



Services for July and August

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

JULY

Sunday 7th

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

Sunday 14th

9.30am	Family Worship 'Wedding Banquet'	Liz Resch
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Sunday 21st

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

Sunday 28th

9.30am	LAMMAS SUNDAY See page 11 for details	Olga Harris/Gary Lee
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AUGUST

Sunday 4th

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

Sunday 11th

9.30am	Family Worship 'Ten Virgins'	Hilary Ayling
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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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CHURCHWARDENS

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

THE LINK

*With St Leonard's in Swithland
in July and August 2024*



Revd. Colin Resch

Priest in charge of the Mountsorrel Benefice

with St Leonard's Swithland

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When is 'GOOD' good enough?

Are you a perfectionist? The older I get, the more I realise that I like things to be 'just so'. Everything should be just as I like it. This gets a bit annoying for those who have to put up with my constant adjusting and correcting. Having removed the pews at Christ Church in 2016, I spend many happy minutes straightening and aligning the chairs before a Sunday service. And a row of hymn books with some upside down or back to front - well, just don't get me started.

When laying a table, knives and forks need to be perfectly aligned and evenly spaced. In the mug cupboard, handles should all point the same way. Things that should be in alphabetical order - well it speaks for itself. I would normally describe myself, therefore, as a perfectionist - but only in certain cases. There are just as many situations where I really couldn't give two hoots about things being right.

Over the last few days I have had opportunity to spend some time in the garden weeding the patio. We have a considerable amount of block paving laid in a herringbone design. This layout, whilst looking very lovely, is not designed for easy scraping between bricks and the moss and weeds very quickly build up. As I worked my way around the patio, instead of the joy and delight of perfection, I soon discovered the pleasure of 'good enough'. Leaving the odd patch a little messy doesn't destroy the overall effect.

In our Old Testament account of creation, recorded for us in Genesis Chapter 1, six times God declares that what he has made was good. And in summary at verse 31, 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.' At no point does God declare his creation as perfect. So if 'good' was good enough for God, then good can be plenty good enough for you and me too. Let's lay aside the burden of perfectionism and strive for what is good.

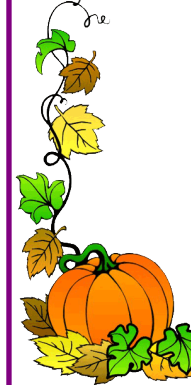
Oh, and if you see me adjusting the chairs, or re-aligning the hymn books, best leave me to it. Perhaps it's not about perfectionism, maybe it's just making things all neat and tidy ready for worship.

With every blessing, Colin Resch

HARVEST FESTIVAL INVITATION

SUNDAY 29th SEPTEMBER

Do you remember the Harvest Festivals of old when churches were full of fresh produce? This year we are asking our congregation to bring along a basket of fruit & vegetables to decorate our window sills to try to recreate this nostalgic scene.



The Harvest Service may be at a later time in the morning to enable those attending to stay on in church and enjoy a meal together in the form of a Harvest Brunch.

Please accept this invitation to join us and make a note of the date - **Sunday 29th September.**

Non-perishable goods for the Soar Valley Food Project will also be gratefully received.

LAMMAS DAY SERVICE

9.30am SUNDAY 28th JULY

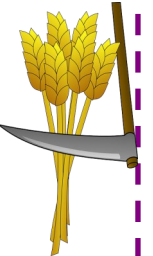
Despite the increased activity of our farmers and even the sight and sound of combine harvesters in the fields towards the end of July, it is easy to forget that there is more than one harvest a year.

The Lammas Day Service helps us to remember and give thanks to God for this early harvest and to pray for the success of the main harvest later in the year.

During the service we also remember and pray for those throughout the world who, through climate change and acts of war, have had their harvest taken from them. The service is also a time for us to reconfirm our commitment to care for creation, reduce waste and live sustainably.

I do hope you will come along to sing, pray and give thanks to God for all that He has given and provided for us.

