



NEWS

from **St. B's**



Summer 2024
June/July/August
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.*

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**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
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News from St B's editorial team :

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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.

**Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its
twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that
summer is near.**

Matthew 24:32

From the Vicar's Desk

St Botolph's; a church with a vision



Who are we? Where have we been? And where are we going? The PCC spent a day with the Bishop of Colchester discussing these questions so that we can have a better understanding of how to lead St Botolph's church through the next season of our ministry.

At the heart of our vision is the desire to base all that we do on our belief that 'Jesus welcomes everyone'.

**Jesus said,
"If anyone is thirsty,
let them come to me and drink"
John 7:37**

The outworkings of this vision include improving our signage and advertising, connecting with our local primary school and engaging with both church planners and our City council to discuss how we can play a part in making the St Botolph's area an attractive part of our City. We will share more details as we move forward, but for right now, I'd like to share two parts of the day.

First, Bishop Roger presented us with the 'Everybody Welcome' course. This material was developed with expert advice from John Lewis to help churches look afresh at how they welcome newcomers and see visitors become regular members of the congregation. This is just what we want to see at St Botolph's, so the PCC has committed to running and attending the sessions, and we want to extend this invitation beyond the PCC to the whole congregation.

**You are invited to join us in the church on Tuesday
9th July, 13th August, 10th September and 8th October at 10.30am**

Continuation/

The other gift Bishop Roger gave us was a conversation about our relationship with God. He explained that the Church of England has done a great job of helping churchgoers grasp God's awesomeness – which is good. But, he questioned whether this has been at the cost of our understanding of God's intimacy with us. Just as God's awesomeness is significant to helping us grow in faith, so is the recognition of God's close, personal love for us.

To help us understand our relationship with God, the Bishop asked us to divide a piece of paper into four sections. We then drew a picture in each of these sections showing how we pictured God – when we were a child, in times of difficulty, when God is close and right now. This exercise was really enlightening, so I encourage you to give it a go and if you would like to share what you have drawn, I would love to spend time talking it through with you.

So, be encouraged. God is working amongst us to draw us close to Him and to draw others to Him through us.

With love,

Chris



A Prayer for travellers

O God, our heavenly Father, whose glory fills the whole creation, and whose presence we find wherever we go; preserve all those who travel. Surround them with your loving care; protect them from every danger; and bring them in safety to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

A CELEBRATION OF GOD'S FAMILY

God invites us to be members of his family.

On Sunday 14th April we welcomed twins Verity Beverley and Azalea Grace into God's family .

Revd Emma took the service and baptised the two little girls.

The Twins' parents, Sean and Lydia Buckley, used to live in Colchester, and most of their families predominantly still live within the Colchester and Ipswich area.

So let's take a few moments to think about and pray for this family and celebrate God's love for everyone.



God's family stretches across the world; through time, over continents and oceans.

In his family all are welcome.

His family brings people together; sad people, happy people, young people, old people.

In his family we learn to care.

In his family we discover that he forgives us for all the wrong things we've said and done.

In his family we learn to forgive others so that, together, we can start over again.

God's family should be a place of healing in body, mind and spirit.

He binds up the broken hearted and makes the wounded spirit whole.

In his family we learn to trust him through good times and bad.

He helps us when we are weak or afraid.

God's family should be a force for change.

He is making the whole world new.

God loves the world he has made; in Jesus he is putting right the things that have gone wrong; through his Spirit he fills us with new life.

Listen for his voice in your heart.





NOTES from St Botolph's PCC

There have been three PCC meetings since the last magazine

After a positive and interesting Away Day in February at Wivenhoe House, led by Bishop Roger, the PCC have spent time at the following PCC Meetings discussing a *Vision for St Botolph's in 2024*. It has been agreed to hold a series of *Everybody Welcome* meetings, for the PCC members and members of the congregation, to discuss a Vision for 2024.

At the following three meetings the PCC have also received various reports on other matters for PCC consideration.. The most important points are as below.

PCC 20th March

- Revd. Emma had already begun a Junior Church once a month and an approach to St. John's Green School was planned
- **Fabric** : The gutters had been cleared of debris and slates that had slipped had been secured. The lights in the hallway and vicar's vestry had been replaced with LED lights.
- **Bookings**: March had been a busy month. The Booking Secretary said that at the moment we only had two stewards and we needed more help or bookings would have to be cancelled. April was going to be another busy month but we did have a baptism and wedding to look forward to later in the year.
- The Bishop would be preaching at the Civic Service on 21st April.

PCC 17th April

- Revd Emma has visited St Johns School
- **Safeguarding**: Sarah Butcher, the Parish Safeguarding Officer attended the meeting and gave a talk on what safeguarding entailed and what we should look out for. Her full report is available.
- To help with the collection of parish funding, the Diocese is giving parishes bank card machines free for a period of twelve months, after which they could be kept, providing that they were being used advantageously. It was proposed that we accepted this offer and it was unanimously agreed.

