

NEWSWIRE: 14th March 2025



- Services on Sunday
 - Serving on the PCC
 - Pastoral Care Training Day
 - Be Space at St Peter's: 2nd - 4th April
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A message from Duncan

As we continue our journey through Lent I thought I would highlight some useful disciplines that have helped Christians over the years to draw nearer to God during this time. And we begin with the most obvious discipline associated with Lent: fasting.

Jesus gave directions concerning fasting in his Kingdom manifesto, the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 6:16 he says "*when you fast...*". He assumes his disciples would undertake the discipline, and in Acts we see the New Testament church continuing this practice (Acts 13.2, 14.23). Indeed, our meditation in Lent usually begins with Jesus' own fasting in the wilderness, and so as Jesus' followers we should probably...follow him. For most of Christian history we have, and seeing as Jesus' advice was not to make a song and dance about it perhaps we still do today.

In the old days of mandatory public fasts some were exempt - if you were a labourer or pregnant - which was probably most folk back then! But this does highlight that it is not an appropriate discipline for everyone for a variety of practical or health reasons or at various times of life. But for most of us, missing a couple of meals is not going to be a problem. In fact, fasting is becoming more in vogue these days precisely *for* health reasons.

Christian fasting, however, is not undertaken for health reasons, but for spiritual ones. One is to strengthen our self-control muscles! When we fast we practice saying 'no' to that which we crave in the present. This is a useful muscle to develop for the times when our body urges us to enjoy something that will damage us or our relationship with God and others; but also for when enjoying a good thing straight away will prevent us from enjoying a greater good in the

future. Another reason is to spend more time with God. The time given to eating can be used for prayer and bible reading, reminding us that *“Man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God”*. It is also an expression of our longing - our hunger - to be closer to Christ, and to enjoy the blessings of the Age to Come when we will see him “face to face” and join the table at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

So as you forgo your mid-morning biscuit, your chocolate treat, or a meal or two, be strengthened and encouraged, be built up and blessed; and as you draw near to God, God will draw near to you.

Grace and peace to you all,

Duncan

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.

SERVICES ON SUNDAY

9.30am - Holy Communion at St Peter’s

Readings: Isaiah 42: 1-9; John 8.1-11

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

Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 12:15-21

If you have difficulties accessing the service on the livestream link above, please try accessing [our youtube channel](#) directly.



NEXT WEEK

Monday 17th March

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 18th March

Mum's Bible Study meets on **Tuesday** mornings (term time) from **10 - 11.30am**. Please contact Jo Shaw for more details. Email: jollypops@gmail.com

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

Wednesday 19th March

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

Friday 21st March

The funeral of the late Shirley White will be held at **St Leonard's church** at **12.30pm** on **Friday 21st March**

NEXT SUNDAY - 23rd March

9am - Holy Communion at St Leonard's

9.30am - Morning Worship at St Peter's

10.30am - All-in at St Leonard's and livestreamed

Looking further ahead

Annual Parochial Church Meetings

Cassington - Sunday 23rd March at 2.30pm

Eynsham - Sunday 6th April following the Sunday morning service

Mothering Sunday service at 3.30pm on Sunday 30th March at St Peter's followed by afternoon tea.

Serving on the PCC

There are a number of vacancies for new members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) in both Cassington and Eynsham. Speak to Duncan or any member of the PCC if you are interested in serving. You will find more information on [this link](#) and a nomination form [here](#).

Gatehouse Sunday - 16th March. This is our Sunday to provide sandwiches and cakes for the Gatehouse in Oxford. I will be at the youth weekend away so if you can't take your contributions directly to Marie Bridge (15 Newland Street) between 9:00 and 13:00 on the 16th please get in touch with Sue Butler. If you would like any further information or food allergy labels please let me know. Thanks Jennifer (jenniferclarke@gmail.com)



**St Peter's primary school prayer and reflection space
in St.Peter's Church: Wednesday 2nd April - Friday 4th
April**

We will be hosting BeSpace at St Peter's Church between Wednesday 2nd April and Friday 4th April. BeSpace equips churches to serve the spiritual life of school communities through creative, interactive prayer and reflection spaces. The children will have the opportunity to reflect on the Christian faith and time and space to explore their spiritual life. A small group will attend a session over these two days, and we also hope to open the space for parents and others from the community out of school hours. **We will need some volunteers from either/both churches to help run some of the spaces. Perhaps you could give a morning or an afternoon on Wednesday or Thursday to help?** Everything is provided including a brief on how to run the station. The final timetable is being agreed but if you are interested in helping please speak with Duncan (vicarslp@gmail.com 07810 324088)

