



St Leonard's

Ordinary People, Extraordinary God



Parish Magazine

February 2014

Diary for February

SUNDAY 2nd: Candlemas

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am All Age Worship – Christingle. Guest speaker Liz Digby from The Children’s Society

6.30pm Parish Eucharist

Tuesday 4th

10.00am Holy Communion at Wren House

2.30pm Holy Communion at the Old Rectory

Wednesday 5th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Open Church

10.45am Holy Communion at Woodlands

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

Thursday 6th

8.00am The Eucharist

7.00pm House Group at 10 Bale Close (579944)

SUNDAY 9th: 4th before Lent

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Tuesday 11th

2.30pm Mothers’ Union meet in the Nicholls Room

7.30pm ‘Medley’ House group (515245)

Wednesday 12th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Open Church

7.45pm ‘After Eights’ House group at 127 Straight Road (07710070387)

Thursday 13th

8.00am The Eucharist

3.00pm Daytime House Group 19 Wordsworth Road (564577)

SUNDAY 16th: 3rd before Lent

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Monday 17th

11.00am Holy Communion at Hill House

Wednesday 19th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Open Church

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

Thursday 20th

8.00am The Eucharist

8.15pm 'Harmony' house group at 'Harmony' 145 High Road, Layer
(734246)

SUNDAY 23rd: 2nd before Lent

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Monday 24th

7.45pm 'Jubilee' house group at the Rectory (575966)

Wednesday 26th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Open Church

Thursday 27th

8.00am The Eucharist

March

Saturday 1st

Day of prayer for mission week in church (times to be advised)

SUNDAY 2nd: Trinity V

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am Fifth Event

6.30pm Parish Eucharist

Wednesday 5th March: Ash Wednesday

10.00am Eucharist with the imposition of ashes

7.30pm Eucharist with the imposition of ashes

Saturday, 8th March: Coffee Morning 10.30am -12noon at 18 Scott Drive

From the Rectory



When Bishop Stephen came in November he encouraged us to have a teaching session after church occasionally. With that in mind, and for that purpose, the Cathedral's Canon Theologian, Revd Edward Carter is coming on the 9th March to preach and teach in the same way that the Bishop did – so there will be a teaching session after church followed by lunch (but more of that next month).

It crossed my mind that the title of canon was not always well understood and worth explaining a bit about. Originally, a canon was a cleric living with others in a clergy house or, later, in one of the houses within the precinct of or close to a cathedral and ordering his life according to the orders or rules of the church in a semi-monastic lifestyle.

Today the system of canons is retained almost exclusively in connection with cathedrals and a canon may be a member of the clergy on the staff of a cathedral or diocese. The dean and chapter are the formal body which has legal responsibility for the cathedral.

There are various different types of canon. Some canons have specific roles within the life of the cathedral eg precentor, theologian or pastor and are known as residentiary canons and, with the dean, form the chapter, which is the governing body of the cathedral, responsible on the one hand for the maintenance of worship within the cathedral and on the other for the maintenance of the cathedral buildings. Residentiary canons are permanent salaried staff of the cathedral and often live within the precincts.

There are also honorary canons, a title usually awarded to clergy in recognition of long and dedicated service to the diocese, but these are non-residentiary and non-stipendiary. Canon Hugh Beavan is an example of this type. There are also lay canons, an honorary title bestowed on a lay person, who is not a priest, but whose faithful work in support of the church has been recognised.

The College of Canons consists of the Dean, the Area Bishops, the

Archdeacons and the Residentiary, Non-Residentiary and Ecumenical Canons. There are 30 clerical and six lay Non-Residentiary Canons and five Ecumenical Canons. The College meets at least annually to discuss matters concerning the Cathedral. When required, it elects a new Diocesan Bishop.

So what does a Canon Theologian do?

