

GRAPEVINE

ST LAURENCE CHURCH, ALVECHURCH

January 2025



Winter a season that holds the
promise of hope and new beginnings

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Deadline for submission for February Grapevine is 13th January

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.



REVD GAIL WRITES...



Dear Friends,

As the New Year begins, it's natural to reflect on where we are and where we're heading. Some of us make resolutions—plans to exercise more, spend less, or finally take up that hobby we've been putting off. Others approach the year with big questions: What does the future hold for me? Where am I heading in my relationships or career? Will this year bring peace, joy, or change?

These moments of reflection can feel exciting, but they can also be daunting. Life's big questions often don't have straightforward answers, and it's easy to feel overwhelmed by uncertainty. Yet, in the midst of it all, I believe God is present—inviting us to explore, reflect, and discover.

God isn't waiting for us at the finish line with all the answers; instead, God walks alongside us in the questions themselves. Through beauty, truth, and goodness in our lives and relationships, God reveals a deep desire to be with us—not just when life is clear and sorted, but in the messy, uncertain, and questioning moments too.

That's why I'm excited about the Being With course, starting this month. It's a space to wonder together about life's questions and stories, to connect with others, and to explore how God is already at work in the world around us. Whether you're wrestling with questions or simply curious about life and faith, this course offers a safe and welcoming place to journey together.

So, as we step into this New Year, perhaps the best resolution we can make isn't to find all the answers but to stay open—to the questions, to new experiences, to one another, and to the God who promises to be with us every step of the way.

Why not take that first step and join us? It might just change the way you see the year ahead.

With prayers and blessings

Revd. Gail



I WONDER...

Who... What... Why...
How... When... If...



Join our 'Being With' course, an invitation to discover faith in the context of discovering friendship.

The Being With Course helps people consider the Christian faith in new and refreshing ways. No prior knowledge is needed, just a simple willingness to share your questions, what you do know or feel.

Sessions begin on the following dates for 5 weeks:

Monday 13th January, 7pm
with Revd Gail at The Ark, Alvechurch.

Wednesday 15th January, 7pm
with Revd Martin on Zoom

'Being with' is a ten week course that we are holding over two five week blocks, the first beginning in January and the second in the spring.



For more information contact
For the monday session, contact RevD Gail:
revdgail@icloud.com / 07867 853813 or just show up.

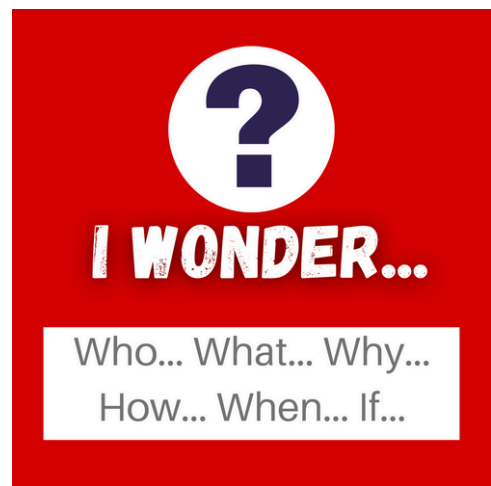
For the wednesday session contact Revd Martin for Zoom detail
allnix@btinternet.com / 07788 872738



Being With Course

We All Have Questions About Life:

- *Who will I fall in love with?*
- *What should I do about rising costs?*
- *When will my next meal be ready?*
- *Why does my family argue so much?*
- *Will I ever truly be happy?*
-



If you've ever found yourself wondering about life, the Being With course could be just what you need. It's all about exploring relationships—with others, ourselves, and with God. You don't need to have any answers or even any particular beliefs—just a desire to share and connect.

Together, we'll discover how God shows up in beauty, truth, and goodness in everyday life. By sharing our own stories and listening to others, we find meaning in both the small and the transformative moments of life.

There's room for every story—yours included. All you need is a willingness to listen and share in a supportive, open space.

Sessions begin

Monday 13th January, 7pm
with Revd Gail at The Ark, Alvechurch

Wednesday 15th January, 7pm
with Revd Martin on Zoom

The Being With course runs for ten weeks, split into two five-week blocks: the first begins this January, with the second to follow in spring. Why not join us and see where the journey takes you?

For more information contact

For the Monday session, contact Revd Gail:

revdgail@icloud.com / 07867 853813 or just show up.

For the Wednesday session contact Revd Martin for Zoom detail

allnix@btinternet.com / 07788 872738

For more information about the 'Being With' course see - <https://being-with.org/>

INTRODUCING THE ARK'S SWOP SHOP

We're thrilled to invite you to the Swap Shop—an exciting opportunity to bring along items you no longer need and swap them for something you do! This event is all about sharing, reusing, and building community.

