



THE PARISH CHURCH OF  
ST LEONARD, LEXDEN

**ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GOD.**



**PARISH MAGAZINE**

**OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2023 £1.00**



## PARISH SHARE FOR 2024

Dear friends,

I write on the morning after a very involved PCC meeting, where we met to pray and discuss the payment of our parish share for 2024. It was unanimously agreed to pay the £102,000 share asked of us by the deanery. This means that the PCC will have to draw on our reserves by tens of thousands of pounds.

It is a complicated practical and spiritual issue, and as Chair of the PCC I want to share with you the different – and competing – responsibilities we have striven to honour in making our decision.

I am writing here solely about money. Lexden's many other gifts are offered very generously well beyond our parish: most obviously through the support of our lay people and clergy for other parishes in their mission, regular worship and weddings and funerals.

### **What is Parish Share?**

Parish Share is not a bill for services rendered, though much of it is used to maintain the structures and workings of our parish and the broader Church. Rather, it is a critical part of the obligation to generosity and stewardship that is at the heart of our lives as disciples of Christ. It is part of our response to God's grace to us in our personal and collective lives in a parish that is part of a broader many-layered "body" – that is, part of a diocese, and of the Church of England, and, in the broadest sense, God's Church. We are not a free church, nor a congregational church concerned about finance in isolation – we are a parish church in the Church of England whose purpose is to serve all the people in our geographical parish, irrespective of whether they come to church.

## Three responsibilities

1. Our first and over-arching responsibility is to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are more verses in the Gospels about how wealth should be used for the good of others and to the glory of God, than about any other moral issue. In Paul's letters – especially 2 Corinthians – it is made explicit that the practical outworking of this teaching is that materially wealthier church communities support materially poorer church communities. In 1 Corinthians our obligations to each other are clarified: “God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member.” So, the matter of parish share is not the balanced and calculated giving of the bank manager, but sacrificial giving shaped by Jesus's giving of himself on the cross for us all. This is the theological foundation of the parish share system.
2. We therefore have a responsibility to use our material and other gifts for the good of the Body of Christ: the Church well beyond Lexden; that is, internationally, nationally and locally. We have a particular responsibility to our near neighbours, and this is why the diocese has chosen to address the issue of share through the deaneries.
3. We also have a responsibility to steward our resources with great care – not to grasp them as though we were running an investment fund, but to be considered in how we use these gifts. This is not only a Christian responsibility, but one of the key legal obligations we have as a charity under the care of the Charity Commission. I will explain below why, strangely, this presently means that we are both financially over-stretched and wealthy.

### **The Body is Suffering: “If one part suffers, every part suffers with it”**

The deanery meetings I have attended, and my contact with clergy across the diocese and the Church of England, reveal that the majority of parishes are facing very significant financial problems. I encourage you to read the diocese's accounts to see how precarious its financial situation is: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/249505/accounts-and-annual-returns> . The diocese is, of course, us and not them.

Some – perhaps I should write, many – parishes have no reserves, no regular clergy, a single or no churchwarden, and a handful of volunteers trying to “keep

the show on the road". Whether or not it is deliberate, these parishes often infer (as do I) that if they want a minister, they will have to pay for a minister. My view remains that the Gospel clearly teaches an obligation to preferential treatment for the outcast, overlooked and under-resourced, and that the deployment and provision of ministry is first a matter of local need, which is then funded by collective resource. In areas of deprivation and communities where there is a constant turnover of the population (for example Colchester's army estates) it was already exceptionally difficult for parishes to pay their share. Now, for a significant number, it is impossible. This has a massive negative mental impact on those faithful and generous people who are keeping these parishes running. We talk a great deal about where the clergy are to be deployed, but the real problem is the weight on the shoulders of engaged and generous lay people, many of whom are being crushed. Very populous parishes are reduced to having to deal with the energy ombudsman just to try and pay their electricity bills.

I write with passion, because I have had my eyes opened to just how profound the effect of the pandemic, inflation and energy prices have been on other parishes. As I shall explain below, our situation is very different. We must be attentive to the financial plight of our brothers and sisters in other parishes – and crucially to the plight of those who are not churchgoers, ministry to whom is usually the first to suffer. The Apostle Paul is clear – their suffering is our suffering. It is our problem, and we must see it this way.

Many will share my view that part of addressing this problem is encouraging those who hold power to consider whether the structures and para-structures of the Church of England are fit for purpose. And if, like me, you have views on this – please offer them to the Bishop or join the Diocesan or General Synod where you may have some small opportunity to affect change. However, our views on structures beyond our control, or the massive disparity of wealth between dioceses, do not abrogate our financial responsibility to our brothers and sisters in the Church – nor to the many poor and suffering people in parishes who are not churchgoers. The Church of England is either for the people of the parishes of England – all of them – or it is not the Church of England.

