

GRAPEVINE

ST LAURENCE CHURCH, ALVECHURCH

February 2025



Finding Beauty in the In-Between

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Deadline for submission for March Grapevine
is 10th February

REVD GAIL WRITES...



Dear Friends,

February often feels like an "in-between" time. January has left us with its cold, dark days, and although the first official day of spring isn't until March 20th, there's a quiet sense of waiting in the air. The bulbs are stirring underground, the daylight is creeping in earlier each morning, and the birds are beginning to test their spring songs. Nature reminds us that life doesn't stay still—it moves, grows, and transforms, even in the "in-between" moments.

It's tempting to rush ahead, to wish away these lingering days of winter in anticipation of brighter, warmer ones. But there's also something precious about learning to pause and notice what is happening right here, right now. There's a quiet beauty to be found in February's bare branches, frosty mornings, and the first hint of green peeping through the soil.

How often do we live in these "in-between" times? Waiting for answers, anticipating new beginnings, or even just hoping for the next step in life to become clear. These seasons can feel uncertain or frustrating, but they can also be rich with possibility. They are opportunities to pay attention, to be present, and to discover what might otherwise go unnoticed.

The Bible often speaks of these "in-between" moments. The poet of Ecclesiastes writes, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). That includes not only the obvious beginnings and endings but also the moments in between—the spaces where we wait, reflect, and prepare for what's next.

Perhaps God is most present to us in these times, walking beside us, guiding us gently, and reminding us to take in the beauty of the journey.

If you're in an "in-between" season of life, I invite you to pause and explore what it might mean to find God in those spaces. Whether in the big moments or the quiet, hoping, and waiting, there's always an invitation to discover that God is with us—right here, right now.

With prayers and blessings

Revd. Gail

The Ark Spring Lunch

THURSDAY 13TH MARCH,

£12 PER PERSON



STARTER

Tomato and Basil Soup
with a bread roll

MAIN COURSE

Honey-Roasted Gammon
Succulent gammon glazed with golden honey
Stuffed Mushroom (V) (VE)
flavourful mushroom filled with a delicious plant-based stuffing

Served with:

Buttery baby potatoes with skins-on, roasted carrots and parsnips, and a sweet red cabbage.

DESSERT

Treacle Sponge and Custard
Eton Mess

DRINKS

A glass of Red or White Wine
or a non alcoholic alternative
Tea and Coffee

Arrive from 12.30pm with food served at 1pm

Tickets must be paid for in advance and meat or vegetarian ordered.

For tickets see Charlotte in The Ark office -
admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk / 0121 447 7955

LENT COURSE 2025:

As Revd Gail mentioned in the February Grapevine, we are using a study called Act on Poverty from Church Action on Poverty. This study was co-authored by them and other organizations (including the Methodist, Baptist, and United Reform churches, Christian Aid, and the Trussel Foundation). In the course, we hear the first-hand stories of those in poverty. It is a prompt to reflect on the roots of poverty, explore how to act on poverty and pray for justice. We hope that the study can be a way to make a difference for people who may have no voice.

It's a series of five group studies with easily accessible resources printed for a small fee. At the end of the course, on Saturday, April 12th, at 18:00 in The Ark St Laurence, we will have a shared meal to reflect on what we have learned and discuss possible future actions.

The following have kindly said they will run groups:

- *Sue Phillips-Wardle and Roger Wardle – Mondays at 10:30 am on Mon 3rd March, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st contact sue@suephillips.org.uk*
- *Alvechurch Baptist Church Thursdays 10:15 for 10:30 am starting 6th March contact Revd Joey Redhead contact joey.redhead@alvechurchbaptist.org.uk*
- *Felicity Rixon at St Mary's Catholic Church school Lane Wednesdays 09:45 for 10:00 am starting 12th March contact felicityrixon@hotmail.com*
- *Graham Clark Thursday evening, 19:30 for 20:00 starting 6th March. Contact clarkalvechurch@sky.com for details of the start date and venue.*
- *Martin Allen Wednesdays - two options – 13:00 in the Tapestry Room St Leonards Church Beoley and evening@ 19:00 in person or online depending on people's preferences. Starting 12th March. Contact allnix@btinternet.com or 07788872738*

Do feel free to contact them directly. For any other queries or information contact Revd Martin – allnix@btinternet.com or 07788872738

HOW DOES ST LAURENCE KEEP THE LIGHTS ON?