How does it work?

Simply bring your preloved items—clothes, toys, household goods, books, and more—that are in good condition but need a new home. Browse through what others have brought, and take home items that catch your eye. If you don't have anything to swap, no problem! Items can also be purchased at a fair price. Any profits made will go toward supporting the mission and work of St Laurence Church.

There's no charge - entrance is free and refreshments, including cakes will be available for purchase.

This event is about much more than swapping items. It's about fostering a spirit of sustainability, generosity, and connection:

- **Environmentally Friendly:** Swapping reduces waste and gives preloved items a second life, helping our planet.
- **Community Building:** It's a chance to meet others, share stories, and create a supportive network.
- **Cost-Effective:** A brilliant way to save money while finding what you need.
- **Encourages Simplicity:** Reassess what you have and embrace a more minimalist approach.
- **Teaches Valuable Lessons:** For kids and families, it's a fun and meaningful way to learn about sharing, caring, and sustainable living.
-

I am sure there are many other benefits too!

To find out more, please contact Charlotte in the church office.

Whether you're looking to declutter, find hidden treasures, or enjoy a morning of community spirit, the Swap Shop has something for everyone. Together, let's make a positive impact—one swap at a time!

SWOP

WE'RE EXCITED TO INTRODUCE THE SWAP SHOP—A CHANCE TO BRING ITEMS YOU NO LONGER NEED BUT COULD BE JUST WHAT SOMEONE ELSE IS LOOKING FOR!

THIS IS A BRILLIANT WAY TO REUSE AND SHARE RESOURCES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

**SUNDAY
2ND FEB
12PM -3PM**

**THE ARK,
SCHOOL LANE,
ALVECHURCH**



SHOP

If you'd like to attend please contact Charlotte office.

Entrance is free, and we're offering space at no charge.

Bacon and Sausage Bap and refreshments will be on sale.

A CHANCE TO BRING ITEMS YOU NO LONGER NEED BUT COULD BE JUST WHAT SOMEONE ELSE IS LOOKING FOR! RATHER THAN SELLING, YOU'LL BE SWAPPING YOUR ITEMS FOR THINGS YOU NEED. IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SWAP, YOU ARE WELCOME TO PURCHASE ITEMS AT A FAIR PRICE. WHERE A PROFIT IS MADE, WE KINDLY INVITE A DISCRETIONARY DONATION TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF ST LAURENCE CHURCH.

GRAHAM CLARK WRITES...

It is strange writing an article for a magazine. I'm writing this in the first week of December, for the January edition of the Grapevine, which you could be reading in the middle of January. At other times of the year this may not matter, but at this time, with Christmas and New Year in between these dates then it is difficult to make my writings relevant. So I am going to assume that you are reading this in the first week of January. Christmas is over and New Year's Resolutions have been made.

Random family members that you see once a year have gone home, the wine bottles have been recycled and the sprout haze has finally dissipated. The last of the left-over turkey has been eaten and you're back to sausage and chips. Wrapping papers are in the bin, the first toy has been broken and you are wondering how to entertain the kids until they return to school. And what are your memories of the season? Good? Bad? Better than last year? Or worse? Family rifts mended, or reinforced? Dreading the coming of the credit card bill?

New Year's Resolutions! What is your weight loss target this January? How are you going to be nicer to, and keep in touch with Auntie Ada this year? And as for next Christmas – a much tighter budget and fewer frivolous extras. With all these things rattling around in your head have you had any time to think of the world-shattering impact of that first Christmas? Whether you like it or not, whether you believe it or not, that baby, born 2000-odd years ago, changed the world for ever.

You've heard the story many times. But have you really thought about it? What does it mean to you personally? Is Christmas just an excuse for parties and over-indulgence? Or is it a remembering and a celebration of the time when Almighty God, who created the universe, started a process to enable us, his creation, to have a much more personal and intimate relationship with him?

Is the answer to the meaning of life, the universe and everything really "42" as Arthur Dent was told in The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy? Or is there a more serious and important answer to that question?

January is a time of new beginnings, of new resolutions. Maybe this January is a time for resolving to find out the true answer to that question

PRAYER MINISTRY



10:30-11:00

EVERY SUNDAY MORNING

IN THE LADY CHAPEL

HERE TO SUPPORT YOU
IN PRAYER

What's on at The Ark in January

Enroll Now for January 2025 Dance Classes!

Why choose us?

Experienced, passionate instructors
Fun, inclusive environment
Opportunities for performances
Spaces are limited – secure your spot today!

