

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



Operation Christmas Child
Shoeboxes awaiting their journey.

DECEMBER 2019

Emmanuel: God with us

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*Articles for the January magazine by
Sunday 15 December
 please, to Kath Dunstan.
 New contributors will be welcome.*

**Your magazine costs 50p.
 Please pay in church.**

**Or pay in advance if it is delivered to
 you.**

**The 2020 subscription will be due in
 January.** Please decide and speak with
 Brenda Sheppard about delivery etc.

Reflections

Immanuel; God **with us**. (Matt. 1: 23)

“Help! December is upon us all of a sudden and there is so much to do; I don’t know if we will be ready in time for Christmas, how are we going to do it all?”

December is such a busy time in our lives as we try to finish the year without a carry over into the New Year. There is lots of planning, preparing and buying to do – and those decisions about what is going to be the right gift for people. December can be a time of great stress, emotional, spiritual and financial for families as the pressure builds for a ‘perfect’ Christmas. “Are we going to invite Auntie Mabel this year? You know how much time she takes, and then we have to drive her home afterwards!” “Perhaps we will go away next year and let other people look after us instead.....” Maybe, our focus is misaligned?

At the end of November there was a confirmation service in St. Thomas church Bradwell where a few of our parishioners (congratulations to them!) were confirmed by the Bishop of Bradwell, Rev’d Dr, John Perumbalath, and during the service the Bishop prays a prayer of blessing for those to be confirmed; it reads;

“Almighty and ever living God, you have given these your servants new birth in baptism by water and of spirit, and have forgiven them all their sins. Let your Holy Spirit rest upon them: the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and inward strength; the Spirit of knowledge and

true Godliness; and let their delight be in the fear of the Lord.

This blessing is ours, for those that have come before God and received from Him the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ; a blessing that commends us into the presence of God at all times and in all places; a blessing that God wants to give to each of us – every day.

When Jesus came and stood in front of His disciples in the upper room, after His resurrection, He said to them “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.” (John 14: 27) His presence is with us always, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and He brings peace – He is the Prince of Peace, the One who is in control of peace and gives it to those who seek after Him, a peace that passes understanding and a peace that is with us in the most difficult times because we know that He is with us. Our Eucharistic prayer says as much

“The Lord is here – **His Spirit is with us.**”

We are reminded once again of the faithfulness of God that He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13: 5) He is our constant companion in life and into eternal life - **He is with us.**

Matthew 1: 23 ‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel’, which means, ‘**God is with us.**’

In our preparations for Christmas – God is with us;
in our work and organising – God is with us,
in everything that we do, plan and say – God is with us.
The Prince of peace is here – His Spirit is with us.

May we all know the presence of God in every
moment of Christmas.

Merry Christmas to you all,
and a happy and peace-full New Year!

Peter & Fiona.

P.S.

Peter and Fiona would like to say a huge "THANK YOU" for all the lovely cards and gifts that have been given over the last month, following Fiona's operation. We have enjoyed beautiful flowers and food, chocolate and yummy cakes, wonderful soups and superb homemade bread: it has been so wonderful and we want to say this THANK YOU to our lovely, and most loving, family of this benefice for your warmly expressed care and faithful prayers. God bless you all right on back!! "Pressed down, shaken together and running over"!! Alleluia, AMEN.

Peter & Fiona xx

Messy Church in November

Jacky Griffiths writes



The theme for Messy Church was 'Remember Me' remembering the promise Jesus gave to the thief who was crucified beside him when he asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his Kingdom.

Also Remembrance Sunday is thought of and as you can see there were lots of poppies in the group picture and as badges. The sweets on the plates were picturing Paradise and how good things can be in Paradise. There is one picture of a grandparent remembered and string art frames in which to keep a photo of a loved one. The meal was bangers and mash as it was nearly Guy Fawkes night, with Catherine wheels for pudding (swiss roll!). As usual, it was a lovely family time of crafts and activities.

