

January

2025



50p

St Peter's

Leckhampton Parish Church

Parish Magazine



www.stpetersleck.org

parishofficeleckhampton@btinternet.com

*part of the South Cheltenham Team Ministry.
The contents of this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the PCC or the editor, but are those of the individual contributors*

Our Vision Statement

St Peter's Church, Leckhampton
exists to love and worship God,
to serve its neighbours and
to share the love of Jesus Christ.

The Parish Prayer

Loving God
Open our eyes that we might see you.
Open our ears that we might hear you.
Open our hearts and minds that we
Might respond to you and bring others to know you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ
Our Lord who lights our way.
Amen

+++++

Cover pic: Revd Gary with Toby Perona-Wright as bishop for the day.



St Peter's

Leckhampton Parish Church

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Gary writes.....

Happy New Year

The Christian New Year actually begins on Advent Sunday, which is the 4th Sunday before Christmas! This enables us to start the year by re-telling the birth of Jesus and the events that precede it.

Advent is also about the 'unknown story', the waiting for Christ to return, and for all things to be transformed and restored.

These are puzzling times, however, and it's not easy to fully grasp some of the changes that we are seeing around us, or how we should sometimes respond. Powerful forces have been reshaping how we live together, and some of these have been destructive and divisive.

Brexit, the pandemic, homelessness, nation rising up against nation, the ongoing climate emergency, a war on European soil, and more...

All of these things have exposed an appetite, perhaps even a desperation, for change, but have given us little clarity on how a better society might emerge, and who might be able to flourish within it.

Could it be that *what* we are actually living through is deep systemic change, a necessary if unsettling step in a journey towards a society (and even a world) which looks very different – more just, more human, and more equal?

By reflecting on the coming of Christ at the start of the Christian year, we can take inspiration from the example of freedom, equality, and love that is the life of Jesus, and then consider how *that* might be expressed in our lives and our communities.

I wonder what your new year's resolution might be therefore?

Rev'd Gary.

Live Stream Services for January

We will be live streaming the 10am service from St. Peter's most weeks. This can be accessed via www.stpetersleck.org or www.facebook.com/stpetersleckhampton

Readings for January

Date	Day	Readings
5 th	EPIPHANY SUNDAY	Isaiah 60.1–6 Ephesians 3.1–12 Matthew 2.1–12
12 th	BAPTISM OF CHRIST	Isaiah 43.1–7 Acts 8.14–17 Luke 3.15–17, 21–22
19 th	EPIPHANY 2	Isaiah 62.1–5 1 Corinthians 12.1–11 John 2.1–11
26 th	EPIPHANY 3	Nehemiah 8.1–3, 5–6, 8–10 1 Corinthians 12.12–31a Luke 4.14–21

Celebrate or Commemorate with Flowers

The Flower Guild would like to give you the opportunity to celebrate a special occasion or commemorate someone by sponsoring a pedestal of flowers at the high altar in church. The flowers would be of the colour appropriate to the church calendar or a colour of your choice if the calendar permits. We would appreciate a donation of £20 towards the flowers. The occasion can be acknowledged in the church news sheet or can be kept confidential – the choice is yours. If you would like to mark a special date in this way please have a word with Averil Murray (Flower Guild Co-ordinator) or Sally Marlow (Flower Guild Treasurer) or email sally.marlow@softcopy.co.uk.

Sally Marlow

From the Parish Registers

We congratulate those who were recently baptised:

Sebastian Joseph Colombo on 22nd December

Olivia Giovanna Colombo on 22nd December

There were no weddings in December.

We offer our sincere sympathy to the families of those who have recently died, especially:

Martin Axworthy on 1st November aged 72

Robert Michael Dewey on 21st November aged 86

Stephen Paul Cook on 23rd November aged 66

Pauline Mary Hart on 30th November aged 84

AtaLoss.org is the UK's most comprehensive hub of bereavement support and information for anyone bereaved and for those supporting them. You can easily search using filters according to age, location or relationship to the deceased and find support from the many hundreds of services listed, confident that the details are accurate, up to date and offer choices from a wide range of support available. Useful things to read, helplines and a FREE live-chat counselling service are also available on www.ataloss.org to help anyone deal with their loss, whatever the circumstances and whatever their faith or none.

Bereavement Support Please contact one of the clergy if you would like to talk about a bereavement. Please visit the church Wellbeing webpage for more details.

'Notes from the Director of Music'



Happy New Year! First and foremost, I must pass on my gratitude to all of the singers that have enhanced our worship over the festive period. Our regular choir members, and the extra singers who join us on occasion, have all offered their considerable time and talents to bring great Glory to God - and I am so pleased to be able to work alongside them all. What will 2025 bring from a musical point of view, I wonder? Well, the music is planned up until the end of April - so there are certainly lots of musical treats in store. This time last year, we were all out of St. Peter's for the reordering, so we missed out on some of the rich music and liturgy that forms part of the Passiontide/Lent journey. We will certainly rectify that this year, with a Choral Compline planned for Candlemas and a Passiontide Choral Service on Passion Sunday (in addition to all of our usual, regular Sunday worship).

