



THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST LEONARD, LEXDEN

ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GOD.



PARISH MAGAZINE

JUNE 2020

WANT A CHAT?
WORRIED ABOUT SOMEONE?
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How to join St Leonard's on Facebook:



1. Type www.facebook.com into your internet browser (e.g. Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari) or download the Facebook app on to your phone or tablet, and open the app.
2. Follow the instructions to 'Create a new account', entering your details. Remember that you don't need to use any other part of Facebook to access our site: you don't need to add friends for example.
3. Using the search function in Facebook look for 'St Leonard's Lexden' or type www.facebook.com/stleonardslexden into your internet browser.
4. Click or press on the button that says 'Like' and has a thumbs up sign.
5. That's it! ***But, if it doesn't work, please contact a friend for help.***



Matt's June Letter

Dear friends,

It has become increasingly apparent as the weeks of lock down have passed that it is going to be a significant period of time before things return to near normality for us. Indeed, normality can't and won't be a simple return of all that was.

Instead – and rather excitingly - we have an opportunity to shape a new normal. Though this will entail some mourning for things that were, it also promises creativity, hopefulness and joy in dreaming and discovering what the future can bring for our society and for God's church.

As Christians, we have the anchor of God's unchanging love to embolden us, and we also have the clear Christian principles of compassion, justice, freedom and love to inspire and guide our efforts. Now is the time to dream about what we might love the future to hold!

While we ponder such profound things, we are also entering into fete season. Though we're not able to have a physical fete as we'd love to, we're determined to celebrate Lexden and St Leonard's and make the best of a difficult situation.

And so...for 2020, we are proud to present the **ST LEONARD'S ONLINE FETE!**

At 2pm on Saturday 20th June we'll broadcast our special virtual fete through Facebook (facebook.com/stleonardslexden) and YouTube (tiny.cc/4468oz). We hope to have a little music and some simple entertainments, but we're also looking for contributions from our community! Our sincere thanks to Robin Greatorex who - as usual - has already put a great deal of energy and creativity into this year's preparations.

So here are a few of the things we'd love you to join in with:

Fancy dress: "an afternoon at the movies" – can you dress as a character from a movie, and email us the photograph?

Vegetable and fruit show:

- **Largest home-grown vegetable or fruit** – pretty self-explanatory, please take a photo with a tape measure or ruler!
- **Funniest-shaped vegetable or fruit** – again self-explanatory!

St Leonard's Pet Show:

- **Scruffiest pet** – can you send us a photo or a short (maximum 10 second) video clip of your pet?
- **Pet most like owner** – it's often said that pets and their owners look alike. Send us a photo of you and your pet, so we can see if it really *is* true.

Flower arrangements: make a flower arrangement at home and send us a photograph.

Cake decorating: (*Primary school age, Secondary school age, and 16+ categories*) we can't test your delicious cakes (blub), but we appreciate your beautiful decorations!

Art Show :(*Primary school age, Secondary school age, and 16+ categories*)

- Submit a photo or a recording of an artwork in any medium on the theme of St Leonard's – it could be a picture of the building, a poem about the church community, or a piece of music about Lexden – get your creative juices flowing.

Lego modelling show: (*Primary school age, Secondary school age, and 16+ categories*)

- 2020-21 marks the 200th anniversary of our beautiful nave and tower: but can you recreate it in Lego? We'd love to see your efforts!

DEADLINE for ALL SUBMISSIONS (Friday 12th June)

To submit your material, please email fete@stleonardslexden.org.uk.

Large images and videos should be sent via WeTransfer.com to fete@stleonardslexden.org.uk or through Google Drive. If you don't have the internet, please pop your submission into the church letter box. We regret that we won't be able to return submissions. We'll gather together as many of the submissions as into a video which will be broadcast on Saturday 20th June at 2pm.

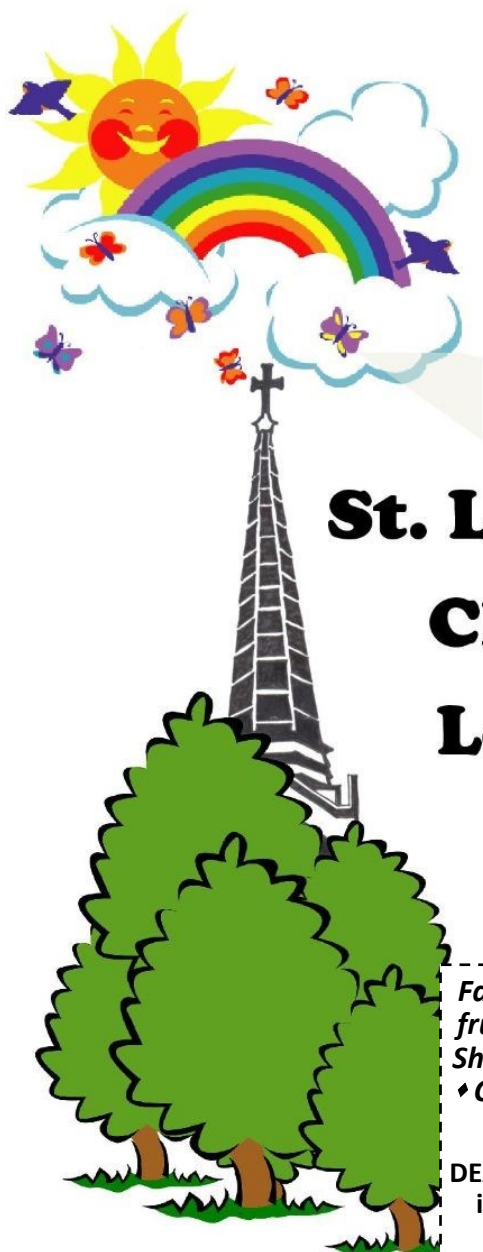
We encourage you to watch from your garden (weather and technology permitting) and enjoy either a cream tea or something from your own 'beer tent' for that authentic St Leonard's Fete feel. For those who don't have the technology to access this, we'll make sure we include some photographic evidence in a future edition of the magazine!

