

A message from Bishop Guli The Right Reverend Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford, has written a message for the season of Christmas to Epiphany.

One of my favourite books of all time is by an American author, Henry van Dyke, who was writing around the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries. It's a short book, called *The Other Wise Man*, which you could easily read in one sitting. It tells the tale of a fourth and unknown wise man who sets out along with his three colleagues, but they get separated and he gets lost along the way to Bethlehem. The fourth wise man spends a lifetime searching for the Christ child, arriving eventually in Jerusalem 33 years later where he finally finds Jesus hanging on the cross. It's a profound and poignant tale about the significance of faith as a journey and it's a vivid reminder that the stories we hear around Christmas and Epiphany are inextricably bound up with the stories of Lent (where this edition of the prayer calendar takes us to) and beyond, to Holy Week and Easter.

As we begin another year with all the uncertainty that continues raging around us, and with continued worries about the cost of living and the changing nature of the church, it's perhaps worth remembering that the same Christ child who drew kings and magi to his crib, is the one who invites us to follow him still today. We have no idea where the journey may take us, possibly to the foot of the cross. But regardless of the destination, the way we travel shapes and forms us. Along the way, we catch glimpses of God's presence in smaller and larger ways, and we are held by the everlasting arms of the one who goes before us.

May God bless you during 2023 and may you know the love of God which surrounds and strengthens us each step of the way.

"May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the Magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. Amen." By Ray Pritchard



Soup Lunch

This Tuesday* at 12.30

*29 November, 6, 13, 20 December

All welcome: no charge (donations welcomed)

At Ford End Church

A big thank you to everyone who helped make Revd Dan's licensing service so special.

A warm welcome to Revd Dan and his family



Welcome to your Church Pew Sheet for Dec 2022



December Church Services

Sunday 4th Dec

9.30am – Family Service – Little Leighs
11.00am – Communion – Great Waltham

Sunday 11th Dec

9.30am - Communion with Sunday School – Little Leighs
10.00am – Communion – Ford End

Sunday 18th Dec

11.00am – Communion – Great Waltham
11.00am – Communion – Little Waltham
11.00am – Communion with Carols – The Chignals
5.00pm – Carol Service – Great Leighs
6.30pm – Nine Lessons and Carols - Great Waltham

Friday 23rd Dec

4.00pm – Crib Service - Little Waltham

Saturday 24th Dec

3.00pm – Crib Service – The Chignals
4.00pm – Crib Service – Ford End
11.30pm – Midnight Mass – Great Leighs
11.30pm – Midnight Mass – Great Waltham

Sunday 25th Dec

10.00am – Christmas Day Communion – Little Leighs
10.00am – Christmas Day Communion – Ford End

Sunday 1st Jan

11.00am – Joint Service – Little Waltham

Private Prayer

Little Waltham: Sundays 11am - 3pm

Little Leighs: open daily for private prayer

Ford End: open daily 10am–4pm for private prayer

The Chignals: Sundays 10–6pm – open for private prayer unless a service is taking place.

Great Waltham: open Mondays 1pm to 2.30pm and last Wednesday of the month 10am to 12pm

Parish administrator: Alison Bates

admin@littleandgreat.org.uk 07957 228467

Church Websites: www.greatwalthamchurch.org.uk

<https://churchesattheleighsandlittlewaltham.org>

Please Pray:

- Please hold Revd Dan, Ruth and the boys in your prayers as he starts his ministry with us.
- Dear Lord, we worship You during this Christmas season. You are our Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Help us to put You at the centre of our lives as we celebrate Your birth. Please comfort those people who struggle at this time of year.
- For people living in residential and nursing homes and those who care for them.
- For all our Carol Services that the people who come will enjoy singing the Carols and listening to the lessons and that they will meet Jesus. Give thanks for all our choir singers and organists in our churches.
- For all those who need our prayers due to sickness or ill health, especially Pat Mitchell, Luke Wiffen, Richard Gibson, Joanne McLachlan, Stephen Lidbury, Jean Sly, Izzy Reed, Teddie Emmett, Libby Hill, Dorothy Osborne and others we know.
- For those who mourn, especially the family and friends of Keith Brooker, John Trew, John Jenkins, Ernestine Prentice, Sheila Newell, Margaret Trow, Julia Bevitt-Smith and Richard James Porter.

Margaret Trow has passed away. She was the wife of David Trow, the former headmaster at Great Waltham school and had a lot of involvement in the church years ago.

The Harvest Supper ticket sales raised enough money to pay approximately £300 towards the cost of Dan's licensing service and £300 to the charity Sanctus in Chelmsford which supports homeless and vulnerable people.

Christmas Tree Festival - Great Waltham Church

Saturday 3rd December

Christmas Fayre – Saturday 11-4pm

View decorated trees in the church

With games, stalls, the big tombola, raffle, free craft for children and Church tours.

Tea and coffee, homemade cakes 11-3pm, Homemade soup and rolls at lunchtime.

Father Christmas arrives at 2pm.

Essex Police Band Concert - Great Waltham Church

Saturday 3rd December

Saturday evening 7pm for 7.30pm start with licensed bar

Includes Great Waltham School, Great Waltham Village Choir and Dance Projection.

Cleaning day at St John's Little Leighs on Sat Dec 3rd from 9.30 to 11.30 we are having a cleaning day at St John's Little Leighs. Coffee and biscuits included. Hope to see you there.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1.5

Daily Devotional for 2023

We have decided to read "Strength for Each Day" by Joyce Meyer as our daily devotional for 2023. Discover a powerful and positive mindset each day of the year with uplifting insights and motivational Bible verses. Please let Carol or Jo know if you'd like a free copy if you haven't done so already.

God Bless, Jo and Carol.

Christingle at Great Waltham Church

In view of time pressures, we are unable to hold this service on the 4th December and instead plan to have a Candlemas service in the new year. There will be a communion service at Great Waltham on 4th December at 11am and Family Service 9.30am Little Leighs.

Clock winder at Ford End Church

If you are fit and have some spare time once a week we would be grateful of your help to wind up the clock at Ford End Church. Please speak to Roger Bearman if you can help.

Great Waltham churchyard

On Saturday 10th December at 10am two lime trees are being pollarded and we would be grateful for help to clear away branches.

"Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:14

A Christmas card is being produced to advertise the Christmas Services jointly for the Leighs, Little Waltham and Great Leighs Free Church. The aim is to deliver this to as many houses in the villages as possible so we will need an army of volunteers to help with this delivery. Please speak to Marion Richardson - 07501 454785 if you can help.

Pastoral Care Part 1 Course

This course is an introduction to pastoral care skills rooted in a Christian context and is suitable for all who are in some way involved in caring informally for others and wish to develop their pastoral skills and grow their pastoral role within their church.

The next course will run on Saturdays at The Diocesan Office in Chelmsford, 2 sessions each Saturday from 9.15am to 3.30pm. The dates are Saturday 21st Jan, 18th Feb, 18th Mar, 15th Apr. For more info contact dhardy@chelmsford.anglican.org or 01245 294449

Carol Singing at the pubs - Wed 21st December

The Castle, Great Leighs – 7pm

The Compasses, Little Leighs – 8pm