

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



and also for Steeple Parish

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



**Gravelpit Lake, Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve**

**The Lord God made a garden and put a  
man in it to tend it and preserve it.**

**Genesis 2: 15**

**NOVEMBER 2023**

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**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:**

*Articles for the December magazine should be with Kath Dunstan by, at the latest, **Sunday 12th November** New contributors are welcome.*

To cover our costs we have to charge for this magazine. This is now **80p per issue** or £3 for Every 4 months paid in advance. There may be changes ahead, so we have removed the annual subscription.

## Reflection by Ken Dunstan

In 1986 two Christian families moved to Portugal to create a Christian Field Studies Centre. It was called “The Rock” – in Portuguese, that’s “A Rocha.” By 1994 it had become internationally known and expanded with a focus on distinctively Christian projects for nature conservation in needy areas. Projects had developed in Lebanon, Kenya, France and Canada as well as the UK. They included “Eco-Church” which encourages local churches to examine their impact on their natural surroundings.

Between 1997 and 2009, when he died, Keith Morris owned 5 Hectares of land at Foxearth, near Sudbury on the Essex-Suffolk border. He had developed it as a nature reserve, and his widow Maureen sold the reserve to A Rocha in 2015. From then until this year it has been in the care of Mark Prina, who has said, “Habitat loss and climate change mean Foxearth Meadows is already a refuge for depleted wildlife. Places like this will enable our countryside to return to a richer natural environment.”

That’s the background. Kath and I visited the reserve in 2019. In June this year A Rocha invited us to an open-air service, to be addressed by Canon Mike Parry, Chairman of the A Rocha Trustees. We had a good time.

Mike quoted Psalm 104, a joyful description of God’s relationship with Earth, commenting that caring for God’s earth is not for the select few. It is for all of us. Foxearth Meadows is hugely rich in dragonflies and damselflies. Climate change has brought immigrant species from the Continent. Climate change – global heating – is caused by

rich countries burning fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas. The worst effects are felt in poor countries that have contributed very little to the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Nationally, Britain is losing insects. We had an entertaining few minutes thinking about creatures that we do or don't like. Butterflies, yes (except caterpillars eating cabbage leaves) Wasps, no (but they eat 14 million kilograms of greenfly and caterpillars a year.) Earwigs no (but they eat insects attacking pears.) Slugs no (but they control some invertebrate pests; hedgehogs love them). Matthew 6:19 condemns moths as destroyers, and the Bible has many references to destruction caused by locusts.

What about us? For generations we have been at war with insects. We began to "win" seventy years ago with new insecticides, until Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" led to the banning of DDT. But DDT's heirs, like neonicotinoids, which kill bees, are more poisonous still. Flea killers, often from the fur of dogs, get into waterways and kill fish. Meanwhile, weedkillers and oil-based fertilisers can damage soil structure and soil's inhabitants. There has been a massive decline in insect numbers.

"Why worry? We can do without a few species." Really? Loss of pollinators means loss of fruit. We are part of nature, not distinct. One in six wild species in Britain is at risk of extinction.

St John of the Cross saw the interactions of living things as evidence of the love of God. He taught that the

more a person participates in God, the more he or she participates fully and joyfully in this community of creatures. Jesus taught that besides loving God, we must love our neighbour. I don't think it's going too far to include our non-human neighbours. They too are part of God's creation. Genesis 2:15 has God putting Adam in the Garden of Eden to "till it and keep it." The Hebrew words can equally mean "serve and protect" it. The fifth Mark of Mission – what God calls us to – is to do just that. We are "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth."

Let us consider how we, as individuals and families, and as part of God's Church family, can serve and protect the amazing place He has lent us. And act.

Blessings,

**Ken**

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## **Welcome Bishop of Bradwell and Archdeacons of Chelmsford and Stansted**

Their official welcome will be on Saturday November 4th at Chelmsford cathedral. Please pray for all three - and their families but particularly Bishop Adam and Archdeacon Jonathan because they will have more contact with us.

Obviously over recent years we had close contact with Bishop John Perumbalath and Archdeacon Elizabeth Snowden, so the forthcoming relationships have a very hopeful nature.

# Check ups

As some of us get older we seem to be called by our doctors more often for check-ups. It seems to be mostly Cholesterol, Diabetes and Blood pressure they seem to be more concerned about, and of course our weight and lifestyle!!



Check-ups are good, they highlight any concerns that we may not even be aware of and so often we have to make lifestyle choices or go on to medication if appropriate. Also, as well as physical check-ups we also need mental health and spiritual check-ups.

Thinking about the health checks we have today, I got to thinking what it was like for Jesus' first disciples as they often followed Him on foot for many miles over rough terrain at times, having to sleep rough and eat where and when they could and probably not being able to wash themselves regularly. They must have had times of feeling poorly physically and mentally. Not an easy life.

So, was there any help for them? We know that physicians existed in those days with their various remedies and that Jesus Himself healed many people during His travels. We know later that St. Luke was a doctor which must have been a comfort to those who travelled with him!