Walkie Talkies team are seeking help once or twice a term during Rabea's leave. Could you help on a Monday mid morning (excluding Bank Holidays) for a couple of hours? Please get in touch to find out more, Elly 07375418925

Mothers' Day lunch Sunday 30th March. Are you on your own for Mothers' Day? Would you like to come and join me for a simple soup lunch? I'll make several pots of soup and ask you to bring bread or cheese. If you'd like to join me please let me know. Thanks Jennifer (jenniferclarke@gmail.com)

Posies for Mothering Sunday - Help needed to make posies for Mothering Sunday. We will be meeting in St Leonard's at 10.30am on Saturday 29th March to make posies to hand out at the service the following day. Please come along if you are able to help. Dads and children are particularly welcome! For further information speak to Margaret Thornton.



Pastoral Care Training Day: Last chance to sign up!

9.45am-3.15pm, Saturday 22nd March, St Leonard's Church Hall

On March 22nd we are planning for a Pastoral Care Training Day. We have been aiming to establish a Pastoral Visiting Team for the Benefice but this training day will appeal to many others who are involved in pastoral care in different contexts: including homegroups and other ministry areas. Attending this training does not comprise a commitment to become an official part of the visiting team. We want to keep the training open to as many as possible in order to learn from each other. We will be considering how our faith informs our pastoral care, desirable skills and qualities, helpful guidelines, safeguarding, as well as sharing our collective wisdom and experience together.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

LAST CHANCE TO SIGN UP! St Leonard's Electoral Roll - Many thanks to everyone who has already completed a new Electoral roll form. If you wish to be included on the Electoral Roll you **must** complete [a form](#), even if you have been on the roll in previous years. You can do this easily online or you will also find paper application forms in church.

Youth weekend away!

Our young people are away this weekend at Adventure Plus in Clanfield. Please pray:

- For safety, good organisation and activities
- For fun, building friendship and no-one feeling left out
- For everyone to know the touch of God in their lives and to move on in their faith journey



Duncan's Sabbatical

Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers in the diocese are encouraged to take a three-month sabbatical for every ten years of ministry. This sustained period away from normal duties promotes professional development and personal enrichment. I have been in ministry for 12 years now and I have the privilege, for which I am immensely thankful, of being able to take a sabbatical this year for the months of May, June and July. The Sabbatical consists of three elements. Firstly, times of retreat for deepening my relationship with God. I am heading to north Wales for a 6 day silent retreat in a Jesuit Retreat centre, and a walking retreat camping in Herefordshire churches. Secondly rest and refreshment, which is not just holiday, but restorative activities: I intend to be writing music and engaging in art, as well as spending time away with the family. The greater part of the time is spent in personal and professional development through study and theological reflection. I will be studying the Pentateuch (Genesis - Deuteronomy) with a particular focus on the law in Exodus and Leviticus, and how Jesus fulfills the law, and how the church is, in turn, to fulfil the law in the New Covenant (following on from our time in the Sermon on the Mount last year). It feels like I have bitten off more than I can chew in the time but we'll see how I get on!

I would like to thank Margaret in particular for organising preachers and service leaders in my absence, many of whom are doing more than usual to cover for me - thank you. We have a number of visiting preachers who I know will be a blessing to the worshipping life of the Benefice. Revd. Andrew Bunch, our Area Dean, will be stepping into various legal responsibilities, and we are making progress with ensuring there is pastoral support available in my absence. If you have any queries or concerns please do get in touch.

Vacancies at the King's School in Witney

Vacancies for two part time Maths teachers and a part time Head of Art and Design have arisen at the King's School in Witney. For more information follow [this link](#).



access

Riding for Resilience: Supporting Young Lives vs Cancer from London to Amsterdam



Dear St. Leonard's Church Family,

I'm reaching out to ask for your support in raising funds for the Access - London to Amsterdam 2025 event in June, which benefits Young Lives vs Cancer. This cause is close to my heart, and with your generosity and prayers, we can make a real difference in the lives of young people facing cancer.

Every donation, no matter how small, can provide vital support to those in need. If you feel called to contribute, it would mean so much to me and to the young lives we are helping. Together, as a church family, we can bring hope and make a positive impact.

You can donate on this [link](#) to the charity fundraising page, or use the QR code in the photo above. I can also accept cash donations, which I will add the charity page on your behalf.

Thank you for your kindness, support, and prayers. God bless you!

Kind regards, Ginta

Please pray for:

- Dave following his recent move to a care home.
- 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.

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

Church Office - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am – 2pm

Tel: 01865 883325 E-mail: stleonards_stpeters@btconnect.com

Revd Duncan Fraser: 07810 324088 (Day off – Friday)