



St. Leonard's NEWS

www.stleonardspenwortham.org.uk

Sunday 26 July 2026

Trinity 8

The Weekly Newsletter
for St. Leonard's Church

Marshall's Brow, Penwortham PR1 9JA



The way things were - building the large hall

The possibility of another change to our church building provides a good excuse to look back at some of the many changes St Leonard's has seen over the years.

Church buildings are never entirely static. They grow and adapt as the needs of their congregations and communities change. Yet every alteration becomes part of the story of the place and of the people who have worshipped, served and gathered here.

Over the summer, the newsletter will evoke a little nostalgia by sharing photographs from St Leonard's past—a chance to remember familiar faces, rediscover forgotten details and see how church life has developed through the years.

This week, the series begins with a photograph showing the construction of the large hall. For those who remember it being built, they may bring back memories; for those who arrived later, they offer a fascinating glimpse of how one familiar part of St Leonard's first took shape.

If these photographs stir any memories or stories, please share them. They are all part of the continuing story of St Leonard's.

AN UPDATE FROM THE PCC

As part of the PCC's continuing responsibility to care for everyone who uses our church buildings, a professional fire risk assessment has recently been carried out by Wyvern Fire Safety Solutions.

The report identified a number of medium and low-risk items which can be addressed through our ongoing programme of maintenance and improvement. It also recommended that the capacity of the church worship area should currently be limited to 100 people, unless an additional exit can be provided. A suitable alternative exit could allow the capacity to rise to approximately 250 people.

This recommendation will not affect most of our regular worship, as the average Sunday attendance is around 65. It could,

however, have implications for occasions when the church welcomes larger numbers of people, including some funerals and other occasional offices, visits from the church school and concerts already planned in the building.

The PCC would therefore like to find an appropriate solution as quickly as possible.

Following some initial conversations, the most practical and economical option may be to create a new internal doorway between the worship area and the main hall, close to the hall's existing fire exit. Early advice suggests that a doorway of approximately 1600mm could provide sufficient additional exit capacity for considerably larger congregations. The work would also involve moving some pipes

and a radiator.

These ideas remain at an early stage, and no final decisions have yet been made. The next step is to consult a local architect, who can advise on the design, likely cost and permissions required. Any proposed work will need to be considered through the Church of England's faculty process, including consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee. It is hoped that plans can be prepared for consideration at its September meeting.

The assessment is helping the PCC plan responsibly for the future, ensuring that the church can continue to welcome people safely for worship, school services, concerts and significant moments in family and community life.

Please pray for wisdom and good guidance as this work develops, and especially that a simple, affordable and effective solution can be agreed and put in place promptly. Further information will be shared as soon as plans become clearer.

Joyful, generous stewards — part four: Generous Hope

This Sunday we reach the final chapter of the Book of Ruth and the last part of our Stewardship series — Generous Hope.

Throughout this short and beautiful story, generosity has brought change. Ruth's generous loyalty brought companionship to Naomi. Boaz's generosity provided food and protection for Ruth. Naomi's concern for Ruth opened the possibility of a new future. In Chapter 4, these individual acts of kindness come together, bringing hope and healing that extend far beyond anything the characters could have imagined.

The chapter begins at the city gate, where legal and financial matters were settled. Boaz has the opportunity to redeem Naomi's land and marry Ruth, but another relative has the first right to do so. Boaz does not manipulate the situation to get what he wants. He acts openly, honestly and with integrity, even though the outcome remains uncertain.

The nearer relative is interested in acquiring the land but withdraws when the arrangement may become costly. Boaz makes a different choice. He accepts responsibility for Ruth and Naomi, placing their well-being before his own financial advantage.

This raises an important question about stewardship: "Is money the measure of life, or is money a means through which love, faith and hope can be expressed?"

Boaz shows that generosity is about more than an occasional gift. It is about living with integ-



rity and allowing faith to shape everyday choices. Christian stewardship concerns not only what is placed in the offering plate, but also how resources are earned, used and shared.

The story then returns to Naomi. At the beginning of Ruth, she had returned to Bethlehem overwhelmed by bereavement. She described herself as empty and believed that hope had disappeared from her life. Now, as she holds Ruth and Boaz's child, the women of Bethlehem tell her that this child will renew her life.

Naomi's losses are neither forgotten nor replaced. Yet through the generous love of Ruth and Boaz, life begins to open around her again. Generosity becomes a source of healing and hope.

Ruth's life has also been transformed. She first arrived in Bethlehem as a poor, childless widow and a foreigner, dependent upon the kindness of others. By the end of the story, she is honoured as a woman of courage, faithfulness and generous love. She has found a home and a place among

God's people.

Yet the story reaches far beyond the happiness of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz. Ruth's son, Obed, becomes the grandfather of King David. From this ordinary family, and through a series of generous choices, comes a legacy that will eventually lead to Jesus.

