



NEWS

from St. B's



SPRING 2024
March / April / May

**St Botolph's Church,
Colchester**



ST. BOTOLPH'S CHURCH - PARISH INFORMATION
www.stbotolphs.org - 01206 542307

*We would love to hear from you whether it is about
an important life event or just to say hello.*

**Church Office - Emily Gooch - tel 01206 542307 or
email : stbotolphscolchester@outlook.com**

**Bookings (Church and Hall) Marion Branson
01206 570260 - branson@uwclub.net**

Vicar: - Revd Chris Smith Tel 07458 197461

Churchwardens - David Poppleton and Colin Nicholson

Parish Safeguarding Officer - Sarah Butcher

PCC Secretary - Gill Poppleton

Treasurer - Vacancy

Organist - Philip Elwell

Site Manager - David Poppleton Tel 570725

Caretaker - Alan Grimsey Tel 792845

News from St B's editorial team :

Ann Levy: 574210 annpatricialevy@gmail.com
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Colchester Deanery News - www.colchesterdeanery.org.uk/news

**The Church is fully open for our services
at 10.30 on Sunday mornings.**

Reasonable hygiene precautions are in place.

**I keep my eyes
always on the
LORD. With him at
my right hand, I
will not be
shaken.**

Psalm 16 v 8



From the Vicar's Desk



St Botolph's; a church with a legacy?

Since 1837, St Botolph's Church has been a place of welcome and music that helps people discover Jesus. Sunday worship, midweek bible study and prayer, regular weekday use by Crafty Drama, and of course, concerts and orchestras galore. These things would not be possible without generous givers, and with your help, we can continue to open, maintain and enjoy St Botolph's for years to come.

No vicar! Don't mention money!!

I must. I must say thank you to all those who have sown financially into the ministry of St Botolph's Church – so thank you, you really are appreciated. I must also be honest about the cost of providing Colchester with this bright, light, acoustically brilliant space. The news is full of rising costs, but the church is already familiar with big bills. Maintaining, heating, lighting and cleaning a large 19th-century building has always been expensive and is not getting any cheaper.

So, we are asking everyone who calls St Botolph's their spiritual home or who values what St Botolph's does and can do in our city to consider giving in a couple of ways.

Parish Giving Scheme

Whether you would like to make a one-off donation, or give regularly the Parish Giving Scheme is a secure way for St Botolph's to receive your donation. The Parish Giving Scheme is operated by the Church of England and keeps the workload of our volunteer treasurer as low as possible, while also handling gift aid (enhancing your gift by 25% if you are a tax payer) and offering you anonymity.

You can either use the QR code to the right, search for parish code 080608461 or use this link - <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/colchester-st-botolph-colchester/>



Legacies

Leaving a gift in your Will to St Botolph's Church is one of the most valuable and lasting ways you can continue to support the future of the building and our work in Colchester.

With expert advice, you could simply add a statement like this to your Will...

"I give _____% of my residuary estate / the sum of £_____ (pounds only) free of all taxes to the Parochial Church Council of the ecclesiastical parish of Colchester, St Botolph in the Diocese of Chelmsford for its general purposes, and I declare that the receipt of an officer of the Parochial Church Council shall be a sufficient discharge to my executors and trustees."

Or you could use the Church of England's free online will writing service by visiting - <https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-calling/lasting-gift-your-church/writing-your-will/free-wills>

Whether you choose to give right now or not, thanks for reading.

With love,

Chris

I am a Christian

When I say that "I am a Christian," I am not shouting that "I am clean living." I'm whispering "I was lost, but now I'm found and forgiven."

When I say "I am a Christian," I don't speak of this with pride. I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not trying to be strong. I'm professing that I'm weak and need His strength to carry on.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not bragging of success. I'm admitting I have failed and need God to clean my mess.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not claiming to be perfect. My flaws are far too visible, but God believes I am worth it.

When I say "I am a Christian," I still feel the sting of pain. I have my share of heartaches, so I call upon His name.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not holier than thou. I was just a simple sinner who received God's good grace,

somehow!





