

**PARISH OF SOUTHMINSTER
MAGAZINE OF THE
CHURCH OF ST LEONARD**



and also for Steeple Parish
**The Church of
St Lawrence & All Saints**



Team leaders and several children
who attended this year's **HOLIDAY CLUB**
“Diary of a Disciple”

SEPTEMBER 2025

Let us answer Jesus' question:
“Who do you say I am?”

by reading and reacting to Luke 9:20

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

*Articles for the October magazine
should be with
Kath Dunstan by, at the latest,
Sunday 21st September
New contributors are welcome.*

To cover our costs we have
to charge for this magazine.
The charge per issue is £1
but if you pay for the
whole year in advance the
charge will be £10 -
(obviously a bit saved!)

Reflection from Jenny Pratt

God is good – all the time. Our Holiday Club this year was called Diary of a Disciple and we delved into the gospel of Luke. It ran over 3 days and we looked at a different question each day.

Day 1 - Who is Jesus? Our memory verse came from Luke 9:18 – 20. Jesus asks his disciples “Who do the crowds say I am?” Lots of people were saying Jesus was lots of different things and that still happens today. My grandfather would say that Jesus was a very good man because he did lots of good things. He also thought that because lots of people do very good things there must be lots of ‘little’ Jesus’s in the world. So what is different about Jesus? The crowds were confused as well. Some said he was John the Baptist, others said Elijah and still others said he was one of the prophets of long ago that had come back to life. Then Jesus made it more personal. He says, “Who do you say I am?”

So what do you think? How do you know? We look at what Jesus said and did.

Day 2 – What did Jesus do and say? Jesus told lots of parables and did many miracles. This day we looked at the paralysed man that was lowered through the roof. We talked about team work, the man who had friends to help him, and Jesus who had 12 disciples to help him. Here is a clue as to who Jesus is – He said to the man “Your sins are forgiven.” This infuriated the Pharisees because they said that only God could forgive sins.

Day 3 – What happened to Jesus? We heard the Easter

story and made an Easter garden. This was not good-bye, it is not the end. Jesus came back to prove who he is.

“Who do you say I am?” Only Simon Peter got it right, he answered, “God’s Messiah.”

God is good – all the time. It may be difficult to say this when things are going wrong. And then it gets worse. Jesus never promised to take away all your problems. He promised to be with you through them. He is God’s Messiah, our Saviour, our friend and he loves us. Everybody is included, nobody is excluded.

All the time – God is good.

Jenny Pratt

The Summer weather turns the leaves to flame. ?

Our Holiday Club depends partly on the weather, for each day includes games in the churchyard. Grey skies and damp grass are kill-joys. This year, not only did the sun shine during the week, but we had a warm – hot even – sunny Sunday for our barbecue. Before I say more, we thank Rev. Peter, Keith and Frances Hatfield and cooking helpers and those who erected the gazebo for the splendid Barbecue after a Holiday Club plus Café Church service that got even a solemn octogenarian dancing.

The forecast for September looks a lot like more of the same. There will be some rainy days, but on most occasions the chances of rain are lower than 50%. Already, dead leaves are collecting in the streets of London and Paris, and it won’t be Astronomical Autumn until 22 nd September. The climate is changing. It’s bad. And it’s us.

Opponents of changing our habits will say, “the climate is always changing, it’s nature.” Well, it’s *human* nature, certainly. We as Christians have been told that our task in the world is to serve and protect the Earth (Genesis 2:15). That requires limiting activities that produce the gases like Carbon Dioxide, Methane and Nitrous oxide which increase air temperature. The Original Sin in Genesis 3 wasn’t eating a particular fruit. It was refusing to accept limits on human consumption and abide by them.

Ken Dunstan

Southminster Flower Show 2025

On Saturday 19th July Southminster had its yearly flower show. St Leonard's had their own stand there where we had plenty of leaflets to hand out to people about all the groups and services we have as a church.