Call us at 07979408997

Email: amygreavesschooldance@gmail.com

Visit: www.amygreavesschoolofdance.com

**COME JOIN THE
CIRCUS**

WITH DANCE CIRQUE @
THE AMY GREAVES SCHOOL OF DANCE

Want to experience
the fun of the circus?
Join our waiting list today!

- Conditioning
- Lyra/Arial Hoop Skills
- Hula hoop drills
- Scarf drills
- Beam drills
- & more

No experience required

Monday's @ The Ark Alvechurch
Diddy/Junior 4-5pm
Senior/Advanced 5-6pm

What's on at The Ark in January



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

Contacts for class and group regular events

Alvechurch Historical Society - Anne - 0121 445 5955

Karate - Chris 07564604613

Adult Irish dancing - donnagriffinacademy.com

Places of Welcome - Charlotte - 0121 447 7955

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

Line Dancing - Bryan - 07975569065

Hillside WI - 0121 628 4121

Tots & Toddlers - Sarah- sarah100work@gmail.com

Physio Led Pilates - www.elizabethalexanderphysiotherapy.com

Zuu Move 2Bfit - Cliff- [CliffHocoxfitness](https://www.facebook.com/CliffHocoxfitness) on Facebook

Mini-Athletics - Steph - www.miniathletics.com

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

Dance Cirque - Amy Greaves - amygreavesschooldance@gmail.com

What's on at The Ark in January

MONTHLY
Ark Schedule

MONDAYS

AMY GREAVES - DANCE CIRQUE
4PM-6PM

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

TUESDAYS

KARATE 6.15PM - 7.45PM

ADULT IRISH DANCING 8PM -9PM

WEDNESDAYS

PLACES OF WELCOME 10AM -
12PM

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

LINE DANCING 6PM - 7PM

THURSDAYS

TOTS AND TODDLERS 9.30AM
-11AM

PILATES 6PM - 8PM

MOVE 2B FIT 7PM - 8PM

ADULT IRISH DANCING 8PM -9PM

FRIDAYS

MINI ATHLETICS 9.30AM -
11.30AM

WEEKENDS

AVAILABLE TO HIRE

PLEASE CONTACT

CHARLOTTE
0121 447 7955

ADMIN@THEARKALVECHURCH.C
O.UK

Coming to The Ark in February



Yoga & Art Day Retreat

Creative Reconnect For Adults



Date:
Saturday 15th Feb 2025

Time:
9:30am - 4:30pm

Venue:
The Ark, Alvechurch, B48 7SB

Price:
£85pp
INVITE A FRIEND DISCOUNT
(See website for details)

No experience needed - plenty of options & support given.
Includes Somatic Movement, Yoga Nidra,
a Nutritious Lunch & Mandala Drawing

find Out More & Book Your Space:
www.sophiereyyoga.co.uk/yoga-art-day-retreat

Any questions?
Contact Sophie:
07929603972 | Hello@sophiereyyoga.co.uk

**A relaxed space to explore your
creative self-expression!**



"This *winter Retreat Day* - Creative Reconnect - is a place of exploration & playfulness, giving you an opportunity to connect with your creativity and experience the soothing and nurturing effect Somatics, Yoga, Art and community has on your body, mind and Soul. Includes all materials, a nutritious lunch and snacks.

A creative & nourishing start to 2025, hosted by Sophie Rey"

A CHRISTMAS DAY TO REMEMBER: A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY

Christmas Day at The Ark was truly a testament to the power of community as we came together to host the Christmas Community Day Lunch. What a wonderful day it was, filled with festive cheer, warm company, and the joy of giving.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of so many within and beyond our parish. We are deeply grateful to John Evans, the Alvechurch Parish Council, Adrian Byrne for there generous monetary donation. To Neil and Alison Hoskins for their thoughtful gift of a hamper (which was a raffle prize at a previous event), and an anonymous donor whose kindness reminds us of the unseen acts of generosity that make such events possible.

A huge thank-you also goes to The Lounge Youth Club for creating delicious treats and to Alvechurch Middle School for their handmade cards, which brought so much joy to our guests. We were touched by the generosity of the Belmont Home, who provided a gift for everyone who attended, and the support of The Community Larder.