You might not think about what it takes to keep St Laurence Church running day to day. From electricity to heating, maintaining the churchyard to running community events, it all costs money. So, how do we pay the bills?

The simple answer is: through generosity. Whether it's a one-off gift or a regular donation, every penny counts. For example, if someone gave just £2 a week—the price of a cup of coffee—that would add up to over £100 in a year. Now imagine if ten people did the same. Small, regular gifts like this can make a huge difference.

If you're able to Gift Aid your donation, even better! Gift Aid allows us to claim an extra 25p from the government for every £1 you give, at no extra cost to you. For those who prefer an easy and regular way to give, the Parish Giving Scheme is available—just ask us for more details.

Some people prefer to support a specific area of the church's work. Did you know you can donate directly to funds like our General Fund (which pays for everyday running costs), the Churchyard Fund, or even the Organ Fund? Perhaps you'd like to support youth work, community outreach, or flowers in church? Let us know if there's something close to your heart, and we can make sure your gift supports that area.

You might also consider leaving a financial gift in your will, ensuring the work of St Laurence continues for future generations.

If you'd like to donate online, simply scan the QR codes included here to find the relevant fund. If you'd like to talk about other ways to give, please contact the church office.

Every donation, big or small, goes directly towards St Laurence's ministry and supporting the wider community. Thank you for helping us continue to be here for everyone.

HELPING ST LAURENCE KEEP THE LIGHTS ON?



All money donated to the churchyard fund will pay for maintaining the space, this might include contractor fees, tree care, servicing/replacing equipment and supporting the natural habitat of the churchyard.



All money donated to the general fund pays for the day to day running of the church. It literally pays for the bills, e.g. lighting, heating, repairs, cleaning, church office, the costs of outreach for our mission and ministry.



We also have funding campaigns, like our organ fund. All money donated to the organ fund will pay for essential works that need doing on the organ. We haven't yet reached the amount we need to get the work done, and we are busy arranging a fund raising event with Alvechurch Middle School Choir and the Oakville Singers. Ad of course our sponsor a pipe campaign is running alongside this too. All money donated via any of these means will be for our Organ Fund.

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.

What's on at The Ark in February



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

Line Dancing - Bryan - 07975569065

Hillside WI - Pat - 0121 628 4121

Tots & Toddlers - Sarah- sarah100work@gmail.com

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

Mini-Athletics - Steph - www.miniathletics.com

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

AGSOD - Amy Greaves -amygreavesschoolofdance@gmail.com

Please note - Line dancing classes on Wednesdays are now Full - please call Bryan before attending to see if there are any new spaces available for that session.

