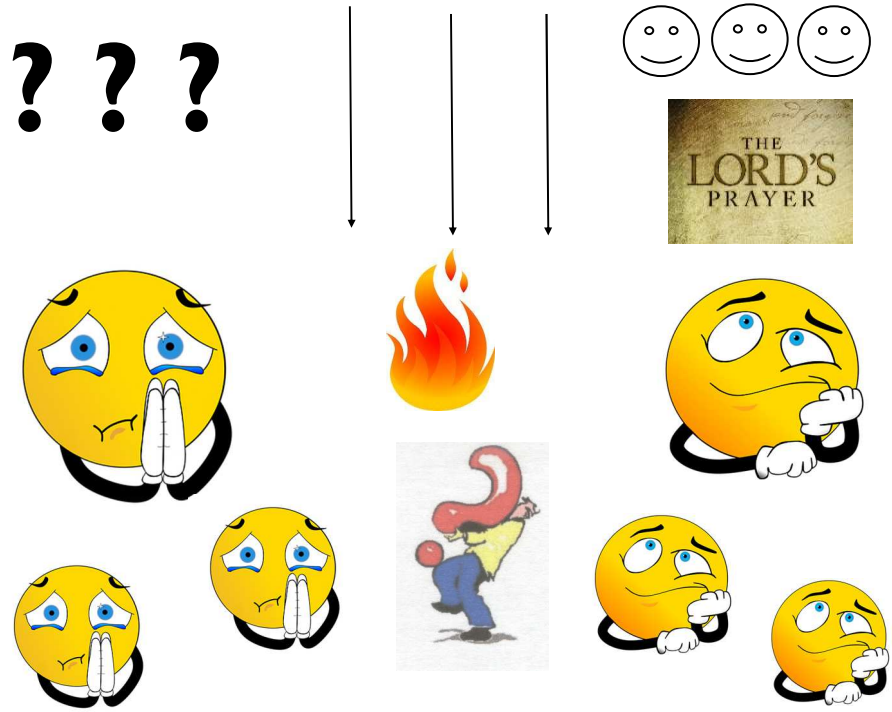
PARISH OF SOUTHMINSTER
MAGAZINE OF THE
CHURCH OF ST LEONARD
and also for Steeple Parish
The Church of
St Lawrence & All Saints



Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord…"
Jeremiah 17:7

NOVEMBER 2026

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QUIZ NIGHT (Se page 9)

***NOTE FROM THE EDITOR**:*
I hope you will receive this issue before 30th October. Our deliverers always make an effort to do this.

Articles for the December magazine should be with Kath Dunstan by, at the latest,
Sunday 14th November

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!)

If you receive this printed version please tell your deliverer whether you want to continue from January 2027.

Reflection from Rev'd Peter Begley

"Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord…" Jeremiah 17:7

The beginning of Hebrews 11 says "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" Having faith for the things we do not see takes real courage and the author of Hebrews continues that the "ancients were commended for their faith" Their faith placed them into the book that is still *the* top selling book *in the world* – The Bible. Isn't that a blessing!
When it comes to living in faith it becomes a different matter; we hear about faith all the time and read about it too, but actually living by it……?

Over this past year Fiona and I have been seeking God for the future and where we shall live and what shape our ministry will be for the future. We have had a little difficulty in selling our property which means we do not have the money to look at property yet; but we 100% trust God for our future and we place it into His hands as we pray: because we know what He says in His Word: … "I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord: plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you to give you hope and a future." He has that plan!

During the year, we have both been reading of George Muller who, at God's behest and by His provision, set-up and ran children's homes in the south west: one after another, after another.. up to 5, and collectively cared for 10,000 orphans in his lifetime: without asking for one penny from anyone, except asking of God alone. God certainly *did* provide! On one occasion in the book, George writes that all the children and staff were sitting around the table ready for breakfast - with no food in the building at all – and whilst they were praying for their daily needs and the food to sustain them, there came a knock

on the orphanage door. Opening the door revealed a local baker standing there with a very large basket of bread! The baker said that he had woken very early that morning and had the thought to bake bread for the orphanage and, would they like to receive it!! George Muller said yes, and they all praised God for His wonderful provision.

