



THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST LEONARD, LEXDEN

ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GOD.



PARISH MAGAZINE

JULY 2019

50p

Looking for Matt's opening words?

Turn to page 6 for a bumper article. The cover photo is a clue!



JULY DIARY

Monday 1st

7.00pm Eucharist

7.45pm PCC meeting in the Nicholls Room

Tuesday 2nd

10.00am Holy Communion at Wren House

2.30pm Lexden Ladies in the Nicholls Room

7.30pm 'Medley' house group (Rosemary 515245)

Wednesday 3rd

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

10.45 Holy Communion at Woodlands

11.30 Holy Communion at Cheviot

Thursday 4th

8.00am Eucharist

2.30pm 'Constable' House Group (Hugh 564577)

Saturday 6th

8.30am Men's Breakfast in the Nicholls Room

SUNDAY 7th Trinity 3

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am ALL AGE EUCHARIST

6.30pm Evensong and Sermon

Monday 8th

7.45pm Jubilee house group at 118 St John's Road (Maureen 861250)

Tuesday 9th

2.30pm Mothers' Union in the Nicholls Room

Wednesday 10th

10.00am Eucharist followed by coffee

Thursday 11th

8.00am Eucharist

SUNDAY 14th Trinity 4

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

6.30pm 'Grow!' OMG Service led by the Youth Group



Monday 15th

11.00am Holy Communion at Hill House

Wednesday 17th

10.00 Holy Communion followed by coffee

Thursday 18th

8.00am Eucharist

SUNDAY 21st Trinity 5

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

12.00 Parish Picnic in Spring Lane Park

6.30pm Evensong and Sermon



Wednesday 24th

10.00 Holy Communion followed by coffee

Thursday 25th

8.00am Eucharist

SUNDAY 28th Trinity 3

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am PARISH EUCHARIST with Junior Church

6.30pm EUCHARIST for WHOLENESS and HEALING

Tuesday 30th

10am-12.00 St Leonard's Lego Club in Church



Wednesday 31st

10.00 Holy Communion followed by coffee

SUNDAY 4th August Trinity 6

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am ALL AGE EUCHARIST

6.30pm Joint Summer Evensong at St Barnabas, Old Heath





July

<p>7th July</p>	<p>All Age Service</p>
<p>14th July</p>	<p>Have you heard? – Paul delights in the fruit that the church at Colossae is bearing. <i>Colossians 1. 1-14</i></p>
<p>21st July</p>	<p>Who is Jesus? – In a lyrical text, Paul invites reflection on the glory of Jesus, revealed in creation, known in the Church, reconciling everything to God. <i>Colossians 1. 15-28</i></p>
<p>28th July</p>	<p>Rooted in Christ - Paul reminds the Colossians that they belong to Christ in baptism and through his sacrifice on the cross. <i>Colossians 2. 6-15</i></p>



Messy Church
22nd September, 3-5pm

SEEDS, NEEDS AND DREAMS:

Some findings from our Parish Away Day

At St Leonard's Parish Away Day in May, a group of about 30 people gathered at St Mary's Church, Stoke by Nayland. We split into groups and began to share stories of our experience of St Leonard's: recalling times when we have felt blessed, involved and encouraged, and thinking about our church's core values. We learned that what really matters to the life of St Leonard's ranges from love, inclusivity, and bringing people together in worship, to joyousness, fun, worship, friendship and fellowship. There was a sense that at the centre of St Leonard's life is a desire to share, welcome and worship with all, and to build relationships and communities.



We then thought about obstacles faced by those who aren't used to church. Many groups highlighted the importance of meeting people where they are: going out into our community and building personal links. The importance of personal invitation and of work with schools and other community groups and organisations was also noted.

It was observed that many people fear being judged when coming to church for the first time; that some expect us to be a 'closed group' or a members-only club, and that the very first step into church can be a very scary one indeed!



Our second session was on the theme of “seeds and needs” and grew from a reflection on the Parable of the Sower. Matt encouraged the groups to think of St Leonard’s as a smallholding or a farm, where we all participate in God’s work. What are the green shoots in St Leonard’s? What is God bringing to growth? Where is there decay – that natural and necessary process in every garden? What might we need to let go of as a church? What do we need to prepare the ground for mission and ministry in Lexden? What are our communities’ needs? Interestingly, what some groups identified as signs of growth, other groups saw as signs of decay. Signs of growth were seen in very many of our regular activities, but Messy Church, our youth and schools work, and our Friendship Lunches’ potential to further reach the isolated in Lexden were most commented upon.

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When considering areas of decay, some of the groups noted that for many the old model of weekly commitment is difficult due to the changing shape of peoples' lives, and that it is increasingly challenging to recruit people to some of the higher-commitment activities in church (some of the things for which we have rotas, for example).

