



***FESTIVE SEASON SERVICES AT
ST LEONARD'S CHURCH***

We look forward to welcoming you



DECEMBER SERVICES

Sunday 4th - Advent 2

9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Sunday 11th - Advent 3

9.30am Family Crib Service

Sunday 18th - Advent 4

9.30am Holy Communion (CW)

4pm Service of

Nine Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 21st

7pm Jazz Carol Service

of 8 Lessons and Carols

Saturday 24th - Christmas Eve

4pm Christingle Service

Sunday 25th

CHRISTMAS DAY

8am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Family Communion

JANUARY SERVICES

Sunday 1st

9.30am 'Sing a Song of Christmas'

Sunday 8th

9.30am Family Holy Communion

Sunday 15th

9.30am Holy Communion (CW)

Sunday 22nd

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Morning Prayer

Sunday 29th - Candlemas

9.30am Holy Communion (CW)



stleonardsswithland.org

CHURCHWARDENS

Sally Allen 0116 2375704 and Chris Watts 0116 2123763
St Leonard's Church, Main Street, Swithland, LE12 8TJ

The Reverend Colin Resch

Priest in charge of the Mountsorrel Benefice

& Acting Rector, St Leonard's Swithland

4 Rothley Road, Mountsorrel, Loughborough, LE12 7JU

Tel/Fax 0116 429 9946 revcolinresch@mountsorrelchurch.org



THE LINK

*With St Leonard's in Swithland in
December 2022 & January 2023*



'Hark the Herald Angels Sing'

Design by Archie, KS2 pupil at St Leonard's C of E School, Swithland.



The Reverend Steve Delaforce

A regular leader of the Services at St Leonard's and
a much appreciated supporter of all our activities.

For Steve's Christmas message, see below.

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE THAT
THIS YEAR OUR
'CHRISTINGLE SERVICE'
WILL BE HELD ON
CHRISTMAS EVE

SATURDAY 24TH DECEMBER AT 4pm

**Celebrate the coming of Christ
- the light in our world**

A joyful occasion which is particularly loved
by children and a wonderful way
to prepare for Christmas Day

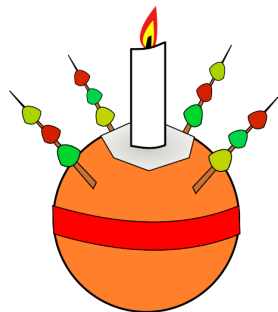
A candle - to represent Christ

An orange - to represent
the world

A red ribbon - to represent
the love and blood of Christ

Fruits and sweets on four
cocktail sticks -

to represent the four seasons and God's love in
providing the fruits of the earth



*As 2022 closes we look
forward together with hope
to the coming of the Light
and to celebrate and
remember the Birth of
Jesus our Emmanuel!*



Whilst many of us older ones may have fond memories of Christmas times past with family, exchanging small presents and eating oranges and chestnuts in front of roaring coal fires, the tradition of family get togethers prevails and thankfully can resume properly since the Covid restrictions are a thing of the past. We also have an opportunity to remember those we have not seen for a long time and to reach out, and get out to them, with the milk of human kindness.

This year in the UK we have seen many 'highs and lows'; the warmest New Year's Day on record: 16.2C; the highest July temperature of 40.3C ever. The demise of one Prime Minister in the wake of Partygate, an opposition leader questioned over Beergate, and the election of two subsequent PM's making a trio in just one year! And if that's not enough, a suspended conservative MP choosing to become a 'notable celebrity' by hanging out in the Australian rain forest. One can be forgiven for wondering what goes on in the lives of our leaders. But turning to a true world leader, we sadly lost our noble and beloved Queen Elizabeth. There was such an outpouring of grief and loss which brought stillness to our nation; and for a moment it helped to restore a sense of dignity and sobriety; may she rest in peace and may God grant long life to our King Charles.

And at our various All Souls and Remembrance Services we have taken the time to be still and to remember our loved ones whom we no longer see. May we take time to be still and to count the blessings we have each received over the past 12 months, the strength we have been given to face our daily lives, and to look forward to a fresh New Year with Hope and Confidence with Jesus our Emmanuel at the helm.

May you have a Blessed Christmas, and as my dear late mother-in-law used to say; May your name be written in the Book of Life for a Happy New Year.

The Rev'd Steve Delaforce



CANDLEMAS SUNDAY 29th JANUARY 2023

The Christian Festival of Lights

This ancient festival marks the midpoint of winter - halfway between the shortest day and the Spring Equinox. In pre-Christian times, this day was known as the 'Feast of Lights' and celebrated the increased strength of the sun as winter gave way to Spring.

