



THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST LEONARD, LEXDEN

ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GOD.



PARISH MAGAZINE

AUGUST 2019 50p



IN THE SUMMER TIME

In my mind's eye, August is slightly different from the other summer months. I think this relates back to childhood, when August was the only complete month with no school. The holidays began in July, and finished in September, but August was always *all* holiday, and school didn't have to be thought about for ages.

We all benefit from some sort of break in routine, and the old saying rightly goes: 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' Not dull in the sense that we are expected to be interesting all the time, but dull in the sense of a lack of brightness and freshness in our own quality of life. It feels safe and comfortable to have a regular routine, in familiar surroundings, but sometimes we need to depart from routine in order to refresh ourselves. It's easy to become stuck in a day to day existence which lacks flavour, as if we were eating the same food for every meal. That food may be pleasant enough, but we miss out on new, fresh flavours and variety, and eventually meals become dull and cease to be a pleasure. So it is with life in general: we keep our minds fresh by stepping away from routine and extending ourselves into new territory now and then.

A change and rest from routine is important for all of us. Not everyone will be able, or even want to, go away on holiday, but just a day out somewhere, or even a change in where we sit in church might be enough! If we lead frenetic and busy lives, we need to get away from all the stress and activity of daily work; if we live alone, perhaps we want to

go where there are people, even if it's just a day out to the seaside, or a visit to family or friends we don't often see, or perhaps the adventure of a package holiday with a like-minded group.

Jesus knew the importance of getting away. When he could, he would go off by himself to rest and pray, then come back refreshed and ready to resume his ministry. It wasn't easy for the disciples to appreciate that he needed rest, and they came looking for him, always wanting more from him, but although he was God incarnate, Jesus was also human, and couldn't function day in and day out without a break, so he made sure he took time out. (*Mark 1:35-36*).

And although when we're away on holiday we imagine how wonderful it would be to stay for ever, there's a reason for the postcard cliché, 'Wish you were here'. We find we miss some of the familiarity of home and the people we normally see, and so we're pleased to return to them. We greet them with fresh eyes and appreciation.

There's another old saying: 'A change is as good as a rest'. During August on Sunday evenings we travel to other local churches for Evensong together. Worshipping with others in a different setting and having a cup of tea with them afterwards is one of summer's pleasures, and reminds us that we are part of a larger family. And it makes a change!

Have a blessed and restful month.



COVER PHOTO

All set up and ready for the recent Summer Fete.

More pictures inside this issue.

AUGUST DIARY

Thursday 1st August

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 3rd

8.30am Men's Breakfast in the Nicholls Room

SUNDAY 4th August Trinity 6

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am ALL AGE EUCHARIST

6.30pm Joint Summer Evensong at St Barnabas, Old Heath



Tuesday 6th

10.00-12.00 St Leonard's Lego Club in church

10.00am Holy Communion at Wren House



Wednesday 7th

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

10.45 Holy Communion at Woodlands

11.30 Holy Communion at Cheviot

Thursday 8th

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 10th

12.30pm Friendship Lunch in church

SUNDAY 11th Trinity 7

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

6.30pm Joint Summer Evensong at St Leonard's

Tuesday 13th

3.00pm Mothers' Union Summer Garden Party

Wednesday 14th

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

Thursday 15th

8.00am Eucharist

SUNDAY 18th Trinity 8

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

6.30pm Joint Summer Evensong at All Saints, Shrub End



Monday 19th

11.00am Holy Communion at Hill House

Wednesday 21st

10.00 Eucharist followed by coffee

Thursday 22nd

8.00am Eucharist

SUNDAY 25th Trinity 9

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

6.30pm Joint Summer Evensong at St Albright's, Stanway



Tuesday 27th

3.00pm Lexden Ladies Summer Garden Party

Wednesday 28th

10.00 Eucharist followed by coffee

Thursday 29th

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 31st

10.30-12.00 Coffee Morning at 22 Rudsdale Way

SUNDAY 1st September Trinity 3

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

6.30pm Joint Summer Evensong at St Mary's, Wivenhoe





August

4 th August	All-Age Service
11 th August	Unfailing treasure – God offers the chance of building credit in heaven rather than having to depend on vulnerable purses. <i>Luke 12. 32-40</i>
18 th August	Until it is completed – Two images of judgement – fire and water – lead into an exploration of how faith can work. <i>Luke 12. 49-56</i>
25 th August	God's gift of the sabbath – Jesus is teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath. He heals a woman who is bent double. A debate starts! <i>Luke 13. 10-17</i>



