PARISH OF SOUTHMINSTER MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF ST LEONARD



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



JANUARY 2022

Paul wrote: "In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy" Philippians 1:3

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Articles for the February magazine should be with Kath Dunstan by, at the latest, **Sunday January 16th** New contributors are welcome. We have needed to plan for an increase in price for this magazine in 2022 because of increased printing costs.

We are aware that most of our readers felt that the present price was too low, so we hope that you will all accept the new one:

80p per issue £9 per year paid in advance

Vicar's Reflection

The beginning of a new year is a good time to look back on the past year to see where God has shown us His grace and taught us about Himself and his kingdom. I was absolutely delighted to be reacquainted with a mum at a Christingle service whose daughter I baptised two years ago. This little girl had not had a very good prognosis from the doctors when she was born; her life was in the balance and the parents asked if I would baptise her as soon as possible as they wanted God's blessing for her should she not make it through the year. We baptised her and prayed for her. Part of the problem was that her skull had not formed completely; not unusual but hers was only two thirds formed. The doctors said that the likelihood of continued growth of her skull was less than 5% and it would be likely that they would need to put a plate onto her skull. Well: two years on, through a pandemic where hospital appointments have been rare and specialist consultants hard to meet with, mum took the little girl for a scan at the hospital and met with the consultant who told the mum that he was in shock and amazed because the skull had grown completely! The consultant said he couldn't understand how that could have happened – but we know a God who is able. Needless to say, that made me stop for a moment to thank God for what He had done: nothing that we could do - just God.

Then I thought of the other lives that have been transformed because God had done something wonderful in their lives, those that had given themselves wholeheartedly to God and found peace with themselves and God; and those who have spoken to me about how they have been spiritually fed by the word of God, all of these people have not just been encouraged by me – they have been encouraged by you, the parishioners who are willing to serve God in the various ministries that you have been given. You the parishioners have been salt and light into people's lives, you have loved your neighbours as yourselves, you have been willing to sow seeds into other lives, and let God grow them. You, the parishioners, are special and are greatly appreciated.

These thoughts and reminiscences reminded me of Paul in prison, giving thanks to God for the church that he loved so much in Philippi; remembering how the church had grown, flourished and been maintained by faithful people. The Philippians provided for Paul; they sent news to him along with messengers that had personal messages. They gave money for the work of planting other churches, and they remembered him faithfully in their prayers. John Calvin once said "Prayer doesn't change things – God changes things in answer to prayer"

As we enter a New Year, with fresh starts that have been granted by God as we turn to Him, may we continue to pray for God to change hearts and minds, to bring us all into a better knowledge and understanding of Him and His kingdom. That we will be able to look at 2022 with excitement about what God is going to do in this benefice. May our prayers be like that of Paul "In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy" Philippians 1:3

With our love and prayers that you will all have a blessed 2022. *Peter*

Something to look forward to....

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH SOUTHMINSTER PRESENTS THE SID BOLAN BIG BAND SATURDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2022



AN EVENING CONCERT OF THE BIG BAND MUSIC OF GLENN MILLER, FRANK SINATRA, PEGGY LEE AND MANY OTHERS.

THE CONCERT STARTS AT 7.30 pm

TICKETS ARE £10 and are available from CHURCH MEMBERS or by phoning 772199 Some of the proceeds will go to Knightswood.

Backwards and Forwards

Are you someone who starts to move forward in one direction and then changes to go back in the opposite direction? Perhaps you are being tossed around mentally, longing for perhaps the stability of former days and afraid of the challenges of the future? Are you stuck at the crossroads of life unsure of the future?



And now, we venture into a New Year! As we look back over 2021, how did it impact us? Was it a good year with new challenges? Was it a real struggle with health or other personal issues? What did we learn from it? Can we pass on any experiences to help others?

I have been inspired for this article by a 1979 Dusty Springfield song called "I think I'm going back." She sings about returning to her younger days and re-living the times and great games she played with her friends. Dusty also recognises that as she grew up there was so much more to do and that every day could still be fun and her "magic carpet ride" and she could still "live her days instead of counting her years."