What's on at The Ark in February

*Enrol Now for 2025 Dance Classes!
Mondays at The Ark 4pm - 6pm*

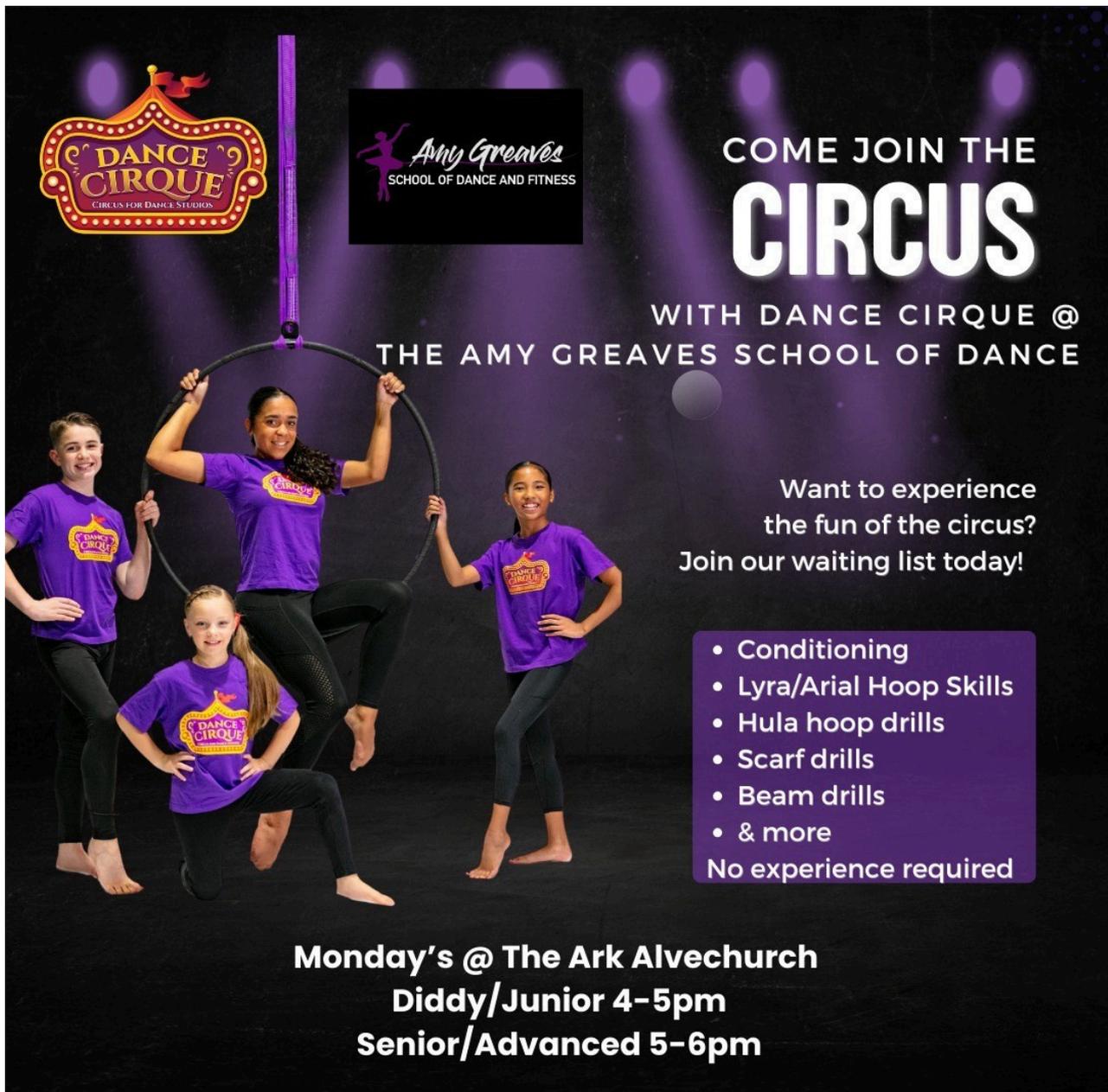
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Email: amygreavesschooldance@gmail.com

Visit: www.amygreavesschoolofdance.com



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- 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

Coming to The Ark in March

Amy Greaves School Of Dance

Amy and the team have been so supportive with promoting our Ark events and annual Heritage Day that takes place here St Laurence. It is with great pleasure that we can now share that as well as the NEW Dance Circe class that started on the 6th of January and run every Monday in term time 4pm - 6pm , we will now be the venue for AGSOD on Tuesdays and Saturdays .

