



St Leonard's

Ordinary People. Extraordinary God.



Parish Magazine

January 2015

Men's Prayer Breakfast

**on the first Saturday of every month
in the Nicholls Room**

8.30 to 10.00am

with a breakfast of

Cereals, Tea, Coffee, Fruit Juice and Bacon Rolls.

Followed by Prayer Time

REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday:

- 8.00am Holy Communion
(BCP using Common Worship lectionary)
9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST and Junior Church
9.45am All Age Worship (1st Sunday in the month)
6.30pm Evensong and Sermon
6.30pm PARISH EUCHARIST (1st Sunday in the month)

Wednesday: 10.00am The Eucharist.

Thursday: 8.00am The Eucharist.

Monday-Wednesday: Morning Prayer is usually said at 9.00am

Monday-Thursday: Evening Prayer is usually said at 5.00pm
(Please check times listed in Weekly Notices each week)

CHURCH OPENING

The Church is open every weekday morning, for anyone who would like to visit, to enjoy this beautiful building and to have the opportunity to experience God's presence. The normal opening hours are:

<i>Mondays</i>	<i>8.45 – 12.00</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>7.45 – 12.30</i>
<i>Tuesdays</i>	<i>8.45 – 12.30</i>	<i>Fridays</i>	<i>9.45 – 2.00</i>
<i>Wednesdays</i>	<i>8.45 – 12.00</i>		

Advertisements: The inclusion of an advertisement in this magazine should not be taken as implying endorsement of the objects of the advertiser by this church or the diocese.

Diary for January

Saturday 3rd

8.30 Men's Prayer Breakfast

4th January: The Epiphany

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church (INCENSE WILL BE USED AT THIS SERVICE)

6.30pm Evensong and Sermon

Tuesday 6th

10.30am Holy Communion at Wren House

2.30pm Holy Communion at the Old Rectory

Wednesday 7th

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

10.45am Holy Communion at Woodlands

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

7.45pm 'Explorers' house group

Thursday 8th

8.00am The Eucharist

3.00pm 'Canticle' and 'Wordsworth' House Groups meet (Hugh 564577)

Saturday 10th

9.00am Alpha course begins in church

SUNDAY 11th: Baptism of Christ

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Monday 12th

7.45pm PCC meeting in the Nicholls Room

Tuesday 13th

2.30pm Mothers' Union

7.30pm 'Medley' House group at 20 Wordsworth Road

Wednesday 14th

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

Thursday 15th

8.00am The Eucharist

SUNDAY 18th: Epiphany II

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and Sermon

Monday 19th

11.00am Holy Communion at Hill House

Wednesday 21st

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

Thursday 22nd

8.00am The Eucharist

Friday 23rd

7.30pm Pantomime: 'Dick Whittington'

Saturday 24th

3.00pm and 7.30pm Pantomime: 'Dick Whittington'

SUNDAY 25th: Conversion of Paul

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Wednesday 28th

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

Thursday 29th

8.00am The Eucharist

7.45pm 'Jubilee' House group at the Rectory (please note change of day)

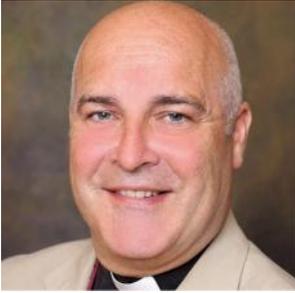
February

SUNDAY 1st: Candlemas

8.00am Holy Communion (1662 rite)

9.45am All Age Worship - Christingle

6.30pm Parish Eucharist (INCENSE WILL BE USED AT THIS SERVICE)



Bishop Stephen's New Year Message 2015

Only the lonely

How will the age we are living in be remembered? Many already refer to it as the digital age. But I read an article before Christmas which suggested that it might be more appropriate to call it the age of loneliness.

According to statistics from the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* we are the loneliest country in Europe. The number of people in the UK living on their own has doubled since the 1970s. Single person households now make up a third of all homes. We are least likely to have close friendships, and a survey in 2010 found 60% of people aged between 18 and 34 described themselves as lonely. These same young people dream of fame and riches but not much else. They have hundreds of virtual friends, but not many real ones. Older people – also tired and lonely - resort to TV. Many say it is their principal source of company. And a favourite programme of late has been watching other people watch TV!

