

# St Leonard's Lexden



Ordinary people. Extraordinary God.

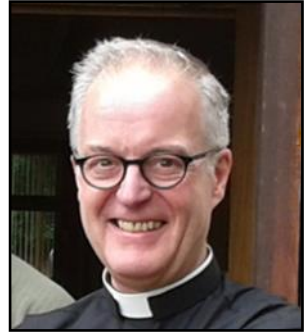


## Parish Magazine

50p    January 2018



# From the Curate



## Be wise...

This season of Epiphany is when we celebrate the manifestation of the Messiah to the Gentiles, beginning with the Magi, or wise men.

I find the mystery of these wise men intriguing. They were obviously well esteemed. Their prophecy and judgments were clearly taken with great gravitas; and that must be because at the heart of their being was a recognised wisdom.

We have a great number of beautifully crafted prayers in the Anglican liturgy. One of the great joys of using these and having so many, is that they lead us into different ways of thinking and new ways of seeing or approaching God. Each prayer will reach out to different people in different ways. Some will leave the hearer cold and untouched, while to another person that same prayer will ignite some deep inner thought or emotion. But, I believe that, if we leave ourselves open to God's presence, even the possibility of God's presence, then every now and then each of us will be unexpectedly touched by some unpredicted words.

For me recently, one such prayer is the prayer we use after communion on a specific Saint's day: the first lines read:

*God of truth,  
Whose Wisdom, set her table,  
And invited us to eat the bread  
and drink the wine of the kingdom,  
Help us to put aside all foolishness,  
And walk in the way of insight...*

What draws me in particularly is the captivating reference to Wisdom. There is a romance about wisdom, to sit at the feet of wisdom and somehow learn from her, as if wisdom can drop slowly from her and we can absorb it. And, in effect, there is some truth to that. Wisdom does exist, wisdom has been there from the beginning of time, we need only to seek her. And, seeking wisdom is not that difficult. Wisdom wants to be found, she is there waiting for us, she does not have to be re-invented, she is there from the beginning of time, if only we will trust in God and let divine wisdom in.

Wisdom is concerned with how we live our lives. It is clear from both the Old and New Testaments that only when our life is orientated to God and his guidance is applied to our daily experience can we become wise. In biblical terms, the wise person is one who applies divine guidelines in everyday situations and, guided by God's will, makes daily choices. For us, combining knowledge and experience to successfully meet moral or other challenges in our lives is what demonstrates the possession of wisdom.

God is wisdom and a life lived with God is wise. At the start of the year, may I offer you a wise 2018 and all the peace and happiness that will bring.

*Fr David*

## **FRIENDSHIP LUNCH**

**Our next Friendship Lunch  
will be on**

**Saturday 6th January at 12.30pm  
in the church.**

**Please sign up on the list  
at the back of the church.**



# DIARY FOR JANUARY

## Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>

10.00am Holy Communion at Wren House

## Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Coffee

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

## Thursday 4<sup>th</sup>

8.00am The Eucharist

## Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>

8.30am Men's Breakfast

## **SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup>: Epiphany**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**

**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**

**6.30pm Evensong and Sermon**



## Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>

2.30pm Mothers' Union meet in the Nicholls Room

## Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Coffee

10.45am Holy Communion at Woodlands

## Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>

8.00am The Eucharist

2.30pm 'Constable' House Group meets (Hugh 564577)

## **SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup>: Epiphany II**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**

**9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church**

**6.30pm Evensong and Sermon**

### Monday 15<sup>th</sup>

11.00 Holy Communion at Hill House  
7.00pm PCC corporate Eucharist  
7.45pm PCC meet in the Nicholls Room

### Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Coffee

### Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>

8.00am Eucharist

### **SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup>: Epiphany III**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**  
**9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church**  
**6.30pm Evensong and Sermon**

### Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>

'Jubilee' house group at 118 St Johns Road (Viv 513495)

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>

10.00am Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Coffee

### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>

8.00am Eucharist

### **SUNDAY 28<sup>th</sup>: Presentation in the Temple/Candlemas**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**  
**9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church**  
**6.30pm Evensong and Sermon**



### Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup>

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by Coffee

### Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February

8.00am The Eucharist

### **SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup> February: 2 before Lent**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**  
**9.45am Christingle Service *in aid of the Children's Society***  
**6.30pm PARISH EUCHARIST**



# Bishop Stephen's New Year Message 2018



We used to measure time by the rising and setting of the sun and by the cycle of the moon. All this was apparent to the naked eye and needed little additional calculation. We called these days and months.