So, does the Bible mention anyone with physical or mental health problems? We read in 2 Corinthians 12:17 that St. Paul had a thorn in the flesh which he had to live with, and it has been suggested it was an eye problem. We read in 1 Timothy 5:23 that Timothy suffered from recurring stomach problems

and was told by Paul to stop drinking only water as safe drinking water was often hard to find and he was instead to use a little wine. We also read in Philippians 2:25 that Epaphroditus a fellow worker with Paul and Timothy had been seriously ill and almost died in his work. The disciple's journey was a really difficult life at times and we read in John 6 that many of Jesus' disciples turned back and stopped following Him, mainly because they found His teaching too hard to comprehend. I'm sure some found it all too hard in other ways too and went home. We, too, at times struggle to keep on the right path when following Jesus especially if we feel tired and run down or when life throws up really painful times and it all seems too difficult.

Perhaps for us all it's good to have a spiritual check-up as well as a physical one regularly, perhaps find a trusted friend to speak to and pray with, because life on the road, our journey, with Jesus can be challenging and tiring at times. But just as with our physical health, where we often have to make lifestyle choices to keep healthy, let us make the most important lifestyle choice and follow our Lord. He knows our strengths and our weaknesses. He is there in times of sickness and health. He is with us always in all circumstances, and how good is it to know that the Holy Spirit lives within us and certainly checks up on us all the time.



**Brenda Sheppard**

**“Where your Treasure is, there will be your heart also”**  
(Luke 12:34) **Ken Dunstan**

Some years ago Kath and I regularly attended the Keene Lectures at Chelmsford Cathedral. They featured a variety of nationally known speakers on contemporary Christian life. The lectures were funded by a trust in memory of John Henry Keene, a prominent citizen of Chelmsford. After a break of some years, the lectures are returning this Autumn. Admission is free.

This year’s lectures are on Tuesday evenings starting at 7:30pm and follow the theme of Treasure; each speaker will address a Christian approach to an issue impacting contemporary society. They are:-

**31 October    Treasuring Each Other;**  
a response to Black History Month  
The Reverend Sharon Quilter,  
Diocesan Race Relations Officer

**7 November    Treasuring the world;**  
a response to the climate crisis  
The Right Reverend Roger Morris,  
Bishop of Colchester

**14 November    Treasuring the Scriptures;**  
the place of the Bible in a multi-faith world  
Drew Maust            Senior Translation Consultant,  
Wycliffe Bible Translators

(Southminster Church has for many years supported  
Wycliffe Bible Translators, especially Steve and  
Johanna Pillinger)



# CHATTERBOX

Chatterbox continues to grow in numbers of people who like to come along every Thursday to the Memorial Hall from 10am to 12 noon. It is a time of meeting new people; a time out of daily routines to sit and chat and enjoy a cuppa or two and unlimited biscuits all for £1.



For those creative people there is a Craft table and for jigsaw lovers there are usually 2 jigsaws on the go which prove really popular. There is adult colouring which is really relaxing and cards and dominoes etc. Some people just like to sit and chat. We have also acquired a new laptop computer and help is available for anyone hoping to learn new skills.

We had a great response to our jigsaw appeal and have a good stock but we can always accommodate more. The ones completed then go over to the Charity Shop.



Any enquiries to: Norman on  
or: Brenda on



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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.

## **Sunday 5th November**

## **4th Sunday before Advent**

### **08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/President/Preacher

I Thessalonians 2 : 9 - 13

Matthew 24 : 1 - 14

Sidesperson

Rev'd Peter & Brenda Sheppard

Celebrant

Celebrant

Gordon Baker

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### **11.00 FAMILY CELEBRATION with Holy Communion**

President/Preacher

Readings as above

Intercessions

Prayer Ministry

Audio-visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

Rev'd Peter/ Brenda Sheppard

t.b.a.

Kath Dunstan

Christine Lucas & Yvonne Thurbon

Sylvia Adams

Gwyneth Iffland

Eira Hagger & Frances Hatfield

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### **16.00 MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**Led by Rev'd Peter**

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## **6th November is St Leonard's Day**

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## **Sunday 12th November**

## **3rd Sunday before Advent**

### **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**

### **08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/President/Preacher

I Thessalonians 4 : 13 - end

Matthew 25 : 1 - 13

Sidesperson

Rev'ds Peter/Jacqui

Celebrant

Celebrant

Paul Lucas

### **10.00 Remembrance Service**

Leaders

Audio-visuals

Prayer Ministry

Sidespersons

Refreshments

Rev'd Jacqui & team

Christine Morgan

n/a

G Baker, P Lucas, L Flack, N Winger

Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

**Sunday 19th November****2nd Sunday before Advent****08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

President/Preacher

I Thessalonians 5 : 1-11

Matthew 25 : 14 -30

Sidesperson

Rev'd Jacqui/Jenny Pratt

Celebrant

Celebrant

Leon Flack

**11.00 Family Celebration - Shoebox Sunday**

Leader/preacher

Readings t.b.a.

