

**ST LEONARD'S CHURCH SANDRIDGE
PARISH MAGAZINE
MAY 2026**



**DIARY FOR MAY
A TRIBUTE TO TREVOR
REMEMBERING DOUG HOBBS
EASTER AT ST LEONARD'S
ORGAN RECITAL
SUMMER FAIR
THE MARTENS OF SANDRIDGE**

MAY DIARY

- Sunday 3 10am Holy Communion
- Tuesday 5 10am Midweek service
- Sunday 10 10am Holy Communion
- Tuesday 12 10am Midweek service
- Saturday 16 10am-12pm CRAFT CHURCH for children and families**
- Sunday 17** 10am Holy Communion
3pm **ORGAN RECITAL** by William Fox, Director of Music at St Albans Cathedral, with tea and cake afterwards. **FREE ADMISSION**
- Tuesday 19 10am Midweek service
- Wed 20** 7pm **INSTALLATION** of the Revd Ritah Namakula as Vicar at St Oswald's church, Croxley Green
- Sunday 24 Pentecost**
10am Holy Communion
- Tuesday 26 10am Midweek service
- Sunday 31 Trinity Sunday**
10am Holy Communion

JUNE DIARY

- Tuesday 2 10am Midweek service
- Sunday 7 10am Holy Communion
- Tuesday 9 10am Midweek service
- Saturday 13 11am-3pm SUMMER FAIR - see page 11 for details**
- Sunday 14 10am Holy Communion

The church is open daily from 10.00am until at least 3.00pm
Cover photograph of bluebells in Langley Wood by Ros Adlard

Letter from our Vicar

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Elton John has a song called 'Sorry seems to be the hardest word'. I quite agree that 'sorry' is indeed a tricky word. But I think that for many of us 'goodbye' is actually the hardest word.



At St Leonard's we have said goodbye, or are in the process of saying goodbye, to a number of people who have been an important part of our church family.

On 29 March we said our formal goodbyes to Vivian and Christine Nutton, who have attended St Leonard's for about 30 years. Between them they have covered virtually every post in the church – ringing captain, church warden, organist, representative on both Deanery and Diocesan Synods, Flower Festival organiser. The list goes on. We celebrated by interviewing them and after the service there were, of course, refreshments. Vivian and Christine will be moving shortly, and will be sorely missed.

On 30 and 31 March we said goodbye to Doug Hobbs, whose obituary you will find on pages 4 and 5. Doug was a part of St Leonard's for many decades, especially enjoying evening services. And so, the evening before his funeral, Doug arrived at church and we had a small, quiet and beautiful service before he rested in church overnight, prior to his funeral when the church was packed. The goodbyes were both private and public. Again, he will be much missed.

On 15 and 16 April we said goodbye to Trevor Hawkins, who was associated with our church for about 70 years. Trevor was our church organist for most of that time, as well as being our steeple keeper. He taught many young people to ring the bells and accompanied the choir for decades. I received many lovely messages from those who had fond memories of him. The day of his funeral ended with a peal on the bells, rung jointly to honour the service of both Trevor and his good friend Vivian. There is a tribute to Trevor on pages 6 and 7.

The next goodbye on Sunday 19 April was to our wonderful curate Ritah, whose ministry has touched so many in the ten months she has been with us. We shall miss her greatly; no one more so than the Vicar, who has thoroughly enjoyed having a colleague to work alongside. We shall also miss her lovely family, and wish them the best in their new home and church.

Letter from our Vicar (cont)

These were all hard goodbyes. Yet we have had to say goodbye, trusting that God will go with them on their journeys.

Vivian and Christine go to a new life ‘up north’. May it be full of God’s blessings. Doug and Trevor have gone to a new life in heaven. I am confident that their new life will be one of peace, joy and rest, as they share in God’s glory. Ritah continues her journey as a minister of the church; carrying out her ordination vows to offer comfort and prayer, as she lives a life which speaks of God’s love for all.

