

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

and also for Steeple Parish

**The Church of  
St Lawrence & All Saints**

**StL**



**L**et us all love  
**E**veryone, near and far,  
**N**ow and always, and  
**T**rust God's provision  
of **Love, hope & faith.**

**MARCH 2026**

**Faith, Hope & love will abide, but the  
greatest of these is love.**

**I Corinthians 13 v 13**

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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 2026.

**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:**  
*Articles for the April magazine should be with Kath Dunstan by, at the latest, Sunday 15th March*  
*New contributors are welcome.*

## **Vicar's Reflection for March 2026**

### **Faith in action.**

We have just heard the news the Rev'd Jesse Jackson has gone to glory; a man who fought for civil rights alongside Martin Luther King. He was an energetic preacher whose style and delivery encouraged faith and hope. On the night that Barak Obama was elected Jesse was seen to be crying; not from the emotion of the Obama presidency but for the hope that this election brought to so many people who thought that they had been overlooked.

Hope is so important in all of our lives, not just the earthly hope i.e. 'I hope the weather gets better' or 'I hope the shop is open' 'I hope I can get a parking space...' but true biblical hope which is certain and assured. Biblical hope is fully holding on to the promises of God knowing that they will be fulfilled in God's perfect timing. Abraham waited twenty years for his firstborn son Isaac, yet he told everyone that he (Abraham) would be the father of many nations; his hope was built on the promises of God – Who is faithful. Faith and hope go hand in hand, faith in God Who is the provider and hope in the promises of God Who will give to His children.

When Paul wrote to the church in Corinth he spoke about the love of God and living in faith and hope; the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of I Corinthians he said that there are three things that are eternal. Paul said "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love".

“Faith Hope and Love abide” We hear quite a lot in church about love and how we receive love, give love - and live in love, yet hope and faith seem to take a second and third place. These are things eternal; they are how we should live in the here and now - in Faith, in Hope and all surrounded by, and held, in love.

What is it that we have faith for?

What is it that we hope for?

What is our ultimate goal?

Are our thoughts of hope and faith in an earthly dimension or in an eternal dimension?

These are questions that confront us in our spiritual life, they challenge us to live differently, according to who and what we love.

When Jesus travelled towards Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) He wept and said “If only...”

The “if only...” is the challenge to us today. If only we had lived a better life. If only we had told so and so about Jesus. If only we had thought about God and known His peace years ago” If only...

The good news is that we *can* have hope *today*; we *can* have faith *today*. We *can* be assured of peace *today* if we are willing to say “sorry” to God and say we believe Jesus is the Son of God: we *will* receive new hope and new faith for today and forever

**Blessings,**

**Peter**

## **Christine Lucas shares some thoughts....**

Silence or stillness are probably uncommon in most people's daily lives. Of course we can find them if we are determined! Perhaps at home, in a church, in the countryside or by the coast. During Lent, Christians are encouraged to spend time in quiet reflection on our faith and in seeking to know God more deeply.

The following verse inspired a popular worship song that we have often used in church.

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46 v 10

### **Be still and know that I am God: a short reflection.**

In stillness we rest  
In stillness we wait  
In stillness we listen  
In stillness we pray.

In the silence we might enter a thin place where heaven gently brushes earth's sleeve, where we can encounter Christ in unspoken worship.

When He speaks, our inner silence is disturbed;  
When He is silent, He is still present.  
In the stillness we can know that He is God.  
His Presence offers love, forgiveness, peace and joy.

So let us not fear silence or stillness:  
Silence is not empty, or dark, or cold, or meaningless, or an abyss.  
It can be charged with the Spirit,  
illuminated by His Light,  
warmed by His Love,  
full of His Truth;  
It offers an invitation to be caught safely in His everlasting arms.

In stillness we rest  
In stillness we wait  
In stillness we listen  
In stillness we praise.

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46 v 10

**NB** Practising stillness is just one of many ways in which we can seek God.

# Policies and Procedures

One of the ‘fun’ parts of starting a new venture is the legal requirements needed. I opened up my emails recently and saw quite a few policies and procedures that I was asked to read through and ratify as correct as part of my role on the management team for the Hive. I have to admit they were very well put together and not too onerous a task to read through!!

