

St Leonard's Lexden



Ordinary people. Extraordinary God.



Parish Magazine

50p September 2017





From the Rector

It's a funny old job - stipendiary priest (i.e. a full-time, paid incumbent) as it is transient by its very nature. We become (very quickly) part of a community, we share the joys and sorrows of people's lives, develop relationships and friendships, and then we are called to move on and start all over again in a new place, leaving them all behind. In some ways life would be so much easier if that wasn't the case! But that's the point really, we aren't called to an easy life - we are called to serve Jesus and his church, and priesthood is sacrificial. We know that when we sign up!

This will be my last magazine article 'From the Rectory' and it, naturally, prompts reflection over the last seven years. St Leonard's was described to me as a 'can do' church – and that continues to be the case. As I said soon after my appointment - St Leonard's is built on firm foundations - and in these seven years we have extended the work done by those who have gone before us and we are well placed to continue that; we are growing and thriving. I say frequently that you should be proud of the ethos here of generous hospitality, obedient discipleship and willingness to live out your faith. St Leonard's is truly a unique place to be - and I shall miss you all, but I shall take with me the things you have taught me and the love you have shown us. I have been very proud to be part of such a vibrant, willing, generous, spiritual community who have shared their lives with us. The community of St Leonard's has welcomed Martin and me, supported us and rejoiced with us and our family as we have grown in number, which has been heart-warming and for which we thank you.

And what to the future I hear you thinking? Well, a time of vacancy (apparently we aren't supposed to use the term interregnum any more) can be unsettling. I know, I have been in parishes when they have

happened, but it is an opportunity for a church community to work together, sometimes for people to realise that they have skills which perhaps they hadn't known about. One great advantage is that you will have Fr David here for a good few months yet; I know he will be a safe pair of hands, a listening ear and a faithful priest, and you have a pair of very capable and hardworking churchwardens in David Watkins and Esther Heptonstall, who will be supported by a gifted ministry team. St Leonard's will continue on its mission in the world to share the Gospel - and the new incumbent will come in due course.

But in all this it is important to remember that it isn't actually your church, it isn't my (or the new incumbent's) church, and it isn't the churchwarden's church (really). It's God's church and our aim should be to fall in line with his will, which sometimes is not the same as ours. It's important to discern the difference between the two; to stop and think, and pray... what is God's will, not mine? I know you will because you are a prayerful community and from that starting point God, through Jesus, can and will do great things if we let him.

So I leave you at the start of next month with sadness and thanks - but also with my blessing, confident that all shall be well - and a prayer from Dag Hammarskjöld which I try to remember to say often:

*"For all that has been, thank you.
For all that is to come, Yes!"*

Teresa

FRIENDSHIP LUNCH

**Our next Friendship Lunch
will be on**

**Saturday 9th September at 12.30pm
in the church.**

Look for the sign up list in church



DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER

Saturday 2nd

8.30am Men's Breakfast

SUNDAY 3rd: Trinity XII

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Informal Eucharist

6.30pm Joint Evensong at St Albright's, Stanway



Tuesday 5th

10.30am Holy Communion at Wren House

7.30pm 'Medley' house group at 20 Wordsworth Rd (Rosemary 515245)

Wednesday 6th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by coffee

10.45am Holy Communion at Woodlands

11.30am Holy Communion at Cheviot

Thursday 7th

8.00am The Eucharist

Saturday 9th

12.30pm Friendship Lunch in church

SUNDAY 10th: Trinity XIII

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Parish Eucharist and Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Monday 11th

7.00pm The Eucharist

7.45pm PCC meeting in the Nicholls Room

Tuesday 12th

2.30pm Mothers' Union

Wednesday 13th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by coffee

Thursday 14th: Holy Cross Day

8.00am The Eucharist

2.30pm Constable house group; for venue see weekly pew sheet (Hugh 564577)

Saturday 16th

3.00pm Wedding of Margaret Brodie and Andrew Sorrell



SUNDAY 17th: Trinity XIV

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Monday 18th

11.00am Holy Communion at Hill House

7.45pm Jubilee House group at 118 St John's Road (Viv 513495)

