

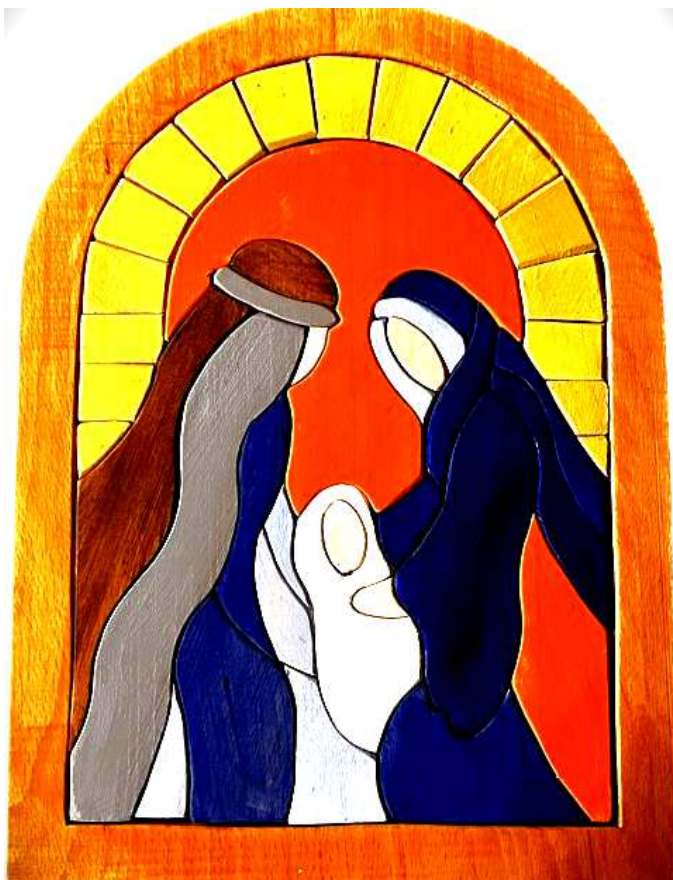
**PARISH OF SOUTHMINSTER  
MAGAZINE OF THE  
CHURCH OF ST LEONARD**

**StL**



and also for Steeple Parish

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



**DECEMBER 2023**

**Sing Glory to Jesus Christ this Christmas**

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***NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:***

*Articles for the January magazine  
should be with  
Kath Dunstan by, at the latest,  
**Sunday 17th December**  
New contributors are welcome.*

To cover our costs we have to charge for this magazine. Because we are making new arrangements about the printing we have not yet fixed an annual charge. Please be patient.

# Curate's Reflection

## Join the Song

As we already know, Advent, in the Church calendar, is the time when we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas. The word advent originates from the Latin *adventus*, which means coming because we remember when Jesus came and when people first came into God's presence, born as a child in a manger.

Singing plays a huge part in our Christmas preparations, but the account in our Bibles, in the book of Luke, reminds us that music was also significant at the time of Jesus' birth. When Mary was pregnant, her cousin Elizabeth sang, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" Mary responds to Elizabeth in the song we call the Magnificat (often used in evening prayer), "My soul magnifies the Lord" is the first line. Then we hear how the shepherds were overwhelmed when the night sky filled with a great company of angels singing God's praise, "Glory to God in the highest." And, after meeting Jesus, the shepherds returned, praising God for all they had heard and seen.

All these years later, singing is still central to how we prepare for Christmas Day. Our young people learn and sing Christmas carols that the old among us often know by heart. This year, the Church of England has developed a range of resources to help choirs, singing groups, schools and churches 'join the song' during Advent. A new composition of the First Nowell has even been commissioned from a world-renowned composer, Bob

Chilcott, and I'm sure we'll play the music video in church this month.

