

## NEWSWIRE: 23rd February 2024

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- Services on Sunday
  - Lent Course and resources
  - Prayers of Love and Faith discussion including Duncan's summary and position paper
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### ***A message from Duncan***

We have looked together at the first three 'makarios' statements of Jesus' introduction to the Sermon on the Mount. They are a strange, unexpected description of who is experiencing the good life of the Kingdom of Heaven. The first three consider the types of people Jesus is drawing our attention to: the wrung out and resource-lite, those who grieve this state and its impact on 'rightness' of our lives and our world, and those who have no influence to do much about it. Then he will describe the result of their Kingdom formation into people who reach hungrily for a world in which right relationships have been restored, and who act towards others in accord with this vision - embodying merciful love, with a whole of life integrity that harmonises our words, actions and the motivations of the heart. Finally he describes the consequence of this formation - these kind of people will be peacemakers, persecuted and misrepresented.

Well this is my attempt anyway at making sense of Jesus' beatitudes, helped very much by others. But rather than the content of the last paragraph forming my message to you today, it is the process I would like to draw your attention to before we move on. The process of re-articulation is an important part of deepening our understanding of scripture. Putting something into our own words really helps Jesus' teaching sink into our lives. Even when we know our words are insufficient and in need of constant revision, the effort and process is really valuable. It is an important part of what the Psalmist means when he says that the one who knows the good life is the one who "*delights in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.*" (Psalm 1). And surprisingly, like the good life of the Kingdom, meditation is not reserved for the intellectual, or academic or those interested in theological discourse. Indeed, they might well find themselves at a disadvantage if the principles of the upside-down kingdom is anything to go by. It is for all who simply love the Lord, who think of him and his words as they do the dishes, or walk the dog, or paint their latest piece of art, or chat with a friend.

As we devote ourselves, in some measure, to this discipline during Lent we are assured that something grows in us, or rather we grow *“like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.”*

And thinking of growing things puts me in mind of Spring, but that’s for another time. For now, grace and peace be with you all,

Duncan

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### Collect for the second Sunday of Lent

Almighty God,  
you show to those who are in error the light of your truth,  
that they may return to the way of righteousness:  
grant to all those who are admitted  
into the fellowship of Christ’s religion,  
that they may reject those things  
that are contrary to their profession,  
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;  
through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

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### SERVICES ON SUNDAY

**9am - Holy Communion at St Leonard’s**

*Readings: Psalm 8; Luke 19:37-40*

**10.30am - All in service with baptism at St Leonard’s**

*Readings: Acts 9:1-7; Romans 12.9-21*

**5pm - Evening Prayer at St Peter’s**

*Readings: Isaiah 55:6-13; Mark 8:31-38*

**7pm - Informal discussion at St.Leonards: Prayers of Love and Faith** (see below)

**The 10.30am All in service service will not be livestreamed this Sunday.** You may wish to join the 9am Church of England Online service on [this link](#) as an alternative this week.



## **NEXT WEEK**

### **Monday 26th February**

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

**Walkie Talkies** meet on **Mondays** (term time) from **10am to 11.30am** in **St Leonard's church hall**.

### **Tuesday 27th February**

**Tinies and Toddlers** meet on **Tuesdays** from **1.30pm to 3pm** (term time) in **Cassington Village Hall**.

### **Wednesday 28th February**

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

**Lent Courses** at **2pm and 7pm**

### **Thursday 29th February**

**Mum's Bible Study** meet every **Thursday morning** (term-time) **10 - 11.30am** at **95 Hazeldene Close**.

## **NEXT SUNDAY - 3rd MARCH**

9.30am - Holy Communion at St Peter's

10.30am - Morning Worship at St Leonard's and live streamed

7pm - Revive at St. Leonards

### **Looking further ahead:**

**A Memorial Service** for the late **Grace Brown** will be held at **St Leonard's church** at **11am** on **Tuesday 5th March**.