We shared lots of information about Little Lions, Saturday Club, Holiday Club, Café Church, Family Celebration and had a team of four of us on hand to chat to everyone who came to our stand. In addition to this the children had fun making a flower crown for themselves and we had lots of sweets to hand out.

It was a fun community day which we thoroughly enjoyed. Unfortunately, I cannot comment on any of the rest of the flower show as we were so busy we couldn't leave the stand. We thank Peter, Leon, and Dawn for all their help and to Gordon and Keith for helping with setting and packing up.

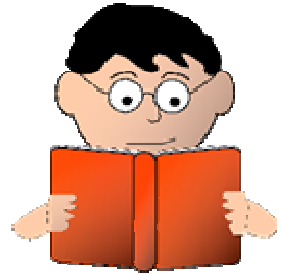
If anyone would like to volunteer to do an hour or so on the stand next year it would be wonderful so that we could all get to enjoy everything the flower show had to offer.

Karen Flack

Editor's extra note: As has become normal over the years, Jenny Pratt and Sue Moore won prizes in the Craft Section. Congratulations to them!

Fostering and Adoption

What type of books do you read? Do you have a favourite book or a favourite style of writing or author? I read mostly novels on topical subjects and lately have read quite a lot on fostering and adoption, although novels and fiction they are based on a lot of research by the authors and tell a story based on real life experiences.



So, what is fostering and who are foster parents? I have read that foster parents are not saviours but servants, they are there not to solve all the child's problems but to care for them for an interim period of time. They bring up a child that is not their own, to nurture, and encourage their development until a more permanent home can hopefully be found through adoption. Fostering may also be a temporary stop gap whilst family dynamics can be worked through.

What also is adoption? Adoption is a process where people take another person's child into their own family and take care of them as their own child. I was thinking of how this relates to our Christian walk. The Bible tells us that God calls us his children when we put our faith and trust in Jesus, acknowledging his death on the cross for our sins. Through Jesus' sacrifice and our becoming believers we are adopted into God's family becoming His children and heirs of his grace and promises and co-heirs with Jesus. (Romans 8- 14-17).

The Bible also emphasises that we take care of people especially orphans and widows, those experiencing separation and need loving care. (James 1 v 27).

We, as Christians, become foster parents in a way, taking people under our wing and nurturing them, teaching them the Good News of Jesus, until they themselves give their lives to Jesus and are adopted into the permanent family of God.

Fostering and Adoption aren't always easy; they can bring much joy but also pain when things are difficult and don't work out. Sometimes a child needs more specialist care than can be given, so the right place and help is sought for them. We thank God that He calls us to care and nurture people in the best way we can, just as someone cared, prayed and nurtured us and led us to a new life with Jesus.



Brenda Sheppard

Prayer Ministry on Sundays after the 11 am service

Please come to the area outside the Chapel if you have a particular need for prayer, (for yourself or someone close to you) where there should be two people available to pray with you. Pre-service prayer occurs too, so feel free to join them with your supporting prayers or your urgent requests.

Obviously church members will be available to pray with you at other times too, so do ask if necessary.

VJ Day Tea Dance

On Saturday 16th August Southminster Parish Council invited people to ‘The Great Southminster VJ Day Tea Dance Celebrations’ in the Memorial Hall. This dance followed a laying of wreaths on Friday 15th at St. Leonard’s Church War Memorial. On the same day local bellringers rang the church bells for about half an hour. Many throughout Southminster could enjoy the ringing at a distance. This was the first of two days incorporating remembrance and reflection and then celebration.

The Tea Dance was a great success and the afternoon included music and singing from the “Bon Bon’s” who were 3 lovely ladies singing 40’s music as well as some Rock and Roll to get us up dancing!! There was also a magician who went from table to table completely baffling us with his magic skills and we all said “How on earth did he do that?”



A superb ‘High Tea’ was served mid afternoon which consisted of sandwiches, cakes and scones provided by the Dengie Ladies. A real feast!

