



*You are invited to join us at any of our services and be assured of a very warm welcome.*

**Sunday 3rd**

8am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Revd Steve Delaforce
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	Revd Colin Resch & Gary Lee

**Sunday 10th**

9.30am	Family Worship Bible Hero: Stephen	Revd Colin Resch
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**Sunday 17th**

8am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Revd Steve Delaforce
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	Revd Steve Delaforce

**Sunday 24th**

9.30am	<b>“ HARVEST PRAISE”</b> All harvest gifts will be distributed to the The Soar Valley Food Project	Olga Harris
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**CHURCHWARDENS**

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

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

More information about St Leonard’s Services and activities is available on our website: [stleonardsswithland.org](http://stleonardsswithland.org)

# THE LINK

*With St Leonard’s in Swithland in September 2023*



Join us on Wednesday 27th September at our  
**MacMillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning, 10am - 12noon**  
More details inside

Revd. 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](mailto:revcolinresch@icloud.com)



## CH\_\_CH - What's missing?

The English language is a complicated thing. Seeing first-hand the experience of Ukrainian refugees trying to learn the language has brought this home to me. Words that sound the same have different spellings and meanings; and other words that have identical spelling have alternative definitions, and sometimes pronunciation, depending on the context. I am sure that most, if not all, languages have similar anomalies as these.

One English word that is difficult to define is the word 'Church'. Its meaning varies according to the context in which it is used, and even then it may not always be clear what is meant by the speaker.

Church can simply mean a building for Christian worship - the Church is at the other end of the village. Church can also be defined as an occupation or ministry of the ordained clergy - What made you join the Church? (For some reason I can't explain in a few short words, it's not a phrase that I am comfortable with.) The word Church can also be used to define the global collective of all Christian believers - We are part of the Church.

The word Church(es) appears 114 times in the New Testament and with very few exceptions, the Greek word (*the New Testament was originally written in Greek*) used is *ekklesia* which is also sometimes translated as assembly or congregation. It is also closely related to the words which mean broken off, alienate, exclude. Which brings me, perhaps to a greater understanding of how I would use the word Church.

Church is a community of Christian believers who gather together to worship the living God. We are 'called apart' to live according to a different standard, following the commands of Jesus, who calls us to be holy. In some parts of the world, this 'calling apart' is more of a 'thrusting away' as Christians face persecution by their families and communities. For most of us in the UK, it is a separating of ourselves from the temptations of the world to live as God calls us to. St Peter puts it like this: "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2.9)

I wonder if you would like to be part of this amazing body of people. Why not join us as we worship God together?

*With every blessing, Colin Resch*

## Swithland St Leonard's C of E Primary School

### Year 6 Leavers' Service



At the end of term all school staff, pupils and Year 6 parents attended a service at St Leonard's Church to celebrate the current year 6 pupils' time at school. Teachers contributed by reading poems, reminiscing about the pupils and their school life. The children contributed to the service with Rev'd Colin and the whole school joined in with the singing. The pupils explained what they would like to be doing as a profession in the future; watch this space.

We wish Vincent, Isaac, Austen, Archie, Freya, Ariana and Freya and also Emily (who isn't in the photo) the very best as they move on to their new schools in the autumn.

**Mrs Ali Wright, Foundation Governor, St Leonard's School.**

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### Friday Club News

With the help of drink and biscuits I finally managed to photograph some of the toddlers! It's drinks and biscuits time before the toddlers listen to a story, sing nursery rhymes and say the Friday Club prayer.



We held a summer party just before the school summer holidays began. We partied well with disco lights, music, party games and food.



We also had the opportunity to say goodbye to Arthur as he leaves to start his new school in the autumn. Arthur has been a regular attender coming most Fridays with his grandmother Louise.

We were fortunate that Seb and his grandparents offered to sweep the church after the party!

**Ali Wright**

Sally, Chris, Angie and Ali



## CHRISTIANS IN THE FOREST

The Autumn Bible Study Course will be,  
"THE UNIQUENESS OF OUR FAITH" by Selwyn Hughes

Come and find out what makes Christianity distinctive  
and an essential way of life.



Dates and venues as follows:

### 3rd October

The uniqueness of the Incarnation - St Leonard's, Swithland

### 10th October

The uniqueness of the Person of Christ - Methodist Church, W/Eaves

### 17th October

The uniqueness of Personal Salvation - St Leonard's, Swithland

### 24th October

The uniqueness of the Cross - Methodist Church W/.Eaves

### 31st October

The uniqueness of the Bible - St Leonard's, Swithland

### 7th November

The uniqueness of the Resurrection - Methodist Church, W/Eaves

### 14th November

The uniqueness of the Ascension - St Leonard's, Swithland

All meetings at 7.15pm for tea and coffee. 7.30pm Study start.