Please see below

Tuesdays

DIDDY CLASS

Suitable for Reception Class, yr1, yr2

4:15pm -5pm Ballet and Commercial Jazz with Becky

5pm - 6pm Musical Theatre

JUNIOR CLASS

Suitable for yr3, yr4, yr5

5pm- 6pm Musical Theatre

6pm - 6:45pm Ballet and Commercial Jazz with Becky

Saturdays

PARENT & TODDLER CLASS

8:25am - 8:55am Suitable from walking to pre school age

DIDDY DANCE

Suitable for Reception Class, yr1, yr2

9:00-9:30am Ballet & Tap

9:30-9:35am Five minute change break

9:35 - 10:05am Commercial (Includes Jazz, Freestyle & Street)

10:05 - 10:35am Acro & Cheer

JUNIORS

Suitable for yr3, yr4, yr5

10:45 - 11:15am Tap & Ballet

11:15 - 11:45am Commercial (Includes Jazz, Freestyle & Street)

11:45 - 12:15pm Cheer & Acro

SENIORS

Suitable for yr6, yr7, yr8

(Maybe yr9 depending on previous dance background)

12:15 - 12:45pm Contemporary

12:45 - 1:15pm Tap

1:15 - 1:45pm Ballet

1:45 - 2:15pm Commercial (Includes Jazz, Freestyle & Street)

2:15 - 2:45pm Acro & Cheer Senior/Adv

2:45 - 3:15pm Musical Theatre Senior/Adv

What's on at The Ark in February ...

MONTHLY
Ark Schedule

MONDAYS

AMY GREAVES - DANCE
CIRQUE 4PM-6PM

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

TUESDAYS

KARATE 6.15PM - 8.15PM

AMY GREAVES DANCE
4.15 -7.30PM

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

SATURDAYS

AMY GREAVES DANCE 8AM -
3.15PM

SUNDAYS

AVAILABLE TO HIRE FROM 1PM

A New Electoral Roll:



What Is This About, and Why Should I Join?

It is saying, "I belong"

The electoral roll is a list of people who consider themselves connected to St Laurence, Alvechurch. Whether you join us for worship, live nearby, or simply feel part of this community, the roll helps us keep track of who is involved.

It's also important in the bigger picture of the Church of England, as the roll size is used to allocate resources across parishes.

Electoral Rolls provide a true indication of the real membership and strength of the church both locally and nationally. Putting your name on the roll is a way of saying "I belong"; it is an act of commitment to your local church and to the church as a whole. It is also an important statement of witness, and a step along the path of discipleship. With your name on the electoral roll, the strength of the church can be seen in the parish, the town, and the diocese. We are a church growing in numbers, and the electoral roll also allows us to demonstrate this to the world.

4 Who can join?

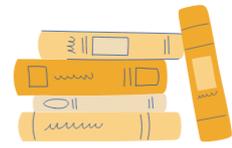


To join, you must:

- Be aged 16 or older (you can apply at 15 and join on your 16th birthday).
- Be baptised into the Christian faith.
- Consider yourself part of the Church of England.
- Either live in the parish or attend worship at St Laurence.
- If you attend another church too, you can be on more than one electoral roll, as long as you meet the criteria above.



What does the bible say?



"Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread"

(1 Corinthians 10:17)

Every six years, we start fresh with a completely new electoral roll – and 2025 is the year for this at St Laurence. Whether you've been on the roll before or this is new to you, **everyone needs to fill out a form to join.**



What is the electoral role?



Why Join the Electoral Roll?

It is saying, "I am here to serve"

By joining, you're making it official: you're saying, "I'm part of St Laurence's and its mission here in this community."

- Have your say: Being on the roll gives you the right to nominate, vote for, or stand for election to the PCC (Parochial Church Council). These manage St Laurence's buildings, finances, and mission.
- Show you belong: Joining the roll is a way of saying that this church matters to you – whether you worship here weekly, occasionally, or simply feel part of the family.
- Support the wider church: Joining the electoral roll opens up the way for greater involvement in the life of the church, at deanery, diocesan, and national levels. It is a statement of active and ongoing support for the church. This may mean different things for different people, but includes getting involved in the purpose we share across the parish of "being a Christ-like presence to all we meet"



What is expected of me if I join?