The Tea Dance was really well attended, very well organised and enjoyed tremendously. A huge ‘thank you’ to all who contributed and for all the hard work undertaken in making the day very memorable.

Brenda Sheppard



YOUR BUZZING COMMUNITY HUB

Celebrating Community Spirit at the URC

What a wonderful day it was for the launch of The Hive community hub at the URC! The event buzzed with excitement as visitors of all ages came along to discover what's in store and sign up to volunteer or be the first to hear the latest news.

We were delighted to welcome so many members of our community, young and old alike, and LuLu's Café proved so popular that you had to queue to get in!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us, including our stall holders, volunteers, staff, and all our visitors. Your support made the day truly special.

If you'd like to learn more about upcoming activities or how you can volunteer for one of our projects, please get in touch with Karis at communityworker.dengieurcs@gmail.com. Keep an eye on the notice board or simply pop in!

Chris Martin writes: From Friday 12th September, the Bereavement Group will be meeting at Lulu's Cafe at the URC church on Fridays from 10 till Noon.

Anybody interested can contact me on 01621 772751 or at this email address for more details. kookychrisuk@yahoo.co.uk

Meanwhile we'll continue to meet on Tuesdays at the URC as before.

Sunday 7th September

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
Philemon 1 - 21
Luke 14 : 25 - 33
Sidesperson

12th Sunday after Trinity

Rev'd Peter
Celebrant
Celebrant
Gordon Baker

11.00 Family Holy Communion

President/Preacher
Readings as above
Intercessions
Prayer Ministry
Audio-visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Rev'd Peter
Kath Dunstan
Brenda Sheppard
Frances Hatfield & Yvonne Thurbon
Christine Morgan
Gwyneth Iffland
Maureen Smith & Sally Culff
+ Pam Morris

Sunday 14th September

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
1 Timothy 1 : 12 - 17
Luke 15 : 1 - 10
Sidesperson

13th Sunday after Trinity

Rev'd Ken Dunstan
Celebrant
Celebrant
Paul Lucas

11.00 Family Celebration

Leaders
Prayer Ministry
Audio-visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Team: Karen, Jenny, Dawn
Fiona Begley & Sylvia Adams
Christine Lucas
Brenda Sheppard
Jenni Blomfield & Dee
+ Yvonne Thurbon & Denise Mason

Sunday 21st September**08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

2 Corinthians 4 : 1 - 6

Matthew 9 : 9 - 13

Sidesperson

14th Sunday after Trinity

Rev'd Ken /Jenny Pratt

Celebrant

Celebrant

Leon Flack

11.00 Morning Worship

Leader/Preacher

Readings as above

Intercessions

Prayer Ministry

Audio-Visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

Norman Pratt / Jenny Pratt

Pauline Siggers

Fiona Begley

Sarah Prendergast & Christine Lucas

Christine Morgan

Kath Dunstan

Kathy Carnell & Frances Hatfield
+ Graham & Sandra Bradford

Sunday 28th September**08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

1 Timothy 6 : 6 - 19

Luke 16 : 19 - end

Sidesperson

15th Sunday after Trinity

Rev'd Peter / Brenda Sheppard

Celebrant

Celebrant

Keith Hatfield

10.15 Morning Worship

Leader/Preacher

Readings as above

Intercessions

Prayer Ministry

Audio-Visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

CAFÉ CHURCH

Rev'd Peter/ Brenda Sheppard

Linda Payne

Frances Hatfield

Jenni Blomfield & Kathy Carnell

Sylvia Adams

Gordon Baker

Christine Lucas & Sandra Billingham
+ Sarah Prendergast and Ray Kempen

Steeple Church News

Steeple Church has services every Sunday morning at 9.15am unless otherwise advertised

We have Morning Prayer on the first Sunday each month, a Family Service on third Sunday and Holy Communion on the second and fourth Sundays. An on-line service for those preferring to worship from home is available each week on www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk



Steeple Historic Vehicle Gathering in Grange Farm meadow on Sunday 17th August was even more popular than we had dared to hope. We had more vehicle and stationary engine exhibits and more visitors to admire them. Even people without a natural interest in old cars, like Kath Dunstan, were able to appreciate their historical value. The two refreshment facilities were both very busy all day. In fact, the financial takings at the Southminster Refreshments tent were increased by 20%.