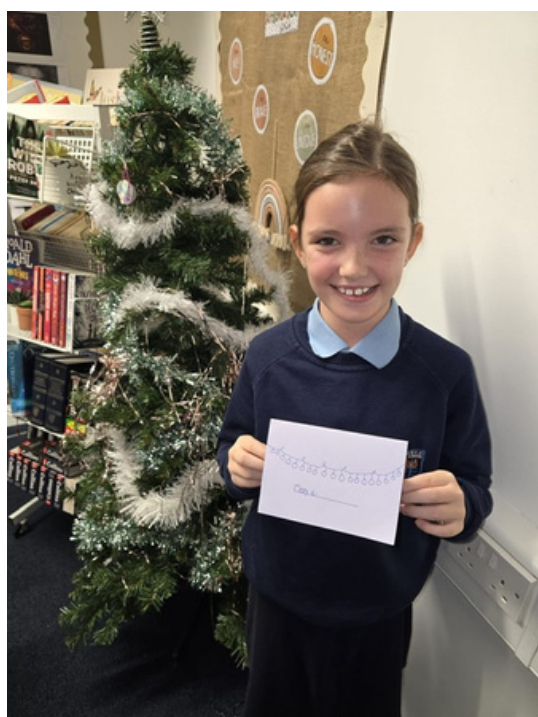
For the 2nd year running now, Belmont Healthcare have donated gifts for those in need and who attend the Ark over Christmas, and for Christmas lunch.

Sam and Andrea along with other volunteers for the Ark took part in a wrapping session at Places of Welcome, which was a lot of fun. A lovely festive few hrs well spent together, having a cuppa, a mince pie and a few Christmas tunes to get everyone feeling the Christmassy spirit!



A CHRISTMAS DAY TO REMEMBER: A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY

This day could not have happened without the tireless efforts of 42 amazing volunteers. From setting up and decorating The Ark to peeling vegetables, wrapping presents, welcoming guests, serving meals, washing up, and even providing transport for those who needed it, your contributions made this day truly special. Your dedication shines as a reflection of what it means to be part of a loving and giving community.



Students from Alvechurch Middle School have kindly made some crafted Christmas cards for our Christmas Day Community lunch

This was a community event to be proud of—a day that brought people together, reminding us all of the hope and love that Christmas represents. So, the big question remains: Shall we do it all again this year?

T&Cs Apply

Refer a Client & Receive £50

*Receive £50 for every client referred

contact us here for more information: 0121 295 8905
enquiries@belmonthomecare.co.uk
belmonthomecare.co.uk



ST LAURENCE CHURCH DIARY

JANUARY 2026

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

A BCP Service of Holy Communion

St Leonard's Church, Beoley

Thursday 2nd January 10am

Family Worship with Holy Communion and Ark Time

Sunday 5th January 9:15am

Morning Worship

Sunday 5th January 11.15am

Holy Baptism

Sunday 5th January 2pm

Open Church

Wednesday 8th January 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 8th January 10.00am - 12pm

Ark Tots and Toddlers

Thursday 9th January 9.30am

Family Worship with Ark Time

Sunday 12th January 9:15am

Celebration of Holy Communion

Sunday 12th January, 11.15am

Being With Course

Upper Room, The Ark

Monday 13th January 10.00am -12pm

A BCP Service of Holy Communion

St Laurence Church, Alvechurch

Wednesday 15th January 10am

Open Church

Wednesday 15th January 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 15th January 10.00am - 12pm

Being With Course

Gathering on Zoom

Wednesday 15th January 10.00am -12pm

Ark Tots and Toddlers

Thursday 16th January 9.30am

ST LAURENCE CHURCH DIARY

JANUARY 2026

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

Café Church, breakfast pastries served from 8:45am

Sunday 19th January 9:15am

Morning Worship

Sunday 19th January 11.15am

Being With Course

Upper Room, The Ark

Monday 20th January 10.00am -12pm

Open Church

Wednesday 22nd January 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 22nd January 10.00am - 12pm

Being With Course

Gathering on Zoom

Wednesday 22nd January 10.00am -12pm

Ark Tots and Toddlers

Thursday 23rd January 9.30am

Family Worship with Ark Time

Sunday 26th January 9:15am

Celebration of Holy Communion

Sunday 26th January, 11.15am

Being With Course

Upper Room, The Ark

Monday 27th January 10.00am -12pm

Open Church

Wednesday 29th January 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 29th January 10.00am - 12pm

Being With Course

Gathering on Zoom

Wednesday 29th January 10.00am -12pm

THE ARK LUNCHEES

For many years, St Laurence Church has been at the heart of our community through initiatives like the Ark Lunches. While the pandemic reshaped many of our activities, we are delighted to have reinstated these lunches on a more manageable schedule. Over the last two years, we've hosted three Ark Lunches annually, and the support and turnout have been tremendous.

Looking ahead to 2025, we're thrilled to continue offering three Ark Lunches alongside a special Christmas Lunch in December. In addition, our Christmas Day Community Lunch will once again be open to all, providing a warm and festive space for anyone who would like to share in the joy of the season.