The next time we'll meet will be on 2nd December when the subject is "Snowy Christmas"



Christmas Message from Bishop Stephen

I was visiting New Zealand in the summer – their winter. I was speaking at a conference on mission. My wife, Rebecca, came with me and like a couple of teenagers we hired a camper van and went exploring. Because it was winter many of the sites we visited were delightfully quiet and peaceful. One of the most unusual places was Wai-O-Tapu Park. It has all of the ingredients you might expect from a beauty spot; unspoilt rocks, ferns, and trees nestled around lakes. What makes this place remarkable are the weird colours. The glooping escape of geothermal gases through mud and hissing geysers have upset the colours you would expect to see. Soil is white, rocks are orange and water is bright green or red. There is something wonderfully unsettling about seeing what is familiar in a startlingly different way. The day after the birth of Jesus Christ, the houses of Bethlehem, the harbours of the Mediterranean and trade routes of the Middle East all looked the same. But for Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and Magi everything was startlingly different. God's familiar creation was now represented in a new and unsettling way. Jesus is baby just like any other, yet his birth, life, death and resurrection reveal God's new creation. God reframes the entire universe from him, through him and for him. When we visit him at Christmas we are invited to see ourselves and the whole world in startlingly new and different colours. I wish you a peaceful and colourful Christmas.

The Conductor

Have you ever watched someone conducting an orchestra and not having a clue what it all means or wondering if the musicians even look at them? I have often wondered what exactly a conductor's role is. I have been informed that basically, they keep the orchestra or choir in time or together. Their responsibility is to understand the music and convey through gestures that musicians in the orchestra understand perfectly. It is said that the orchestra or choir can manage without a conductor but it is so much more controlled with!



Thinking about conductors there are different types, for example it could be:

A person who conducts musicians; a material or device that conducts or transmits heat or electricity directly through a substance as in a lightning conductor; a person who collects fares on a bus; a person who behaves in a certain way so that their conduct is to be polite and acceptable; a person who guides or leads someone as in conducting a marriage service for example

In the book of Job (Job 38-39) in the Old Testament after Job has complained about his demise, God reminds Job that He is sovereign and that everything has been created by Him and held together by Him. God points out to Job that it is He who conducts the waves upon the sea; He who sends lightning bolts on their



way; He who laid the earth's foundation; He who controls and conducts everything and is sovereign over all the earth sea and sky. Also, in Isaiah chapter 40 particularly from verse 12 Isaiah points out the sovereignty of God and that everything is under His control.

So, can we manage without God as our conductor, keeping us in harmony and being wise and together in all we do? To be in tune with Him and His creation?

Do we need Him to teach us how to conduct ourselves in our behaviour toward others?

Do we need to be a conductor of His power through us to live and work for His praise and glory in this world?

The answer is yes, we can manage without God and do things in our own strength, but what a difference it makes to our lives when we acknowledge Him as our creator. We then realise how we rely on Him to keep our world turning; We rely on Him to orchestrate the whole of the universe to sustain life; And we rely on the power of the Holy Spirit working through us to change us to be Christlike as we conduct ourselves and stay in tune with our God!



Brenda Sheppard



Monday 2nd December

Snowy Christmas
starts at 3.45 pm

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

A family afternoon of fun and messiness

Future dates

13th January 2020

3rd February

2nd March

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 15th December

February 2020		2	9	16	25
March 2020	1	8	15	22	29

Name

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



**THANK YOU - AS ALWAYS -
FLOWER ARRANGERS**

The church looked wonderful during the remembrance season and we are grateful to all who contributed to this.

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers in memory of a loved one or a special occasion please give details and a donation to Kathy Pegg or to a churchwarden, preferably 2 weeks in advance.

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

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



ROTA FOR DECEMBER 2019

Date **1 December**

1st Sunday of Advent

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Col: Purple

Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Romans 13 : 11 - end	Paul Lucas
Matthew 24 : 36 - 44	Celebrant
Sidesman/ Communion Asst.	Paul Lucas

10.45 Holy Communion

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Romans 13 : 11 - end	Linda Payne
Matthew 24 : 36 - 44	Linda Payne
Intercessions	Kath Dunstan
Communion Assistants	Jacky Griffiths & Paul Lucas
Prayer Ministry Team	Sylvia Adams & Christine Lucas
Audio-Visual Operator	Christine Morgan
Sidesperson	Gwyneth Iffland & Mo Shakspeare
Refreshments	Linda Payne & Rosemary Cooper
Transport	Christine Morgan