Wednesday 20th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by coffee

Thursday 21st: St Matthew

8.00am The Eucharist

SUNDAY 24th: Trinity XV

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Parish Eucharist with Junior Church

6.30pm Evensong and sermon

Wednesday 27th

10.00am The Eucharist with prayers for healing followed by coffee

Thursday 28th

8.00am The Eucharist

Sunday 1st October: Trinity XVI

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.45am Harvest Festival and Parade Service

6.30pm Parish Eucharist *followed by farewell to Teresa*



Teresa's last Sunday



Teresa's last Sunday at St Leonard's will be 1st October.
She will be at all three services:

8.00am Holy Communion

9.45am Informal Harvest Festival and Church Parade

6.30pm Parish Eucharist

Following the Eucharist at around 8.00pm we will say
farewell with drinks and light refreshments in the Hall.



Thank you!

I would like to thank all my friends at St Leonard's for the lovely cards and tributes that I had from you all since Ralph passed away. I am sure he would have been so moved to know he had such loving friends.

The support I have had from you all has been wonderful, and I thank all who came to the thanksgiving service. Teresa has been marvellous both at the hospital and for the church services.

The whole family join with me to send these thanks.

Sheila Cook

My First Year of Licensed Lay Ministry Training

As I sit writing this I have just submitted the last of this year's essays. The total amount of words for this year amounting to 19,000 plus a sermon and a whole lot of reading that has had to happen before I could put finger to keyboard!

It has certainly been a huge learning curve; not only on the theological front but also learning new aspects of I.T. which has been a challenge. All the essays have to be sent in on-line as they go through a system called 'Turnitin' which gives a plagiarism count for our work. If this is too high it means I have to go back to my essay and re-arrange the words.



I have written essays on 'Who wrote the Pentateuch' and another comparing the life of Benedictine and Jesuit monks. All of the essays are quite different and they have taken over my life and my mind for weeks on end.

There are 14 of us studying as a group on Thursday evenings at Chelmsford. They come from all the corners of the diocese and are a great, diverse group of people. They are from all walks of life from surgeons and carers to office workers, bus drivers and retired people like me. I greatly admire those still working who have undertaken this course. How they manage to fit it all in I don't know. Being part of this group is the greatest joy of this course. The support from and of each other and the general camaraderie is just beautiful. The out-pouring of love when one of the group is in trouble is wonderful.

I have had such support from many at St. Leonard's for which I am truly grateful; Chris and Tony being absolute stars when it came to videoing my sermon. Teresa has listened to me bemoan my fate on many an occasion and I will miss her input greatly. But it is time to turn my mind to sorting out the harvest service before going on holiday and then returning for my second year and all that it brings. So for a short while I can put the books up on the new book shelves and relax.

Jacquie

Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum

In August Maggie and I visited the National Memorial Arboretum which is situated centrally in the country to the south of Burton on Trent in the Midlands.

Several acres of countryside were planned and planted with trees and shrubs about 20 years ago in remembrance of British and Allied service men and women killed in both World Wars and in conflicts around the world thereafter. Also honoured are members of the three emergency services (police, fire and ambulance) plus the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (sometimes regarded as the fourth emergency service).



Part of the Burma Railway

Each tree or shrub represents the nation's loss of a life or lives in various guises. For instance, there is a large wood where every tree honours an allied Merchant Navy ship which sank as a result of enemy action during World War II and it makes a huge personal impact to walk among these hundreds of trees which, incidentally, are carpeted with bluebells in the spring to represent the sea.

Interspersed amongst the grasses and trees are many statues honouring the fallen in the defence of the nation and its population over the last two centuries; as Maggie remarked, "Everyone in the country should visit this place
(Continued on p 23...)

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to offer thanks to those who made the ultimate sacrifice to guarantee our freedom and safety.”

We spent the best part of two days looking round the Arboretum which is free to enter and has an indoor exhibition, a chapel and a restaurant if the weather is inclement. There is plenty to see and we would recommend that, on arrival, you take a ride on the road train that travels around the site to get an idea of the layout and what’s on view so that you can then choose which places to visit on foot during the rest of your visit.



