



THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST LEONARD, LEXDEN

ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GOD.



PARISH MAGAZINE

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2026 £1.00



The year ahead.....

As we turn the page into a new year, we do so with that familiar mixture of hope, gratitude, and honest wondering about what lies ahead. The metaphorical turning of the calendar is never magic in itself, but it does offer us a moment to pause—to look back with thankfulness for all that God has done in and through St Leonard's over the past twelve months.

One of the real joys of our parish life has been our work with children: our Baby & Toddler group continues to flourish, our Messy Church creates fun and worship to families, some of whom are nervous about entering a church, we have our youth group SLYC where young people can encourage their friends to join them. Huge thanks to all those who give of their time and talents to support our young people and crucially their families. Of course there is work still to do and I know that more work needs to be done for our Junior Church, but never think we don't have young families in our church - you may not see them on a Sunday morning but they are there on a Wednesday morning and a Sunday afternoon. Our young people have brought life, laughter, and a reminder of what it means to come to faith with open hands and open hearts.





Our outreach activities, Men & Women's Breakfast Groups, Friendship Lunches, House Groups, Friendship Line, School Assemblies and our newly formed Loose Ends, have also continued to stretch our sense of community & inclusivity— what is so special is our offering of support to those who need a listening ear, or creating spaces where people can simply belong. These acts of hospitality, small and large, show Christ's love far beyond our walls.

Speaking of walls... we will have a church rooftop focus on during the year and this will give us even more opportunity to reach out to our community as we start fundraising for the repairs. The roof continues to remind us, with great theological consistency, that we are all “works in progress.” Your contributions, prayers, and creative fundraising ideas will keep us moving towards a watertight future both physically and spiritually.

So perhaps, if you are into New Year resolutions, ours for 2026 is straightforward: to keep being a community that welcomes, encourages, and gently laughs together. To shine Christ's light—brightly on good days, bravely on the harder ones. And to continue building a church where the youngest to the oldest feel at home (preferably under a roof that isn't leaking).

A very happy and blessed New Year to you and those you love. May God guide us, strengthen us, and cheer us on in the months ahead.

Reverend Maggie.

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the first parish of 2026 and all at the Church wish you a happy New Year.

In this edition we highlight much of went on during the past two months including our very successful Christmas Market at the end of November and various other fund raising events.

2026 promises to be an eventful year with the major work on the Church roof due to start sometime in the first few weeks of the year and hopefully by the end of the year we should have a new Priest in Charge.

At the moment we can tell you that we have submitted our Parish Profile to the Archdeacon and hope that the advert for a new Priest in Charge will go out sometime in late January or early February.

Mike.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS FROM SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER MAGAZINE

JANUARY-FEBRUARY DIARY

Saturday 3rd January

8:30am Men's Breakfast

SUNDAY 4th January – The Epiphany

8:00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am ALL-AGE PARISH EUCHARIST

Tuesday 6th January

11:30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

7.30pm 'Medley' house group (Rosemary 515245)

Wednesday 7th January

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

10:45am Holy Communion at Woodlands

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 8th January

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 10th January

12:00pm Friendship Lunch

SUNDAY 11th January Baptism of Christ

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

5.30pm Evensong & Sermon

Monday 12th January

7:00pm Eucharist

7:45pm PCC Meeting

Wednesday 14th January

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 15th January

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 17th January

8:30am Women's Breakfast

SUNDAY 18th January 2nd Sunday of Epiphany

8:00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9:45am PARISH EUCHARIST

Monday 19th January

2:00pm Digital Skills Course

Wednesday 21st January

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

7:00pm Bible Study Group

Thursday 22nd January

8.00am Eucharist

SUNDAY 25th January 3rd Sunday of Epiphany

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

5.30pm Eucharist for Wholeness & Healing

Monday 26th January

2:00pm Digital Skills Course

Wednesday 28th January

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 29th January

8.00am Eucharist

2:00pm Pop-Up Cafe in Church

Saturday 31st January

8:30am Men's Breakfast

SUNDAY 1st February Presentation of Christ (Candlemass)

8:00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am ALL AGE CHRISTINGLE Celebration Eucharist

3:00pm SLYC in the hall

Monday 2nd February

2:00pm Digital Skills Course

Tuesday 3rd February

11:30am Holy Communion at Cheviot
7.30pm 'Medley' house group (Rosemary 515245)