Hopefully all of them will continue to feel close to us – through our memory of them and through the legacies they leave behind. And let’s hope that this is not a final goodbye in any case, that it is more of a ‘See you later’, whether that is on earth or in heaven. For no goodbye is final with God.

Every blessing

Revd Wendy

Remembering Doug Hobbs 1934 - 2026

Doug was born in 1934, the middle child of Alfred and Dorothy (Doris), growing up alongside his older brother Peter and younger sister Valerie within a close-knit community in St Albans. During World War II, he and Peter were evacuated to relatives near Newbury - an experience he later remembered with great fondness.

At Fleetville School, he formed lifelong friendships (a recurring theme throughout his life) and later attended Verulam Grammar School, where he enjoyed learning and discovered a love of singing. As a member of St Albans Cathedral Choir, he even performed a solo on the wireless - a moment of great pride.

Doug served three years in the Royal Air Force as a mechanic, proudly representing RAF Chivenor at the Queen’s Coronation in 1953. His engineering skills shaped his working life in the family businesses: Hobbs Garage, Tractor Shafts and Smallford Planters.

Remembering Doug Hobbs (cont)



A proud milestone came in 1980 when the company was granted a Royal Warrant as manufacturers of soft fruit harvesters to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In 1959 Doug married Joan and together they created a loving home for their three daughters, Carina, Melanie and Belinda.

Over the years the family grew to include five grandchildren: Gemma, Alexander, Luke, Laila and Jade, and two great-grandsons, Angus and Kit, with another soon to join the family.

Family was always at the centre of Doug's world.

Rugby was a lifelong passion. Alongside his father he helped secure the land for Old Verulamium's Rugby Club, where he was a player, official, and later President. Doug was also a committed Freemason, serving in Old Verulamium's Lodge and Cranbourne Chapter, including roles as Master, Almoner and Most Excellent Zerubbabel, and later as an Honorary Member.

An enthusiastic traveller, Doug explored much of the world creating new friendships along the way, particularly in New Zealand. Wherever he went, he was known for his warmth, kindness and unmistakable presence - often the loudest voice in the room, always polite and well-spoken, except perhaps on the rugby pitch.

Doug believed deeply in living with joy and humour, often reminding those around him "Laugh and the world laughs with you, cry and you cry alone." His life was full of family, friendship and fun, and he will be remembered with great love, gratitude and many smiles.

With thanks to Doug's family for permission to print this eulogy

SUMMER

at St. Leonard's

Sunday 17th May - 3pm
Organ Recital

Saturday 16th May,
20th June, 18th July
- 10am-12noon

Craft Church for Families

Saturday 13th June
- 11.30am-3pm
Summer Fair

Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th July
Flower Festival

Sundays 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd,
30th August - 3-5pm
Afternoon Teas

All events are free of charge • Everyone is welcome

www.sandridgechurch.org.uk

St Leonard's Summer Fair

Saturday 13 June: 11am-3pm

We all know summer is upon us when we start planning our ever-popular Summer Fair. This year it will include:

- Performances by the **St Albans Morris Dancers at 12.00 noon and again at 1.30pm**. Thank you to County Councillor Alison Wren for the grant to pay for this.
- **Hot and cold refreshments**, so why not come for lunch or afternoon tea? Almost everything is home-made.
- The **summer hamper raffle**, new last year and a great success.
- Good quality unwanted **gifts, bric-a-brac, toys and books**. Please leave any donations in church in the fortnight before the Fair.
- **Homemade bakes and preserves**. Donations are most welcome, please bring the day before or on the morning of the Fair.
- Stalls where you can try to win a prize, such as the **bottle tombola, guess the number of the sweets in the jar**, and more.

There will be other stalls too, some still to be confirmed. Cash is handy, as is a bag to take home your goodies. We do have a contactless machine if cash isn't your thing!! And we always welcome offers of help with setting up, clearing away, or manning a stall.

Please pray for sunshine and many visitors,
to make this a truly wonderful community parish event.