Cover photo: Altar flowers in St Leonard's Rectory. S. Simpkins

Math

ADVERTISEMENTS

Please note that inclusion in this magazine does not constitute endorsement of the advertisers.



Virtual Summer Fete

St. Leonard's Church Lexden

**Saturday 20th
June**

*Fancy dress ♦ Vegetable and
fruit show ♦ St Leonard's Pet
Show ♦ Flower arrangements
♦ Cake decorating ♦ Art Show
♦ Lego Show*

DEADLINE for ALL SUBMISSIONS
is 9am, Friday 12th June (full
details in Matt's letter).

Pilgrim Course



Our Pilgrim Course on the Bible, run using Zoom, continues each Wednesday starting at 7pm.

Pilgrim Courses are accessible and enjoyable courses on different aspects of Christian life and faith, centred around prayer, open discussion and reflection.

If you'd be interested in participating, read Revd Maggie's piece on p. 17 and please email her at maggie@stleonardslexden.org.uk. She will then email you instructions on how to join.



From the Editor

Dear readers,

Here we are, bringing more colour and more poetry to lockdown! This month we bring news of an exciting innovation—St Leonard's virtual fete. See Matt's opening letter and the accompanying advertisement for more details. I am delighted to be able to share with you not just a poetry corner but a whole festival of it. I hope you find the poems here move you as much as they did me. Poetry of another kind is included in the form of a link to the Simpkins family's wonderful album of Gospel songs. I hope they don't mind but I think as many people as possible need to listen to these recordings! Last month we commemorated VE Day 75; 80 years ago today (31 May) was the highpoint of the Dunkirk evacuation. In the summer months of 1940 that followed, the Battle of Britain was fought across the skies of southern England. I've reviewed a book for you in recognition of this anniversary: Viscount Alanbrooke's wartime diaries. They are well-worth reading. Please take note of the announcement about the search for the next Bishop of Chelmsford. If you have any questions about the process and St Leonard's role in this, then please do contact Matt. Keep well—all of you—and happy reading.

Ruth

Help Identify the Next Bishop of Chelmsford: consultation now open

The process is now underway to discern who God is calling to be the next Bishop of Chelmsford. As part of this process, a diocese wide consultation is now open. Submissions are welcome from churches, groups and individuals until 4 July. A



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

group discussion will be organised in our parish soon, so that we can give the views of our church community. Look out for more details shortly. The discussion will inform a submission to the consultation on behalf of our church. Submissions are also welcome from Individuals.

[You can have your say here](https://chelmsdio.typeform.com/to/LMxWdl) [https://chelmsdio.typeform.com/to/LMxWdl] The consultation will help to inform the Diocesan Statement of Needs. The Statement of Needs is an important document that will help the Diocese tell a story about who we are and what our priorities are for the future. It will be read by candidates and those who make decisions during the process.

Prayer is at the heart of this process. The Very Reverend Nicholas Henshall, the Dean of Chelmsford has written a prayer for discernment which we encourage you to say as we embark on this important period for our diocese.

God of provision and care,
discernment and knowledge:
lead us in your love,
empower us by your Spirit,
and equip us with your gifts;
give us hearts full of love for all people,
minds open to the signs of the times,
and wisdom to know how to respond
to the voice of your calling;
We ask this through him whose coming is certain,
whose day draws near, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

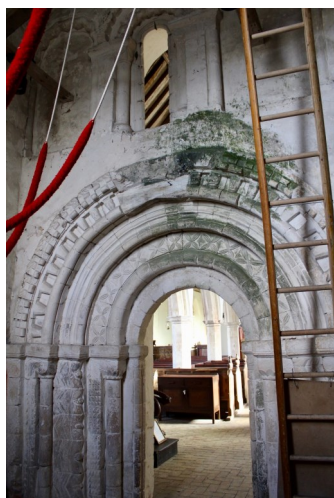
Prayer resources and more information about the process can be found at www.chelmsford.anglican.org/our-next-bishop. Online submissions can be made [here](https://chelmsdio.typeform.com/to/LMxWdl) [https://chelmsdio.typeform.com/to/LMxWdl]. If you are unable to complete the consultation online, please contact your church for a paper copy.

A Trip to St Andrew's, Westhall, Suffolk

Another excursion to one of Matt's favourite Suffolk Churches...

Tucked away in the north east of the county, about 3 miles from Halesworth is St Andrew's, Westhall, truly one of the great ecclesiastical treasures of Suffolk.

As a church building it is not as famous as Long Melford, nor as fine as Lavenham. It can't compete with the romance of Blythburgh, and it has nothing to rival the majesty of Eye or St Mary's in Bury St Edmunds, but Westhall's church is splendidly unrestored (to a great extent) and consequently bursting with exquisite and fascinating period details.



Westhall was never a great town nor an important port, but the love – and money – that were clearly lavished on this building give a glimpse of Suffolk's powerful economy across the Middle Ages.