Date **8 December**

2nd Sunday of Advent

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Col: Purple

Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Ken Dunstan
Romans 15 : 4 - 13	Sheila Nicholson
Matthew 3 : 1 - 12	Celebrant
Sidesman/ Communion Asst.	Paul Lucas

10.45 Family Celebration Service - & TOY Service for Refuge

Leader/preacher	Norman Pratt / Karen Flack
Romans 15 : 4 - 13	Jacky Griffiths
Matthew 3 : 1 - 12	Jacky Griffiths
Intercessions	Jenny Pratt
Prayer Ministry Team	Lynda Hedges & Viv Perry
Audio-Visual Operator	Mike Bikhazi
Sidesperson	Rosemary Cooper & Jacky Griffiths
Refreshments	Christine Lucas & Sandra Billingham
Transport	Bob Perry

ROTA FOR DECEMBER 2019

Date	15 December	3rd Sunday of Advent
08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)		Col: Purple
Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter	
James 5 : 7 - 10	Anne Wodhams	
Matthew 11 : 2 - 11	Celebrant	
Communion Asst. / Sidesman	Pete Adams & Anne Wodhams	

10.45 Holy Communion	
Leader	Rev'd Peter
James 5 : 7 - 10	Christine Lucas
Matthew 11 : 2 - 11	Christine Lucas
Intercessions	Jacky Griffiths
Communion Assistants	Paul Lucas & Mike Bikhazi
Prayer Ministry Team	Jacky Griffiths & Brenda Sheppard
Audio-Visual Operator	Sylvia Adams
Sidesperson	Paul Lucas & David Johnson
Refreshments	Bob Perry & Viv Perry
Transport	Christine Morgan

17.00 Christingle Service	
Leader/preacher	Rev'd Peter

Date	22 December	4th Sunday of Advent
08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)		Col: Purple
Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter	
Romans 1 : 1 - 7	Kathy Pegg	
Matthew 1 : 18 - end	Celebrant	
Communion Asst. / Sidesman	Pete Adams & Kathy Pegg	

There will be NO 10.45 service today because of:

19.00 Service of Lessons & Carols	
Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Readers	Community Group members
Audio-Visual Operator	Christine Morgan
Sidespersons	Christine Lucas & A.N Other
Refreshments	Social Committee

MORE SOUTHMINSTER INFORMATION

Date **24th December**
16.00 Crib Service

CHRISTMAS EVE

23.30 Holy Communion

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Titus 2 : 11 - 14	Kath Dunstan
Luke 2 : 1 - 20	Kath Dunstan
Intercessions	Rev'd Peter
Communion Assistants	John Hedges & Paul Lucas
Audio-Visual Operator	Mike Bikhazi
Sidesperson	Paul Lucas & Lynda Hedges

Date **25th December**

CHRISTMAS DAY

09.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Leader/Preacher	Jenny Pratt/Rev'd Peter
Hebrews 1 : 1 - 12	Paul Lucas
John 1 : 1 - 14	Celebrant
Com. Asst & Sides	Paul Lucas

10.00 Family Celebration

Leader/Preacher	Jenny Pratt/Rev'd Peter
Readings as above	Sylvia Adams
Intercessions	Jenny Pratt
Sidesperson	Paul Lucas

Date **29th December**

1st Sunday of Christmas

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Leader/Preacher	Jenny Pratt/Rev'd Peter
Hebrews 2 : 10 - end	Paul Lucas
Matthew 2 : 13 - end	Celebrant
Com. Asst & Sides	Paul Lucas

10.45 United Service

Leader/Preacher	Rev'd Peter
Readings as above	U.R.C. member
Intercessions	Steeple Church member
AV operator/Sidespersons	Christine Lucas / Sylvia & Mo
Prayer Ministry Team	Viv Perry & Brenda Sheppard
Refreshments	Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

DECEMBER SERVICES AT STEEPLE

Sunday	1 st	9.15 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday	8 th	10.30 am	Holy Communion
Sunday	15 th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday	22 nd	4.00 pm	Service with Christingles
Tuesday	24 th	5.00 pm	Service of Lessons and Carols
Sunday	29 th	10.45 am	United Service at St Leonard's