## **Reflecting on our small part of the body in Lexden: How can we be both financially over-stretched and wealthy?**

You will recall from our stewardship campaign that we are endeavouring to keep a close eye on our expenditure while raising our income. This is because for the last few years our expenditure has been higher than our income. The resulting deficit has been in the tens of thousands of pounds. Viewed from this perspective, we must continue to strive to increase our stewardship – including our regular giving and income, as well as consider our outgoings carefully. This is essential to the long-term health of our parish and so it is rightly a key priority.

At the same time, however, we need to acknowledge that we have large historic financial reserves. The majority of these reserves is “restricted” or “designated”, which means it is either set aside legally – or intentionally – for particular uses only. Most of this part of our reserves is for the “fabric” of the church – that is, our building structures and furnishings. It is extremely difficult to change to “restricted” to “unrestricted” funds. Our unrestricted reserves can be used for things such as parish share.

The accounts of other large churches in our deanery suggest that our total reserves may be roughly four times larger than any other church, and that our unrestricted reserves seem to be roughly double any other church. These are very significant proportions. We are, in this sense, very wealthy.

The largest church in the deanery has roughly 15% more members than us, receives more than double the regular income from individual giving, and has roughly half the unrestricted funds.

The truth is that our careful deliberations over parish share would be much simpler if we had smaller reserves and larger regular income which covered our expenditure. However, our situation is that we have large reserves, and regular income that is presently below our regular expenditure. This is why we are both financially over-stretched and wealthy.

I want to be clear that the implication of all this is that, given the size of our reserves, the deanery and the diocese expect us to draw on them to support the broader ministry of the Church. Which is to say, even with our regular income and expenditure as it presently is, that they expect us to run a deficit each year.

I believe that this is a just expectation given the plight of other parishes. This is also the view of the PCC. However, we also believe that we need to keep trying to increase financial giving, so that we can eventually arrive at a position where we consider how our parish runs without having to constantly consider our reserves.

### **Why are we paying £102,000 and drawing on our reserves?**

After a prayerful, fulsome and frank discussion at our meeting, during which we carefully balanced our responsibilities to our own parish and the broader Church under the umbrella responsibility to give generously to God' glory, we concluded that we would offer to pay £102,000 share in 2024 in the knowledge that this may mean drawing on, perhaps, £40,000 of our unrestricted reserves.

We have made this decision for this year only, understanding the financial implications of drawing on these funds, and are willing to take responsibility for these implications. Next year we will again assess and pray, and we shall continue to encourage us all to carefully consider our own financial giving for the good of our neighbours and the whole Body of Christ, as well as our part of it – Lexden.

Matt



## **Around Mersea Island for the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity**

Matt and Jim and would like to thank everyone who sponsored them for the Round Mersea Island Race. They successfully completed the race in just over 4 hours and have so far raised over £1500 for the Royal Marsden Cancer charity. If you still wish to donate please do so via this link:  
<https://www.justgiving.com/page/matty-and-jim-round-island-sail>

# FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the latest edition of the Parish Magazine. The last two months have been rather hectic with Weddings Baptisms and funerals; everything that is expected to occur in a vibrant church like St Leonards.

All this was happening as the new floor was installed and finally the heating system was reconnected. It did mean that there was some disruption during the week, but we could use the Church for services at the weekend. I would like to place on record our thanks to everyone concerned in restoring our church back to normality, it also means that no one needs freeze during the winter months! The only event that was really affected was the Brick Club which was moved to the Church Hall as the work was carried out, more on the Brick Club later. Finally, from the Editor, congratulations to Matt and Jim for completing the round the island sailing event.

Enjoy this edition and if anyone has suggestions, please contact the Editor.



## AUTUMN CHURCH QUIZ

**Come and test your knowledge at a fun packed evening!!!**

**Venue:** St Leonard's Church Hall, Lexden

**Time:** 7.00pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Size of teams:** minimum 2 people, maximum 6

**Cost of tickets:** (cash preferred) **£10** per person / **£5** for under 16s

**Tickets:** available at the back of Church after Sunday morning service  
Price includes a supper (vegetarian option available) and a soft drink.

**BRING OTHER DRINKS OF YOUR OWN CHOICE**

*Steve Whiteman*  
Steve Whiteman, Quiz Master



Contact for any queries by email  
[stevewhiteman211@gmail.com](mailto:stevewhiteman211@gmail.com)



# OCTOBER-NOVEMBER DIARY

## **SUNDAY 1st October Harvest Festival**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**

**9.45am ALL AGE HARVEST CELEBRATION**

## **Tuesday 3rd October**

11:30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

7.30pm 'Medley' house group (Rosemary 515245)

## **Wednesday 4th October**

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10:45am Holy Communion at Woodlands