Gary Lee



FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERALS

6/10/23 Brenda Holloway

10/10/23 Michael Roalfe

13/10/23 Josephine Garton

7/11/23 Clive Hilton

6/1/24 Annette Rowntree Clifford

27/3/24 Derek Buswell

14/5/24 Jeffry Harrison

Robert Whowell

BURIAL OF ASHES

17/12/23

12/12/23

16/5/24

HOLY MATRIMONY

7/10/23 Michael Gibson & Beth-Anna Pinkney

30/5/24 Jonathan Prince & Isabelle Sansome

7/6/24 Martin Booth & Sheila Wood

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH WILL BE OPEN

DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS

FOR VISITORS FROM 3pm TO 5pm ON

SATURDAY 13th JULY



The Thurstaston Handbell Ringers will entertain us during the afternoon in aid of their chosen charity - LOROS. You can have a go yourself or take the opportunity to visit our Bell Tower.

SATURDAY 10th AUGUST



Come along and listen to the music of 'Jazz Manouche', a gypsy jazz band who will be playing for your enjoyment throughout the afternoon

SATURDAY 7th SEPTEMBER



After your visit to the Annual Swithland Flower & Vegetable Show, call in and share a little peace and quiet.

Make a note of these dates in your diary
Delicious homemade cakes and tea or coffee will be served on each occasion.

Our Activity Trail leaflet and video presentation about the church will also be available.

We shall look forward to making you welcome.

ST LEONARD'S FRIDAY CLUB

We shall be closed during the school holidays but will re-open at the start of the new Autumn term
on Friday 6th September at 9am.

We have lots of playtime and singing, storytime and a short prayer, so why not call in for a coffee and a chat. Everyone welcome.





MEMORIES OF D-DAY

JUNE 6th 1944

PAT COPSON



I worked in a small shadow factory in Mountsorrel where we repaired Hurricane Fighters. We repaired the smaller parts - wing flaps, ailerons, etc - the fuselage was repaired at Rearsby Aerodrome. We knew that things were going to move because the 82nd Airborne Division of the Americans were stationed in Quorn. Because nobody had cars in those days ammunition was stored on the roadside up in the forest. One day on a bike ride we noticed that the ammo had gone. There seemed to be a hush everywhere - the Americans had gone and we got the news on the radio. It didn't seem real. Lancaster bombers were flying in groups of 100. We saw pictures of the invasion at the Rock Cinema in Mountsorrel in black and white. We still had a long way to go - there was still the war in the Far East. It's a long time ago and I can't put into words the feelings of that historic day.

**At the dawn of the day and at the going down of the sun,
we will remember them.**



OLD FRIENDS IN HAMPSHIRE

Geraldine Mason and

Lizette Pugh



On a recent short break in Hampshire, Chris and Roger Watts met up with two former congregants of St Leonard's Church who had both moved to this county earlier in the year. Geraldine now lives in Arlesford and regularly attends St John the Baptist Church, as shown in the photo on the left. Lizette lives in Winchester and the Cathedral is visible in the background of the photo on the right which was taken in the grounds of the Refectory. On behalf of our congregation, Chris and Roger passed on the good wishes of us all



MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

You are invited to a

COFFEE MORNING



at St Leonard's Church in aid of this charity
on WEDNESDAY 25th SEPTEMBER - 10am to 12noon

Our stalls will include Greeting Cards & Books
'Janice Ramsay's Handmade Cakes & Chocolates'

'The Hathern Coffee Roasters'

Pre-loved Costume Jewellery and Scarves

Raffle

As well as yourself and friends,
please bring along something for our

Bring & Buy Stall

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

Gary Lee - and his wife Janet - have contributed so much, in so many ways, through fellowship and Gary's always enjoyable and totally relatable sermons, that I make no apology for the length of the following fascinating article about his life and his journey on the way to St Leonard's Church. Editor