None of the characters could have foreseen where their generosity would lead. They simply acted faithfully within the circumstances placed before them, and God used those choices to bring blessing to future generations.

That is the hopeful message at the heart of Ruth Chapter 4. Generosity today can create possibilities for tomorrow.

The life of our church has been shaped by the prayer, service and financial generosity of those who came before us. In the same way, the choices made today will help shape the church inherited by future generations. Regular giving, joining the Parish Giving Scheme or remembering the church in a will can all become part of a lasting legacy of faith.

As our journey through Ruth comes to an end, perhaps there is one final question to consider: What legacy of hope might today's generosity leave for those who come after us?

The answer may be greater than anything we can presently imagine.

SAVE THE DATE

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE OUR

DIOCESAN CENTENARY WEEKEND

A WEEKEND OF FUN, FRIENDSHIP AND CELEBRATION FOR OUR COMMUNITY

FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

Quiz Night

WITH HOT POT SUPPER

Bring your friends and make up a team!

SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

Family Fun Day

FOR ALL AGES

Come along and bring the family!

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

Celebration Service

A JOYFUL CELEBRATION OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

All are welcome!



Penwortham
ST. LEONARD'S
FAMILY CHURCH

St Leonard's Family Church, Marshall's Brow, Penwortham PR1 9JA

As our stewardship campaign and journey through the Book of Ruth draw to a close, I would like to offer a huge thank you to everyone who has listened, reflected, prayed and responded with such generosity and encouragement.

Thank you to those who have already joined the Parish Giving Scheme, and to those who are still prayerfully considering their response.

Every commitment, whatever its size, helps sustain the worship, mission and ministry of St Leonard's and enables the church to look towards the future with hope.

Thank you to the PCC and Standing Committee for their wisdom, encouragement and support throughout the campaign, and for the many hours they give—often quietly and un-

A VERY, VERY BIG THANK YOU

seen—to the life of our church.

Above all, thank you to everyone without whom St Leonard's simply could not be church.

Thank you to those who prepare and serve tea and coffee; those who welcome people on Sunday mornings; those who read scripture; write and lead prayers; and those whose beautiful flower arrangements enrich our worship.

Thank you to those who manage hall bookings, care for our buildings and grounds, deal with maintenance and undertake countless practical jobs. Thank you to everyone who

makes Chatting Chairs and Talking Tables possible each month, to our Eco Group, and to all who help St Leonard's serve and care for the wider community.

Thank you to the musicians, singers, servers, sidespeople, cleaners, children's leaders and prayerful encouragers.

Thank you to those whose contribution is highly visible and to those whose work happens quietly in the background. There are far too many people and ministries to name individually, but every act of service matters and every gift is valued.

The Book of Ruth has shown

how God works through the generous choices of ordinary people. Ruth, Naomi and Boaz could not have imagined the lasting difference their faithfulness would make. In much the same way, a warm welcome, a cup of tea, a prayer, a flower arrangement, a financial gift or an hour freely given can become part of something much greater.

St Leonard's is not simply a building or a programme of services and activities. It is a community of people offering their time, gifts, faith and love to God and to one another.

So, to everyone who contributes to the life of St Leonard's in any way: thank you. Your generosity makes a difference, your service is deeply appreciated, and without you St Leonard's could not be the welcoming, serving church that it is.



BLOOM & PLAY

TINY TOWN

STAY & PLAY SESSIONS





Come and explore our pop-up role-play town, filled with beautiful wooden play equipment, ride-on toys and fancy dress. Designed for little ones to imagine, learn and play, children can step into their very own mini town featuring:



CAFÉ



SUPERMARKET



ANIMAL RESCUE



CONSTRUCTION ZONE



EMERGENCY SERVICES

All centred around a community park complete with an ice cream van, picnic area, post box and cosy reading corner – a calm, welcoming space particularly suited to babies and younger explorers.

90-MINUTE SESSIONS		
Friday 24th July	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Peter's Church Hall, Chorley (PR6 0HP)
Friday 7th August	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Peter's Church Hall, Chorley (PR6 0HP)
Friday 14th August	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Leonard's Church Hall, Penwortham (PR1 9JA)
Saturday 29th August	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Peter's Church Hall, Chorley (PR6 0HP)

Under 1 year

£3.50

Ages 1-6 years

£7.50

Discounts available for multiple child bookings

Complimentary refreshments included

DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-6 YEARS

SPACES ARE LIMITED –

FIND BLOOM & PLAY TINY TOWN ON FACEBOOK TO BOOK!

St. Leonard's Afternoon Tea

To be held on

Sunday 2 August 2026

in the Church Hall from 2pm

£15

per person

Please sign up on the sheet at the back of church - Don't miss out spaces are filling up quickly.



