

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

This is a magazine with a difference
unfortunately.

The format is almost as normal.

The content is very different
because of all the changes
that are happening
to stop the spread of COVID19.

Let us rest in the promise expressed
below, and responsibly show God's
love in our community.

APRIL 2020

**Nothing can separate us
from the love of God**

Romans 8 : 39

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A notice about our offerings to God.

Many of us use the facility of the offering plate to give our gifts to God. As the church is closed for the moment it may be 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:

St. Leonard's church: Barclays Bank Sort code: **20.54.30** A/c No. **80825107**
 Made payable to: Southminster Parochial Church Council.

St. Lawrence & All Saints church: Barclays Bank Sort code: **20.54.30**
 A/c No. **60842494** Made payable to Steeple Parochial Church Council.

May God bless our gifts to Him.

Reflection

Nothing can separate us from the Love of God. Romans 8: 39

Mothering Sunday has passed as you read this article, and it was a very different Mothering Sunday to those experienced in years past. We now move towards Easter and the great celebration of Jesus rising to new life and becoming the first among many (Romans 8: 29). The Easter services will be very different this year as many will still be isolating and keeping away from any gatherings outside of their family. Yet the joy of Easter is not just because (in normal circumstances) we are able to gather together in church to sing praises to God, but a deep seated joy in our hearts caused by the knowledge that we are part of the wonderful plan of God because we have put our trust in Jesus Christ. In His death and resurrection the price of separation has been paid and we are again in communion with our heavenly Father. This is the joy of Easter, a new beginning with God and new possibilities for the future. We are no longer separated from Him, as it says in Romans 8:

“Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?.....

.....For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The journey on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13) gives us a great example of the ‘lost’ nature of the human soul and

the 'found'. The disciples have been separated from their hope; Jesus their hope had been arrested and crucified. The connection that they had felt with God had been broken and they spoke of the despair that they felt of the last few days. Jesus comes to walk with them, He is not recognised for hours, most of their journey perhaps, yet the realisation of Him being with them caused them to race with joy back to the disciples in Jerusalem. They knew that they had been accepted, forgiven and even enlightened on their way home, a new joy had settled in their hearts - a knowledge of walking with Jesus even when they did not know He was there. Often during our own journey of life we do not feel or know the presence of God, but He *is* with us, walking alongside speaking to us and loving us; that is His unfailing promise. Uncertainty about the future is not a new thing, it has happened many times in history, yet we can know peace as we journey with Jesus along our road home.

One other thought from this Emmaus experience is that the two disciples had a revelation of Jesus and then shared that knowledge with others, they raced to tell others the truth of the promises in God's word. Others need to hear the reassuring words that Jesus *is alive and wants to be with us*, to give to them hope in a troubled time and peace in difficult circumstances. Can we, knowing the risen Christ, be those disciples... eager to give words of comfort to those who are afraid and unsure of the future? The world needs hope in a living God who will never leave us or forsake us.

Peter



The World Day of Prayer Service 2020 in Southminster had been prepared by the Christian Women of Zimbabwe

It was good to have several people gathering at St Leonard's Church on Friday 6th March, including people from Christ Church as usual. We were particularly blessed because we were able to hear from "our own Zimbabwean", Gwyneth Iffland. She showed us some personal possessions which had an interesting history and after we had heard about the situation in Zimbabwe over recent years and even today she shared a challenging 'Reflection' about the relevance today of Jesus' words to the man He healed at the pool of Bethesda, "Rise! Take your mat and walk." (John 5 2 - 9a)

Do we want to be made well - transformed?

What obstacles or excuses hinder our transformation?

How can we support our community with actions of love,
peace and reconciliation?

We raised £67.60 to support World Day of Prayer projects.

Details of such are on their website **www.wwdp.org.uk**



IS CORONAVIRUS ALL BAD?

Well, it's hardly a welcome situation that has befallen us! And at the time of typing this, it looks set to get a lot worse before it gets better.

One thing it has managed to achieve, though, is that it's changed our conversation from Brexit to something else!!!!

But seriously, we have an opportunity here: this epidemic will be manageable if we look after each other. We're being advised – with daily changing instructions – on exactly how to do this, but it occurs to me that with caution, this is a once-in-a-lifetime chance for us all to be our best selves. In this village, where the community spirit is so strong, people are already caring for each other in many ways and I hope that we can all capitalise on this and those who are able to will look to see what we can all achieve together. Just checking on neighbours, running errands for somebody and generally being neighbourly will lighten the load at local level, albeit we have to be very careful not to catch or pass on the virus. For example, many elderly people don't use the internet and perhaps those of us who do can shop online for those who don't when people are “self isolating”. If there's a problem with public transport, perhaps drivers can help those who need to get to hospital.