As a traditional Christian Festival, Candlemas commemorates the ritual purification of Mary forty days after the birth of her son Jesus. On this day, Christians remember the presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple. Forty days after the birth of a Jewish boy it was the custom to take him into the temple in Jerusalem to be presented to God by his thankful parents.

February 2nd came to be known as Candlemas Day as it was the day of the year when all the candles that were to be used in church during the coming year were brought into church and a blessing was said over them - so it was the Festival Day (or 'mass') of the Candles. This year the nearest Sunday to this date will be Sunday 29th January.

Candles were very important many years ago when there were no electric lights and some people thought they gave protection against plague, illness and famine. For Christians they were - and still are - a reminder of something even more important. Before Jesus came to earth, it was as if everyone was 'in the dark'. People often felt lost, lonely and afraid, as if there was no-one to help them. Jesus came with his message that he and his followers were always ready to help and comfort them and to be a guiding light in their darkness. Christians often talk of Jesus as 'the light of the world' and candles are lit during church services to remind Christians of this.

We shall be celebrating Candlemas at St Leonard's on **Sunday 29th January at 9.30am**. You will be very welcome to come along to share it with us and learn more about it.

Geraldine Mason



ST LEONARD'S CHURCH 'FRIDAY CLUB'
WILL RE-OPEN AFTER CHRISTMAS

On JANUARY 13th from 9am to 10.30am

Join us for playtime activities, bible stories,
songs, a drink and a chat

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Decorate our Advent Tree with your Prayer Cards

This year we shall once again be decorating the
small tree at the back of church from Advent Sunday.

We have so much to be thankful for, especially at
this time of year.

Everyone is invited to write a prayer or a message
of thanks on one of the coloured cards provided
and hang it on our tree.

Write whatever springs into your mind.

We hope to see the tree well and truly covered
by Christmas Day to show our love and
appreciation both for God and for one another.

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

SWITHLAND WOMEN'S GROUP

Our meeting in November was a presentation by local historian Mark Temple on the Mountsorrel Quarry and Heritage Railway. Mark gave a very interesting talk with some wonderful old photos which included information about the local families involved in setting up the quarry and laying the railway to carry the stone. He concluded his talk by telling us about the ongoing development plans at the Heritage Centre. We had twelve visitors from the Men's Club who also enjoyed the evening.



Our Christmas meeting will be on
Monday 5th December at 7.30pm at the Memorial Hall
when we welcome Yvonne Meadows who will be demonstrating
'Christmas Foliage' Arrangements

As is traditional at our Christmas meeting, we will be serving mince pies and mulled wine. Members are very welcome to bring along a guest if they wish, for which there will be a nominal charge of £2.

Prior to the pandemic we always arranged a New Year meal and we are hoping to do the same again in January. We are currently exploring locally for a suitable venue and hope to have details available at the December meeting when we look forward to seeing you all again.

Val Capewell-890551 Sarah May-890547 Jan Beeby-890805



**Your Christmas gifts for The Soar Valley Food Project
and The Y Centre**

Please note that both organisations have this year
confirmed that they are unable to take donations in shoe boxes.

CHRISTIANS IN THE FOREST

If you have not been to one of our meetings - why not give it a try? The meetings are informal and include prayer and Bible study with discussions about our faith and how it informs our daily lives. Such discussions are topical and can range widely. Don't worry! It's not all about theology!

All meetings are at 7.15pm for tea and coffee and a 7.30pm study start at the venues stated below. It is not necessary to attend all the meetings as each evening's study and discussion is complete, so please feel free to drop in and out. I shall look forward to seeing you. *Gary Lee*

ADVENT COURSE "Key figures around the coming of Jesus" -
Devised by our own Hilary and Jerry, this is sure to be a lively, entertaining and informative course.

- 29th November** Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves
Zachariah and Elizabeth - Doubt followed by great faith.
- 6th December** St Leonard's Church, Swithland
Mary and Joseph - Trust and willingness to follow a God
with whom all things are possible.
- 13th December** Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves
Simeon and Anna - Waiting for the Saviour.
- 20th December** St Leonard's Church, Swithland
John the Baptist - Preparing the way.