PCC Reports continued/

- The church website has been updated by the Parish Administrator.
- **APCM** : The reports on the agenda at the APCM would be available to the electoral roll members two weeks before the meeting to give people time to read.
- **Fabric** : A plumber had been to look at the toilet at the back of the church and had estimated that to refurbish it would cost £4,572. Further estimates would be sought. Our first Aid Box in the church contained out of date contents and needed replacing.
- **Finance**: End of March Accounts were received and accepted
- **Bookings** : April is a busy month with 9 outside bookings: 4 concerts, 1 recording session, 1 school visit, 2 play reader group, 1 young archeologists.

PCC 8th May

- **A Pastoral team** had met and had a discussion on future needs.
- **The Electoral Roll** has to be renewed this year.
- **Heritage Open days** will be from 6th - 16th September and stewards would be required on those days 10 am to 3 pm. It was suggested a Memory Board be provided for visitors to record their connections and memories with St Botolph's.
- It was learned that the church needed to be re-registered as a place of worship to be able to continue as a Fairtrade Church. It was proposed and agreed that this should be done.
- Colchester Episcopal Area is to hold the Ordination of Deacons at St Botolph's in September.
- **Fabric** : The south porch has been tidied and it was proposed and agreed to purchase two cupboards to go under the staircase, for a cost in the region of £400.
- **NET**: Extra equipment was required by NET to upgrade their present equipment in the tower. A PCC resolution was required and it was therefore proposed and agreed that *The PCC agreed that NET could apply for a faculty to install equipment deemed necessary in the power for upgrading.*
- **Finance**: The accounts had been circulated and were healthy.
- **Worship**: Leaders of Services are now introducing themselves, as requested.

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- **Bookings:** Bookings were being handed over to Emily, PA at Christ Church. It was suggested that there should be an addition to the booking form that staging used should be assembled by the booked organisation and overseen by a church member.

Date of next Meeting:

Wednesday, 12th June 2pm in the Church.

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

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

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS (APM)

At the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, held at the Church on
Sunday 12th May 2024 two Churchwardens were appointed :

David Poppleton, proposed by Chris Kidd-Stanton and seconded by Jane
Humbles

Colin Nicholson, proposed by William Jolliffe and seconded by Philip Elwell

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)

12th May 2024

The Annual Report and Safeguarding Report had been circulated previously
and there were no questions.

Approval and acceptance of Accounts for 2023. The Accounts had been
circulated and acceptance was proposed, seconded and agreed.

Appointment of Independent Examiner. It was proposed seconded and
agreed that Michael Howarth should be accepted and thanked for this on-going
task.

Electoral Roll Officer's Report There are 43 names on the Electoral Roll having the last year lost six members but had gained three. After this meeting the Electoral Roll would be wiped clean and every person would have to re-apply before next year's meeting.

Church Warden's Report The report had been circulated previously but, since the year end, the church architect had carried out the Quinquennial inspection, and although the full report had not yet been received there were several important but minor things to be done on the outside of the building but there was nothing major needed.

Invite to Everybody Welcome This is a five week course that the PCC has committed to do plus any member of the congregation who would like to join them. The first four would be held monthly, on a Tuesday morning and the fifth during a Sunday service.

Elections of PCC Members to serve for three years.

The following were elected:-

David Branson, Pat French, Jackie Haylett, Chris Kidd-Stanton, Gill Poppleton

There being no further questions, the Vicar closed the meeting with a prayer.

Following the APCM there was a short PCC Meeting to elect :

Gill Poppleton - Minute Secretary

Treasurer - Vacant (Acting treasurer - David Poppleton)

Electoral Roll Secretary - Jackie Haylett

Standing Committee : The Vicar and the two Churchwardens

*Look back and thank God.
Look forward and trust God.
Look around and serve God.
Look within and find God!*

How do we grow the number of children and young people in our churches?

In 2022 the Church of England researched churches that have grown their engagement with under 18s.

The first thing we can do as a church is **PRAY**.

- Pray for families, children and young people to come to faith.
- Pray for our church.
- Pray for God's wisdom and guidance.

PRIORITISING children, young people and families in our churches is fundamental. In most cases one of the key drivers has been committed leadership that sets the culture and sees youth and children's ministry as an essential priority.

We can **RESOURCE** growth through a range of activities such as toddler groups, craft activities, Messy Church, parent groups and youth groups. Volunteers are your best resource and if you have the option of employing a Youth and Children's Worker this can accelerate growth.

ADAPTING is crucial. The church must be prepared to change to ensure that it's a welcoming place for all ages. This might impact services and activities.

Churches that are growing acknowledge the whole family in their services, not just in their family activities.

This isn't just about leadership, this is about **YOU**. It's about everybody in the church. Whether you are 95 and can offer to pray for younger people or only five and can invite a friend along, we all have a part to play.



A Summer Wedding

In 2014, while in the county of Maramures in northern Romania, I visited Breb, a village “miles from anywhere” - about which I had read in William Blacker’s book, *Along the Enchanted Way*.