The job description of the Canon Theologian (at least for Chelmsford Cathedral) is written around the priorities of evangelism, apologetics (explaining our faith), and spirituality. As a diocese we want our lives and the life of our churches to be a transforming presence in the world. This means that we have to tell the story of our faith – evangelism; we have to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in us – apologetics; and the truth and the beauty that we see in Jesus Christ needs to be evident in our lives – spirituality. And the Canon Theologian’s job is to help us to do that. He will also be asked to assist the Bishop and the Cathedral Chapter in their theological reflections and to encourage theological integrity in their discernment and decision-making, as well as being invited to preach in the Cathedral and teach.

Revd Edward Carter and his family moved to Chelmsford in March 2012. When he was appointed he said, *“I will be going out into the wider community and talking to people about faith and religion. I am hoping there will be opportunities to travel out and about and be involved in church education.”* Revd Carter moved from his role as parish priest at St Peter's Didcot in Oxford Diocese and Area Dean of the Wallingford Deanery. He had previously been teaching Christian ethics at Ripon College, Cuddesdon.

But what about the others?

The Canon Precentor is responsible for the music in the cathedral and, working under the authority of the Dean, for preparing the services which take place in the Cathedral. A Canon Precentor needs to be musically literate, with the ability to sing services and to work closely with all the Cathedral’s musicians

The Canon Pastor who is the Cathedral’s first point of contact for pastoral care, works with the Dean to develop effective pastoral liturgies and an effective system of pastoral care for the whole Cathedral community, including staff, visitors and worshippers. He oversees the Cathedral’s

existing work with children, young people and young adults and its provision for families. In addition, he gives guidance and advice on the growth and development of similar areas of mission and ministry.

So there we are – a whistle-stop tour of some of the various titles we encounter in the Church of England. There are more, of course! I'm sure Edward Carter will prove to be inspiring and thought-provoking in equal measure – he is spoken of very highly. Put the date in your diary and come along and listen to him.

Teresa

We talk about canticles – but what are they?

The expression 'canticle' is derived from a Latin word '*canticulum*' meaning, literally, 'little song'. Liturgically, it denotes the texts derived from the Bible which are said or sung at Morning and Evening prayer – the Benedictus (Blessed be the Lord God of Israel) at Morning Prayer, and the Magnificat (My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord) and the Nunc Dimittis (Lord, now you let your servant go in peace) at Evening prayer.

These three are sometimes called the 'evangelical canticles', as they come from the Gospel of Luke, and they refer to the Incarnation of Christ, in whose honour congregations are expected to stand while they are being said or sung.

Apocrypha have been used as canticles, with varying degrees of success. Psalms are not generally called canticles, nor are texts such as the Te Deum (We praise you O God) or the Gloria in Excelsis (Glory be to God on high) which are not Biblical and are properly hymns.

With thanks to St Mary's Rickmansworth



CARDS

Handmade cards of various sorts are on sale in the Nicholls room after all services.

Also, I can make cards to order.

Proceeds to church funds

Owen Shepherd

House Groups

I'm sure you've seen the previous articles and messages about the house groups in this parish – and I am delighted that we are now up to five house groups (and potentially six – see below).

I know I've said it before – but I will say it again – they are a wonderful way of getting to know people and talking about the important aspects of our faith; which we rarely do on the 'social' level of interaction which we have after church. So – maybe as an extension of your new year's resolution you might like to 'dip your toe' into one this year.

Also – on 1st June at 3pm we will be having a House Group tea party at Harmony (145 High Road, Layer) – where all the members of the house groups are going to get together over tea/coffee/cake – just for fun! If you would like to come to that you'd be very welcome, even if you're not a member of a group. Transport will be available, please ask.

Teresa

Daytime House Group

We are aware that some people don't like going out in the evening and Hugh and Mary Beavan have kindly offered to run a daytime house group.

The inaugural meeting will be on

Thursday 13th February at 3.00pm at 19 Wordsworth Road
for people who are interested.

The day, time and even venue of subsequent meetings will be discussed and decided on the 13th

so if you can't make this one please speak to

Hugh or Mary (564577)

and let them know if you could come another time.



Christingle

This year the Christingle service will form the 09.45 morning worship on 2nd February 2014 Candlemas.

Please come and support the work of the Children's Society and bring any children and young people along with you.

The Sound of Music

“You mean, you actual have a choir every Sunday morning”?