In January, we have a variety of lovely anthems planned for our Sunday worship. Epiphany will see Simon Lole's 'The Journey', a beautiful anthem with the melody passing between lower and upper voice before joining together in the final verse with a soaring descant over the top by the trebles/sopranos. The second Sunday will have Hurford's 'Litany to the Holy Spirit' performed as the anthem. This is a lovely piece with another beautiful melody passed around the different voices of the choir. On the third Sunday, we are singing a wonderful piece of Renaissance polyphony for the Epiphany period by Marenzio titled 'Tribus Miraculis'. Polyphony is a wonderful, but challenging style of music to sing with all the interweaving parts and melisma (lots of words sung to one word or syllable). It is something the choir enjoys but hasn't done much of in the past. We will gradually introduce more and more alongside our other music as we continue to broaden our repertoire. The final anthem in January is the fabulous anthem by S. S. Wesley 'Blessed be the God and Father'. He wrote this piece in 1834 when he was Organist and Master of the Choristers at Hereford Cathedral when he only had a handful of choristers and a solitary bass in the choir! As a result, there are lots of sections which are for either 'men' (which would have been the solitary bass!) or trebles. However, it concludes with a triumphant section full of praise to our Lord ('But the word of the Lord endureth forever'). I hope you all enjoy.

I have matched the voluntaries with the themes and/or the other music for the Sundays. The first voluntary is a 'Paeon' by Marsh (a song of praise). The second is Mendelssohn's 'Sonata in Bb' (1st movt). The readings for the 3rd Sunday are related to the wedding in Cana, and I have put down the Handel 'Hornpipe' (from the Water Music) as it is often used at weddings. The final voluntary is a 'Gavotte' by Wesley to coincide with the anthem by the same composer.

Dr. Kit Perona-Wright

Director of Music

Cheltenham Coffee Concerts 2025

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4th January. Oboe through the ages

3rd February. Four cellos with Hannah Davey

1st March. Enigma Duo to celebrate St David's Day

12th April. Bach and beyond

Little Pebbles

***Tuesdays 10.00 to 11.30 in the Cottages during term time.
Please contact Lara Skinner via the Parish Office for details.***

Craft-T-Time

Do join our friendly and supportive group on Wednesday mornings from 10-12 in the Cottages. All are welcome to join, even if just for a 'cuppa' and a chat.

Helen Shill coordinator



The first Book of Remembrance

Carved oak cover of the first Book of Remembrance Following Eric Miller's article last month.

It can be seen in church near the Giffard memorial.

Photograph: Eric Miller

FRIDAY LUNCH WITH FRIENDS

This is a monthly lunch, always on a Friday and usually at the end of the month, that gives people an opportunity to sit and share a light meal with friends old and new. We are usually around 20 in number and the room buzzes with conversation! Donations for the The Children's Society are always welcome – in 2024 the lunches raised around £750. There is no need to book a place at the table – just come and join us at 1 Vineries Close (off Kidnappers Lane). We are always so pleased to welcome new faces!! Lifts can be offered – just have a word with us. The lunch dates for the next few months are:

Friday 31 January, 12.30-2pm

Friday 28 February, 12.30-2pm

Friday 28 March, 12.30-2pm

We look forward to welcoming you!
Sally & Peter Marlow

Leckhampton Local History Society Programme for 2025

Tuesday 28th January 2025

'Cheltenham's Iconic Buildings'
David Elder

Tuesday 25th February 2025

Member's Evening

25th March 2025

Katherine Parr Gloucestershire's Queen
Mike Bottomley

Tuesday 29th April 2025

Malcolm J Watkins
The Birdlip Grave Group, a 2000-Year Mystery

Tuesday 27th May 2025

AGM- Eric Miller "Treasures from the Bendall archive"

Meet at St. Peter's Church, Leckhampton.

Last Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. All welcome. Visitors £3

Further details: Sue Marlow 01242 581661

Youth News The Youth program can be found here.

<https://southcheltenham.wordpress.com/youth/>

Abbie Marsh

JNC Professional Youth Worker
South Cheltenham Churches
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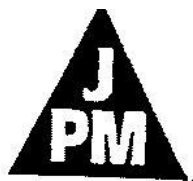
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
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Please contact Sue Marlow 581661 for details.



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A Happy New Year to all our readers, contributors, advertisers and to all who support the magazine and the life of St Peter's.