Revd Wendy Sellers

A Tribute to Trevor 1930 - 2026



Arthur Trevor Hawkins was born in Walthamstow on 11 March 1930, the son of a prosperous draper. His mother was a fine amateur singer and Trevor inherited her musical talents.

Unfortunately, he was born almost completely deaf, a handicap that did not stop him from a lifetime of music as a pianist, organist, bell-ringer and performer on the recorder in early music groups.

He was educated at the RNID School at Margate, where he was trained as an electrician and where he remembered seeing dogfights over the Channel in the Battle of Britain. His parents by then had moved with his brother to run a small hotel in Hastings, but wartime bombing made them move for safety to St Albans, where they took over two adjoining houses near Clarence Park. Trevor was a keen student, very good with his hands, so it was no surprise that, on leaving school, he went to work for Marconi in St Albans. He stayed there until he retired, working on calibrating and testing instruments.

About 1950, he learned to play the organ at the nearby church of St Saviour's. It was an interest he combined with electronics throughout his life. He turned his loft into a workshop for building electronic organs, serving on the committee of the Society of Electronic Organ Builders and continuing into his nineties to tune and repair electronic organs in churches around the country.

After his parents died, he inherited one of the two houses, which was filled with organs, keyboards and spare parts. He built his own portable organ which he played in his care home, as well as an ingenious harpsichord which could be tuned to any frequency, something essential in playing with early music groups.

In 1953, following the death of the Sandridge organist in a motorcycle accident, Trevor agreed to help out as organist "for a few weeks". It was a post that he was to occupy, save for a few years, until 2023, when the first

of a series of accidents landed him in hospital. Although he eventually returned to a care home in the village, he was never able to play or ring again, and died peacefully on 26 March, aged 96.

It was Trevor's musical skills and his endless curiosity that enticed him to learn to ring the bells at Sandridge in 1958. He joined the Herts County Association in 1959 and continued to ring at Sandridge, with a short intermission at St Stephen's church, until November 2023. He rang his first quarter on the Sandridge treble in 1960 and, 62 years later, rang the same bell for his last quarter for the late Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

A small wiry man, he climbed the long ladders at Sandridge as steeple keeper well into his 90s. He was ringing master for many years and continued teaching and helping with young ringers until the end. He loved tune-ringing on handbells and for many years ran a hand-chime group at the local United Reformed Church.

He was active in many deaf groups and was often called upon to help as a sign-language interpreter, especially in driving tests. An emergency stop, he explained to me, was simple compared with other instructions – no sign language, just a bash on the dashboard in front of the wheel! He was also for many years a trustee of a charity in Nepal, bringing Nepalese speakers to Sandridge when they were in England.

The Sandridge congregation was familiar with the quirks that were the result of his deafness, particularly if he forgot his hearing aids – unlike visiting preachers who, if they continued to preach or pray much longer than was usual, might find themselves interrupted by Trevor beginning the next hymn. Solving these problems was a test of ingenuity. An organ stop was altered to turn on a light in the belfry to announce the departure of a wedding couple, and he installed a hearing loop in the pulpit which functioned for several years as his private circuit, inaccessible to any others in the congregation with hearing loss. Other schemes were more successful, including a Heath Robinson-style construction that lit up the church clock face for decades.

Above all, Trevor was known for his kindness and his engaging smile. To the end of his life, he refused to let his increasing problems of both sight and hearing loss depress him and engaged fully with all around him. The ringers, church, and indeed the whole community of Sandridge, are much poorer by his passing.

With thanks to Vivian Nutton for allowing us to publish this eulogy, delivered at Trevor's funeral on 16 April.

Bellringing News

Local ringers rang after Trevor's funeral service and in two longer rings in his memory.

On Wednesday, 15 April, a quarter peal of 1260 Plain Bob Doubles:
1 Ron E Titmus; 2 Dianne E Crowder; 3 Julia Pentelow; 4 Hana Booth (Conductor); 5 Vivian Nutton; 6 Richard Hayes.