This lady continued;

“We’ve never had an choir and we struggle to find an organist”

Admittedly she lives in the heart of the countryside and the small but staunch congregation are pleased if the numbers attending reach 12 people.

I thought I’d better not say any more at the risk of sounding a little arrogant and boastful, which I definitely wasn’t. However she wanted to hear more and marvelled at the thought of anthems, concerts, small children singing their hearts out, young musicians and even dancers in her church.

“Unimaginable” she said.

Between Thursday morning Eucharist and before the other members of our cleaning team arrive, I’m sometimes quite alone in a completely silent church. As I start sweeping the pews, I have time for reflection—it is so peaceful and I enjoy these few moments before the others arrive, but a silent church for most of the time? No.

Oh how fortunate we are at St Leonards. From the opening hymn when, as the choir lead in, you can hear the individual voices as they pass by in procession up the aisle, the beautiful anthems sung between the Bible readings, Teresa singing those first beautiful lines of the Eucharist, right through to the last hymn as they leave.

The hard work and dedication that goes into the musical side of our worship is wonderful. Sally, teaching the youngsters, some of whom will hopefully join adult choirs having been inspired by the joy of singing. Sarah, leading the voices week by week thus adding another dimension to our Sunday services.

I know we all appreciate Sarah and her team, Sally and her young people, but how often do we as individuals, actually say so? I’m thinking mainly of the Intercessions where, quite rightly, everyone in the clergy from our Archbishop to our Readers at different times are mentioned and prayed for, for their leadership and guidance, but what about the music and singing! Take a moment to think about Sunday in church with no music

and singing! Take a moment to think about Sunday in church with no music and no joyful voices in the choir, and imagine that in a little church in the countryside a really lovely lady has none of these. It is a major part of our worship and unlike this lady, we cannot imagine being without them.

So let us all with one “A Chord” be joyful and thank the Lord for those in our beautiful church who make “The Sound of Music”

Gill Young

A big sugary thank you

to everyone that bought a Christmas Cake,
and to those who gave their support in other ways.

We have raised £160 for church funds in total,
so thank you all!

I also make hand decorated,
bespoke cakes, cookies and cupcakes to order .

Just give me a call or email and we can discuss your requirements!

Patsi Morgans

FINAL DAY FOR ITEMS FOR THE MARCH MAGAZINE IS

SUNDAY 9th FEBRUARY

11.00 am hard copy or 7.30pm email copy

Please include your name with any submission. This will be withheld from publication if requested but items from unknown sources cannot be used.

**PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE MARCH EDITION TO
PETER BROWNING ; email: magazine@stleonardslexden.org.uk
or by placing items in the box marked ‘Parish Magazine’ in the
Church**

Christmas at St. Leonard's 2013

As last year December 2013 was generally mild but particularly wet at times.

During the fortnight before Christmas three carol services took place at St Leonard's with large numbers of pupils, parents and staff from Lexden Primary, Home Farm Primary and Kingswode Hoe Schools and we also hosted carol services for Colchester Centurion Rotary Club (featuring the choir of Kingsford Junior School) and Stour Valley Wives.

On Saturday 14th December Lexden Choral Society held a well attended Christmas Celebration of New and Traditional Carols in Church whilst on 21st December Beyond Blue organised a most enjoyable Wassail in the Church Hall which raised £443 for Church funds.

We experienced excellent attendances at services over Christmas with 1001 worshippers coming to our Church over the four services on Christmas Eve plus a further 144 worshipping at the two Eucharists on Christmas Day.

This was the second year when we have offered two identical Services of Light at 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm on Christmas Eve which had a combined attendance of 608 in addition to 246 at the preceding Crib Service. The three Communion services gave a total attendance of 291 including 225 communicants.

The Christmas card delivered throughout the Parish clearly helped to publicise our services as did the poster on the Lexden Road Noticeboard.

Once again we held special charitable collections at the Christmas Eve services which after Gift Aid recoveries had been added enabled us to send £348 to the Sheepfold Centre, near Bethlehem, £622 to Colchester Food Bank and £597 to Colchester CAP Debt Centre.