The Ark Lunches and our other community meals wouldn't be possible without the dedication of our wonderful volunteers. Their generosity and hospitality create a welcoming environment that truly embodies the spirit of love and service. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who gave their time and energy in 2024!

These meals are more than just food on a plate—they're a chance to connect, share stories, and build friendships that enrich our lives and strengthen the bonds of community.

If you'd like to join the volunteer team for 2025, we'd love to hear from you! Please contact the church office for more information. Whether you enjoy cooking, serving, or simply sharing a smile, there's a place for everyone.

Here are the 2025 Ark Lunch dates for your calendar:

- **Thursday, 13th March**
- **Thursday, 8th May**
- **Thursday, 10th July**
- **Friday, 12th December (Christmas Lunch)**

We're also excited to announce the return of afternoon tea as part of our Heritage Day celebrations. Keep an eye out for updates on menus and ticket details—we can't wait to welcome you!

Let's continue to come together in 2025, celebrating community, friendship, and faith through these shared moments around the table.

DID YOU GET ENGAGED OVER CHRISTMAS OR THE NEW YEAR?

First of all, congratulations! Engagement is such an exciting time in your journey together, a moment to celebrate love and look ahead to the future. At St Laurence Church, we believe your wedding day should be as special and unique as your love story. If you are starting to plan your big day, why not consider saying "I do" in the stunning and historic setting of our church?

There is a common myth that church weddings are impersonal or overly formal, but nothing could be further from the truth. A wedding at St Laurence is a beautiful and deeply meaningful way to begin your married life together. Not only do you make your vows before your loved ones, but you also make them before God, receiving God's blessing on your marriage – a powerful and sacred promise that will sustain and guide you in the years to come.

While the service follows a legal framework, designed to meet the requirements of a marriage ceremony, it's also highly personal. You can choose music that resonates with your relationship, whether that's a traditional hymn, a classical piece, or a modern love song. You can include readings from scripture, poetry, or even a meaningful piece of prose that reflects your unique journey. These personal touches create a service that celebrates your love story in a way that is memorable, intimate, and entirely your own.

Picture yourselves exchanging vows in our beautiful church, surrounded by the prayers and support of your family and friends. Imagine the timeless elegance of walking down the aisle, the romantic peal of the bells, and the knowledge that you are joining a tradition that has united couples in love for centuries. From the moment you step through our doors to the moment you leave as newlyweds, our church offers a setting full of love, hope, and joy.

If you would like to know more about planning your wedding at St Laurence Church, please get in touch with Penny in the church office. She will be delighted to guide you through the process and answer any questions you might have. We are here to help you create a wedding day that is everything you have dreamed of and more.

Once again, congratulations on your engagement! May this special time be filled with joy, laughter, and the excitement of planning a day that reflects your love and commitment to one another.

We hope to be part of your wonderful journey.



QUIZ AND CHIPS: FUN, FREINDSHIP AND FUNDRASING

Few things bring people together like a good quiz night, and at St Laurence Church, our Quiz and Chips evenings are a highlight of the calendar! These social events are a wonderful opportunity for teams to test their knowledge, enjoy some delicious food, and share in laughter and friendly competition.

Organised by Graham and Lynne Clark, Quiz and Chips isn't just about answering questions—it's about building connections. Whether you're a trivia master or just in it for the fun, everyone is welcome to join in. Teams often include family, friends, and neighbours, making it a great way to meet new people and strengthen our sense of community.

As part of the evening, we also run a bar, (staff by the vicar and her husband) with proceeds going towards the church's general fund. This not only supports the running of the church but ensures that events like these can continue to bring people together year after year.

We're delighted to announce the 2025 Quiz and Chips dates, so mark your calendars:

- **Friday 19th June 2025**
- **Friday 7th November 2025**

Gather your team, sharpen your trivia skills, and get ready for another year of quizzing, chips, and community spirit! If you've never been before, why not give it a try? Keep an eye out for more details closer to the dates, including how to book your place.

A big thank you to Graham and Lynne for their dedication in organising these evenings and to everyone who supports them by attending or helping out.

Quiz and Chips is more than just a fun night—it's a celebration of the shared joy and fellowship that make our community so special.

IS CHRISTMAS REALLY OVER?

As January unfolds, the signs of Christmas quickly disappear. Trees are taken down, decorations are packed away, and the carols that filled the air are replaced by the hum of everyday life. Even the nativity set, which so beautifully retells the story of Jesus's birth, is boxed up and stored until next December. But is Christmas really over?

