

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



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



MARCH 2025

**The earth is the Lord's
and everything in it.
Psalm 24 verse 1**

↑
*...even all that
“we have made”!*

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

*Articles for the April magazine
should be with
Kath Dunstan by, at the latest,
Sunday 16th March
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 for March

Rev'd Ken Dunstan

During the last few weeks Norman and Jenny Pratt have hosted a series of Bible studies on the last book of the Bible: Revelation. It is written with a whole series of pictures with multiple meetings. One scene includes “the Four Horses of the Apocalypse.” These four animals are ridden by riders representing war, disease, famine and death. The scene is prophetic in the sense of saying how things are, not necessarily how they will be. Those four threats were part of daily life in Roman times, and they’re with us still. One feature of life under Nero and his successors was an enormous gap between rich and poor. Slavery was normal, though not as savage as the slavery of kidnapped Africans in the West Indies and the United States. Israelites had rules, including what to do when selling one’s daughter as a slave, which limited the duration of slavery for men, and gave rights to a slave wife. Today, 40 million people, mainly women and girls, are in slavery of various kinds world-wide.

In the United Kingdom, the top richest fifth of the population own two thirds of the wealth and a little over a third of the country’s income. The poorest fifth own half of one percent of the wealth and under a tenth of the income. The top 1% earned 14% of total income just before the financial crash of a few years ago; the bottom 20% earned 8%. John, writer of Revelation, would not have been surprised. Nor would he have been pleased.

In 2009 Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson wrote “The Spirit Level: why Equality is better for everyone.” They

demonstrated that severe inequality erodes trust, increases anxiety and illness, (and) encourages excessive consumption. I'll return to the question of consumption later.

I used the church toilet recently (Too Much Information?) and saw a picture of our toilet's twin in Zimbabwe. Sanitation-related illness keeps people from working, children miss school, parents have to pay for medicines or food and fall into debt. Our twinning helps people in areas without the necessary plumbing for a domestic toilet to avoid this. Toilet twinning is part of the work of TEARfund, an offshoot of the Evangelical Alliance which Southminster Church has supported in the past. We have helped our "twin's" people to build a safe, hygienic toilet. Thanks be to God for enabling us to use our plenty for this.

And this leads me to "excessive consumption." I get bombarded with adverts for holidays, many of them cruises, most of them requiring flying. At the same time, I hear of numerous problems brought about by rapid climate change brought about by global heating. The increase in wild fires in areas where drought has turned trees into tinder, more (and more severe) hurricanes and cyclones and recently, more flooding after heavy rain are symptoms of unwelcome change. Glaciers are melting, as are ice caps. Once the glaciers are gone, many places will lose their water supply. And the warming, principally at the poles, will increase sea levels as ice melts. Not only that, but as the seas become less salty, the system based on the Gulf Stream Atlantic current will grow weaker and Britain will cool to a climate more like Norway's. And it's caused by the emission of "greenhouse gases" like Carbon dioxide and Methane which trap reflected heat from

the earth. The cruises and the flights are serious contributors to this process. So, too, are frequent private jet flights. Frequent, private jet flights are the preserve of the wealthy. Their consumption – including big houses and big cars, second homes and frequent travel between them are doing the most damage per person to the world God made and loves and has called us “to serve and preserve.” (Genesis 2.15). The late Margaret Thatcher once said, “No generation has a freehold on this earth. All we have is a life tenancy, with a full repairing lease” Many people over the last century have published variations on the statement, “We have not inherited the earth from our fathers. We are borrowing it from our children.” We are also doing harm to those who have contributed the least to the damage, including our diocesan partners in Kenya,

Part of me apologises for a “lecture cum rant.” But as the Psalmist wrote, “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.” (Ps 24:1) Get informed. Find informed, committed friends. Act together.

Blessings

Ken

Hallelujah!

It was lovely to welcome so many people to the church on 15th February for the Sid Bolan Big Band concert.

Many positive comments were shared after the concert. It is hoped that there will be another date sometime in the future for the band to return. Our church funds had a great benefit too, with thanks for the Band’s generosity.

