



## NEWSWIRE: 2nd February 2024

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- Services on Sunday
  - Lent Course
  - Volunteers needed for the Youth Team
  - Men's Curry Night
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### ***A message from Duncan***

“The Good life belongs to the powerless for theirs is the kingdom of the skies”

*Matthew 5.3 (Bible Project Translation)*

It's a striking translation, isn't it. There's no avoiding the radical and disorientating teaching of Jesus. We are more used to “the poor in spirit”, which is too easily cloaked in religious overtones. The ‘spirit’, in Hebrew thinking, is our life-force. So Jesus is saying that those who are at the end of themselves (impoverished in life-force), lacking drive, energy and the necessary ‘omph’ to make things happen in this world for themselves, at the end of their rope - much like the crowd that stood before him ([Matt 4.24](#)) - they are in a state of blessedness, they are in a good place, for theirs is the kingdom in heaven.

I'm still struggling to work this out. I have more questions than answers. But I have been struck that there are plenty of people amongst us who do feel like this themselves - dear brothers and sisters who struggle daily with chronic fatigue, debilitating illness for a brief or longer period, the profound limitations of old age, stubborn depression, financial anxiety, severe loneliness. I have shared in some of these myself, as I expect we all have for differing lengths of time. Our tendency, quite rightly, is to pray for swift recovery, healing and provision. After all, that is what Jesus did for the crowd before him. But Jesus seems to be saying much more - that such experiences and states of being will open you up to the Kingdom of Heaven - to God's way of doing things, to God's way of thinking to which we are to align our own thinking ([Matt 4.17](#)).

I'm not suggesting we should stop praying for healing for one another. It is perfectly biblical to do so. But perhaps we should encourage one another to lean in - to lean into the suffering that impoverishes our spirit in order that we might grasp something more of the Kingdom of heaven - a deeper insight, a more profound experience of God. For, according to Jesus, we are clearly in the perfect place at such times to be able to do so.

Whatever you are going through at the moment, and the struggles you live with, my prayer is that you would reach out to receive the Good life of the Kingdom of Heaven as you trust in the one who specialises in turning mourning to dancing.

Grace and peace,

*Duncan*

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### **Collect for the Second Sunday before Lent**

Almighty God,  
you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your hand in all your works  
and your likeness in all your children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,  
now and for ever.

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### **SERVICES ON SUNDAY**

#### **9.30am - Holy Communion at St Peter's**

*Readings: Deuteronomy 17.14-20;*

*Matthew 5.17-20*

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

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

**7pm - Revive at St Leonard's**

### **NEXT WEEK**

#### **Monday 5th February**

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



church.

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

### **The Chosen at St Peter's Catholic Church, Eynsham**

Join us to watch 'I have called you by your name' an episode of the Chosen, on **Monday 5th February** at **7pm** in the Tolkien Room. All welcome.

### **Tuesday 6th February**

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

### **Wednesday 7th February**

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

### **Thursday 8th February**

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

**Men's Curry Night** at 8pm at Ready Steady Spice (see below)

### **NEXT SUNDAY - 11th FEBRUARY**

9am - Holy Communion at St Leonard's

9.30am - Morning Worship at St Peter's

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

4pm - Families@4 at St Leonard's

### **Looking Further Ahead**

#### **Ash Wednesday - 14th February**

9.30am - Holy Communion at St Peter's

7pm - Holy Communion at St Leonard's

**Lent course starting 21st February** (see below)

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

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

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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](#)

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### **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](#).

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### **Men's Curry Night**

Thursday 8th February at 8pm at Ready Steady Spice. Sign up on [this link](#) or speak to Andy Greenwood.

## 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



## Open Doors

**Open Doors World Watch List 2024** is the annual ranking of the countries in the world where Christians face the most extreme persecution. Click [here](#) for more information about the World Watch list and the work of Open Doors in supporting the persecuted church.

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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.



## **Vacancy - Guest Coordinator at Adventure Plus**

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

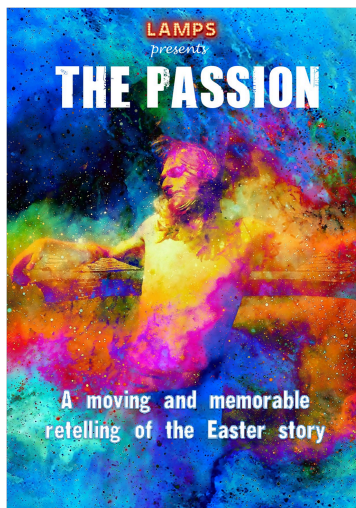
The role involves arranging visits for groups to come and stay in our comfortable retreat centre or at the Adventure Base in Oxfordshire. Click [here](#) for more information.

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## **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)
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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

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