To show that you support.

- There are no specific commitments tied to being on the electoral roll.
- However, we encourage everyone to:
 - Take part in our shared life through prayer, worship, events, and volunteering.
 - Consider how you might contribute your time, skills, or financial support.
 - Join us for our Annual Meeting where our Trustees are elected onto the DCC/PCC.

A New Electoral Roll:

What Is This About, and Why Should I Join?


PARISH OF St Laurence Alvechurch
APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT ON THE CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

Full name _____
 Preferred title (if any) _____
 Full address _____

 _____ Postcode _____
 Email Address (optional) _____

1: I declare that (please tick only one box from options A or B)
 1A am baptised, am a lay person, and am aged 16 or over
 1B am baptised, am a lay person, and become 16* on _____
*Those who become 16 in the next twelve months may complete the form and become eligible to be entered on the roll on their sixteenth birthday.

2: I declare that (please tick only one box from options A, B or C)
 2A I am a member of the Church of England (or of a Church in communion with the Church of England) and am a resident in the parish.
 2B I am a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England, am not resident in the parish, but have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months [and would have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months but was prevented from doing so because _____].
 2C I am a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, am also a member of the Church of England [and have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months] [and would have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months but was prevented from doing so because _____].

*If you tick 2B or 2C in circumstances where a new roll is being prepared, you must delete either the first set of words in square brackets, or the second set. If you delete the first set, you must complete the second set by filling in the space at the end. See Note 3 for further information.

I declare that the above answers are true and I apply for inclusion on the church electoral roll of the parish.
 Signed: _____ Date: _____

6

How do I join?

Filling out the form is simple and only takes a few minutes. A forms is available in church or via email from Charlotte - admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk Remember that a form needs to filled out per person not person household so you may need multiple forms.



7

Your Privacy



We take your privacy seriously.

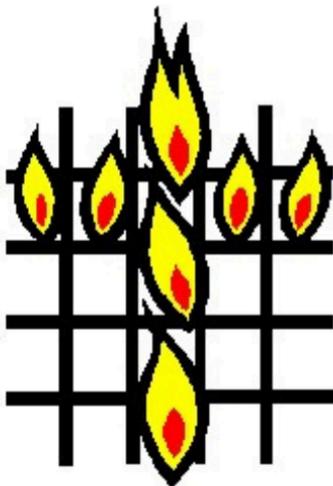
We are committed to keeping your information safe, and information is collected and processed in line with our Privacy Policy.

All the information requested is needed to confirm you are eligible for the electoral roll and to communicate with you about this.

We will publish only your name in church as part of the electoral role in 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029 and 2030. We will not publish your address, email address or any other information you provide.

Your name will appear on the roll, but your address and other details won't be shared publicly.

We'll only use the information you provide for electoral roll purposes.



Being on the electoral roll is about more than just having your name on a list. It's a way to show that you belong, to declare your commitment to the life and mission of the church, and to be part of shaping its future. It gives you the chance to have your voice heard and to contribute to the growth of a community that lives out faith, love, and service in Alvechurch and beyond.

We hope you'll join the roll and be part of the life and future of St Laurence, Alvechurch. Together, we're building something special.

REVD MARTIN ALLEN WRITES...

Happy February, and welcome to the month we think about love and Valentine's Day! It is a great month, and the focus on love is wonderful. I do hope you have known love in your life. Love is big business with media and commercial attention. As an example, a florist once mentioned to me that a huge slice of their income depended on the day! Love is also essential when we think about faith.

It is hard to say something fresh or new about love, which is also true of our love for God. We can all reflect on love and its parts. A love relationship can have the following properties.