NOTES from St Botolph's PCC

There have been two PCC meetings since the last magazine (*No meeting in December*)

January 10th

- All C of E churches were being asked to look at their strengths and weakness and this was an ideal time to reflect on this. The vicar had produced a Survey for St. Botolph's on growing a healthy church. Every church member would be asked to read this and indicate at what stage they thought we were at this moment on seven headings.
- The vicar had been pleased with the Christmas services held at both churches. The Christmas cards that had been distributed had increased our congregations. Next year we should consider distributing more cards in our parish. He had heard nothing but praise for the service held at St. Botolph's on New Year's Eve. Christ Church and Castle Methodists had attended with Clive and Sarah leading the service. During Lent Christ Church house groups would be having Lent based study groups to which all were welcome. The Wednesday morning group would also study a Lent topic.
- The loudspeakers from the east end of the church had been sent to the manufacturers for inspection and repair but the manufacturers said that whilst the speakers were in good condition, they were not suitable for our needs, so it is proposed to sell them and the money put towards suitable speakers, or upgrading to include the possibility of adding audio visual equipment for live streaming services.
- A letter had been received asking if St. Botolph's would be prepared to offer the church and its facilities for an event at Pentecost for churches in Colchester. Ideally, they would like to use the Priory for a Picnic and Praise event. This would be organised by the C7 group of Churches who promoted the Free Family Fun in the Castle Park and other events. The church and hall would be free on that day so, if the C7 group could help with stewarding, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that we would offer and support the use of our church.

The PCC received full reports on Fabric, Finance and Bookings :

- The work on the sump pumps had been completed at a cost £1,870.49. Another £2,537.40 was paid to inspect the reason for the initial gas leak and to replace pipe work making a total cost of £5,742.74 spent on the church heating system.

- The Draft Accounts for the end of the year 2023 had been circulated. The Treasurer pointed out that planned giving was up on last year while the hire of the church was down, We had now paid our full amount of Parish Share and our end of year balance is up on last year.

- November and December had been busy months with lots of concerts and carol services. The vicar thanked Marion for keeping the booking diary and all those who had stewarded and helped them.

February 14th

- The secretary had prepared a list of jobs that Churchwarden David does. The vicar asked that they be emailed to the PCC with a view to planning future succession. The item will be placed on the next Agenda.

- The vicar asked members whether or not they had noticed that he wasn't wearing his robes at some services and what were their thoughts on this. There were various opinions and after much discussion it was agreed that as an experiment he and Revd. Emma would robe on Festivals and Holy Communions.

- St. George's Day would be celebrated on 21st April and the Morning Service would be a Civic Service welcoming the Mayor and the City Councillors.

- The vicar had attended the meeting with the council regarding the planning for the Britannia Car Park and made good representation on the necessity of keeping the car park. Sir Bob Russell and other representatives also made many points as to why the car park should be kept but to seemingly no avail. After the meeting the vicar and Sir Bob agreed to contact the church hirers and businesses to make their strength of feeling known.

- The vicar had also attended the C7 group of Churches meeting concerning the use of the Priory and the church premises for a picnic and service. C7 would provide insurance cover and security. He felt it was a good central place for town centre churches to come together.

- Revd Emma outlined her plans for a Junior Church, to be held once a month at the same time as the morning service. Some resources would be needed to be purchased between £100 - £150 was a rough estimate. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that this should go ahead.

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The PCC received reports on Fabric, Finance, Worship and Bookings

- The systemiser in the gents toilet is not working and needs replacing but it is out of stock at the moment. There is a loose tile on the roof and with the amount of recent rain the downpipe is blocked causing water to seep through the roof and down the inside wall. A builder has been notified to solve the problem. The only lights that had not been changed to LED were those in

the hallway and the vicar's vestry. To replace these with LED lights would cost in the region of £200 and it was proposed, seconded and agreed that this should be done. The loudspeakers that had been repaired were not suitable for our requirements. It was agreed to see if they could be sold.

- The Accounts were presented to end January 2024.
- Services for Maundy Thursday and Easter morning were discussed. The Agape service would begin with a simple meal followed by Communion. The sunrise Easter morning service would be held in the Priory, weather permitting, followed by a breakfast of bacon and marmalade rolls. Easter cards were needing printed to distribute. There will be no service on Good Friday but there will be alternative services at Christ Church and Castle Methodists.
- Bookings were increasing and we had some new organisations booking the church. An email had been received from Marion Branson saying that after ten years as booking secretary and for personal reasons she wished to retire from the job in the summer and she has been asked that she documents how she deals with bookings so that appropriate steps could be taken to cover that role.
- **The APCM would be held on 12th May following the morning service.**
- The toilet in the Welcome Area needed a good clean and updating and David said he would find someone who could quote for such an update. It was suggested and noted that our notice boards needed updating. .

Date of next Meeting:

Wednesday, 20th March at 2.30 pm in the choir vestry.

*Full Minutes of PCC Meetings and copies of the various reports
can be obtained from the PCC Secretary*

Annual Meetings will be held on Sunday

12th May following the morning service.

