

NEWSWIRE: 9th February 2024



- Services on Sunday
 - Lent Course and resources
 - PCC priorities 2024
 - Volunteers needed for the Youth Team
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A message from Duncan

“How good is life for those who grieve, because they will be comforted.”

Matthew 5.4 (Bible Project Translation)

Who is experiencing the Good Life? Who is at the centre of what God is doing in this world? According to Jesus it is those who are powerless, at the end of themselves with no resources to change things, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. It is also those who are well acquainted with grief in this world. As we approach the season of Lent this is particularly relevant, for Lent is a time when we allow ourselves to lean into the darkness of our hearts and the darkness of this world. It's not an easy or comfortable time, and is quite out of step with this world. It is also out of step with the Christian culture many of us have come from. Evangelical funerals have often been quite colourful affairs, and I understand why, and am equally pleased to celebrate a life lived for Christ and the certain hope of resurrection, as long as we take time to lean into the tragedy of bereavement as well, of the condition that humanity finds itself in, and that touches our lives in profound ways. Jesus, leads the way in this as he weeps at the graveside of his beloved friend. And it must have been an obvious display of grief as those around him comment, *“See how he loved him”* (John 11.36). He knew joy was just round the corner but in that moment he leaned into his grief, into the tragedy that there is a *“burial shroud that enfolds all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations”* (Isaiah 25.7). He also tells us that those who grieve this tragedy of sin and death amongst the blessed ones who will be comforted.

I know, I'm still trying to work it out myself -Jesus' topsy-turvy kingdom. But this Lent is an opportunity to learn. Homegroups, and specifically formed groups (see

below), are invited to learn from the persecuted church how to grieve, how to practise the biblical instinct to lament in God's presence. Ash Wednesday is also an opportunity to take a moment to lean uncomfortably into our mortality and our propensity towards evil and grieve. It will feel even more out of joint this year as the day will be shared by the festival of St.Valentine. But maybe there is something in that. For we do not meditate on these things to despair at the darkness, but to see and welcome the light.

Christ, the Light, be with you all,
Duncan

Collect for the Sunday next before Lent

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

SERVICES ON SUNDAY

9am - Holy Communion at St Leonard's

*Readings: Deuteronomy 17.14-20;
Matthew 5.17-20*

9.30am - Morning Worship at St Peter's

Readings: Isaiah 58: 6-11; Matthew 5:1-16

10.30am - Morning Worship at St Leonard's and livestreamed on [this link](#)

Readings: Deuteronomy 17.14-20; Matthew 5.17-20

4pm - Families@4 at St Leonard's

NEXT WEEK

Monday 12th February

Bump to One meet on **Mondays** from **10.30am to midday** in **St Leonard's**



Wednesday 14th February

Ash Wednesday Holy Communion - 9.30am at St Peter's

Warm Welcome Wednesday from 10.30am to midday in St Leonard's church

Ash Wednesday Holy Communion - 7pm at St Leonard's

Thursday 15th February

No Mum's Bible Study this week (half term)

NEXT SUNDAY - 18th FEBRUARY

9.30am - Holy Communion at St Peter's

10.30am - Holy Communion at St Leonard's and live streamed on [this link](#)

Looking Further Ahead

Lent course starting 21st February (see below)

Click [here](#) to see a summary of the monthly Sunday services at St Leonard's and St Peter's

The St Leonard's Winter Term Services Card is available on [this link](#). There are also some printed copies available in church.

Craft and Chat: Saturday 17th February 22 Falstaff Close, Eynsham from 14:00 - 16:00. I love crafting and would love company while I do. Bring anything you are working on and we can craft and chat. My hope is to do this regularly. Please let me know if you are coming or if you have any questions. Jennifer jenniferclarke362@gmail.com 0774 975 9939

The Church Office will be closed from 1pm on Friday 9th February until 9am on Monday 19th February. Please leave me a message and I will get back to you on my return from holiday. *Louise*

PANCAKES: Saturday 17th Feb. Baptist Church Hall. 10.30 - 12pm. Please do come and support the African Children's charity and the Baptist Church youth work and enjoy!



Lent course starting 21st February

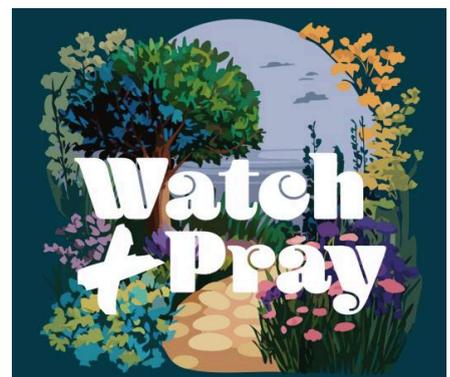
Among the Ashes Learning Lament with the persecuted church

[This course](#) from Open Doors sits helpfully alongside our journey through the sermon on the mount as we encounter, through the persecuted church, those who have become poor in spirit, those who mourn and are afflicted - and yet taste of the Kingdom of Heaven, often in deep and profound ways. Those who find themselves among the ashes find a lasting hope and comfort. You can find an introductory video [here](#).