On Thursday, 16 April, in 2hrs 29mins a peal of 5040 Doubles in 4 methods: Grandsire; St Simon's Bob, St Martin's Bob, and Plain Bob:



1 Vivian Nutton; 2 Judith E Titmus; 3 Hana Booth; 4 Callum Hayes; 5 Robert J Crocker (Conductor); 6 Ron E Titmus.

This was also a farewell to Vivian and Christine Nutton, who are leaving Sandridge for Liverpool. Vivian was Tower Captain in Sandridge 1999-2024.

Trevor (2nd from right, seated) with his handbell group in the 1950s

From the Registers

Baptism:

2 March - Finn Pieter Tevendale
2 March - Aletta Suzanne van Roundsburg

Burial of Ashes:

14 March - Jill Patricia Bloomfield
14 March - Stewart Aldin Bloomfield
1 April - Terence Frederick Reynolds



Sandridge Evening WI



Last month Peter Dawson, a Trustee of Rennie Grove Peace Hospice, gave us a very interesting talk. It was obviously an emotive subject but was dealt with very sensitively. Contrary to people's perception, the hospice movement focuses more on people with life-limiting diagnoses living the best they can in the time they have left, rather than being places where people go to die.

Hospice care is free to anyone in need of their services. Care can be provided from the moment of diagnosis and continues, if needed, after your loved one has died. At a cost of £9.1m per year, raising funds is something of a challenge. The hospice only receives 14% of its expenses from the Government, so relies heavily on fund-raising from local people, e.g. charities such as Rotary Club and Lions, and people running the London Marathon.

Three local hospices have recently merged and the Peace Hospice in Watford is now the only one with beds, having 15 for in-patient care. Rennie House in Tring and Grove House in St Albans offer a range of day services including diet advice, exercise classes, help with mental health issues, and friendship and support for those going through a life limiting experience without the support of family. Rennie House also provides hospice services for children and 'Hospice at Home' care for people who wish to live out their final days at home. Compassionate Cafés are held once a month to support those who have been bereaved. At Jersey Farm Community Centre there is a Café on the second Friday of the month, run in conjunction with Ridgeway Church.

Over the past year the three hospices have supported around 2,000 people. They have 32 shops across the area, 350 staff who are paid and 1700 volunteers, who help with a range of activities: leading exercise classes, gardening support and many other activities.

Next month, the WI holds its AGM, which will be fairly brief (!) and then we will have time for tabletop games and refreshments. Sandridge Evening WI has existed in the village for over 50 years and we are very keen that it will continue to thrive. We would be happy to see any ladies from the village and surrounding area if you would like to come along and meet us. You would be very welcome.

Tricia Campbell

Organ Recital - Sunday 17 May at 3pm

As regular readers of the parish magazine will know, we are delighted to be welcoming William Fox, Director of Music at St Albans Cathedral, to give us an organ recital of works by well-known composers in May. This is by way of a thank you from the Cathedral Music Department for the church's donation of a digital piano to the Cathedral's choir rehearsal rooms.

William's programme will last about an hour and will include pieces written for the organ by J S Bach, William Boyce, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Johann Pachelbel and Amy Beach (1867 to 1944), who was a well respected American pianist and composer.

Like all our best events, the concert will be followed by tea and cake in the Roland King Room at the back of the church. Do come along and hear Will put our Victorian organ through its paces as you've probably never heard it before!

Ros Adlard

There is no charge for the concert or tea.

Donations to the church will be welcomed.

Craft Church 2026

**10.00am to 12.00 noon on
Saturdays for children and
families**

16 May

20 June

18 July

19 September - as part of Heritage Day

17 October

19 December

NB there is no Craft Church in August

We hope to see you there – all are most welcome.

Krystyna, Kathy and Jenny



St Leonard's Church, Sandridge
presents

AN ORGAN RECITAL OF POPULAR CLASSICS

By **William Fox, Director of Music,**
St Albans Cathedral



Sunday 17 May 2026, 3pm
Followed by tea and cake

FREE ADMISSION
Donations to the church welcomed

The Marten family and Ayot St Peter church

We were sent this article by Paul King, one of our readers, who thought it might be of interest. It first appeared in the parish magazine of St Mary's church, Welwyn.