So why do we have to have policies and procedures and what are they? Briefly policies are rules to follow and procedures are step by step instructions on how to follow these rules. They incorporate legal requirements, laws and regulations, workplace rules, government guidelines and data protection. Together they make a framework for decision making and smooth operations. A lot of work for those setting all these in place but necessary for safeguarding requirements.

I then thought of how the Bible is a book of many policies and procedures. Throughout history God gave laws to live by and they were recorded. He gave verbal laws, statutes (written laws) and commandments to live by and govern moral, social and spiritual conduct. The most well-known laws being the Ten Commandments given to Moses for the many Israelites whom Moses led out of slavery in Egypt to define the moral standards for their relationship with God and others and to guide them to live in a righteous way.



These laws still apply today and as 2 Timothy 3 v 15-18 tells us: “All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” God’s laws, His policies and procedures are all there for our

good and protection. We sometimes have to tweak our policies and procedures according to each circumstance but God's laws are always the perfect guidelines and never change.

Brenda Sheppard

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## **Chatterbox remembers Gwen**

Gwen Kempen had been a regular member of Chatterbox for many years. Gwen always sat in her own chosen place with the Craft team. Gwen loved doing the craft work until her hands could no longer manage it but she enjoyed watching and chatting.

Gwen was very generous to us especially with her home-grown garden produce; she often brought in delicious cucumbers and tomatoes when in season. Gwen always loved to show us around her garden when visiting her and it was a credit to her.



We miss Gwen, who died in January, but we will never forget her and her faithfulness and friendship to us all at Chatterbox.

**Brenda Sheppard**

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.

# A Tribute to Charlotte

Charlotte Ruffle was a real Southminster girl who grew up and became very well known in the village. In the words of Graham Martin one of her teachers at the local primary school; “She was a little girl with a big personality”.

At St. Leonard’s we got to know Charlotte as she began to come along to church, often late, with her little dogs in tow. She would make her way to the front of the church and join in quite exuberantly at times with the worship service. Charlotte became a regular part of St. Leonard’s church family and really enjoyed the friendship and all the church social events.



Charlotte was cared for by members of the church over the years and Rev’d Peter and Fiona really took her under their wing in her latter days and cared for her faithfully through the ups and downs of her life.

We shall certainly miss her and every time the church door opens late in a Sunday service, I’m sure we will still expect to see and hear Charlotte coming in for a long time to come!!

**Brenda Sheppard**

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For your diary

The **HIVE AGM** will be on  
Saturday 28th March  
at 5pm with refreshments.

It is open to anybody

This is obviously the Sid Bolan Big Band evening but hopefully it won't disturb anyone's arrangements.

# SID BOLAN BIG BAND CONCERT

**On Saturday 28th March 2026**

**at 7.30 pm**

The concert is one of Big Band Music of Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Frank Sinatra, Michael Buble and many others.

**Tickets £10** are available from the church.

or you can book by calling Kath Dunstan.

Local shops, (Chapmans & Southminster Butchers,)

have tickets for you. Main posters show the details.

Money raised will go to the Knightswood Day Care Centre

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**Extra service at St Leonard's** *(There are 5 Sundays in March!)*

**Sunday 29th March**

**Palm Sunday**

**08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

Rev'd Peter /Jenny Pratt

Psalm 118 : 19 - 24 & Matthew 21 : 1-11      Celebrant

Sidesperson

Leon Flack

**11.00 United Morning Worship**

Leader/Preacher

Rev'd Peter/ Jenny Pratt

Readings as above

Gwyneth Iffland

Intercessions

Rupert Killick

Prayer Ministry

Keith Hatfield & Sylvia Adams

Audio-visuals

Christine Morgan

Sidesperson

Gwyneth Iffland

Refreshments

Frances Hatfield & Kathy Carnell

## **Sunday 1st March**

### **08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/President/Preacher

Romans 4 : 1 – 5, 13 -17

John 3 : 1 - 17

Sidesperson

## **2nd Sunday of Lent**

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

Sylvia Adams & Kathy Carnell

Christine Morgan

Gordon Baker

Christine Lucas & Pam Morris

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## **Sunday 8th March**

### **08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/President/Preacher

Romans 5 : 1 – 11

John 4 : 5 - 42

Sidesperson

## **3rd Sunday of Lent**

Rev'd Ken Dunstan

Celebrant

Celebrant

Leon Flack

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### **11.00 Family Celebration**