Our motorways are clogged with cars, jammed end to end and going nowhere. Most have only one person in them. It is a perfect illustration of our dependence upon technology, and the isolation it breeds. These things – cars, computers, TVs, mobile phones – they were supposed to make our lives easier, and in so many ways they have, and, no, we can't turn the clock back, but there has been a cost. We are more likely to know the names of the inhabitants of Albert Square than our own neighbours. And that is a terrible indictment on what our society has become. Indeed, I was recently talking to a young Ugandan woman who has moved to this country and is worshipping in one of our churches and asked her what she made of England. She said she was happy here, and glad of the opportunities this country was giving her and her son. But she said people don't talk to each other. People don't welcome each other into their homes. People seem lonely.

Well – wait for it! – there is help available. I read another article in another magazine which was offering a remedy for all this isolation. Cuddle workshops! This popular therapy began in New York in 2004. It

came to England a few years later; and now, at the knockdown price of £29.00 per session, you can purchase a place at a cuddling workshop.

Cosmologists tell us that the universe is expanding all the time, the stars and the planets moving further and further away from each other, and, one day, so far away from us that the night sky will be permanently black. Is this also what is happening to us? The expansion of our knowledge leading to a separation from our humanity? And what could we do about it?

The Christian faith teaches that God is a community of persons: Father Son and Holy Spirit; and that we human beings are made for community: with God and with each other. Moreover, we are at our best and most happy and most fulfilled when we live in community. This isn't quite saying: no wonder we're lonely, we've lost God. But it is saying that by keeping the idea of God alive the local church also keeps the idea of community alive. The local church is probably the one place left in Britain where people of different ages, ethnicities, abilities and aspirations meet together regularly and know each other by name. There are other tremendous forces for good which bring people together: the University of the Third Age; our community schools; even, where there is one still standing, the local pub. But the church has a particular vocation and calling to be the place where the lonely and the isolated are welcomed in and community is built.

January can be a cold and lonely month. Let us reach out to our neighbours at this time of year; and may our churches be places of welcome to all.

+Stephen

From Pauline and Phil

Pauline & I wish to thank the fellowship at St Leonards for their support and friendship over these last 10+ years. Also, thank you for the National Garden Scheme voucher that will be very useful for our new home's garden.

We shall be calling in at the church whenever we are back in Essex visiting family or friends. Our prayers are sent for your continued growth and outreach into the community of Lexden.

Phil Kershaw

From the Rectory



A New Year resolution? Well, sort of – read on...

Matthew 22:36-40

‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’

Deuteronomy 6:5 says, And you shall love the Lord your God with all your [mind and] heart and with your entire being and with all your might. In the New Testament, Jesus repeats this command and even points it out as the most important commandment of all (as well as loving your neighbour as yourself).

Seems like a good thing to pay attention to, no? What Jesus says is easy to understand. The Greatest Commandment is so simple. Yet it’s so deep and rich it’s like a mine from which we can forever extract pure gold.

The Greatest Commandment (obviously) consists of two parts: Love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength; and love your neighbour as you love yourself. Most unbelievers recognize the value of the second half of this command (“You shall love your neighbour as yourself”) but deny the value of the first part (“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”) There’s a reason, however, why Jesus listed these two commands in this specific order.

The first command (loving God) is the “great and foremost commandment” because it is required to achieve the second command (loving others). You can’t truly do the right thing unless you understand the relationship between these two commands. Fundamentally, though, the Great Commandment really is pretty simple to execute. Firstly, you love God. But you must love God seriously—with, in fact, all of your heart, mind, soul and strength.

But how do you do this... it’s so easy for it to trip off the tongue, isn’t it,

and not really think about it?

How do we love God? How can we show our love for God (putting aside our love for our neighbours for a moment)? Well – the obvious ways are worship and prayer. In fact, I can't think of any others... David explored prayer in his excellent article last month – but I would like to examine the worship aspect of loving God.

If we love someone we want to spend time with them, surely? But in the busyness of our lives – worship and prayer get squeezed out. Why on earth would you, a busy person, want to sacrifice what little R&R time you have to go to church regularly? It's so easy to say that something else has a better claim on our limited time. It's easier sometimes to say, 'I love God, but just I haven't got time to go to church or to have a prayer time today. I can still function as a Christian – I can still love my neighbour, be a good person...' etc. etc. And for a while it will be fine – but not for ever.

So why do we need to come together in church and worship? Why do we have to do this thing – that the world thinks is so strange? Why do we have to keep doing it? The Pope said, the Church is more than a charitable agency and the human needs it can meet go deeper than material goods. Without our spiritual 'topping up' that's all we are though – a charitable agency - a group of well-meaning, kind people who do things for others.

In worship we expect to encounter God. We know he is always with us – but this is our point in the week where we have the opportunity to become aware of his presence through word and Sacrament. To encounter the numinous and feed our souls.

In worship we have the opportunity to be formally forgiven... or more likely, to be reminded that we are sinners but God loves us enough to forgive us.