In addition a collection at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on 23rd December enabled us to send £399 to St Helena Hospice.

These charitable donations were all higher than in 2012 with a particular improvement in respect of the Sheepfold Centre.

Tom Scrimgeour

The Journey of the Three Kings

All Age Service for Epiphany

January 5th 2014

They say you shouldn't work with animals or children. Whilst I might agree with the first part of that statement, I cannot agree with the second part. I thoroughly enjoyed taking the service for Epiphany with so many children to help me. They read the prayers beautifully, and with Mia to accompany them, they sang two songs and did the actions with great energy. They had no rehearsal, but responded very well to the story simply by acting out what they heard. When asked to sit *quietly* at their activity while I talked to the grown-ups, they did just that.

It was lovely to see so many of them wearing, or bringing to show us, things they had made at Holy Commotion earlier in the week. I am sure you will agree that their very presence brings an added dimension to our worship.

Rosemary

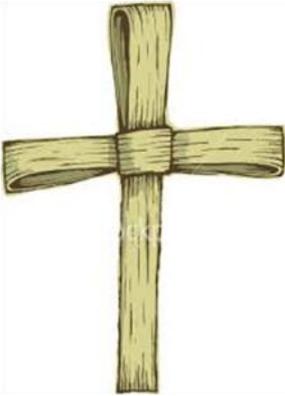
Confirmations 2014

When Bishop Stephen was here he reminded everyone that it's never too late to be confirmed – and the first step is just to ask about it. In the Diocese we will have fewer Bishops than usual next year (since Bishop Christopher retired, shortly to be followed by the Bishop of Barking) so confirmations will have to be combined.

We haven't had the dates or venues of the deanery confirmations – but a Diocesan one will be held in the Cathedral on the **19th April** in the evening (at the Easter Vigil). We already have one candidate – so if you are thinking about it, please let me know (and if you can think of someone who might want to do it...give them a nudge!)

Teresa

Ash Wednesday



It seems strange to be writing this when we have only just celebrated Epiphany and Candlemas, the end of Christmas, in the Church Calendar is still to come.

Do you know that our Palm Crosses that are blessed and used to mark Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday are also used for the Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday at the beginning of Lent?

One of my first duties as Sacristan, last year, was to turn Palm Crosses to Ashes and mix with Holy Oil—a real challenge. We need a lot of crosses to produce very little ash.

I would be happy to receive your crosses, if you are prepared to part with them, in order to prepare the Ashes for 5th March, which is Ash Wednesday this year and the beginning of Lent.



Please would you all keep an eye out for new people moving into your road or block of flats. We would like you to put a Welcome leaflet through their door and if possible talk to them a little bit about our church. If you are unable to do this yourself, please let someone in the Ministry Team know and we will follow it up.

Many thanks, **Rosemary**

Churchwardens and assistants

Most of you may realise that in May Tom Scrimgeour will cease to be church warden (having served the maximum six years). While we value immensely the dedication and sheer hard work he has put in over these years – we must begin to think about appointing a new Churchwarden.

As this opportunity presents itself, it is worthwhile, I think, to consider the tasks which are undertaken by the Churchwardens (few of them in the official ‘job description’ and many of which have ‘devolved’ to them unintentionally) and consider whether any of them can be delegated.

It is common for churches to have ‘assistant wardens’ or ‘wardens’ assistants’, who have no legal role, but who can share some of the delegated responsibilities. For example; an assistant warden could be ‘on duty’ at some services, or be responsible opening up church for lettings/workmen outside Lynne’s hours, or oversee some rotas... the list is fairly eclectic and would vary according to individual’s preference and personality, but it would mean the Churchwardens needn’t feel that they had to be ‘on duty’ or at every service and do everything – and they could even relax and worship with the rest of us!

It is becoming apparent that, in a parish which is this busy, if we are to continue to thrive and grow we will need more people to help with the smooth running of church and all that goes on here. In some ways it’s a nice problem to have, but it does need to be addressed. People value the welcome, the comfort and the efficient organisation – and we must continue to provide this.