ALL PROCEEDS TO THE CHURCH FUNDS

Sidespersons, readers and coffee rota

Sun 26 July - Trinity 8

Generous Hope. Ruth 4.1-17 – Luke 12.27 – 34

8.30 – Peter and Angela Milner.

Reader: Angela Milner

10.00 – Philip Walsh *Reader:*

Brian Bamber *Prayers:* Rev

Simon *Coffee:* Linda and Alistair

Sun 2 August - Trinity 9

Genesis 32.22-31 – Matt 14.13-21

8.30 – Franklin Bello and Phil

Range. *Reader:* Andrea Waine

10.00 – Barbara Palmer

Reader: Ann Butterworth

Prayers: Diane Raynor *Coffee:*

Barbara and Christine

Sun 9 August - Trinity 10

Genesis 37.1-4, 12-38 – Matt 14.22-33

8.30 – Irene Farrimond and

Elizabeth Bunyan. *Reader:*

Philip Walsh

10.00 – Laraine Southwell and

Jenny Stanton *Reader:* Laraine

Southwell *Prayers:* Set *Coffee:*

Laraine and Ann

Sun 16 August - Trinity 11

Genesis 45.1-15 – Matt 15.21-28

8.30 – Susan and Phil Range.

Reader: Rev Janet

10.00 – Brian Bamber *Reader:*

Andrea Waine *Prayers:* Rev

Janet *Coffee:* Brian and Melvyn

Sun 23 August - Trinity 12

Exodus 1.8-2.10 – Matt 16.13-20

8.30 – Franklin Bello and Peter

Milner. *Reader:* Angela Milner

10.00 – Barbara Palmer

Reader: Ann Butterworth

Prayers: Rev Simon *Coffee:*

Linda and Alistair

Sun 30 August - Trinity 13

Exodus 3.1-15 – Matt 16.21 - end

8.30 – Peter Milner. *Reader:*

Andrea Waine

10.00 – Laraine Southwell and

Jenny Stanton *Reader:* Ann

Butterworth *Prayers:* Angela

Milner *Coffee:* Barbara and

Christine.

JUST TAKE 5

This week, a new feature appears on our service sheet: Just Take Five.

Each week, it will highlight five particular areas in need of prayer—within our church, our community and the wider world. Alongside these, there will be space to write the names of five people known personally to you, praying that they may come to know the love, hope and new life found in Jesus.

The names are for your own use and do not need to be shared with anyone else. The invitation is simply to hold those people

before God regularly, praying gently and faithfully for them and remaining open to any opportunities God may provide to offer friendship, encouragement or an invitation.

Paul wrote: “Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.” 2 Timothy 1.3

Prayer is not an addition to the Church’s life; it belongs at its very centre. Before plans are made, decisions taken or invitations offered, prayer opens hearts to God and makes space for the Holy Spirit to be at work.

Please take do take the sheet home with you and keep it somewhere visible. Five prayer needs, five names and five minutes may seem like a small beginning, but faithful prayer can make a profound difference.

CHURCH AND HALL DIARY

Friday 24 July

08:00 Friday morning prayers

19:30 Gilbert & Sullivan Group

Saturday 25 July

9:30 Vicarage Garden BBQ

08:45 A Purrfect Friend Jumble Sale

Sunday 26 July

08:30 Said Communion

10:00 Sung Communion

11:30 Baptism for Louis Proctor

Monday 27 July

09:15 Skylarks Community Choir

18:15 Yoga

Tuesday 28 July

09:30 Magic Moments Memory Choir

Wednesday 29 July

10:00 Weds Morning Communion

19:15 Rawstorne Singers

Thursday 30 July

18:15 Ling Shi Tai Chi Club

18:45 Choir Practice

Friday 31 July

08:00 Friday morning prayers

13:00 Magic Moments Disco

19:30 Gilbert & Sullivan Group

Sunday 2 August

08:30 Said Communion

10:00 Sung Communion

14:00 Afternoon tea

Monday 3 August

18:15 Yoga

To swim or not to swim?



Well, I have dug out the swimming trunks and located the earplugs, nose clip and goggles. All that remains is to decide whether to dip my toes back into the water for another August Swimathon challenge.

You may remember that last year you generously sponsored me to swim 21 miles in 21 days—roughly the distance of the English Channel, or La Manche for all the Francophiles among you!

Now, another year older and carrying a little extra Penwortham ballast, I am consid-

ering attempting the same feat again. The equipment is ready, the pool is waiting, but is the swimmer willing?

That is where you come in. Should I take the plunge and swim another 21 miles this August, or should the trunks be returned safely to the drawer?

So to swim or not to swim—that is the question!

You have until next Friday to persuade me. Let me know what you think—and whether you might be prepared to support the challenge once again!