

CHURCH NEWS AND VIEWS

A few words from Reverend Ali

Dear Friends

Everything is changed.

We have just celebrated Easter, but the church year marches on, urging us to turn from the empty tomb to the world where Christ goes before us. Confident of his resurrection we are changed by coming close to the mystery that is Easter.

Forty days after Easter we commemorate the day when Jesus went back up into heaven to be with the Father. Ascension Day is on 30th May, then on 9th June, fifty days after Easter, we celebrate Pentecost, the church's birthday. The day when the Holy Spirit, the gift that Jesus had promised, came to the disciples with the sound of wind and with tongues of fire and they are changed forever.

Fire, is particularly poignant as I write this letter, we are all still shocked by the images of the devastating fire that destroyed much of Notre Dame Cathedral. Thousands of Parisians stood in stunned silence in the streets and watched and stared, unable to tear their eyes away as the 19th century spire fell into the fire. They couldn't believe what they were seeing. As the flames rose, some began singing hymns as they watched in pain and sorrow. They stood as witnesses, painful as it was, unable to do anything but stand alongside each other. They will be forever changed by the sight of their beloved cathedral in flames. But President Macron has said that Notre Dame will be rebuilt. There will be resurrection for Notre Dame

That first Easter, Jesus' friends had watched and waited, first at the cross and then behind locked doors as they struggled to understand what was happening. Then comes the joyous news that Jesus was alive! They had met together when words failed them and the pain was too much. Then they met together as hope was rekindled as the news of the resurrection travelled through their group – then Jesus was with them, he was alive again! Out of the horror and destruction of Good Friday a new community had been born, a community that would transform the world.

Resurrection – the promise of new life is what Easter is all about. Jesus bore the scars of the cross, his church will bear the scars as a sign of hope in the world. After the fire, through the ashes, new life will come. Altered and transformed, changed forever but bringing beauty from brokenness. And that is the promise of Jesus. Whatever happens in our lives, whatever changes we experience, there is always resurrection hope.

But if, for you, the world feels like a place of fire and ashes and the hope of the resurrection seems an impossible dream, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With love and prayers
Ali

Easter Dawn by Malcolm Guite

He blesses every love which weeps and grieves
And now he blesses hers who stood and wept
And would not be consoled, or leave her love's
Last touching place, but watched as low light crept
Up from the east. A sound behind her stirs
A scatter of bright birdsong through the air.
She turns, but cannot focus through her tears,
Or recognise the Gardener standing there.
She hardly hears his gentle question 'Why,
Why are you weeping?', or sees the play of light
That brightens as she chokes out her reply
'They took my love away, my day is night'
And then she hears her name, she hears Love say
The Word that turns her night, and ours, to Day.

Sounding the Season, Seventy Sonnets for the Church Year, Canterbury Press © Malcolm Guite 2012

St Leonard's Contact information

Rector	Rev Ali Massey	07837 124509	reverendalimassey@gmail.com
--------	----------------	--------------	--

Rev Ali's usual Working days are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Sundays, but do feel free to contact her outside these hours if needed

Churchwarden	Karen Armbrister	01926 632030	karen.armbrister@btinternet.com
Church News	Rachel Glanville		ChurchNews34@gmail.com

