

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

StL



and also for Steeple Parish

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



FEBRUARY 2024

**God saw all that He had made, and it was
very good. (Gen. 1:31).**

*GAIA, a touring art work by Luke Jerram
Chelmsford Cathedral October 2022*

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

*Articles for the March magazine
should be with
Kath Dunstan by, at the latest,
Sunday 18th February
New contributors are welcome.*

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!)

Reflection by Ken Dunstan

Back in the 1970s I taught a combination of Geography, History and Biology, especially Ecology, that rejoiced in the title, “Environmental Studies.” That was when I first came across what we called the “greenhouse effect” and its result, “global warming.”

It's old hat to many now, but the greenhouse effect depends on two things. First, very short-wave ultraviolet rays from the sun heat the earth's surface, and are reflected back as long-wave infrared waves. Some atmospheric gases, small amounts of Carbon dioxide (CO_2), Methane (CH_4) and five others heat up when struck by infrared waves. Some of that heat continues out into space. Tellingly, some of it does not, and the atmosphere warms. That's brilliant if you're in an ice age, but not when your climate is ideal for life. Greenhouse gases are produced by burning coal, oil and natural gas, formed over millions of years from plant materials. We call them “fossil fuels.” They are energy-packed and we have learned over past centuries to burn them to develop industries and raise living standards for many people. Without these gases, the average temperature of the world would be -14° Celsius. Because of Greenhouse gases, until recently it was $+14^\circ$ Celsius. The effect was first described in 1824 and the particular effect of CO_2 was demonstrated by Eunice Foote (USA 1854) and independently, John Tyndall (Ireland 1857). In 1896 Svante Arrhenius in Sweden demonstrated that doubling the CO_2 in the atmosphere raises global average temperature by $2-4^\circ$ Celsius. Large increases could give us a climate like that of Venus – impossibly hot for life. We've known this for two centuries, but the scientific conclusions have been denied, largely by fossil fuel suppliers

out for short-term profit. Exxon, the biggest oil company, knew about the effect as early as 1977, and carried out research that confirmed the theory. They hid their results and sought to cast doubt on the science.

In 2015 the Paris UN climate conference agreed that we must restrict global heating to 2° Celsius above pre-industrial levels and aspire to only 1.5° Celsius. We have already almost reached that. 2023 was the hottest year ever. The ten hottest years since 1850 have all been in the last decade.

The results have been alarming. Our partner dioceses in Kenya have experienced more extreme weather: longer, hotter dry seasons – severe droughts – and more heavy rains, sometimes from stronger tropical cyclones, leading to floods. Existing challenges to water and food security have worsened. Yet Kenyans are responsible for less than 1 tonne of CO₂ per person per year. Britons emit 12.7 tonnes per person, Americans 14.95. This means that those who do least harm to the earth suffer more than those who do most. This is injustice inflicted by the most powerful people, including us.

The book of Genesis tells us that having created this world and called it good, God took the man he had made from the earth and put him in a garden, “to work it and *take care of it*.” (Gen. 2:15, NIV). He gave the man freedom to eat fruit from the garden but *within limits* – one tree was poisonous. The tragic story of the next chapter shows the temptation to “be like God.” Humans were already made in God’s image. But we do, still, behave as if we have rights over the earth that exceed the health of other species and, indeed, the stability of the climate that gives us life.

Human refusal to accept limits has led to many major and life-giving discoveries. But it has also led to disasters. In Genesis 3:17 God says to disobedient Adam, “Cursed is the ground because of you.” James Jones, a former Bishop of Liverpool says, “The earth bears the scars of human sinfulness.” St Paul wrote to the Romans about future glory, with the hope of “the sons of God” being revealed and creation’s frustration being ended because “creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay.”

Meanwhile, (Romans 8:19-22). “the whole creation has been groaning”. And by adoption, **we** are God’s children, while Jesus is “one substance with the Father,” who came as one of us to inaugurate the Kingdom of God.

Jesus taught us to pray to the Father, “your kingdom come, your will be *done on earth*, as in heaven.” We are to tend and care for our home. Insulating your house is a spiritual act. Using low-Carbon transport and turning down the central heating thermostat is the same. We followers of Jesus, children of God the Father, are called as our 5th Mark of Mission says, “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.” That’s not an add-on. It’s a basic part of being a Christian disciple.

And a prayer from the Chelmsford Diocesan Environment Group:

Give us eyes to see the beauty of your creation and ears to hear creation’s song of worship. Give us grace to stand with all who care about this world and the suffering of people and the planet. Show us how to care, how to listen, how to live and how to proclaim your redeeming love for all people and all your creation.

Is The Other Man's Grass Always Greener?

I don't know about your lawn but mine at the moment looks a bit sad and mossy and still has bald patches from the really hot dry summer of 2023. My husband and I have a small lawn, always fed and de-mossed each year and mowed regularly, but still often looks really tired and pretty waterlogged lately with all the rain we've had.

Our lawn, over the years, has suffered a lot from a resident mole who, I'm afraid, we did have to evict. The neighbouring cats often use our lawn as a litter tray and the resident squirrels make lots of holes burying their nuts in the Autumn and then digging them up again in the Winter. We even had a large rat sitting on the lawn one day just soaking up the atmosphere!



