled, and the doors open? It's not just big cheques or grand gestures—it's the quiet faithfulness of many people giving what they can, month by month.

Think of it like this:

£2 a week – about the cost of a bus fare or a newspaper – could help cover candles, communion bread, or activity materials for children.

£7 a week – the price of a takeaway lunch – might go toward keeping the heating on for a midweek group or covering insurance.

£12 a week – less than a cinema trip – could help fund pastoral visits, family events, or essential maintenance.

Individually, these gifts might seem small. But together, they allow us to serve our community with warmth, welcome, and hope—week in, week out.

They mean we can say yes when someone needs a listening ear, yes to creative worship spaces like Be Space, yes to children's activities, concerts, community partnerships, and the big questions about how we grow and serve in the years to come.

Regular giving gives us stability. It lets us plan with confidence, dream generously, and live out our calling in real, practical ways.

Whether you already give or haven't started yet, would you consider joining in? A small regular gift—set up by standing order—makes a big difference.

To explore giving or to update your standing order, have a quiet word with Michelle, our treasurer (details in the "Our Team" section), or ask for a leaflet in church.

Because together, we keep the light on.



General Fund



Churchyard Fund

Our Team



Revd Gail Rogers

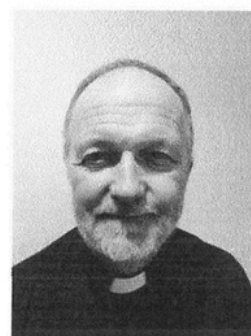
Priest in Charge

The Rectory, School Lane

0121 824 5257

07867 853813

revdgail@icloud.com



Revd Martin Allen

Assistant Curate

117 Birmingham Road

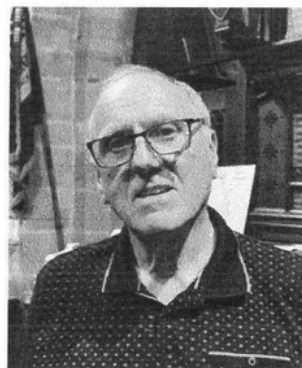
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Churchwardens



Michael Davenport

0121 447 7955



Mick Fletcher

Authorised Lay Minister

0121 447 7955



Penny Walker

Ministry Support Administrator

Tuesday - Thursday 9.30am -1.30pm

0121 447 7955

church-beoleyandalvechurch@outlook.com



Charlotte Palethorpe

Ark and Facilities Administrator

0121 447 7955

admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk



Sue Phillips Wardle
 Licensed Lay Minister
 55 Birmingham Road
 0121 445 0505



Helen Ayling
 Licensed Lay Minister
 "Tamcroft", Hewell Lane
 0121 445 6176
 07708433691

Authorised Lay Ministers



Helena Allen



Graham Clark



Sarah Linton



Sue Sperring

Deputy Churchwardens



Andy Notley

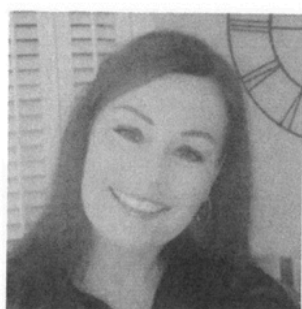


Susan Lambert
 Safeguarding Officer
 07769110608



Colin Bennett
 Tower Master
 01527 64077

Mark Linton



Michelle Read
 Finance Officer
stlaurencetreasurer@outlook.com

Heritage Fun Day – At a Glance

Saturday 13th September 2025 | 11am–2pm

St Laurence Church & The Ark

Entertainment

Crown Meadow First School Choir
Community Choir
Paddywack Ukes
Tango Unplugged
Amy Greaves School of Dance
Aelfgythe Border Morris
Singers including Karen Marsh

Food & Drink

Cakes & refreshments in The Ark Café
Manny's Eats
BB King Whippy Ice Cream

Family Fun

Free children's crafts
Face painting
Hook-a-duck, lucky dip & tombola
Horse racing & archery
Bournville Boats

Heritage & Displays

Church & churchyard tours
Portrait exhibition
Restoration videos & displays
Heritage Land Rover

Stalls & Community

Handmade crafts, cards, pet accessories
Community groups: Better Together, Belmont Healthcare, Creative Carousel

Grand Prize Draw

1st Prize £100
2nd Prize £50
Hot Air Balloon Ride for 2 (Thomas Brothers)
Plus hampers, vouchers, cupcakes, and more!

Where history meets community, fun, and friendship.