When we love, we may avoid getting what we deserve regarding our actions. Thankfully my wife tolerates the things in my pockets that go through the washing machine! Christians call that mercy.

In a love relationship, we often receive what we do not deserve and more than we expect. We may feel fortunate when we receive love or something freely given, especially if not earned. Christians call that grace.

The one who loves us may hold onto our hope when we have lost ours, too. Being in love can allow us to borrow hope from the other person.

When another person loves us, we have opportunities to create something extraordinary together. Love can also rescue us from things that are damaging to us. Finding a human who expresses and does all those things is hard. Those who love us are human and limited. We may also recognize our limitations and times when we are not loving.

In Jesus, we meet someone who is rooted in being human. At the same time, He is entirely God and shows us the heights and depths of love.

I recently came across a worship song that sums this up nicely: -

"My King is known by mercy.
My King is known by grace.
For the hope in his name
And a power that saves.
My King is known by the cross
My King is known by an empty grave.
Oh, in all that he does
My King is known by love."

(My King is known by Love – The Crabb Family)

Happy month of love.
Revd Martin

JOIN US FOR THE SWOP SHOP

We're excited to invite you to the Swap Shop—a fun, free event where you can bring along preloved items and swap them for something new-to-you! Whether it's clothes, toys, books, or household goods, this is a wonderful opportunity to declutter, discover hidden treasures, and support sustainability.

No items to swap? No problem! Everything will also be available for purchase at fair prices, with proceeds supporting the mission and work of St Laurence Church. Refreshments, including delicious cakes, will be on sale.

Come along, enjoy the community spirit, and make a positive impact—one swap at a time! For more details, contact Charlotte in the church office.



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.

Hot Pork Baps, cakes 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.

ST LAURENCE CHURCH DIARY

FEBRUARY 2025

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

Family Worship with Holy Communion and Ark Time

Sunday 2nd February 9:15am

Morning Worship

Sunday 2nd February 11.15am

Swop Shop

Sunday 2nd February 12pm - 3pm

Being With Course

Upper Room, The Ark

Monday 3rd February 7pm

Open Church

Wednesday 5th February 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 5th February 10.00am - 12pm

Being With Course

Gathering on Zoom

Wednesday 5th February 7pm

A BCP Service of Holy Communion

St Leonard's Church, Beoley

Thursday 6th February 10am

Ark Tots and Toddlers

Thursday 6th February 9.30am

Family Worship with Ark Time

Sunday 9th February 9:15am

Celebration of Holy Communion

Sunday 9th February, 11.15am

Being With Course

Upper Room, The Ark

Monday 10th February 7pm

Open Church

Wednesday 12th February 10.00am -12pm

Places of Welcome

Wednesday 12th February 10.00am - 12pm

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

WHAT IS ASH WEDNESDAY, AND WHY DO WE DO IT?



Have you ever seen someone walking around with a smudge of ash on their foreheads. It might make you wonder: what's that about?

This day is known as Ash Wednesday, and it marks the beginning of a season called Lent—a time of reflection, preparation, and looking forward to Easter. Ash Wednesday has its roots in ancient traditions, but it still speaks to our modern world in surprising ways.

Why Ashes?

Ashes are a symbol with deep meaning. They remind us of the natural cycle of life—everything that lives eventually returns to the earth. For many, this is a moment to pause and think about what's most important in life.

When people receive the ashes, they're often accompanied by words like, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust, you shall return." While this might sound sombre, it's also a gentle nudge to consider how we live, the choices we make, and the legacy we leave behind. It's less about guilt and more about reflection—an opportunity to think about the kind of person we want to be.

What Happens on Ash Wednesday?

In churches, there's usually a simple service where ashes—made by burning palm leaves from the previous year's Palm Sunday—are used to make the sign of the cross on people's foreheads. But even for those who don't attend church, the idea behind Ash Wednesday is something we can all connect with: slowing down and making space to think about our lives.

What is Lent About?

