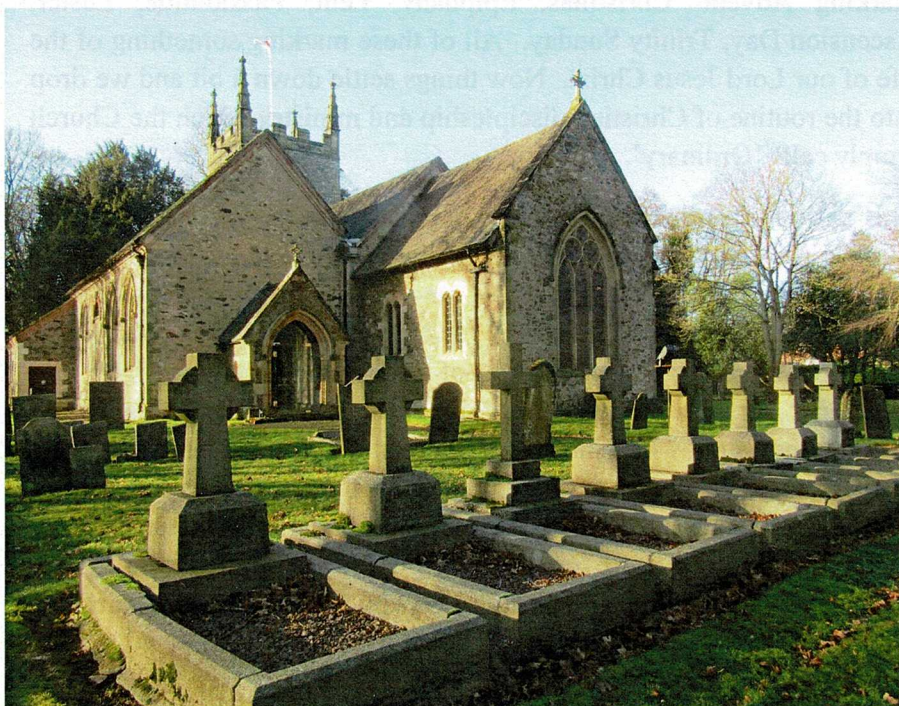


THE LINK

*With St Leonard's in Swithland
in June 2021*

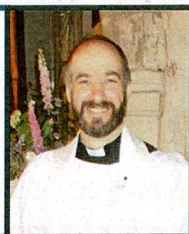


Rev. Colin Resch

Priest in charge of the Mountsorrel Benefice
with St Leonard's Swithland

4 Rothley Road, Mountsorrel, Loughborough, LE12 7JU

Tel/Fax 0116 429 9946 Email revcolinresch@icloud.com



Time for a bit of the Ordinary



As we enter June and the weather begins to improve (hopefully), many of us are hoping for a bit of the ordinary, we are looking forward to things getting back to a bit of normal. Certainly, the church is entering that time of the liturgical calendar called 'Ordinary Time'. We have been through the six months of special seasons and feasts marking Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Passiontide, Easter, Ascension Day, Trinity Sunday. All of these marking something of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now things settle down a bit and we drop into the routine of Christian discipleship and ministry which the Church simply calls 'Ordinary'.

This period of ordinary, this year, coincides with the gradual easing of coronavirus restrictions and the population as a whole looks for a sense of normality. But what is 'normal' now? Many of our favourite high street shops have not survived the lockdown; people have switched to online retail and a good proportion of this will no doubt continue into the future; our high streets will take on a new feel. Perhaps this will be a good thing allowing more opportunity for artisan and specialist retailers to showcase their wares. Much of my early career was in independent retail and I still think that there is nothing better than the knowledge you can gain from speaking with a specialist who knows their field inside and out. Our high streets will be changed because of Covid.

And the Church is not immune either. As the world changes, so do the challenges facing the Church. Many Churches have seen their income plummet because of fewer onsite services and almost no weddings to speak of. Our own Diocese of Leicester is accelerating a process of restructuring that was just beginning at the start of the first lockdown; and what was going to take five years, will now have to be completed before the end of this current year because of financial constraints on the budget. I would urge you to read the article on *Shaped by God Together* for more information.