Gary Lee - garyhlee87@gmail.com 01509 890642



### ST LEONARD'S FRIDAY CLUB

Recommences after the summer  
break on 8th September.

Join us in church from

**9am to 10.30am**

for playtime activities,  
bible stories, songs,  
a drink and a chat.

**EVERYONE WELCOME!**



You are invited to a

**Coffee Morning**



at St Leonard's Church

on Wednesday 27th September, 10am to 12noon

All donations in aid of

**Macmillan Cancer Support**

Bring & Buy, Jewellery,

Greeting Cards & book stalls



**Raffle**



A warm welcome awaits  
and we hope to see you there!



## LINDISFARNE HOLY ISLAND NORTHUMBRIA - Chris Watts

Many of you will have visited this wonderful island, accessed twice a day when the tide is not covering the causeway. I have visited many times and love its feeling of calm and have wanted to stay on the island to experience it when the tide has cut it off from the mainland and left just those staying to enjoy the peace and quiet.

The opportunity arose this year when myself and husband Roger joined others for a Christian retreat led by Rev'd Steve Delaforce on the island in July.

Our routine was to meet each morning at 8am and celebrate morning prayer. We then had breakfast and later Steve led us on a fascinating insight into the Orthodox Christian Church. We had plenty of time to walk the island, sit in the stunning island church, visit the castle, Priory, etc, before we met up again at 5pm to have evening prayers, prior to an evening meal.

We had hoped to walk the pilgrim's route across the sands at low tide but unfortunately the weather had other ideas. The walk is the way St Aidan would have accessed the island when he walked from Iona on the west coast to Holy Island to settle.

The island has an Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and Celtic church. On our final evening we attended the Celtic church room at 9pm for an evening prayer. The space is one small sitting room in a cottage, with a few chairs, an amazing cross made from flotsam and jetsam washed up on the beach - a very quiet and moving service.

A magical place with such a strong Christian feel which is often described as a 'thin place', as the space between us and God here is miniscule.

## QUIET DAY AT ST JOSEPH'S TEAROOM - JULY 2023

### Looking East with Western Eyes



Happy smiling faces of participants with 'Eastward looking eyes' from churches in Swithland, Quorn, Mountsorrel and Belgrave who gathered together in July to hear four introductory talks on Eastern Orthodox Christian Spirituality and Practice. The talks included: 'Making space for Daily Prayer', 'The Jesus Prayer', 'Fasting', and 'Praying with the Psalms and the Gospels'. Ant Grimley and his team at St Joseph's Tearoom looked after us well with tea, coffee and fabulous food. Despite the unfavourable weather, many of us were also able to visit Mount St Bernard Abbey after lunch.

It is very likely that there will be more quiet days covering topics such as 'Stillness and Silent Prayer', 'Reconnecting with the Sacred' and 'Developing a Spiritual Rule of Life' in the future.

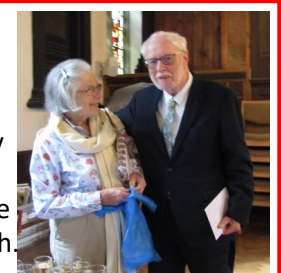
It is a real boon having St Joseph's Tearoom on our door step as it can facilitate a local quiet day with only having to cover the cost of hiring the main function room. It is within easy striking distance of Mount St Bernard Abbey. Furthermore, during the times of good weather, for the more adventurous, Mount St Bernard Abbey could be used as a base for a 5 mile circular walk including a 'Guided Walking Meditation of Thanksgiving'.

### Steve Delaforce



### Sunday 30th July was a day of both celebration and sadness at St Leonard's.

We celebrated the 80th birthday of our Lay Reader, Gary Lee, and said goodbye to our longtime congregation member Lizette Pugh.



Our congratulations to Gary and very best wishes to Lizette in her new home in Winchester.

## *Life and Death - a personal perspective*

Chris Packham, in his wonderful new series *Earth*, told us how death was an essential part of life on earth, because without death, the necessary renewal would not occur though this was accompanied by a warning about premature destruction through global warming. Gary Lee, in one of his recent sermons, said that life in this world is also about dying, and that it is to the next life that we will find eternal life.

As many of you know, I have terminal lung cancer. I am not bitter about this, nor will I seek to blame God who has given us this wonderful world. I have achieved the allotted span referred to in Psalm 90: "The days of our life are 70 years... they are soon gone, and we fly away." I accept Ecclesiastes 3: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die." More so I am comforted by John 14: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe in me. In my father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."

I have had a good life - family, career, music, friendships, travel and am incredibly grateful for this. Do I regret my impending early departure? Of course I do! I would have liked to have spent more time with my lovely wife and children, and to have seen my four grandchildren (12, 10, 9, 3) into adulthood. I miss the music and singing I have had to relinquish, the meals I used to enjoy, and the globetrotting which I am no longer allowed or capable to do. But then, I have visited 50 countries covering 5 continents so cannot complain!

