



FEBRUARY SERVICES

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

Sunday 4th

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

Sunday 11th

9.30am	Family Worship 'Unforgiving Servant'	Hilary Ayling
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Wednesday 14th - Ash Wednesday

7.30pm	Holy Communion (CW)	Revd Colin Resch
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Sunday 18th

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Revd Steve Delaforce
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	Revd Steve Delaforce

Sunday 25th

9.30am	Morning Prayer	Olga Harris/Gary Lee
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St Leonard's Church

www.stleonardsswithland.org

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

THE LINK

With St Leonard's in Swithland in February 2024



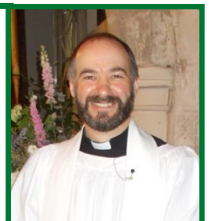
Revd. Colin Resch

Priest in charge of the Mountsorrel Benefice

with St Leonard's Swithland

4 Rothley Road, Mountsorrel, Loughborough, LE12 7JU

Tel/Fax 0116 429 9946 revcolinresch@mountsorrelchurch.org





ONE PIECE AT A TIME

Many of you will be aware that I am quite a fan of jigsaws - at least there are certain types of jigsaws that I enjoy. I quite enjoy the WASGIJ series of puzzles where what you see on the box is not quite the same as what you will see in the finished picture. I also enjoy puzzles where the finished puzzle creates a beautiful picture. It is a joy to see the picture come into being one piece at a time.

I use jigsaw puzzles as a means of relaxation. While I am trying to fit the pieces together I can lay aside the concerns and stresses of the day. One of my favourite gifts was a portable jigsaw board which allows me to pack up the puzzle part way through and continue it on another occasion. This came about after finding a jigsaw in a holiday cottage I once stayed in, then realising part way through that I might not finish it in time before I had to go home. The level of stress I experienced undid any of the gain - it was certainly not a relaxing experience. For the same reasons, I am not a fan of ridiculously difficult puzzles either such as the picture of baked beans I was once given - I mean, what is the point!?

As we journey together in our Bible Readings (see separate leaflet Fifteen Minutes a Day) we gradually experience more of God's salvation plan. Slowly, bit by bit, piece by piece, we make connections between the Old Testament and the New, between the promises of God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the coming of Jesus as a Saviour for the world. When we re-read our Bibles in this way, we can take the connections made in one year and join them with the connections we make in previous years; and slowly, sometimes very slowly, gradually, bit by bit, piece by piece, the entire story of God's love for us is revealed until we can finally step back and take a look at the finished picture.

In one sense, we will never see the finished picture until we have finished our journey through this life; but then, as we look back, we will see the most beautiful picture of God's love reflected in every one of the trials and tribulations, the joys and celebrations of our life. What an amazing picture that will be.

So "...do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear...But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6.25,33)

With every blessing, Colin Resch



SWITHLAND MEMORIAL HALL

is available throughout the year
to hire for
small family and children's
parties of all kinds

Please contact the
Bookings Secretary

01509 890354 for all the
information you may require

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH

'FRIDAY CLUB'

9am to 10.30am

Mums, dads, grandparents and
carers - join us for playtime
activities, bible stories, songs,
a drink and a chat!

Meetings are held each
Friday morning in Church
in termtime.



**EVERYONE
WELCOME!**

The Memorial Hall Management Committee
invite you to a

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING IN SWITHLAND MEMORIAL HALL ON SATURDAY 16TH MARCH

from 10am to 12noon



**ALL VILLAGERS WELCOME
DO COME ALONG
AND BRING YOUR
FRIENDS**

SWITHLAND CHURCH WOMEN'S GROUP

The **Shanty Folk** from Loughborough entertained us for our Christmas meeting on 4th December. With mulled wine and mince pies at the interval, we had a very convivial evening. Their varied repertoire included songs old and new and they had us singing and clapping along to several numbers. They were a very enthusiastic group of singers who we first met at the Loughborough Male Voice Choir concert in the Autumn of 2022. Thank you to Debbie Rossi for providing a Christmas tree to add a festive touch to the proceedings. As well as members, there were 11 guests.

The donations from the **Sunday Gift Service** on December 3rd were taken to the **Soar Valley Food Bank** and the shoe boxes to the **Y Centre** in Leicester.

The **Annual Dinner** for our members was held at the **Wheatsheaf, Woodhouse Eaves**, on Monday 22nd January.

Our next meeting is on

**MONDAY 5th February at
7.30pm at the Memorial Hall**

Our speaker is local historian **Mark Temple** with what sounds like a very interesting talk for everyone who enjoys a good detective novel.

'The Life & Crimes of Agatha Christie'



As always, partners, friends and villagers are welcome to come along.

The speaker usually talks for around 45 minutes and this is followed by refreshments.

Sarah May 890547 - Val Capewell 890551 - Janet Beeby 890805



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - 1st MARCH 2024

The World Day of Prayer is celebrated all over the world and each year is written by Christian women of a different country. It is the turn of Palestine this year and our service will be held at

St Leonard's Church, Swithland

at 2.00pm on Friday, 1st March

The theme is "I beg you bear with one another in love"

All men, women and children are invited and the service will be followed by refreshments. Do join us. We would love to see you.

