

Welcome to St Leonard's. If you're here for the first time or visiting, please say hello.

The nave will usually be open for private prayer & reflection on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday mornings, and Sunday afternoons.

Please note that this may be subject to change at short notice.

THIS SUNDAY'S SERVICES

9:45am **Parish Eucharist with Junior Church**
(238, 592, 794, 373, 128, Lent Prose, 641, Addington)

5:30pm **Eucharist for Wholeness & Healing**

PRAYER DIARY & EVENTS

SUNDAY 23rd - we pray for the parishes of Lexden & Shrub End.

MONDAY – in the Anglican Communion we pray for The Diocese of Maryland: The Episcopal Church.
8:45am Morning Prayer.

TUESDAY - we pray for staff and residents at New Hythe.
8:45am Morning Prayer.

WEDNESDAY – in the Colchester Deanery we pray for all Hospice Chaplains Spiritual Lead: Tim Leeson.

9:30am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall.
10.00am Eucharist with followed by coffee.
11:00am Lent Course – Hearing God in Poetry.
11:00am Baby & Toddler Group in the hall.
7:00pm Lent Course – Hearing God in Poetry.

THURSDAY - we pray for the Society of Friends.
8:00am Eucharist.

FRIDAY - we pray for all nurses.

SATURDAY - we pray for the residents of Collingwood Road and Round Close.
9:30am Church Spring Clean.

Services next Sunday:
30th March – Mothering Sunday

9:45am All-Age Eucharist for Mothering Sunday

NEWS AND EVENTS

Our **Lent Course** this year is called **Hearing God in Poetry**. Sessions continue in the Nicholls Room at 11:00am and 7:00pm on Wednesday 26th March and 2nd & 9th April. We look forward to welcoming you.

Church Spring Clean – we are holding a Spring Clean of the Church on Saturday 29th March starting at 9:30am. Many hands make light work so if you can help get our beautiful building ready to celebrate Easter, please speak to Julie.

Men's Breakfast is on Saturday April 5th in the Nicholls Room. Contact David Watkins davidw@stleonardslexden.org.uk

Messy Last Supper takes place on Sunday 6th April at 3:00pm. Free activities and crafts, food and fun! All children must be accompanied by an adult. Email to let us know that you are coming to: juniorchurch@stleonardslexden.org.uk

Journey to the Cross – Please join us at 5:30pm on Palm Sunday, 13th April, to enjoy readings and music reflecting on Jesus's journey to the cross.

Revision of the Church Electoral Roll 2025: Our Electoral Roll is to be completely revised before this year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 18th May. If you are baptised, attend St Leonard's Church, and are aged sixteen or above, you are encouraged to enter your name on the new roll by completing and signing an application form. Forms and a collecting box are available in church or from the website <https://www.stleonardslexden.org.uk/APCM/>. If your name is on the existing roll you will still need to re-apply, please; this is a full revision. There are further details in the March/April Magazine. Please ensure that all forms are returned by Sunday 20th April.

Summer Fayre – this year's summer fayre will take place on Saturday 28th June, please save the date in your diaries. Please speak to Nick if you are able to help in any way.

Our 9.45am service is live-streamed each Sunday to include those who are unable to join with us in person. If you prefer not to be on camera, please sit behind the front five rows of the nave. We are happy to provide Holy Communion to you in your pew, just let a steward or warden know.

Among those for whom we pray are:

Angela Sargent, Jean Holden, Father David Armstrong, Dick Verrier, Richard, Derek Cowie, Johanne Bresch, Lionel Simpkins, Brian Root, Katrina Light, Joseph, David Moxon, Kim Harding, Graham Tyler, Jenny and Peter Hazlewood, Frances Bonner, Maureen Watkins, Antonia Loxley, Janice, Kim Kite, Hugh and Mary Beavan, Michael Eavery, Freddie Woolard, Jacquie, Ashley Hanmer, Jan Buckley, Tony Gurney, Shirley Everitt, Stella Llewellyn, Pat Hughes, Doreen Mayes, Holly Donovan, Win Kenway, Freda and Ernest Jenkins, Ellen Whalley, Nick Leaning, Pam Hatherly, Owen Shepherd, Frances Dowson, Joan Collis, and those others known to us.

Those who have died & those who mourn them: Carole Durrant, Douglas Garland

The Church has a card reader available for contactless payments. Please ask if you need help using it and also Gift Aid your donation if you are able to. Donations can also be made online via our website <http://www.stleonardslexden.org.uk/>

COLLECT & READINGS (3rd Sunday of Lent)

Collect

Merciful Lord,
absolve your people from their offences,
that through your bountiful goodness
we may all be delivered from the chains of those sins
which by our frailty we have committed;
grant this, heavenly Father,
for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion Prayer

Merciful Lord,
you know our struggle to serve you:
when sin spoils our lives
and overshadows our hearts,
come to our aid
and turn us back to you again;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Joshua 5.9–12 (Old Testament, p210)

The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.' And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were encamped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Psalms 32 (Old Testament, p536)

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.
Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

While I kept silence, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah

Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not hide my iniquity;
I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord',
and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah

Therefore let all who are faithful
offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters
shall not reach them.
You are a hiding-place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. Selah

I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,
else it will not stay near you.

Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord.
Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

2 Corinthians 5.16–21 (New Testament p194)

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Luke 15.1–3, 11b–32 (New Testament p83)

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable:

Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found." '