In 1 Corinthians 13 v 11, St Paul says "When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me." We often look at our age and long to be able to do the things we used to do but I suspect most of us are still very young at heart and enjoy what we can.

We see examples in the Bible of people looking back and losing so much blessing and even their lives. One example is Lot's wife in Genesis 19. Lot and his wife lived in Sodom, a wicked and depraved place. Two angels of the Lord came and told Lot to flee with his family before the coming wrath of the Lord as He was going to bring about the destruction of Sodom. As they were fleeing, Lot's wife hesitated and turned back and looked back to see her life, everything she valued going up in smoke! She hesitated and became a pillar of salt; she became preserved and physically incorporated as a memorial into the land she so desired to continue occupying. She couldn't let go easily and move on and so lost her future life.

For some the past can bring up painful memories or for others idyllic times but in the words of St. Paul in Philippians 3 v 13-14 he says: "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Also, the words of Isaiah 43: 18-19 say: "Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up do you not see it" We can't always change the past but we can learn from it and go on and embrace the future.

Dusty goes on to sing "I'd rather see the world the way it used to be, a little bit of freedom's all we lack so catch me if you can I'm going back". Yes, we all think this at times, especially in these difficult, unpredictable times in the world where freedom for some is not an option be it through war or poverty or recently by Covid. Growing older can bring its concerns especially health wise but in Dusty's words "Thinking young and growing older is no sin and I can play the game of life to win."

Our walk with the Lord doesn't exempt us from the difficult challenges of life but His presence with us is guaranteed and He wants us to walk with Him through them and above all enjoy our lives as best we can and to bring His joy into the lives of others.



Brenda Sheppard

A New Year Reflection

I found this lovely piece of writing (from an unknown author) called "Roots and Wings" and felt it to be so apt for the beginning of a New Year and hopefully the beginning of new works for the Lord for each of us. Let us not get root or pot bound as some plants do but let us be planted out in new soil to thrive and grow and reach our full potential!

Roots and Wings

Roots and wings I yearn for most of all, my longing to stay, my longing to go, come wrapped in the same passage. I struggle. It is very much the same when we fall into each other's lives. Our roots say "Stay! Set up your tent! Be at home here!" Our wings say: "Continue your journey! Don't get root bound! Keep dreaming of something beyond!" When you love someone, you have to let them go. It's the only way to keep them.

Weaving in and out of lives I've come to know the letting go as the surrender in that war between my roots and wings. It is a blessing. It is grace. It is victory. It is pain.

This piece of writing reminded me of St. Paul who was torn between his longing to stay on earth but also longing to go and be with Jesus. He said: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labour for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two. I desire to depart and be with Christ which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me. Philippians 1 v 21-26.

We thank God for those people in our lives who are supportive and encourage us to follow Jesus even if they are not yet believers. Thank you that they love us enough to allow us the freedom to follow Him and in turn we love and continue to care for them too on our journey.

Brenda Sheppard

Greetings from past friends

It has been great to have Christmas greetings from people many of us will remember from years ago. These include Shirley Chesterton (widow of late Bob Chesterton who was vicar here in the 1970s) Tim Chesterton (their son - vicar in Edmonton, Canada) Martin & Dot Cleeve (Martin was Vicar after Bob) Gordon & Rita Anderson (Our Begleys' predecessors) Val & David White (Val was Gordon's curate here) Other church family members including Julie Blackburn, John & Heather Thain, Pat & Keith Duncan, Norman Teece, Ian & Kate Crosher, Michelle Huggins, Dave & Liz Smith..... And more....

A notice about our offerings to God.

Many of us use the facility of the offering plate to give our gifts to God. As the church is closed for the moment it may be 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:

St. Leonard's church:Barclays BankSort code: 20.54.30A/c No. 80825107Made payable to:SouthminsterParochial Church Council.Southminster

St. Lawrence & All Saints church:Barclays BankSort code:20.54.30A/c No.Made payable to Steeple Parochial Church Council.

May God bless our gifts to Him.