Another occasion I recall, only some 40++ yrs ago, is when Rev'd. Colin Urqhart moved to a house in Surrey to begin a ministry to which he already knew God's call. Whilst there, Colin and the team heard God say that they needed to move into bigger premises and they heard of an ideal place to move. At the beginning of the year they needed a million pounds to buy the property, and they needed it by September when they were due to exchange. By May they had the million pounds! Colin then said to the trustees that they did not need the million pounds until September, 5 months away, and that they should give it all away, which they did! By September they again had the million pounds needed to complete their purchase and thus a wonderful bible college began.

Why do I give you these examples of faith-living? Fiona and I are at peace about where we shall be and what we shall be doing, we trust God to direct us and look after us, and to provide – when He is ready for us to move. In the meantime, the bishop has granted to me a two-year licence to stay on in Southminster and Steeple as vicar, on a House-for-Duty basis – here at the Vicarage. In practice this means reduced working (to Sundays and two other days) and on a voluntary basis, during the first few years of our retirement.

So: God has not finished with us here in Southminster and Steeple, there are still things to do and look forward to doing.

The full verse of our title phrase says
““But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in Him.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit.” Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

We all live by faith and as we continue to journey together over this next year or so, we look forward to the fruit that God will bring. Let us all, together, live like George Muller and Colin Urquhart: by faith, for big and small things, and always looking to and trusting God for His provisions to us, both as individuals, as families, as these 2 churches, all the while within this wonderful benefice of Southminster & Steeple. Amen!

Peter

Editor’s comment:

As we celebrate God’s plan for Peter and Fiona, we recognise that we, the Church family need to keep listening to God so that His plans for our future will become clear. We are grateful that won’t have to say “Goodbye” to them for another two years but we will have to learn to live appropriately to fulfil God’s plan for Southminster and Steeple.

Sadly we now have to adjust to life without our sister Linda Payne who died on 18th October. We also need to pray for her husband, Harry, as he adjusts to his loss. Over the years Linda has been active on the PCC, as a Pastoral Assistant and recently a valued member of the Chatterbox Team, linking the Church with the local community. Our thanks and prayers will maintain our memories at this sad time. *Kath*

I told you, didn't I?

by Brenda Sheppard

Why didn't our resident squirrel listen when I told it not to cross the busy road from North End into our gardens in Homefield? I kept telling it but I'm afraid it came to a squashed end. I do miss it as it used to pick cobnuts from my neighbour's tree, sit on my fence and drop the shells in my garden or bury the nuts in my lawn! It came almost every day and I loved to watch it. It worked really hard for its daily food. I felt quite proud of its achievements!

Heather Small released a single in 2000 called "Proud" she sings: "What have you done today to make you feel proud?" She then goes on to say "It's never too late to try, to question, to grow! This got me thinking "Is it ok for Christians to be proud? I think so don't you as long as we come from a place of gratitude, turning personal satisfaction into thankfulness to God for giving us the ability to achieve. St Paul uses the word boasting a few times in 2 Cor 12 v 9 He says "I will boast of the things that show my weakness and in 2 Corinthians 11 v 30 he also says: "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness so that Christ's power may rest on me." In our pride we always need an attitude of gratitude.

I wonder, how often do I give God the glory for something I've achieved? How often do I thank God for forgiving me for the messes I've made in my life? One thing I can do is thank him that I can use them to empathise and

come alongside someone else with the Good News that all our messes and sins can be forgiven. I love the quote I saw recently which said "Let your mess become a message"

Nothing's wasted if we turn it around and use it wisely.

Poor squirrel, a life cut short because it wouldn't listen to my warnings and took risky chances. It ended up a real mess on the road. The lesson is that we don't need to be a mess, we need to listen to what our Lord is telling us after all he knows best what we need for our lives.

As I finish this article another squirrel has appeared on my fence which reinforced to me the message that even if one person doesn't listen to the Good News of Jesus, God will keep sending people and then we can stand before Him at the end of our days when our work here is done and say "I did tell them didn't I"

Brenda Sheppard

Harvest Service and General Information

We celebrated Harvest by enjoying a "Bring and Share" Lunch in church after the Family Celebration on Sunday 11th November. Gifts from the School and from church people had accumulated and were appropriately delivered to people who needed them. We were grateful for the preparation, organising and serving of the food. Mrs Kathy Carnell and her team did a great job!