NEW YEAR COURSE "Isaiah Prophet to the Nations" by John Houghton
"Isaiah is the Messianic prophet above all others. He sought to address the spiritual bankruptcy and hypocrisy of God's chosen nation and to point forward to the One who would come to save all nations. He speaks of not only the first coming of Christ, but the second coming also - he is a prophet for us today! This study looks at some of the main themes in the first half of the book of Isaiah, enabling individuals and groups to grasp an overall picture of this passage of Scripture, and grapple with key biblical concepts within it, including holiness, atonement, salvation and evangelism.

- 3rd January** Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves
- 10th January** St Leonard's Church, Swithland
- 17th January** Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves
- 24th January** St Leonard's Church, Swithland
- 31st January** Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves
- 7th February** St Leonard's Church, Swithland
- 14th February** Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves

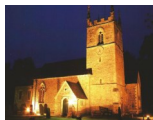


***Our grateful thanks to those who have sponsored our
Floodlighting and Flowers***



Flowers

20th November - Jayne and Derek Cranage
Birthday memories of our much loved Mums



Floodlighting

12th September - Janet Hunt
In memory of David and Moss his dog.

20th October - Sally Allen
In memory of Jack and Joan Copson

27th October - Val Capewell
In memory of Pat and Phyllis Close

10th November - Judith Copson
In memory of Leonard Copson

19th December - Jayne and Derek Cranage
Christmas memories of family times together

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

As we commence the Christian season of Advent we look forward to all the services on offer at St Leonard's - a Crib Festival and Service, a traditional Carol Service, a jazz style Carol Service and a Christingle Service for the children - and as the pace of commercial advertising gets louder and louder, perhaps we need a few words to remind us of the reasons for the celebrations which sometimes get lost.



Advent (Latin *adventus* "coming") In the Christian church calendar, the period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas and also of preparation for the Second Coming of Christ. In Western churches, Advent begins on the Sunday nearest to 30th November (St Andrew's Day) and is the beginning of the liturgical year. In many Eastern churches the Nativity Fast is a similar period of penance and preparation that occurs during the 40 days before Christmas. The date when the season was first observed is uncertain. Bishop Perpetuus of Tours (461-490) established a fast before Christmas that began on 11th November (St Martin's Day), and the Council of Tours (567) mentioned an Advent season.

We all do things which are associated with Advent but may not know how they started. This includes the lighting of an Advent wreath. The custom began with Lutherans and Catholics in 16th-century Germany. Typically, the Advent wreath is a circle of branches or garland with four or five candles arranged on the wreath. During the season of Advent, one candle is lit each Sunday as a part of the Advent services.

We also traditionally do other things such as keep an Advent Calendar, pray an Advent daily devotional, erect a Christmas tree or light a Christingle, as well as other ways of preparing for Christmas such as the setting up of Christmas decorations. We all enjoy these traditions, but let us not lose sight of what this is all about - the birth of Jesus Christ. *Chris Watts, Churchwarden.*

To welcome in the New Year come along and
join us at St Leonard's Church on January 1st



**New Year's Day at 9.30am for
'Sing a Song of Christmas'**



Sing your favourite carols and learn about their
remarkable individual histories.

With readings and poetry it is sure to be a joyful occasion
which will end with sparkling wine and Christmas cake!

Yes, your New Year's resolution will have to wait!!

'CRIB FESTIVAL'

Saturday 10th and
Sunday 11th December
at St Leonard's Church



Begin your Christmas celebrations with a visit to our Crib Festival and see our display of the many and varied cribs and nativity scenes we have gathered together. The church will be open from 10am to 4pm on Saturday and and, following our service on Sunday, again until 4pm.

Listen to some Christmas carols and enjoy a mince pie and cup of tea with us.

You and all your family will be very welcome

*Greetings to all my friends at
St Leonard's Church -
have a lovely Christmas and
A Peaceful New Year.*



I miss you all very much - the Service of Nine Lessons and the beautiful cards made by the school children and our own exchange of cards with all our friends.

We have a lot to look forward to next year including the Coronation of the King.

I wish everyone health and happiness.

Love to you all, **Pat Copson**



A Stellar Candlelit Service of
8 Jazz Carols and Lessons
A retelling of The Infancy Narrative
according to St Luke
Wednesday 21st December at 7pm
at St Leonard's Church

Jazz played by "The Charnwood Jazz Band"
with heavenly voices drawn from Charnwood Forest
and a special nativity solo item from
Jazzy George on Blues Harp

Included in the programme will be unique Jazz settings of
The Magnificat and The Nunc Dimittis (Extended)

Mulled wine and mince pies to follow

All donations for The Children's Society