The Messenger, January 2025

Prioritise what truly matters in 2025 with 'Run the race'

Do you struggle with nailing down your priorities when you're planning? So many excellent options, coupled with New Year's resolutions can sometimes lead to overwhelming expectations and unrealistic commitments.

Kate Stacey, Diocesan Collaborative Ministry Lead: Lifelong Learning, and Becca Faal, Diocesan Strategic Lead for Safeguarding Training and Learning, are running an event to help us unpick some of the expectations we put on ourselves and support us as we refocus our lives on the bigger picture.

Kate said, "Prioritising what is most important when all choices are good options is something that often puzzles people. How do we make good choices? Becca and I both realised the importance of discerning priorities and wanted to help others to do the same."

'Run the Race', is a led day retreat taking place on 11 January from 10am to 3pm. It is structured so that attendees have plenty of time and space for reflection.

By the end of the day, participants are encouraged to leave with practical next steps, such as scheduling intentional rest, prayer, and joyful activities into their calendars.

Kate explained: "The day will have little bits of input, then big chunks of time. We encourage people to bring their journals and diaries, and they can talk with others, or walk the grounds, whatever helps them process.

"As the event is at the start of the year, it gives people the chance to get on top of their diaries before the diary gets on top of them. Our diary dictates our values, and I would like people to go away from the day feeling like they are in control of their diary; they have all their leave marked down, they have key moments for times of reflection and prayer penned in.

"I'd like people to treat these moments like a funeral, or something vital that they would never dream of missing."

A central part of the day will be adopting the idea that learning to say 'no' can be just as important as saying 'yes' when it comes to living a balanced and meaningful life.

Kate noted: "The inability to say no can lead to burnout and frustration. I have had experiences with chronic illness and burnout from not saying no when I should have.

"Saying no is also not just about self-preservation, but about empowering others. If I say no, somebody else might be really pleased that they could say yes. Saying no makes us more collaborative and reminds us to rely on others."

Another important element of Run the Race is the concept that choices rooted in joy and values are sustainable.

"When we decide what we should be doing, we should choose things that bring us joy. It's hard to be creative and joyful when we are exhausted and overworked, so we should prioritise the joyful things.

"Matthew 11:28-30 says: 'Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.'"

One of the tools Kate uses is the 'bell jar' analogy. Kate explained: "Rocks represent vital priorities like relationships and rest, while gravel and sand symbolise lesser tasks. Fill the bell jar with sand and gravel first, and there's no room for the rocks. Start with the rocks, and everything fits around them.

"The bell jar isn't always the same size. Some weeks, it shrinks, like when you have two days out of your usual routine. Recognising this helps us adjust our expectations."

As you go into the new year, consider adopting these principles of Run the Race. Identify your 'rocks', those non-negotiable priorities that align with your values. Practice saying no to sand and gravel commitments that don't serve your well-being. Finally, remember that the sky won't fall if you say no.

In Kate's words, "There is a redeemer, and it's not me, and it's not you."

It's open to everyone, lay or ordained. Book your place on Run the Race at <https://gloucester.anglican.org/event/run-the-race> .

Join us for Faithful Generations this February

People of the grandparent generation are warmly invited to Gloucester Cathedral for a special creative afternoon to explore Christian faith and spirituality with your grandchildren or surrogate grandchildren. There will be prayer spaces, stories, activities, dance, interactive worship and more.

The event will be followed later by a workshop for grandparents at St Andrew's, Churchdown, led by Becky Sedgewick, author of *Grandparenting for Faith*.

For all the details, visit: <https://gloucester.anglican.org/2024/youre-invited-to-faithful-generations-events-in-february>.

Events and training

More details for all these events at gloucester.anglican.org/events

Faithful generations event Cathedral Green, Gloucester Cathedral, 1 February, 12pm to 5pm
Book now for this fun and creative afternoon where grandparents and grandchildren can explore Christian faith and spirituality together. There will be prayer spaces, story, activities, dance, interactive worship and more.

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/event/faithful-generations-event>

Cathedral Eucharist for the Celebration of the Epiphany, Nave, 12 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LX, 5 January, 10.15am
A Cathedral Eucharist, commemorating the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus Christ.

<https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/cathedral-eucharist-for-the-celebration-of-the-epiphany-25>

Faithful Generations ‘What can a grandparent do?’ workshop
Church Centre, St Andrew’s Church, Station Road, Churchdown, GL3 2JT,
11 February

Becky Sedgewick, author of *Grandparenting for Faith*, leads this workshop, teaching how to understand the importance of strong intergenerational relationships and how to share and demonstrate faith meaningfully.

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/event/faithful-generations-workshop/>

Run the race, Prinknash Abbey Gloucester, GL4 8EX, 11 January, 10am to 3pm

An opportunity to reflect on your priorities, schedule activities that bring joy, and identify what can be let go.

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/event/run-the-race>

Have your say

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