CORONAVIRUS 2022

We are pleased that some restrictions have been lifted but we do need to be sensible and follow guidelines again during New Year celebrations. Any changes 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

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 2022	6	13	20	27
April 2022	3	10	17	24

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

Sunday 30th January4th Sunday of Epiphany08.00Holy Communion

Leader/President/Preacher I Corinthians I3 Luke 2 : 22 - 40 Sidesman/Communion Assistant Rev'd Ken Paul Lucas Celebrant Paul Lucas

10.45 United Service at St Leonard's

(There will be no service at Steeple of course because our Steeple family will be here.) Leader/President/Preacher Rev'd Peter

Rev'd Ann Sardeson

Readings as above Other duties to be decided near to the date.

Probably because of the continuing Omicron Virus problems, we still haven't had enough volunteers in advance to cover all the January services. If you are able to offer for February and onwards, please contact Paul Lucas or Pete Adams.

JANUARY WORSHIP

Sunday 2nd January 08.00 Holy Communion BCP	2nd Sunday of Christmas
Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter/Brenda Sheppard
Ephesians 3 : 1 - 12	Paul Lucas
Matthew 2 : 1 - 12	Celebrant
Sidesman/Communion Assis	tant Paul Lucas
10.45 Family Holy Communic	on
Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd Peter/Brenda Sheppard
Readings as above	Christine Morgan
Intercessions	Kath Dunstan
Audio-visuals	Sylvia Adams
Sidesperson & Refreshment	s t.b.a.
Thursday 6th January El If a special service is to available on the church	• •

Sunday	9th	January	,
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THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST Ist Sunday of Epiphany

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher Acts 8 : 14 - 17 Luke 3 : 15 - 17, 21-22 Sidesman/Communion Assistant Rev'd Ken Dunstan Paul Lucas Celebrant Paul Lucas

10.45 Family Celebration

Leader/ preacher Audio-visuals Sidespersons Refreshments Rev'd Peter & team Christine Morgan t.b.a. Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

Sunda 08.00	y 16th January Holy Communion BCP	2nd S	Sunday of Epiphany
	Leader/President/Preacher		Rev'd Peter
	Corinthians 2 : -		Rev'd Peter
	John 2 : 1 - 11		Celebrant
	Sidesman/Communion Assist	tant	Pete Adams
10.45	Morning Worship		
	Leader/ preacher		Norman Pratt
	Readings as above		Linda Payne
	Intercessions		Jenny Pratt
	Audio-visuals		Christine Lucas
	Sidesperson & Refreshments		t.b.a.
	Leader/President/Preacher Philippians 4 : 4 - 7 Luke 3 : 7 - 18 Sidesman/Communion Assista		Peter/Rev'd Jacqui Celebrant Celebrant Pete Adams
10.45	Morning Worship		
	Leader/President/Preacher	Rev'd	Peter/Rev'd Jacqui
	Readings as above		Christine Lucas
	Intercessions		Rev'd Jacqui
	Audio-visuals		Christine Morgan
	Sidesperson & Refreshments		t.b.a.
16.00	Memorial Service for the I Jacky Griffiths, A		ve and Tom Fogg

Details for 30th January are on page 11.

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 and third Sundays each month and Holy Communion on the



second and fourth. An on-line service for those preferring to worship from home is available each week on www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

It was no surprise that the funeral for John Partridge on Friday 10th December was attended by over one hundred and fifty people. That's more than Steeple Church can hold so some were in a marquee in the churchyard. The whole service was professionally video relayed to the marquee and 'live streamed' on the internet, for the benefit of family members as far afield as Australia and those local people who could not attend due to Covid restrictions.

This was followed, just two days later, by a smaller but far happier event. The 'Christingle and Carols' service attracted twenty people, ranging from babies-inarms and small children through to an octogenarian. Jenny Pratt and Vicar Peter provided the oranges and other materials for the children – young and not so young – to complete their Christingles, with the excitement reaching a noisy crescendo when everyone stood in the aisle, the candles were lit and the lights turned off. Down to earth with a bump in January. We'll be turning our attention to the project for renovating timber around the Church belfry and other overdue maintenance work, such as repairing the roadside gates and cutting back overgrown hedges around the churchyard.

BREAKING NEWS

We regret to have to announce the death of Marian De'Ath on 20th December. She was a regular member of our congregation and came from a Steeple farming family. We hope to have a more considered appreciation in the February magazine. Meanwhile please remember her husband Norman in your prayers.

