



Thank you David and farewell



This Sunday we mark a very important day in the life of our church, expressing our sincere thanks to David Cookson on his retirement. David has faithfully served St. Leonard's for fourteen years as our organist and director of music. From the moment he arrived at St Leonard's, David has shaped our worship with skill, passion, and a wonderful sense of humour.

Through hymns, anthems, Even-songs, Christmas singing, and those unforgettable lockdown porch practices, David has helped us lift our voices and our spirits. His musical talent has enriched our worship; his wit, determination, and kindness have strengthened our choir and blessed our whole church family.

We are deeply grateful for the friendships he has built, the music he has inspired, and the dedication he has



shown week by week. We will miss him at the organ bench, but celebrate with him as he begins this next chapter.

This special edition of the Newsletter contains a reminder of David's gift and legacy and expresses our thanks to him. In our prayers we ask that God would bless him richly through his retirement.

David's legacy of wonderful music

In July 2011, a chance meeting in a Blackpool café set in motion something quite special for St Leonard's. Choir member Susan Walsh had known David many years. She knew that husband Philip and David "were boys together" in Marton Church Choir, Blackpool. She also knew that David was an accomplished pianist. With the post of Organist and Choirmaster vacant at the time, she wondered — half hopefully — whether he might consider coming to St Leonard's.

David came the very next Sunday to observe a service. He liked what he saw, introduced himself to Revd

Nick, and the two got on immediately. The result was that David joined us as Director of Music, a role he held for thirteen and a half years, and more recently as our Organist.

Over those years, the choir and David shared many memorable moments — bowling trips, meals out, and of course the annual "Lancashire Sings Christmas" events at places like The Fleece, Penwortham Golf Club, The Brown Hare, and The Pear Tree Inn. The choir also enjoyed singing carols at the Penwortham Christmas Markets and visiting parishioners to sing outside their homes.

Monthly Choral Evensong became a highlight, with the choir learning a new psalm, anthem, and canticles each month. Our faithful congregation was often joined by friends from other churches who simply loved the music.

During the COVID lockdowns, when the church doors were closed, David kept everyone connected by setting up a choir WhatsApp group which met online every Thursday at 6.30pm — choir practice time. When restrictions eased, the choir gathered outside the main porch, spaced safely apart, with David playing the keyboard from the doorway. Neighbours later said they could hear the hymns from several streets away.



The Marton days, but can you spot David and Philip?



Under David's direction, the choir learned a great deal — glottal stops, the importance of watching the conductor, how to carry on regardless when the organ developed a cypher, when to stand for a hymn (never before the first note!), and, perhaps most importantly, how to stay completely still until the very last note faded. Watch!

And the music itself has been exceptional. David has led the choir in performing some truly beautiful pieces that have enriched our worship. His organ voluntaries at the end of services have often been met with spontaneous applause — a testament to both his skill and the joy he brought to our worship. Many of us will always remember trying not to “prance like ponies” out of church while he played the Radetzky March!

In December last year, David stepped down as Director of Music, and the choir thanked him with a gift



voucher for afternoon tea at Lytham Hall — a treat he thoroughly enjoyed. There was also a grand-piano-shaped cake, shared by all.

David, we will miss you. Thank you for everything you have brought to the music and worship of St Leonard's. We hope you enjoy your well-earned retirement.



We would love you to join us on Saturday 13th December for a joyful morning of Advent and Christmas themed crafts, games, storytelling and free admission and free refreshments.

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH LARGE HALL
ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS MESSY CHURCH
Saturday 13th December from 10am to 12 noon

Penwortham ST. LEONARD'S FAMILY CHURCH

GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY CHRISTMAS AT ST LEONARD'S CHURCH 2025

Messy CHURCH

Together we'll explore the build-up to Jesus' birth and discovering why Advent is such a special time for preparing our hearts and homes for the coming of Christ.

Families and children of all ages are very welcome

Come and make memories on this very special evening as we embrace the light of the season with the whole family.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST LEONARD'S CHURCH
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE In aid of The Children's Society
Wednesday 24th December St. Leonard's Church Penwortham at 4pm

Families and children of all ages welcome

Penwortham ST. LEONARD'S FAMILY CHURCH

GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY CHRISTMAS AT ST LEONARD'S CHURCH 2025

Welcome to a joyful CHRISTMAS at St Leonard's Church

Sat 13 Dec at 10am
CHRISTMAS MESSY CHURCH

Fun for all the family at our Christmas and Advent themed messy church with crafts, stories, games and free refreshments.

Sun 21 Dec at 6pm
CAROL SERVICE

Time to sing those well-known and much loved Carols and readings to set the scene for the Christmas week.

Tues 23 Dec at 4pm
2 SLEEPS TO GO CRIB SERVICE

St. Leonard's traditional Crib Service for the younger children. Join our Christmas characters in their journey to Bethlehem.

Weds 24 Dec at 4pm
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

A Christmas Eve treat for all the family as we light candles, sing Carols and get ready for the birth of the Light of the World. In aid of the Children's Society.

Weds 24 Dec at 11.30pm
MIDNIGHT SUNG HOLY COMMUNION

A traditional sung Holy Communion and the first opportunity to welcome the new born King.

Thurs 25 Dec at 9:15am
CHRISTMAS DAY SUNG HOLY COMMUNION

Come and share the joy of Christmas with us as we celebrate Christmas together as a family.

CHURCH DIARY

Saturday 13 December

10am Messy Church.

Sunday 14 December
Advent 3

8.30am Said Holy Communion

10am All Age Service

Wednesday 17 December

10am Holy Communion

Friday 19 December

8am Morning prayer in church for growth and renewal.

Sunday 21 December
Advent 4

8.30am Said Holy Communion

10am Sung Holy Communion

6.00pm Christmas Carol Service

Tuesday 23 December

4pm Two sleeps to go. Crib Service.

Wednesday 24th December
Christmas Eve

4pm Christingle Service.

11:30pm Midnight Sung Holy Communion

Thursday 25 December
Christmas Day

9:15am Sung Holy Communion

Please note that there is no 10am Weds morning Communion on Christmas Eve 24th December.

St. Leonard's
NEWS

www.stleonardspenwortham.org.uk



Sidespersons, Readers and Coffee Rota

Sunday 14 Dec - Advent 3

8.30am Irene Farrimond and Elizabeth Bunyan. *Reader:* Andrea Waine.

10.00am Sylvia Johnson. *Reader:* Philip Walsh. *Prayers:* Set Prayers
Coffee: Barbara and Christine.

Sunday 21 Dec - Advent 4

8.30am Franklin Bello and Peter Milner. *Reader:* Angela Milner.

10.00am Barbara Palmer. *Reader:* Laraine Southwell. *Prayers:* Angela Milner
Coffee: Laraine and Ann.

6.00pm Christmas Carol Service
Brian Bamber. *Readers:* There are five lessons in the service, if you would like to read one, please let Rev Simon know.

Tues 23 Dec - 2 sleeps to go Crib Service

10.00pm Joyce Helm. *Reader:* TBC. Set Prayers.

Weds 24 Dec - Christmas Eve

6.00pm Christingle Brian Bamber, Angela Milner. *Reader:* TBC.

10.00am Midnight Communion
Laraine and Jenny. *Reader:* Brian Bamber. *Prayers:* Rev Janet

If you have any news or prayer requests that you would like to share in this newsletter, please email them to revsimonking@gmail.com

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH DIRECTORY

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Leo's (Sunday School) Please see Jenny Stanton or Jeanette Smith

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