All in all - A very busy lawn.

We have thought about paving our lawn over to save a bit of work but then the birds land on it and amuse us by cocking their heads, listening for worms, and what joy to watch one being pulled out and eaten! It's also one of the joys in life to see and smell freshly cut grass, grass that can be recycled as mulch underneath other plants.

One of the Ten Commandments given in Exodus 20 says "You shall not covet or yearn to possess something belonging to your neighbour." I have to admit I would so love to have a perfectly cut or even a stripey lawn and even one resembling a cricket pitch, bowling green or golf course, which I know are

achieved with a lot of hard work and loving care! but I think we will soldier on and love our garden as it is and our imperfect, almost green lawn. We will continue to mow it, de-moss it, fill in squirrel holes and pick up cat's mess and watch the birds pull up worms.

One thing I do know is that it is a joy and a privilege to have somewhere in the hot Summer months to be able to sit on our lawn, to sit and enjoy this gift from God, and never mind that my lawn isn't perfect and my neighbours is much more lush, I know that I am content that my grass is green enough for me.



Brenda Sheppard

Eco tip of the month from A Rocha: February

Go green for Lent.

The weeks leading up to Easter are a time for self-reflection, repentance and emulating Jesus' obedience to the Father. Is there something you'd like to give up or take up during Lent that will enable you to reflect on God, contribute to our planet's well-being and enhance others' lives through sustainable, ecofriendly living?

Explore some of these changes at
arocha.org.uk/go-greenfor-lent/

ALTHORNE CHURCH invite you to a

ST VALENTINE'S EVENT

On SATURDAY 10th FEBRUARY

2 pm - 4 pm

in the Althorne Church Hall

Althorne CM3 6BY

Funds raised will be for
BREAST CANCER NOW
(The Research & Care Charity)
and St Andrews Church, Althorne.

Come and enjoy the
TEA, COFFEE & CAKES
BOOKS, PUZZLES, RAFFLE,
CARDS & CRAFTS
BACKGROUND MUSIC.

Who was Valentine?

Ken Dunstan

What do you associate with St Valentine? The day of his death has turned out to be a great money-maker for greetings card sellers. But who would link him with epilepsy, beekeepers and the central Italian town of Terni? It was around 600 years after his death that Valentine became associated with “courtly love.” In this, knights would perform great deeds for the sake of a woman, who might well be married to a nobleman of higher rank than the knight. It wasn't for people like us. Romantic love for ordinary people came even later.



General Information about our Bible Studies

The Course, “The Chosen” (Series 3) is already happening but here are some details which should be helpful.

We meet at 10am every Monday and 8pm every Thursday.

1. January 8th & 11th : **FORGIVE** as Jesus forgives you
 2. January 15th & 16th : **GO** as Jesus sends you
 3. January 22nd & 26th : **GRIEVE** as Jesus grieves
 4. January 29th & February 1st : **STAND** where Jesus stands
 5. February 5th & 8th : **DELIGHT** in what Jesus delights in
 6. February 12th & 15th : **ASK** because Jesus tells you to
 7. February 26th & 29th : **WELCOME** who Jesus welcomes
 8. March 4th & 7th : **TRUST JESUS** all the time.
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Valentine was a priest who helped persecuted Christians in the third century in persecutions by two Roman Emperors, Decius and Valentinus between 249 and 260 AD or Diocletian (283-305). While under arrest, says one tradition, he healed his gaoler’s blind daughter, and a much later tradition says he wrote to her on his way to execution, signing, “from your Valentine.” Another even later tradition says he performed weddings for Christian soldiers who were forbidden to marry.

Whatever the tradition, the truth is that Valentine gave literally life-long service to Christ. He lived his faith. On 14 February, let us thank God for him and seek to follow his faith.

Sunday 4th February

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
Colossians 1 : 15 - 20
John 1 : 1- 14
Sidesperson

2nd Sunday before Lent

Rev'd Peter
Celebrant
Celebrant
Gordon Baker

11.00 Holy Communion

President/Preacher
Readings as above
Intercessions
Prayer Ministry
Audio-visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Rev'd Peter
Linda Payne
Rupert Killick
Christine Lucas & Sarah Prendergast
Christine Morgan
Kath Dunstan
Eira Hagger & Frances Hatfield

Sunday 11th February

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
2 Corinthians 4 : 3 - 6
Mark 9 : 2 - 9
Sidesperson

Sunday next before Lent

Rev'd Ken Dunstan
Celebrant
Celebrant
Paul Lucas

11.00 FAMILY CELEBRATION

Leaders
Audio-visuals
Prayer Ministry
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Rev'd Jacqui & team
Christine Lucas
Brenda Sheppard & Frances Hatfield
Leon Flack
Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

14th February ASH WEDNESDAY

8.00 pm Rev'd Jacqui will lead and preach.