Messy Church
22nd September, 3-5pm

THANK YOU



On a hot day at the end of June, I was ordained as a priest, alongside two other curates from the Colchester area. It was a transformative, Spirit-filled and profound moment, and was all the more special because it took place at St Leonard's, with so many of my church family present.

The following morning I presided at the Eucharist for the first time, at a service filled with love and holiness. I have so many reasons to say thank you: to everyone who came to both services, for the church flowers, the gifts, the cards, the cake; to the sidespersons, servers and caterers at the ordination service; to the choir for the lovely anthems, and Simon the organist for playing a favourite voluntary of mine. Special thanks are due to Matt and the churchwardens for all the planning and organisation.

Thank you all for your prayers, love and support. I thank God for calling me to the priesthood, and I pray that I will be worthy of that calling.

Viv



Following prayers, Sian Simpkins, wife of the lovely Matt, was welcomed as our Speaker for the July meeting and she spoke about two projects that she is obviously both passionate about and involved with, both in Chelmsford and now Colchester.

The first of these is “English for Women”, which began about five years ago with just three Afghani families but has now grown to support women of over thirty nationalities. Whilst Chelmsford Cathedral continues its involvement, in January 2018 English for Women was adopted by the Chelmsford Diocese Mothers’ Union. These days, the meetings (for women only) are for any non-English speaking women. They are currently held three times a week at the YMCA, which also has nursery facilities for their children and each meeting sees an average attendance of around thirty women. Since moving back to Colchester, Sian is now on the Steering Group and discussions are ongoing to increase the number of venues for this important project.

Sian then spoke enthusiastically about CAP (Christians Against Poverty) at St Leonard’s. The charity was started, with a small donation and big faith, by John Kirkby of Bradford in 1996 and there are now 303 Debt Centres, 149 Job Clubs, 118 Life Skills Groups and 75 Fresh Start Groups (these help people with addictions) in the UK. Colchester CAP Debt Centre is part of CAP, an award winning, national debt counselling charity, offering free help and advice through a network of debt centres based in the local church. Sian said that a lot of research also goes into this work and current statistics are horrifying: although, locally, the Debt Centre has a three-month waiting list for people needing help and advice, it has helped 100 people go debt free in its first five years. Overall, CAP’s work impacts around 21,000 families a year and 13,894 people in debt received help from CAP in 2018.

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CAP also provide a two to three-week Money Course that teaches people budgeting skills and a simple cash-based system for managing their money. However, the course that Sian is going to be personally involved with is CAP Life Skills, which is aimed at people with lower income and educational skills. The first eight-week course at St Leonard's will start on Wednesday, 11 September.

Next month, Mothers' Union members will have their annual Garden Party by kind invitation of Ellen Bartlett at her home on Tuesday, 13 August, starting at 3pm. Members are encouraged to attend and provide something for the raffle.

Mary Hanmer

FRIENDSHIP LUNCH

Our next Friendship Lunch
will be on

Saturday 10th August at 12.30pm.

Look out for the sign up list
at the back of the church.

And invite a friend or neighbour!



CAP LIFE SKILLS AT ST LEONARD'S



St Leonard's has supported the work of Christians Against Poverty (CAP) here in Colchester for a number of years. CAP is a charity that gives free help to everyone regardless of age, gender, faith or background. Starting 20 years ago, it first offered debt counselling and now offers a range of help to tens of thousands of people in hardship across the UK every year. The local CAP debt centre here in Colchester has helped many individuals and families out of unmanageable debt, freeing them from the related stress and worry.