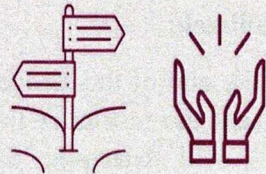
But whatever changes we may face, as we enter this 'Ordinary Time', let us rest assured that there are some things that do not change for, as the writer to the Hebrews says, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. (Hebrews 13.8)* God's love for you does not change. Remember there is nothing you can do that will make God love you less; and there is nothing you can do that will make God love you more. Let us imitate God's love in our own lives each and every day.

With every blessing, Colin Resch

1 John 4.7-11

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

SHAPED BY GOD TOGETHER



Church is changing:

Accelerated by the Covid pandemic, the Diocese of Leicester, of which we are a part, is undergoing a strategic period of restructure which includes looking at our finance - how we make use of our historical assets and our current giving; our buildings - the challenge of maintaining significant numbers of historic churches; and our ministry - how clergy and other ministers are recruited, trained and deployed.

/continued overleaf

Local Conversations:

Ministry to our Church is extremely likely to change affecting the allocation of clergy here. We have been asked to give input into this change by considering three possible models of future ministry (all of which arise because of the reducing numbers of clergy in our Diocese). We are now inviting you to be a part of a Local Conversation.

How can I get involved in the Local Conversation?

We will be having two meetings: The first will be on ***Saturday 5th June 10am till 12noon***, where the three Models of Ministry will be introduced. The second will be on ***Saturday 12th June 10am till 12noon***, where we will be able to discuss the three models and answer questions on them. The meetings will be held online using Zoom and we would encourage those who are not able to access this technology to link up with another household (now allowed under Covid restrictions) and join the meetings in this way. In between the meetings, we would encourage you to talk with other members of the congregation to weigh the pros and cons of the different models. It is important that you attend the first meeting so you understand the proposals to be discussed at the second.

Feedback:

At the end of this process, each parish will complete a feedback form to present the results of the local conversations to the Diocese. This feedback will determine the model to be agreed by Diocesan Synod in October.

Preparation:

Before these meetings we would urge you to view the resources provided by the Diocese which are available on our website together with Zoom meeting ID and Passcodes at: stleonardsswithland.org/sbgt

If you are not able to access these online resources, please ring Colin Resch (0116 4299946) and he will let you have a set of papers instead.

Repairs to the War Memorial

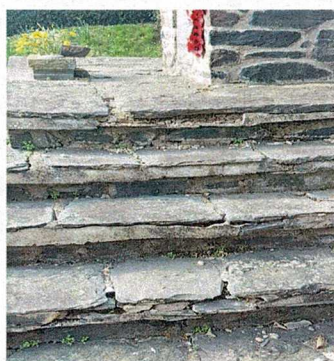
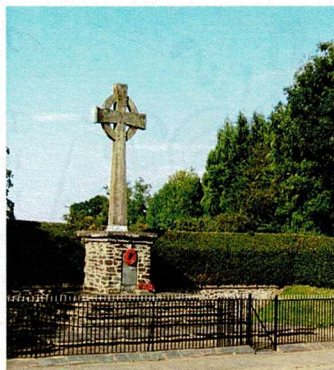
Some of you may be aware of the poor state of repair of the War Memorial.

The slate steps are quite dangerous and badly in need of repair.

I have started an appeal to pay for these repairs and I am delighted to tell you I have received some very generous pledges to fund the work.

I have had several estimates and I am happy to tell you that the work will be carried out later in the summer by a firm of local builders.

If you would like to make a contribution please contact me to give your donation. Hopefully the work will be complete in time for the Act of Remembrance 2021 when I hope we can all gather as we have done in previous years.



Sarah May - Chair Swithland Parish Meeting

Swithland Church Wives

We hope that you are all well. It seems such a long time since we were able to meet. We wondered about having a get together in the late summer to have a social chat about how everyone feels about meeting again. We hope to let you have a date soon for this, probably at the Memorial Hall one afternoon to discuss future arrangements.