**Mothering Sunday Service and afternoon tea** at **St Peter's church** at **3.30pm** on **10th March**.

**Tuesday Fellowship Reunion - 26th March** at **2.30pm** in **St Leonard's Church Hall** (see below).

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**Carol Sanders** - It is with sadness that we let you know that Carol Sanders has recently died. Carol was well known and much loved at St Peter's. Carol's funeral will be held at St Peter's. Full details to follow.

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**The General Synod of the Church of England** meets this weekend and **Andrew Atherstone** will be in attendance. **Please pray for Andrew** and for the

whole synod as decisions are made and issues raised on behalf of the church. The agenda and the discussion papers are publicly available [here](#).

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LIVING  
IN LOVE  
& FAITH

### Prayers of Love and Faith

The Church of England now offers Prayers of Love and Faith for same-sex couples on a trial basis. The PCCs of both churches will be meeting on 19th March to discuss this and it is important to give space to both congregations to feed into this discussion and to have the opportunity to ask questions. On **Sunday 25th February at 7pm in St. Leonard's Church** we will have an opportunity for informal questions, comments and conversation concerning over coffee. Here are some links to various relevant documents including a paper from Duncan:

[Prayers of love and faith](#)

[Pastoral Guidance](#)

[Theological Rationale](#)

[Paper being discussed at General Synod this weekend](#)

[Duncan's summary and position paper](#)

In our conversations it is worth remembering the Pastoral Principles from last year's Lent Course: *Pay Attention to Power | Speak Into Silence | Admit Hypocrisy | Acknowledge Prejudice | Cast out Fear | Address Ignorance*. Please pray for the PCCs and our churches as we discuss these matters. Duncan

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### SAVE THE DATE

**Tuesday Fellowship** is having a **Reunion** on **Tuesday 26 March** at **2.30pm** in the **Church Hall**. Roger Aston is our special guest along with his guitar. An opportunity to get together again for prayer and praise, not forgetting a welcome cup of tea and piece of cake. **Visitors** are always welcome so why not come along. *Angela Parks*

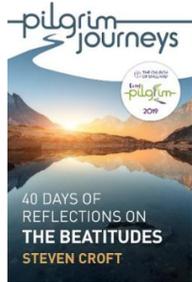
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### LENT COURSES AND RESOURCES

**Lent course - Among the Ashes *Learning Lament with the persecuted church*** If you would like to join a course its not too late. Just let Margaret or Duncan know and we'll try to fit you in somewhere.

The Church of England's Lent Reflections, *Watch and Pray* can be accessed 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](#).

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### 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](mailto:stleonards_stpeters@btconnect.com)) Names will be added to the list by express permission, and only first names will be published.

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### 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](#) | [Being at home in the Kingdom](#) | [The Hard Path of Peacemaking](#)



## 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](http://www.tkswitney.org.uk)



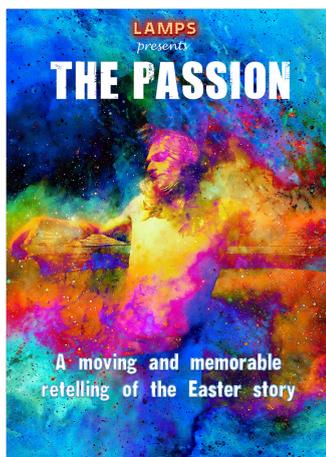
## Benefice of Hanborough and Freeland

An evening of Christian poetry for all

Christ Church, Long Hanborough

7-9pm on Friday 8th March

You are welcome to read or just listen. There is no charge for this. If you would like to bring cake or biscuits, that would be most appreciated. We hope to see you at what promises to be a spiritual and uplifting event. If you wish to attend please text Laura on 07974973867.



**St Mary Magdalene Church, Woodstock**

**Monday 25th March at 7pm**

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

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[www.stleonardseynsham.org.uk](http://www.stleonardseynsham.org.uk) | [www.stpeterschurchcassington.org](http://www.stpeterschurchcassington.org) | [Youtube channel](#) | [facebook page](#)