Wednesday 4th February

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall
10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee
10:45am Holy Communion at Woodlands
11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

Thursday 5th February

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 7th February

8:30am Men's Breakfast

SUNDAY 8th February 2nd Sunday before Lent

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church
5.30pm Evensong & Sermon

Monday 9th February

2:00pm Digital Skills Course

Wednesday 11th February

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

Thursday 12th February

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 14th February

12:30pm Friendship Lunch

SUNDAY 15th February Sunday next before Lent

8:00am Holy Communion (BCP)
9:45am PARISH EUCHARIST
3:00pm Messy Pancakes

Tuesday 17th February

10:00am Brick Club in the hall

Wednesday 18th February

10.00am Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes followed by coffee
7:30pm Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

Thursday 19th February

8.00am Eucharist

Saturday 21st February

8:30am Women's Breakfast

SUNDAY 22nd February 1st Sunday of Lent

9:45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

5.30pm Eucharist for Wholeness & Healing

Monday 23rd February

2:00pm Digital Skills Course

Wednesday 25th February

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall

11:00am Lent Course

7:00pm Lent Course

Thursday 26th February

8.00am Eucharist

2:00pm Pop-Up Cafe in Church

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crossword



MOUSE TAILS

Rupert and Molly woke up at the crack of dawn on Christmas Day (as all children do) excited to see what presents had been left for them in their special Christmas stockings that Mum had knitted for them many years ago.

They checked out their stockings and were thrilled with their gifts. Molly got a new hat and scarf, 2 chocolates and some pretty red ribbon. Rupert also had a new hat and scarf, 2 chocolates and a toy car. They both rushed into Mum and Dad's sleep area laughing and shouting their thanks and singing, "We Wish you a Merry Christmas".

Mum and Dad woke up and laughing at the twins antics, wished them a happy Christmas with hugs and kisses for them both. The twins proudly produced their gifts to Mum and Dad, special cards that they'd made plus Molly had knitted Mum some fingerless gloves and a stripey scarf for Dad. Rupert had made a miniature Christmas tree for them both.

After a lovely breakfast of berries and little pieces of cake the family discussed their plans for the day. First, visit Grandpa, who was living below stairs with their cousins. They took cards and homemade gifts to them all.



Christmas celebrations for all the mice community began properly after the Service for the humans which they quietly watched and enjoyed. Once all the humans had left the Church they held their own Service with Grandpa officiating. All the mice community attended, the Woods, Halls, Outsiders and anyone else who wanted to. Grandpa welcomed everyone, the mice choir sang Away in a Manger, accompanied by Tommy Organ and his little band. Grandpa led them in a prayer of thanks to God for giving them this chance to be together and gave the blessing, the service finished with Hark the Herald Angels.

Any of the mice who wished to were invited to scoot up to the Hall for the days festivities.

Earlier that week the Dads and youngsters had built a Christmas tree and the Mums had made decorations for it and very splendid it looked too.



All the mice brought contributions for the feasting that would come later. Elderberry wine cordial, acorn beer, watercress, chestnuts and fresh wild herbs from the Woods. Pieces of cake, scraps of cheese and other foodstuffs from the Halls and the Church mice brought whatever they had managed to scavenge during the various festivities that had been held in the Church. All in all the Mums were delighted with the haul and started to plan what they would do with it all.

Of course, cards and news were exchanged while the youngsters ran riot playing all their favourite games, pin the tail on the rat, musical chairs, blind man's bluff, statues etc. The Mums were thrilled to meet the new baby, born that week to the youngest Woods cousin, they had called her Holly and Grandpa was going to Baptise her the next day.

The youngsters were pretty hot and bothered after an hour or so of hectic games so the Mums gathered them all up, sat them down and Grandpa held a lovely story time session whilst the Mums prepared all the scrumptious food ready for their feast.

After the feasting everyone was happy and full and some of the elders were having a quiet snooze. Tommy Organ and his band played a selection of Christmas carols. Once everyone had recovered from the feast the band stepped up the tempo and the dancing started up. Well, they called it dancing but to you and I it would look a lot like hopping! No matter, they were enjoying themselves greatly.



Eventually, they were all worn out and many of the smaller youngsters were already sound asleep. All agreed that it had been a wonderful day and they made their way to the nests that they'd readied earlier and soon all that could be heard was snores and snuffles as they drifted into sleep, dreaming of the fun they had had that day.