‘Shot at Dawn’

Steve Whiteman

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

FINAL DAY for items for the October edition:

SUNDAY 10th SEPTEMBER

Please submit items to the Editor
email: magazine@stleonardslexden.org.uk

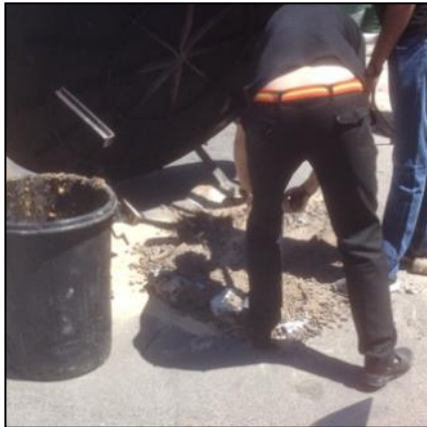
Please include your name with any submission.
Items from unknown sources cannot be used.

Please limit text to 500—600 words maximum.
Longer articles may be edited. Thank you

Tales from Spain

One Thousand Portion Paella

First of all don't try this at home as you might run into problems with your local council and health & safety.



The first requirement is a very large Paella pan, lots of wood and a big stirring thingy. This to be set up on a nice quiet tarmac road. To protect road put down a load of old sand. Place wood under pan and set light.

Put lots of oil in pan and heat through. Add a few kilos of bony chicken pieces stirring until cooked through. Health & Safety note: It is best to wear plastic gloves when handling the chicken.

In the meantime, prepare large quantities of peppers, garlic and spices. Add peppers to pan and cook through. Adjust heat by adding wood as required.





I have no idea what the temperature setting is, all I can say it was very hot.

Add a few gallons of water and spices to the mix and bring to the boil. You could of course use chicken stock, but that might take a while to prepare.

Next add buckets of rice - note the normal ratio is one part rice to two parts liquid. But what's normal about any of this?



Anyway, now serve on plastic plates with a piece of bread and a glass of beer or wine.

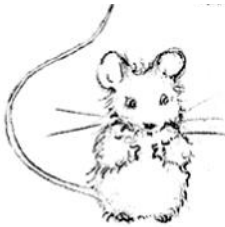
Note: if you cannot find a thousand people to eat it you are going to have a lot left over and will be eating paella for weeks.

Graham Tyler

Mouse Tails



Molly and Rupert were in the Churchyard scavenging one morning when they heard the frightening sound of a dog barking nearby. As they had been taught to do, they quickly scurried for shelter under a gravestone. Cautiously peeping out, they saw a cat being chased by a large dog. Once the chasers passed by the twins slowly crept out of their hiding place, Rupert holding Molly's paw as she was trembling and very scared; but all was clear, the danger had passed and as soon as Molly calmed down they resumed their scavenging. Molly was busily gathering up elderberries (Grandpa used these to make his famous cordials) when she gave a loud squeak. Rupert rushed to her side and asked what was the matter now? She pointed to the ground and said: "Look, it's a baby mouse, poor little thing; that horrid cat must have dropped it in the chase!"



Peering closely, they discovered that the tiny mouse wasn't dead but had been momentarily stunned by the fall. "Are you OK baby?" asked Molly. The mouse squeaked a reply but the twins couldn't understand what it was saying, it sounded like "mouse speak" but with a funny accent. Speaking slowly and loudly the little chap said "I am NOT a baby if you don't mind, my name is Jack Straw and I'm a field mouse. That rotten cat snatched me from my nest then dropped me during the chase, thank God!" Being good Christian mice, the twins helped Jack to his feet and asked if he would be able to walk to their home in the church so that they could give him food, drink, shelter and a good rest.

After he had been introduced to Mum and Dad, who welcomed him to their home, Mum bustled about getting their guest food and water and insisting that he had a good long rest to get over his ordeal. Jack was grateful for the refreshments. Although the "biscuits and chocolate" were unknown to him he found them quite tasty (Mum strongly believed in the restorative benefits of chocolate!)



(Continued on p31...)