Dear Lord - Enable this church to do your will;
Make it vulnerable that it may speak with calm humility;
Make it outward looking that it may care deeply;
Make it a community of peacemakers and bridge builders.
In the midst of turbulence let the church make space
for the hearing of your still small voice. Amen



ST. BOTOLPH'S CHURCH

Easter Flowers at St B's



Photographs by Chris Kidd-Stanton

READERS' PICTURE GALLERY

Spring in Castle Park



Photographs by Pauline Palmer



Word from West Bergholt

Welcome to Spring

Writing this piece in advance, I'm aware that this edition of 'News from St B's' will herald the arrival of spring with its lighter days and displays of colour in our gardens. Like for many people, it's my favourite time of the year with its promise of better things to come.

For many years, I've been fascinated by the artist David Hockney and his works of art, especially his ground-breaking approach to photography. A lot of his artwork depicts the changing seasons, with a particular emphasis on spring. One of his recent books is entitled 'Spring Cannot be Cancelled' and he now lives in Normandy, partly because there is more blossom to be experienced there in the springtime. David Hockney does not own up to holding any particular religious beliefs, despite his parents being Methodists, but nevertheless he clearly rejoices in the renewal of nature that we welcome in the spring.

During the currency of this magazine, we will be celebrating the greatest event of new life that the world has ever known – the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ. So we can celebrate the arrival of spring along with the miracle of Easter and all that it means for us. To deliberately mis-quote David Hockney – the resurrection cannot be cancelled!

The photographs below show the bluebell woods and orchard apple blossom, both taken in West Bergholt last spring.

With best wishes,

Michael Foster



FIFTYISH YEARS AGO

During 2023 I have been looking at magazines of fifty years ago in the magazines of 1973. To my disappointment I cannot find any magazines of 1974. However I do know that in November of that year The Revd. Peter Evans was appointed vicar of St. Botolph's. He was our first Part-time vicar. Many will know Peter. He arrived with his wife and two young children from London as a breath of fresh air. However, inevitably not everyone liked fresh air!

One of his ideas, and there were many, he introduced a hike on Easter Monday and for several years and there are at least four of our present congregation who were on those walks. One stands out in my mind. It was Easter 1979 when someone had the bright idea of walking round Mersea Island.. I don't think anyone had thought about what the distance might be. Anyway, we began from one of the car parks in West Mersea. There were at least twenty of us including many children, mostly from the choir. I believe the youngest was about eight. We set off with great enthusiasm spreading along the beach to begin with until we reached the sea wall and made our way to East Mersea. The views of Brightlingsea and beyond were great. I can't remember exactly where we stopped for our picnic lunch but we found a grassy slope and quickly devoured our sandwiches and drank from our Thermos flasks. Reluctantly, we pulled ourselves up and begun walking with not quite so much enthusiasm as earlier. Eventually, we arrived at The Strood which meant that we had to cross the road. Shepherding that many people across the road was no mean feat, especially on a Bank Holiday but it happened safely. By this time it was well into the afternoon. On we trudged and eventually got back to our cars, a little weary but well pleased with ourselves for having completed SIXTEEN MILES!! Certainly a day to remember.

Gill Poppleton



May-Flower

by Emily Dickinson

Pink, small, and punctual,
Aromatic, low,
Covert in April,
Candid in May,

Dear to the moss,
Known by the knoll,
Next to the robin
In every human soul.

Bold little beauty,
Bedecked with thee,
Nature forswears



Crataegus - Hawthorn - May blossom

Despite our national familiarity with the Hawthorn tree, many people are not aware that we have two native species of hawthorn. The common hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna*, is the taller and more widespread of the two, often found along hedgerows or in scrubland. The midland hawthorn, *Crataegus laevigata*, is more shrublike and favours ancient woodland habitat. Both traditionally blossom in May time.

Colloquially known as May or the May tree, hawthorn blossom typically appears at the start of May in England and toward the middle of the month further north.

Hawthorn is a common sight across the UK. It is a robust, practical little tree, growing up to 15m tall even in harsh conditions. It's dense and spiky qualities make it a useful hedgerow plant as well as providing food and shelter for wildlife. Hawthorn trees can live up to an astonishing 400 years old and are steeped in mythology.

In the Scottish Highlands you might hear the saying:

'Cast ne'er a clout til May be oot'.

So, don't discard your winter clothes until the hawthorn is in flower, as cold snaps can catch you out until May at the earliest. Once hawthorn blossom arrives, the white and pink flowers coat scrublands, hedgerows and woodland edges, heralding warmer, sunnier days from here on out.