A LONG JOURNEY INTO FAITH - GARY LEE

My Early Life

In 1943 my mother was evacuated from the East End of London to Winchester in order to give birth to me and I duly arrived on 1st August. When the war was over my mother and I returned to London - but not to the family home - this had been removed by one of Hitler's bombs! My father was an air-raid warden and without a home, we were 'billeted', along with several other families, in a vacated army barracks. From there we were moved to a 'halfway house' in Bickley, Kent. This was a large Victorian mansion which had suffered some bomb damage and we occupied this magnificent house with two other families. The expansive, sprawling garden was exciting for a young boy containing, as it did, a very large pond with newts, frogs, bullrushes and wild bright yellow flag irises. I was disappointed when we moved to a prefab on the outskirts of Bromley but my mother was delighted as it contained all the 1950s mod-cons - and we had it to ourselves!

Once my father established himself as an accountant at the engineering firm of Mears Brothers we moved house again - this time to our own home, a lovely cottage between Coney Hall and Biggin Hill. From here we explored the Kent countryside, castles and gardens, in my father's marvellous Austin which always smelt of leather and lubricating oil. My mother was particularly fond of Sissinghurst Gardens which we visited many times and where she struck up a friendship with Vita Sackville-West.

When not on family outings I explored the narrow Kent lanes and villages on my sleek Dawes bicycle - drop handlebars, black frame, whitewall tyres - I loved that bike and those days found that I had most of the lanes to myself - hardly ever seeing a car and only a few cyclists. How Kent has changed!

I attended Raglan Road Secondary Modern School which was extremely secondary and not at all modern. It had been taken over by a very rough element. I left school at 15 having learnt how to survive but not much else. It was then that I really discovered the wonder of books and the train to work

and home again became my University. I had become a hairdressing apprentice at Steiner's, in Grosvenor Street, Mayfair, and I met many fascinating and interesting people including the pianist Winifred Atwell and Margaret Rutherford. It was my responsibility to wash Katherine Hepburn's hair when she was in town - I was completely in awe of her - she though was very kind and always managed to put me at my ease. Having completed my apprenticeship I became a fully-fledged hairdresser at Steiner's.

The Joys and Tragedies of Life

My father loved music, especially jazz, and had a passion for playing cricket but otherwise was a very private man. He had rheumatic fever as a child which weakened his heart and meant he lived most of his life on borrowed time. He passed away on 3rd March 1963 aged just 46. I regret to this day that I never really got to know my father. After he died my mother had a number of suitors including a lovely, gentle, man who had been captured by the Japanese during World War II. Although he survived it was at considerable cost to his mental health. My mother's decision to marry him was not wise given her own struggles with depression and mood swings. On 3rd March 1975, at the age of 58, my mother took her own life.

In my early 20s, I took over, with a friend, a struggling hairdressing salon in Hampstead by the name of Pierre Patou which was to lead to the most unexpected change of direction in my working career. I was living in and working in Hampstead! It was the 'swinging sixties'!

I wanted to make a name for 'Pierre Patou' by having the best dressed and trendy hairdressers but was finding it difficult to get exactly the right 'gear' for us to wear. In a market I saw some stretch fabric with a snakeskin print which looked ideal - I bought enough fabric for a dozen shirts and had them made up at a local tailors. They were a hit with our clients and before long they were asking if I could make some for their boyfriends and husbands. More designs followed and more orders came in. Pretty soon we were supplying shops in Carnaby Street and I found myself hairdressing by day and packing shirts by night. Our activities came to the notice of Sidney Solomon, a manufacturer and wholesaler of womenswear, who invited me to set up a menswear division of Highlight Sports. I was enjoying the buzz of the fashion industry and so had little hesitation in saying goodbye to hairdressing. From a standing start Scrooge Menswear (For a Mean Fit) turned over £3million in the first year of trading. Then, in answer to an advert for a menswear designer, into my life walked the most stunningly beautiful and exciting person I had ever met!