Excitingly, from September, here at St Leonard's we will supporting this work by offering new free sessions on Wednesday afternoons aimed at giving people the confidence and decision-making skills to live well, look after themselves and feel positive, even on a low income. CAP Life Skills is a series of relaxed session looking at lifting the pressure to spend and sharing some great practical tips to help us take control of our money and make it go further. There are also sections on making good food so we can help families stay healthy on a budget. Towards the end of the course, there are also sessions on helping relationships – as these have a big impact on how we treat our finances. Above all, the course will be time to share what works and what doesn't, both as a group and one-to-one, and give each other encouragement to do things better.

I have recently been up to CAP HQ in Bradford for my training, along with Steve Goddard from Kingsland church, who'll be working alongside me to deliver the course, and am really looking forward to starting the course after the summer. I have seen first-hand the difference CAP can make in people's lives, and the Life Skills course is a much-needed addition to the debt support and job clubs which CAP already runs here. There will be a launch service on 8 September when you can learn more, ahead of the first 'taster' session on 11 September, but before then if you are interested in learning more and/or volunteering to help run the sessions (as a befriender or providing refreshments) please grab me for a chat.

Siân Simpkins

LEXDEN LADIES



At our July meeting, we welcomed David Acksteiner, our Youth and Families Worker. He gave an excellent, well prepared and presented talk on his life: family, education, faith, hobbies and hopes for the future. Thank you David.

Our next get-together will be at 3pm on Tuesday 27th August at the home of Christine and Brian Moore, 6 Scott Drive, for our Annual Garden Party. Admission £3. Do join us for tea and delicious cakes - all are welcome.

Margaret

COFFEE MORNING



Sonia Lewis has kindly invited us to her new home at 22 Rudsdale Way, Prettygate for our next Coffee Morning, on Saturday 31st August from 10.30 - 12 noon.

There will be a Bring and Buy table of home produce, plants books and jigsaws and a Raffle.

We very much look forward to meeting up here so please come along, bring a friend or friends and enjoy the morning.

Jean Hallett

MEDLEY HOUSE GROUP

Medley House Group has been meeting for many years once a month, in the evening, at my home - 20 Wordsworth Road. Over the years, membership has changed as people have moved on and new people have joined us.

We have been a very informal group, and as our name suggests we have done a mixture of things from studying a set course over a period of weeks, to choosing a passage on the day and discussing as the spirit moves us. We share books, and pray and light candles for people in need or just to say thank you.

It is a real opportunity to talk about our faith, express our doubts, and raise challenging questions in a non-threatening environment. We also feel the fellowship/refreshment side is just as important as the studying! Just lately, one or two of our members have had other commitments which they hope are temporary, and we have lost a couple of people who no longer wish to come out at night. Numbers are therefore at their lowest.

This begs the question should we continue as we are, change the way we do things or change the time at which we meet – bearing in mind that some people can only do evenings? We are very reluctant to discontinue meeting as it is very important to us, but it would be good to have some new faces.

We will meet on **Tuesday September 3rd at 7.30 p.m.** If anyone is interested in joining a house group, please do come along - no commitment - and we can discuss the way forward. In the mean time I will be very happy to answer any questions.

Rosemary Elden



PRAYER MINISTRY

On Sunday mornings, you may have heard the celebrant say that Prayer Ministry is available in the Lady Chapel, but you may be unsure about what is being offered.

This is a ministry offered **by lay people** in the congregation. It gives the opportunity for people to pray with, or just talk to, somebody in **strict confidence**. The time allows you to ask for God's help with a problem or situation, or to ask His blessing on you or a loved one. **But it is not intended just for people in need**. It is also an opportunity to share some good news and to give thanks to God for the many blessings we receive.