In worship we can remember that we are loved and encouraged – by the words of the liturgy or scripture or sermon - but also by the members of our community. And in turn, we can love and encourage others.

In worship we have the opportunity to pray – and be prayed for.

In worship we learn about our faith, we hear again the timeless stories and are reminded of what God did for us.

In worship as we hear and receive the Gospel we are empowered and motivated to share it in the world.

Those of us who attend church regularly give a very positive message to others about what Jesus Christ means to them. We are saying he means enough to set aside time each week for him. And, fed and watered (spiritually speaking) we go out to love our neighbours, renewed, refreshed, energised. We're not designed to unconditionally love our neighbours, and it's not always easy! Our normal, everyday, quick-to-anger, reactively judgmental, habitually evaluative minds don't work that way. If we're really going to feel peaceful, benevolent, patient, and truly loving toward people - then we're going to need undiluted, pure, direct-from-the-source Divine Love! And where better to get that than at church? (I have a picture in my mind here of Lord Kitchener pointing and saying Jesus Needs You!)

So, at the beginning of the New Year – have a think - how well do you carry out the Greatest Commandment?

Teresa



Mothers' Union

The carol service we shared with Lexden Ladies had the theme of PEACE. Rev David led the service and spoke about the truce between the British and Germans during Christmastide 1914.

We prayed for peace in our own time and remembered the troops still serving in the Middle East. Prayers were said for the families who are suffering because of war.

Thank you Margaret for planning this moving service

David will be our speaker in January when we hope to hear about his life before becoming our Curate.

Jean Hallett is planning a lunch in February and would be pleased if you came in January to let know if you wish to sign up for a meal.

The subscription for 2015 will be £17.20 so will you come prepared with cash or cheque book!

Best wishes for 2015

Joan Kitson

Alpha

What do we talk about?



Christmas gifts for the Seamen of Felixstowe

On December 1st we took the gifts you had so kindly donated to the Mission to Seafarers at Felixstowe Docks. They were delighted to see us as they had run out of hats. We took; 229 hand knitted hats, 30 jigsaws, 20 packs of playing cards.

Many thanks to all of you who gave and knitted from the parish and from other parishes some as far away as Spain. It was a marvellous effort

Sheila Cook

Christmas all Year Round

Each of us has a God given 'imagination screen'. This is the place where we can visualise, plan and imagine events, scenes and conversations. I believe that God has it there for our good and also for His use. It being the place where He gives instruction, vision and dreams for His purposes.

Occasionally I have a night dream which leaves a significant impression with me. In the last few years I have recorded some of these. This provides me with an opportunity to talk to Father about them at greater length, by writing down answers to the questions that arise. Often the opening question is "What do you want to show me through this dream". The following account is from one of these memorable dreams .. which has a festive slant! So, imagine the scene

"We are with a group of friends gathered around a huge cardboard box in a large festively decorated room. The box is full of presents, letters and cards. Each present is specially and uniquely wrapped for its recipient in all kinds of different ways. We know that these presents are individual, purposeful and are 'just what we need' and 'fit for purpose'.

"A kind man is looking through the box and pulling out the presents, letters and cards; he is placing them in separate piles on the floor according to their recipient. There is a pile of presents growing for each of us .. but look more closely at the large box from which they come.

"Because of your curiosity, the kind man calls you over and invites you to take something from His cardboard box, see who it is for, and then place it with that person's ever-growing pile of presents. Gradually we realise and notice that as soon as an item is removed from the box, it is replenished with another gift, the box will never be empty and will always be full to the brim. Wow, this is absolutely amazing ... spectacular .. out of this world. We can't believe it, yet we know, because the kind man is so very kind, that this must be real and not a party trick. We jump around and shout with joy, just as a child may do when it has got the best present ever; we sing and dance because it seems every Christmas has just happened all at once. There is going to be no end to the presents for us and for others!

"It is time to leave the room. Some of us have gone to our own piles and have opened the presents, read the letters and cards, enjoying the fullness of the gifts and messages .. but some of them remain unopened, we seem

either content to merely admire their wrapping, or actually do not want to find out what is inside, perhaps the gift is too personal or costly for us to accept. Perhaps we will leave these gifts to open later in our own homes, or even keep them wrapped up just to look at.

“There are some piles of presents left, for those who have not been gathered with us. The kind man encourages us as we leave, to take these piles, and to go and search out their recipient.

We do indeed have a Father who sent his Son, the ultimate gift, full of grace and mercy. Christ brings a never ending supply of gifts towards us. He offers to us hope, forgiveness, restored relationship, healing, fullness of life, joy, peace, confidence, certainty, comfort in trouble (as an initial list of gifts!). As believers we carry Him around within us, and so we too are able to offer forgiveness, speak words of healing, seek restored relationships, bring kindness and offer encouragement (again, as an initial list!).