Worship in the Draycote Benefice

Date	Place	Time	Service	Readings
Sun 2 nd June	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Family Worship Holy Communion	<u>Acts Ch16 vv16-34</u> Psalm 97 Revelations Ch22 vv12-14, 16-17 &20-end <u>John Ch17 vv20-end</u>
Sun 9 th June	BENEFICE COMMUNION at 10.30 Stretton			<u>Acts Ch2 vv1-21</u> Psalm 104 vv26-36 & 37b Romans Ch8 vv14-17 <u>John Ch14 vv6-17</u>
Sun 16 th June	Bourton Frankton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Family Worship Evening Worship	<u>Proverbs Ch8 vv1-4 & 22-21</u> Psalm 8 Romans Ch5 vv1-5 <u>John Ch16 vv12-15</u>
Sat 22 nd June	Bourton Frankton VH	3.45 pm	Celebrate@4	
Sun 23 rd June	Birdingbury	11.00 am	Morning Worship	<u>1 Kings Ch19 vv1-4</u> Psalm 42 Galatians Ch3 vv23-end <u>Luke Ch8 vv26-39</u>
Sun 30 th June	BENEFICE COMMUNION at 10.30 am Bourton			<u>2 Kings Ch2 vv1-2 & 6-14</u> Psalm 77 vv1-2 & 11-end Galatians Ch3 vv1 & 13-25 <u>Luke Ch9 vv51- end</u>
Sun 7 th July	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Family Service Holy Communion	<u>2 Kings Ch5 vv1-14</u> Psalm 30 Galatians Ch4 vv7-16 <u>Luke Ch10 vv1-11 & 16-20</u>
Sun 14 th July	Birdingbury	9.15 am	Holy Communion	<u>Amos Ch7 vv7=end</u> Psalm 82 Colossians Ch1 vv1-14 <u>Luke Ch10 vv25-37</u>
Sun 21 st July	Bourton Frankton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Family Worship Evening Worship	<u>Amos Ch8 vv1-12</u> Psalm 52 Colossians Ch1 vv15-28 <u>Luke Ch10 vv38 end</u>
Sat 27 th July	Stretton VH	3.45 pm	Celebrate@4	
Sun 28 th July	Birdingbury at Davenport Cottage	Morning Worship in the garden (Church if wet)		<u>Hosea Ch1 vv2-10</u> Psalm 85 Colossians Ch2 vv6-15 <u>Luke Ch11 vv1-13</u>

Scripture underlined will be read aloud in Church services.

Other Events and Activities

Morning Prayer at St Leonards Church Birdingbury on Tuesday mornings 9.00am

11th June
9th July



Service and Tea at Bourton & Frankton Village Hall 2.30pm

6th June
4th July

Home Communion in Birdingbury at 10.30am

12th June
10th July

Davenport Cottage, Back Lane
Loen, Main Street

A Service of Compline 'Thy Kingdom Come'

You are warmly invited to a Deanery-wide service at 7:30 p.m. on 4th June, to be held at St Nicholas' Church in Willoughby. Bishop John, who is trying to visit as many deaneries as possible during the period between Ascension and Pentecost, is coming to this service to lead a reflection.

Celebrate@4 An opportunity for informal worship for all from 3.45 pm

22nd June at Bourton & Frankton Village Hall
27th July at Stretton Village Hall

Coffee and a chat on Thursday mornings at 10.30am in the Birbury, Birdingbury

27th June
25th July



After school drop in

All welcome for a story with crafts and healthy snack in Birdingbury Club lounge at 4.30pm.

Date to be confirmed.

Please check notice boards for information about other services and events.

Details of all our activities for the seasons can be found on our website www.draycotegroup.org.uk

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

Come and celebrate the birthday of the Christian Church at our PENTECOST service on SUNDAY 9th JUNE at ALL SAINTS, STRETTON at 10.30am. It will be relaxed and fun and will include CAKE!!

Everyone of all ages welcomed. If you need a lift, then please ask Karen

ALL SAINT'S CHURCH STRETTON



Communi-Teas

A group of us are meeting at All Saint's Church on the 3rd Sunday of each month from 4.45pm to enjoy an hour of friendship, fellowship, tea and cakes. This is not a fundraiser, just something we wanted to do. Please come along and join us, even for a little

while.

There is an evensong service at 6pm which you are very welcome to stay to, or not, as you wish.

If you can't make Sunday, May 19th, there will be further Communi-Teas taking place on:

June 16th

July 21st

August 18th

September 15th

October 20th

November 17th

We do hope that you will feel able to come along and join us.

You'll be very welcome.



Church and Lunch in the Garden!

Our service on Sunday 28th July will take place in the garden at Davenport Cottage (subject to the weather!) and will include a chance to sing your favourite hymns and hear some of your favourite readings. Coffee will be served from 10.30am and the service will start at 11am. It will be suitable for all ages and everyone is welcome to come along and join in. It will be followed by a very informal 'Bring and Share' lunch so please can you bring a contribution if you would like to stay for that.

Christian Aid

This year we didn't do house to house, but took a collection in Church in 12th May which raised £159. Thankyou for your contribution.

From the Registers

The funeral and burial of ANN LAVERICK took place on Tuesday 14th May 2019. Our thought and prayers are with Gary and their family. We were blessed by Ann's floral arranging talent and she was responsible for a lot of our flower festivals and weddings over many years.

We are about to install a bench in loving memory of our friend DOREEN JOHNS, who died in 2017.