I was cheered to see that even though we have left the European Union there's still going to be mutual assistance among the countries in dealing with this virus just as if we were still “all together”. Our biggest hope now should be that politicians of all persuasions will now work together, across the world, to fight this common enemy. If one country comes up

with a vaccine, wouldn't it be wonderful if it were just automatically shared with the rest of the world, regardless of....well of ANYTHING? If one president or prime minister comes up with an idea to benefit his countrymen, couldn't he or she share it with the rest of the world? And from this would come ideas to benefit everybody. After all, it's only the Food Bank idea applied globally!

It seems to me that this is our chance as a species, as human beings – especially those in powerful positions – to do our best to work together; and can you imagine if the whole world were working together to organise, manage and deal with this virus once and for all? Then, afterwards, perhaps old adversaries could look at whatever they've been fighting about and realise that if mankind can work together to sort out one problem, then no other problem, however difficult, should be insurmountable.

That would be really the spirit of all that is good and something to be thankful for.

Chris Martin

Follow-up Comment from Brenda Sheppard & Kath Dunstan

Before we received this from Chris, we had covered much of the message in the above article in our discussion at the Monday Home Group on 16th March. Group members saw the need to try to encourage people not to panic but to look for the positive aspects of what is happening. The Group accepted that however difficult the times are, God has a plan to bring us through them. He is also challenging us to realise that we can all play a part in that plan in order to bring love, reconciliation and hope for our community and, through the world-wide church, to all humankind.

Prayer Walking

I was thinking back to my introduction to prayer as a small child, every night before bedtime we were taught hands together, eyes closed, and to pray for blessings on our family, and so that seemed as I grew up as the only way to pray.

So, is there a right and wrong way to pray?

1 Thessalonians 5:17 urges us to pray continuously at all times. God doesn't dictate or specify on how or where as long as we do!

We can pray in our hearts or out loud whilst driving (with eyes open!); whilst talking with someone we can pray quietly in our hearts for wisdom if in a difficult situation; we can pray whilst walking perhaps with another person or with a dog; or we can pray whilst sitting or lying down if unable to be physically active.

Prayer is talking and also listening to God, a two-way conversation. We read in Genesis 3 that God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve, that wonderful companionship until sin crept in and spoiled it. Thank God that Jesus came to restore that relationship with mankind and as we come to accept Him into our lives we can walk and talk with the Lord always.



One way I enjoy talking to God is by physically prayer walking. Graham Kendrick a Christian singer/songwriter wrote these words in one of his songs "We'll walk the land with hearts on fire and every step will be a prayer". Prayer is a way

of claiming ground for God. An illustration of this is in Genesis 13 v14-17 where God gave Abram land for himself and his descendants and told him to walk through the length and breadth of the land either to inspect it or to exercise authority over it, demonstrating the promised ownership.

Another of Graham Kendrick's songs called "Rejoice, rejoice" talks about us marching upon the land and that into our hands God will give the ground we claim, and there are quite a few illustrations in the Bible of ground claimed in this way.

Thinking about walking with God reminds me of the saying "Walk a mile in my shoes" reminding me that before I judge anyone and if I am able, to walk through their circumstances with them and to try to understand how they feel and to practice empathy. The Bible also tells us to "Go that extra mile with someone" (Matthew 5:41) sacrificing time and energy for God's work.



So prayer walking isn't just about pounding pavements, it's about walking alongside people, sharing lives and experiences and praying for them and with them. Going back to the reading in 1 Thessalonians 5 v 16-18, it tells us to "Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" Prayer is joyful and a privilege to be a part of bringing others to Him for blessing and healing.

Brenda Sheppard



Sadly the April session,
"Best ever Easter"
has had to be cancelled
because of the Coronavirus.

Age range aimed especially for children at
Primary School with Parent or Carer

A family afternoon of fun and messiness -
Come along and join in, starting at 3.45pm!

Future dates - if we are allowed....

May 11th (4th is Bank Holiday) = Wonder Moments

June 8th (1st is INSET) = Wonder Minds

July 6th = Wonder Machines

July 27th - 31st = WONDER ZONE Holiday Club

See posters about entry forms etc.

