

St. Leonard's NEWS

www.stleonardspenwortham.org.uk

Sunday 9 August 2026

Trinity 10

The Weekly Newsletter
for St. Leonard's Church

Marshall's Brow, Penwortham PR1 9JA



VICARS SWIM CHALLENGE



What the swim looks like in the Vicar's head!

21 miles in 21 days - the first week...

Last Saturday, your Vicar took to the water to begin this year's sponsored swimming challenge: to cover 21 miles in 21 days one mile every day for three weeks.

In all honesty, the first 20 lengths were tough. By the 25th, I was beginning to wonder why I had suggested attempting this at all! Thankfully, by the time I reached 30 lengths, my breathing and stroke had settled into something resembling a rhythm, and the second half of the swim was considerably better than the first.

Whenever possible, I shall be swimming early in the morning so that the challenge does not interfere too much with the working day. The downside is that there have already been evenings this week when I have struggled to keep my eyes open beyond nine o'clock!

May I offer a massive thank you to everyone who has already added their name to the sponsor sheet. The last time I looked, the pledges totalled more than £300, and I am once again humbled by your extraordinary generosity and encouragement.

Thanks to your support, I shall be back in the pool tomorrow and Saturday to complete the first seven days—and reach the one-third mark. Seven miles down, fourteen to go. Please keep the encouragement coming!

If you would like to donate online, please follow this QR Code which will take you to the GoFundMe Page.



Pictured are recorded swim times to Thursday August 6th

Sat 1 Aug	
Pool Swim Freestyle (1,600m) 08:04–08:56 Preston	
Workout Time 0:51:25	Distance 1,600M
Active Kilocalories 767KCAL	Total Kilocalories 882KCAL
Avg Pace 3'12"/100m	Avg Heart Rate 96BPM
Lengths 64	Pool Length 25M

Sun 2 Aug	
Pool Swim Freestyle (1,600m) 12:40–13:32 Preston	
Workout Time 0:52:36	Distance 1,600M
Active Kilocalories 789KCAL	Total Kilocalories 906KCAL
Avg Pace 3'17"/100m	Avg Heart Rate 91BPM
Lengths 64	Pool Length 25M

Mon 3 Aug	
Pool Swim Freestyle (1,600m) 07:06–08:01 Preston	
Workout Time 0:54:48	Distance 1,600M
Active Kilocalories 816KCAL	Total Kilocalories 938KCAL
Avg Pace 3'25"/100m	Avg Heart Rate 138BPM
Lengths 64	Pool Length 25M

Tue 4 Aug	
Pool Swim Freestyle (1,600m) 06:04–06:56 Preston	
Workout Time 0:52:43	Distance 1,600M
Active Kilocalories 764KCAL	Total Kilocalories 882KCAL
Avg Pace 3'17"/100m	Avg Heart Rate 88BPM
Lengths 64	Pool Length 25M

Wed 5 Aug	
Pool Swim Freestyle (1,600m) 07:06–08:04 Preston	
Workout Time 0:58:18	Distance 1,600M
Active Kilocalories 800KCAL	Total Kilocalories 927KCAL
Avg Pace 3'38"/100m	Avg Heart Rate 109BPM
Lengths 64	Pool Length 25M

Thu 6 Aug	
Pool Swim Freestyle (1,600m) 06:02–06:54 Preston	
Workout Time 0:51:52	Distance 1,600M
Active Kilocalories 781KCAL	Total Kilocalories 894KCAL
Avg Pace 3'14"/100m	Lengths 64
Pool Length 25M	

BUILDING THE CHURCH

By the middle of the twentieth century, Penwortham was changing, its population grew and so did the number of houses needed to accommodate them.

The Iron Church had served Middleforth faithfully since 1901, but it had originally been built as a chapel-of-ease—a place of worship for those who found it difficult to reach the parish church of St Mary. As the community continued to grow, it became clear that St Leonard's needed a larger building and a more independent life.

In 1959, the Revd Alan Reid announced that he would remain in Penwortham and take responsibility for St Leonard's. It became a conventional district, with its own churchwardens, electoral roll and parochial church council. The first vestry meeting was held in January 1960, and increasing congregations were soon being reported.

Attention quickly turned towards building a new church. Several possible locations were considered, including sites on Park Lane and opposite New Lane, but the PCC preferred land

on Marshall's Brow belonging to Miss Whitham of Alderfield Farm and Riding Stables.

The site was purchased in 1962 for £3,000. Raising that sum became a shared endeavour. A plan was displayed in church, divided into 4,840 small plots, and parishioners were invited to "buy" one for 12 shillings and sixpence. Threepences and sixpences were collected in a box at the back of church, while Sunday School children contributed halfpennies.

Interest-free loans, regular giving and a generous gift from the estate of Elizabeth Price meant that the church did not need to use the bank overdraft it had arranged. The land was formally conveyed on 31 October 1962, and a sign appeared on Marshall's Brow announcing: "Site for the new Church of St Leonard, Penwortham."

