

Leightonstone Mission Area Update

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“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”

John 15:12–17

1 What Is the “Leightonstone Mission Area”?

The “Leightonstone Mission Area” is a working title for the work we are doing to figure out how to be churches together in the Benefices of West and South Leightonstone. This is an update on the work so far, and a request for your prayers and thoughts.

Our ambition is to keep on doing what we are already good at, but do together what we can't do alone.

The villages of West and South Leightonstone are: Keyston, Bythorn, Molesworth, Brington, Old Weston, Leighton Bromswold, Catworth, Barham, Woolley, Spaldwick, Easton, Stow Longa, Kimbolton with Stonely, Tilbrook, and Covington.

1.1 Parish Representatives

All our parishes are invited to participate in and shape the work. The following parishes are currently involved, and the representatives will welcome your input into the work.

Parish	Representative
Brington	Vacant
Bythorn	Jon Croke
Catworth	Ken Payne John Hurley
Covington	John Fells Fiona McCulloch
Easton	Phil Bell
Kimbolton	Tristan Pithers Jamie De Souza
Leighton Bromswold	Jenny Saunders Jon Saunders
Molesworth	John Prentis Geoff Burns
Spaldwick	Vacant
Stow Longa	Nicola Matthews
Tilbrook	Pauline Swinden
Ministers	Revd Pamela Soutl Michael O'Callaghan

You can also contact Revd Philip direct at:

Email: revphiliphowson@gmail.com Telephone: 07946 206586

2 Finding Out What's Going On

At this early stage of working together, you can find out about worship together at:

<https://www.kymchurch.org.uk/wp2/index.php/church-services/>

Or there is the free booklet *Village Matters* produced by West Leightonstone churches or the WhatsApp groups, Facebook posts, and chats in the street that go on all the time.

3 What Do We Call Who We Are?

We have been wondering what we might call ourselves if we are to be a group together.

What do you think of this?



4 Working Out How to Work Together: a Joint Council

If we are to “do together what we can’t do alone”, we need a way of working together.



Thankfully, the Church of England now has a legal mechanism called a “Joint Council” where Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) can either merge into a Joint PCC, or they can create a *Partial* Joint Council where PCCs delegate specific functions but retain others.

At this stage we favour the creation of a *Partial* Joint Council because we already know our PCCs have great and caring relationships with their communities, manage church buildings and local finances extremely well, and have their own distinctive worshipping life. However, we also know that our PCCs and ministers haven’t figured out how to be church for younger generations who don’t share our long history. That’s where we need to work together.

That Council needs to decide on *functions* that parishes delegate to it. Our view is they should be:

Functions of the Joint Council

The Joint Council shall have a particular focus on mission and ministry to younger generations in our communities. To do that it will lead on, facilitate and collaborate with parishes in the following parish functions:

1. Mission and ministry which will include:

- a. Evangelism
- b. Pastoral care
- c. Discipleship
- d. The development of new worshipping communities
- e. Supporting local churches with targeted missional work

2. Employment of officers working within the Benefices.

At time of writing the emphasis will be for the Joint Council to be the employer of a Children and Families Minister. However, this does not preclude any other employment opportunities the parishes may wish to sponsor.

3. Safeguarding

The Joint Council will ensure all its activities comply with all necessary safeguarding requirements. It may also appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer who will act as PSO for participating parishes.

4. Communications, publicity and promotional work

5. Collaboration with and support of parishes in worship development.

What do you think? Let us know.

5 Recruitment to Priest-in-Charge of West Leightonstone

Archdeacon Richard has contacted church wardens in West Leightonstone to invite them to start the selection process for a Priest-in-Charge. Bishop Dagmar is nominating Revd Philip as the candidate.

The reason for this is to create the conditions for our two Benefices to create a Joint Council together that will be the employer for the proposed Children and Families Minister.

Archdeacon Richard's explanation is here, in a letter he sent to South Leightonstone PCCs: <https://www.kymchurch.org.uk/wp2/wp-content/uploads/2024-ADHW-letter-to-PCCs-about-PH-West-Leightonstone.pdf>

Please do pray for Revd Philip and our friends in West Leightonstone as they discern the way forward.

6 Sharing Ministry, Developing a Ministry Team

Did you know, all our villages together only make up about 4,200 people? For that small population we are blessed to have quite a number of licensed ministers.



They are increasingly working together, and you'll be meeting them more and more in our regular worship. The team have already decided to share in Lent and Easter together across the Benefices, so we hope for a wonderful celebration as we journey together to Easter.

Add to that the toddlers' group in Brington, the Outreach Team in Kimbolton, the Children's Church team, our many church officers, our home groups and the care we show each other, and we have formidable potential.