CT



Digital Access Help – Do you need help getting online?

The North East Essex Digital Access Support Team (NEE DAST) offer a free service that helps people gain basic skills and confidence using today's smart technology. The team will be hosting 8 sessions at St Leonard's, starting at 2pm on Monday 19th January. Each session last 2 hours and they will be covering the following subjects

- 19th Jan – How to use your Smart Device
How to interact with your smart device and settings
- 26th Jan – Understanding Apps
What are Apps? and how to download them.
- 2nd Feb – Online Safety
How to keep yourself safe.
- 9th Feb – Browsing Online
How to search and navigate online.
- 16th Feb – Online Communications
How to communicate online.
- 23rd Feb – Social Media
Learn about socialising online.
- 2nd Mar – Online Banking
Learn about what online banking is and how it works.
- 9th Mar – Recap and ask us anything
Ask us about anything from previous sessions or any other questions you may have

If you think you may be interested in attending please speak to Esther who can give you more details.

From the Church Wardens

Update on Roof Repairs

The latest on the Church Roof is that, as mentioned earlier, the builders hope to start work early in the new year. The first thing you will notice will be scaffolding going up around the main body of the Church. We understand this is a complex construction and will take some time. Once this is done then the main work to replace broken and missing slates can start. Our services will not be disrupted as the whole roof area will be covered in tarpaulins.

Although we have do have money in our Fabric Fund to carry out the work, we will be looking to cover a proportion of the cost by applying for grants, fundraising and making appeals to the wider community for financial help. As you can imagine this is a very costly exercise and anything we can raise will be much appreciated.

Vacancy Update

We have been working hard on putting together our Parish Profile and are pleased to say that this has now been submitted to the Archdeacon and Area Dean for consideration. We are hopeful that the advert for the post of Priest in Charge at St Leonard's will be placed in the Church Times at the end of January or early February and that, should we receive some applications, interviews will take place after Easter. We will keep you up to date with progress during future magazines.

Nick and Mike



SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday, 21st January 2026

Please join us at our monthly Bible Study
Group all welcome.

Please contact Maggie for further details.



At a... “LOOSE END”?

Just drop in to our “pop-up” cafe on
the last Thursday of every month
starting @ 2:00pm



Christingle Service

Our annual All Age Christingle Celebration service will take place on Sunday 1st February at 9:45am. All proceeds from this service will be donated to the Children’s Society.



Ash Wednesday – 18th February

There will be two services with Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, 18th February, at 10:00am and 7:30pm.



At a...
**"LOOSE
END?"**

Just drop in to
our "pop-up" cafe
on the
**last Thursday of
every month**
@ 2:00pm

Further details from:

maggiew234@gmail.com

or

admin@stleonardslexden.org.uk

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

19th November

Stephanie Howgego

17th December

Alex Fullerton

'Rest in peace and rise in glory.'



BAPTISMS

16th November

Theodore and Isobella Knight

28th December

Harry Boyle-Ames

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



CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX OPENING

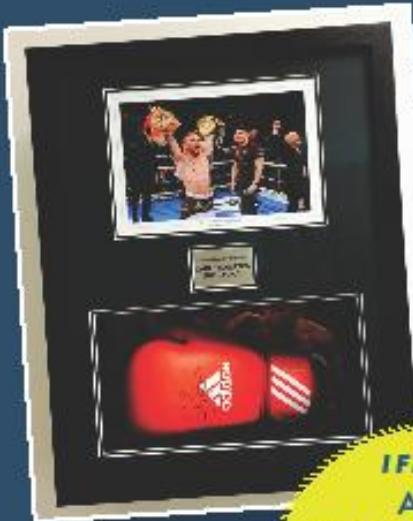
Thank you to everyone who contributed towards our collection for the Children's Society, either by having a box at home or by donating on Sunday 30th November after the 9:45am service. We raised over £700 which will help towards the Society's work to protect hopes of children threatened by abuse, exploitation and neglect. If you would like to know about the work of the Children's Society or would like a donations box please speak to Julie, Linda or Rachel.