But what of the less fortunate people, those beset by war and conflict, those who have lost children at an early age? What can the church say to comfort them? I have a lady friend and former singing partner who in a short space of time lost her husband, son, son-in-law and grandson to illness. She asked me "What has God got against this family?"

My own belief, which I conveyed to her, is that God created a wonderful world for us, but one which he does not micro-manage. Random events occur as well as the man-made. Bad things can happen to good people and good things can happen to bad people. We need to look to the future. Our life on Earth is but a twinkling of the eye in comparison to the eternal life we have in store.

In the meantime my advice to those in terminal decline is to make the most of the time left, and to seek alternatives to those things you can no longer do. In my case, instead of a stiff walk in Bradgate Park or Beacon Hill, I enjoy the Rose Gardens at Mount St Bernard's Abbey and a seat on a bench; instead of making music, I listen to music; instead of active gardening, I now have a gardener and read more books. All of these activities give me pleasure.

I am forever grateful for the friendships I have made at St Leonard's - my little church in the woods! People have been so kind with house visits, phone calls, emails, cards and how lovely of Laura to put my name on her Cancer Run t-shirt. I feel well-blessed.

May God rain down his blessings on you all.

*Clive Hilton*

*Just 4 Ladies*  
come and learn about the work of  
**Saffires**  
Date: Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Time: 7:30pm  
Venue: Christ Church

Becky, from Saffires, is coming to talk to us. Saffires is a Christian charity based in Leicester, which supports women who work in or are affected by prostitution. As some of you will be aware Mel Rowley has been volunteering with them as part of her training to become an Associate Minister.

Please come along and learn about the work they do.

**Liz Resch**



*A connection with St Leonard's of over 80 years - and still going strong - must be one that will be impossible to beat. Thank you Olga for being the subject of my third interview. Editor*

## **OLGA HARRIS**

Olga was born in Yorkshire in 1932 and had an elder sister Sheila. Following her father's appointment as Assistant Manager of the Leicester Permanent Building Society, the family moved to Evington, Leicester, in 1935 and a couple of years later settled at No 19 Swithland Lane, Rothley, where Olga lived until 1965.

Olga's family had always been regular churchgoers wherever they lived but a particular service at St Leonard's became a turning point in their worshipping. In 1940 World War II was going very badly and a National Day of Prayer was called. The family attended the service at St Leonard's and so Olga's lifelong association began.

Sheila became a member of the church choir and Olga recalls that she couldn't wait to become old enough to join too - in fact when she did, she sang in the choir for over 30 years. Attendance at church was twice a day on Sundays by bicycle and interestingly, Evensong could be at 3pm in the war years because of blackout restrictions. With St Leonard's in interregnum at this time, Olga was prepared for confirmation by the Vicar of Rothley and confirmed at St Peter's Church, Mountsorrel, in 1947. Taking part in the Bluebell Service in Swithland Woods became an enjoyable annual event with memories of the days when a harmonium was taken into the woods by tractor and played by Gwen Gimson to lead the music!

Following the death of her father and marriage of her sister, Olga and her mother moved to Woodhouse Eaves, but as she will happily confirm "wild horses wouldn't have stopped me worshipping at St Leonard's!" Despite forging a career in banking which took her away firstly to Sheffield and then to Manchester, Olga regularly returned to see her mother and attend services at St Leonard's.

In 1972 following her marriage to Dr Waldron Harris who was a Churchwarden at St Leonard's and affectionately known to everyone as 'Bill', Olga returned permanently to Rothley and to giving even more of her time to the church. She felt privileged to be asked by Canon Anne Horton to take the Evensong Service and subsequently to conduct Morning Prayer. She became

an Altar Server when Norman Cutler was Head Server and took over this role when he passed away. She took on the responsibilities of Sacristan which involves, among other things, changing the altar frontals to fit the ecclesiastical seasons and feast days and washing the altar cloth - "washing is easy but ironing is a nightmare - there are yards and yards of it!"

In addition, Olga has been leader and also treasurer of the Mothers' Union, has served on the Parochial Church Council over many years and is still secretary of the Worship Committee. One of her chosen highlights was being a Server when Bishop Tim Stephens dedicated the church extension in the year 2000. Her hobbies are gardening and birdwatching.



Olga celebrated her 90th birthday on Sunday 17th July 2022, appropriately enough at a service at St Leonard's church.

Long may her service and dedication continue.



## **The final 'OPEN CHURCH' day of the season Saturday 9th September**

St Leonard's will be open from 10am to 4pm  
to accommodate visitors taking part in the annual  
**RIDE AND STRIDE EVENT**

**Tea and cakes will be served from 2pm to 4pm**

Drop in and learn more about our historic church  
and churchyard or just enjoy its peace and tranquillity.

You will be made very welcome throughout the day.