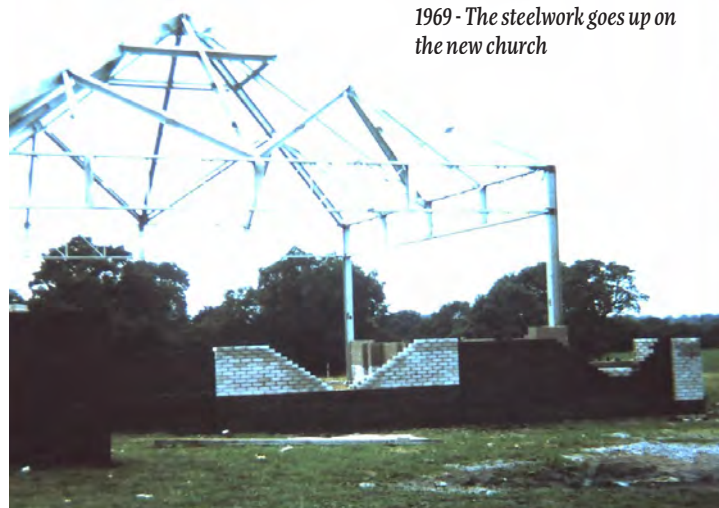
Buying the land was only the beginning. The church minutes record years of discussion about what sort of building St Leonard's should become. Should it have a bell tower, gallery, courtyard or chapel? Where



Summer 1969 - work begins on the new church



The south west corner



1969 - The steelwork goes up on the new church

should the font, choir, pulpit and altar be placed? Should there be chairs or pews? Could a Garden of Remembrance be created behind the church?

There were also more practical questions about toilets, heating, storage, parking and meeting space. One member warned that thought should be given to the kind of building that would be needed in fifty years' time—an observation which now seems remarkably perceptive.

The early vision was ambitious: a 300-seat church, hall and vicarage costing up to £50,000.

Financial restrictions imposed by the diocese meant that the plans had to be repeatedly simplified. The bell tower disappeared, the design was reduced and the church, hall and vicarage became separate phases of development.

Even so, the essential vision remained. The new St Leonard's would be simple and welcoming, with space not only for worship but also for meetings, music and the wider life of the community.

The final design provided seating for 250 people in a square nave beneath a pyramid

WE KNOW TODAY...



Laying the Foundation Stone

roof. It included a separate chancel, large side windows, a central aisle, a communion rail for thirty people and space for the organ and choir at the rear.

Mayor's tender of £24,287 was accepted in February 1969. The first sod was cut on 26 April, and building work began on 15 May.

On Sunday 21 September 1969, between 400 and 500 people gathered for the laying of the foundation stone. Led by the Leyland Parish Church Band, parishioners processed from the Iron Church to the new site. The PCC, choir, clergy, churchwardens and Bishop of Burnley then walked around the building in a formal perambulation.

The Yorkshire marble foundation stone was laid by Canon Rawstorne, and the bells of St Mary's marked the occasion



Ready for opening

with a full peal of 5,040 changes of Plain Bob Minor.

The building was completed on 15 May 1970, although preparations continued for several months. Pews and flagstones were brought from the Iron Church, both preserving a connection with the past and saving money. Members of the congregation gave generously towards

the organ, pulpit, lectern, communion rail and altar.

The new church was finally dedicated on Saturday 10 October 1970 by Charles Claxton, Bishop of Blackburn. Around 500 people packed inside, while the clergy had to robe in houses across the road. Refreshments were served in a marquee loaned by St Mary's Scouts, with tea and

sugar supplied by the Mothers' Union and milk provided by the PCC.

Interestingly, the building was dedicated rather than consecrated. Bishop Claxton explained:

"It is absolute nonsense to spend vast sums of money on building a fine new church such as this and only using it for divine worship for about six hours a week."

Dedication allowed the building to be used more flexibly for the community as well as for worship. It was not formally consecrated until 1980.

The following morning, the Bishop celebrated Holy Communion. There were 117 communicants at 8am and another 84 at 9.30am, followed by a children's service and Evensong.

The final cost was £26,466, 9 shillings and 5 pence. It was met through grants, a diocesan loan, a gift from St Mary's, investments, legacies, fundraising and years of faithful regular giving.

The present St Leonard's was therefore not simply commissioned and constructed. It was imagined, debated, prayed for and paid for by a whole community. From children collecting halfpennies to parishioners funding furnishings and buying imaginary plots of land, countless gifts helped turn a field on Marshall's Brow into the church known today.

Its story reminds us that St Leonard's was built not merely as a place in which people could attend worship, but as a flexible and welcoming church at the heart of its community. More than fifty years later, that calling remains as important as ever.



Please note, due to the holidays there will be no Newsletter next week

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CHURCH AND HALL DIARY

Wednesday 12 August

10:00 Weds Morning Communion

Thursday 13 August

18:15 Ling Shi Tai Chi Club
18:45 Choir Practice

14 August

08:00 Friday morning prayers
08:30 Bloom and Play Tiny Town

16 August

08:30 Said Communion
10:00 Sung Communion
11:30 Holy Baptism Oscar Cox

Monday 17 August

18:15 Yoga

Wednesday 19 August

10:00 Weds Morning Communion

Thursday 20 August

18:15 Ling Shi Tai Chi Club
18:45 Choir Practice

Friday 21 August

08:00 Friday morning prayers
19:30 Gilbert & Sullivan Group

Saturday 22 August

08:45 A Purrfect Friend Jumble Sale

Sunday 23 August

08:30 Said Communion
10:00 Sung Communion

Monday 24 August

18:15 Yoga

Sidespersons, readers and coffee rota

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.

Sun 6 September - Trinity 14

Exodus 12.1-14 – Matt 18.15-20

8.30 – Franklin Bello and Peter Milner. *Reader:* Philip Walsh

10.00 – Brian Bamber *Reader:* Brian Bamber *Prayers:* Rev Simon *Coffee:* Laraine and Ann.

Sun 13 September - Trinity 15

Exodus 14.19 – end – Matt 18.21-35

8.30 – Irene Farrimond and Elizabeth Bunyan. *Reader:* Rev. Simon

10.00 – Linda and Alistair Woollard *Reader:* Philip Walsh *Prayers:* Set *Prayers Coffee:* Laraine and Ann.

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

Date	Time	Location
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!