(...continued from p29)



He was then shown to a cosy nest and advised to have a good long sleep; he was warm, full and safe and within seconds was sound asleep although he did twitch about a lot and Mum told the twins that he was probably dreaming of his ordeal.

Jack awoke to find himself surrounded by around 20 Church mice! Blinking and still a little dozy he asked where he was. Grandpa introduced himself and welcomed him to the Church mouse family; he said that everyone wanted to hear Jack's story but that it could wait until he felt strong enough. Meantime, he could stay for as long as he wanted and they should all join in a prayer of thanks for Jack's safe delivery.

After the prayer, Grandpa suggested that they all go up to the Hall cousins as he was sure that they would love to meet Jack and hear his tale. So they all trooped up the hill to the Hall, collecting numerous Churchyard mice on the way, some of whom had witnessed the cat/dog chase.

The Hall cousins did indeed welcome Jack and everyone else so it became an impromptu party! As you know, they never needed much of an excuse to have a party.

As Jack relaxed he began to tell them his tale: "I was born in a cornfield not too far from here although I can't tell you which direction nor exactly how far away it is, because that cat moved so much more quickly than I ever could." He trembled at the memory and many of the Mums were openly crying. Grandpa placed a reassuring paw on Jack's shoulder and told him to take his time.

Mum asked him about his family and what life was like in the fields. Jack paused for a moment to gather his thoughts then told them that he and Mrs Straw had 2 youngsters, Laurel and Hazel, named for the trees around the cornfield. Talking about his family proved just too much for Jack and he couldn't continue. By now there wasn't a dry eye in the hall and wise old Grandpa said it was time for everyone to go to bed and let their guest have a good night's sleep.



(Continued on p33...)

(...continued from p31)

He assured Jack that they would do their very best to reunite him with his family even though it might take a little time. Ending on an optimistic note he said that they had many friends, some of which were birds and they would be happy to help them. He asked all the mice to include a Jack in their prayers that night and as they all went to find a cosy nest, they were a very quiet group, unusual for them after a get together!



They all did include Jack in their bedtime prayers and many of them dreamt of ways in which they could help him be reunited with his family.

(To be continued next month)

CT



Gifts brought our Harvest Service at 9.45am on 1st October will be donated to Colchester Foodbank. Please note the items they urgently require and also those of which they have plenty:

They urgently need:

- Tinned potatoes
- Tinned puddings
- Tins or packets of custard
- Jam
- Peanut Butter
- Deodorants
- Shaving Gel
- Razors

They have plenty:

- Beans
- Pasta
- Tinned fruit
- Soup

Please bring what you can, to help those in difficult circumstances.



Lifting people out of debt and poverty

The Colchester CAP Debt Centre (CCDC) is an independent charity, set up in March 2013 with the objective of helping to relieve poverty in Colchester through advice to people who have lost control of their finances on account of spiralling debt. We have CAP in our title, as we use the specialist debt management skills of Christians Against Poverty, a national debt advice charity.

Just think what it must be like to receive multiple daily telephone calls from debt collection companies seeking the payment of outstanding bills or loans, or regular visits from bailiffs who want to take away what few items of furniture or possessions you still have left. Maybe you have a family to feed but no money for that, as what income you have is needed for rent or for loan repayments. Some of our clients have no heating or light for their homes or are nervously awaiting eviction. A report recently produced by CAP showed that one third of the people who make contact with it have considered suicide.

It is sometimes said that people in debt have only themselves to blame, but consider how much advertising there is for gambling or for 'payday loans'. If you are desperate it is so easy to succumb to such temptations. Many of our clients are also coping with the effects of an addiction or a life-changing event such as the death of a near relative, the unforeseen loss of a job or the destabilizing impact of divorce. We also have numerous clients who suffer mental health issues.

Sadly there are areas of our town that are within the top 10% of neighbourhoods in England defined as 'most deprived.' This is from a government survey called the 'English Indices of Deprivation 2015'. 60% of the clients that we see come from such areas but in truth all our clients are affected by severe stress and/or poverty.

(Continued overleaf...)

The Bible tells us '... if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.' (1John 3:17-18). In a nutshell that quotation shows why we set up our debt centre.

