

The Way Forward

At the end of September, a group from St. Leonard's spent a day praying and discerning God's future for the church. Part of that process was to look back at moments in the life of the church. Another was imagining trying to describe St. Leonard's to some aliens who had landed and knew nothing about Christianity or faith or what the church stands for. Both exercises were designed to tell our story, the story of St. Leonard's Marston Green and our journey with God, and to discern where God might be leading up in the future.

I was greatly encouraged recently on a return visit to one of my previous parishes, Colne in East Lancashire. It was wonderful to see how well things were progressing twelve years after I had left. The morning congregation had swelled from around 60-70 to around 90-100. In addition to the morning a new more contemporary service was held in the afternoon, and this attracts an additional 50 or 60 people. Much of the success is down to the church being active, reaching out into the community meeting their needs through foodbank, drug rehabilitation, addressing isolation and loneliness and by simply playing an important part within the community. In addition there is an active team working in schools, drawing families and children into the life of the church. All that I saw and heard was consistent with what we were praying for and working for 20 years ago. It would be my hope that anyone returning to St. Leonard's in twelve years' time would see a similar transformation and finding the church flourishing. In Proverbs 29:18 we read; "without a vision the people will perish." I believe our away day made great progress in seeking God's vision for St. Leonard's as we look forward to what the future might hold. We concluded the day agreeing to focus on five priorities:

1. Prayer
2. Listening (to God and others)
3. Open to change
4. Communication (making it easier to find what is going on in St. Leonard's)
5. Breaking down barriers (working on our welcome and invitation, making church accessible to all)

In this season of Harvest where we gather in all that was sown earlier in the year, we recognise that God not only requires us to sow seeds in the soil but in our churches and community. Who knows what the seeds sown today will look like in 12 or 20 years' time but it is my prayer that we will find St. Leonard's flourishing and a force for good in our community.

Rev. Tony Rindl, Vicar of St. Leonard's

Dates for your Diary

Date	Service
Sunday, October 5th <i>Harvest Festival</i>	8am Holy Communion, 10am Family Communion
Sunday, November 2nd	3pm Service of Memory (said)
Sunday, November 9th	10am Remembrance Sunday
Saturday, November 15th	10am - 2pm Christmas Craft & Gift Fair
Sunday, November 23rd	6pm C.M.M. Choir ' <i>While Shepherds Watched</i> '

Sunday, December 7th	10am Family Advent Service
Sunday, December 14th	6:30pm Carol Service
Sunday, December 21st	4pm Christingle
Wednesday, December 24th <i>Christmas Eve</i>	4pm Nativity Service 11:30pm Midnight Mass
Thursday, December 25th <i>Christmas Day</i>	10am Family Communion

Our Folk

Congratulations to **Natalie** and **Jay** on their wedding.

Our thoughts are with those in hospital, in retirement homes, or confirmed to their own home:

Rose Farley, Jean Burnand, Pat Musgrove, Ethel Gough, Roy Allen, Shirley Evers, Doreen Rose, Vicky Spedding, Beryl Robinson and Avril Warwood.

Community News

Two big Christmas fund-raising events are taking place next month; **St. Leonard's Craft & Gift Fair** is on Saturday, November 15th in the Parish Hall from 10:00 to 14:00 and the **Scouts' Christmas Fayre** takes place two weeks later on November 29th in their Elmdon Road premises, from 12:00 to 14:00, 50p admission for adults, children free. This event always has a lovely atmosphere and is open to the public, with refreshments and food, book stall, games, home-made gifts, raffle, tombola and much more.

Marston Green Gardening Club give thanks to all who entered and helped at the very successful Flower Show. It was a credit to see the range of exhibits after a very difficult growing year. Next year is the Club's 100th anniversary.

Marston Green Library held a coffee morning for Macmillian Cancer Support and were successful in raising £225.

Marston Green 50 Plus

October is going to be a fun month! On the 13th there will be a **Games Night** and on the 27th a **Race Night**. Last month members enjoyed an excellent five-day trip to Sidmouth in Devon, from where they visited Buckfast Abbey, Exeter city and Cathedral, Wells Cathedral, Totnes and Cheddar Gorge. There was also a river cruise and a South Devon rail trip.

Ladies Fellowship

Monday, October 20th, **Over to you, The floor is yours!** 14:00 - 16:30 in the Elmdon Lounge. All ladies are welcome.

Literary Society

Friday, October 17th, **'Your Favourite Poem'**. We celebrate poetry in the month of World Poetry Day. 19:30 Elmdon Lounge. Please bring own drinks and refreshments.

Marston Green Library

Date	Event
2nd October	Reminiscence Group - Remember When? 14:15 - 15:15
4th October	Councillors' Surgery 10:30 - 12:00

9th October	Reading Cafe. Theme: 'Much-loved characters' 10:15 - 12:15
11th October	Knit and Natter 10:00 - 12:00
11th October	Police Surgery, with PCs Will and Danielle 10:30 - 12:15
16th October	Writers Group 14:00 - 15:30
23rd October	Family History taster session (Only one place left) 10:30 - 12:30
25th October	Knit & Natter 10:00 - 12:00
30th October	Hallowe'en Craft 14:00 - 15:00 Please book online (10 places only)