Intercessions

Audio-visuals

Prayer Ministry

Sidesperson

Refreshments

Jenny Pratt/Karen Flack

Linda Payne

Fiona Begley

Christine Lucas

Brenda Sheppard &amp; Frances Hatfield

Kath Dunstan

t.b.a.

**Sunday 26th November****CHRIST THE KING****08.00 Holy Communion BCP**

Leader/Preacher

Ephesians 1: 15 - end

Matthew 25 : 31 - end

Sidesperson

Rev'ds Jacqui/Peter

Celebrant

Celebrant

Pete Adams

**11.00 Morning Worship - TOY SERVICE**

Leader/Preacher

Readings as above

Intercessions

Prayer Ministry

Audio-Visuals

Sidesperson

Refreshments

Rev'ds Jacqui/Peter

Christine Lucas

Rupert Killick

Fiona Begley &amp; Keith Hatfield

Christine Morgan

Paul Lucas

Christine Lucas &amp; Sandra Billingham

**16.00 Christingle Service****Southminster's Christmas Lights to be turned on.**

# 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)

The members of Steeple's Parochial Church Council struggle to keep the church in good repair and the churchyard looking tidy. They are grateful for a small band of parishioners who regularly mow the grass in several parts of the churchyard and even cut the hedges periodically.

Families are responsible for maintenance of individual graves and some do this beautifully with plantings of seasonal flowers. Some graves are unkempt, perhaps because there are no family members living locally.

Unfortunately, some people ignore established rules and extend their grave into the pathways or install hard kerbs. Some spread chippings that can damage mowers. These people are about to be contacted and asked to reinstate their grave to comply with churchyard regulations.

As well as our traditional Remembrance Sunday service on 12<sup>th</sup> November, the Assistant Lord Lieutenant of Essex is planning to visit Steeple Church on Armistice Day, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> for a small ceremony during which all the names recorded on Steeple's War Memorial will be honoured at 11am. For most of them, we have a summary of their war service kept alongside the memorials in the church.

**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,

**SOME SOUTHMINSTER SPECIAL EVENTS COMING UP**

Saturday 2nd December at 2.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**SOCS Concert** in church. Posters will have details.

5th December People will be decorating their trees for this  
Saturday event:

9th December

**Christmas Tree Festival** in church: 2 pm until 4 pm

6th December at 7 pm **"Light up a Life"** Service

outside church (inside if weather is inappropriate)

Remember a loved one this Christmas. (Farleigh Hospice)

## Alpha course

We're excited to have started our latest Alpha (just done week 1 as I write this article for the magazine), on Tuesdays at the Vicarage (finishes in approx. 8 weeks). We gather and have supper together, which is a nice time to chat over some delish food, and relax after the day...

We then move into the other room and watch the Alpha video: last week it was really good!! Very current and addressed us in clear 'today' life terms.. For me, I really enjoyed it.

Afterwards, we have a group chat, joining in only if we wish, no pressure, and it was so good last week, very informative and encouraging, to hear their story from 2 of the folks on the course. Then we can ask any questions we have.... truly any, but it helps if they're connected to what we've just seen and heard. Keeps us all on a similar thought train.

Then we have a prayer and we nip home.  
"Simples".. and a very nice evening.

We will definitely be running another course. We usually have a follow-on course if people care to carry on, and that has in the past been very helpful and well-attended. Sadly, our last one was just stopped completely due to the first covid lockdown commencing and we haven't been able to finish it with those folks – a real shame. Happily, we can move on now and run more courses, so there's always going to be a course you can join... with a nice mix of folks coming along.

Jacqui & Fiona

## **SOUTHMINSTER MEMORIAL HALL**

**LUNCH CLUB** meets on alternate Mondays.

Back after Summer Break

If you would like any information please phone

Dave Christie 07775 758118.

**CHATTERBOX (See page 9)**

meets on Thursday mornings 10 am-12 noon.

### **DENGIE HUNDRED LADIES GROUP**

will meet on 28th November

**Valerie Kemp: Beekeeping**

**Competition: My Teddy Bear**

For further details contact Paula Neall 01621 773243

### **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.



**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.

We have been meeting many of the families at our Celebration Services and this is really enjoyable.

**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.

|               |   |    |    |    |
|---------------|---|----|----|----|
| January 2024  | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 |
| February 2024 | 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.**

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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.

## SOME IMPORTANT EVENTS

See all the special services at this time of year on pages 10-11.

### Also **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

We are managing the Shoebox Collection as usual.

Details are available in church - as are the boxes ready to fill.

The boxes should be returned to the church by 19th November when there will be a **SHOEBOX SERVICE**.



We also want to encourage people to give toys or toiletries for the women and their children in the **Refuge**. This has been greatly appreciated in the past. Your offerings should be given to church members or returned to the church by Sunday 26th November, when there will be a **TOY SERVICE**



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## QUIZ NIGHT

in church

11 November at 6 pm

Tables of up to 8 people.

£10 for food and table (£5 without food)

Sign up for choice of food.

Bring your own snacks & drinks.

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## PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b 5 November Central - North-West

w/b 12 November Central - East

w/b 19 November Central - South

w/b 26 November South - 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](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.