•Cards•
•Framing•
•Gallery•

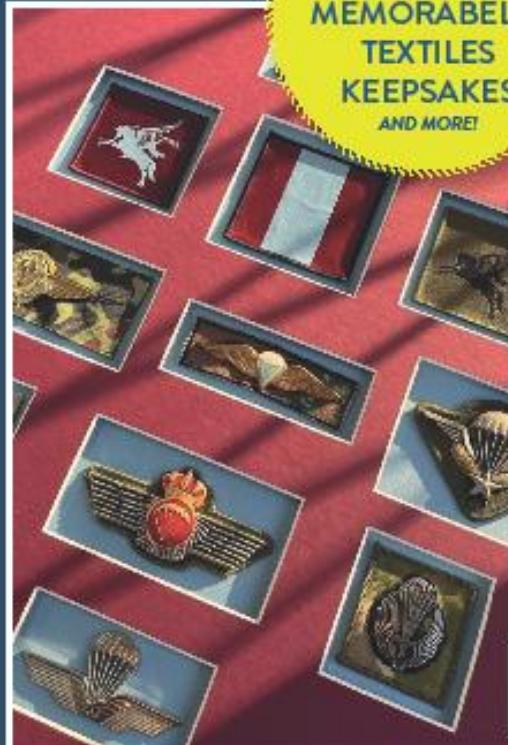
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New Hythe Hampers

Thank you to everyone who contributed towards Christmas hampers for the residents at New Hythe. We raised £320.00 in total, the hampers are always well received, and the recipients are very grateful to be remembered.





CHRISTMAS MARKET

Our annual Christmas Market was held on 29th November and despite there being other events on the same day we are pleased to announce that over £2250 was raised towards church funds.



Our thanks must go firstly to Nicholas Percival for providing advertising boards and a banner that did much to encourage people to come.

Next thanks must go to all those who helped in the lead up to the event and those who worked tirelessly on the day. We had our usual number of stalls plus our very popular café area that was always busy.



Especially popular was our area put aside for children and of course Father Christmas who gave up his time from what is his busy season.



Everyone said how good it was to see new faces together with old friends who have supported us through the years. Events like these take time to organise and planning is already underway for November 2026.





What's on for Children and Families in January and February

The Baby and Toddler Group takes place in the hall every Wednesday in term time at 9.30am or 11.00am. These sessions are identical. The first session this term is the 7th January. Just turn up!

4th January

All Age Epiphany Service 9.45am

11th January

Junior Church

25th January

Junior Church

1st February

All Age Christingle Service 9.45am

SLYC youth group for youngsters in Year 4 and above

In the hall 3pm - 5pm

Please book at juniorchurch@stleonardslexden.org.uk

8th February

Junior Church

15th February

Messy Pancakes 3pm - 5pm



Please book at juniorchurch@stleonardslexden.org.uk

17th February

Brick Club 10am - 12noon

In the hall Just turn up and build

22nd February

Junior Church

A Winter News Round up from our Children and Young People.



We have been busy! Starting with the older children - our **SLYC** youth group held another active session at the end of November. We played the usual badminton, football and tennis games and had great fun exploring Kirty's selection of table games. But it seems 'the oldies are the goldies' as we really enjoy a game of Bingo! It's great to see how well this group of youngsters get along and we're looking forward to our next session on 1st February.

Junior Church has welcomed some new members recently and they seem to be enjoying our Sunday morning sessions during the 9.45am service. We are including a photo of us making Christmas cards for our church members who find it difficult to get to church. We were a great team and produced some lovely cards and letters which I'm sure have been really appreciated by the recipients. Junior Church runs on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.





Our most recent **Messy Church** took the form of a **Messy Nativity** performed by leaders, and a lovely family from our Baby and Toddler group who took on the roles of Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus.



We told the story of a very grumpy innkeeper who was tired of answering his door to all the unexpected visitors on Christmas Eve. However, his grumpiness changed to joy when he realised that a very special baby

had been born in his stable that night.

It was wonderful to see the faces of the children when they were invited into the stable and found a real baby in his mother's arms!

Nearly 80 of us were able to enjoy the experience. Thank you, Mary, Joseph and Baby for taking part.



Our Baby and Toddler Group finished the term with a very busy Christmas Service in the church.

Nearly 80 children and adults came along and Maggie created yet another imaginative way of telling the Christmas Story to this young group of children.



It started with a very bare Christmas tree which was gradually decorated with the nativity characters, with every child helping with the decorations. Lastly, we added hearts to the tree to show that our hearts

were full of the love and joy that the Baby Jesus brought into our lives.

We made crowns and decorated stars.
We made a nativity decoration and



played
snowballs in
the aisle!
Then it was up
to the hall for our party lunch and a
visit from Father Christmas.