We do have a part to play though. To accept, receive, open and make full use of these gifts given to us; to take these gifts to others, known or unknown; to live in full joy of our salvation, as individuals, as a church and within the wider community. We ought not to leave them unopened, and we may even dare to ask Him for some more presents from His inexhaustible supply.

Simon

Coffee Mornings

I would like to wish everyone a Happy and Peaceful New Year 2015 and am hoping to arrange a Coffee Morning every other month starting with February.

I'm always happy to receive offers of a venue and if anyone feels they could offer to host, that would be great.

Thank you to all who so kindly held a Coffee party in their homes during 2014- always a good social get-together.

The approximate total raised, incl. Dec. 2013, was £1,222.50 for church funds and charities.

Jean Hallett.

From Judy



Sometimes it can be hard to pause and think when life is busy and chaotic. Being still is something I've been learning over the past month. There are moments when I know I need to realign myself with God, remembering His promises. November was a pretty busy month, and as December has begun it appears to be even busier!

November had me talking at the Mothers' Union meeting, another great Junior OMG meeting where we talked about Fairtrade, and several meetings for the various December services. I'm enjoying the variety and being kept busy! Remembrance Sunday in particular was a really lovely day of reflection. I really enjoyed gathering outside with the rest of church and the uniformed groups as 11 o'clock struck. I also really enjoyed the Evening of Remembrance by candlelight, with beautiful songs and lovely poetry.

Junior Church has been going well too. I'm learning a lot by teaching the children. By spending time planning and reading the appropriate Bible passages during the week, it has been great to be able to think deeper about them. I've introduced a couple of new worship songs to the children which they seem to have enjoyed, and getting creative each week seems to go down well too.

Although December had only just begun as I write this, I'm really excited for this month and all the services coming up! The All-Age service on the 7th was a really good experience for me, and thanks to everyone that helped and took part (especially for their patience). I loved having the children as sides-people and readers, and I hope they enjoyed it too. It's great to have every part of the church involved!

Thanks again for your continued support and care for me! God bless, and (as it is now January), Happy New Year!

Judy



Dick *A Pantomime* Whittington

in St Leonard's Church Hall

Friday 23rd January 7.30pm

For grown ups... café-style seating,
bar and light supper.

Saturday 24th January

3.00pm & 7.30pm

Traditional fun for all the family!

Friday: £10.00 (includes food)

Saturday: adult £7.00, child £4.00,
family (2 adults & 2 children) £20.00
children aged 4 & under Free

Tickets in church
after Sunday services

or ring

01206 574797

or email

boxoffice@stleonardslexden.org.uk



AT THE CHRISTMAS BAZAAR



THE FONT AT ST LEONARD'S

Fifty years ago, on Sunday 10th January 1965, a special service was held in St Leonard's Church, to dedicate the new font. The font had been given in memory of the Beattie and Morton Families. The following description was printed in the order of service:

The shape of the new oak font is rather like that of a very large octagonal wineglass, the bowl being supported by a slender tapering stem. This departure from the traditional design was made possible by the choice of wood in preference to stone as a material.

The oak was grown in Essex. There are 76 pieces of it in the font and cover, each carefully selected and shaped to match its neighbour in grain and colour. In addition there are eight internal struts of idigbo, a tough and stable African hardwood.

Set in the oak bowl is a hemispherical bowl of spun copper which is heavily silver plated.

The oak rim of the font is inscribed, in Roman letters, 'To the memory of the Beattie and Morton families AD 1965,' and the font cover has eight carved panels representing, in clockwise order:-



- (1) An Angel, symbolizing St. Matthew.*
- (2) The badge of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.*
- (3) An Eagle, symbolizing St. John the Evangelist.*
- (4) The crest of the Morton family.*
- (5) A winged Ox, symbolizing St. Luke.*
- (6) The badge of the Northamptonshire Regiment.*
- (7) A winged Lion, symbolizing St. Mark.*
- (8) The crest of the Beattie Family.*

The font has served St Leonard's well for many baptisms and looks as good now as it must have done when it was made, half a century ago. It has concealed castors in the base, so that it can be moved forward for use. In accordance with tradition, the font is always positioned near the entrance to the church.

Viv



A Hospital Experience to Remember

The morning following my hip operation I was transferred from a six bed ward to a single bed room. At around nine o'clock that same morning I was sitting in my room beside my bed, when I heard a gentle knock on my door, which had been left open. I looked up to see a nurse standing there holding a pan of water with a towel over her arm. She asked me if I was ready to have a wash to which I replied, "I was" .

