

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



and also for Steeple Parish
**The Church of
St Lawrence & All Saints**



Special refreshments after
the Hackblock Service (p8)

FEBRUARY 2025

**‘Make the most of every opportunity’
Colossians 4: 5**

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:
*Articles for the March magazine
 should be with
 Kath Dunstan by, at the latest,
 Sunday 16th 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!)

Vicar's Reflection for February 2025

Missed opportunities?

Colossians 4: 5 'Make the most of every opportunity'

At a recent school assembly, we were looking at the life of young Jesus, beginning with His presentation in the temple when he was eight days old. There wasn't much that Jesus could do at that time as He was too young, yet His parents made the decision to bring him up as part of the family of the church (temple) and by making regular visits there. Jesus would have been taught at home too as Joseph and Mary nurtured and taught him; and of course, all those relatives round and about them would have their input into His life. The next time that we read about Jesus' life was when He was 12 years old and in the temple for celebration again; this time being left behind for three days.

We read that Jesus was taking an opportunity to sit in the temple courts debating and asking questions of the teachers. It says in Luke 2: 47 "and all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers" Clearly, Jesus had been a good student and by the time He was 12 He had great understanding and interpretation of the scriptures, or Old Testament as we would describe. Fiona and I have known a lot of 12-year-olds over the years, from teaching 11 – 14-year-olds at a previous church and in the work we have done with schools and other churches; but we have not come across one that is well versed in the scripture; old or new testament. However, I had been encouraged during this past year when asked to chair a discussion in the local school, that the year 6 students (4th year junior in old money!) had really good insight

into the bible and asked some amazing questions. As we (Rev'd. Jacqui and I) spoke on atonement and forgiveness; topics that are quite mature in Christian terms, and thoughts ideas from the young people were voiced that were quite amazing. How good, we thought, that these young people have a grasp of theology that maybe their parents did not.

We are blessed within the benefice of Southminster to have people who are able to speak to us in different ways on a Sunday Morning; some teach, others preach, some give contextual example, some give scriptural background, some historical; all of which broaden our understanding of scripture and of God and His kingdom. We all learn from different perspectives and we are blessed to have a diversity of people to enable our understanding of God's intentions for us.

The hour that Jacqui and I spent in the classroom speaking with the students encouraged our hearts as we sought to find the reason for our faith and the meaning of our vocation. One hour out of 168 hours in a week, and in that time, God encouraged the hearts of nearly 35 people; God fed us enough to be uplifted and excited about our faith.

There is so much more to learn; there is no end to what God wants to teach us and how He wants to feed us. Perhaps we need to spend a concentrated hour with God, with His word, that we might be uplifted from the routines of the day and maybe see things in a new light.

Maybe meeting with others, chatting about our faith, chewing over the scriptures may be the way we spend the hour. There are Homegroups/Bible study groups, Alpha course/ Children's

work/ church work that can fulfil our meeting together in a way that enables us to speak about our faith, journey and grow together.

Let's make the most of the opportunities that we have, to bless others and to grow in our faith and encourage others. Let us "be amazed" as God meets with us.

Peter

From Peter & Fiona

We would like to say an enormous THANK YOU for the many, many kind and loving gifts and cards we received for Christmas, and for Peter's birthday: oooops... we missed the deadline for the January magazine.

We do so appreciate the thought and love that went into our presents. It really lifts our hearts that you think of us thus.

God bless you right on back with HIS many gifts and help you see and what they are, and receive and use them to His glory.

The ALPHA COURSE for 2025

The evening starts with a meal together followed by a short talk and discussion in a small group.

No experience necessary; come as you are and get to know others while learning more about the Christian faith.

The evening starts at 6.30 pm on Thursday January 30th. There is a new sign-up sheet at the back of the church.



One Piece Missing

It's so frustrating isn't it when you come to the end of a jigsaw and there's one piece missing! I know from experience that so much time is spent looking for that one piece to finish a certain section of the puzzle and it's not there!

Jigsaws can become quite addictive can't they! At Chatterbox on Thursday mornings a group of people can be seen beavering away at a shared jigsaw with such concentration that not much chatter is to be heard! I am impressed at the way that tasks are shared, with one person sorting out the blue-sky pieces into a small tub and another person sorting different colours to make life easier! A really shared task and it's often difficult to prise them away to pack up and go home!



As with all jigsaws there are often areas that aren't so appealing like the vast expanses of sky or grass and frustration can set in but if we persevere it becomes all worthwhile.

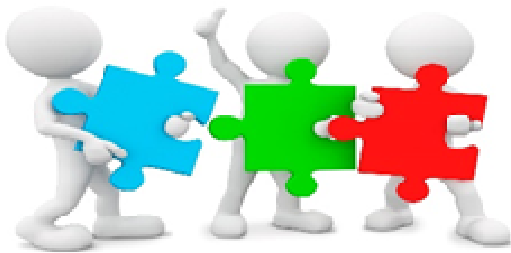
As I was pondering on the jigsaw and how all the parts fit together it struck me how one- piece missing can make it feel incomplete. Equating this to our Christian lives, we are part of God's great jigsaw, each piece with a part to play, fitting in to the pattern of life God has mapped out for us.