The HIVE

Contact details for any of the activities at the Hive are:
Karis Galliano on 07840 530519 (work mobile)
Email:
communityworker.dengieurcs@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/karis.galliano.7
Community Development Worker page
www.facebook.com/thehiveURC/ The Hive Community Hub page

Details are also on the notice board at the back of St. Leonard's Church or available from myself or Rev'd Peter.

Brenda Sheppard

It's the normal time for us to fill shoeboxes with gifts for children who otherwise will not be able to have Christmas celebrations.

The cardboard boxes have been available at the back of church for some time but there are still some there. They will need to be returned to church by 13th November, so please get started.

Leaflets from Samaritan's Purse are at the back of church with advice about donations, (gifts or money).

Let's support this in 2026 as we have in the past.

IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS

HOW TO PACK A SHOEBOX

National Collection week
9 - 16 November

Sunday 29th November **First Sunday of Advent**

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
1 Corinthians : 3 - 9	Celebrant
Mark 13 : 24 - end	Celebrant
Sidesperson	Paul Lucas

10.30 United Service at Christ Church

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Ann Sardison

16.00 Christingle Service

Wednesday 2nd December

18.30 "Light up a Life" Service
Remembering Farleigh Hospice

Bible Study & Quiz Night

We have just finished a Bible study on the Acts of the Apostles where we looked at Mission. We all found it very interesting and challenging. Our next Bible study starts on Monday 2nd 10am and Thursday 5th 8pm of November. This is a five-week course looking at the Senses of Christmas. The first on is Sound. What were the sounds of the Nativity and what sounds do we hear around our Christmas festivities? How did they originate and what do they mean? Watch out for flyers or contact us.

Our annual **Quiz Night** has been changed in order to manage the special Big Band Concert. Please note that the Quiz will happen on Saturday 21st November beginning at 6pm for 6.30 start as usual. We look forward to seeing you there. **Jenny & Norman Pratt**

Sunday 1st November **4th Sunday before Advent**

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter/Norman Pratt
1 John 3 : 1 - 3	Celebrant
Matthew 5 : 1 - 12	Celebrant
Sidesperson	Gordon Baker

11.00 Family Holy Communion

President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter/ Norman Pratt
Readings as above	Kath Dunstan
Intercessions	Fiona Begley
Prayer Ministry	Sylvia Adams & Christine Lucas
Audio-visuals	Christine Morgan
Sidesperson	Kath Dunstan
Refreshments	Sarah and Ray Kempen

16.00 Thanksgiving & Remembrance Service
Details available later.

Sunday 8th November **3rd Sunday before Advent**
Remembrance Sunday

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Ken Dunstan
1 Thessalonians 4 : 13 - end	Celebrant
Matthew 25 : 1 - 13	Celebrant
Sidesperson	Paul Lucas

10.00 Remembrance Sunday Service

Leader	Rev'd Peter
Intercessions	t.b.a.
Audio-visuals	Sylvia Adams
Sidesperson	Gordon Baker & Paul Lucas
Refreshments	Kathy Carnell & Frances Hatfield

Sunday 15 th November 2nd Sunday before Advent

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

President/Preacher	Rev'd Ken Dunstan
1Thessalonians 5 : 1– 11	Celebrant
Matthew 25 : 14 - 30	Celebrant
Sidesperson	Leon Flack

11.00 Family Celebration

Leader/Preacher	Team: Karen, Jenny, Dawn
Audio-visuals	Christine Lucas
Prayer ministry	Frances Hatfield & Yvonne Thurbon
Sidesperson	Brenda Sheppard
Refreshments	Dee Byford & Jenni Blomfield

Saturday 21st November Quiz Night

Please arrive about 6 pm for a full start at 6.30 pm.
For more details contact Jenny Pratt.