In considering the needs of our community, our groups thought about Lexden, West Colchester and the region in general. Some of the most pressing needs included support for young people with mental health issues, difficulties in relationships and family situations, the needs of the new housing estates in Stanway and beyond, the need draw the two "halves" of Lexden parish community together, activities and facilities to engage young people and children, and the issue of isolation for those who are housebound.

Finally, in a third session, imaginations were set loose as the groups wrote newspaper articles for May 2029 – explaining the Good News of what God is doing in St Leonard's. Matt encouraged everyone to dream, and to consider what would be needed for those dreams to become reality. The OMG+ youth group came up with some wonderful stories about welcome parties, and using technology both to welcome newcomers, and also to help those who are isolated connect with the

church through broadcasting services. Some of the other good news stories included: a St Leonard's nature reserve; a rehabilitation centre; a community choir; banqueting hall to accommodate massive friendship lunches; a number one hit for the church rock band; a music festival with music tuition; a re-ordered nave to make the space more flexible; a church full of various forms of dance, drama and music; a youth drop-in centre in the Collingwood Road area, and a "Phoenix Fun Park" soft play/study/coffee centre on the site of the burned-down church hall(!!!).

It was wonderful to see so much effort being put into discerning what God might be planning for Lexden and West Colchester. This is something to which everyone is invited to contribute, however. So please ponder these things, if you have the opportunity: What do *you* value about St Leonard's? What do you see God growing, and what needs do you see in our communities? What are the pressures on St Leonard's, where are things changing in terms of resources and people's involvement and engagement? What are *your* dreams for St Leonard's and how might we get there?

If you weren't able to be at the Parish Away Day, please reflect these questions – and let us know what comes to you!

Matt



Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

It was an unsettled day weather-wise, unfortunately, when we had our Summer Outing on 11th June. However, nine of us enjoyed lunch at The Fox, West Mersea, and tea afterwards at Brenda Cant's home. She had kindly offered tea at her Beach Hut but decided against it. Thank you, Brenda.

Our Speaker on 9th July will be Mrs Siân Simpkins who will speak on "My activities since moving to Lexden".

This will be an Open Meeting and we welcome non-members.

Jean Hallett

COFFEE MORNING



A big "Thank You" to Wendy Allen for hosting our June coffee Morning. It was a blustery, rainy day, unfortunately, but some of us managed to admire and enjoy looking round her lovely garden.

It was a very happy occasion with mouth-watering scones and cakes etc. soon disappearing off the Bring & Buy table and plants for the garden being snapped up!

The total proceeds amounted to approximately £380. Thanks to all who supported.

Our next Coffee Morning will be at the new home of Sonia Lewis in Prettygate on Saturday 31st August - details in next month's magazine.

Jean Hallett

LEXDEN LADIES



At our June meeting Alice Goss presented an interesting talk on her research into the genealogy of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore, and his namesake who was rector of St. Leonard's.

Alice had collected an impressive amount of material on the former, who was born aboard his father's ship, the Ann, off the coast of Jamaica in 1781. His father's trading business had problems and the family returned to England where Thomas was sent to boarding school. At 14, he began work in London as a clerk for the East India Company.

He had an adventurous life in the East Indies where he was appointed Governor in a number of districts and founded Singapore. He was also a keen biologist, collecting plants and animals, becoming the first President of the Zoological Society; and founded London Zoo.

He married twice and fathered 5 children with his second wife, Sophia. All his children sadly predeceased him but the family line continued through cousins down to Thomas Stamford Raffles, rector of St. Leonard's from 1914 to 1926, whose memorials to him and his wife Cecily are found in the church. Alice had very little information on this Thomas as his family were reluctant to share it with her. Thank you Alice for all your work.

On July 2nd at 2.30 pm in the Nicholls room we shall welcome David Acksteiner, our Youth Worker, who will be finishing his year with us in July. Do come and hear him. All welcome. ***Please note that this talk replaces the previously planned lunch at The Barn.***

Margaret Howard

ST LEONARD'S LEGO CLUB!



St Leonard's Lego Club will be running in church on Tuesdays 30th July and 6th August from 10.00am till 12.00 noon. Fun for all!

PARISH PICNIC

On Sunday 21st July after the Parish Eucharist please join us for an informal picnic in Spring Lane Park. [On Lexden Road]

Everyone is welcome! Please bring your lunch, any seating or blankets you need, and a bag to take your rubbish home with you.

Please also bring any outdoor games that you'd like to play! We'll gather from about noon, but if there's time to kill after the service we there'll be an opportunity to relax and play some games.

If the weather is bad, we will retreat to the Church Hall.



Memories of a previous Parish Picnic



MOUSE TAILS



You may recall that earlier in the year a new family had sought refuge in the church from the bad weather and had been befriended by Grandpa and the rest of the mice community. They were still living there and felt very much at home. They had learned about God and Christianity from the other mice and after hearing and seeing what happened at the Messy Baptism decided that they would like Grandpa to baptise them all, Mum, Dad and little Joey.

