# GRAPEVINE ST LAURENCE CHURCH, ALVECHURCH July 2023



## Places of Welcome: Belonging, Friendship, Connecting

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# REVD GAIL WRITES...

After a recent visit to the A&E department, I received a notification on my phone from trip

advisor to 'rate' my visit. One of the questions was around welcome and hospitality; How do you rate your welcome between 1 (lowest) and 5 (highest)? This got me thinking about how one might 'rate' the welcome and hospitality at St Laurence Church?

Jesus's expectations for hospitality are set high. The bible tells us that we should receive one another as though they are Christ themselves, that we should see the image of God in all people and treat them as God treats us, with love and grace. The hospitality of God welcomes people as they are, it is a place of belonging and of flourishing.

Over the last year St Laurence Church has been offering new spaces of worship, welcome and hospitality. It has been a year since we launched Places of Welcome, a space for friendship and conversation over free hospitality which includes tea, coffee and toast. We have reintroduced The Ark café, holding regular events throughout the year, these have proved to be very popular with tickets selling out early. We have held an animal service, a new service for advent which concluded with the switching on of the tower star and free hot chocolate, mince pies and cookies in The Ark. Each week church is open on a Wednesday morning offering a quiet space for reflection and prayer. And back in April we launched a new monthly café style worship in The Ark where we serve a selection of puddings and drinks as part of our hospitality.

Jesus has high standards for welcome and hospitality, and following in these footsteps, so do we. Why don't you come along to any of the above, or any other of our events and worship, a warm welcome awaits you!

In this issue of Grapevine you will find lots of information about the life of St Laurence Church and The Ark. You are very welcome to come and join us where you can.

Prayers and best wishes

Revd Gail





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

Free refreshments, including toast!

# Wednesdays 10am – 12pm

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

# Martin Allen writes

Were you at the Picnic in the Park I wonder? Wasn't it a wonderful day? There were dog shows and choirs. There were dancers and airplane flybys. Small businesses were selling goods from food to pamper products. It was amazing with charities, sports organisations, and a funfair ride. There was of course ice cream! All that topped off



with people relaxing and picnicking in the sunshine! There was a real sense of togetherness and community.

I wonder how you experienced the Coronation recently with the pageantry of the day. Whilst most people were watching TV, there was still some sense of connection. If we go back just a little further, we remember that same togetherness in events such as the Queen's jubilee. Public events can connect us together in wonderful ways. Connecting to something bigger happens in other ways too. Volunteering as some find through helping a charity can do it. The new Alvechurch Village Larder is an example of people connecting with a common purpose. Social connections can help with wellbeing too.

I think human beings are made for relationship and to be in community. We want to be part of something bigger than ourselves and some seek that and value it. We may get a taste of that from experiences like those mentioned above. We can also get it from being part of a work community or family. Sadly, for those who do not have those communities to be part of, that can accentuate loneliness. Sometimes people feel hurt by relationships and must stay apart for selfprotection.

Being part of God's family involves being part of something bigger than ourselves too. The church can give a similar sense of belonging to something bigger. You do not need to believe everything Christians believe. God's family is for everyone, and all are welcome to his celebrations. You can be part of something bigger than yourself and belong before you believe too. Yes, the family says and does things that can be a problem, but I like to think we get things right more often than wrong. When we get things wrong, we try to apologise as you might expect in a family. God promises to help us reset and restore relationships when things go wrong too so we have help!

If you enjoyed that sense of togetherness at the Picnic in the Park, why not give us a try out? The recently started Church at 4 on a Sunday afternoon is a relaxed way to check us out, with fun, craft, and food (puddings!). Next date is 2nd July 2023.







Last month at Church@4 we thought about how we can keep on track in our relationship with God. We heard the story of Adam and Eve as an example of how we are not always good at this, focussing on how if we try to keep the commands Jesus gave us, 'Love God, love others and love ourselves, we grow closer to God and one another. As a reminder of this we made keyrings to remind us to keep this focus in our everyday lives.

This month we are thinking about the story of a very tall tower, this is wonderful story where we hear about God's sense of humour. Come and join us as we think how through God's encounter with people who thought they were more important and greater than God informs our journey of faith.

The worship at Church@4 is created to be inclusive and informal as we worship God through interactive songs, bible telling, teaching and prayer. All interaction is offered by invitation, you chose how much or little you wish get involved.



interactive worship for all

We gather on the following Sundays in 2023:

4th June 2nd July 6th August **3rd September** 1st October 5th November 10th December

Come and hear how much God loves us as we share pudding, songs and bible stories, with an invitation to explore deeper through interactive responses.