Thoughts from William's Garden

The Day of Flag-pole and Greenhouse - "you bad lad"

Spring already - doesn't time fly so quick. Not so long ago it was New Years Day. I'm going to take you folks down memory lane, back to the 1960s and to my Grandad Will's huge garden, which was called Greenlands.



It was where the new "so-called" Australian Estate is now, at the top end of Mersea Road.

Grandad Will's garden consisted of 1 ½ acres of garden and 4 acres of paddock. The garden contained a flower garden, vegetable garden and an orchard, plus soft fruit area. Also there was a large greenhouse. Grandad was looking to have a well in the vegetable garden and in his paddock was a stream fed by a spring at the sides where fresh watercress grew. He rented his paddock out to Jim, who had a horse. This was great because fresh manure was plentiful. It was my job on Saturdays to collect the muck cart from the shed and collect manure. I used to chuck it on Grandad's compost heap. I can tell you in the summer steam rose from the heap which was 10 feet high. Old Granny Mabel hated the smell but I and Grandad loved it.

This will make you smile : Grandad Will was like me and was patriotic of his country of birth, and 365 days a year the proud St George flag of England would fly. It stood 25 feet tall. One day as a nine year old lad I shinned up to the top of the pole to see how far I could see up Mersea Road. All of a sudden there was a creak and the long pole started to fall. I jumped from the top and landed in a laurel hedge. The top of the pole mast crashed into the top of Grandad's greenhouse. Granny Mabel rushed out on hearing smashing glass and a loud bang. She shouted out "You bad lad, look at Grandad's greenhouse". There was glass inside and all around his prize chrysanthemums. Me, being rather a boisterous lad said "At least Grandad wasn't in there". He was luckily in the shed.



Anyway, time marches on and that was all history. Grandad passed away in 1972. The big old house and huge garden and paddock was far too big for Granny Mabel, so all the land sadly was sold to a developer and by 1975 the "so-called" Australian Estate appeared. It also claimed Black Heath Bulb Company and Lapwoods Tomato Farm, which bordered Grandad Will's land. So that is the story of Greenlands.

Continued on page 13/

One final thing - I used to get paid 2/6d, which was half a crown, or today 12.5 pence, for the Saturday work. I used to buy sweets and a comic for the week. It wouldn't go anywhere now.

All for now folks. It will be back to normal from my own garden. So, as always, enjoy your own garden if wild or cultivated.

Just a short final message - Badger has created a new set at the corner edge of the garden, You ought to see the sub-soil pile it has created. Not to worry - their home is theirs, not mine.



Also now got a new garden cat : Tabster.



William Jolliffe

So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.
1 Corinthians 3:7



"I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there."

William Wordsworth

Your unfailing love,
O Lord, is as vast as
the heavens;
your faithfulness
reaches beyond
the clouds.

Psalm 36:5



A prayer for peace in the Middle East.

O God of all justice and peace we cry out to you in the midst of the pain
and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.

Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for
people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of
the land.

While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the
establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to
the peoples.

Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and
honour as your children for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

*This prayer was written by The Very Revd Canon Richard Swell,
Dean of St George's College Jerusalem.*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

St Botolph's Church is open for public worship, and Sunday morning services are being held, starting at 10.30 am.

Information about forthcoming services will be on the church notice board in the Welcome Area, on the church website www.stbotolphs.org and will also be in the parish newsletters.

Reasonable hygiene precautions are in place.

March

Sunday 3rd - Morning Worship

Sunday 10th - **MOTHERING SUNDAY** Holy Communion

Sunday 16th - Morning Worship

Sunday 23rd - Holy Communion

MAUNDY THURSDAY 28th at 7.30 pm - Agape (Last Supper)

GOOD FRIDAY - 2 pm at Christ Church - An hour before the Cross
10.30 am at Castle Methodist Church

EASTER DAY 31st - 7.00 am - Dawn Eucharist in Priory Grounds
10.30 am - Holy Communion

Clocks change

April

Sunday 7th - Holy Communion

Sunday 14th - Morning Worship

Sunday 21st - Morning Prayer - *St George's Day Civic Service
welcoming the Mayor and the City Councillors*

Sunday 28th - Holy Communion

May

Sunday 5th - Morning Prayer

Sunday 12th - Holy Communion - ***Service followed
by Annual Parish Meetings***

Sunday 19th - **Pentecost**

Sunday 26th - Morning Prayer



Sunday June 18th - St Botolph's Day

Lord Jesus, light of the world, shine in our hearts and in our lives.
Expose in your unquenchable light those things in us which need to
change In order that we may be more like you.
Help us shine Lord, to the glory of your name
Amen