As the hot dry Summer draws to a close, our thoughts turn to Harvest. Gardeners and farmers are reporting mixed results with some crops getting off to an early start in the Spring but then suffering from lack of rain. But the weather was ideal for combining the cereal crops so farmers were able to avoid the cost of drying the grain before storage.

For our **Harvest Festival at 4pm on Sunday 5th October** please help decorate Steeple Church with fresh produce and other provisions. Donated goods will be shared between the Dengie Food Pantry and a woman's refuge.

After the service, we'll move to the barn at West Newlands where Steeple Church and St Lawrence church will hold a joint **Harvest Supper at 5.30pm**. Tickets will be £7.50 single or £20 for a family. If you would like to be part of this, please tell one of the people listed below.

Steeple Church contacts:

Rev'd Canon Peter Begley, Vicar, 01621 772 300

Fiona Ashworth, Churchwarden,

Rhona Leech, Assistant Warden

Teresa Julien, Assistant Warden,

Peter Marshall, PCC Treasurer & Verger,

Editor's note

As we move through the late Summer and early Autumn we will all be planning what we should be doing for the church Harvest Festivals. Obviously the first thing is to recognise the farmers and gardeners who provide so much for us, and we will demonstrate this by contributing funds and food to the church collections. This will benefit people who have not what they really need (and who regularly receive goods from our local Food Pantry). Christian Aid are asking for support so that they can help people worldwide who are experiencing famine and other problems. Details of this will be available in church. Please be generous in the best way possible.



Henry Church Cleaning Club 2025



The cleaning continues on in the Church and we are blessed to be part of a really faithful team but there is always plenty of room for new recruits as some of us are slowing down a bit!! We meet fortnightly on a Friday morning from 9am to 11am. If you could spare just a little time during those 2 hours or even if you could come monthly it would be a great help.

September dates are: 12th and 26th

If you would like to give it a try and would like a rota please speak to me, Brenda Sheppard, or contact me by phone. You will be made very welcome.

SATURDAY CLUB

for Primary School children

Saturday morning (monthly) in church

9.30 am - 11.30 am

£1 per child

Children can join in craft, music, games etc.
or just spend time chatting with their friends.

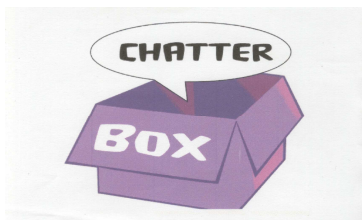
As usual, the day after Saturday Club is our Family
Celebration in the church at 11 am.

Lots of books are available on the shelves at the back of church for you to borrow and enjoy, and then - of course - return. If you have books that you don't need any more, speak with Christine Lucas about donating them to church.

SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL

LUNCH CLUB meets on most Mondays.
If you would like any information please phone
Dave Christie 07775 758118.

Fancy a chat?



At the Memorial Hall
10.00 - 12.00 Thursday mornings

As well as chatting there's tea, coffee, biscuits (and sometimes cake) jigsaws, crafts, newspapers, board games - and chatting isn't compulsory!

DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP

Tuesday 23rd September

There will be a speaker

For further details contact Paula Neall 01621 773243



LITTLE LIONS' usually meet on Wednesday mornings in the Memorial Hall but this is **during term-time only**. It is for babies, toddlers & their carers. The families join the main services, especially the Family Celebrations every second Sunday.