St Laurence Church, 4pm @ The Ark, School Lane, Alvechurch, B48 7SB

At Church@4 we serve free puddings and refreshments.



Church@4 is a worship space that is generous in welcome and delights in diversity! Page 4



# Cancelled Model Railway Exhibition

The model railway exhibition on July 8th has had to be cancelled.

My enthusiastic message was at least two months too late, and did not allow for the Covid gap which had taken away any flow in arrangements needed to keep the event going.

I am sorry to disappoint any enthusiasts who saw the article, or who saw any other adverts (now cancelled) but the event has finally run out of steam.

David Richmond

### SUNDAY FAMILY WORSHIP AND ARK TIME

2nd July 9:15am Family Communion Children in church

9th, 16th & 23rd July 9.15am Ark Time - each week We will continue to find out how God grows good 'fruit' in us

We will look at the fruit of kindness, goodness and faithfulness

> 30th July 10:30am United Worship with activities for children

We look forward to meeting you.

Bring along your Babies, children, or grandchildren to join us for our Family Worship. Under 8's, including toddlers, enjoy singing, stories and craft activities with loveable Jack the Labrador puppet. Over 8's Group explore similar Bible stories and themes, along with activities.

The Ark A Aternoon Tea

A selection of sandwiches Ghuten Free Sandwiches can be pre-booked

Sausage or cheese rolls

8 A selection of cakes including scones.

Elderflower Fizz Unlimited tea and Coffee

August | 31st | 2023 ARRIVE FROM 12.30PM WITH FOOD SERVED AT 1PM

Page 6

Advance booking only

£10 per ticket Please contact Lynda 0121 447 7955 admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

## The Ark - upcoming events

### Ultimate Girls Vintage Craft Fayre Saturday 15th July 12pm - 4pm

Following a first successful event in April, the next vintage fayre will be held at The Ark. Please contact www.ultimategirls.co.uk for further detals or to book a stall

### The Midland Sinfonia Saturday 22nd July 7.30pm

The next musical evening at the Ark will be French Fancies, hosted by The Midland Sinfonia. Please see their ad on page 14 for further details



# The Ark - some spaces over the summer but Autumn party slots filling up fast!

As the weather improves , fewer parents chose indoor parties for children's birthdays. However, some villagers are very organised and our autumn slots are filling up!

If you'd like details about hiring the Ark for birthday parties ready for the Autumn school term, please contact Lynda in the Ark office on 0121 447 7955 or by email at admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

## Church Flowers Creative co-ordinator vacancy

It is with some sadness that I have to announce I am no longer able to coordinate weekly flower arrangements in church. The years have caught up with me and I have found it increasingly difficult to manage. This opportunity can be a wonderful challenge to someone a little younger.

I took over almost 20 years ago from Isabel Lowe as coordinator and before that had helped the team of flower arrangers. Over the years it has been a pleasure to work alongside so many members of our congregation who have given their time. At the risk of omitting some names I have to mention Monica Clarke, Elizabeth Clement, Brenda Davies, Dawnie McDonald, Lynda Wolstencroft, Janet Wright and Helen Gardener who have been willing team members and over the years we had a lot of fun together and enjoyed the occasional Easter treat or Christmas mince pie when we sat down together at the end of a session!

Flowers have always been important in churches over the years and certain flowers and herbs have special meaning in our lives i.e Rosemary for Remembrance. In the Old Testament God tells Moses to put an image of Almond Blossom and buds on the Altar.

I do hope that someone will come forward to take over this role and enjoy, as much as I have, working in the quiet of church enhancing our beautiful church building. I will still be around to help as much as I am able.

Ann Thurrell

On behalf of the PCC and St Laurence Church we extend huge thanks to Ann for her commitment to coordinating this team. We give thanks for her creative flair, and the many displays she has so generously provided. Revd Gail

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### "Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God." *-Teresa of Avila* **Prayer**

We pray for our schools, as they approach the end of the school year may they look back with thankfulness and look ahead with hope.

We pray for local business, giving thanks for the services they offer to our community.

We pray for conversations and consultations happening around restoring a village Post Office.

We pray for all who live and work in Alvechurch, with a focus on all who live on Station Road, The Becks and Latimer Road.

# Hillside WI

At our June meeting Pat welcomed everyone, including our guest speaker, Rev Gail Rogers, Vicar of Alvechurch and Beoley churches, who sat patiently through our business section. Gail then took over and related how she became ordained as a minister. It took several years of study. She started her working life as a nurse and continued in that capacity with the NHS. for 11 years. It was a fascinating journey of hard work and commitment, with the support of her husband, all taken whilst bringing up her family. She held a question session after her talk, which was followed by refreshments and social time.