However, something in the past year may make you reluctant to or not feel like joining in the singing. The thought of preparations for Christmas may make you sad, uninterested, or lonely. This year, remembering may be about stitching together something that has been severed, a feeling of separation from others, so it may be hard to join in the chorus. However, the season of Advent, the coming of Jesus Christ, is a time of preparing not just for Christmas Day but for three things: celebrating the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, receiving Jesus into our hearts and believing that our destiny is to come; to live with the holy choir of heavenly angels in God's eternal Kingdom. Unlike Santa Claus, Jesus doesn't just travel from house to house, leaving gifts on one day each year; Jesus dwells in each home and is the one who fills the empty chair(s) at our tables, comforting us and helping us to face all that is to come each and every day.

As we remember and prepare for Christmas, may the peace of Jesus dwell in your hearts, and may we all sing our way through Advent, as was done in biblical times, believing that God came in the form of a baby and was named Jesus – the one who will cradle us as our lips sing of our love for all that Jesus did and will continue to do for us in the year ahead and into eternity.

Christmas blessings,

**Rev'd Jacqui**

# **PCC Jottings**

The PCC (Parochial Church Council) assists the clergy in the management of church affairs and are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the Church and in the Parish.

As a PCC in Southminster St. Leonard's, we thought it may be helpful to let the Church know some of our ongoing items on the agenda, that are discussed at our bi-monthly meetings. As part of our PCC agreement each member belongs to a group or team which carries out certain functions within the church or community and at each PCC meeting we have a feedback report from them.

At our November PCC meeting we had updates on:

The progress of the Community Hub being formed at the URC church building in North Street.

The forming of our Pastoral Care Team

Our Treasurer's report: It was again highlighted that a new treasurer for the Church is urgently needed.

The Children's work report

The Social Team report

Church and Community report

Safeguarding and safer recruiting. The PCC are responsible to ensure training where required is kept up to date.

Other ongoing matters and updates are discussed and appropriate action taken if needed. The PCC is here to serve the Church and the Parish and will be pleased to let anyone know more of how the teams work. Teams aren't exclusively PCC members, so if interested, people can find out how to be involved.

**The PCC**

## O Holy Night

Do Christmas Carols continue to touch our hearts each year? They are so familiar to many of us but still hold us in that same awe and wonder of Jesus the Son of God coming to earth. When we sing them, it seems that heaven touches earth. It also seems when we sing them that the Holy God reaches into our lives which causes us to fall to our knees and worship the new born King.



It's lovely isn't it how music can touch our hearts and I had to smile when I read a comment recently which said "I do wish the supermarkets would play old English Carols instead of "Santa Claus is coming to town" or Slade singing "Merry Christmas Everybody" which they have been singing since 1973 I believe!!!

Now more than ever we crave a Silent and Holy Night. We yearn to hear the Herald Angels sing on high and we long for lasting peace on earth, and in what sometimes seems to be our Bleak Midwinter, we need to see and feel amid the Winter's snow, the Joy to the World as our Lord and Saviour comes.

The Christmas carols point us to the real meaning of Christmas, how from that "Little town of Bethlehem" came a Saviour born of David's line, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord. A Saviour who came to teach us to love one another and we thank God that He so loved the world so much that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

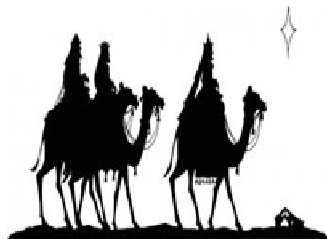
Will we echo the words of the carols this Christmas time and along with the angelic host proclaim that Christ is born in Bethlehem? Will we prepare room in our hearts, amongst all the hustle and bustle, to receive Jesus into our lives the Jesus who came to give us a new life, a second birth and eternal life for all who believe in his name.

And now let us sing with the Three kings of the Orient:

“Glorious now, behold Him arise,  
King and God and sacrifice.

Heaven sings “Alleluia!”

“Alleluia!” the earth replies.



Christmas – a time of praise and thanksgiving and may we all know the peace and healing of Jesus in our own lives and in all of His precious world.

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**Brenda Sheppard**

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### **Prayer Ministry on Sundays after the 11 am service**

Please come to the area outside the Chapel if you have a particular need for prayer, (for yourself or someone close to you) where there should be two people available to pray with you.