We will be running the course over 5 weeks in Lent on Wednesday afternoon (2pm - 3.15pm) and evening (7.30pm - 8pm) starting on 21st February. For more information and to sign up, click [here](#) for the afternoon course and [here](#) for the evening course.

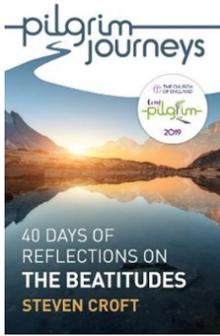
LENT RESOURCES

The Church of England's Lent Reflections, *Watch and Pray* invites us to seek God in both familiar and unfamiliar places this Lent: in darkness and in quiet; in movement and migration; in the healing and transforming work of the Spirit; in the weeping of Holy Week and in the joy of Easter morning. You can access these reflections in a variety of ways:



- The [Watch and Pray app](#)
- Alexa: tell your smart speaker to "Ask the Church of England for today's Lent reflection"

- The [Watch and Pray reflection booklets](#), available from Church House Publishing. *We will also have some copies of the booklet at the back of both churches this Sunday.*



To support our journey through the Sermon on the Mount, you may wish to spend time **40 days of Reflecting on the Beatitudes**. Bishop Steven Croft produced a booklet a few years ago to help us dwell on this revolutionary vision of Kingdom people. *We will have some copies at the back of both churches this Sunday* or you can order a booklet/or e-booklet for yourself [here](#).

Pick up a PCC Priorities for 2024 leaflet

How could you get involved?

Following an Away Morning in November, the St Leonard's PCC have agreed priorities for action in 2024. A leaflet is available [on this link](#) or you can pick up a copy at the back of church

YOUTH TEAM - WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS!



It is a blessing to all of us that our church regularly interacts with many young people in three week night cell groups and on Sundays. We are currently in need to two new helpers to join the team:

1. Someone to assist with the youth activities during the service on the 3rd Sunday of each month. These sessions are for 11-18 year olds and you would be working alongside an experienced team member.

2. Someone to join the team working with a lively group of 7 young people currently in years 7-8 who meet on Wednesdays 7-8.30pm during term time.

You need to be aged 18 -80, with a sense of humour and fun, a passion for God and a willingness to befriend, listen to and share your faith with our youth. All our team are safely recruited and DBS checked.

To find out more or to have a chat about these opportunities please contact Laura Churchyard or Margaret Thornton

Please pray for:

- Dave recovering from a stroke.
- Ben and healing for his mental health.
- Scarlett's recovery from long Covid.
- Katie suffering with epilepsy. Please pray that the right medication be found to control her seizures.

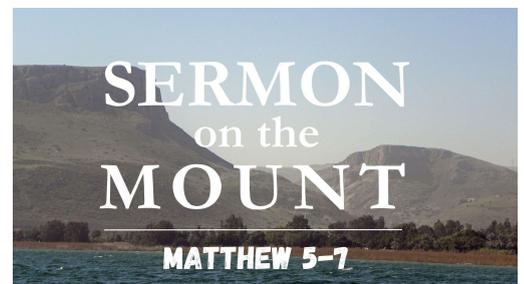
To add names to the prayer list, please contact the Church Office (stleonards_stpeters@btconnect.com) Names will be added to the list by express permission, and only first names will be published.

SERMON on the MOUNT
with the Bible Project

Sign up for weekly emails from the Bible Project on the Sermon on the Mount [here](#)

Links to previous weeks below:

[Introduction](#) | [Jesus and Torah](#) | [Doing right differently](#) | [Right relationships](#) | [The Choice Before Us](#)



The Filling Station, Witney

Next meeting - Tuesday 20th February at the Witney Corn Exchange. Kevin Elliot Missionary, Bible Teacher and Author of 'See Miracles'

Refreshments at 7.15pm. Meeting starts at 7.30pm

<https://thefillingstation.org/station/west-oxon/>

Vacancy - Guest Coordinator at Adventure Plus

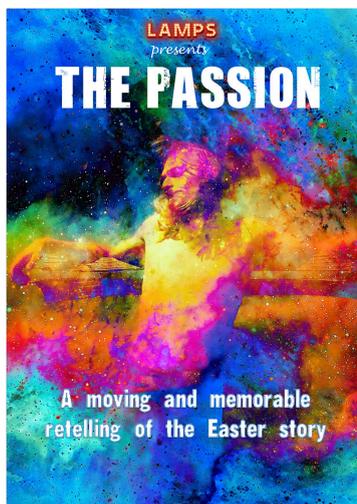
An exciting opportunity has arisen to join the Adventure Plus team.

The role involves arranging visits for groups to come and stay in our comfortable retreat centre or at the Adventure Base in Oxfordshire. Click [here](#) for more information.

Open Morning at The King's School, Witney

Join us for our whole school Open Morning on Tuesday 5th March, from 10:30 am until midday. Discover The King's School, a small and friendly Christian school, for ages 3-16, on the outskirts of Witney.

- Date: Tuesday 5th March
 - Time: 10:30 am - 12:00 pm
 - Location: The King's School, New Yatt Road, Witney, OX29 6TA
 - Website: www.tkswitney.org.uk
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St Mary Magdalene Church, Woodstock

Monday 25th March at 7pm

Tickets - £12 (£6 for under 18s) available from Woodstock Bookshop or on the door