Leaders

Prayer Ministry

Audio-visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

Team: Karen, Jenny, Dawn

Jenni Blomfield & Frances Hatfield

Christine Lucas

Brenda Sheppard

Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

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## Sunday 15th March

### 08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher

Colossians 3 : 12 - 17

Luke 2: 33 - 35

Sidesperson

## Mothering Sunday

Rev'd Peter/ Brenda Sheppard

Celebrant

Celebrant

Paul Lucas

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### 11.00 Morning Worship

Leader

Norman Pratt / Brenda Sheppard

Readings

Pauline Siggers

Intercessions

Fiona Begley

Audio-visuals

Christine Morgan

Prayer ministry

Christine Lucas & Yvonne Thurbon

Sidesperson

Paul Lucas

Refreshments

Ray Kempen & Sarah Prendergast

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## Sunday 22nd March

### 08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher

Romans 8 : 6 - 11

John 11 : 1 - 45

Sidesperson

Rev'd Peter

Celebrant

Celebrant

Keith Hatfield

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## 5th Sunday of Lent

### 10.15 Café Church

Leader/Preacher

Readings as above

Intercessions

Prayer Ministry

Audio-visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

### Morning Worship

Rev'd Peter

Linda Payne

Frances Hatfield

Fiona Begley & Sarah Prendergast

Sylvia Adams

Kathy Carnell

Dee Byford & Jenni Blomfield

# 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](http://www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk)



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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,

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## Steeple's March Services in brief

(Service titles and leaders only)

1st 09.15 Morning Worship Rev'd Peter

8th 09.15 Holy Communion Rev'd Ken Dunstan

15th 09.15 Family Service Rev'd Peter / Brenda Sheppard

22nd 09.15 Holy Communion Rev'd Peter

29th No service but United Worship at Southminster

See page 9

Steeple's Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held in Steeple Church at 7pm on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. The meeting is open to anyone but only those on the current Electoral Roll are eligible to vote in any elections. If you wish to be added, please see the Roll Officer, Peter Marshall, as soon as possible.

In times past, it was traditional for young women working away from home to be given a day off on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent so that they could take a bunch of spring flowers to their mother, leading to the name Mothering Sunday. This year it occurs on 15<sup>th</sup> March,

March 15<sup>th</sup> will be a "third Sunday" which is fortuitous because it would normally be Steeple's Family Service anyway.

Although flowers are normally banished from the church during Lent, an exception is made for Mothering Sunday. So, during our 9.15am service, we'll provide each "child", whether young or not-so-young, with a potted plant to give to their mother as a modern reflection of the old tradition. If their mother is not in church, they can take it home and give it to her later, perhaps during a family lunch.

**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.

April 2026	5	12	19	26	
May 2026	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.**

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**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.

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.

## 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.

### **March dates are: Fri. 13th & 27th**

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

Your involvement in clearing up after the Christmas trees were removed was thoroughly appreciated.

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## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION LETTER

From **Walter Jenkins** (Hon. Sec. Burnham-on-Crouch branch)  
To our Secretary, Sylvia Adams.

I am writing to thank you and the congregation of St Leonard's Church for the donation of £400 collected at church services on Remembrance Sunday, 9 November 2025.

This generous response has increased the total of the 2025 Poppy Appeal in Burnham and the surrounding villages to just over £19,000.

All the money donated to the annual Poppy Appeal is spent in supporting the Armed Forces Veterans and their families. Please pass on our thanks to the congregation for supporting the Appeal.

## **SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL**

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

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### **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!

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### **DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP**

**Tuesday 24th March**

**Speaker: Dale Simmons : Vineyards**

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.

**Make sure these are in your diary**

**See page 9 for full details of this one:**

We are pleased that we have been able to arrange the return of the **Sid Bolan Big Band** to St Leonard's on **Saturday 28th March at 7.30 pm**

At their previous concerts here the audience expressed really grateful thanks and enjoyment, so we hope that this year will prove to be as well-supported again.

And also for your March Diary - at Althorne:

**On Saturday 21st March**

**There will be a BIT OF A DO**

**From 11 am to 3 pm**

**At Althorne Church Hall**

**With tea/coffee/ food/ Books/ puzzles etc. etc.**

**Funds raised will go to manage church repairs**

**And to Farleigh Hospice**

**Queries: 01621 740481 / 859379**

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**PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:**

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





## 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](http://www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk)

**Contact:** [vicar@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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.