Therefore, there are some things I would like you to do. First, pray about Tom’s successor, that the right person will come forward. Secondly, consider who might be suitable to be wardens’ assistants - and also pray about this, of course!

Speak to Teresa if you have any suggestions as to who might undertake either of these roles.

**Lexden
Ladies’
Group**

There will be no meeting in February but I hope to arrange a programme for later months.

Ideas and suggestions would be most welcome.

Margaret Howard. Tel:579629

Update from Colchester CAP Debt Centre, January 2014

Current operations

Since the launch in May 2013, Colchester CAP Debt Centre (CCDC) has tapped a real need in the community. We are now working with 16 families and appointments are being booked for April. Recently we celebrated our first two debt-free clients.

Some clients have complex needs and CCDC puts teams of support workers around them rather than just one person. Most new clients need emergency cash from CCDC for food or gas bills, etc We use the food-bank 3-4 times each week and they have provided special service to us (larger parcels and with no restriction on number of requests).

We continue to pray with all of our clients. Some of them have started attending church. With all of them we are having conversations around faith. I would like some of them to attend an Alpha course in the new year.

There is now a drop-in service each Tuesday morning at Beacon House, for those who are waiting for first appointments or making contact with the debt centre for the first time. This is a place where clients can feel supported, be assessed and sign posted to other services. We give out a lot of Food Bank vouchers!

We have some 50 volunteers. We trained another 15 befrienders in October. If the centre is strong, it's because of the quality of our volunteers.

Christmas client event

The client event was hugely encouraging. Having set a goal of five client families attending, we were thrilled that 10 of our families came. 50 people attended a three course meal and were entertained by Rev Nick Lear from Colchester Baptist Church. The volunteer help was outstanding, many people serving throughout the whole 6 hour set-up, set-down marathon!

Every family that we have contact with received a luxury hamper and gifts for their children. The feedback from our clients and befrienders was deeply moving.

Text from one of our families:

‘We have woken up this morning still totally overwhelmed by the love, kindness and support we felt from you guys yesterday and since we have met you! Thanks for all the wonderful gifts for us. This is our first Christmas with the Lord and the first Christmas in a lot of years we can be truly free and happy’

Comment from another family:

‘Since the day you walked into our home our life has changed, taken a turn for good. Even when you are not there, there is a peace in the house.’

Many clients had originally said they could only come for an hour or so. All of them stayed to the end with several of them saying they didn’t want to leave at all!

One of the volunteers said: ‘Can I just say what a joy it was to share the afternoon with everyone yesterday. It was so humbling to see how the befrienders care about their families and I’m pleased that everything seems to be going well for you all’

Future plans

The Debt Centre manager, funded for 2 days, is working far in excess of this. The urgent need is for strong, flexible administrative support, and we will be hoping to recruit a dedicated volunteer in the next few months.

The trustees agreed to support a second debt coach training (as a volunteer) and this will increase the number of families we can work with, and hopefully reduce the waiting time for those in need.

There is also a need for one, possibly two, extra trustees to assist with fundraising, PR and the governance of the debt centre.

CAP Job Clubs are being established, in conjunction with CCDC/ CCDC trustees, and other Colchester churches.

We would be grateful for your prayers for:

- **All those who we meet as clients and potential clients.**
 - **Future funding as we plan for our second year of operation**
 - **The right people to come forward as future volunteers, particularly for administrative and trustee support**
- Teresa Lasky, debt centre manager; all the volunteers giving time and expertise.**

Teresa Lasky, Centre manager / Sara Batts, Trustee

A Prayer for our CMS Mission Partners in Nepal. Paul & Jean Dobbing and daughter Jennifer

Heavenly Father, we pray for those who have gone to other countries with the good news of Jesus.

We especially lift to you in prayer Paul & Jean Dobbing and their daughter Jennifer, our missionaries in Nepal.

When their work is difficult and tiring, make them strong.

When they are lonely and homesick, remind them that you are with them.

When they uncertain what to do, guide them.

Bless them and keep them at all times loving you for Jesus sake.

Amen.

From Jane

Music at St Leonard's – Update

John Brown has tendered his resignation as full time organist at St Leonard's. He has held this post for just over three years and feels that it is time for him to reduce his workload. We are grateful for John's hard work and dedication to St Leonard's during that time.