As usual, **To arrange a Wedding, Blessing, Baptism or Funeral please contact Rev'd Canon Peter Begley 01621 772 300** The Vicarage, Burnham Road, Southminster, CM0 7ES





Christmas is a time of Giving

During the last weeks of 2021 we were able, in our benefice, to help people in various ways. As individuals, we are responsible for the decisions we make for our charitable giving - whether financially or practically. Many of us find it helpful to do this through the organised events in our churches.

Examples of these were:

the **Shoebox** appeal (which enabled us to send over 100 shoeboxes to children in need)

the **Toy Service** (providing toys for children and toiletries for parents in the Refuge)

The **Food Pantry** (continuing our regular provision of food for people who would otherwise be hungry)

Various charities supported by people who sponsored a Christmas Tree and ran a 'stall' at the Tree Festival

Knightswood Day Care Centre (money collected from people who saved by displayed a joint greeting card at the back of church instead of sending to church members.

DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP

We hope to resume meetings in January, and are sorry that the Christmas Party was cancelled due to the increase in Covid infections, but we will arrange a 'Freedom Party' as soon as it is safe to do so. *Paula Neall*



The New Year's Day I-Cycle Ride will NOT be happening this year

because of various difficulties. We thank

everyone who has taken part over recent years and hope that at some stage we may be able to enjoy it again.

SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL

Depending on how the Omicron Virus Regulations are, we hope that the following gatherings will take place.

LUNCH CLUB continues on Mondays (but not 1st of month). Please call by the previous Friday to book your place. £5.00 for 2 courses plus tea/coffee. Ring Kath Savage 07434 915467

CHATTERBOX

meets on Thursday mornings 10am-12 noon. Everybody is welcome – come along for a chat, activities if you would like to join them and a cuppa and a biscuit for \pounds 1.00. No entry charge.

The **BEREAVEMENT GROUP** meets in a quiet corner on Ist and 3rd Thursdays as part of Chatterbox.

There are other groups too. If you have any spare time and would like to volunteer to help us in running this valuable community organisation, please call or text Kath Savage. It's a way to enjoy village life and make new friends!

DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP

will meet at 7.30 pm on January 25th Speaker: Charles Bran - Paper making from plants Competition: A greeting card made by me For further details contact Paula Neall 01621 773243

HOW CAN WE PREVENT A TRAGEDY?

Chris Martin

This morning I'm finding it very difficult to find something "uplifting" to write about, given so many dreadful events in recent days, particularly those involving children. I don't need to quote any details about what has gone on - let's just say I'm thinking particularly of a certain 12-year-old girl and a certain 6-year-old boy.

All I can say is: let's be vigilant as we go about our daily activities, and if we spot any signs of trouble not only for children but for anybody, seek advice as to whom should be told. Let's keep an eye on our friends and neighbours, and if something seems amiss, do something. Let's remember lots of people live alone and could fall without anybody knowing, and be on the floor for a good length of time. I'm sure we can all think of this happening to somebody we know – I certainly can even though it was some years ago.

It would be a good idea if we telephoned if a house has been in darkness for a few days – or even hours if there's normally a light - and we aren't sure where the occupant is. Chances are that they are fine but it doesn't hurt to check and they won't mind.

Some of the events in recent news would not be prevented by caring neighbours calling, and I don't know the answer to "Why are so many young people carrying knives and even guns these days?" There's a whole debate about the entertainment industry and the media – and recently I heard of a theory that relates violent incidents to poverty. I don't buy that, although I do understand that peer pressure makes children very unhappy and that could be the tenuous link. Peer pressure is a serious issue. It's what makes

youngsters start drinking and taking drugs, yet oddly enough apparently smoking is on the decrease, perhaps because of the price of cigarettes these days.

As adults we can only give guidance as best we can and if we are aware of a family potentially in trouble, help if we can or seek help from experts as to what to do if something serious is going on. But first of all, we need to be aware of what's happening around us so that we don't have to hear of tragic incidents in our vicinity.

Julie Blackburn (formerly of Southminster) sent this, her latest poem, for us to share.