What is now the south aisle, was once the nave of a Norman church. Enter into the ring-ing chamber at the base of the 14th century tower and turn east to find the fabulous west facade of the original building, complete with a mighty Norman arch decorated with fan-tastical heads of beasts and men. At the east



0800 804 8044

DailyHOPE

A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

Daily Hope is the Archbishop of Canterbury free national phone line, launched as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus. *Daily Hope* offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – was set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind and received over 6,000 calls in the first 48 hours. The service is supported by the Church of England nationally as well as through the Connections group based at Holy Trinity Claygate in Surrey and the Christian charity Faith in Later Life.

Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop before being able to choose from a range of options, including hymns, prayers, reflections and advice on COVID-19. Options available include materials also available digitally by the Church of England's Communications team such as Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer, updated daily, from Common Worship, and a recording of the Church of England weekly national online service.

A section called 'Hymn Line' offers callers a small selection of hymns, updated daily. An option entitled 'Hymns We Love', provides a hymn and reflection and is based on an initiative by the Connections group.

end of this aisle was the original apsed chancel, evidence of the apse and chancel arch can be seen on the exterior.

In the thirteenth century, a new nave and chancel were added to the north of the Norman church. Look above the north porch to see the original shape of the nave windows before they were later replaced in the perpendicular style.

In the upper portions of the reticulated windows in the chancel can be found plenty of medieval glass. The glory of the chancel, however, is easily missed. It is found high up in the beams: a rare boss of the Trinity, thought to be associated with the Guild of the Trinity here.



St Andrew's other delights include the seven sacrament font (p. 15), which – because it was decorated with gesso – still retains something of its original colour scheme. The walls also show off great colour, with the remains of wall paintings of national significance, to be found in both the nave and the side aisle. Between the nave and the chancel can be found the decorated base of what was obviously a fine rood screen – male saints to the left, female to the right.

What a delicious glimpse of the (literally) colourful world of the Middle Ages this remarkable church offers.



Matt





The Pilgrim Course

During May and into June, ten of us have been meeting via Zoom to take part in the Pilgrim Course on The Bible.

I would like to share with you some of the questions and answers shared with Pilgrims by Paula Gooder in her introduction to the course.

Q. What is the Bible?

A. The Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, is the record of God's revelation of himself to humankind through his people Israel, and above all in his Son, Jesus Christ.

Q. How was the Bible given to us?

A. The Bible was given to us by the Holy Spirit who first inspired and guided the writers, and then led the Church to accept their writings as only Scripture.

Q. How should we read the Bible?

A. We should read the Bible with desired prayer that through it God will speak to us by his Holy Spirit, and enable us to know him and do his will. It is inessential part of our Christian life and journey. Being a disciple of Jesus means to be someone who yearns to learn more and more about him.

And throughout the sessions there has been so much love and sharing of ideas. I certainly have come to realise that our walk with God is about us as individuals as well as a community - we all bring very different aspects to our interpretations and our different contexts will influence how we respond to God's word. God has given us such a rich and diverse response to his living word. I'm in awe of people's knowledge and insight.

I would like to share one of those insights with you - it is so very simple and yet so very profound:

"The Bible is one big love story."

Revd Maggie

Since the last edition of the magazine I have been sent some poetry which I would love to share with you - I hope you find it touches your emotions. It is printed on the following pages...

This poem expresses what its author felt when they first became a Christian.

I dream of you always; felt you were there all my life.

I saw the cross and prayed one day I would come to know you.

When I thought love had passed me by...

Then on Easter Day I saw your face on the cross.

Now I give you my heart and nothing on this earth will take it away.

So, I dream your arms will hold me tight.

God knows how much I love his Son

And blessed the day I gave my heart.