Prior to the service the prayer minister of the day joins the clergy and serving team in the vestry for prayers. This is when the celebrant asks the Holy Spirit to be with the prayer minister, to enable them to hear what needs to be heard and to discern how to respond with an appropriate prayer. He or she is among the first to take communion in order to be ready for anyone who wishes to join them.

Whilst we have all undergone some training, we do not seek to give advice or counsel - merely to listen and, when asked to, say a prayer. **We just focus on the Holy Spirit and let Him lead us**. Some people prefer to talk and leave the minister to pray when they have gone. Some do not even wish to talk but just to feel that someone is there for them if need be. Of course, it is still a place for anyone to pray on their own and to light a candle if they so wish.

Prayer Ministry begins on a Sunday during the distribution of the bread and wine, and is also available after the service has ended. We have also begun to offer it at the All Age Eucharist on the first Sunday of the month.

Prayer Ministry takes place in the Lady Chapel. It is amazing how this can happen generally without our being disturbed, because the congregation respect the fact that it is going on. If, however, you feel that you would like to pray with someone in a more private place, please speak to one of the team and we will endeavour to find somewhere quieter.

The prayer team at the moment is: Pauline Jarvis, Patsi Morgans, Maggie Whiteman, Jackie Messenger, Julie Hinchcliffe, Sarah Blake and Rosemary Elden, but as Jacquie and Maggie soon take on other responsibilities we are looking to increase the size of the team and are currently discerning who else is perhaps being called to this very rewarding ministry.

If you have any questions please ask me or one of the team.

Rosemary Elden

DON'T GET SCAMMED!

A member of the congregation was recently the victim of a scam, which began with a telephone call from someone who said he was a police officer. He was very plausible and polite and she was deceived, which was a distressing and costly experience. She wants to warn others not to be caught out by one of these callers, who rely on our trust.

The police *never* cold call, and you should never give personal or bank details of any kind to a stranger over the phone or at the door, no matter how genuine they seem to be. Similarly, the water companies do not call unannounced requiring access to our homes. If you do not know the person, do not let them in. Stay safe!

THE SUMMER FETE: THOUGHTS AND THANKS

Jimmy Connors was once quoted as saying, during a wet Wimbledon fortnight, that they should put this tournament on in the summer. A week earlier this year and people might have been saying the same thing about our summer fete at St. Leonard's. 22nd June 2019, however, was witness to another magnificent day - avoiding both the unsettled weather that preceded it and the muggy weather that followed.

Those seated in the arena tent were treated to two splendid sets performed by Scarletts Road, a local group based at the U3A in Stanway, and we were, as ever, privileged to be entertained by the wonderful 1st Class Brass, directed by Anne Rudduck.



Subscribers to the online messaging service NextDoorLexden will have read my words of thanks both to them and the small craft businesses who attended the fete, giving the event a truly local feel. I continued *'Short of a guest appearance by Blur, themselves a Colchester band of the 90s, it is difficult to know how much happier Matt Simpkins, our Vicar, could have been.'*



It is certainly not to ignore the huge team achievement of all those who ran stalls and attractions at the fete and helped set up and take down, if I focus this time on those who have helped in the past but feel they can no longer. I must first thank Leslie Fullerton, the doyenne of raffles since the dawn of time. While Leslie will of course continue to run the raffles for coffee mornings, the summer fete was proving a bit too much for her. Thank you, Leslie, for your help over the years.

I did not know Jane Groves when she first appeared at 6am on the morning of the fete in 2014. I thought she was a trader wanting an early glimpse of the bric-a-brac and I explained we were not yet open. 'Actually', she said, 'I am here to help set up'.

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I would never ask anyone to appear at that hour. Regularly, for the last five years she has arrived ready for work at that time. Her legendary contribution to the plant stall is wholly another matter. Thank you, Jane.



I would like to mention Alex Fullerton's help over the last six years in moving the books from my garage to temporary storage in Chris Andrews' garage the week before the fete. Both the help and the storage have been indispensable. Alex has always been available to help put up and take down. His work in the least glamorous and most physically demanding tasks has been greatly appreciated. Thanks, as ever, to Chris Andrews for lending not only her garage space, but also her electricity supply for Scarletts Road's amplification system.