She came over towards me and knelt down and placed the bowl at my feet. She gently placed my feet in the warm water and proceeded to wash my feet in the most tender way possible. As I looked down and watched her gently bathing my feet all I could see was our Lord washing his disciples' feet. I have to admit that after only a few moments had passed, I got a lump in my throat and knew that a tear had formed in my eye. Try as I might to hide what was happening to me, I had to look away and wipe my eyes as discreetly as possible with the back of my hand.

Once my feet had been washed the nurse rinsed my feet in the same caring way as she had washed them. Trying to offset embarrassment I engaged her in conversation, all the time she looked down, concentrating on my feet. She dried my feet with a towel in the most tender fashion by which time I had just about composed myself and I don't think she was aware that I had shed a tear or two during this experience.

As she got up to leave, I thanked her and she turned and smiled and passed from my view to get on with the rest of her duties.

I shall always remember this day, which I have tried relating to one or two friends and family, but I just find that when I try to recount the episode, I become overwhelmed.

So I have tried to put down on paper what happened in my hospital room that morning. It may sound strange but I feel it will always be, for me, like an Emmaus Road encounter with our Lord. I doubt I shall ever forget the kindness and care that nurse gave me that morning.

Tony

Lexden War Memorial Cross

First World War Deaths – 1915

Previous articles in this series have covered the two recorded Lexden deaths in 1914 and by the time you are reading this article we will be passing the Centenary of the Christmas Truce which has received much television coverage and has formed the core of Sainsbury's somewhat controversial Christmas advertisement, which in my opinion is an excellent fund raising effort for The Royal British Legion.

As mentioned in previous articles I am much indebted to Mr Peter F Potter who researched the Lexden War Dead and in 2003 published a fascinating book "The Real Lexden Heroes" and his widow Christine has kindly given me permission to use extracts from her husband's book.

The initial August 1914 theories that 'The war would be over by Christmas' sadly turned out to be wishful thinking and in 1915 fighting on the Western Front, having settled down to the trench warfare of attrition, claimed increasing numbers of killed and injured on all fronts.

Whilst those Lexden residents who joined the British forces fought predominantly in France and Belgium and at Gallipoli as well as on the high seas we must not forget the fighting in Eastern Europe between the Central Powers of Austria Hungary and Germany and our allies of Serbia and Russia. Very early in the war Germany was able to gain a famous victory over the Russians at Tannenberg in East Prussia in late August which resulted in 250,000 Russian casualties but this engagement had the benefit in the west of relieving the pressure on the French and British armies fighting on the Marne to save Paris.

There are 6 names on the War Memorial who died in 1915 and were concentrated into a short three week period –

Lieut G.W.S. St. George - 1st Gurkha Rifles who died at Ypres, Belgium on 28th April

Rifleman M. A. Mann – 2nd Rifle Brigade who died at Fromelle, France on 9th May

L/Corporal T. Thurlow – 2nd Essex Regiment who died at St Jean, France on 9th May

Sgt J. Lanagan – 9th Yorkshire Regiment who died at Folkestone on 10th May

Trooper E. P. Munson - Royal Horse Guards who died at Ypres, Belgium on 18th May

Capt C. E. H. Morton – Royal Marines Light Infantry who died at Alexandria, Egypt on 18th May

I will aim to prepare a series of articles in the March, April and May issues to give fuller details of these men but the small village of Lexden must have been left reeling from the news of all these deaths in three weeks in the early summer of 1915.

Tom Scrimgeour

**Lexden
Ladies'
Group**

LEXDEN LADIES' GROUP

On December 2nd, nineteen Ladies sat down to an excellent Christmas lunch at the Ardleigh Garden Centre. It was lovely to welcome 3 Ladies from way back. Many thanks to Merlin for organising the event.

We joined Mothers' Union on December 9th in church for our Annual Carol Service. Our curate, the Revd. David Armstrong, conducted a moving service to the theme of "Peace and Reconciliation" commemorating the Christmas Truce of 1914. A collection was taken for Beacon House which, together with a donation from Lexden Ladies, amounted to £100.

In November we sent a cheque to St Helena Hospice from our funds.

We shall not be meeting in January or February but I send everyone Good Wishes for a Peaceful and Healthy New Year and look forward to seeing you all at our March meeting.

Margaret Tel: 01206 579629

From Tony

Following my recent stay in hospital, I just wanted to convey my grateful thanks for all who called on the 'phone or sent me cards, to those who visited me in hospital and all remembered me in their thoughts and prayers. Thank you all.