Then we observed the movement of the sun, and added years: and then, at some point, hours and minutes; and then named the days and months and numbered the years; and then clocks and calendars and, eventually, the pulsating throb of the mobile phone in your pocket telling you your next appointment is due and mapping all that you will do today, tomorrow and until you are no more. No wonder a wise African bishop asked why it is that we in the west have all the clocks, but they in Africa have all the time. We have become imprisoned by precision. Every moment is accounted for.

So Happy New Year! Happy new turning of the chapter from last year to this year. In one sense it is just another rising of the sun; but it is also an invitation to reflect.

How will I measure this New Year?

How will I measure my life?

Will it be by days and months? Or will it be by what I do in them and what I achieve? Or will it be by the love and generosity with which I do these things and inhabit these days?

So this is my prayer for the New Year: O Lord, teach me to measure my life in something other than years. Amen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large '+' followed by a stylized cursive name, ending with a period.

Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell  
Bishop of Chelmsford

# Confirmation Congratulations!



A sudden, heavy snowstorm on the morning of Sunday, 10th December meant it was quite a challenging trip to the Church of St Mary the Virgin, West Bergholt, but everyone managed to arrive just in time for the service. We were made welcome by Revd Mandy Elmes, the Bishop of Colchester and the congregation, before Kim, Emma and Jane from our church family joined others there, to be confirmed by Bishop Roger, and then take their first Communion.

It was a deeply meaningful experience for the candidates, and a privilege for Jacquie, Fr David, Win and myself to be there with them. We returned through the snow to Lexden, looking forward to the next Sunday, when our newly confirmed trio would be fellow communicants in the Eucharist with all of us at St Leonard's.

**VM**

# Mission to Hungary

In November I went with Heather Elson to Tata in Hungary. The purpose of the visit was to see the work of missionaries who are devoting their lives to spreading the gospel of Jesus.

There we met Marcel and Frans, both of whom are Dutch, and their respective wives Lea and Eszter who are both Hungarian. They are working with Operation Mobilisation - OM - which is a charity that has missionaries in around 200 countries. It also has a huge cruise ship which it sails around the world trying to reach as many people as possible. Our hosts were extremely generous to us, taking time and trouble to show us around and providing us with evening meals each day.

In previous years, Heather and a team have joined with the missionaries to give both practical and prayer support. Last time they helped to renovate a building to act as a Youth Centre. They also took food parcels to the poor of a nearby village, Tatabanya, and they went into schools and helped the children with their English.

This time no such activities had been planned, but Heather and her friend Pauline were able to see the fruits of their labours. The Youth Centre, known as The Dock, was completed and we were able to spend an afternoon there - treating the visitors to a typical English tea complete with scones and Tiptree jams. We took lots of English games and activities for the children.

Unfortunately, as it was the half term holiday, we did not visit the schools but I was taken on a tour of the village to see the conditions in which the residents lived. The children had an extremely long walk along a muddy road just to get to the school bus. There was electricity, but water had to be fetched from a pump and there was no sewage. Houses generally consisted of one room.

Fast forward to Budapest – a typical bustling, western capital city – where we travelled on clean, efficient underground trains and drank coffee in Starbucks. We also visited The House of Terror – a museum dedicated to the stories of people who lived under the Nazi and Communist regimes. Many of their friends and family had simply

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disappeared overnight. This gave us a very clear indication of the traumas the country has faced and from which it is still trying to recover. We were really pleased to be joined in Budapest by Bori, our previous Youth Worker, who proudly showed us around her city. It was a real joy to see her and she asked to be remembered to everyone at St Leonard's. Although initially I was disappointed that we did not do more to help, Heather assured me that our visit was extremely important to Marcel, Lea, Frans and Eszter. They get a tremendous boost from seeing the people who are supporting them, and just knowing they are being prayed for back in England gives them real encouragement to continue their mission.