Welcome to the Grief Club

Because you don't have to go through it alone

This was the title of the book that inspired us to run the 8-week Bereavement Course we held recently at St. Leonard's. The course embraced brief writings, illustrations, and creative diagrams to explore the wide range of emotions and experiences that grief can encompass.



We looked at ways of navigating through grief and emphasised that for each person it is a unique journey. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, we do it our way, the way best for us, realising there is no set time frame but that grief does change and soften over time.

We also looked at some of the helpful and unhelpful things people may say and that some people may even avoid us for lack of knowing what to say!

We talked about the variety of emotions we may go through, namely: Sadness, anger, guilt, numbness, and then the physical symptoms of grief which can manifest as we struggle through the busyness of paperwork needed after an immediate loss and then the possible letting go of belongings and the reality of noticing the real emptiness when a loved one isn't there anymore. We may feel very tired and low and this is the time when we need the support of others where some may need to talk about their loved ones or may need to just sit with a friend or go for a walk and not say much at all.

There are so many different types of grief, not just bereavement, namely a job loss, a divorce or any loss which changes our lives. During this course we particularly focussed on the death of loved ones and we all participated and shared memories and how we have navigated, or still are navigating our way through our losses. We built up a really comfortable rapport with each other and when asked to briefly sum up the course one of our ladies said “I felt it was a lovely safe place to be”

We hope to all meet up in the near future and check in on how we are all doing and may hold another course later in the year.

Meanwhile there is an informal Bereavement group in the URC Church in North Street on a Tuesday Morning, which is a time to chat and share with others. This is run by Chris Martin and she would love to hear from you if you’d like to go along.

Jenny and Brenda

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.

Community Hub update.



The Community Hub Management Committee meet each month at the URC Church building in North Street to discuss plans in progress for the refurbishment of the building and to discuss policies and procedures which need to be in place and also fees for hiring space within the building.

It is hoped that at the beginning of April the interior renovations inside the building will start in earnest. A new kitchen will be installed in the rear of the building as well as a small one in the front of the building. An extra toilet will also be installed in the front of the building, adding to the ones in the rear, so that both halves of the building can be used simultaneously as separate entities. The outside of the building will be landscaped and fenced off so the parking will be for building users only.

The URC building is already well used and our Community Development Worker is busy seeking out and working with many organisations to help make the Hub a hive of activity for people of all ages and abilities in this Dengie area.



DON'T FORGET the local **FOOD PANTRY**

which has been running for several years and still meets at the URC building every Wednesday morning.

Contributions can be placed in advance in the bin at the back of our church. Details are available there.

THE ALPHA COURSE

**explore the
meaning of life!**



A new course in the Vicarage started on
30th January 2025

and has 10 consecutive Thursday evenings.

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 about the Christian faith.

6.30 p.m. in the Vicarage

(sign-up sheet at the back of the church)

6th March How and how should I read the Bible?

13th March How does God guide us?

20th March No Alpha this week

27th March How can I resist evil?

3rd April Why and how should we tell others?

Sunday 2nd March

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
2 Corinthians 3 : 12 - 4 : 2
Luke 9 : 28 - 43
Sidesperson

Sunday next before Lent

Rev'd Peter/Brenda Sheppard
Celebrant
Celebrant
Gordon Baker

11.00 Holy Communion

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

Rev'd Peter/Brenda Sheppard
Lauren Lomas
Rupert Killick
Yvonne Thurbon & Frances Hatfield
Christine Morgan
Gordon Baker
Kathy Carnell & Frances Hatfield

ASH WEDNESDAY (5th March)

19.30 Special Service

Rev'd Peter & Jenny Pratt

2 Corinthians 5 : 20b - 6 : 10 and John 8 : 1-11

Sunday 9th March

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/President/Preacher
Romans 10 : 8b - 13
Luke 4 : 1 - 13
Sidesperson

1st Sunday of Lent

Rev'd Ken Dunstan
Celebrant
Celebrant
Paul Lucas

11.00 Family Celebration

Leaders
Prayer Ministry
Audio-visuals
Sidesperson
Refreshments

Team: Karen, Jenny, Dawn
Fiona Begley + another
Christine Lucas
Brenda Sheppard
Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