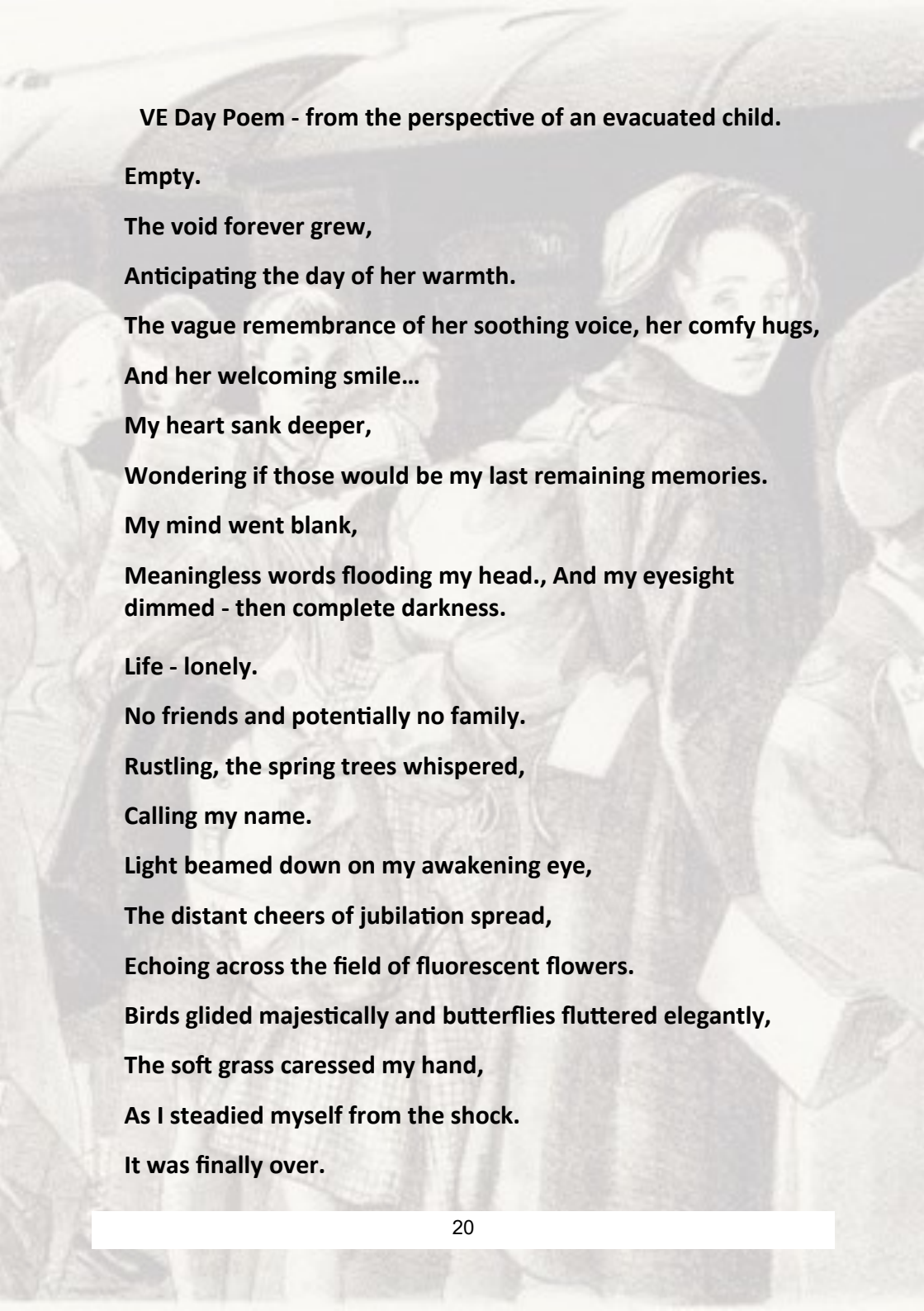
I still dream of you my best friend.

The following two poems were written by Louis Gannon; he is 15 years old and I have the pleasure of being his English tutor. He wrote these as part of his thoughts about V.E. Day.

Fireworks on VE Day

**The memory still planted in my head;
Of beautiful asterisks engulfing the black night.
The gentle and refreshing wind subtly whispering in delight,
And then the campfire,
Elegantly dancing with desire,
Burning passionately, as if never to expire.
I remember it all.**

**The soothing sight of the vast sea of stars,
Too great to write in any memoir.
Painted by the assemblage of emotions,
Still flowing within, like a rough current in the ocean.
As the last firework slithered into the sky,
Saying its final goodbye,
The distinct sense of freedom and hope blossomed that day,
And still, up to this moment, it has managed to stay;
Along with the memories of the fallen heroes,
Who carried the world's burdens on their shoulders.
The saviours, we call soldiers.**



VE Day Poem - from the perspective of an evacuated child.

Empty.

The void forever grew,

Anticipating the day of her warmth.

The vague remembrance of her soothing voice, her comfy hugs,

And her welcoming smile...

My heart sank deeper,

Wondering if those would be my last remaining memories.

My mind went blank,

**Meaningless words flooding my head., And my eyesight
dimmed - then complete darkness.**

Life - lonely.

No friends and potentially no family.

Rustling, the spring trees whispered,

Calling my name.

Light beamed down on my awakening eye,

The distant cheers of jubilation spread,

Echoing across the field of fluorescent flowers.

Birds glided majestically and butterflies fluttered elegantly,

The soft grass caressed my hand,

As I steadied myself from the shock.

It was finally over.



Island Life

‘Forty days and forty nights’ so far... I’m writing this at the beginning of May, things might be different by the time you read it, but for the moment this is where we are at. I thought it might be interesting for folks off-shore on the Mainland to hear a little of how these times have been on Mersea Island.

The first thing you notice is how quiet it is and how little traffic. Margaret tells me that it was like this thirty years ago when she first moved here. There was a bit of a wobble the first weekend of the restrictions when many caravan and second-home owners descended on us and raided the local supermarkets! But perhaps the prospect of many weeks marooned here didn’t appeal and most of them seemed to go back to their main residences within a few days.

There are odd anomalies - the bus still comes. We live opposite the bus stop and every twenty minutes or so the buses – two separate companies running two different routes – come and go, mostly with no passengers and no one to pick up. The post still comes – good old Royal Mail – and the other delivery companies, though sometimes it’s a game of hide and seek with them as they ring the door bell, find somewhere to hide the parcel and run away before you can get to the door!

We have a good selection of shops within walking distance which have coped with a varying degree of success. One local supermarket has imported ‘security’ personnel who would not look out of place outside a Colchester nightclub, to control access – not great public relations. The other more sensibly has its own staff who people know, chatting with the queue. I must admit to finding it very frustrating to queue for ten minutes to get into one of these establishments only to find that they don’t have half of what I came for.

Top marks to our local corner shop which has risen magnificently to the challenge and has been stocking a vast range of things which they never regularly had before. They managed to have both toilet paper and flour when neither of the mainstream shops did and their range of fruit and veg, which they have extended, is superior in quality to the usual supermarket stock – especially the oranges.