In the Church's calendar, Christmas isn't confined to December 25th. The celebration continues through the Twelve Days of Christmas and into Epiphany, when we remember the Magi's visit and reflect on the universal reach of God's love. The season doesn't officially end until Candlemas on February 2nd, the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. This moment in Luke's Gospel (Luke 2:22-40) reminds us that Jesus' coming was not just a fleeting event but the beginning of something profound: the light of salvation shining for all people.

Yet even after Candlemas, the message of Christmas continues to resonate. The Incarnation—the astonishing truth that God became human—is not just a story for one season; it's a truth that transforms our understanding of God and ourselves all year round.

From the opening chapters of John's Gospel, we are reminded of the power of the Incarnation: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This is the heart of Christmas: God stepping into our world, not as a distant deity but as one who walks with us, sharing in the joys and struggles of human life.

Throughout the Gospels, the Incarnation shapes every moment of Jesus' ministry. Jesus's teachings, healings, and miracles reveal a God who is intimately involved in the lives of people—lifting up the poor, healing the broken-hearted, and challenging systems of injustice. The Incarnation means that no part of our lives is too small or too messy for God to care about.

The challenge for us is to let the truth of the Incarnation shape our lives beyond Christmas. What does it mean to live as people who believe that God is with us?

First, it calls us to recognise God's presence in the ordinary. The birth of Jesus in a stable reminds us that God often works in unexpected places. As we go about our daily lives, we are invited to look for signs of God's presence—in the kindness of a stranger, the beauty of creation, or the quiet moments of prayer.

Second, the Incarnation calls us to live out God's love in tangible ways. Just as Jesus reached out to the marginalized and the hurting, we are called to care for those in need. Whether it's through acts of kindness, standing up for justice, or simply being present with someone who is struggling, we embody the love of God in our actions.

Finally, the Incarnation reminds us that we are part of a bigger story. The God who became human in Jesus continues to work in the world today, bringing healing and hope. We are invited to be part of that story, sharing the light of the world with others and pointing to the hope that is found in Jesus.

The rhythm of the Church year helps us to keep the Incarnation at the centre of our faith. As we move from Christmas to Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and beyond, we see the full picture of God's plan of love—a plan that began with the Word becoming flesh. Each season invites us to reflect on different aspects of God's love and to live out the truth of the Incarnation in new ways.

For example, during Lent, we remember Jesus' humanity when temptation and suffering remind us that God understands our struggles. At Easter, we celebrate the victory of life over death, showing us that the Incarnation leads to transformation and hope. Even in the long season of Ordinary Time, we are called to live faithfully in the knowledge that God is with us every day.

So, is Christmas really over? In one sense, yes—the festivities have ended, and the decorations are put away. But the deeper truth of Christmas—that God is with us—never ends. The Incarnation is not just a moment in history but an ongoing reality that shapes how we live, love, and see the world.

Can we keep the spirit of Christmas alive by seeking God in the ordinary, sharing God's love with others, and remembering that we are part of God's story. For the God who came to dwell with us at Christmas is the same God who walks with us every day, offering light, hope, and grace for the journey.

Movie Mondays are back !

We are happy to say that after the great success earlier in the year we will be showing a movie on the screens in St Laurence Church during February half term.



**Film suggestions are welcome ,
please send any suggestions to Charlotte**

If you are able to help with refreshments on the day please contact
the office and speak with Charlotte 0121 447 7955
admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

LENT 2025: ACTING ON POVERTY TOGETHER

This Lent, St Laurence Church with Churches Together in Alvechurch and Rowney Green are joining the journey of reflection and action with the 'Act on Poverty' course. Provided by Church Action on Poverty, this resource invites us to deepen our understanding of poverty in the UK and globally and explore how we, as a community, can respond with gospel values of justice and compassion.

Church Action on Poverty is a national ecumenical Christian social justice charity, committed to tackling the root causes of poverty in partnership with churches and those directly affected by it. Their work is grounded in the belief that those who live with poverty are the real experts. By amplifying their voices and sharing their insights, the charity enables meaningful change at both local and national levels.

Lent is a time to reflect on Jesus' life and teachings, particularly in showing God's care for the marginalised with a call to action and seeking justice.