## **Thursday 5th October**

8.00am Eucharist

## **Saturday 7th October**

8.30am Men's Breakfast

4:30pm Blessing of the Marriage of Laura Aldridge and Christopher Raines

## **SUNDAY 8th October 18th Sunday after Trinity**

**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**

**12:00pm Baptism of Lily Jayne Rogers**

**5.30pm Evensong and Sermon**

## **Wednesday 11th October**

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

## **Thursday 12th October**

8.00am Eucharist

## **Saturday 14th October**

12:00pm Friendship Lunch

## **SUNDAY 15th October 19th Sunday after Trinity**

**8:00am Holy Communion (BCP)**

**9:45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**

**3:00pm Messy Church**

## **Wednesday 18th October**

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

## **Thursday 19th October**

8.00am Eucharist



Friday 20th October

7:00pm Church Autumn Quiz in the Hall

Saturday 21st October

8.30am Women's Breakfast

**SUNDAY 22nd October 20th Sunday after Trinity**

**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**

**5:30pm Eucharist for Wholeness & Healing**

Tuesday 24th October

10:00am Brick Club

Wednesday 25th October

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

Thursday 26th October

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 28th October

10.30am Children's Society Box Opening Coffee Morning

**SUNDAY 29th October Last Sunday after Trinity**

**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**

Wednesday 1st November

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

Thursday 2nd November

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 4th November

8:30am Men's Breakfast

**SUNDAY 5th November 4th Sunday before Advent**

**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**

**9.45am ALL AGE EUCHARIST**

**5:30pm Memorial Service**

Tuesday 7th November

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

7.30pm 'Medley' house group (Rosemary 515245)

Wednesday 8th November

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 9th November  
8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 11th November  
12:00pm Friendship Lunch

**SUNDAY 12th November Remembrance Sunday**  
**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**  
**5.30pm Evensong and Sermon**

Monday 13th November  
7:00pm Eucharist  
7:45pm PCC Meeting

Wednesday 15th November  
9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall  
10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee  
11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 16th November  
8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 18th November  
8.30am Women's Breakfast

**SUNDAY 19th November 2nd Sunday before Advent**  
**8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)**  
**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**

Wednesday 22nd November  
9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall  
10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee  
11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 23rd November  
8.00am Eucharist

**SUNDAY 26th November Christ the King**  
**9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church**  
**5:30pm Eucharist for Wholeness & Healing**

Wednesday 29th November  
10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

Thursday 30th November  
89:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall  
10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee  
11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Saturday 2nd December  
8:30am Men's Breakfast  
11:00am Christmas Market



# MOUSE TAILS

St. Leonard's mouse community were very busy and excited, the Church mice, the Balconies, Organs, Under Stairs and Flower Cupboards families were preparing to go back to their old homes. Whilst the youngsters had really enjoyed their time with the Woods cousins the Mums couldn't wait to get back to their old homes. At a get-together with their Hall family the Balconies had heard all about the flood and the work taking place on the Church floor. So, until such a time that the work was finished, they'd temporarily move in with the Halls, a sort of halfway house. All the mice were thrilled to be spending time together and having a proper catch up. While the youngsters were teaching the Halls some of the things they'd learnt during their time in the woods, Mums were happy to be indoors again and sharing the more 'civilised' type of food like cake, bread and cheese etc. Dads were sharing the new wine and beer recipes they'd learnt and were attempting to grow watercress (a big favourite) in a mossy, damp patch behind the hall.

One of their greatest pleasures was to be on Church grounds when the Summer Fete took place. The very young mice couldn't remember anything about previous events so were mega excited when Dad regaled them with tales of previous years and how, as youngsters themselves, had held their own little fete. Everyone agreed that they should do this again. Foraging after the Church event was always exciting and this year was no exception, they had a busy time scurrying back and forth with their finds; cake, part-sandwiches, bits of sausage and hamburger, plastic cups, ribbon, coloured crayon stubs, pretty paper and so on. By nightfall the Mums had put together a wonderful feast and had enough food stored away for the next few days. Dads had emptied dress of beer into cups and were surprised by how much they had. Once they were all full, they set to planning their own little fete for the following day.



Gerry and Daisy (the Balcony twins) were up at the crack of dawn excited and keen to get on with their Fete organising. First they set up the cups and a pile of small pebbles ready to throw into the cups, followed by setting out markers for the relay race. In addition, there would be a painting competition and a treasure hunt plus lots more. Mums and Dads had got together

some little prizes and were looking forward to the feast and being entertained by Tommy organ and his little band, a drummer who'd made his own drums with upturned old tins and a sort of homemade cello. The band would be accompanied by the choir with everyone joining in with choruses (to the human ear this sounded like a lot of high-pitched squeaking, sort of in tune) but they all enjoyed it! All in all, the fete day was a great success.

The following week they learnt that one of their human friends and supporters, Sheila, had passed away. All the older mice were sad to hear this news and kept their ears to the ground to find out when the Church service would be, all agreed that they would be present, even if hidden, as a mark of their respect. On the day before the service the flower arrangers were in the Church, filling it with flowers. When they had finished, and the Church was quiet, the mice wandered around admiring the beautiful displays. Grandpa, who as the elder, conducted all the mouse services said he wished to be present to join in the prayers but didn't want to be seen. After some consideration they decided that a flower arrangement in the extension would be easy to climb into and he could hide amongst the flowers. An hour before the service and wearing his special robe and cross, he climbed up and settled himself into the flowers, he could only be seen if you looked very closely. All the mice listened to the service, joined in with the prayers, and enjoyed the hymns. After the service a delicious buffet had been placed at the back of the Church. Once all the humans had cleared up and gone the mice did their usual scavenging and found some tasty morsels to enjoy and once eaten, said their own thanks and farewell to their old friend Sheila. CT.