Alas the beach huts were put out-of-bounds quite early on but luckily no

such restriction has been placed on the allotments— we are growing some of the nation's food after all— so a great deal of our time has been spent there. It's never looked so good so early in the season, and we will have a Blessing for the Growing Crops there at Rogationtide! Other pursuits have included repair-shop-style restoration work, landscape painting, knitting, a vast amount of family history research and an attempt to rationalise an archive of digital photos taken over the last fifteen years or so.

We've managed to keep in touch with friends and family all over the world; our son and daughter-in-law in Brussels, cousins on the western seaboard of North America, folks in Ireland, Spain and others across the UK. Happily all are well and none directly affected by the virus. We are very appreciative of all who have kept in touch with us and especially to the folks from St Leonard's who have phoned and e-mailed.

We were brought up in a culture where people acknowledged each other in the street with a simple greeting. We've always tried to maintain this but here it generally hasn't been reciprocated with people hurrying past heads down or simply ignoring you. We have noticed that this has begun to change, on our walks to and from the Allotment people seem much more likely to greet or acknowledge your greeting from six feet six inches away than they did when you were a bit closer. Very odd!

And we haven't needed to consult our tide tables much recently. We haven't been over the water to the Mainland since my appointment at Broomfield Hospital on the eighteenth of March. Not been off the Island for nearly two months – normally this would be a cause for concern as island life carries with it dangers of insularity!!

We'll soon be celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of war in Europe and ironically we will do so with considerably less freedom than the people of this country had in 1945! After the War this country set out on an ambitious programme to build a much better society than the one that had existed pre-War. Let's hope that after the current crisis there is a new vision to fix what's been broken and build a better and fairer society and that all the loss and sacrifice of the present days will not have been in vain.

Laurence & Margaret Whitford

PS: I have a new hobby - cutting up recycling plastic into flat pieces so it doesn't take up so much room in storage!

Giving to St Leonard's

A message from Matt

I want to thank the many people who have changed their method of giving to St Leonard's over the previous weeks, and those who are continuing to give by their usual means. I am acutely aware that very many of us are under new financial pressures: your continued generosity is greatly appreciated by the parish.



As a family, we give to St Leonard's through the wonderful Parish Giving Scheme, which I heartily recommend to you. Joining this has just been made easier: there's now a dedicated phone number for prospective donors to enable you to set up regular payments. It's 0333 002 1271 and lines are open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm. Callers need to have their bank account details, church name (St Leonard's Lexden) and our Parish Code (080608476) to hand.

For those who normally give in the collection or through blue envelopes, we have set two things up to help you give, if you are able:

You can call our administrator, Lynne on 07582 442682, during her working hours (Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings, Fridays until 3.30pm) to give by credit or debit card.

You can donate online (click [here](#)) using a card (rather than by bank transfer, standing order or direct debit).

For those who aren't able to give financially at present: please know that the gift of your prayers, your efforts and your lives are the most precious things you can offer to God! Thank you to you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt".



The Simpkins family started arranging and playing old Gospel tunes as something to cheer up friends and to keep them busy during the lock down. They've been persuaded to release the recordings as an album, which is dedicated to all those who are separated from their loved ones.

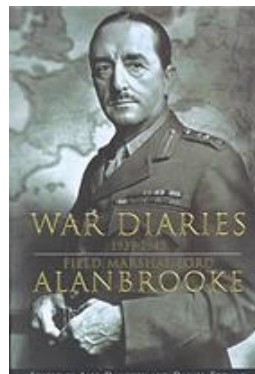
You are very welcome to download this LP for free (click [here](#)), but - if you are able - please donate to the Cavell Nurses' Trust who help nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants in the UK, both working and retired, when they're suffering personal or financial hardship. This is often due to illness, disability, older age and domestic abuse.

The best way is to donate direct here: www.cavellnursestrust.org/donate-now/

If you decide to donate through Bandcamp, the remain monies once Pay-Pal and Bandcamp have taken their fees will be passed onto the Cavell Nurses Trust.

Book review: *War Diaries 1939-1945 Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke* edited by Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001.

The eightieth anniversaries of Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain, which fall this summer, offer a suitable moment to revisit one of the most remarkable published documents from that period: the wartime diaries of Alan Brooke, 1st Viscount Alanbrooke (1883—1963). Although Alanbrooke does not rank as highly in the popular memory of the War as Montgomery, Eisenhower or Churchill, this says less about Alanbrooke's abilities and achievements and more about how history identifies charisma and self-promotion as the guarantors of worldly success. Alanbrooke's diaries are worth reading, not only to remind us of his historical importance, but also because his recorded experiences offer us some interesting insights into how humans – and Christians – respond to and live with those disappointments which are as much a part of human life as successes and victories.



Alanbrooke was born into a Northern Irish military family, served in the First World War and began the Second leading a British Expeditionary Force corps in France. After Dunkirk, he took command of Home Forces before being made Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the end of 1941 as well as chair of the Chiefs of Staffs Committee. This made him the chief advisor to the War Cabinet as well as professional head of the army. He was promoted to Field Marshal in 1944 and showered with post-war honours. Alanbrooke's diaries reveal his crucial contribution to the allied victory, not least in his promotion and support of the brilliant but often tactless Montgomery, and in his tireless management of the insightful, charismatic, but waywardly impulsive Churchill, of whom he wrote, on 10th September 1944: 'Without him England was lost for a certainty, with him England has been on the verge of disaster time and time again.'