Grandpa was delighted to do this and all the rest of the mice agreed that it would be lovely to make a proper celebration of the event with a party in the Hall afterwards. Fortunately, after the humans' Messy Baptism the mice had scavenged some lovely pieces of cake and little bits of craft materials. It was a beautiful sunny day for the event and many mice came to witness the baptism which Grandpa conducted at the back of the church, near to the font. Little Tommy Organ played the hymns on his



miniature harmonica and the mouse choir sang along. Once the service was over they all scampered up to the hall to begin the festivities, starting of course with the feast. As usual, everyone had contributed and Grandpa and the Dads had made their beers, wines and cordials. It has to be said that St. Leonard's Church mice could always put on a good spread (not unlike their human counterparts!)

Using their scavenged treasure Molly and Rupert and the rest had made some small gifts and a card to commemorate the special day – a Dove of Peace (made from a paper plate), a bunch of flowers tied with a red ribbon and something they had never seen before – a glittery candle. The family were thrilled and overwhelmed by the kindness of the Church mice and in their thanks said that it was a good day when the storms had driven them into the church.

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Grandpa commented that God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform.



The youngsters then enjoyed playing their favourite games to work off some of their energy (the Mums said) and Tommy Organ with his little group had heard The Reverend Matt playing his guitar in church, and having a good ear for music, he had learnt the tunes, so played some jolly music for dancing – well, dancing is a bit of a loose description, more like hopping about!

Once they felt the need for ‘a good sit down’ the grown ups set to planning their next event, the Fete, which was held once all the humans had gone home. It was always a good scavenging day too: bread, bits of burger, sausage and if they were really lucky, some cheese, their most favourite food. They agreed who would do what: a treasure hunt, pin the tail on the cat, Tommy and his band would play music, the Dads would provide the drinks (no surprise there!) and the Mums would organise the food.

It was getting late and had been a busy day so they all found a cosy corner and settled down for a good night’s sleep.

CT

NEW!



Women’s Breakfast

The first Women’s Breakfast at St Leonard’s will be on Saturday 21st September at 8.30am. Make sure you put this date on your calendar and look for full details in the August magazine.

WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD



On 23rd April this year I flew out to the Philippine Islands with my son and his girlfriend. Gemma's parents and her family live in the remote village of Macayo on the island of Luzon. We stayed in Gemma's newly built house, very close to her parents' house. It was such a privilege to have the opportunity to meet her parents and to experience such a vastly different way of life.

After a few hours' stopover in Dubai we flew on to the Philippines. On approaching the Islands I was overwhelmed at the beauty which came into view. After an 18 hour flight I was looking forward to what I knew would be a wonderful experience for the next two weeks.

No hot water, no mod-cons, clothes washed in a tub outside and hung straight on the line to dry, cooking done on the barbecue, and numerous tropical storms, when the water and power are not available (only rain water and candles!) What a joy to see and experience the simplicity and acceptance of these extreme weather conditions in this part of the world

with those who have so little, are not at all materialistic and yet are so happy. Family life and togetherness are so important and a joy to see. The main form of travel in the villages is the tricycle. This is used for visits to the supermarket (a rare occasion) when as many as five people travel on, and in it, and boxes of shopping are carried home on the back and roof of the tricycle! 'Local shops' are mobile tricycles laden with goods which stop at each house.

We visited a beautiful church in Manaoag, Panastine: Or Lady of Manaoag, a Roman Catholic title for the Virgin Mary. We attended a Mass in this beautiful church which was so moving and full of love for all nations.

I was so impressed by the love, friendship and hospitality offered to me by the family, friends and neighbours in Macayo during my visit. After two weeks it was time for us to leave. With so many memories to bring home with me, I will always remember my visit to the Philippines with love and affection, and I give thanks for such a wonderful opportunity and experience.

Our world really is 'A Wonderful World.'

Margaret Cox

FRIENDSHIP LUNCH

Our next Friendship Lunch
will be on

Saturday 10th August at 12.30pm.

Look out for the sign up list
at the back of the church.

And invite a friend or neighbour!



SEPTEMBER ORDINATIONS

Dear All,

We are being ordained on the 14th September at 10.00am at Chelmsford Cathedral as deacons to serve our beloved family at St Leonard's.

We would love to see you there on the day but what we need and ask for, leading up to this special day, are your prayers. Please pray for all who will be ordained at this time and also for The Reverend Matthew Simpkins and all the people of St. Leonard's who have given us such amazing support.

Maggie Whiteman and Jacque Messinger



MESSY BAPTISM!



Kelsey was baptised during a very joyful Messy Church in June



And there was a chance to do our own 'pretend' baptisms.