Sunday 16th March

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher
Philippians 3 : 17 - 4 : 1
Luke 13 : 31 - end
Sidesperson

2nd Sunday of Lent

Rev'd Ken Dunstan
Celebrant
Celebrant
Leon Flack

11.00 Morning Worship

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

Jenny Pratt / Norman Pratt
Linda Payne
Frances Hatfield
Christine Lucas & Sarah Prendergast
Sylvia Adams
Kath Dunstan
Dee Byford & Jenni Blomfield

Sunday 23rd March

08.00 Holy Communion BCP

Leader/Preacher
1 Corinthians 10 : 1 - 13
Luke 13 : 1 - 9
Sidesperson

3rd Sunday of Lent

Rev'd Peter / 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
Sylvia Adams
Brenda Sheppard
Frances Hatfield & Sylvia Adams
Christine Morgan
Kathy Carnell
Christine Lucas & Sandra Billingham

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| <i>Continued on page 13</i> |
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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



In times past, it was traditional for young women working away from home to be given a day off on the 4th Sunday in Lent so that they could take a bunch of spring flowers to their mother, hence the name Mothering Sunday. This year it occurs on 30th March because Easter 2025 is quite late in April.

At Steeple Church we like to celebrate Mothering Sunday in a traditional way with a service that's particularly focused on children.

During the service we'll provide each "child", whether young or not-so-young, with a potted plant to give to their mother. If their mother is not in church they can take it home and give it to her later, perhaps during a family lunch.

In today's world, Mothering Sunday gets hijacked by commercial interests and wrongly referred to as Mothers Day. Sadly, much the same will happen three weeks later with the commercialisation of Easter.

Planning is important too.

Make sure that this is in your diary.

**“Wheels, Hooves and Paws”
at Elmwood Equestrian, Burnham-on-Crouch
will be on Saturday 12th July.**

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,

More Southminster details

Sunday 30th March Mothering Sunday (4th of Lent)
08.00 Holy Communion BCP

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Leader/President/Preacher | Rev'd Ken / Brenda Sheppard |
| 2 Corinthians 1 : 3 - 7 | Celebrant |
| John 19 : 25b - 27 | Celebrant |
| Sidesperson | Paul Lucas |

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 11.00 United Service Mothering Sunday | |
| Leaders | Norman Pratt / Brenda Sheppard |
| Readings as above | Christine Lucas |
| Intercessions | Kath Dunstan |
| Audio-visuals | Sylvia Adams |
| Sidesperson | Paul Lucas |
| Refreshments | Volunteers t.b.a. |

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 telephone or email. Information will be available.

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.

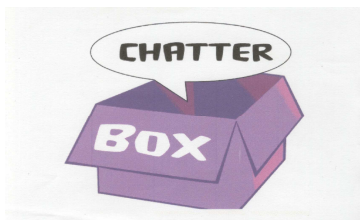
8th March is our next meeting

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 March

Temprd

Chocolate making

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.

| | | | | |
|------------|---|----|----|----|
| April 2025 | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 |
| May 2025 | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 |

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.

In aid of Althorne Church there will be a

BIT OF A DO

On Saturday 15th March 11 am - 3 pm

At Athorne Church Hall

Look forward to teas, coffees, toasted sandwiches,
cakes, puzzles, Easter decorations, cards
Farleigh Maldon Craft Circle, raffle, tombola

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 LATEST BIBLE STUDY GROUPS DETAILS**

Revelation is OVER!
Well, the Bible study is.
The actual Revelation is still to come.

To bring us up to Easter, the next Bible study
will be three sessions on **HOPE**.

Hope in the Church of England

Hope in politics

Hope in suffering

We meet in the church chapel

on Mondays at 10am and

Thursdays at 8pm.

We would love to see you there.

Norman & Jenny Pratt

PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

| | | |
|-----|----------|----------------------|
| w/b | 2 March | South - West |
| w/b | 9 March | Central - West |
| w/b | 16 March | North - East |
| w/b | 23 March | Central - North-West |
| w/b | 30 March | Central - 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

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. See page 18 this month.