Alanbrooke described himself as 'not an exceptionally religious person' (16/11/41) and yet his possession of a deep moral sense and a firm belief in providence are both clear in the diaries. War brought the long-sighted military tactician face-to-face with God in ways in which he did not anticipate. Its outbreak, although nightmarish and depressing, did

nothing to dislodge 'my belief in an almighty and far seeing God, working towards one set purpose for the destiny of the human race'. He maintained a 'firm conviction that Right must conquer Wrong' (15/5/40) even in the most desperate of circumstances. Alanbrooke's faith, in its simplicity, confidence, and essential nature is reminiscent of the Lord's prayer. His acknowledgment of a God who was in both heaven and earth was enriched and strengthened by his relationship with his second wife, Benita. 'Through you', he confided in the diary, which was written as a letter to her, 'I have been able to realize better than any other time in my life the perfection of God's works' (9/12/39). Without Benita's faithful example, he wrote 'I should have found it hard to come through such trials and deficient of the grit to meet such ordeals' (3/9/40).

Alanbrooke continued to call on God's help throughout the War – asking for the things he needed—his daily bread—in terms of courage, fortitude, and patience. He was pushed to the limit on many occasions and endured periods of chronic self-doubt, loneliness and sadness as he sought to discharge his considerable wartime responsibilities. Tirelessly touring British defences during the anxious summer of 1940 that we commemorate again this year, he prayed 'to God that I may be capable of carrying out the job. The idea of failure at this stage of the war is too ghastly to contemplate' (19/7/40). At times like these, the diary became almost an intercession for its writer. 'I pray God that the decisions we arrived at may be correct, and that they may bear fruit' he wrote on 24th August 1942 after the fraught re-organisation of the North African command which preceded Montgomery's famous victory at El Alamein. Reflecting on this entry after the war, Alanbrooke noted:

... one may be apt to overlook those ghastly moments of doubt which at times crowded in on me. Moments when one wondered whether one had weighed up situations correctly, arrived at the right conclusion, and taken suitable action. This little short prayer of 2 lines was not just a figure of speech, it was a very real, deep felt and agonized prayer written at a moment of considerable mental and physical exhaustion.

Such stress took its toll on Alanbrooke's relationships with colleagues and left him often seeking forgiveness. He did not suffer fools gladly and regularly lost his temper during meetings and his assessment of contemporaries could be eye-wateringly frank. Nonetheless, he did his best to 'love our allies as ourselves' (27/7/44) and his post-war writings are full of regret for judgments too hastily made. But it was when it came to forgiving the trespasses of others that Alanbrooke faced perhaps his greatest test. Alanbrooke did not lack personal ambition but it was always

tempered with a clear sense of higher duty. He sometimes looked upon offers of promotion as temptations – of the sort which encourage the placing of self interest above a God-given obligation to work for the common good. However, when Churchill informally offered him Supreme Command of ‘Operation Overlord’, the D-Day invasion of Europe, planned for the late spring of 1944, Alanbrooke felt at last that the demands of duty and ambition coincided. He was therefore doubly shocked and devastated when Churchill subsequently announced that the command was to be given to one of the American generals instead. Churchill, in his own war memoir, recorded that Alanbrooke took the news ‘with soldierly dignity’ whereas, as Alanbrooke wrote later, it took him several months to recover from the blow and indeed one can see in his diary a Job-like tone not present before. Thus 20th October 1943 was recorded as

one of those days when even the sunshine fails to dispel the gloom that lies on one. All life, and all its enterprises looked black. In every problem the molehills became mountains, and failure seemed to be the inevitable result of all enterprise. A desperate feeling of failure, incompetency and incapacity to carry this burden any longer!

Alanbrooke had both earned and reaped the rewards of a successful and honourable military career. If we look beneath the surface, however, the story is more complicated. His high-profile public position made his private doubts all the harder to bear. ‘Perhaps the hardest part of it all’, Alanbrooke confessed later, was ‘the absolute necessity to submerge all of one’s innermost feelings and apprehension and maintain a confident exterior ... [it] is a test of one’s character, the bitterness of which must be experienced to be believed!’ (19/7/40).

When the end of the war came, Alanbrooke emerged from this period of tumultuous and trying change tired and numbed, but he still drew strength from those aspects of life which offered him reassurance and continuity: his home and family, his love for the natural world, and his faith in God. On 8 May 1945 – VE Day – Alanbrooke wrote in his diary:

I have often looked back, during the last ... years ... and thanked God for the way he had listened to me and provided me with the help I had asked for, and without which I should have floundered in the first year. I am not a highly religious individual according to many people’s outlook. I am however convinced that there is a God all powerful looking after the destiny of this world. I had little doubt about this before the war started, but this war has convinced me more than ever of this truth ... The suffering and agony

of war in my mind must exist to gradually educate us to the fundamental law of 'loving our neighbour as ourselves'. When that lesson has been learned, then war will cease to exist. We are however many centuries from such a state of affairs ... For the present we can do no more than go on striving to improve more friendly relations towards those that surround us.

RCW



**There are always people
worse off...**

This is a line we often let roll off our tongues when things aren't going just as we would like them to. I'm not sure that it ever really makes us feel any better but lightens the moment in some difficult conversations.

I watched a news broadcast, before the lock-down began, which moved me so much that I wrote a reflection on it and, looking back, it makes me really understand that there are so many people worse off than myself. In comparison, even in lock down, I'm living in luxury.