Covid Continued

In '21 the bug's still ripe In spite of jabs and hygiene hype. Omicron raised its ugly head Confining many more to bed. When shopping this is all I ask To leave at home my sweaty mask! To sing with gusto 'midst my choir Without the stress of symptoms dire. To meet with friends, to hug and kiss, Not doom and gloom, just Christmas bliss. In '22 let's forge ahead To travel far, no fear or dread. To open up to pastures new And hope our paths will cross with you.

Summary of Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals during 2021

We welcomed into the Church family at St Leonard's:

June 6th	Aria Shirley Ella Bozkurt
June 6th	Chloe Louise Smith
August 22nd	Monty John Aston-Plumb
17th October	Albert James David Lewis

We celebrated the marriage of these couples:

Jamie Adam Green & Victoria Foster On 19th June at St Lawrence & All Saints, Steeple

Chris James Longshank & Nicola Ann Jarvis On 31st July at St Leonard's

We gave thanks for the lives of these people and supported their grieving relatives and friends:

2nd February **Constance Winifred Robinson** who died on 5th January Service & committal at Chelmsford Crematorium

8th February James Alexander Brown who died on 29th December Service and burial at St Leonard's

15th February Lucy Sandra Ann Lyle who died on 5th January Service & committal at Chelmsford Crematorium

4th March **Martin Reginald Walsh** who died on 5th February Service & committal at Chelmsford Crematorium 22nd March **Thomas Fogg** who died on 17th February Service and burial at St Leonard's

15th April **Allan Sydney Pye** who died on 2nd March Service at St Leonard's & committal at Chelmsford Crem.

> 20th April **Audrey Violet Jackson** who died on 14th March Service and burial at St Leonard's

20th May Leslie Lowe who died on 26th March Service at St Leonard's & burial at Chigwell Cemetery

> 21st May **Pamela Joan Bishop** who died on 10th May Service and burial at St Leonard's

12th July **Margaret Joyce Loft** who died on 17th June Service at St Leonard's & committal at Chelmsford Crem,

> 25th October **Rita Calvy** who died on 8th October Service and burial at St Leonard's

20th December Isabella Matilda Mothersill who died on 16th November Service and burial at St Leonard's

This list includes only people with direct links to the two churches of our benefice. Canon Peter actually conducted many more services in other parishes (16 funerals, 2 weddings and 8 baptisms). Because he is Area Dean and several parishes have no regular incumbent he has overall responsibility.

The St. Leonard's Together Apart Facebook Group

This was created as a way to keep in touch, encourage and support each other during the difficult time of lock-downs. Since then we have shared songs, daily devotions, prayers, church services, Bible studies, Alpha courses etc.

At the present time each weekday looks like this;

6am Daily Devotion including a worship song
11.30am Family Time (Tuesday and Thursday) including
Little Lions' singing time, Veggie Tales movies, virtual Sunday School etc.
3pm Bible Study / Reflection
8pm Prayer

Saturday is a quiet day and on Sunday we post the church service and weekly bulletin.

We welcome others to share encouraging posts on the page too. Karen Flack

If you are part of the Facebook group, you will have regular updates from the Diocesan Group "Greening the Church". Taking on board that information is helpful in these times where our environmental concerns are growing because of global warming etc. Your responses for this magazine will be very welcome.

s/lix

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b
2 January
2 January
Central - East
9 January
Central - South
W/b
16 January
South - West
W/b
23 January
Central - West
W/b
30 January
North - East



WHO ARE WE?



Mission Statement

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

Web Site www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk Contact: vicar@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

If you wish to contact the Church regarding a Safeguarding issue please contact the Church Office at 772300 or safeguarding@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

NORMAL PUBLIC WORSHIP IS STILL A BIT DIFFERENT BECAUSE ALTHOUGH LEGAL REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN REDUCED WE STILL RECOMMEND THAT APPROPRIATE CAUTIONS ARE TAKEN.

See pages 10-13 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)
10:45 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 Prayers

'LITTLE LIONS' usually meet on Wednesday mornings in the Memorial Hall during term-time only. It is for babies/toddlers & their carers.



Home Groups (in some form) should be meeting again soon. Details will be available in the weekly notices.