The Group meeting hosted by Beoley WI is being held on June 20th at Beoley Village Hall. The theme is 'I do like to be beside the seaside', and is to include a fish and chip supper.

Our July meeting is on the 5th and it is our birthday meeting. We are holding a Beetle Drive, which is something we haven't had for a long time, so a bit of a change.

A trip has been organised for later in July to Moreton Hall Gardens near Inkberrow.

We meet in the Ark at St Laurence Church on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.We always welcome visitors and new members.

Please contact Pat McDonagh on 0121 628 4121.

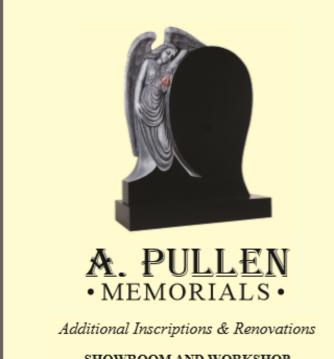
# **Funerals**

## June

### Nigel Leonard

## **Michael Sprigg**

... go forth from this world: in the love of God, the Father who created you, in the mercy of Jesus Christ who redeemed you, in the power of the Holy Spirit who strengthens you.



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## Heritage Open Day Saturday 16th September

This year we are holding our Heritage Open Day on **Saturday 16th September.** 

It will be an opportunity to celebrate both the history of our church, dating back to 1239, rebuilt between 1858 and 1964 by the renowned church architect, William Butterfield, and also our modern church hall, The Ark, winner of the 2007 EASA President's Award for best Ecclesiastical Architecture.

We are pleased to announce that many of our participants who had volunteered to entertain and educate at last year's event have already confirmed they will be with us this year.

Our programme of events, confirmed to date, includes storytelling based on the tale of our 14th century Knight, Sir John Blanchfront, tours around the church, and a nature trail around the churchyard. There will be stands and demonstrations from our Ark classes and communities - a great way to see what you would like to try!!

The village's community choir will be performing, and there will be refreshments - including barbeque, beers and cakes.

The event will conclude with Pimm's and hymns.

More participants will be announced as confirmations are received.



## ST LAURENCE CHURCH DIARY JULY 2023

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

### St Leonard's, Beoley Summer Fete

Saturday 1st July, 1.30pm-4.30pm

Wednesday 5th July, 10.00am - 12pm

Wednesday 5th July, 10.00am - 12pm

Sunday 2nd July, 9.15am

Sunday 2nd July, 11.15am

Sunday 2nd July, 4pm

Tuesday 4th July, 7.30pm

Family Worship with Holy Communion

**Morning Worship** 

Church@4

PCC Meeting PCC Members Only

Places of Welcome

**Open Church** 

**Ark Tots and Toddlers** 

A BCP Service of Holy Communion St Leonard's Church, Beoley

Thursday 6th July, 10am

Thursday 6th July, 9.30am

Wedding Bookings at St Leonard's Church, Beoley Thursday 6th July, 6pm- 8pm

Family Worship with Ark TimeSunday 9th July, 9.15am

Celebration of Holy Communion Sunday 9th July, 11.15am

Baptism Preparation at St Leonard's, Beoley

Tuesday 11th July, 7.30pm

Places of WelcomeWednesday 12th July, 10.00am - 12pm

**Open Church** 

Wednesday 12th July, 10.00am - 12pm

# DIARY JULY CONT.

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

Ark Tots and Toddlers		Thursday 13th July, 9.30am				
Family Worship with Ark Tim	Sunday 16th July, 9.15am					
Morning Worship		Sunday 16th July, 11.15am				
Places of Welcome	Wednesday 19th July, 10.00am - 12pm					
Open Church	Wednesday 19th July, 10.00am - 12pm					
A BCP Service of Holy Comr St Laurence Church, Alvech		Wednesday 19th July, 10am				
Wedding Bookings at St Leonard's Church, Beoley Thursday 20th July, 6pm- 8pm						
Family Worship with Ark Time		Sunday 23rd July, 9.15am				
Celebration of Holy Commun	Sunday 23rd July, 11.15am					
Places of Welcome	Wedne	esday 26th July, 10.00am - 12pm				
Open Church	Wedne	esday 26th July, 10.00am - 12pm				
United Worship		Sunday 30th July, 10.30am				
Prayers and Anointings for Healing and Wholeness						