Olga Harris

The Season of Lent

The first day of Lent in the Christian calendar begins on Ash Wednesday and this year the date will be February 14th - a date we know much better these days as St Valentine's Day.

The day prior to this is known as Shrove Tuesday when traditionally all flour, eggs and fat are used up in the form of pancakes ready for the Lent fast.

The 40 day period of Lent finishes on Easter Eve and we then celebrate Easter Day on Sunday March 31st.

*We look forward to seeing you at
St Leonard's Ash Wednesday Service
at 7.30pm on 14th February*



Now 99years old and living for the last 3 years at Rose Cottage in Mountsorrel, Pat Copson was the oldest member of our congregation. Here she shares memories of her life with us and how she came to be so much a part of St Leonard's Church. Editor



Pat was born in Rotherhithe, a part of London now known as Surrey Quays. The youngest by 10years of 4 siblings, her father was a solicitor who tragically died when she was only 6years old. However, Pat remembers a happy childhood with the family worshipping at St Katherine's Church in Rotherhithe - a church which no longer exists as it was bombed during the London Blitz. An annual birthday treat was a visit to the London Palladium with her cousins to see popular performers such as the Crazy Gang.

After primary school Pat was educated at The Guild of Haberdashers School which dates back to medieval times and is still open today and this involved travelling from her home for one stop on the 'tube'. Pat remembers exploring the streets of London with her friends quite freely in those days - something we can only marvel at today but then, just a normal part of everyday life.

On reaching her teens, the advent of war with Germany loomed large and in 1939 - the year later known as the phoney war period - the government decided to evacuate children from London. Pat was sent first to Brighton and later to Devon. On both occasions, in common with all other parents, Pat's mother had no idea where she was until she received a postcard from her a few days after her arrival. During the war one of Pat's brothers joined the RAF and served in the Middle East and the other joined the Royal Navy and was involved in the battle of the Bismark in the Atlantic. Returning to London in 1940, Pat has vivid memories of the London Blitz in the September of that year when her home was bombed out and all the family's worldly possessions were lost - in particular she remembers losing a pair of new tennis shoes and, of more concern to her mother, a whole leg of lamb!

Fortunately, Pat's mother was able to take up the offer of a lifelong friend, Mrs Wright nee Pegg, to stay with her family in Mountsorrel. In due course, Pat, her mother and her sister, moved into rented accommodation in Mountsorrel - an old house with no plumbing and only pumps to provide water. During the war Pat worked in the offices at the Auster Aircraft Company in Mountsorrel who repaired Hurricane fighter planes, and recalls calculating the bonuses for the employees on a slide rule.

Now a young woman, Pat enjoyed as much of the social life that was possible in the war years and met her future husband, Les Copson, at a dance at the Mountsorrel Working Men's Club, an institution which is still there to this day. Marriage followed in 1946 at Christ Church and the life of a farmer's wife began at Brickyard Farm, Swithland Lane, Rothley, including attendance at St Leonard's Church. After the tragic death of their 6year old daughter, Jane, Les was also able to find solace and hope at St Leonard's and was baptised there and later confirmed along with Pat in 1955. Interestingly, Les chose Gwen Gimson, St Leonard's longest serving churchwarden, to be his godmother.

During the years which followed Pat was always a very active member of the church congregation including being secretary of the Mothers' Union for 14years, writing the intercessions into her 90's and serving on the Parochial Church Council. She remembers when the Men's Club helped to lay the Memorial Hall floor and the many Harvest Suppers held there. Church Wives' meetings were at the home of Gwen Gimson where, on one occasion, the guest speakers were from Leicester City Football Club. She also enjoyed many delightful suppers hosted by the Earl of Lanesborough at his home following the Temple Estates and Lanesborough shoots.

Pat and Les moved to The Green, Mountsorrel in 1984 following Les being taken ill in 1977. The farm was sold when they left and a house built at the side in a part of the large garden. Pat nursed Les for 23years and then in 2012 she moved to the Hind Sisters' cottages in Cropston. During all this time Pat often travelled back to London and on many occasions visited the ballet where she was lucky enough to see Margot Fonteyn and Rudolph Nureyev dance together. Come rain or shine she attended St Leonard's each Sunday until her own ill health resulted in her move to Rose Cottage. She remains lively and interested in all that happens at St Leonard's through reading The LINK and visits from friends and sends her good wishes to everyone she knows for a joyful and prosperous New Year.

**At a recent meeting of St Leonard's Parochial Church Council
it was agreed for St Leonard's Church to be open
every Saturday between 10am and 4pm to
enable visitors and passers by to call in.
The first Saturday opening will be on 3rd February.**

Jazz Carols at St Leonard's - December 2023



Our Jazz Choir and a 5 piece Jazz band assembled themselves at St Leonard's Church on 13th December to lead a service of Nine Lessons and Carols embracing a variety of musical genres including Jazz, Rhumba, Reggae and Rock.