A graduate of St Martin's School of Art and the Royal College of Art, Janet was not only a brilliant designer but brim full of ideas. In addition, as I mentioned before, she was a stunner! We soon found ourselves in love. In the years that followed we were able to travel the world - sourcing fabric and working with factories in Portugal, India and Hong Kong. A marvellous thing about working abroad is that you get to feel the pulse of the country, find out what makes it tick, meet people and see places the average tourist hardly sees. It was a time of great adventure for us both. We married in 1978 at Westminster Registry Office in Marylebone Road London. One of the happiest days of my life. On Father's Day 15th June 1980, Janet gave birth to our daughter Charlotte. The greatest Father's Day gift that any man has ever received. And so began a new chapter in my life.

A Faith Full Life

When Charlotte was two years old we moved to Great Easton in Leicestershire as by now I was working for a Jeans manufacturer in Leicester. Number seven Church Bank was close by St Andrew's Church with views over the fields up to Rockingham Castle, two working farms, a butchers, corner shop and pub. It was, for us 'city slickers', the epitome of country living.

Janet had been brought up as a Christian while I had no tradition of church-going. Nevertheless, I was the first to suggest that we go to St Andrew's for an evensong service. I attended out of culture rather than any conviction. The vicar was Revd John Hughes who possessed a wonderfully mellifluous Welsh voice which made his sermons delightful to listen to. I became very fond of Evening Prayer and relished the language of The Book of Common Prayer. One wild wet Sunday night I made a dash for the church and Evening Prayer. The rain grew heavier and thunder rumbled but as the clock finished striking six o'clock, the rain began to subside. There were just three of us in church and John led us tenderly through the service and began his sermon which was on the love of God. At some point during the sermon - I'm not quite sure when it was - I found myself crying! Tears were streaming down my cheeks as I realised that what John was saying was true - God loved me. I was 40 years old and had just placed one foot on the pilgrim's pathway to Christ.

Janet returned to work as a lecturer at Loughborough College of Art and after a couple of years we decided to move closer to Loughborough and bought a house in Woodhouse Eaves. There we started going to St Paul's Church but

neither of us could settle. One May Day Bank Holiday we were at Oaks in Charnwood Spring Fair and the church was open - it felt just right and became our spiritual home for several years.

St James was blessed with two great preachers - Revd Gerald Paddock and Revd Gordon Harman. and with their help I made steady spiritual progress and began to feel that Christ was calling me to preach the Gospel. To test my calling I decided to enrol onto the Reader Training Course which was being run by Canon Anne Horton. With Anne in charge it was very thorough and well structured and while on the course I felt that I was also being called to use more of my skills in the service of God - so when I saw that the Diocese of Leicester were advertising for a Parish Funding Director I decided to apply for the position. During the interview I was told that if I were to be offered the job because of the long hours of work involved, I would not be able to complete the Reader Course. I replied "In that case please don't offer me the job". Imagine my surprise when a few days later I received a phone call offering me the position. The Funding Director's working hours were very long and completing the Reader Course was not easy but I managed and was licensed as a Reader by Bishop Tim Stevens in Leicester Cathedral on 9th October 1999. I was now aged 56 and with the help of many wonderful people I had moved a little further along the pilgrim's pathway.

Two years later the Diocese decided to reorganise the Benefice of St James the Greater and St Peter's with Oaks in Charnwood joining Shepshed and Copt Oak joining Markfield. I was left with the difficult decision of which way to move. Canon Anne was in charge at Woodhouse, Woodhouse Eaves and Swithland and it seemed the most sensible option and the most diplomatic would be to return to my home benefice. Anne agreed to my transfer and it has been my joy, honour and privilege to have been able to serve Christ at St Leonard's for the last 23 years while continuing my pilgrimage with all of you.

We are now in a period of uncertainty as the Diocese makes changes to the make up of the parishes once again but I have faith that it is all in Christ's hands and that all will be well - it is just another step along the pilgrim's pathway which we share with each other - and I could not ask for better companions along the way.

Yours in Christ

Gary