A huge thank you to all the people who help to run all of these groups. We are a very lucky church! **Brick Club** will be returning in the February half term.



Children and Youth Ministry Team



Here we come A-Wassailing

The Comrie Singers and Jubilant Brass held a very successful Wassail in the Church Hall in December which raised £314.50 for Church funds.

Many thanks to all involved, we look forward to welcoming you again in 2026!

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 2nd
Saturday from **September to
March** at 12pm

Please book by emailing
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.



A New Year message from the Bishop of Chelmsford

The Right Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, the Bishop of Chelmsford, has written a New Year message for 2026:

It was a joy to meet Pope Leo in Rome in November of last year. The occasion was the declaration of Cardinal Newman as a Doctor of The Church, made all the more meaningful in the Jubilee Year, themed “Pilgrims of Hope”. It seems to me that as we stand on the threshold of a New Year, we are called to travel this path of Hope together.

It's always a temptation to be drawn towards despair. A febrile political environment, the diminished standing of the Church, even our own weariness can lead us to forget that we are called to be people of Hope. Those whose Hope is in the Word made Flesh - the message that's been proclaimed in churches throughout our Diocese this Christmas period and because of which we can journey confidently into a new year.

And Hope abounds not just when all is well, not just in life's joys and successes. In his November message for World Day of the Poor, the Pope urges us to recognise those experiencing poverty as "witnesses to a strong and steadfast hope, precisely because they embody it in the midst of uncertainty, poverty, instability and marginalisation". That is not how a secular society usually measures Hope. Christian Hope has nothing to do with whether a successful outcome can be predicted but everything to do with the conviction of things not seen and the determination to travel well in times of uncertainty, for our Hope is in the one who renews all things.

In my Persian childhood we celebrated New Year on 21st March - a time of new life bursting forth at the Spring Equinox. Joyful though that remembrance is, I've also come to see the blessing of the western tradition - of the New Year coming at a time of darkness and even a certain bleakness. Every morning in the small chapel at Bishopscourt I see the words of St. John engraved on the stain glass window: Light Shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Now that is Hope, and that is what I wish for you, your loved ones and your communities. May you have a happy and Hope-filled 2026.

+Guli Chelmsford



CHRISTMAS CRAFT & WINE EVENING

Thank you to everyone who came to our Christmas Craft evening in November. 20 people attended, 8 of which were not from our church family. It was a lovely evening and had some really lovely feedback.

I'd just like to say a big thank you from both myself and my friend Clare for such an enjoyable evening making Christmas crafts, we were both made to feel very welcome and we were very proud of our accomplishments! Best wishes, Jo Jackson

And we also made £190.00 for church funds. A huge thank you to Rachel, Julie, Linda, Liz, Amy and Linda who made it all possible.

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



We have printed below Viv's sermon from our Memorial Service held on 2nd November. Many people have remarked on how much it moved them and how perfectly it summed up what they were feeling so we thought it was worth reproducing for anyone who was unable to be there.

Today the Church celebrates All Souls Day. It's a day when we're invited to set aside some time to remember our departed loved ones, to reflect on their time in the world and all they meant to us, to give thanks to God for them, and to pray for the repose of their souls. And it's also a time when we can acknowledge our continuing sense of loss and sorrow.

That short Bible reading we heard from Revelation Chapter 21 is one to which we often turn for comfort in bereavement. When we have lost someone who was very dear to us, our hearts ache and we cast around in our minds for some way to make sense of it, in the desperate hope that we can somehow ease the pain. After the funeral, life goes on relentlessly around us, other people continue to go about their lives, as if nothing has changed, and for them nothing has; and even those who are close to us and aware of our situation seem all too soon to expect us to move on and get back to normal. But that old normality no longer exists; we can't go back; we have to adjust to living in this new reality.

Recently while I was recovering from surgery I watched a lot of daytime television. All the adverts seemed to be aimed at older people, and many were for 'no fuss' cremation plans. There's nothing wrong with wanting to make provision for when the time comes, but one advert particularly infuriated me. Two women are having a conversation and one says, 'Nobody likes funerals, do they?' I wanted to shout, 'Well of course we don't like them, but that doesn't mean we don't need them!' The death of a loved one is such a significant event that we want to acknowledge it; we want to honour and celebrate that person's life, to recognise the

part they played in the world and in our lives. We need to be able to express our grief and our sense of loss, and perhaps sometimes to address feelings of guilt or anger. And it's a time when we can say goodbye to them and commend them to God's safe keeping.