As part of the Body of Christ, we need each other as it tells us in 1 Corinthians 12. We may think we aren't very important or don't play as big a part as others seem to and

we can get by with some parts of the body not functioning so well, but how lovely it is when everything works together in harmony and all the pieces of the body fit together and become complete.

So, how do we fit in to God's jigsaw? How do we fit in to the Body of Christ here in St. Leonard's? Perhaps we could be an edge piece holding it all together, or a piece of bright colour standing out and very visible, or we can blend in to the sea or sky. No one piece more important than the other, all pieces fitting together to create the complete picture.

Are there any pieces missing in our Church family? Any tasks or ministries our Lord wants to enhance and are we open to filling that vital space that God is encouraging us to fit into. Let's seek Him and attempt to fill any empty spaces this year and rejoice at what God will achieve through us.



Brenda Sheppard

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. Pre-service prayer occurs too, so feel free to join them with your supporting prayers or your urgent requests.

2025 HACKBLOCK SERVICE

This annual service remembers the Father and Son John and Peter Hackblock who were Southminster's doctors in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Their wills left land to the church, including a proviso that on the Sunday nearest to Peter's birthday, 17th January, a service should be held during which the preacher would receive one shilling (12 old pence), and a quartern loaf (*See picture on cover of this magazine.*) would be provided for the poor of Southminster. The land concerned was sold for the building of the Tattersall's estate near the station. The money following their wishes was used to create the Hackblock Education Charity which was set up in 1991 in memory of the two men. . The main objective of the charity is to provide funds to support the educational needs of young people up to the age of 25 living in the parish of Southminster and adjoining parishes. This can include financial support for St Leonard's Primary School. Grants may also be allocated to individuals or other bodies after an application to the trustees in accordance with the Trust's criteria.

Many of our young people have benefited and several, including group leaders, gave their testimonies as presentations during the service to explain their situation. These included:

Jenny - for Holiday Club Val - for Girl Guides
Rachel - for Brownies and Rainbows
Wendy - for St Leonard's School
Dawn - for School Prayer Stations
Karen - for Little Lions and Saturday Club

Dawn - for her daughter Aria's assistance
Lucy - for St Nicholas School, Tillingham

All these testimonies were greatly appreciated and then our visiting preacher, Rev'd Carrie Prior, was welcomed. She is the Chelmsford Diocese Director of Education. She began by saying "It is a privilege to be here and to celebrate the work of the Church School, of the other groups and clubs and individuals, and of course as part of this service we rightly give thanks for the shared commitment of the children, the teachers, the staff, the volunteers, the parents and the wider community who all contribute to the learning and growth. Together we play a vital role in nurturing gifts, creating opportunities and providing environments where children and learners of all ages can flourish."

Carrie's sermon was based on 1 Corinthians 12 1-11 and John 2 1 - 11. Paul's letter reminds us that every person has a unique gift to contribute, and all gifts come from God. They are used to build up the body of the Church for community benefit. Our work in schools or in groups, with children and young people is the work of the Spirit. We are nurturing the whole person - the mind, body and soul. Every contribution, no matter how small, matters when guided by love and service. John's story of Jesus turning water into wine at a wedding, shows us how a simple act of obedience (the servants did what Jesus told them) can remind us that transformation takes place when we offer the most ordinary things - our time, our effort and our talents into the hands of Christ.

(This will be continued on page13)

Sunday 2nd February
08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
Hebrews 2 : 14 - end
Luke 2 : 22 - 40
Sidesperson

Presentation of Christ

Rev'd Peter/Peter Begley
Celebrant
Celebrant
Gordon Baker

11.00 Holy Communion

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

Rev'd Peter/Rev'd Peter
Sylvia Adams
Gwyneth Iffland
Christine Lucas & Sarah Prendergast
Christine Morgan
Gwyneth Iffland
Kathy Carnell & Frances Hatfield

Sunday 9th February
08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
1 Corinthians 15 : 1 - 11
Luke 5 : 1 - 11
Sidesperson

4th Sunday before Lent

Rev'd Ken Dunstan
Celebrant
Celebrant
Paul Lucas

11.00 Family Celebration

Leaders
Prayer Ministry
Audio-visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Team: Karen, Jenny, Dawn
Yvonne Thurbon & Frances Hatfield
Christine Lucas
Brenda Sheppard
Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

Saturday 15th February at 7.30 pm Concert in church
The SID BOLAN BIG BAND See posters re tickets etc.