Visitors to Ayot St Peter church often remark on the beauty of the wrought iron screen, especially when our volunteers have decorated it with flowers and foliage woven through the metalwork.

The screen was erected in 1908 and was donated by Selina Still in memory of her mother Agnes Frances Marten who died in 1906, and her stepfather Francis Marten, who died in 1891. Selina was the only child from Agnes' first marriage to the Revd Henry Hughs Still. She was born in 1858 but her father died within a year and the widowed Agnes married Francis Marten in 1866. In their later years, the Martens lived at Ayot Lodge on Ayot Green. After the death of her mother, Selina lived in Bayford.

Selina's inscription is written along the bottom of the screen:
'To the glory of God and in loving memory of Rear Admiral Francis Marten and Agnes Frances his wife. This screen is erected by Selina A. Still. 1908.'

A further inscription along the bottom of the gates reads:
'In remembrance of Selena A. Still who died 30th January 1912. This inscription is added to the screen she gave by friends who loved her.'

Francis Marten was part of the wealthy and influential Marten family who owned the Marshal's Wick (Marshalswick) estate at Sandridge. He was born in 1814, the son of George Sullivan Marten by his second wife Charlotte. George had a large family – seven children with his first wife Jane, and four with Charlotte, although only three of Jane's children survived into adulthood. Charlotte was clearly a loving stepmother as shown by the monument to her in St Leonard's Church in Sandridge, which carries the inscription:
'Her motherly care and affection for the children of her husband's first marriage were the same as for her own and secured for her the devoted love of every member of a united family.'

The Marten family and Ayot St Peter church (cont)

Marshalswick House was demolished in 1927 and the estate now forms a major housing area in St Albans.

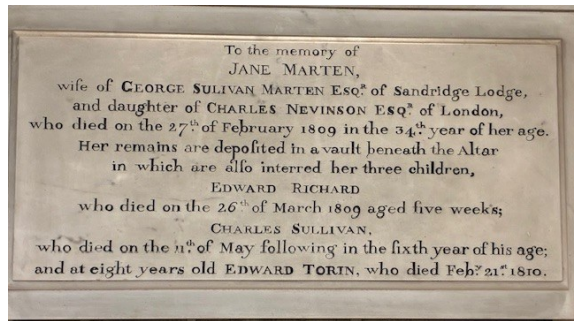
The donation of the wrought iron screen suggests a great attachment to our church. Despite this, Francis, Agnes and Selina were all buried together in the churchyard at Sandridge, where their grave is marked by a stone cross, close to the east wall of the church.

If any readers would like to know more about the Marten family, please see this webpage:

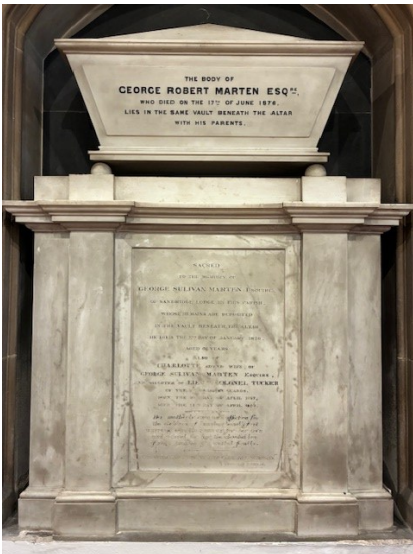
www.ayotstpeter.com/the-marten-family

Our church is kept locked when not in use, but I am happy to open it to show people the screen.

Valerie Richards



Monument to Jane in Sandridge church



Family memorial in Sandridge church



Detail of the wrought iron and gilded screen: from the Ayot St Peter website

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What would you do in the event of an emergency? How can a local church help in an emergency situation? Come along and find out!