December at St Nicholas, Tillingham

Sunday 1st	10.00 am	Family Service (Laity)
Wednesday 4th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers (Laity)
Sunday 8th	10.00 am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 11th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers (Laity)
Sunday 15th	10.00 am	Family Service (Laity)
Wednesday 18th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers (Laity)
Sunday 22nd	10.00 am	Parish Holy Communion
	6.00 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols
Tuesday 24th	6.00 pm	Nativity Service
	11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
Sunday 29th	10.00 am	Joint benefice communion at Dengie

December Services at St James, Dengie

December 1st	8.00 am	Holy Communion
December 8th	3.00 pm	Southminster Flower Club Carol Service
December 15th	2.00 pm	Christmas Praise Carol Service
December 22nd	3.00 pm	Evensong (Laity)
December 25th	9.00 am	Christmas Day Holy Communion
December 29th	10.00 am	Joint Benefice Communion
Refreshments afterwards in Dengie Village Hall		

ST. LEONARD'S REGULAR MIDWEEK ACTIVITIES

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

The **Music Group** meets in church on Fridays at 7.45 pm
& occasional Tuesdays. See Hazel Richards 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 9.30 am (normally on Fridays)

The December dates are 6th and 20th.

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

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

Next ones will be on 8th Dec. at 10.45 & Christmas Day at 10.00 am.

Weekly bulletins and church notice boards list any other events in the Church.

Information for these should go to Christine Morgan.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Southminster W.I.

We normally meet at Southminster Memorial Hall

Tuesday 3rd December: Kirk Simmons

First responders

Competition: Pin Cushion

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 10th December 1 pm - 3 pm

Light lunch, games & good company

Little Lions Baby & Toddler Group
meets at the Memorial Hall

Every Wednesday **during term-time**

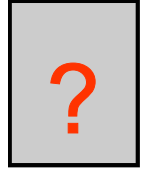
10 am - noon Singing, craft, refreshments

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

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



Quiz Night - Saturday 9th November



Despite all the jokes we all had a fabulous time at the 'Quiz Nite' this year. We had 50 people join us and the fish was worth the wait.

The quiz was won by the team DLD (Dairylea Dunkers). I think they got the idea for their team name from something on their table!

Thank you to everybody who helped and thank you to all those who came. We raised £85 for church funds.

Jenny

DECEMBER EVENT TO NOTE - AND ATTEND!

This year's Festival of Trees is on
14th December 2 - 5 pm.

Come and admire the wonderful decorated trees.

There will also be a few stalls
and an elderly gentleman from up north somewhere.

I wonder where he'll park his reindeer!

The school may also have some entertainment for us.

If you would like to sponsor a tree, speak to
Sylvia Adams. We aim to decorate our trees on
Wednesday 11th December at 7pm.

See you all there.

STEVE PILLINGER WRITES

Particularly to those of you reading this on line...

Dear Friends,

How often do you get a chance to work on a practical project that will help Bible translators all around the world?

If you're a mother-tongue English speaker, and have a knowledge of Scripture and an eye for detail, I would love your help on a project that's too big for me to do alone.

In the online **Scripture Maps and Illustrations Repository**, which I manage, we have 2800 scripture pictures for translators to choose from; and we have recently introduced a new, streamlined method that allows them to search these pictures quickly and easily for the ones they need. For this to work, though, each picture needs good **keywords** associated with it, so that translators can find just the right illustration in a given context.

But as you can imagine, it would take one person a massive amount of time to add keywords to all 2800 pictures! *However:* if a whole group of people could each adopt a section of these pictures to work through, we'd demolish the mountain in no time!

Would you like to help with this? All it takes is your knowledge of English and of Scripture, about 45 minutes of your time, and a computer with internet access! *I'd be tremendously grateful if you could help lighten this load!*

To take part, [download the instructions here](#). Thank you!! (Don't be put off by the length of the instruction document: it just takes a bit of space to describe the procedure, but once you've read through it you'll find it's all very straightforward and easy to do.)

I hope you enjoy being involved in helping ease the task for Bible translators around the world!