He will, however, continue to play at evensongs and, with the agreement of the PCC, we will be using a small pool of experienced and talented organists to cover the other services. Sarah Blake will be responsible for overseeing this. This system will run initially for 6 months (from the middle of March) to see how well it works and we will then review it. We hope it will prove flexible and provide opportunities to develop the music here.



Mothers Union

14th January

It was strange to come to the meeting today, knowing that Sheila would no longer be there as Enrolling Member. Teresa had kindly agreed to Chair this meeting.

We started with worship and then tackled the task of distributing among us the list of 16 responsibilities Sheila had undertaken herself over the years.

I have agreed to visit any members who are unwell or in hospital-please let me know if you hear of anybody.

Our Speaker today was Mia, our Youth Worker. She gave an illustrated talk about Erlangen where she lives in Germany. She told us about her family, her school life and her church. We also saw slides of typical German food. Mia told us about the process of applying to come here. She is enjoying her work here with us. She has particularly enjoyed the Youth Communion Service, held in the Lady Chapel and the Crib Service on Christmas Eve. Mia has already done a lot of exploring in England, visiting Oxford, London and the seaside. She has been fortunate enough to see a Ballet at Covent Garden and the fireworks in London on New Year's Eve. Many thanks, Mia.

It is our turn to bake cakes for the Hospice in February. Please bring cakes to the 9.45am Service on 16th February, or deliver to Joan Kitson, 44 Sanders Drive by 10am on 17th February.

Our February Meeting on 11th February will be lunch at the Colne Bistro, Sheepen Road. We will meet there at 12noon. If you have not already signed for this and would like to attend, please ring Jean Hallett on 01206 547837.

Finally, we have a challenge for Lent: give up a cup of tea or coffee a day during Lent and donate what you would have spent to the Water Aid Project.

Pamela Higham.

2014 Colchester Deanery Synod Elections

The Diocese of Chelmsford have asked us to publicise the 2014 Deanery Election Process and the Diocesan guidance on electing Parish Representatives to Colchester Deanery Synod at the APCM in April

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2014 Deanery Elections

Elections of lay representatives to the Deanery Synod happen every three years and the next election for St Leonard's four representatives will take place at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in the Church on Monday 28th April 2014 at 7.45 pm. Each person elected as a Deanery Synod representative will, by virtue of their election, also become a member of Lexden Parochial Church Council (PCC).

Transforming Presence

The Deanery Synod is a key body as we come to grips with the issues in Transforming Presence.

In 2011 the Diocese agreed a set of priorities for the mission and ministry of the Church in Essex and East London. These four priorities were set out in a document known as 'Transforming Presence' –

- Living a distinctive Christian life in the world
- Evangelising effectively
- Holding ourselves mutually accountable over the basics of Christian ministry
- Developing a new vision for a Church serving in a missionary context by re-imagining ministry

As each of these priorities develops, key questions are being faced at all levels within the church.

What is a Deanery Synod?

The Deanery Synod is a gathering of ordained and lay representatives from all the parishes in a geographical area – the Deanery. The word 'Synod' means 'seeking the way together'. The Deanery Synod fits into the synodical structures of the Church of England between the PCC and the Diocesan Synod with the General Synod at the national level.

Why Deanery Synod is important?

Generally speaking the Deanery Synod provides a forum for mutual support for all the clergy and congregations within the Deanery. It should be a place of prayer, listening and study where people can grow a vision and passion to see the wider Church flourish.

It is also an important link between the local Church and the Diocesan and National Church and Deanery Synods are sometimes asked to vote on matters affecting the wider Church.

At present Deanery Synods are becoming more important as the process of Re-imagining Ministry unfolds. Each Deanery has been asked to prepare their responses to this and the next Deanery term will be a crucial period in this process.

Finally, Deanery Synod members elect the Diocesan and General Synods. So whoever is chosen to represent St Leonard's on the Deanery Synod for the three years from 2014 will, in turn, choose the deanery representatives to our Diocesan Synod in 2015; and that same summer, will elect our diocesan representatives to General Synod – the Church of England's national decision-making body.