Please email me and let me know how you feel about a get together.

We are hoping to organise an outing but we think this would be better postponed until the early Autumn. Please feel free to contact me, Janet or Val with your thoughts.

sarah.may1@btinternet.com



Three Favourite Hymns

Towards the end of the Christians in the Forest summer course “Hymns Un packed”, I set each of our members the task of choosing their three, and three only, favourite hymns. If you have ever tried to select your eight ‘Desert Island Discs’ you will appreciate just how difficult a task this was.

Allowing for those hymns that would be chosen by more than one person - Dear Lord and Father of Mankind was bound to be chosen by everyone I thought - I figured I would end up with a list of about twelve hymns. It was a foolish calculation and took no account of just how many hymns have been written - Charles Wesley wrote six thousand five hundred and the current St Leonard’s hymn book has six hundred and twenty eight hymns in it (some of them even by hymn writers other than Charles Wesley!). Neither did it take into account the individuality and varied tastes of the members of CITE.

There were, of course, some hymns that made it into more than one ‘top three’ and by this measure, “And can it be” by Charles Wesley was the clear winner of the top spot.

The top three were:

1. And can it be - Charles Wesley
2. Love Divine - Charles Wesley
3. The day thou gavest Lord is ended - John Ellerton

I would encourage you to take up the challenge of choosing your own three favourite hymns as they are well worth ‘thinking about’ as well as ‘singing’ (and let’s hope we get back to singing soon as at the time of writing it is still not permitted).

If you would like to email me your three favourite hymns I would love to hear from you. You can find me at garyhlee87@gmail.com

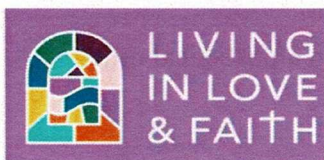
Meanwhile here is the list of CITF favourites in alphabetical order:

Abide with me - Henry Francis Lyte
 A debtor to mercy alone - Augustus Toplady
 And can it be - Charles Wesley
 A safe stronghold our God is still - Martin Luther
 At the name of Jesus - Caroline Noel
 Be still - David Evans
 Dear Lord and Father of mankind - John Greenleaf Whittier
 Great is thy faithfulness - Thomas O. Chisholm
 Guide me O thou Great Redeemer - William Williams
 Hail the day that sees Him rise - Charles Wesley
 Immortal honours rest on Jesus' head - William Gadsby
 It is well with my soul - Horatio Spafford
 Love Divine all loves excelling - Charles Wesley
 My song is love unknown - Samuel Crossman
 Now thank we all our God - Martin Rinkart
 O come, O come, Emanuel - J M Neale
 O for a thousand tongues to sing - Charles Wesley
 O sacred head surrounded - Paul Gerhardt
 O thou who camest from above - Charles Wesley
 O worship the King - Robert Grant
 Praise to the holiest in the height - John Henry Newman
 Sans day carol - Traditional
 Tell out my soul - Timothy Dudley Smith
 Ten thousand reasons - Matt Redman
 The day thou gavest Lord is ended - John Ellerton
 When I survey the wondrous cross - Isaac Watts

Prayerfully reading through the words to all these great hymns together with their linked scripture readings, presents an inspiring and rewarding day's meditation.

Gary Lee





How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?

What does it mean to live in love and faith together as a Church?

We will be considering these questions together through the Living in Love & Faith course.

The course will run via zoom on a Wednesday at 10:00am from 9th June till 7th July.

Meeting ID: 822 6380 3044 Passcode: 947889

The Church of England have put together a set of resources for us all to learn more about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. We, the church, are being asked to study and pray together to discern what God might be saying to the church today about these topics with an opportunity to feed back to the Church of England what we feel we discover as we learn, pray and listen together.

These topics are often perceived as difficult to talk about within the church and there is certainly some division within the wider church as people express differing attitudes and beliefs towards identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

The Church wants to understand what it means to follow Christ in love and faith given the questions about human identity and the variety of patterns of relationship emerging in our society, including marriage, civil partnerships, cohabitation, celibacy and friendship.