So how do we help our clients? CAP is quite well known and it has a 0800 help-line whereby local clients are put in touch with us. One of our trained debt coaches then visits the client in their home (uncommon in the world of debt advice), to assess the extent of their debt problem. Typically clients have become overwhelmed and are no longer opening letters from creditors. Once we have quantified their debts, identified income sources and clarified essential items of expenditure, CAP HQ negotiates with the client's creditors to arrive at a realistic repayment programme. A budget is then prepared and we revisit the client to start them on living within that budget. Keeping to it is tough so we help with support from our fantastic band of volunteers who get to know our clients and continue to visit them, providing encouragement along the tough path to becoming debt free. We have 70 volunteers from local churches and it usually takes up to 4 years for clients to become debt free, with their lives then back on track.

We have many stories to tell. One concerns John whose addictions had led him into debt, with no electricity or heating and little money for food. To boil a kettle he used an electric socket on the hallway outside his flat. He had mental health problems and was cut off from society, but with our help he has followed a Debt Relief Order and is now debt free. He is now back doing voluntary work as a gardener and this should lead soon to paid work. He has joined a local church and is getting married later this year. It has been a joy to see him turn his life around.

Since we started we have had a full appointment book and have set up over 250 meetings, with many clients now on repayment programmes. In our first 3 years, 58 clients have become debt free and others are well along the way to this. Our service is totally free and whilst there is no requirement for clients to attend a church, a happy consequence of our Christian ethos is that over 20 clients have come to faith as a result of their involvement with us.

CCDC has grown quickly in 4 years and we are now seeking help from local churches and individuals. Firstly we would ask for your prayers as our work can be emotionally challenging. We are also happy to add to our band of volunteers, so if you are interested please get in touch. Our contact details are below. We also need financial support as we have 4 paid employees and we make a monthly payment to CAP HQ for its specialist input. Nearly all our funding comes via the generosity of the people and churches of Colchester, so if you have a heart for our work please consider making a donation, possibly with Gift Aid. Better still please consider setting up a regular monthly contribution.

It costs £37,000 a year to run our debt centre, or £500 per new client per year. A donation of £500 (or 5 separate donations of £100) will therefore support a client family for a whole year. Similarly a regular donation of £40 per month will support a family for a year and if it runs for 4 years it will help that family to become debt free. If you would like to help us please detach and send the form below to the contact address shown. Alternatively please E-mail us (see below).

I would like to help Colchester CAP Debt Centre with a donation of

£ _____ / a regular monthly donation of £ _____
(delete as applicable)

Please send me a form so I can arrange this. My contact details are:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Email: _____

Please return to: Ms Patsi Morgans, Colchester CAP Debt Centre,
c/o W R S Fornham Financial Management , 227 London Rd, Stanway,
Colchester CO3 8PB (Email: patsi.ccap@gmail.com)

Favourite Paintings - 3



The painting shown here was painted in about 1601 by the Italian artist Caravaggio, with the title "The Supper at Emmaus". Although it is one of my favourites, I hesitated to write about it because a copy in the parish magazine can only be a few inches wide, whereas the original is more than six feet wide - the copy can only hint at the impact of the original. You can get a larger and better impression of it on your computer screen, with colour rather than black and white; or best of all, if you have the opportunity, you can see the original in the National Gallery in London.

The background to the painting is the story in St Luke's gospel, chapter 24, verses 13 to 35. On the first Easter Day, two followers of Jesus are walking from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus when Jesus joins them, but they do not recognise him. He explains what is said about himself in the Scriptures. When they approach the village they invite Jesus to stay with them. He shares a meal with them, and they recognise him when he breaks the bread and begins to give it to them.

The painting captures the moment when the two followers suddenly realise that it is indeed Jesus who is with them at the table. Their astonishment is palpable: the one on the left looks as if he is about to leap out of his chair, and the one on the right can't open his arms wide enough to express his feelings.

The painting is typical of many by Caravaggio, in the way that he depicts a dramatic scene and emphasises the contrast between darkness and light.

Colin Hetherington



**Come and enjoy afternoon tea in the
church on Sunday 8th October
3.30- 5.00pm.**