## Tributes to Sheila Cook RIP

Sheila's family have kindly given us permission to reproduce the Eulogy given by her son Andy and the poem written and read by her Granddaughter Hannah at her funeral.

Sheila was born in Wakefield, Yorkshire on 21st June 1931 and spent her early years with her wider family in the nearby village of Honley. Many of us will know of this area as it was the setting for the long running BBC comedy series *Last of the Summer Wine* and Honley was the next village just along the valley from the main location of Holmfirth. The characterisation of the folk was accurate, and I will come back to this later.

When Mum was about 7 the family moved to Moortown, then an outer developing suburb to the north of Leeds. Her father had a new job, as he was the *Man from the Pru*. This also coincided with the outbreak of WW2 and her father signed up with the home guard aka *Dads Army* as he was in a reserved occupation. He built a shelter at the bottom of the garden but the neighbours laughed! Leeds was then bombed, and all the neighbours came round demanding to be allowed in!!

At the age of 11, Mum passed the entrance exam for Roundhay High School for Girls and went on to attain the school certificate. She then went to Yorkshire College of Domestic Science, now part of Leeds Uni, and also gained a teaching certificate.

She met Dad in July 1954 whilst on holiday in Majorca. Travel of this nature was rare and well before the advent of package tours and charter flights. Now back to gossip, and a friend of the family put 2 and 2 together and made 5, as she was convinced that Mum was marrying a Spaniard! They married in 1956 and moved into Chaucer Way, the 1st owners of a new house, at the start of a new

estate. Dad had a job lined up at the Gilberd school, then on North Hill, and he helped Mum get a job at Colchester Tech college. I recall that the Christmas Cake class was very popular, and many friends were made.

The teaching was put on hold for a while as I came along. Mum then was a supply primary school teacher and she soon learnt which local schools to say no to! Home Farm Primary School was about to open, at least 2 years late due to a dithering local authority -so no change there! One of the newly appointed teachers was tragically killed in a boating accident 2 days before the start of the first term of the new school. Mum agreed to share the post with another teacher until a permanent replacement could be appointed.

In the early 70s Mum was given a temporary contract in her speciality of Domestic science. This was to cover a medical absence at Philip Morant School for 6 weeks, and she stayed 17 years. She didn't even apply for the job! Many years later she had people stop her in the town to say hello as they were former pupils from these jobs.

Here at St Leonards, Mum was part of the gifted Embroidery Guild team lead by Margaret Claydon. The rich collection of vestments here is down to the small team that are sadly no longer with us. After that there was a much larger team to recover and refurbish the kneelers in front of you. Who could forget Father Mole, lovingly crafted by Mum.

Mum was fully involved in bazaar's, shows & pantos. Mum also did some flower arranging, although she admitted it wasn't her best craft, but she would willingly volunteer to take on a display at flower festivals. If we came to see it she always said don't look at a certain display, it's mine and it's hopeless. Of course, it wasn't but it was rare for Mum to admit that she wasn't very good at something. She was Mother's Union Enrolling Member for many years and then became an enthusiastic member of the replacement Cameo group.

Mum was an enthusiastic WI member, initially with Lexden, then Home Farm, then more recently the merged Lexden and Home Farm WI. Skills included judging produce and baking at shows including the Rose Show and Essex Show. The high point was attending a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace as a representative of the WI, meeting the Queen and Prince Philip, in the early 1960s.

I have mentioned travel being a significant part of Mum and Dad's life including their first meeting and we travelled as a family in the 60s, firstly with a tent and then a caravan, all over Europe. This was again adventurous and ahead of it's time - long before the development of ferries as we know them today. There is some cine film somewhere of our family car being craned onboard a ship in Southampton!

The only time I can recall any anxiety over travel is when Mum agreed to go with Dad to Australia in 1989. Mum was going to meet her brother-in-law for the first time, as John moved there in the early 50s, before Mum and Dad met. John was a £10 pom as featured on a recent TV show, which Mum thought was historically accurate although she didn't think much of the unlikely story lines! They also enjoyed many trips in Europe and river cruises including the Rhein, Danube, Douro and Rhone.

As well as the trips overseas, they kept the Caravan and used it to explore many parts of the UK, sometimes with a grandchild in tow. We occasionally had to remind Mum that she had 2 grandchildren - they came as a pair and favourites were not allowed. At this point we then had our own Caravan and would occasionally meet up. It was nice to be able to send Graham and Hannah next door first thing in the morning and have a coffee in peace!

Graham and Hannah would come and stay with Nannie and Gramps for a week or so during school holidays and fondly remember holiday clubs here as well as trips to the beach.