WEDNESDAY 20 MAY

AT 7:30pm ALL WELCOME

Refreshments and brief AGM from 7:15pm
Ashley Church, Ashley Rd, AL1 5DA

St Leonard's Church becomes a court!

First published in the church magazine in December 1962 and assumed to have been written by the then Vicar, the Revd Philip Handford.

On Wednesday 31 October, St Leonard's church was used by the Chancellor of the Diocese as a Consistory Court. Normally the Bishop's throne would have been set at the chancel step and the Chancellor would have presided from there; our church has such a narrow arch and so little space around the chancel step that the Vicar arranged for the throne to be set under the west window and the space below the tower to be used as the court. An arrangement with which the Chancellor declared himself to be well satisfied, and an arrangement which made some think it would be well if we kept the space under the tower clear of pews at all times.

At 10 o'clock the Chancellor, in wig, white tie and stiff collar and gown, came to the 'court' and when he was seated proceedings began in the presence of a small group of the public. The court was held to hear an appeal for permission to erect a monument in the churchyard of a type of which there are many in this and other churchyards, but are now forbidden by the Chancellor's new regulations. The court managed to mix dignity with a certain informality, and it was made quite clear that everyone who wished to say anything relevant would receive a fair hearing. The petitioner outlined his petition and the grounds on which it was made; the Vicar was asked to inform the court of the arrangements now in force and those planned or intended for the care for the churchyard. After further questions to both by the Chancellor the decision was given that the existing regulations must be observed. It was however made clear that the special circumstances of the case very nearly outweighed the importance of regulations designed to improve the look of the churchyard in future years and to facilitate its maintenance.

The writer of this article is very grateful to the petitioner for giving the public of the parish the opportunity of seeing an ecclesiastical court in action. It is also a matter of significance that even with strong reasons for allowing this petition the faculty was not granted. We may safely draw the conclusion that memorials other than those complying with the regulations (posted in the church porch) will not be allowed.

Some may feel on reading this that nothing has changed in the last 64 years! Our churchyards are still governed by diocesan regulations, copies of which are posted in the church porch and in both churchyards.

Easter Day at St Leonard's



With thanks to our Flower Guild for the lovely Easter displays and to Peter Hyde for the photography

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Paper copies are available free in and outside the church, at
 Carpenter's Nursery, at JTB Butchers and Marshalswick Library.

Alternatively, please contact Peter Hyde
 via the church website for a copy to be delivered.

Family History Research
in Hertfordshire and London

All Enquiries Welcome

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Church Directory

Vicar: Revd Wendy Sellers 01727 301542
(Wendy usually works Saturday through to Tuesday lunchtime)

Churchwardens: Catherine Bailey and Lee Myers

We have a new generic church email address, which is:
sandridgechurch1@gmail.com
or you can use the contact form on the church website:
www.sandridgechurch.org.uk

We welcome enquiries about our services, including weddings, funerals and baptisms. We can also help with other enquiries; for example, about bell ringing, flower arranging, Young Church or our church music.

For enquiries about the parish magazine please contact the
Magazine Editor: Rosamund Adlard on **news.stleonards@gmail.com**

Our Safeguarding Team can also be contacted via the website contact form, or contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser directly on: 01727 818107 or 07867 350886 or **safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org**

Publication notes

The magazine is edited by Rosamund Adlard. Contributions of local interest are welcomed.






If you have such an article, or photographs, please do send them to the Editor by
14 MAY 2026
at the latest
please

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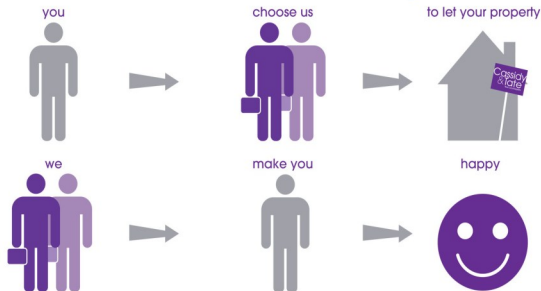


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