After the funeral it's a comfort to know that we've done our best for them and that they're now at rest. But we aren't at rest; we still have to carry on with our lives, but now it feels like more of an effort. There are gaps in our days which they used to fill, and now and then something unexpectedly catches us out, and brings on a surge of grief. Places visited together, social gatherings, a piece of music, or the sudden urge to tell them something; all these things remind us of our loss. We miss them, and it can be hard to see a way to enjoy life again. We may find ourselves feeling angry; angry with them for leaving us, and angry with God for letting us suffer. It's OK to cry out to God in our distress. We have a direct line to him, and nothing is too much for him to hear. In the Bible there are many occasions when people cry out to God in anguish, and the Psalms are full of lines like, 'God, where are you? Why aren't you listening?' 'When are you going to help me? And even Jesus, who was the Son of God, turned to the Psalms when he cried out from the cross to his Father, 'My God, why have you forsaken me?'

But Jesus and all those others before him persisted because they believed that God is loving, and never truly deserts us. They would have found comfort in another Psalm, number 40, which begins, 'I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.' They knew that God doesn't abandon us, even when sometimes it can seem hard to find him. Before the birth of Jesus, people thought God was distant, stern and unapproachable, usually angry and quick to punish anyone who displeased him. But God wanted us to know that this was not what he was like, so he sent his Son Jesus Christ to live among us, to fully experience human life and emotions, as we do. God came and lived in the world, so we can trust that he truly understands our suffering.

God isn't just a far off observer of all our struggles and sorrows; he knows and loves us, and we believe our departed loved ones are with him. If we pray to him in our hearts, it can help us feel closer to them, and to God. We can tell him how we feel, and ask him to help us live on in this world without them. His response may not be obvious, but sometimes, if we keep asking, then something will come into our minds, which we may not even realise has come from God, but which helps us see a way forward. You are here this afternoon because grief doesn't end with the funeral, and that person is still, and will always be, part of your life. Our time in this world is brief; all we can do is make the most of it, cherishing memories and trusting in the love of God, knowing that those for whom we grieve now live on in with him in perfect peace, in a new life which for now we can only imagine, but which we too in our turn will enjoy.

Amen.

Online Self-Compassion
6-Week Course 2026

Maya Campbell
drmayacampbell.com

Maya is a research scientist, psychologist and author. She has used self-compassion tools to overcome severe traumas and deal with life threatening illnesses.

Feeling stressed or overwhelmed? This gentle, supportive course helps you slow down, ease anxiety, and build a kinder relationship with yourself.

Feb 1st - March 15th 2026
No session Feb 22nd
Sundays 10 am - 12 pm
Cost: £295

For further information and booking please contact
maya@heartoftheuniverse.co.uk

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- Improved wellbeing

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Christmas Flowers

Once again, we must thank our team of fantastic flower arrangers for the display in the church over Christmas. Having no flowers in church over the period of advent it was wonderful to come in on Christmas eve to find the church full of amazing displays.





I do not think many of the congregation who attend our services over Christmas realise the time effort and cost that goes into putting these displays together. Our thanks must go to Peter Hearsum who as team leader brings this all together.

What is not realised that for most of the time our flower arrangers provide the flowers from their own pockets and do not ask to be recompensed. Thankfully some people from within the congregation do donate money towards flowers but any extra contributions would be gratefully accepted. If you would like to help, please speak to either of the Church Wardens or the Parish Administrator.



**Thank you so much to
Peter and his team**

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

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Final day for items for the MARCH-APRIL edition:

SUNDAY 8TH FEBRUARY

Please submit items to the Editor
email: 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.

Visit us online at www.johnfowlers.co.uk
info@johnfowlers.co.uk



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From the Archives

In the November December edition of the magazine, I recounted the steps taken to enlarge our church to include a larger chancel and to improve the seating arrangements. This archive is a continuation and covers some of the processes that took place.

A Vestry minute of July 4th, 1892, had highlighted the problems with the Church built in 1821/2 and a further minute had drawn up a schedule of work: -

Section 1:- to cover the internal roof with wood, with the exception of the principal timbers

Section 2:- a chamber for heating apparatus to be under the floor at the Southeast of the Church (this is interesting as it was one of the pipes for the heating apparatus that corroded during the 2021 that led to the floor having to be replaced following a very expensive leak).