During this five week course we will hear real lived experiences from a wide variety of individuals and couples as we consider how questions about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ.

We hope you will join the meetings and if you would like to discuss anything before the course you are welcome to get in touch. *Alison White*
(07305 664009 - alisoncfw.christchurchstpeters@gmail.com)



SWITHLAND FLOWER & VEGETABLE SHOW 2021

Make a date!

**Subject to Government rules prevailing at the time,
The Swithland Flower and Vegetable Show will return on**

SATURDAY 11th SEPTEMBER



UPDATE TO APRIL 2021

The work of the Food Project continues to grow and develop and we are amazingly grateful to all those who support us in so many ways., A new charity called Soar Valley Outreach has been set up to oversee the work of the Soar Valley Community Food Project and Soar Valley Community Money Advice. It can also offer small relief grants.

Some of the main highlights are:-

We are blessed by fantastic donations of food and money including from churches and shops (4 Co-ops and Waitrose) where there are customer donation points.

We have provided 791 food parcels in the first 4 months of 2021 compared to just 280 in the same period in 2020 - almost triple.

We now operate through 6 centres based in churches. Rothley and Birstall have been joined by Mountsorrel, Sileby, Barrow and Syston which opened in 2020. We have Thurmaston opening this month on 7th June.

We have recently been awarded a grant to develop financial and budgeting training and to extend the debt advice service.

Our model is a "hub and spoke" where all the food is held centrally in the hub at Mountsorrel Baptist Church. Each of the centres then take orders from those who need support and the hub pick those food parcels. The centres collect the food parcels and bring their donations. Each centre can concentrate their resources on supporting those who come in for help.

This means the support for those in need is much closer to where they live and also in a church in their community. As well as providing the food parcel the churches can encourage those they support to access other resources in the church.

In addition to the food parcels we want to be able to offer more debt advice and open wellbeing cafes in each of the centres who want to do that.

Your continued support is massively appreciated and is helping some of the most vulnerable in our society. As the pandemic recedes so does the financial support the government is offering, so we expect to see an increase in the need for support.

Tim Jackson



SWITHLAND MEMORIAL HALL

The management Committee are very much
hoping to re-open the Hall for hire bookings
after 21st June.

Please contact the Bookings Secretary -
01509 890354 - for more information.

CHRISTIANS IN THE FOREST

SUMMER COURSE

"Acts 1-12 Church on the Move"

by Christine Platt



There is much we can learn from the believers in the first part of Acts. In taking the message of Jesus to 'regions beyond', we will encounter failures, successes, joys and sorrows just as they did. This challenging study will encourage us to be faithful and courageous, empowered by the same Holy Spirit as the early believers. He longs to pour out His gifts for ministry and to produce His fruit in our lives.

Course dates are as follows:

8th June: The wind beneath our wings

15th June: God's at work!

22nd June: Without bleeding the church fails to bless

29th June: Church on the move

6th July: Gospel explosion

13th July: God writes a new chapter

20th July: Conflict resolution

All meetings at 7pm on Zoom. For Zoom ID and Passcode please contact Gary at garyhlee87@gmail.com

The course book is in the Cover to Cover series and is available from your local Christian book store or Amazon.



CHURCH SERVICES

All services take place at St Leonard's
in line with current restrictions.

Please be assured that you are
most welcome to attend.

Church at Home Zoom Services
continue each Sunday at 11.00am
ID: 73236185391 PC: 002546

Sunday 6th

9.30am

Holy Communion

Rev Steve Delaforce

Sunday 13th

9.30am

Morning Prayer

Clive Hilton &
Gary Lee

Sunday 20th

9.30am

Holy Communion BCP

Rev Darren Walker

Sunday 27th

9.30am

Morning Prayer

Olga Harris &
Gary Lee



St Leonard's Church

www.achurchnearyou.com

www.stleonardsswithland.org

CHURCHWARDENS

Sally Allen 0116 2375704
Chris Watts 0116 2123763

St Leonard's Church Main Street Swithland LE12 8TJ

Please forward contributions for the The LINK to the Editor maryselina@hotmail.co.uk