Lent is the six weeks leading up to Easter. It's often a time when people give something up—like chocolate or social media—or take something on, like a new habit or helping others. It's not about proving anything or punishing ourselves; it's about creating space to grow. Some people see Lent as a way to press "reset" and refocus on what matters most.

Why Might It Matter to You?

Even if Ash Wednesday or Lent isn't something you've tried before, it offers an invitation to step back from the busyness of life. It's a chance to ask big questions: How am I doing? How can I be kinder to myself and others? What do I hope for the future?

At its heart, Ash Wednesday is about honesty—about life's fragility and beauty, our struggles and our hopes. It's a tradition that can help anyone pause, reflect, and reconnect, no matter where they are on their journey.

If you wish to join us on Wednesday 5th of March for a Ash Wednesday service you would be made very welcome to join us either at St Leonard', Beoley at 10am or at St Laurence, Alvechurch at 7.30pm.

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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.

Led by DBS-cleared adults, 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.



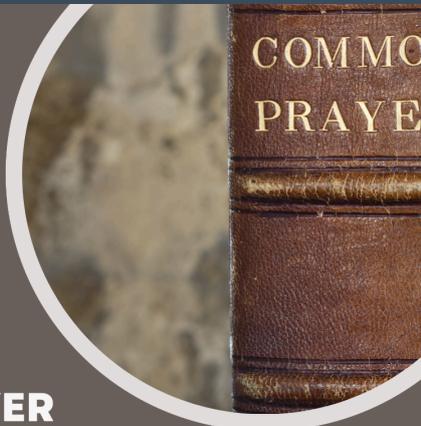
2nd February - 9.15am Family Communion Service with Ark Time

9th February - 9.15am Family Service with Ark Time

16th February - 9.15am Café style service all together in The Ark (breakfast pastries served from 8.45am)

23rd February - 9.15am Family Service with Ark Time

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

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



ARK TOTS AND TODDLERS

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

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For more information contact sarah100work@gmail.com.



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WHY DOES THE DATE OF EASTER CHANGE EVERY YEAR?

If you're flicking through this February edition of the magazine and wondering why there's no mention of Lent or Easter, you're not alone! Most years, we'd already be preparing for Pancake Day, Ash Wednesday, and the journey of Lent. This year, however, these dates are much later. Shrove Tuesday (or Pancake Day) falls on 4th March, Ash Wednesday on 5th March, and Easter Day isn't until 20th April.

So, why does the date for Easter move around? The answer is tied to the cycles of the moon, a tradition that dates back centuries. Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox. This means Easter can be as early as 22nd March or as late as 25th April, depending on the phases of the moon.

The spring equinox is a day in March when day and night are roughly equal in length. From this date, we look for the next full moon. The Sunday after that full moon is Easter. This method of calculating Easter has been in place since the 4th century and links Easter to the Jewish Passover, which is also set by the lunar calendar.

Why the connection to Passover? The events of Easter—the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus—occurred during Passover. The early church wanted to honour this link by using a similar way of setting the date.

It might seem complicated, but it means the timing of Easter reflects the rhythms of creation, a reminder that faith is connected to the natural world around us.

This year, we'll have plenty of time to prepare for Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, 5th March. So, enjoy February's slightly slower pace, and look forward to the richness of the Easter season when it finally arrives in April!

If you'd like to learn more about Lent or join us for any of our services and events, keep an eye out for March's magazine or visit our church website.

We'd love to see you.

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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.

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Visit our website or call 0121 468 9344.



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

Praying for Alvechurch

Prayer is a timeless expression of faith and hope, a bridge between the human heart and the divine. In its quiet moments, it whispers our deepest desires, fears, and gratitude. It reminds us of our vulnerability and our strength, inviting us to seek solace and guidance in the sacred.

We pray for the half term break, that our children and teachers may know rest.

We pray for Youth at The Lounge, giving thanks for those who lead the groups and plan interesting and exciting things to do.