ROTA REPLY SLIP YOUR AVAILABILITY FOR 2 MONTHS

Please cross out the dates when you are **not** available and return this slip to **Paul Lucas** by 12th April

June 2020 7 14 21 28

July 2020 5 12 19 26

Name

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

Easter is coming

As usual, there were no flowers in church during Lent and we shall not have Easter lilies for display. However, Kathy Pegg has designed and displayed a wonderful Mothering Sunday cross which is available in the porch for all to see (provided that you keep a safe distance between you). Her individual posies were delivered to Mums and greatly appreciated by recipients.

People will still remember that first Easter, the loved ones whose names are on the memorial scroll, and the normal floral contributions made by our Flower Team.



PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b 5 April
w/b 12 April
w/b 19 April
w/b 26 April

Central - North-West
Central - East
Central - South
South - West



Because of the directive from the UK Government and the Archbishops, on 23rd March, concerning the Coronavirus pandemic, churches will be closed for any public meetings until further notice.

Details of what would have been happening at St Leonard's are listed below, so please use them in order to be involved in worship from home at this very difficult time.

Date	5 April	Palm Sunday
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08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

President/Preacher
Psalm 118 : 1-2, 19 - end
Matthew 21 : 1 - 11

Rev'd Peter

10.45 Holy Communion

Leader/Preacher
Psalm 118 : 1-2, 19 - end
Matthew 21 : 1 - 11

Rev'd Peter

Holy Week

9 April

Maundy Thursday

20.00 Holy Communion

President/Preacher
1 Cor. 11. 23-26
John 13. 1-17, 31b - 35

Rev'd Peter

10 April

Good Friday

10.15 The usual Walk of Witness from Christ Church to St Leonard's will not be taking place but we can all worship separately using the set readings.

10.30

John 18 and John 19 (two complete chapters)

Date **12 April**

Easter Day

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Leader/President/Preacher

Rev'd Ken Dunstan

Acts 10 : 34 - 43

John 20 : 1 - 18

10.45 Family Celebration Service

It will be possible to celebrate with our families at home!

Acts 10 : 34 - 43

John 20 : 1 - 18

Leader/preacher

Rev'd Peter / Karen Flack

Date **19 April**

2nd Sunday of Easter

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Leader/President/Preacher

Rev'd Ken Dunstan

Acts 2 : 14a, 22 - 32

John 20 : 19 - end

10.45 Holy Communion

Leader / Preacher

Rev'd Ken Dunstan

Acts 2 : 14a, 22 - 32

John 20 : 19 - end

Date **26 April**

3rd Sunday of Easter

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Leader/President/Preacher

Rev'd Peter

Acts 2 : 14a, 36 - 41

Luke 24 : 13 - 35

10.45 Morning Worship

Leader/Preacher

Norman Pratt/Rev'd Peter

Acts 2 : 14a, 36 - 41

Luke 24 : 13 - 35

This service should have been followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in church but this will obviously not happen.

APRIL SERVICES AT STEEPLE

will NOT happen

because Steeple Church is closed of course.

Sunday	5 th	9.15 am	Family Service
Sunday	12 th	9.15 am	Easter Day Holy Communion
Sunday	19 th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday	26 th	9.15 am	Holy Communion

Similarly, the services which would normally occur throughout our local Deanery are all cancelled.

Let us use this strange opportunity to feel at one with our neighbouring parishes as we worship from home, remembering in particular those without their own parish priest at the moment, e.g. Burnham, Latchingdon & Mayland; Althorne, Cold Norton, Stow Maries & North Fambridge and finally, Maldon All Saints.

**AND home worship will also be necessary during April
for people of St Nicholas, Tillingham**

Sunday	5 th	10.00 am	Family Service (Laity)
Sunday	12 th	10.00 am	Easter Holy Communion
Sunday	19 th	10.00 am	Family Service (Laity)
Sunday	26 th	10.00 am	Parish Holy Communion

And those of St James, Dengie

April	5 th	8.00 am	Holy Communion
April	12 th	9.00 am	Easter Communion
April	19 th	3.00 pm	BCP Holy Communion
April	26 th	3.00 pm	Evening Service

ST. LEONARD'S **NORMAL** REGULAR MIDWEEK EVENTS
BUT NOT HAPPENING AT THE MOMENT

PCC meetings and related committee meetings
are usually on Monday evenings.