Mum and dad were devoted to each other and some of you will recall that Dad developed dementia. Mum was insistent that it was her duty to look after him at home, but his condition worsened and he moved to Alderwood Care Home. Mum faithfully visited him many times a week over the next 2 years.

Many of you have sent our family tributes to Mum and thank you for your kind words. There are some themes that reoccur, such as:

- Direct no nonsense approach,
- You knew where you stood,
- Always busy,
- Projects on the go,

- Heart of gold, and
- Yorkshire hospitality

So, let's pause a moment to reflect on the impact that Sheila had on each and every one of us during her lifetime. It may be one or more of the themes I have just mentioned, it may be from your school days or just a few weeks ago.







## Recipe for the perfect Nutty Nannie

### Ingredients list

400g silly songs  
200g hysterical laughter  
200g bridge skills  
50g ambitious embroidery projects  
600g unbreakable family values  
200g enthusiastic yet very messy baking  
50g never ending stories  
4 tbsp wisdom  
2 tbsp of slight insanity  
2 tsp of discipline  
Just one pinch of patience, no more  
A generous dollop of kindness

Combine the ingredients and mix well, bake until light and spongy.

Nannie, thank you for everything you taught me, the love you showed me and Graham, and the way you accepted Dan as your own, you were truly incredible and a force to be reckoned with.

Thank you.

**Poem written by Hannah**



## Friendship Lunch

On a very hot day in September, it was lovely to gather together in the coolness of the church, with the delicious aroma of freshly baked bread and homemade soup, and the perfume of the wonderful flowers on display. It was great to be back together again, and we were delighted that we had so many people after our summer break. Soup was followed by the usual amazing cakes our Lexden bakers produce plus tea and coffee.

Our Friendship Lunches are open to everyone, whether you are a church member or not. It is a wonderful opportunity to make new friends and to have time to chat to old ones. We run every second Saturday in the month up until March, starting at 12 noon. Just ring Esther in the parish office on 01206 575565 or email [admin@stleonardslexden.org.uk](mailto:admin@stleonardslexden.org.uk) if you would like to come – There is also a signup sheet in church.



It would be lovely to see you so please give us a try. There is no charge but donations are welcome on the day.

**The Friendship Lunches Team**

# CHRISTMAS MARKET



ST  
LEONARD'S  
CHURCH  
HALL  
LEXDEN

VARIETY OF  
CHRISTMAS  
STALLS PLUS  
REFRESHMENTS

SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER

11:00AM TO 2:00PM

AT 11:00AM FATHER CHRISTMAS WILL ARRIVE  
WITH HIS HELPERS

ANY ENQUIRIES PLEASE E-MAIL [MIKE@STLEONARDSLEXDEN.ORG.UK](mailto:MIKE@STLEONARDSLEXDEN.ORG.UK)



# Taking Pride

The 'glorious twelfth' certainly came to Colchester back in August when the LGBTQ+ community held their second Pride March through the city centre.

Setting off from the Mercury Theatre the colourful parade of 300+ people set off towards the High Street in a truly festive mood, waving flags, blowing whistles, playing music, and soaking up the truly friendly and welcoming greeting from the people of Colchester. I never heard one disparaging word all the time we walked towards Firstsite.

At Firstsite people enjoyed a range of stalls, street food and various stage acts. The Church had a presence too, via The Open Table which holds a service at St Matthew's Church in Harwich Road at 4 p.m. every second Sunday of the month. All are welcome to the service which is followed by refreshments - this is headed-up by Revd Sara Batts-Neale who is also a chaplain at Essex University.

Why was I there you might ask? In my role as Chaplain at Colchester RFC I have worked alongside the Colchester Kings to set up their own inclusive rugby team where people of the LGBTQ+ community feel safe to enjoy playing sport. And rugby is ideal, as it welcomes all skills and all different shapes and sizes - there's a position for everyone! Plus, players can improve their own fitness.

It has been a privilege to work with such a wonderful group of people.

**Rev Maggie**



# Wordsearch

# Women's Breakfast



3rd Saturday of the month in Church.  
All Welcome, we look forward to seeing you there...  
If you have any questions, please contact.  
[maggie@stleonardslexden.org.uk](mailto:maggie@stleonardslexden.org.uk)

## Friendship Lunches



**St Leonard's Church  
Lexden** welcomes you to its  
**Friendship Lunches**

Join us for delicious  
homemade soup and cake.

Every month on the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Saturday from **September to  
March** at 12pm

Please book by emailing  
[admin@stleonardslexden.org.uk](mailto:admin@stleonardslexden.org.uk)  
or phoning the Parish Office on **01206  
575565** or use the sign up sheet in  
Church.