The news item was from Syria, of toddlers being taken out of a bombed building. They were covered in cement dust and they looked like porcelain dolls; only their eyes shining out showed that they were human and the most striking thing was that they were silent, not crying or screaming, but silent. Yes, compared with these beautiful children I live in luxury.

It was suggested that I wrote a poem about my thoughts and this is it (p. 30). May we ever praise and thank God for all we have and ask for his mercy on those whose lives are full of sorrow and little else.

Revd Jacquie

Porcelain Dolls

**They brought out these beautiful porcelain dolls,
Silence, not a murmur.**

**Their eyes, the windows to their souls,
Non-reactive.**

**Their eyes, the only human thing about them,
Glistening as the sun hit their faces,
Shining as they emerged from the darkness,
Still silent, still non-reactive.**

**Out from the depths of shattered homes,
Shattered lives,
Covered in that which had once been their homes
Now making them porcelain dolls.**

Jacquie Messinger

St Leonard's Prayer Diary

Please pray for the following residences, people, churches and institutions.

(Week 1: w/c 18th May; Week 2: w/c 25th May; Week 3: w/c 1st June, etc.)

Week 1

Sunday

Cadenhouse Mews, Back Lane and King
Coel Road

Cleaners; those who work in the finan-
cial Sector

Methodist Churches, especially Lexden
Methodist Church

Lexden Primary School

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning A

Monday

Bramley Close, Beech Hill and Lexden
Park

Medical researchers

Eastern Orthodox Churches

Home Farm Primary School

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning B

Tuesday

Bramley Court, Beaver Close and

Lexden Mews

Those who work in tourism

Roman Catholic Church, especially St
Teresa's

Lexden Springs School

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning C

Wednesday

Browning Close, Bawtree Way and
Lexden Grove

The unemployed

Old Catholic Church

Kingswode Hoe School

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning D

Thursday

Burns Avenue, Jefferson Close, Tussett
Mews and Whitefriars Way

Judges and magistrates

Taxi and other drivers

United Reformed Church, and the Mo-
ravian Church

Wren House

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning E

Friday

Byron Avenue, Acland Avenue, Baines
Close and Lexden Court

Those who work in the Computer
industry; the farming community

Evangelical Churches

Hill House

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning F

Saturday

The Chantry, Chaucer Way, Alton Drive
and Keats Road

Local GPs; local shops

Presbyterians and Lutherans

Cheviot Nursing Home

Those associated with St Leonard's with
names beginning G

Week 2

Sunday

All other housing and residences in the parish

Prison Service; those caught in modern slavery

Pentecostal and charismatic churches, and especially Kingsland Church and Praiseway

Woodlands Residential Home

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning H

Monday

Cherry Row, London Road, Lexden Road, and Clairmont Road

Those who work in the media, the internet industry, or in broadcast

Society of Friends

Hargood Close

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning I

Tuesday

Chitts Hill, Wordsworth Road, Wroxham Close, and Church Lane

All seafarers; coastguards

All in the Anglican Communion

Newwhythe

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning J

Wednesday

Christine Chase, Tapwoods, Thompson Avenue and Trafalgar Road

Police; the retired

Salvation Army and Church Army

All other caring institutions, nurseries, and child minders

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning K

Thursday

Hunters Chase, Norman Way, The Chase and The Chase Way

Those who work professional sport or the fitness industry

Coptic Church

Local secondary schools

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning L

Friday

The homeless of the parish and town

Factory workers; those who work in local industry

Baptist Churches

Local colleges

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning M

Saturday

Lockhart Avenue, Llanvalley Road, Hurnard Drive and Straight Road

Those who look after their families

Agricultural workers

Mechanics and those car industry

All parishes in the Deanery of Colchester

The University of Essex

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning N



Week 3

Sunday

Magazine Farm Way, Sussex Road,
Hubert Road and Sterling Close
Those in the hotel, restaurant and hospitality industries
Methodist Churches, especially Lexden Methodist Church
Lexden Primary School
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning O

Monday

Marlowe Way, Herrick Place and St Clare Road
Council workers; commuters
Eastern Orthodox Churches
Home Farm Primary School
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning P

Tuesday

Masefield Drive, Heather Drive and Spring Lane
Those working from home;
Politicians; the self-employed
Roman Catholic Church, especially St Teresa's
Lexden Springs School
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning Q

Wednesday

Mellow Chase, Heath Road, Sheridan Walk, and Oaklands Avenue
Communications industry; those who work in transport
Old Catholic Church
Kingswode Hoe School
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning R

Thursday

Milton Close, Halstead Road and Shelley Road
Shopworkers and those who work in retail; faith leaders
United Reformed Church, and the Moravian Church
Wren House
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning S

Friday

Mossfield Close, Glen Avenue and Shakespeare Road
Hospital workers; delivery drivers
Evangelical Churches
Hill House
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning T

Saturday

The Mount, Fitzwilliam Road and Scott Drive
Carers; musicians, writers and artists
Presbyterians and Lutherans
Cheviot Nursing Home
Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning U



Week 4

Sunday

Nelson Road, Fitzwalter Road and Sanders Drive

Teachers and lecturers; those who work at Universities and colleges
Pentecostal and charismatic churches, and especially Kingsland Church and Praiseway