The 'Act on Poverty' course gives us the opportunity to:

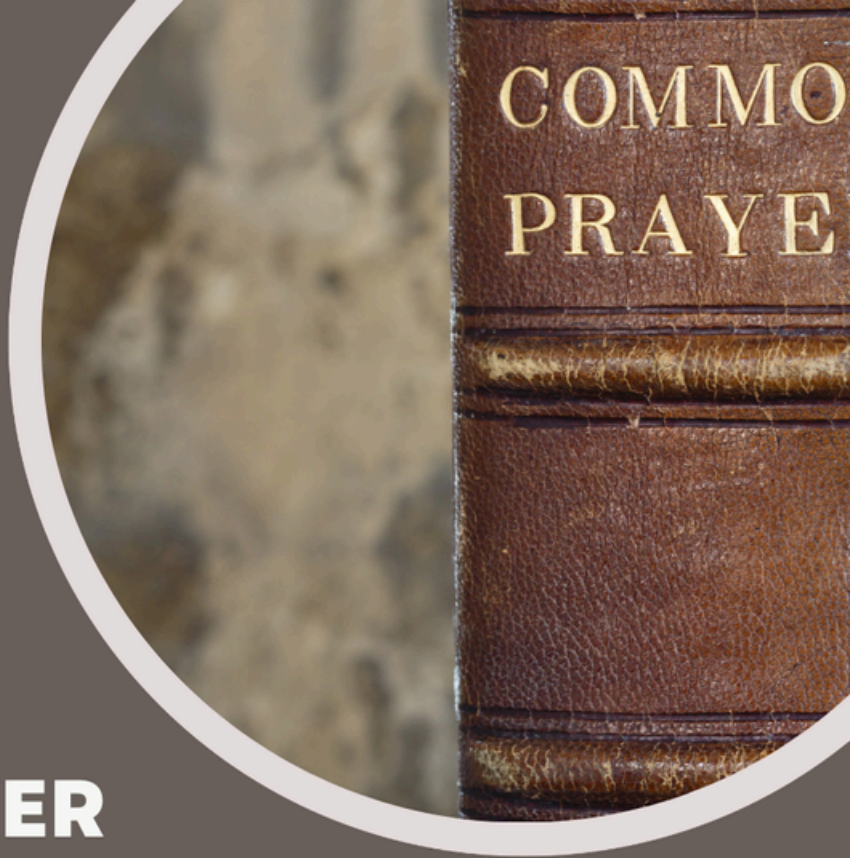
- Listen to the stories of those who live with poverty and learn from their experiences.
- Reflect on the root causes of poverty and the structures that perpetuate it.
- Explore how we can take practical steps to loosen the grip of poverty in our own communities.
- Engage in prayer and action, inspired by the gospel's call to love and justice.

In the February edition of Grapevine, we'll include more information about groups running the course and how you can join in. If you feel called to lead a group, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Revd Martin to express your interest and receive further details.

This Lent, let's come together to reflect, pray, and act. By engaging with 'Act on Poverty,' we can deepen our faith and take tangible steps to make a difference in the lives of others.

Together, we can live out the gospel's call to justice and compassion, making Lent 2025 a season of both transformation and hope.

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



**ST LEONARD'S,
BEOLEY**

1ST THURSDAY OF MONTH

January 2nd
February 6th
March 6th
April 3rd
May 1st
June 5th
July 3rd
August 7th
September 4th
October 2nd
November 6th
December 4th

**ST LAURENCE,
ALVECHURCH**

3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH

January 15th
February 19th
March 19th
April 16th
May 21st
June 18th
July 16th
August 20th
September 17th
October 15th
November 19th
December 17th

Praying for Alvechurch

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
as you trust in God, so that you may overflow with hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

God of all time and seasons,
We give thanks for the year gone by,
for the lessons learned and the moments of grace.
As we look to the year ahead,
fill us with hope for what can be
and peace for the journey ahead.
Help us to be light in the world,
reflecting your love and goodness
in our words and actions.

Gracious God,
We thank you for the gift of community—
for the diversity of gifts, experiences, and lives that enrich us.
Bless our homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods this year.
May we grow in understanding and friendship,
be quick to forgive, and slow to judge.
Strengthen our commitment to care for the vulnerable,
speak for justice, and work for peace.
Empower us to walk in your way, together.

Loving God,
As we step into this new year,
we place our community into your hands.
Guide us with your wisdom,
fill us with your compassion,
and inspire us to serve one another with joy.
May we embrace new opportunities,
seeking ways to grow together in unity and love.

Amen

**PRAYERS AND ANOINTING FOR
HEALING AND WHOLENESS**

Healing Eucharist

**St Leonard's Church,
Beoley**

Sundays at 11.15am

**St Laurence Church,
Alvechurch**

Sundays at 11.15am

19th January

16th March

18th May

20th July

21st September

16th November

23rd February

27th April

22nd June

24th August

26th October

14th December



SUNDAY FAMILY WORSHIP AND ARK TIME

Our 9.15am Family Services are for all ages, with activity bags available for little ones.