**Donations welcome on the day.**



# OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> October</b>  <b>All Age Eucharist</b></p>	<p>Harvest Celebration!</p>
<p><b>8<sup>th</sup> October</b>  <b>Remembering church members who are no longer able to come to church</b></p>	<p>Autumn themed card making</p>
<p><b>15<sup>th</sup> October</b>  <b>Responding to God's invitation</b></p> <p><b>Messy Church 3pm!</b></p>	<p>The parable of the wedding invitation</p>
<p><b>22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>  <b>Belonging to God</b></p>	<p>The story of Caesar and the taxes</p>
<p><b>29<sup>th</sup> October</b>  <b>Loving God compels us to love others</b></p>	<p>The greatest commandment</p>
<p><b>5<sup>th</sup> November</b>  <b>All Age Eucharist</b></p>	
<p><b>12<sup>th</sup> November</b>  <b>(Remembrance Sunday)</b>  <b>What is important and urgent now?</b></p>	<p>The parable of the bridesmaids and the lamps</p> <p>Service followed by the laying of wreaths at the war memorial</p>
<p><b>19<sup>th</sup> November</b>  <b>Using well what God gives to us</b></p>	<p>The parable of the talents</p>
<p><b>26<sup>th</sup> November</b>  <b>Do your actions reveal the real you?</b></p>	<p>Jesus separates the sheep from the goats</p>

**Put December's Messy Church in your diary -10<sup>th</sup> December 3pm**



# Brick Club

It was wonderful to welcome so many people to Brick Club over the 6 weeks of the summer holidays; in fact on one Tuesday we had over 50 young people plus parents in attendance! Those running the club were delighted that the enforced move to the hall due to the work in Church turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it would have been busy in Church.

What was even more pleasing was that even in the final week new youngsters were arriving; word had got round, and we had people coming in from outside of the area of St Leonards, including one family from Kirby Cross.

The club is free and we were told that it was a great help to parents during what was a strange school break in view of the inconsistent weather. Over the six weeks break the club averaged out at roughly 30 youngsters a week.



## Baby & Toddler Group



9:30am and 11:00am in the Church Hall each  
Wednesday during term time.

Find us at [www.facebook.com/stleonardsbabyandtoddlergroup](http://www.facebook.com/stleonardsbabyandtoddlergroup)





## From the Archives

The following are taken from a summary booklet relating to PCC meetings between 1929 and 1940 and cover what was felt to be important at the time. PCC meetings at St Leonards began in 1923 but those records have disappeared.

### 1929

A table was bought for the West end, a gas radiator was to be hired, the use of the church collections was discussed, and an appeal was lodged regarding the rating of the Parish Hall. A need for new hymn books and kneelers was expressed.

### 1930

The installation of new heating and of electric light was discussed. The WI was to be charged 7/6 (38p) a month to hire the Parish Room. The Vestry and the west end to be re-decorated as far as the first window on each side. Colours chosen Green for the lower part of the walls and stone for the upper part.

### 1932

The bequest from the Rev J Rawston Papillon was invested and the interest used for the Sunday School. The cottages in Spring Lane were a separate gift, had also been left to the church. The income from these cottages had previously gone to help fund the Church Day school but since that school had been taken under LEA control it was decided that the income from the cottages would go to the church and be known as the Rawston Trust.

### 1934

Electric light was installed in the porches with the thought of extending it to the interior of the church.

### 1937

A court of enquiry was held by the Rector and the Church Wardens to deal with the difference of opinion between the men of the choir and the choirmaster! Following this meeting the Choirmaster agreed to the Rectors suggestions. The summary gives no reason as to what the disagreement was about.

### 1938

The Rector Mr Dolph took an extended holiday, and a locum was retained. Unfortunately, during his first service he offended many of the congregation.

Upon being criticised he immediately resigned. Difficulty was experienced finding a replacement.

### 1939

This was a difficult year with war being declared. Many of the PCC members were absent on active service and their duties were shared out. The idea of a new curate was shelved but plans to re-gild the hands of the church clock were put in place.

### 1940

As an air raid precaution, the church registers were sent to be filmed by the Society of Genealogists in London. The Church Iron railings were given to the Mayor's appeal for the war effort. The Parish Room was designated a rest centre, blankets were stored there, and a gas heater installed.

### Historical note.

Up until 1894 Parishes were run by the Vestry Committees. This changed with the Local Government Act of that year which set up Parish Councils which removed secular items from the vestry committees and attempted to make things more democratic. PCCs came into being in 1919 following a Convocations of Canterbury and York. Vestry continued to operate until 1921.

## Men's Breakfast



1st Saturday of the month in Church.

All Welcome, we look forward to seeing you there...

If you have any questions, please contact.

[davidw@stleonardslexden.org.uk](mailto:davidw@stleonardslexden.org.uk)

# FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

## FUNERALS



25th July  
**Brian Barton**  
17th August  
**Sheila Cook**  
23rd August  
**Trevor Carter**  
25th August  
**Tessa Smith**  
30th August  
**Stella Cole**  
22nd September  
**Sally Millar**  
28th September  
**Adrian Reynolds**

*'Rest in peace and rise in glory.'*

## WEDDINGS



5th August  
**William Humphreys and Maria Morris**  
2nd September  
**Jamie Sturgess and Isla Gavin**

*'Those whom God has joined together.'*

## BAPTISMS

20th August  
**Theodore Lauder**  
24th September  
**Roma Raggett**



*'One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all.'*

# MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Final day for items for the DECEMBER edition:

SUNDAY 12TH NOVEMBER

Please submit items to the Editor  
email: [magazine@stleonardslexden.org.uk](mailto:magazine@stleonardslexden.org.uk)

Please include your name with any submission  
and limit text to 500-600 words maximum.  
Longer articles may be edited. Thank you.