Heather is hoping that next year she will lead a team from her current placement church, St Luke's, and would be delighted if it could be a joint venture with St Leonard's. This would include a planned programme of activities similar to those she has been involved in before. If this sounds interesting to you, and you would like to know more, please do speak to me. Nearer the time, when I have more details myself, I will let everyone know what is planned.

**Rosemary Elden**



## **CHRISTMAS BAZAAR**

### **SATURDAY, 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2017**

A few lines to thank everyone for their hard work in making this year's Cake Stall a huge success – from the Team behind the table who baked, persuaded and sold – to all you lovely people who produced such amazing and delicious items for us to sell. We thank you all so much and wish you all a Very Happy and Peaceful New Year.

**Mary Hanmer**



## **You Insure and They'll Donate**

Ecclesiastical is the company which insures both our Church and Hall buildings, and this year celebrates its 130 year anniversary of insuring Anglican churches. To mark this, for the whole of 2018, Ecclesiastical are offering a £130 donation to our Church each time anyone within our Church family (clergy, volunteers or members of the congregation) takes out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical during this year.

When a new home insurance policy is taken out by someone quoting Trust130 and nominating St Leonard's, Ecclesiastical will make a £130 donation to the Church. There is no limit to the number of donations.

If you want to know more or obtain a quotation, simply visit [www.ecclesiastical.com/Trust130](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/Trust130) or call 0800 783 0130 quoting Trust130.

# The Christmas Bazaar



**There were lots of smiles...**





## ... Father Christmas came too



And at the centre of it all, a Christmassy Kathleen!

Many thanks go to Kathleen, Tom and to everyone who set up, stocked and ran the stalls, who worked in the kitchen, and who came and supported this happy day. Over £1,700 went to church funds.

# Mouse Tails

St. Leonard's Church mice had a wonderful Christmas. On the day itself after all the humans were gone from the church they held their own traditional Service in the Church. As they did every year as many mice as could safely make their way to the Church gathered: the Woods cousins, the Outside mice, the Halls and everyone who had their nests in the Church itself, to attend this special Service, led by Grandpa, as usual, and sat around the Nativity Crib. Grandpa gave thanks to God for all the blessings He had given them during the year and asked for His blessing for the coming year. Tommy Organ accompanied the choir singing their favourite carols – Away in a Manger, While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night and Good King Wenceslas.

After the service they all wandered around admiring all the beautiful flower arrangements (keeping a look out for any tasty berries or nibbles that may have dropped on the floor). Everyone then made their way to the Hall to begin their traditional feast and entertainments.

Of course, only a few of the mice knew of the surprises in store. Once they had all settled down, Grandpa announced that the young mice (with a little help from their families) had worked very hard to create something new and different for them all and without further ado opened one of the doors underneath the stage and revealed the Nativity Crib and the decorated Christmas Tree. There were gasps of amazement and applause from everyone and beneath the tree were tiny parcels for all of the young mice.



Of course the youngsters were thrilled and spent a happy hour unwrapping their gifts and showing them to their friends and families. Their favourite games followed this: pin the tail on the cat, hide and seek and tag. *(Continued on p35...)*



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Meanwhile the Mums set out the feast and the Dads got busy pouring Grandpa's special drinks and handing them around.

Everyone enjoyed the feast and once they were full they sat and exchanged their news. Tommy Organ was prevailed upon to play their favourite tunes on his mouth organ; he really was a very talented young mouse.

Gradually the very young mice nodded off and their parents took them to a cosy corner, the signal for everyone to go to their own nests for pleasant dreams and a good night's sleep. All agreed it had been a wonderful Christmas.

**CT**



## Thank You

Very many thanks to all who provided Gifts for the Seafarers at Felixstowe at Christmas.

We sent      149 Knitted Hats  
                 14 Jigsaw Puzzles  
                 40 Packs playing cards  
                 and bag of toiletries

Many thanks to Alan Hedgeland for taking them to  
Felixstowe

**Sheila Cook**

## Owen's Cards

Owen Shepherd was pleased to raise £55 from sales of his handmade cards at the Christmas bazaar, making his total donation to Church funds from card sales £201 in 2017. A selection of his cards may be found for sale in the Nicholls Room.