What to look for in a Deanery Synod representative?

Each parish is asked to prayerfully consider who to elect to represent them at Deanery level. In order to stand for election you must be registered on the electoral role of Lexden Parish and have a proposer and a seconder who also need to be registered on the electoral role.

Those are the legal requirements, but Church members may want to consider the following points when deciding where to cast their vote:

Does this person have a passion and vision to see the wider church engage in mission and growth?

Is this person committed to working with others and working across boundaries – both geographical and non-geographical – to seek God's will for the mission and ministry of the Deanery?

Are they able to think and act strategically and to listen to others?

Will they be able to effectively represent the parish at Deanery level and to provide effective feedback to the PCC?

As electors to Diocesan and General Synod, do their views broadly reflect the views of St Leonard's congregation members?

If you are interested in possibly standing for election to Deanery Synod in April or in encouraging someone else to consider standing please free to approach and question any of our present representatives – Mark Cole, John Brown, Tom Scrimgeour and Kathleen Scrimgeour or Teresa.

THANK YOU

This may seem rather late but the deadline for the January magazine was early December, but, I am sure that all those who came to the Christmas Services will join **me** in a big *thank you* to all those who decorated the church for Christmas.

Especially the flowers and the tree

The church looked really beautiful.

Ed

Coffee Mornings

Firstly, I would like to wish all our Coffee Morning Supporters a very happy New Year.

Thank you so much to Fran and Peter Hyde for welcoming us to their home on 16th November and to Mia for her Bavarian input, especially her home-made biscuits! £330 approx. was raised for church funds and related charities.

Also a big “thank you” to Francis Bonner for her Christmassy get-together on 14th December when £140 approx was raised.

The approx. Total raised for the year was £1360 to which Gift Aid was added.

Our first Coffee Morning of 2014 will be held on

8th March at 10.30am -12 noon at 18 Scott Drive,

by kind invitation of Ann Matthews, a Mothers' Union member.

There will be a Raffle and Bring & Buy of produce, plants and books.

Please come along and bring your friends.

Jean Hallett

Some Notes from the January PCC Meeting

The planning for Mission Week (14th-18th May) is coming together with some interesting ideas for events. There will be a day of prayer on 1st March for this week.

Our Organist John Brown has resigned and how we would replace him was discussed. It is difficult to find a full time organist so a Rota of local organists is being considered. (See page 28)

With this Parish Church being so busy the possible introduction of wardens' assistants was discussed. (see page 23)

The APCM will be on Monday 28th April, 7-45pm in church.

We have had a letter from one our Scouts who is raising funds for him to be able attend the World Scout Jamboree in 2015.

The Electoral Roll now stands at 235.

Prayernet

We have an email 'prayernet' which Patsi Morgans is administering.

It works like this: if you would like to receive the (regular) email with prayer requests and thanksgivings and include them in your daily prayers, please sign up (list at the back of church) or let Patsi have your email address.

If you would like Patsi to include your prayer request or give thanks for a blessing you have received or a prayer answered, email Patsi with it. It could be that you're having to make a big decision, it could be that you've got to have some tests or treatment.... it could be that you know someone who needs our prayers... it could be anything, big or small.

This will not replace the intercessions in church – but will hopefully add to them.

Patsi prayernet@stleonardslexden.org.uk

Book Review

Killing Jesus by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard [Macmillan]

Killing Jesus is a book that follows on from the books *Killing Kennedy* and *Killing Lincoln* by the same authors. The latter was described as 'hugely entertaining' in at least one review. *Killing Jesus* does not fall into the category of entertainment; it could claim, however, to be both refreshing and chilling in equal measure. Refreshing, in that it tells the story with a gritty realism as it reads between the lines of the Gospel story and establishes a time-line; chilling, in that much is made of the cruelty and decadence [to say nothing of the war crimes] of the Romans. The authors could not have drawn a stronger contrast between with the message and ministry of Jesus, on the one hand, and the brutal times he lived in, on the other.