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**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. They will be enjoying Christmas events this month, and families will join the main services.



## WELCOME BISHOP ADAM

It was good to be able to attend, on Saturday 4th November, the special Welcome and licensing service at Chelmsford Cathedral for the Right Reverend Adam Atkinson as Bishop of Bradwell. The Reverends Jonathan Croucher, as Archdeacon of Chelmsford, and

Kate Peacock as Archdeacon of Stansted were also welcomed and collated. We particularly enjoyed Bishop Adam's sermon, so we will share some memories of what he said.

**Focus on cooking:** particularly today Lamb Stew. Jesus is often described as eating and drinking with people and we are called to follow Him. So, note the regular hospitality in the Chelmsford diocese. Check the seating arrangements, being aware that those who exalt themselves will be punished but those who humble themselves will be exalted. (Luke 14: 7 - 11) Perhaps this isn't good advice in Sport and Business, but it is good news for Jesus' followers. Blessed are the poor in Spirit.

**Leadership is functional, not hierarchical.** We're here to love you and serve you. We will be bringing the good news of Jesus. There is nothing you can do to make Him love you. Just humble yourself, receive the good news and live your life. There is a hope we can cling to. There is joy in the morning. People at the bottom will be exalted.



**Think of the chef in the kitchen.** There are bad times and amazing times. He is a pauper in spirit. He surrenders (still cooking but praying too). Thinking again about the lamb stew, we can focus on the Lamb slain from the beginning in Revelation. The point of the Lamb Stew is that Jesus is the Lamb slain for us, but mercifully, risen to rule.

We're all invited to receive God's hospitality, so let's join Jesus in the feast. It's free! Hospitality is expensive, but in Jesus, the host has already paid the price.

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## **November news from the Pillingers.**

*Johanna is writing:*

**Wyciffe  
Bible  
Translators**

Presently Steve is completing the typesetting of the Dinka Cam Bible (pronounced “Dinka Cham”— South Sudan). Right now he is completing the final touches: Introduction, cover, etc. It is a complete Bible, and as the script cannot be small, it will end up like the big Bible of around 2000 pages! 9 inches tall! There is a well established network of churches in South Sudan, and this is a much anticipated revision of the New Testament, along with a brand new translation of the old Testament. It has been done under the auspices of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, and will be widely used by a number of different dialect groups making up the wider Dinka language community.

### **WE, THE FAMILY, ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR:**

- ☐ An excellent person to take over the Repository from Steve next year. He is also very computer savvy, and will be able to bring this resource to a higher level.
- ☐ The (almost) completed typesetting of the Dinka Cam Bible.
- ☐ Stephen’s engagement to Mel; they are both actively serving in their church in Glasgow.
- ☐ Jen’s launch of her website to sell her art/photographs.
- ☐ Jesse moving into a new phase and already earning some income whilst continuing to study.
- ☐ Johanna’s recovery from Post Concussion Syndrome.

## **Sunday 3rd December**

## **Advent Sunday**

### **08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/President/Preacher

1 Corinthians 1 : 3 - 9

Mark 13 : 24 - end

Sidesperson

Rev'd Peter & Norman Pratt

Celebrant

Celebrant

Gordon Baker

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### **11.00 FAMILY Holy Communion**

President/Preacher

Readings as above

Intercessions

Prayer Ministry

Audio-visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

Rev'd Peter/ Norman Pratt

Christine Lucas

Kath Dunstan

Brenda Sheppard & Sarah Prendergast

Christine Morgan

Gwyneth Iffland

Eira Hagger & Frances Hatfield

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## **Wednesday 6th December 7.00 pm "Light up a Life"**

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## **Saturday 9th 2 - 4pm Christmas Tree Festival in church**

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## **Sunday 10th December**

## **2nd Sunday of Advent**

### **08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/President/Preacher

2 Peter 3 : 8 - 15a

Mark 1 : 1 - 8

Sidesperson

Rev'd Ken Dunstan

Celebrant

Celebrant

Paul Lucas

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### **11.00 FAMILY CELEBRATION**