Sunday 30th July, 4pm

### COMMO PRAYE

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GIVE YOU PEACE

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Prayers with Anointing for Healing and Wholeness

Sunday 30th July at 4pm

#### 10AM HOLY COMMUNION FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

ST LEONARD'S, BEOLEY

1ST THURSDAY OF MONTH

July 6th August 3rd September 7th October 5th November 2nd December 7th ST LAURENCE, ALVECHURCH 3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH

June 21st July 19th August 16th (Morning Prayer) September 20th October 18th November 15th December 20th

St Laurence, Alvechurch

# PRAYER MINISTRY 10.30-II-00 EVERY SUNDAY MORNING IN THE LADY CHAPEL

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### with Helena Allen



### Please tell us about yourself.

I spent my childhood in theological colleges because my father was a theologian. I'm married to Martin and have two adult daughters Juliet and Izzy. It was a delight to see Juliet and Rory get married at St Laurence recently. I enjoy sewing and music.

## Where might we find you every day, and what sort of things would you be doing or being?

At present during the week, I'm in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Edgbaston where I work as an Occupational Health Consultant. I work in a team who provide help and advice about people's fitness to do their jobs and about any adjustments they may need.

### How do you experience God in the joys and challenges of everyday life?

I am thankful for family and home and the extended family of the village and church. These are reminders that God cherishes each of us. Whatever challenges I experience, God has seen them all before. I find that reassuring.

### How do you share your faith with others in everyday life?

I believe everybody is a unique person precious in God's sight. When people have health conditions affecting their work, they may perceive themselves as devalued. I try to find adaptations to help them stay in work to help them be productive, have a purpose and make a contribution.

### How does your faith grow through everyday living?

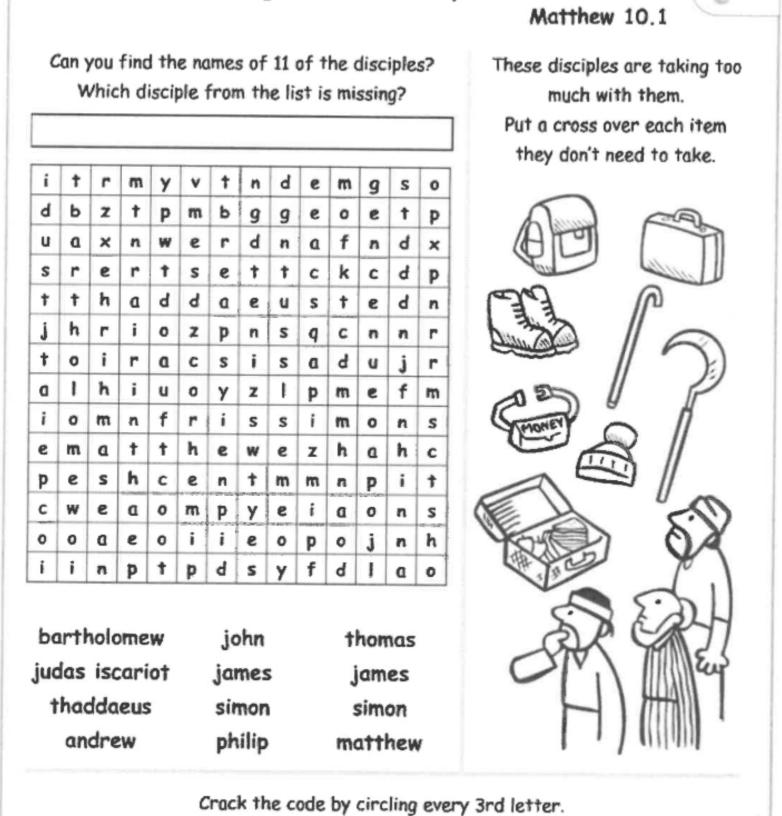
I am encouraged by the people who are committed to helping and supporting others, despite the challenges of recent years.

### "Ministry" is what all believers are called to, not just for those ordained. How can we support you in yours?

I am an Authorised Lay Minister, involved in music in worship. It would be helpful to know what aspects of music ministry help people to build their relationships with God.

### How can we pray for you?

It would help to have wisdom and diplomacy negotiating the needs of managers and employees in my work.



Find out the good news Jesus sent the disciples to proclaim.

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'Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority...'

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St Laurence Church and The Ark, Alvechurch

# ARK TOTS AND TODDLERS

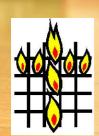
A friendly play enviroment for babies and little ones under 5, with their parents or carers.