Woodlands Residential Home

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning V

Monday

Hargood Close, Firstore Drive and Round Close

Surgeons and consultants; those who work in the gig economy

Society of Friends

Hargood Close

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning W

Tuesday

Endsleigh Court, Richardson Walk, New Kiln Road, and Collingwood Road

Those in the building industry; tradespeople, plumbers and electricians

All in the Anglican Communion

Lexden Springs School

Newhythe

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning X

Wednesday

Elanore Road and Ratcliffe Road

Nurses, midwives, and clinicians

Salvation Army and Church Army

All other caring institutions, nurseries, and child minders

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning Y

Thursday

Deburgh Road and Prettygate Road
Cleaners; probation service; those in the armed forces; charity workers
Coptic Church

Local secondary schools

Those associated with St Leonard's with names beginning Z

Friday

De Vere Road and President Road
Ambulance service, and paramedics; fire and rescue service

Baptist Churches

Local colleges

Candidates for baptism and confirmation and their families

Saturday

Cooks Lane, Piper Road, Colvin Close and Parsons Hill

Gardeners; those in the Legal profession; accountants

All parishes in the Deanery of Colchester

The University of Essex

Those preparing to be married at St Leonards, and those to whom we minister for funerals





Gardening Diary

1st May

Most of the year azaleas are dull but for a couple of weeks they are stars. My soil is alkaline sandy so rhododendrons struggle. However, see right for a nearby superb example.



Next, a picture of a nearby laburnum/golden shower bush that was pruned to the ground two years ago. I had collected some seed and got one plant to grow that hopefully will flower next year. The seeds are poisonous, but I will deadhead them.

I love ceanothus although it is tricky to keep as it objects to anything more than light pruning. The bush is my preferred form but there is a creeping ceanothus. It can be short-lived: keeling over without notice after ten years.



I missed recording the glorious flowering magnolias near me. However, here is a picture of an unusual white flowering wisteria. This shrub will take brutal pruning and recover quickly.

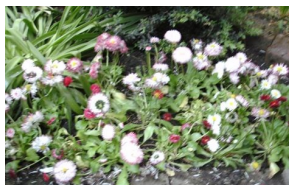
14th May

The first picture shows my yellow flowering flag iris in buckets. I find them dull most of the year so was delighted to find they happily grow in buckets. So, after flowering they can be moved to the back garden. Next my weigela shrub that sulked for two years after brutal pruning but is partially flowering this year.



I seem to be making progress in getting my charitable company, Lexden Sanctuary, registered at the Charity Commission. They have been very helpful in suggesting an improved charitable object description. Also have recognised the efforts I have made in either getting local trustees or getting a local registered charity to take control.

Finally, I was able to get access to the Crouched Friars care home rear garden after delays due to getting the gate unlocked and the car park being blocked by tradesmen's vans. It took a long time to plant up as the car park is a long route march to the area I planted. Four buckets filled with violas generously donated by Stanway Garden Centre have already gone into the somewhat dull area allocated to residents with Alzheimer's. Nearest the house I used a



lot of pansies but also the daisy-like plants to brighten up areas. I rarely saw any residents come outside so the main benefit has been to the staff enjoying a break from their demanding but low-paid work.

I still have four orchids needing cossetting plus a few pansies booked for supply to elderly residents in isolation. Demand from my extensive stored rainwater stock has been high with each of the



four care homes needing about 50 litres per weekly visit. Tap water is alright for humans but only the best for plants!

20th May

Lack of time has meant I have abandoned watering the public areas I looked after. Instead attention has been focussed on maintaining the four care home gardens I previously supplied with plants. As few are travelling to work the priority has to be provision of cheerful plants to benefit those in care without visits from relatives. I will clear the public areas I manage when the dwarf daffodils have died back. It is not an irrevocable decision. Perhaps people may come forward to help and become trustees of my charitable company?



Andy Hamilton

Follow Andy's gardening progress on his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Blooming-Colchester-564285567085224>

⁷Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. ⁸Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. ¹⁰And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 5: 7-11

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

30th April 2020 - Hilary Cowie

17th April 2020 - Bob Potter

'Rest in peace, and rise in glory.'

COVID-19 Staff Well-Being Appeal

If you are looking for ways to support frontline healthcare staff during the current crisis, East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust have launched an appeal to aid the welfare and well-being of staff. The Trust is encouraging people to [donate](#) money or [fundraise](#) in support.

To prevent the spread of infection and keep all staff safe, the type of physical donations or gifts the Trust can currently accept is limited. If you do have a kind offer of support, please tell them about it by emailing charity@esneft.nhs.uk



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Live-streamed on

www.facebook.com/stleonardslexden at 9.45am.

Available later on Sunday on YouTube: [https://
www.youtube.com/channel/UCADkA2TZE5GP6CBZbmJrwdQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCADkA2TZE5GP6CBZbmJrwdQ)

You will be able to download the appropriate Order of Service, accompanying readings, hymns and notices from the Parish's Facebook page (link above) or via our Twitter feed:

[@LexdenChurch](https://twitter.com/LexdenChurch) shortly in advance.

PRAYER

Join us in daily prayer using the words here:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-
service-daily-prayer](https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer)

Morning Prayer: 9am on Mon, Tues, Thurs-Sat

Evening Prayer: 5pm every day.

We try to live stream morning prayer on Mondays, and Evening prayer on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at:

www.facebook.com/stleonardslexden

Download the St Leonard's Prayer book here: [http://
www.stleonardslexden.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/St-
Leonards-Prayer-Book-WEB.pdf](http://www.stleonardslexden.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/St-Leonards-Prayer-Book-WEB.pdf)

EMAIL US with PRAYER REQUESTS:
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