We pray for all who are struggling at this time, whether in body, mind or spirit. We pray that know that they are deeply loved by God and by this community.

We pray for new arrivals, for people who have just moved to the area, we pray that they will know the welcome and support of church and community.

We pray for all who live on School Lane, Red Lion Street and Latimer Road.

ALVECHURCH VILLAGE SOCIETY

EVENTS

Wednesday February 12th at the Village Hall, 7.30pm

Film Night

‘The Shamrock Spitfire’

The story of one of the most celebrated fighter aces of World War II

Filmed locally, written & directed by local folk

WALKS

Sunday Feb 2nd 2pm

A Winter Walk

Meet at The Crown, Withybed B48 7PN

Sunday March 2nd 2pm

The Barnt Green Loop

Meet at The Crown, Withybed B48 7PN

For further information and membership see the AVS website:

www.alvechurchvs.org

St Leonard's Church Snowdrop Weekend

Photography Competition
Family Trail in the Churchyard
Snowdrop stall - purchase a snowdrop
from the churchyard
Refreshments provided by Mothers Union

Saturday 8th February

10am - 4pm

Sunday 9th February

1pm - 4pm



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Barnt Green Support Group

Meets monthly, usually on the last
Friday

2pm to 4pm

The Parish Centre
(behind St Andrew's Church),
Sandhills Road, Barnt Green,
Birmingham, B45 8NR

Members come from a wide area and
new ones are always welcome.

For more information call:
Wendy 0121 445 1585
Alan 01527 877864

Macular Society
PO Box 1870, Andover, Hampshire SP10 9AD
Office: 01264 350 551 Advice & Information: 0300 3030 111
info@macularsociety.org www.macularsociety.org

Barnt Green Support Group

2025 Programme

31 Jan	Ophthalmology in Worcestershire	Helen Hipkiss Advanced Nurse Practitioner
28 Feb	Victorian England	Philip Bowen
28 Mar	Music from the Sixties/Seventies	Nicolette Morgan
25 Apr	25th Anniversary Celebration	Ed Holloway Macular Society Chief Executive
30 May	Fire Safety in the Home	HW Fire Service
27 Jun	Albert, George & Worms	Jen Stone
18 Jul	To be confirmed (This date is not the last Friday in July)	
29 Aug	Chin Wag and Bring and Buy	
26 Sep	Macmillan Nursing	Sonia Tudor
31 Oct	Ultimate Quiz Show	Paul Goddard
28 Nov	Christmas Lunch at Bromsgrove Golf Club	
12 Dec	Festive Extra	Cats Chorus

Hillside WI

Only half of our members ventured out on an icy evening for the January meeting. The group discussed the resolutions we will vote on next month and send the results to the Worcestershire Federation. After very welcome tea and cakes a silent auction was held. There were plenty of items to bid for and everything was sold. It was good for members to have a chance to get together and find out how Christmas was spent and who avoided the nasty bug that affected so many people.

Our next meeting on 5th February is indoor Kurling. Some will play for fun while others will show their competitive streak. It is at Alvechurch guaranteed to keep us warm whatever the weather. New members are always welcome.

Follow us on Facebook at Hillside or contact Marian Clemons on 07586354826 for further information

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Our Team



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

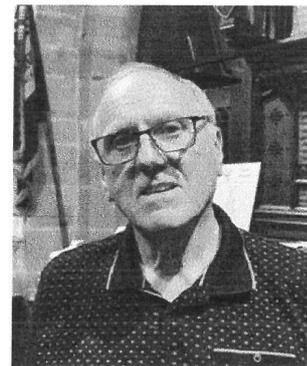


Revd Martin Allen
Assistant Curate
117 Birmingham Road
07788 872738

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

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



SAVE THE
DATE

MOVIE MONDAY

Free Entry , Snacks Available

Monday 17th Feb 2025

10AM

St Laurence Church

Alvechurch

B48 7SB