Altar Guild Rotas

	Flowers	Cleaning
2nd June	Jennifer Johnstone	
9th June		Brenda Ansell
16th June	Phyllis Spence	
23rd June		Mel Palmer
30th June	Eira Owen	
7th July		Pauline Meade
14th July	Aileen Withington	
21st July		Jackie Hart
28th July	Ann Carroll	

Altar Guild AGM

Thankyou to everyone who came - a really good attendance!

After a brief formal meeting we shared memories of the wonderful flower arranging skills of Ann Laverick who has sadly passed away. Gary came specially to thank everyone for the wonderful flowers in the Church for her funeral.

Everyone expressed their joy in doing this for Ann.



The meeting was followed by a wonderful supper and a big thankyou to the chefs.

The officers elected are as follows:

Chair: Eira Owen

Secretary: Liz Ellis

Treasurer: Daphne Chippendale

Rota Secretary: Jasmine

Coles

Altar Guild Easter Lillies

EASTER FLOWERS

The Church looked so lovely on Easter Sunday, thanks to the ladies of The Altar Guild,. The perfume was such a nice welcome as we came through the door.

This year the lilies were in memory of:

Audrey Billings

Wilf Chippendale

The Family and Friends of Liz & Bryan Tompkins

Bob Munro and the Family and Friends of the Munro Family.

Jenny Preston and her team have declined expenses and have asked that the donations for the above be sent to Myton Hospice.

Thank you Ladies

Daphne

CHURCH FETE -Saturday 6th July 2019

from 3pm in the Club Lounge, Forecourt and Birbury

Raffle / Home made goodies / Bottles / Tombolas / Books and DVDs / Cream Teas and Refreshments

Please do come and join us in the centre of the Village for our annual Fete. We would love to see you and are very grateful for your support.

Extra raffle tickets always available and all offers of help very welcomed!

KNITTED CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Reverend Ali would like us to consider creating a knitted Christmas tree from green knitted squares which could be made into blankets for Hope 4 after Christmas. We are planning a Christmas Fayre for December, which will include refreshments / raffle / tombola and a few Christmas craft stalls, but we would be really interested to hear from anyone who might like to co-ordinate this aspect of the event, and get the Birdingbury 'Knitters' on the case. If you'd like to do this, please contact Karen.

Churchyard

We are looking for a small team to help with a churchyard tidy up and cleaning / clearing of older graves. Would anyone please be prepared to help? Please let Karen know if you could spare a couple of hours to help.



Church Wardens Report by Karen

The future of St Leonard's in Birdingbury

We conducted our Annual Church Meeting in April, in the Birbury, but sadly only attended by members of the PCC and 2 others from the church community. I was re-elected as Church Warden for what will be my final year as I do not intend to seek re-election in 2020. Peter Law and Mel Palmer stood down from the PCC with our grateful thanks for their commitment and contribution over many years. Their departure leaves vacancies on the PCC and we are always looking for new and fresh ideas. Most of us have now served for many years.

Times are difficult for some Churches, but particularly small, rural parishes in multi – parish benefices (particularly when you have a Part time Priest working many more hours than they should) and we have to start thinking creatively - and possibly radically – about what the future holds for St Leonard's. Our weekly congregation averaging 15 probably (including people from other parishes), whilst stable, isn't growing, and despite our efforts to engage villagers in our worship and other activities, our regular services and most of our special services now, excluding Christmas, are not attracting anywhere near the numbers we used to. In years gone by, congregations on Mothering Sunday and Easter of 50/ 60 are now probably halved. We would love to know why!

We'd like you to tell us **what you would like** from a church presence in the village. Our pastoral work remains strong, and is always appreciated thank you, and we have been very successful in engaging people to help with charitable activities like the Night Shelter. But we can see that people's desire to attend church services – on a Sunday or whenever – has dwindled and 'church' in that respect is of less interest.

As we consider the future of St Leonard's, we would like your input. We'd like to know whether you **believe it's important to have a church in the village**, and, if so, then **what do you want to use it for?** What do you want 'the church' to **DO FOR YOU?** What would make **YOU want to engage with us?** **What ATTRACTS you and what DETRACTS you?** We **HAVE** to know your views as we plan for the short / medium and long term. That includes planning mission, ministry, finances, organisational structure, representation and maintenance of the building.

A lot to think about.

Please tell us what you think. You can do so in confidence or you can join our discussion. Do let me or Reverend Ali know.

Thank you

Karen Armbrister

Church Warden