Those commercial organisations who contribute raffle prizes should see their names in lights: Fenwicks, for the pamper hamper and the Lexden Crown for a £30 voucher. I would also like to thank, variously, Johnsons, the newsagent in the London Road, for accommodating an A1 poster,



Halstead Town Council and Christchurch for the loan of tables last year and this, and ID Verde, who are under contract to the Council to maintain the churchyard and very kindly do an extra trim in the week before the event.

The imagination that went into the 'Are we nearly there yet?' hamper was impressive. Someone had thought to include a small bottle of wine and was clearly thinking of exhausted parents as well as children after a long journey.

A final thank you to our retiring treasurer, Jan Buckley. The counting of the money continues long after the Lord Mayor's procession has passed. This year she was ably assisted by Simon Eavery but also by Nia [aged 6] who helped make up the floats. Nia carefully distributed the £1 coins but found she was short of 50p pieces. With pencil and paper she carefully traced and cut out an impression of the number of 50p pieces she needed. Clearly nobody has told her of the inflationary consequences of printing money. What do they teach them in Year One? Thanks again to one and all.

Robin Greatorex

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

SATURDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER

8:30 START

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

Following the success of the Men's' Breakfast, it has been decided to start something similar for the women at St Leonard's - choosing a time that might suit those who work or have other responsibilities during the week and cannot attend other day-time activities.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME
WHATEVER YOUR AGE & STAGE IN LIFE.**

The format is up to those who attend, as we want it to develop into something that serves the needs of those who come along. One thing you can be sure of, is that, it will be welcoming, friendly and full of fellowship.

**BUCK'S FIZZ TO CELEBRATE OUR FIRST
MEETING**

Please come along and just so we have an idea of numbers please contact

Esther Heptonstall

esther@stleonardslexden.org.uk

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SHEILA!



A garden party to celebrate Sheila Tuxford's 90th Birthday was hosted by her lovely family and shared with many friends.

Congratulations Sheila, a wonderful day to remember.

Merlin Jobson

A SENSE OF AWE

This is an extract from a sermon I preached at Evensong on 19th May. HB

I can vividly remember our last visit to Notre Dame in Paris: I think it was 1994 and we (along with a group from St. Augustine's Thorpe Bay) were on a 'whistle stop' tour of cathedrals and abbeys of Northern France, which also included a visit to Mont St. Michel, the Bayeux Tapestry, and the D-Day landings museum at Arromanches. We had 2 nights in Paris and a free day to do 'our own thing' and so Mary and I made our way to Notre Dame as we had heard there was a midday mass. This took place in a small chapel behind the high altar and was truly a haven of peace and tranquillity, although we could hear the noise of the visitors and tourists in the main body of the cathedral. The elderly priest who presided gave a homily on the gospel for the day, speaking very slowly, which meant that we could understand much of what he was saying.

Like many people, in France and beyond, I could not believe my eyes when I saw on the TV news the terrible fire on the Monday of Holy Week this year. But I rejoiced that so much of the interior was saved (including the magnificent organ and the beautiful rose windows) thanks to the heroic efforts of the Parisian firefighters.

Notre Dame, built on the site of a 4th century church, was started in 1160 and completed a hundred years later in 1260. It survived the 100 years' war, the French Revolution, and 2 world wars. The 28 statues of Biblical kings on the west front had their heads lopped off because the revolutionaries thought they were kings of France! It became a temple of the goddess of reason, many of its treasures were plundered but its beautiful medieval stained glass windows survived.

It has been said that the stained glass windows, the wall paintings, and statues of our medieval cathedrals and churches were 'the poor man's Bible'. The bulk of the population could not read but they could see stories from the Bible and Biblical characters all around them when they

entered a cathedral or church. It was the genius of Christianity to employ music, architecture and art in the praise and worship of God and in the communication of the gospel. As the Church Times put it, after the fire, 'We can acknowledge that the Church is, first of all, the people of God. But it is impossible to avoid investing ancient cathedrals and churches with great significance – not least because they were designed to convey something of the awe felt when entering God's domain.'