Sunday 22nd November Christ the King

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Ephesians 1 : 15-end	Celebrant
Matthew 25 : 31 - end	Celebrant
Sidesperson	Keith Hatfield

10.15 Café Church Morning Worship

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Readings as at 8 am	Gwyneth Iffland
Intercessions	Brenda Sheppard
Prayer Ministry	Kathy Carnell & Jenny Pratt
Audio-visuals	Christine Morgan
Sidesperson	Gwyneth Iffland
Refreshments	Christine Lucas & Sandra Bradford

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.
More information can be found on **www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk**

Steeple Church contacts:
Rev'd Canon Peter Begley, Vicar, 01621 772 300
Fiona Ashworth, Churchwarden,
Rhona Leech, Assistant Churchwarden & PCC Secretary
Peter Marshall, PCC Treasurer & Verger

Steeple's November Services in brief
(Service titles and leaders only)

1st	09.15	Family Service	Rev'd Peter
8th	10.30	Remembrance	Rev'd Ken/Norman Pratt
15th	09.15	Family Service	Norman Pratt / Jenny Pratt
22nd	09.15	Holy Communion	Rev'd Peter
29th	10.30	United Service at ChristChurch, Southminster	

An amazing quantity of produce, floral displays and other goods were donated to decorate the church for our Harvest Thanksgiving on the afternoon of Sunday 11th October. It was attended by almost fifty people who enjoyed singing the ever popular Harvest hymns.

Following the service, we moved on to the Barn at West Newlands where we shared an excellent Harvest Supper with our colleagues from St Lawrence Church. Certainly no one went home hungry!

During the following week, the donated provisions were taken to the Dengie Food Bank for distribution to those in need. The fresh fruit and vegetables were taken to the women's refuge we have supported in previous years and from whom we have received a "thank you" letter which highlighted that their children would enjoy decorating the pumpkins for Halloween.

Halloween is not a church festival, but it's good that pumpkins grown in The Dengie Hundred brighten up the dark days of Autumn for so many children.

The Letter from **CHANGING PATHWAYS**

On behalf of staff, residents and their children we would like to thank you for the fresh groceries from your Harvest Festival. The children will enjoy decorating the pumpkins for Halloween.

It's people lik yourself that make a difference helping us support our residents and their children.

Donna Ager
Domestic Abuse Practitioner

POSSIBLE ROTA DETAILS: YOUR AVAILABILITY FOR 2 MONTHS

We can worship regularly in church as usual, 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.

December 2026	6	13	20	25	27
January 2027	3	10	17	24	31

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

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.

There are books for all ages and with varied contents, so even if you don't see yourself as a reader, you can enjoy 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.

Henry Church Cleaning Club 2026

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.

November dates are: Fri. 6th & 20th

If you would like to give it a try and would like a rota please speak to me, Brenda Sheppard.

Let us all continue to pray to our loving Father in these very difficult times.

For the National Church - particularly because of International political problems and on-going wars
Also devastation following wild fires, storms and other results of climate change to be dealt with

For family members - near and far - and neighbours

For people suffering loneliness, illness and/or bereavement

For people making decisions about treatment

For hospital staff, carers, front-line workers including teachers

For everyone affected by the School holidays

For local farmers and all their workers in the Autumn months

For people suffering financially because of unemployment….

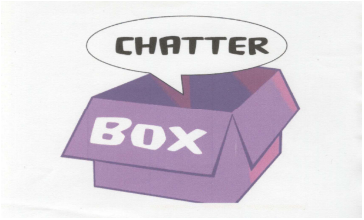
And let us remember "Father, your will be done."

We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL

LUNCH CLUB may be able to start again on 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 24th November

Jane and Janet

Flower Arranging

jane@lunendales.com

'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.

AN IMPORTANT SPECIAL EVENT

SID BOLAN BIG BAND CONCERT

Will be held at Southminster church

On SATURDAY 7th NOVEMBER

At 7.30 pm

THIS CONCERT INCLUDES MUSIC OF GLENN MILLER, COUNT BASIE, FRANK SINATRA, MICHAEL BUBLE AND MANY OTHERS

TICKETS ARE £10.00

Tickets will be in church, & from Kath Dunstan Chapman's Stores & Southminster Butchers.

Many people have enjoyed these concerts in the past, so we hope they will come again and bring other friends to share the evening. Funds raised will go to local charities.

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b	1 November	Central – North-West
w/b	8 November	Central-East
w/b	15 November	Central –South
w/b	22 November	South-West
w/b	29 November	Central - 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

10.15 am (approx.) Café Church begins on 4th Sundays

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 meet in the church on Mondays (10 am) and Thursdays (8 pm)

Details of the actual programme are available in church and on the notice boards. (See page 5)