As well as singing and praying in church with their families,

babies, children and Young People are invited through for **Ark Time**.

In The Ark we listen to Bible stories and join in activities.

Under 8's enjoy Bible stories, songs and craft activities with Jack the Labrador puppet.

Over 8's explore similar Bible story themes, along with craft and drama activities.

So do come along and join us.



5th January - 9.15am Family Advent Service with Ark Time

12th January - 9.15am Family Service with Ark Time

19th January - 9.15am Café style service all together in The Ark (breakfast pastries served from 8.45am)

26th January - 9.15am Family Service with Ark Time

AS TIME GOES BY

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ORGAN FUNDRAISING CONCERT

St Laurence Church is set to host a spectacular evening of music as the **Oakville Singers** and the **Alvechurch Middle School Choir** join forces for a one-night-only fundraising concert. This special event will take place on **Saturday, 14th June**, right here at St Laurence Church.

The concert promises to be a wonderful celebration of music, showcasing the incredible talent of these two choirs. The Oakville Singers, known for their rich harmonies and diverse repertoire, will perform alongside the energetic and inspiring voices of the Alvechurch Middle School Choir, creating an unforgettable musical experience.

The evening's proceeds will go toward our Organ Fund, helping us maintain and preserve this vital part of our worship and musical life at St Laurence Church. The organ has been central to our services and community events for generations, and this fundraiser ensures it can continue to inspire us for years to come.

Join us for this unforgettable evening and support a cause close to the heart of our church. Whether you're a music enthusiast or simply looking for a wonderful night out, this concert is sure to delight.

We're incredibly grateful to the Oakville Singers, the Alvechurch Middle School Choir, and everyone involved in making this event possible. Don't miss this chance to enjoy exceptional live music while supporting the life and mission of St Laurence Church.

SPONSOR A PIPE ON OUR ORGAN

As part of our campaign to raise money for essential works and upgrade our organ we are inviting you to, 'Sponsor a pipe!'

You can sponsor a pipe in your own name, in remembrance of a loved one, or why not even gift a pipe to someone, we can even print off a certificate if you wish to give to them.

How to sponsor a pipe

Pop your £10 in an envelope with the name of the person you wish the pipe to be sponsored to and we will do the rest.



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ALVECHURCH VILLAGE SOCIETY

EVENT

Sat. Jan 18th at the Village Hall 7.30pm

AVS Quiz Night

Ticketed event – enquiries to gerardnash1@outlook.com

WALKS

Sunday Feb 2nd 2pm

A Winter Walk

Meet at The Crown, Withybed B48 7PN

For more information and membership see the AVS website:

www.alvechurchvs.org

Hillside WI

On December 4th the ladies of Hillside WI met at the Rose & Crown Hotel on Rose Hill, Lickey, for our Christmas lunch. There were several other parties in the room so it was a good atmosphere and despite the amount of people we were served our three course meal with no delays and it was hot and very nice. Dave a singer and guitarist came along and sang to us all, both popular and Christmas songs.

All in all a lovely start to the Christmas festivities.

Having not had a meeting in January for a while we have decided to go ahead on the 8th of January for a silent auction, quiz and a good old natter, anyone welcome.

Follow us on Facebook at Hillside WI at Alvechurch or contact Marian Clemons on 07586354826

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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.

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Metchley Manor care home
5 Church Road, Edgbaston – Birmingham,
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careuk.com/metchley-manor

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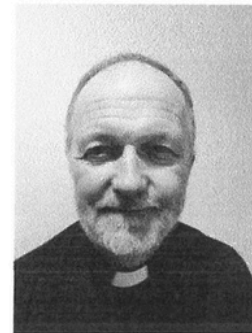


*As rated by the Care Quality Commission in England and the Care Inspectorate in Scotland.

Our Team



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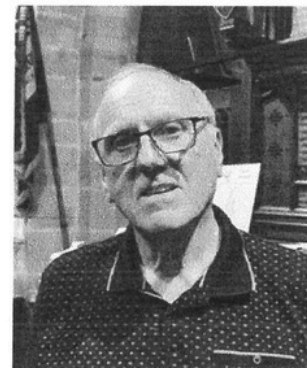


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Helena Allen



Graham Clark



Sarah Linton



Sue Sperring

Deputy Churchwardens



Andy Notley

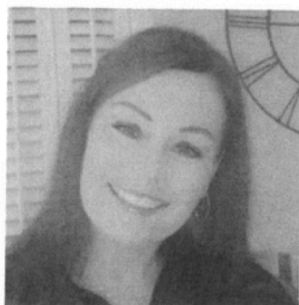


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