Leaders

Audio-visuals

Prayer Ministry

Sidespersons

Refreshments

Rev'd Jacqui & team

Christine Lucas

Keith Hatfield & Yvonne Thurbon

Nigel Winger

Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

**Sunday 17th December****3rd Sunday of Advent****08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

President/Preacher

I Thessalonians 5 : 16-24

John 1 : 6 -8

Sidesperson

Rev'd Jacqui/Brenda Sheppard

Celebrant

Celebrant

Leon Flack

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**NO SERVICE at 11am because of****17.00 Community Carol service**

Leader/preacher

Rev'd Peter

Readings and carols will be provided on screen.

Audio-Visuals

Christine Morgan

Sidesperson

Paul Lucas

Refreshments

Social Committee

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**Sunday 24th December****4th Sunday of Advent****08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

Rev'ds Jacqui/Peter

Romans 16 : 25 - end

Celebrant

Luke 1 : 26 - 38

Celebrant

Sidesperson

Pete Adams

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**11.00 Morning Worship -**

Leader/Preacher

Rev'ds Jacqui/Peter

Readings as above

Christine Morgan

Intercessions

Brenda Sheppard

Prayer Ministry

t.b.a.

Audio-Visuals

Sylvia Adams

Sidesperson

Kath Dunstan

Refreshments

t.b.a.

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**16.00 Crib Service****More details of services are on page 13**

# Steeple Church News

Steeple Church has services every Sunday morning at 9.15am unless otherwise advertised on the church door. We have Morning Prayer with activities for children on the first and third Sunday each month, 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)

Our Christingle & Carols service will be on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 4pm. Instead of making Christingles in advance, we set out all the necessary materials on the table in the middle of the church where children usually sit. When the children (and some of the adults) have made their own Christingles we turn out the lights and everyone processes up the aisle to the chancel with their lighted candles.

With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday this year, Steeple will be having a Carol Service at 4pm but will not be having a morning service that day.

Members of Steeple congregation will attend the Christmas services at St Leonard's, details of which are shown opposite.

## Steeple Church contacts

Rev'd Canon Peter Begley, Vicar 01621 772 300  
Rhona Leech, Churchwarden & PCC Secretary,

Teresa Julien, Churchwarden,  
Peter Marshall, PCC Treasurer & Verger,

**Sunday 24th December**  
**16.00 Crib Service**

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
Karen Flack & Team in charge

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**Sunday 24th December**

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**23.30 'Midnight' Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

Rev'ds Peter and Jacqui

Titus 3 : 4 - 7 & Luke 2: 1-20

Fiona Begley

Intercessions

Rev'd Peter

Sidesperson

Gordon Baker & Nigel Winger

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**Monday 25th December**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**09.00 Holy Communion**

Rev'd Peter & Jenny Pratt

Hebrews 1 : 1 - 12

Celebrant

John 1 : 1 - 14

Celebrant

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**10.00 Family Celebration**

Rev'd Jacqui & Jenny Pratt

Readings (as above)

Sylvia Adams

Intercessions

Rev'd Jacqui

Sidesperson

Sylvia Adams

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**Sunday 31st December**

**First Sunday after Christmas**

**08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

Rev'd Peter & Norman Pratt

Galatians 4 : 4 - 7

Celebrant

Luke 2 : 15 - 21

Celebrant

Sidesperson

Paul Lucas

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**11.00 United Service**

Readings (as above)

Susan Gendreau

Intercessions

Rupert Killick

Audio-Visuals

Christine Morgan

Prayer Ministry

Frances Hatfield & Fiona Begley

Sidesperson

Paul Lucas

Refreshments

Christine Lucas & Sandra Billingham

## Henry Cleaning Team

As we near the close of another year, may I take this opportunity to thank all those faithful members of our Church cleaning team (male and female) who turn up each fortnight on a Friday from 9.15am to keep St. Leonard's a clean, tidy and welcoming place to visit and worship in.