The **Music Group** meets in church on Fridays at 7.45 pm
& occasional Wednesdays. See weekly bulletins for details.

Bellringers meet occasionally in the tower
but we don't have our own regular team now.

Henry Club - Church Cleaning Team - meets twice a month
at 9.15 am (normally on Fridays)

CHURCH GROUNDS WORKING PARTY

Details of these will be in the weekly notices.

Midweek Morning Prayer services (Mon., Wed. and Fri.)

8:00 am (about half an hour) in the chapel.

Tuesdays 8.30 am "Just Prayer" also in the chapel.

HOME GROUPS

Normally they are Mondays at 10 am
and Thursdays at 7.45 pm for 8 pm

ALPHA FOLLOW-ON

Groups usually meet at the Vicarage on Tuesdays at 7.30 pm
Check details on weekly bulletins.

Young people and children are always welcome,
especially at 10.45 services,

Messy Church is once a month on Mondays. See page 10.

Families are encouraged to attend the

FAMILY CELEBRATION SERVICES

*Weekly bulletins and church notice boards list any other events in the Church.
Information for these should go to Christine Morgan.*

COMMUNITY EVENTS that **should be!!**

Coronavirus means Hall is closed until further notice.

Southminster W.I.

We normally meet at Southminster Memorial Hall

Tues. 7th April : Michael Farley

Good King Hal

Competition: Royal Memorabilia

THE COMMUNITY LUNCH CLUB

In THE MEMORIAL HALL
Every Monday except the
first Monday of each
month and Bank Holidays

Please book in by noon
on the previous Friday by
phoning Kath Savage:
07434915467

The **SOUTHMINSTER CHATTERBOX**

meets in the
Memorial Hall
on Thursday mornings
from 10 am until noon.

The Bereavement Group is
there on 1st & 3rd Thursdays

There are also
Weight Management Sessions.

Memorial Hall Wishing Well Club

Tuesday 14th April 1 pm - 3 pm

Light lunch, games & good company

Little Lions Baby & Toddler Group meets at the Memorial Hall

Every Wednesday **during term-time**

10 am - noon Singing, craft, refreshments

£2 for adult and up to 2 children; 50p per extra child

Come and play, stay and chat; all parents & carers are welcomed





Christian Aid Week will begin on 10th May.

Full details of what we shall be arranging will be available in next month's magazine.

This will be very different from the usual activities.

In the meantime, please be ready to support Christian Aid and read their detailed policy documents, especially as they are putting a vast amount of support for people worldwide who are suffering because of Climate Change. Suffering comes in different forms - as we are experiencing at present because of COVID 19.

On Mothering Sunday

you may have listened to the Radio 4 Morning Worship at 8am since, like me, (*Kath Dunstan*) you couldn't attend normal worship in church because of 'lock down'. Archbishop Justin Welby expressed some really valuable thoughts including, *from 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 & John 19:25-27*

Even in our darkest moments Jesus comes to us and provides a new place of nurture and hope for us.

Jesus created the first Christian community while hanging on the cross - by consoling Mary and John.

Paul was consoled in such a way that he was able to console others. Let's receive God's consolation and love and share them with others. Looking inwards will only reveal the limits of our own resources and lead to deeper fear and selfishness. Acting in love does the reverse. Let us create hope in this time of sickness by responding to community needs through prayer and loving action.

J9 Domestic Abuse Initiative

In March the Parish Council ran a short course highlighting domestic abuse. This is a project involving Essex County Council and is provided free of charge. The J9 initiative is named in memory of Janine Munday who was killed by her estranged husband in 2003 while he was on police bail. J9 Domestic Abuse was established to raise awareness of domestic abuse and improve the signposting of victims to relevant agencies.

We watched a video made by the family of Janine after their tragic loss and then went through different aspects of domestic abuse, which is not just physical but also verbal and controlling and can involve stalking. We talked about coercive control by a partner be they male or female where the perpetrator controls all aspects of their partner's life leading to isolation, exhaustion, degradation and loss of self esteem.

We discussed as to why don't people leave these abusive situations? The answer was that it's not that easy for many people as they have nowhere to go especially those with small children. Often the abusive partner shows remorse and promises he/she will change and all is well for a time. Sometimes people who have had abusive childhoods think it is "normal" to be abused in adulthood so put up with it.

This is a very short precis of a very enlightening course with a lot more discussed and time to contribute for those present. For further information the Web site is J9community@outlook.com. All of the above information is shared with permission of the J9 representative on the day.