The church was full and it was a delight to see old faces and new!

After the Service there was much chat, mingled in between sips of mulled wine and mouthfuls of traditional mince pies.

A lot of fun was had and a total of £225 was raised for the benefit of The Children's Society.

Well done Choir, Band and all the people in the 'back office' supporting and laying on hospitality!

Steve Delaforce



CHURCH FLOWERS

Many of us love to have fresh flowers in our homes throughout the year - and this is also the case at St Leonard's. Would you like to volunteer to do a flower arrangement in Church for us 3 or 4 times a year? Sadly, we now have only a small number of people on our Flower Rota and some extra help would be greatly appreciated. It is a really satisfying and lovely way of giving your support to St Leonard's and payment is made towards the cost involved. If you are interested please contact maryselina@hotmail.co.uk

You can also celebrate the special occasions in your life by sponsoring our flowers or our floodlighting and this will be acknowledged with your special message in The LINK. To do this, please contact our Churchwardens, Chris or Sally.



The Christians in the Forest Lent Course will be 'Living Faith - Invitations from the Cross' by Krish Kandiah

This Lent, discover how the words Jesus spoke as He was crucified were invitations to each of us - invitations to a dynamic, living faith in Him. Each of these six Bible study sessions explores one of the sayings of Jesus from the cross, and looks at how we can respond in ways that will not only transform our relationship with Jesus, but potentially the world around us. In his direct and honest style, Krish Kandiah reflects on how the Gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion present His invitations to us, and how He calls us to forgiveness, service, hope, adoption, empathy and trust.

20th February - Invitation to Forgiveness - St Leonard's Church, Swithland.

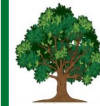
27th February - Invitation to Service - Methodist Church, W/Eaves

5th March - Invitation to Hope - St Leonard's Church, Swithland

12th March - Invitation to Adoption - Methodist Church, W/Eaves

19th March - Invitation to Empathy - St Leonard's Church, Swithland

26th March - Invitation to Trust at the Methodist Church, W/Eaves



All meetings at our usual time of 7.15pm for 7.30pm

Gary Lee - garyhlee87@gmail.com



Jeff Harrison

Jeff Harrison recently made the difficult decision to step down from his role as Server at St Leonard's Church.



Jeff has served at the altar for fifty-one years and has been instrumental in preserving the tradition of our 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Service throughout this time. He first felt the call to this ministry after experiencing the touch of God at Holy Communion and he has always sought to bring a reverence and holiness to these services.

To thank him and in recognition of his dedication, on behalf of the Parochial Church Council members, I recently presented him with a special Long Service Award.

Colin Resch

St Leonard's Angel Festival

St Leonard's Angel Festival was a great success with a constant flow of visitors over the three days - including over 100 schoolchildren from St Leonard's Primary School who excitedly searched for their angels and were treated to the story of the Angel Gabriel visiting Mary.



Our thanks to St Leonard's Primary School and very many others for making paper angels. To all those who have lent their angels and to all those who have given their time, talents and skills in displaying the angels.

The result has been breathtaking and has created a spiritual presence that is very difficult to describe in words and impossible to photograph. It is truly a case of "You had to be here".

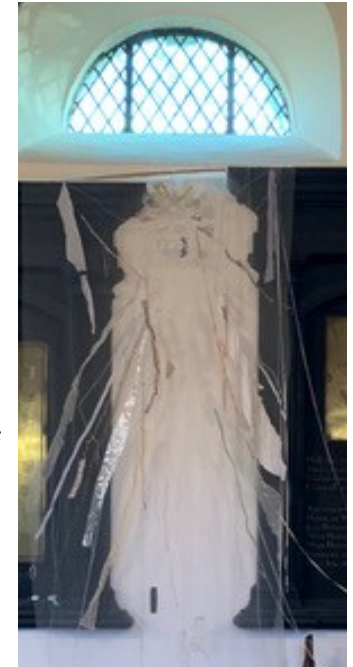


Adding lustre to this sense of presence was the work of our artists;

- Cathy Schou (Angel wings - in the porch)
- Erica Middleton (Angel mother - by pulpit)
- John Middleton (Music composed for event)
- Michelle Holmes (Gabriel icon - south door)
- Maggie Moreland (Felt angels - pulpit window)
- Hilary Fairbairn (Gabriel - sanctuary)
- Sarah Brookman (Glass angels - sanctuary)
- Janet Lee (Archangel - south wall)



Our thanks go to the musicians for the evening of Angels and Light. To Steve Delaforce, Rob Newton and John and Dorothy Pipet. To Jennifer de Hever for her wonderful solo and to Hilary Ayling for her marvellous performance of the 'Shepherd' monologue.



Over the three days of the Festival a total of £600 was raised - of which £300 has been sent to Cancer Research UK with the balance going to church funds for which we thank everyone.



Gary Lee