## ***Have You been Bereaved?***

Losing a loved one can leave you feeling adrift; talking and meeting with others in a similar situation may help.

Lexden Bereavement Support Group offers the opportunity to chat over a cup of tea. The group is informal and relaxed, and led by trained volunteers.

It is open to people of all faiths and backgrounds and is usually run on Thursday afternoons fortnightly.

If you would like to attend – or to find out more - please telephone Margaret on 01206 547803 or email [\*\*bereavement@stleonardslexden.org.uk\*\*](mailto:bereavement@stleonardslexden.org.uk)

# BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE OCTOBER

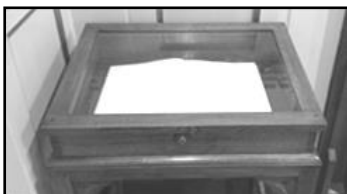
Geernaert, Charlotte Everitt	4th March 1839 - 6th October 1919
Boswell, Edith Amelia	25th June 1910 - 22nd October 1998
Davey, Peter Nigel	4th March 1920 - 31st October 2001
Barnes, Jean Doris	8th August 1933 - 26th October 2003
Funnell, Donald de Jersey	9th March 1910 - 2nd October 1971
Enfield, Jill Marion	17th November 1939 - 4th October 1996
Goddard, Jennifer Mary	29th February 1940 – 3rd October 2006
Austin, Margaret Ann	19th January 1926 – 12th October 2007
Bryant, Charles John	18th November 1928 – 28th October 2012
Goodyear, Gwendoline Hilda	17th December 1921 - 24th October 2014
Hodge, David Campbell	2nd July 1918 - 22nd October 2014
Davis, Marie Ellen	28th March 1921 - 22nd October 2015
Calvert, Albert Cyril Holcombe	24th June 1896 - 9th October 1965
Burgess, Doris Evelyn	6th November 1903 - 6th October 2002
Pugh, Catherine Kirkpatrick	19th December 1928 - 24th October 2020
Cook, Dennis Albert Frederick	21st October 1928 - 31st October 2019



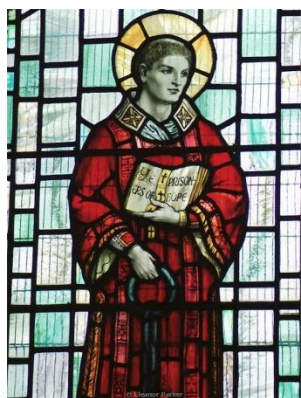
*If you would like the name of a relative added to the Book of Remembrance, you will find forms with instructions on the bookcase beside the north door.*

# BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE NOVEMBER

Crook, Mills William	15th February 1918 - 14th November 1998
Frost, Alan John True	22nd July 1927 - 20th November 1996
Cooke, Nancy Irene	18th January 1908 - 13th November 2003
Hunt, Derrick Edward	24th November 1930 - 15th November 1995
Shepherd, Raymond Hubert	12th May 1926 - 25th November 1989
Ellis, Jennifer Mary	14th July 1935 - 24th November 2004
Bedford, Janet Iris	1st January 1939 - 28th November 2004
Gilham, Gwendoline	19th October 1908 - 7th November 1995
Gilham, Albert Henry	17th July 1917 - 18th November 2005
Nicholls, Betty	11th September 1927 - 25th November 2005
Carter, Alfred Richard (Dick)	9th April 1927 - 5th November 2006
Large, Charles Arthur	18th January 1918 - 19th November 1986
Jarvis, Robin Lloyd	27th August 1941 - 4th November 2007
Kite, Graham John	17th September 1943 - 20th November 2007
Gosling, Elsie Leonora	12th January 1926 – 18th November 2008
Leggett, Jean Mary Helen	4th May 1931 – 2nd November 2009
Marchington, Phyllis May	11th November 1922 – 14th November 2010
Dean, Christine Mary	15th September 1921 – 29th November 2010
Claydon, Margaret Joan	4th November 1912 – 4th November 2013
Pike, Rosemary Ann	20th April 1941 – 22nd November 2012
Calvert, Vera	29th March 1914 – 26th November 2012
Hudson, Jean	18th May 1946 – 4th November 2017
Hoult, Joan Holly	23rd January 1918 – 22nd November 1991
Hallett, John Edward George	11th July 1937 – 8th November 2014
Loxley, Jean	10th January 1928 – 28th November 2019



*If you would like the name of a relative added to the Book of Remembrance, you will find forms with instructions on the bookcase beside the north door.*



## St Leonard, Saints Day 6th November

A few years ago, during an all-Age Eucharist, a talk was given about St Leonard to whom our church is dedicated. As an historian this wetted my interest, so I began to explore a little more about our Saint. So, who was St Leonard and how did our church become dedicated to this Saint? The answer to this is involved and goes way back to before the Norman conquest.