Brenda Sheppard

LET'S SUPPORT OUR NEIGHBOURS - ALTHORNE

As has been written in a letter on display at the back of church, St Andrew's Church is in desperate need of help. Time has taken its toll on this 14th century building and some very serious cracks have appeared, which are going to be very costly to resolve.

A group of like-minded enthusiasts in Althorne have decided to run a vehicle show to raise funds.

It will be known as

AUTOFEST 2020

and will take place at Elm Farm, on the road between
Althorne and Burnham,

on Saturday 20th June from 10am-4pm.

There will be many attractions including an autojumble,
trade stands, music and food,
and things to keep the young ones amused.
Exhibitors of old vehicles will be admitted free of charge;
trade stands will be charged at just £10 per 4x4m slot;
charities will be asked for a donation only;
food vendors will be charged by arrangement.

If you would like to join us please confirm by email to jeaningram@btinternet.com or phone 01621 740795 A non-refundable deposit will be required for trade stands to secure your pitch; final payments to be made by 30 April.

A poster is on display at the back of church.

Your diary has a special mention of it now!



Southminster Big Spring Litter Pick

FOSCOS members were very pleased that 17 volunteers came to take part in Southminster's Big Spring Litter Pick on Saturday 14th March. Fortunately the rain kept off for the duration of the event, and 21 bags of litter were collected in about one and a half hours. There were enough people to cover most of the roads in the village, but due to the restrictions caused by the COVID--19 epidemic, it was decided not to enter the church, but to use the church porch as a base, and it was not possible to provide refreshments for the volunteers after their hard and dirty work. FOSCOS were very grateful to all who helped, and to Maldon District Council for the loan of litter grabbers, Hi-Vis vests and the provision of black bags.

Paula Neall

Big Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday
Tuesday 25th February at the Memorial Hall.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed food and/or time
to make this event a success.

Although numbers attending were quite low we raised **£80 for
the Church Urban Fund.**

An extra £10 was given by folk unable to attend.

The **CUF Together Network** supports people in the UK
who are suffering from poverty in some way.

Lent Lectures

Wednesdays at Chelmsford Cathedral

“Living Lightly” or “Living Distinctively”

focussed on the environment and
the current climate crisis

4 March: Bishop PeterAIR

11 March: Bishop Stephen WATER

**Sadly the remaining lectures were cancelled because
of the coronavirus regulations.**

18 March: Bishop Roger.....FIRE

25 March: Bishop JohnEARTH

1 April: The Ven. Elizabeth Snowden LIFE

The first two lectures were filmed and are available to
watch on the Diocesan Website All the lectures should
be available eventually - and are well worth hearing.

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARIES

As we go to print the sad news is that these two events due to happen in church are to be postponed because of the coronavirus situation.

We hope to be able to find appropriate future dates for both of these May events.



Maldon Orchestra Concert (Saturday 2nd May)



**Proceeds for
Knightswood Day Care Centre**

and a Photographic Exhibition “Southminster Past & Present”

**David Lambert
will provide an amazing collection of
vintage photographs
(Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st May)**

FINALLY, THIS MONTH:

*Articles for the May
magazine by*

Sunday April 19th

please, to Kath Dunstan.

New contributors will be welcome.



WHAT'S WHAT

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

SADLY THERE WILL BE NO NORMAL PUBLIC WORSHIP

Sunday Services - will become 'worship at home'

(See pages 12-14 for details of special days and readings)

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

10:45 am Holy Communion or Morning Worship

(Our Prayer ministry for any needs will continue even though it happens 'at a distance'.)

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

MESSY CHURCH is held monthly on Mondays at 3.45 pm in church.

The next one will be publicised as soon as it is allowed to happen.

'LITTLE LIONS' on Wednesday mornings during term-time only
is for babies/toddlers & their carers. See p.16

Morning Prayer (Mon., Wed. and Fri.) 8:00 am

and **Tuesdays at 8.30am** (Just Prayer)

There will be no 'gathering together' but an e-bulletin will be sent every week to all who would normally participate.

We will still worship our Lord, even if we do so from our own homes and in self-isolation. Let's trust Him to bring us through.

Pray for Southminster (six regions on six-week rota) See p.10

HOME GROUPS will not meet until further notice.

United Service for Elderly at Southminster Residential Home will not happen until restrictions are lifted. We pray for all staff and residents here and at Squeaks House.