The key word is awe. When I go into a great medieval cathedral like Canterbury, York Minster, Ely, Cologne, Chartres , Notre Dame..... I experience that same sense of awe – a sense of my own smallness and frailty and a deep sense of the wonder, mystery and beauty of God to whose glory they were built.

Hugh Beavan



An awesome place - The Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral, where a simple candle burns on the former place of Thomas Becket's shrine.



MOUSE TAILS

Rupert, Molly and all the young Church mice were very excited and woke up early on the morning of the Church Fete, much to Mum and Dad's dismay because on Saturday there wasn't a service in church and they could safely have a bit of a 'lie-in,' probably pretty much the same as their human counterparts. However, today was Fete day. Dad muttered something about 'a fate worse than death' and returned to his slumber. Mum gave him a nudge and told him to shake a leg - which he did and asked if he could go back to sleep now? The family laughed at Dad's little joke then told him to get up at once because humans were already busy in the church and outside. Tents and awnings had already been erected on Friday and the youngsters had great fun playing hide and seek in them (once the humans had gone home).

The day dawned beautifully, a lovely crisp, sunny morning. All of the mice had decided where they would hide in the hedges and tombstones surrounding the awnings, ready to dash out daringly to scavenge bits of food that the humans might drop, especially the children! Grandpa and Dad positioned themselves beneath the beer counter, for occasionally people would drop a plastic cup with a little beer in it. They busily poured the dribbles of beer into one plastic cup and soon had three cups of beer, more than enough for the little mice. They had also managed to salvage an almost full cup of wine which they thought would be more than enough for the Mums.

Meanwhile, Mums had stationed themselves near to the food stations and were successful in picking up lots of scraps of bread, cake, some salad and a bit of cheese. Altogether the mice families had got themselves quite a feast.



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Once the humans had finished their festivities, cleared away and gone home, the mice then started their own little Fete; the youngsters played 'pin the tail on the cat', got hot and excited following the treasure hunt and played leap the stone plus many other favourite games. Of course, mice just don't 'do money' so once the youngsters had exhausted themselves running around, all of the mice scampered up to the Hall for their feast and to listen and dance (well, hop about) to Tommy Organ's music with his band, and the mouse choir sang along with some jolly songs (to the human ear that would be squeaking along).

The Woods family had come along and enjoyed a wonderful time with Pablo, Daisy and the twins because they didn't see their grandchildren very often and were amazed by how much they had grown and, of course, thought the twins were so advanced and bright for their age as probably all grandparents do!



The Dads were finishing off the beers and, it has to be said, we're a little bit tipsy, the Mums hadn't done too badly either but had the presence of mind to put the little ones to bed. Yet another lovely Church event came to a close and soon all the Church mice were asleep, the Dads snoring loudly, and dreaming happy dreams of their day.

CT

ST LEONARD'S LEGO CLUB



St Leonard's Lego Club will be running in church on Tuesday 6th August from 10.00am till 12.00 noon. Fun for all!

A FINE AFTERNOON



I was pleased to join the 'Constable' house group in July, for lunch and a walk at the beautiful Marks Hall Estate. Blessed with perfect weather, we enjoyed a fresh and tasty lunch and then good conversation (and some laughter!) as we strolled around the lovely gardens and arboretum. Thanks for inviting me!

Viv

THANK YOU!

I would like to thank all those who so generously donated bottles for the Tombola at the Fete. Once again your generosity was more than I had ever expected and the number of bottles of wine, champagne and spirits was more than 30, fantastic. Two people (or maybe one) donated two bottles of Champagne, thank you so much.

This wonderful generosity of spirit is remarkable, let's keep it going for the Christmas Bazaar!

My deepest thanks to all who donated.

Tim Knight