St Leonard was a minor Frankish noble during the Merovingian period and lived between 485 and 560 AD (CE) he is also known as St Leonard of Noblat. According to the Catholic online website what follows was written in the 11th century cannot be authenticated and is a brief romantic view.

In one account St Leonard was out hunting with King Clovis, King of the Sallen Franks, when Clovis wife went into labour, Leonard and Clovis prayed through the night for a safe delivery. Following the birth of a daughter, Clovis offered Leonard as much land as he could ride round in a day on a donkey. It is said that he used the land to establish a monastery at Noblat near Limoges where he became Abbot. It is also believed that in old age he became a hermit and died around 560AD.

In another account it is said that during an invasion of Clovis lands, the queen who was a Christian, asked Leonard to pray to God to turn the tide of battle in Clovis favour and repel the invaders. Leonard prayed and King Clovis was victorious. The Bishop of Rheims used this to convert Clovis, Leonard and many others to Christianity.

It is said that Leonard lived an austere life and entered a Monastery in Orleans. In later life St Leonard desired seclusion and withdrew into a forest near Limousin. Eventually a monastery was built there by those who recognised St Leonard's piety. It is said he had great compassion for prisoners and converted

many to Christianity. He became the patron saint of all prisoners, pregnant women, and farm animals.

The first Norman Lord of the Manor of Lexden was Eudo the Steward and it is likely that Eudo, in line with a directive from King William, built a stone chapel within the boundary of his manor house. It is also possible that the medieval church pulled down in the 1820s may also have been the site of the chapel. In the UK there are only about 177 religious establishments called St Leonards, Colchester is unique in having two, St Leonards at the Hythe and St Leonards Lexden.

But why St Leonard? For this we have to go back to a man called Bohemund, a crusading son of a Norman noble. Bohemund was captured and imprisoned by the Muslims for three years. It is said he prayed to St Leonard to obtain his release. After he was released in 1103, Bohemund went on a pilgrimage to Noblat. It is believed that Richard Coeur deLion (Lionheart) also visited Noblat following his release from imprisonment.

Eudo built St Johns Abbey towards the end of the 11th century when William II was king, it is said by Morant that he chose that site because a prisoner had his chains fall off him during a service. It is not known for sure when the church at Lexden became known as St Leonard's or when the medieval church was built. We do know that a parish church was built at Stanway Parva during the late 1200's and that the initial design of St Leonard's was similar. Also, Lexden and Stanway had the same Lord of the Manor, although Lexden was considered the poor relation. Nevertheless, Lexden Church was named after St Leonard possibly as a link to Eudo and the intricate family connections between the St Claires, the de Burghs and the Lanvallies (speculation on my part).

One minor point about Kling Clovis, during his time as President of France, General de Gaulle stated that as Clovis was a Christian then he was the first true King of France. In later years Clovis transposed into Louis which became the most common name of French Kings.



# REGULAR SERVICES

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8.00am 1662 BCP Holy Communion</b> (1st & 3rd Sundays) <b>9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church</b> <i>Or All Age Eucharist</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month) <b>5.30pm Evensong and Sermon</b> (2nd Sunday) <b>5.30pm Eucharist for Wholeness &amp; Healing</b> (4th Sunday)
<b>Monday</b>	8:45am Morning Prayer
<b>Tuesday</b>	8:45am Morning Prayer
<b>Wednesday</b>	10.00am Eucharist
<b>Thursday</b>	8.00am Eucharist

## CHRISTMAS 2023

### **SUNDAY 10th DECEMBER**

**3.00pm** Messy NATIVITY

Mess! Fun! Food! FREE Kids crafts, activities, games, stories, & songs!

Children must be accompanied by an adult. This event is free, please email to let us know you're coming: [juniorchurch@stleonardslexden.org.uk](mailto:juniorchurch@stleonardslexden.org.uk)

**6:30pm** Carols at the Crown

### **SATURDAY 16th DECEMBER**

**2.30pm** Charles Dickens' a Christmas carol

- performed by Anthony Roberts & Jamie Cunliffe in aid of Colchester CAP Debt Centre

### **SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER**

**6.30pm** Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

- a service of traditional carols and readings

### **SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS EVE**

**9.45am** Parish Eucharist (said)

**2.30pm** Crib Service – especially for small children

(Children are invited to come dressed as shepherds or angels)

**4.30pm\*** The Service of Light - a candlelit carol service for all ages

**6.30pm\*** The Service of Light - a candlelit carol service for all ages

**\*These two services are identical**

**11.15pm** Midnight Mass, with the blessing of the crib

### **MONDAY 25th DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY**

**8.00am** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

**9.45am** Christmas Eucharist