Each member of the team has a specific task but that can be flexible if anyone would like to join and would prefer a certain task. We have been blessed by Graham Martin coming along each time we meet to play the organ which not only is pleasurable for him but us too, as we sing along as we work. Graham has now moved away from Southminster but assures us he will come back periodically to play for us again! Thank you Graham.

If you would like to join the Henry team, even if you can only come from time to time. please contact me. You will be made very welcome.

Brenda Sheppard

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## The Southminster Food Pantry

continues to meet on Wednesday mornings at Christ Church, but it now has an extra collection point: on Thursday afternoons at Burnham URC

If you are willing to donate food for the Pantry there is a list of basic requirements at the back of church. In these difficult times more and more people are in need of what some of us take for granted.

## **SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL**

**LUNCH CLUB** meets on alternate Mondays.

If you would like any information please phone

Dave Christie 07775 758118.

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### **CHATTERBOX**



We thank God for another successful year of being able to meet weekly for 'Chatterbox' in the Memorial Hall. We have grown in numbers and people have faithfully come each week and enjoyed company and refreshments, which often includes cake when it's someone's birthday! As well as Jigsaws to battle with, we have a craft table which is really popular and each year a project is entered into the Flower Show and we won first prize this year. Often, we just like to sit and chat or quietly read the newspapers provided. We have recently acquired a computer. Norman will happily help people to navigate it and learn more about computing.

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December in the Memorial Hall we will be having a Christmas buffet during our time together which is 10am – 12 noon . Please feel free to come along and share on that day and please do come along and join us on any Thursday you can. You will be made very welcome.

Any enquiries to: Norman

### **DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP**

will meet on 19th December

**Christmas Party with Handbell Ringers**

**Competition: Christmas Cracker Joke**

For further details contact Paula Neall 01621 773243

**POSSIBLE ROTA DETAILS: YOUR AVAILABILITY FOR 2 MONTHS**

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

February 2024	4	11	18	25	
March 2024	3	10	17	24	31(Easter Day)

**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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**The St. Leonard’s Together Apart Facebook Group**

I prayerfully decided to start the "Together Apart" facebook group at the beginning of the first lockdown and posted on the page at least 6 days of each week. 3 years on lockdowns now seem to be long behind us and the interaction with the group is now minimal so after a lot of thought and prayer it was decided that I would no longer post on this group daily.

The group will remain open and I will occasionally post things that I think may be of interest. Please feel free to post on there too.

Thanks to all those who have interacted over the past three years.

**Karen Flack**



## CORONAVIRUS 2022

We are pleased that most restrictions were lifted but we do need to be aware of possible new viruses, so we must continue cautiously. New information will be available on posters & on-line.

To keep aware of what is happening, and to participate on line with services, log into the website <https://www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stleonardstogetherapart/>

Also, we have a WhatsApp group entitled "Together Apart Our Church". Lots of people are involved in that.

These links have been greatly appreciated by regular Church family members and also by people who have not, to date, attended our church services. In difficult times, like this, we need 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.

## WHAT'S ON IN SOUTHMINSTER THIS DECEMBER

Saturday 2nd December 9.30 - 11.30

Family Christmas Craft Morning (entry free)

Saturday 2nd December 2.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**SOCS concert of Winter Music** Details on posters

Wednesday 6th December 7 pm **Light up a Life Service**  
for Farleigh Hospice. Remember loved ones.

Saturday 9th December 2pm-4pm

**CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL**

With stalls, refreshments, crafts and Santa

Sunday 17th December Note: No 11am service because at  
5 pm is the **COMMUNITY CAROL SERVICE**

Sunday 24th December 4 pm **CRIB SERVICE**

Children can come dressed as angels or  
shepherds

11.30 pm **Midnight Holy Communion** for Christmas Eve

Monday 25th December **CHRISTMAS DAY**

9 am Holy Communion (BCP)

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### PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b 3 December Central - West

w/b 10 December North - East

w/b 17 December Central - North-West

w/b 24 December Central - East

w/b 31 December Central - South





## 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)

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

**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.



Everyone is  
welcome to join.  
Details on board.

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

The new course details will be on the notice  
board and at the back of church.