2 Corinthians 5 : 20b - 6 : 10 & Matthew 6 : 1-6, 16-21

Sunday 18th February

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

President/Preacher
I Peter 3 : 18 - end
Mark 1: 9 - 15
Sidesperson

1st Sunday of Lent

Rev'd Jacqui/Jenny Pratt
Celebrant
Celebrant
Leon Flack

11.00 Morning Worship

Leader/preacher
Readings
Intercessions
Prayer Ministry
Audio-Visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Rev'd Jacqui/Jenny Pratt
Pauline Siggers
Gwyneth Iffland
Fiona Begley & Sylvia Adams
Christine Morgan
Paul Lucas
Christine Lucas & Sandra Billingham

Sunday 25th February

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher
Romans 4: 13 - end
Mark 8 : 31 - end
Sidesperson

2nd Sunday of Lent

Rev'd Peter/Brenda Sheppard
Celebrant
Celebrant
tba

11.00 Morning Worship

Leader/Preacher
Readings as above
Intercessions
Prayer Ministry
Audio-Visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Rev'd Peter/Brenda Sheppard
Christine Morgan
Fiona Begley
Yvonne Thurbon & Keith Hatfield
Sylvia Adams
Nigel Winger
Kathy Carnell & another

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

More than two hundred people attended the funeral of Norman De'ath, a well known and highly respected Steeple farmer. That's more than double the normal capacity of Steeple Church, so extra chairs were put in every available space and the service was relayed to a marquee in the churchyard. Norman is greatly missed by the Steeple congregation.

People who were living in Steeple during the 1980's may remember Reverend Bill Broad, the motorcycling Vicar of Mayland and Steeple.

Sadly, Bill died in December, just a few months after he lost his wife Daphne. Bill's greatest legacy is that soon after he came here in 1983, he founded the Cirdan Sailing Trust, a charity headquartered at Bradwell Marina. Cirdan provides disadvantaged young people with the opportunity for self-

development from experience gained living and working on large sailing boats, of which they have three, Duet, Queen Galadriel and Faramir.

Let's hope February doesn't bring us snow!



Steeple Church contacts

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

Teresa Julien, Churchwarden,



Age is no barrier for praying opportunities.

Our Southminster School has “Prayer Stations” in classrooms and the staff and children are encouraged to use the spaces regularly to pray. For this half term the subject is PEACE, so the prayer below is the basic prayer being used.

PRAYER for PEACE

God of love, we pray for peace.

Peace in our world – for an end to wars and conflict.

Peace in our school – for us to sort out problems.

Peace in our homes – for calm and quiet times.

Peace in our lives – for us to feel content and relaxed.

Help us to know your peace.

Amen.

Henry Church Cleaning Club 2024

The cleaning continues on in the Church! We are blessed to be part of a great team but there is always plenty of room for new recruits. We meet fortnightly on a Friday morning from 9am to 11am. If you could spare just a little time during those 2 hours and would like a rota please speak to me, Brenda Sheppard, or contact me by phone. You will be made very welcome.



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.

The Bereavement Group has started to meet again On Tuesdays at 10.00 am at Christ Church, North Street. Everyone is welcome. If you need more information contact Chris Martin.

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.

SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL

LUNCH CLUB meets on alternate Mondays.

If you would like any information please phone
Dave Christie 07775 758118.



Chatterbox continues to grow in numbers. Each week we look forward to being together with our faithful friends, and also to welcoming new people who would like to come and join us on Thursday mornings from 10-12 in the Memorial Hall. It is a great place to meet and make new friends. Chatterbox lives up to its name as there is always a lovely buzz of chatter and also lots of tea and coffee and biscuits. We also have jigsaws always on the go and different craft activities. We have also recently acquired a laptop computer for people to learn new skills.



You will be made very welcome and If you would like more information, please ring Norman.



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 enjoyed Christmas events, and families joined the main services.

DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP

will meet on 27th February

Valerie Kemp : Beekeeping and Honey Uses

Competition: Cutest Small Soft Toy

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.

April 2024	7	14	21	28
May 2024	5	12	19	26

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

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.

Advance notices

We will have some very much appreciated visitors providing concerts for Charity in the coming months. Please put them in your diaries now. Final details will be publicised very soon.

Firstly, on **Saturday 13th April** we shall welcome
The Sid Bolan Big Band.

They have normally been here in February, but this year the date has been changed. Do ensure that you can be at the concert. You will enjoy it.

Another popular ‘returner’ will be

The Remedy Band

But a date has not yet been fixed. Wait excitedly!

Obviously we all need to be ready for the Special Services this Easter, so just make sure that you note that **Mothering Sunday is 10th March** and then, after Holy Week, **Easter Sunday is 31st March.**

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b	4 February	Central - East
w/b	11 February	Central - South
w/b	18 February	South - West
w/b	25 February	Central - West





WHO ARE WE? Mission Statement



"To be a people offering praise and worship to God and serving him by being the Good News by our words and actions"

Web Site www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

Contact: vicar@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

If you wish to contact the Church regarding a Safeguarding issue
please contact us by telephone on 07745 688845
or via safeguarding@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

See pages 10-11 for details during this season.

**Weekly notices, covering any changes, will be available to read
on the outside church notice-board.**

SUNDAY SERVICES

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

11.00 am Holy Communion or Morning Worship

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