Sunday 16th February
08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher
1 Corinthians 15 : 12 - 20
Luke 6 : 17 - 26
Sidesperson

3rd Sunday before Lent

Rev'd Peter/ Norman Pratt
Celebrant
Celebrant
Leon Flack

11.00 Morning Worship

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

Rev'd Peter / Jenny Pratt
Kath Dunstan
Frances Hatfield
Fiona Begley & Sylvia Adams
Christine Morgan
Kath Dunstan
Sandra Billinghamurst & Christine Lucas

Sunday 23rd February
08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher
Revelation 4
Luke 8 : 22 - 25
Sidesperson

2nd Sunday before Lent

Rev'd Ken Dunstan / Jenny Pratt
Celebrant
Celebrant
Keith Hatfield

11.00 Morning Worship

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

Rev'd Peter/Jenny Pratt
Linda Payne
Fiona Begley
Keith Hatfield & another
Sylvia Adams
Kathy Carnell
Dee Byford & Jenni Blomfield

Steeple Church News

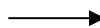
Steeple Church has services every Sunday morning at 9.15am unless otherwise advertised on the church door. We have Morning Prayer on the first Sunday each month, a Family Service on third Sunday and Holy Communion on the second and fourth Sundays. An on-line service for those preferring to worship from home is available each week on www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk



The Parochial Church Council and worshippers at Steeple Church are immensely grateful for the services of many volunteers who help keep our 140 years old church and its graveyard in reasonably good repair. One has been painstakingly restoring some mosaic tiling in the Chancel floor. Another, cuts the hedge and yet others mow areas of the churchyard. Last year, one former Steeple resident renewed the oak railings around the area of the churchyard set aside for cremated remains.

During this year we hope to repair the guttering and improve the rainwater disposal on the South side of the building. Our hardworking volunteers will need support from outside contractors for some parts of this project, affordable thanks to the generosity of everyone who supports our fund-raising activities.

Please note in your diary that the first of these, Wheels, Hooves and Paws at Elmwood Equestrian, Burnham-on-Crouch, will be on Saturday 12th July this year.



Hackblock Service Sermon continues below.

The miracle of Jesus turning water into wine didn't happen in isolation. It involved awareness, co-operation and trust. Mary saw the need, the servants obeyed and Jesus provided the transformation. All of those working with and supporting children and young people today are sowing seeds that may seem small today, but as they participate in a miracle of transformation, they will allow them to grow into capable and compassionate adults.

Just as the wine flowed abundantly at the wedding, God's blessings in education and the work of the Educational Trust are far reaching. There is joy in discovery, the richness of knowledge and the life-giving relationships formed in all the examples we have heard shared today. Places like schools are not only designed for children to learn facts but also how to live together, how to respect differences and how to serve one another. Today's readings call us to reflect on how diverse gifts can work together in unity for a greater purpose. The Church is a core partner in this mission, supporting the spiritual and intellectual transformation, rooted in Christ's love. Like the water turned into wine, our collective efforts, no matter how humble, are instruments of God's transforming power, reflecting His abundant provision and joy. May we all be inspired to continue building a community where gifts are nurtured, opportunities created and God's Spirit transforms all we offer.

Steeple Church contacts:

Rev'd Canon Peter Begley, Vicar, 01621 772 300
Rhona Leech, Churchwarden and PCC Secretary,
Teresa Julien, Assistant Churchwarden,
Fiona Ashworth, Assistant Churchwarden
Peter Marshall, PCC Treasurer and Verger,

Henry Church Cleaning Club 2025



Another year ahead and the cleaning continues on in the Church! 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.

If you would like to give it a try and would like a rota please speak to me, Brenda Sheppard, or contact me by phone. or email: beshepp@btinternet.com You will be made very welcome.

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.

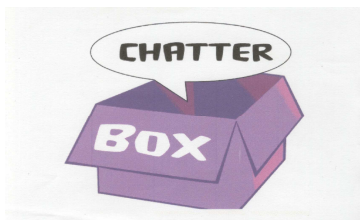
8th February is our next meeting

The day after every Saturday Club is our Family Celebration in the church at 11 am where there will be an opportunity for the children to share anything they have created at the club.

SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL

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

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!



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. Monthly Saturday Club has started.

DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP

Tuesday 25th February

Dina Harris & Another

Community Agents

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.

March 2025	2	9	16	23	30
April 2025	6	13	20	27	

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

Let's support our nearby Church families again.

On Saturday 15th February from 11 am until 3 pm

There will be a **TABLE TOP SALE**

at Althorne Church Hall

in aid of their Church Repair fund.

Book a table in advance for £10

by phoning 01621 741131 or 740481

Lots of items to buy including tea/coffee/ puzzles etc.

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.

**ST LEONARD'S CHURCH SOUTHMINSTER
PRESENTS
THE SID BOLAN BIG BAND
15th FEBRUARY 2025
7.30 PM**



**PRESENTING A CONCERT OF BIG BAND MUSIC OF
GLENN MILLER, COUNT BASIE, FRANK SINATRA
AND MANY OTHERS**

**These concerts have been very popular in the past so
we are pleased to have the band here again.**

TICKETS ARE £10.00

**AVAILABLE DIRECTLY FROM THE CHURCH,
OR FROM CHAPMAN'S STORES
OR SOUTHMINSTER BUTCHERS
OR BY CALLING 01621 772199**

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b	2 February	North - East
w/b	9 February	Central - North-West
w/b	16 February	Central - East
w/b	23 February	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

Contact: 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

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.



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

Details of the actual programme are available in church and
on the notice boards.