Despite its dramatic title, the book is both faithful and sympathetic to the Gospel accounts but also draws on the historical account by the Jewish historian Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish texts. It offers no theological insight and remains firmly rooted to the ground; steeped as that ground was, at the time, in the blood of both human beings and animals.

The authors clearly decided it was necessary to give a detailed account of the political situation in Rome at the time and, at one point, readers could be forgiven for thinking that the book had more to do with killing Caesar. This background to the main story makes for both fascinating and horrific reading and covers the end of the reign of Julius Caesar, then that of his nephew, Caesar Augustus or Octavian [remember Brian Blessed in *I, Claudius*?] and finally that of Octavian's step-son, Tiberius. The account describes Emperor Tiberius as a '68 year old pagan, who hosts orgies in his private villa and despatches his enemies by throwing them off a thousand-foot cliff.' Yet Tiberius admired the Jews' religious ways and Pontius Pilate was under instruction not to meddle in matters of Jewish laws, which were considered conducive to the public order. Pilate therefore honoured this by strengthening relations with Caiaphas, the figurehead of the Jewish faith and the most powerful man in Jerusalem.

Such was the background to the events of Good Friday. The authors create a timeline which becomes ever more pressing once we reach Palm Sunday and there is a chapter for every day of the ensuing week. The book

explains very well how Pilate had to avoid upsetting the Emperor by ordering the release of Jesus, as that would have been interfering in their religious law. Equally any disagreement with the Sanhedrin court of high priests would also have displeased Tiberius. If the Sanhedrin were to enforce the law with a death sentence they would have needed the approval of the Roman governor. Pilate faced an impossible choice and decided the best course was to accept custody of the prisoner and have him scourged, hoping that that would be sufficient punishment. It wasn't. In the end efforts to release Jesus failed. The Sanhedrin had successfully worn Pilate down.

We hear the same account of the last week of Jesus' life every year. The gospel writers were writing down what had hitherto been communicated by word of mouth. Presentation of the story to church congregations in the 21st century may not have been uppermost in their minds. To have it presented differently is helpful. Jesus emerges as a real person. Far from the madman that some people would have him be, Jesus is portrayed in this book as a man of great courage, a brilliant strategist, and with an intelligence second to none. *Killing Jesus* should be read.

Robin Greateorex

Morning and Evening Prayer

Prayer is a very important part of our everyday Christian life.

On Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday of each week we have morning Prayer at 09-00am here in this beautiful church. It is a time when we can thank God for our safe keeping through the night and to and ask God's blessing for the day ahead.

On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of each week we have Evening Prayer at 5-00pm. This is an opportunity to reflect on the day and offer to God everything that has happened—good or bad.

Some 2014 Dates

Lexden Arts Festival 3rd to 10th May

MissionWeek 14th to 18th May

Tea Party for all House Groups 1st June

Summer Fete 5th July

Parish Retreat 18th to 20th July

Youthworker up to date...



The last few weeks were really exciting, but exhausting as well... My first English Christmas- well, what can I say - I loved it! Everything in church was really busy and I had a lot to do: Helping in the school carol services, planning Holy Commotion, organising the Youth Service, doing Junior church, playing Guitar

in the All Age service, being part of the Crib Service, singing and reading in the other Christmas services... All in all: I really enjoy being in England and not in Germany. Of course, it was a little bit sad, not to be with my family on Christmas Eve (and not to decorate the Christmas Tree with my brother), but I had many great new experiences! I think the two things I liked the most were the crackers and mince pies! On Boxing Day my host family took me to a Rock and Roll-pantomime in Ipswich. That was really British and so funny.

New Years Eve was very special. I went to London to see the fireworks, but I had a tough time! 6 hours standing in the cold just to see 10 mins fireworks... But it was the best I've ever seen! And now I've done that in my life... This week my Mum and my brother came to visit. We had a great time together! I think many of you met them in church. I really miss



cuddling my brother ;-). But it made me realise, how much people change (especially me!!!) and that was surprising! But now, I'm looking forward to all the things in this term, like: OMG sessions, Junior church, scouts, Christingle, the All Age services and Holy Commotion...

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