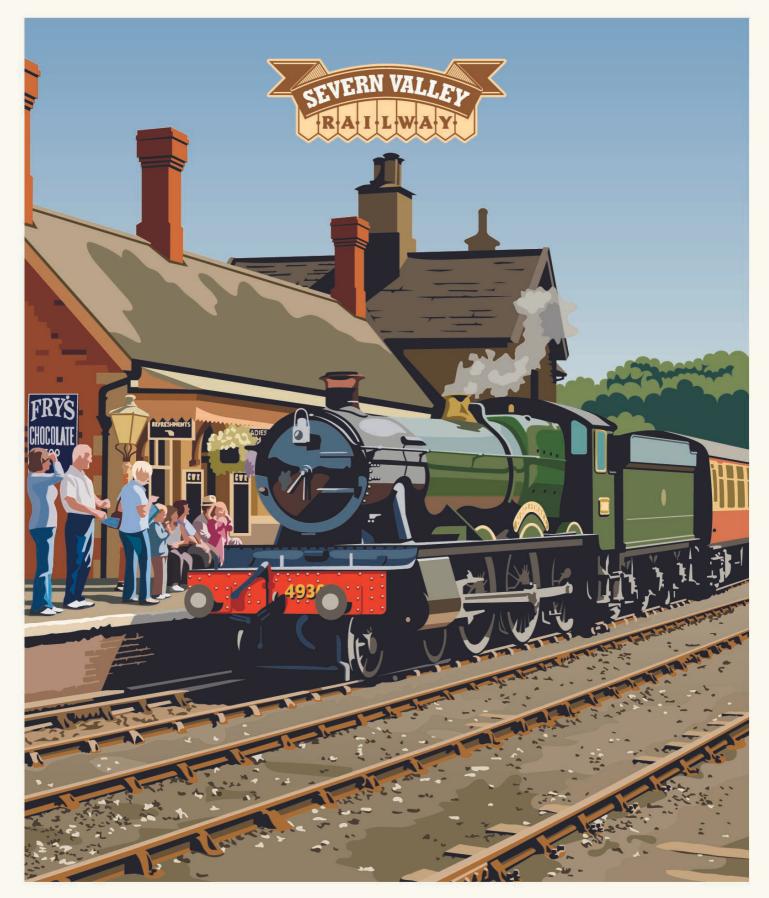
A time to play and chat, with each session ending in singing time.

### 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.





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St Laurence Church relies on the generosity of giving to sustain its mission and ministry. Through the dedication of volunteers and financial giving we maintain the beautiful grade2\* listed building and its churchyard.

You can support this ongoing ministry through one off or regularly giving. This can be done in several ways.

Text giving via DONR

STLALVECHURCH 5 to 70085 TO DONATE £5 STLALVECHURCH 10 to 70085 TO DONATE £10 STLALVECHURCH 20 to 70085 TO DONATE £20

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Through the Parish Giving Scheme

For more information visit www.parishgivingscheme.org.uk Or for a pack pop into church or The Ark and pick one up Or please contact Lynda at admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk or call 0121 447 7955 for a Parish Giving Pack.

Thank you for your support and generosity.

Alvechurch PCC - Registered Charity number 1131783

**June Baptisms at St Laurence Church** 

## Freya O'Keefe

'I baptise you in th<mark>e name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'</mark>

## Weddings at St Laurence Church

### April

Hannah Oakton & Thomas Young

May Juliet Allen & Rory Douglas

### June

Sophie Baxter & Rory Wilson Vickie Roberts & Alexander Stanley

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.



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## OUR TEAM













### Revd Gail Rogers

Priest in Charge The Rectory, School Lane 0121 824 5257 07867 853813 revdgail@icloud.com

### Lynda Lewis

Parish 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 "Tarncroft", Hewell Lane, Vigo 0121 445 6176

### Michael Davenport

Church Warden

0121 447 7955

### Graham Clark

Church Warden The Coach House, School Lane 0121 445 2547

### Mark Linton

Deputy Church Warden

Contact details: 0121

### Andy Notley Deputy Church Warden

0121



### **Colin Bennett**

**Bell Tower Master** 

01527 64077

# Quiz and Chi

### Friday 29th September

7:30pm start, doors open at 7pm The Ark, School Lone, B487SB

Teams of up to 6 people max

£10 per person including fish and chip supper. Veggie option available, please request on booking.

Licensed bar on evening.

Booking in advance by payment of ticket by 15th September. For tickets see Graham or Lynda in the Parish Office



### Deadline for Grapevine August 2023 Edition

If you wish to submit an article or advert the deadline is -Monday 17th July