POSSIBLE ROTA DETAILS: YOUR AVAILABILITY FOR 2 MONTHS

We can worship regularly in church again, but with appropriate safety limitations, so we need to be well-prepared. Please let Paul Lucas know if you are willing to be part of his volunteer team but cannot be available on any of the following dates.

October 2025	5	12	19	26	
November 2025	2	9	16	23	30

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO FULFIL YOUR DUTY YOU SHOULD CHANGE WITH SOMEONE AND INFORM THE WARDENS OF THE ARRANGEMENT.

Please pray for the families involved in the following events:

On 13th September the wedding of Bradley and Megan

On 25th September the baptism of Celiah and Zeydan

Also put in your diaries the new Home Group Meetings
on Mondays at 10am and Thursdays at 8pm
Details will be in church.

Keep praying for everyone who has recently lost a loved one, and for others who are in need of healing and general care. Pray for all medical personnel, local and wider afield, and all the regular carers. Don't forget all the local farmers who are struggling with effects of recent weather problems. And also remember people who have become unemployed for various reasons - and the people who are trying to help them.

Who are we?

We are part of God's Family --- the Church.

Everyone is invited to be part of this family.

To keep aware of what is happening, and to participate on line with services, log into the website

<https://www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk/>

Also, we have a WhatsApp group entitled

"Together Apart Our Church". Lots of people are involved in this.

These links have been greatly appreciated by regular Church family members and also by people who have not, to date, attended our church services. It is good to 'allow' God to point us in possible new directions and then to respond.

God has a plan with hope for future.

If you would like specific prayer, please contact the vicar. preferably by email but otherwise on 01621 772300

A notice about our offerings to God.

Many of us use the facility of the offering plate to give our gifts to God. Whether we are attending in person, or not, it is always a good time to think about a standing order to the church so that we are still bringing our gift. Many of us are doing this already – Thank you, but those who may be wondering how they can continue their giving through Standing Order the details of the church bank are here:

Barclays Bank

Sort code: **20.54.30**

A/c No. **80825107**

A/c Name: Southminster Parochial Church Council.

For Steeple use: Sort code: **20.54.30**

A/c No. **60842494**

A/c Name: Steeple Parochial Church Council.

Some upcoming St Leonard's events in September

A new series of Home Group Meetings in church will be on

Mondays 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th at 10am

and on Thursdays 11th, 18th, 25th, at 8 pm

Full details will be in church.

Wider afield..... As usual.....

**Althorne Church Hall
Sunday 21st September at 3 pm**

Swan Saxophone Quartet
Tickets £10 include Tea and Cake.

From 01621 740481 or 741131

A Raffle will also be available
The event is to raise funds for the
St Andrew's Church Repair Fund.

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b	7 September	Central - North-West
w/b	14 September	Central - East
w/b	21 September	Central - South
w/b	28 September	South - West





WHO ARE WE? Mission Statement



“To be a people offering praise and worship to God and serving him by being the Good News by our words and actions”

Web Site www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

Contact: vicar@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

Telephone 01621 772300

If you wish to contact the Church regarding a Safeguarding issue
please contact us by telephone on 07745 688845
or via safeguarding@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

See pages 10-11 for details during this season.

**Weekly notices, covering any changes, will be available to read
on the outside church notice-board.**

SUNDAY SERVICES

8:00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer 1662)

11.00 am Holy Communion or Morning Worship

Steeple Services similarly continue at **9.15am**

Children and Young people are always welcomed
especially for the **Family Celebration Services.**

WEEKDAY SERVICES:

Monday. Wednesday & Friday at 8 am Morning Prayer

Tuesday at 8.30 am Just Prayer

‘LITTLE LIONS’ usually meet on Wednesday mornings

In the Memorial Hall but this is **during term-time only.**

It is for babies/toddlers & their carers.



BIBLE STUDY GROUPS usually meet in the
church on Mondays (10am) and Thursdays (8pm)

Details of the actual programme are available in church and
on the notice boards. (See page 18)