6.1 Your Ministry Team

Name	Role
Revd Philip Howson	Rector of the Benefice of South Leightonstone and Assistant Rural Dean
Revd John Rawlinson	Licensed Priest (self-supporting)
Revd Pamela Soult	Licensed Priest (self-supporting)
Revd Cathy Brazier	Chaplain to Kimbolton School and Licensed Priest
Michael O'Callaghan	Licensed Lay Minister
Jon Saunders	Authorised Lay Minister (Worship Leading) and trainee Authorised Lay Minister (Preaching)
Jenny Saunders	Authorised Lay Minister (Pastoral Care)
Vacant	Children and Families Minister

We also have other colleagues who are in training. They are:

Name	Role
Clare Firby	Authorised Lay Minister in training (Pastoral Care)
Angela Deavall	Licensed Lay Minister in training
Jen Forester	Ordinand (to be ordained and start her curacy in East Leightonstone in the summer of 2024)

6.2 A Fond Farewell to Revd Sarah

Our curate, Revd Sarah West, has now transferred to Brampton (East Leightonstone) to complete her curacy with Revd Duncan Goldthorpe. We bade her a fond farewell at Spaldwick on the 31st January.



A curacy is a form of apprenticeship and lasts about three years. It's extremely important to get the curacy right as new clergy learn the ropes and develop their priesthood. After review Sarah, Philip, and Diocesan colleagues concluded her curacy needed to be transferred for her benefit.

We thank Sarah and Ant for taking the courageous plunge to join us in the Summer of 2023, and wish them well. Our particular thanks for her wonderful work on *"Lead Kindly Light"* for All Souls, her very fine preaching and her commitment to Spaldwick's first Sunday service.

6.3 Training for Ministry

Did you know that the Diocese has well-developed training and support pathways to support and grow new ministers? If you've been itching to do something, just maybe God is telling you that you have a vocation?



Authorised Lay Minister training opportunities include: Social Justice, Children's Ministry, Worship Leadership, Evangelist, Preacher, Youth and Families; and, of course, there are full college pathways into Licensed Lay Ministry or ordination.

Take a look here:

<https://www.elydiocese.org/church-roles/vocations/developing-a-church-vocation/>

And if this grabs you, come and talk with Revd Philip

7 Church Buildings Partnership

The Diocese have approached the Leightonstone benefices to collaborate with them on a new model for managing our many buildings. You are invited to join Geoffrey Hunter (Diocesan Advisory Committee Secretary) and colleagues to hear more.



Details are:

Where	What	When
St Peter and St Paul's Church, Alconbury	Open to all. Presentations at 4:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	7 th February 2024
Zoom presentation	Presentation as above from 7:00 p.m.	15 th February 2024

Do please come; the event is open to all but may be of particular interest to church wardens, treasurers, and maintenance teams.

8 Sharing Lent and Easter Together

One of the first things we are going to do together is Lent and Easter 2024, and there will be a number of Lent groups you may wish to join.

To launch our shared journey to Easter, we will share the following acts of worship:

Event	Date and time	Location
Joint Service	11 th February 2024. 10:45 a.m.	St Andrew's, Kimbolton
Holy Communion with Ashing	14 th February 2024. 7:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	St James, Spaldwick St Andrew's, Kimbolton St Leonard's, Catworth

9 Lent Groups

We are organising Lent groups as part of our journey to Easter and will be using the Church of England resources.

If you want to know more about the Church's "Watch and Pray" materials, check them out here:



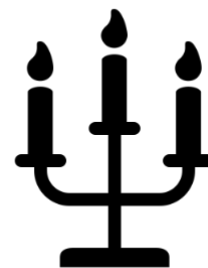
<https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-calling/what-we-believe/lent-holy-week-and-easter/watch-and-pray-resources-lent-2024>

We will publicise Lent groups on the Kymchurch website in a few weeks. Check here:

<https://www.kymchurch.org.uk/>

10 Praying Together

Revd Philip is hosting monthly prayer meetings at the Rectory to talk with God about our work together, and the parish representatives on the Working Group are all invited.



However, if you would like to join those times of prayer, more is merrier. Dates are:

Event	Date and time	Location
Prayer Meeting	20 th February 2024, 7:00 p.m.	The Rectory, Church Lane, Tilbrook. PE28 0JS
Prayer Meeting	19 th March 2024 7:00 p.m.	As above.

11 Last but Definitely Not Least: Prayer Requests.

The very least we can do is pray *“thy kingdom come, thy will be done”*. But if you want something more specific, how about:

Energy and
wisdom for all as
we work together

Claire, Jen and
Angela as they train
for their ministry

Shared vision and
unity between our
parishes

Recruitment of a
Children and
Families Minister

Our work to re-
model buildings.

Our PCCs as they
pray and work for
their parishes

Wisdom and
energy to support
younger
generations in
faith

Our colleagues in
the Diocese and
Deanery who
support our work.