Steve

Special Visit of Archdeacon Elizabeth Snowden

November 17th 2019

It was an exciting day when Rev'd Peter became Vicar of the benefice of Southminster and Steeple rather than 'Priest in charge' of both parishes. The Venerable Elizabeth Snowden inducted and installed him at our 10.45 Holy Communion service. He had already been licensed by the Bishop of Bradwell at the Bishop's House at the end of October.

She explained what this complicated process is about and then went on to share thoughts relevant to the two Bible readings we had heard: 2 Thessalonians 3: 6 - 13 and Luke 21 : 5 - 19. These are my notes about what she said.

All the 'end of the world' times prophesied could relate to today's times, but just as Jesus warned his followers about them then, so He says to us, too, "Don't be afraid." Fear should not be the primary response - even with today's problems about Climate Change, for example. God calls us to be stewards of His creation, but people worldwide are damaging it. I chair the Diocesan Environment Group and in a recent demonstration by Christian Climate Action I was singing hymns with others in Trafalgar Square sensing the hope of seeing God's Kingdom come rather than the fear of irreparable damage exhibited by others. Let's find a way to

love the world God has put us in. There are so many areas of the world where homes have been battered, villages lost, fish populations depleted, lives impacted and always the poorest people suffer most. I am thankful that you remember the poorer folk through providing shoeboxes for children at Christmas. Whatever happens, Jesus says "Fear not." It is through your endurance, standing firm in faith, that your life will be saved. When difficult things happen, we need to be patient and to persevere with what we are called to do. Don't give up. This guidance is for Rev'd Peter, too, especially as he has so many roles to fill now he is also Area Dean and there are so many local clergy vacancies through retirement or sickness. So pray for Peter so that together you can seek God's will and find that the root of endurance is where trust and strength come from.

Kath Dunstan

Operation Christmas Child 2019

The 40 shoeboxes, shown on our front cover, are all ready to go off to make lots of children very happy. Thank you to all who contributed shoeboxes. On Sunday 17th November Archdeacon Elizabeth blessed them as well as installing Rev'd Peter Begley as Incumbent of Southminster and Steeple Parishes. It was a great day to celebrate - with cakes of course!

Jacky

Toy Service for Women's Refuge at Safer Places Sunday, 8th December

Please bring your donations either to this Service or to the church from 1st December. Please note that gifts for children must not be violence based in any way, no guns, and brand new - please leave any labels/tags on as the Refuge is subject to health and safety protection rules.



The ladies appreciate new pamper gifts as they often arrive at the Refuge with nothing at all and without toiletries etc. Please leave everything unwrapped but Christmas paper can be included.

Safer Places, which covers a large area of Essex, always appreciate our regular support. Thank you in advance for your donations.

Jacky Griffiths

ALSO FOR YOUR DIARIES

Light up a Life Service : Wednesday 4th Dec. at 7 pm
for Farleigh Hospice in church

SOCS Autumn Concert

Saturday 7th Dec. in church 2pm & 7.30 pm

A medley from *Les Miserables* and seasonal songs.
with wine and mince pies. (Look out for posters.)

ICycle Ride : New Year's Day (Look out for posters)



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

Sunday Services - normal pattern (See pages 12-14 for details)

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

10:45 am Holy Communion or Morning Worship

(Prayer ministry for any needs is available during/after 10.45 services)

Light refreshments are served after the 10.45 services.

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 on **Monday 2nd December**

'LITTLE LIONS' on Wednesday mornings during term-time only
is for babies/toddlers & their carers. See p.17

Morning Prayer (Mon., Wed. and Fri.) 8:00 am (about 30 mins.)
and **Tuesdays at 8.30am** (Just Prayer) in the chapel

THIS MONTH special services at St Leonard's

Wednesday 4th : 7 pm Light up a Life (for Farleigh Hospice)

Sunday 15th : 5 pm Christingle Service

Sunday 22nd : 7 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve : 4pm Crib Service & 11.30 pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day : 9 am Holy Communion & 10 am Family Celebration

Pray for Southminster (six regions on six-week rota) See p.11

HOME GROUPS: See page 16 and weekly bulletins for details

United Service for Elderly at Southminster Residential Home
4pm Thursday 19th December