Section 3:- to remove the present Chancel and East wall of the nave and use the materials in the new building. To insert a stained-glass window and tablet recording it on the North wall of the Chancel. (the point about reusing materials is interesting as it fits in with our present ideas on recycling)

Section 4:- to renew to the floor of the nave in cement and wood blocks. New heating for the nave and Chancel. Also to reseat the nave with open benches of wood placed three feet apart.

From the Vestry minutes of 21 January 1893 it was reported that tenders for the work on the chancel had been received by the Church Improvement Committee from local and other builders; Beaumont - £1715; Brown, Braintree £1705; Chambers, Colchester £1194; Dobson, Colchester £1789; Dupont, Colchester £2079; Everett 1755; Grimes,

Colchester; £1685; Halliday, Stamford £1682.6.9(34d) Misskin, St. Albans £1987; Orfeur, Colchester £1770; Saunders, Dedham £1590.

Saunders were the lowest tender, but nothing could happen until sufficient funds were raised, however the Committee were keen to do as much work as possible with what funds were available to avoid the expense of having to go out to tender again.

As yet, I have not been able to uncover later vestry minutes to see how the work proceeded. Yet in the Essex County Standard of May 19th 1894, there is a report about the restoration of St Leonards. It states (in the language of the 19th Century) that

“a goodly number of parishioners assembled at the church on Thursday afternoon to witness the laying of the top stone of the building which is a handsome finial cross surmounting the eastern gable. A Hymn, “O God our Help in Ages Past” was sung as the stone was placed in its position by the Clerk of Works, Mr George Spearman. The Rector said the following words “this top stone is placed upon this building and this house of prayer is crowned with the sign of redemption in token that we erect this Chancel to the glory of God and in the faith of Christ crucified.”

There followed a brief service of bible readings and prayers that all who came to worship there may remember the sacrifice of the death of Christ and the benefits received therefrom, and all who passed in pursuit of business or pleasure, may be reminded of the eternal life which our saviour laid down his life on the cross to win back mankind”.

The report went on to state that work was approaching completion and that it was hoped that consecration would take place in July.

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

Francis, John Bernard	21 st February 1928 – 7 th January 2010
Newton, Marjorie Annie	25 th January 1929 – 22 nd January 1983
Bonner, John Reginald	18 th September 1930 – 7 th January 1984
Garland, Patricia	10 th August 1933 – 30 th January 2015
Loxley, Harry Cedric	5 th February 1927 – 22 nd January 2018
Chaplin, George Brian Barrie	27 th January 1924 – 12 th January 2021
Lloyd-Jarvis, Pauline Jane	26 th December 1943 – 20 th January 2025
Carter, Dorren June	22 nd January 1929 – 3 rd February 2000
Tokley, Jack William	29 th April 1914 – 7 th February 2005
Drever, Roy Howard William	9 th March 1949 – 12 th February 2002
Sceats, Kenneth Henry Gordon	7 th December 1915 – 11 th February 2006
Merryweather, Violet Maud	4 th February 1918 – 6 th February 2010
Coulter, Martin Austin	5 th May 1933 – 12 th February 2011
Flower, Mary Gwendoline	22 nd February 1926 – 26 th February 2011
Hyde, Irene Mary	7 th October 1910 - 27 th February 2011
Wake, Charles	26 th October 1926 – 16 th February 2012
Matthews, Stuart James	22 nd September 1980 – 28 th February 2012
Clary, Mary	6 th March 1924 – 29 th February 2012
Whalley, Benjamin	31 st December 1928 – 27 th February 2012
Holden, Arthur Stuart James	29 th June 1923 – 11 th February 2013
Caunter, Margaret Emma	24 th September 1931 – 3 rd February 2017
Ellis, William Frederick	2 nd May 1919 – 16 th February 1991
Lappage, Leonard Arthur	28 th June 1931 – 19 th February 2018
Moxon, Grace Phyllis	13 th March 1920 – 18 th February 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.

REGULAR SERVICES

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



Christingle Service

Our annual All Age Christingle Celebration service will take place on Sunday 1st February at 9:45am. All proceeds from this service will be donated to the Children's Society.



Ash Wednesday – 18th February

There will be two services with Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, 18th February, at 10:00am and 7:30pm.