A country bus dropped me at the top of a hill, down which I walked to Breb. To my amazement, immediately I met an ENGLISHMAN, who told me proudly that he was formerly a photographer for *The Sun*. He tried to rent me one of his wooden cabins, for an exorbitant price. I declined politely, and found accommodation in a wooden cottage (all to myself), on a farm for next-to-nothing; the farmer’s mother brought over my breakfasts and my evening meals, from the farmhouse, also for next-to-nothing.

On the day I arrived there was a wedding at the local church.

The party that followed took place right next to my farm, and I “gawped” unashamedly at the wedding guests. The girls and young women wore headscarves, white blouses and flared skirts; the young men wore white shirts under embroidered waistcoats and tall, straw, Maramures summer hats.



Continuation/

After the partying, they all gathered together and, with pipers piping, drummers drumming and fiddlers fiddling, they set off along a grassy track through the village. It is one of my best memories of Romania: I felt as if I was back in the 19th century, perhaps in a novel by Thomas Hardy.

On my last evening in Breb, the grandmother led me to a walled courtyard and into a wooden hut, where the farmer and others were busy distilling a plum brandy called horinca, and I was given a tot. It all seemed very secretive. Legal or illegal, I didn't know!

As often happened when I was in Romania, I was asked if I had met Prince Charles (as he was then). When I said No, they were surprised. They had met him (as have many people in Romania), and he owns a house in Breb. I wonder if he has tried the horinca!

Nicky Phillips

"What is one to say about June, the time of perfect young summer, the fulfilment of the promise of the earlier months, and with as yet no sign to remind one that its fresh young beauty will ever fade."

Gertrude Jekyll



FIFTYISH YEARS AGO

Once again I have been re-reading the magazines of June, July and August from fifty years ago. It would appear to be a time of change. Revd. William Murray, having delayed his retirement for several months wrote in June that he and Mrs. Murray had moved out of the vicarage and into a house in Beverley Road to free up the vicarage for the next incumbent although that didn't happen until the licensing in December. Revd. Murray pointed out that it was only in the last twenty years that the vicarage had been in St. Botolph's Parish as earlier it was in the parish of St. James. Now of course it is back in St. James and is now their vicarage/rectory. Although the Murrays had moved it would seem that he carried on at St. Botolph's until November.

In May there appeared a strange request for ladies to look in their sewing baskets for any spare thimbles they may have and give them to John Witard or David Poppleton. David has no idea why! Have you?

In the July/August edition Henry Spyvee, the secretary of the Colchester Churches wrote about two things they were working on.

"High Woods Project. *This development between Turner Road and Ipswich Road will have a population of 11,000. What churches will it have? The Cecil's Executives have proved a useful meeting point for church leaders to discuss this. Anglicans, Baptists, Methodises and the United Reformed Church want to share a united witness from one building. As well as a church this building could be Community Centre and linked to a shared church school.*

The Drug Problem. *We are looking into what the Church ought to be doing. Are there people in your church who could help in this? Or people who could work with addicts? The right people exist in our churches – they will not be found solely among the young."*

Have we made progress?

Gill Poppleton





**Read your Bible, pray every day, pray every day,
pray every day,
Read your Bible, pray every day, if you want to grow ...'**

These are the first 2 lines of a Chorus I sang in Sunday School, many years ago. How important it is to put those words into action every day of our lives.

To help with the Bible reading, there are books published on a regular basis, that give daily readings with commentaries by very knowledgeable people. I use 'Daily Bread', which is produced quarterly by the Bible Reading Fellowship. It is possible to take out a subscription but I order mine from Red Lion Books in Colchester High Street.

I will be delighted to help, if you need any further information'.

Pat French



A Prayer to Begin Summer

For more light in the day, we thank you,
For gentle mornings, we thank you,
For night time conversations, we thank you,
For friends and family, we thank you,
For gardens and all manner of creatures, we thank you.
Help us, Creator and lover of our souls.
Help us love this earth.
Help us dwell wholeheartedly in our lives this day.
Help us pray as we walk, work, play, rest, and create.
Amen.



Word from West Bergholt

Does God use a Helicopter or a Parachute?

Like many of us, when I consider the state of the world today (locally, nationally and internationally) I do wonder where we're all heading. And as I necessarily write these pieces in advance, I'm wondering at the moment what will have happened between the now of my writing this and the then of you reading it. How will the situation have changed in Ukraine, Gaza, and elsewhere?

It can sometimes be tricky to discern the presence of God in difficult situations, especially those involving conflict. This has led me to question whether God predominantly uses a helicopter or a parachute. The first option involves God directly intervening and possibly effecting some sort of rescue. The second option involves God joining us in difficult situations and then accompanying us through whatever happens. I believe that the incarnation points to God's preference for using a parachute, and my own experience bears this out. But what do you think, and what's your experience? Next time I'm at St. Botolph's, please feel free to give me your answer to the rather strange question of whether God uses a helicopter or a parachute – or both.

To cheer us up, here are a couple of photographs taken at the Markshall estate near Coggeshall.

With best wishes,

Michael Foster



Thoughts from William's Garden



LOTS OF BUTTERFLIES BUT FEW DUCKS.

Before i mention summer, I just want to tell you folks what a remarkable spring we have had. I've never known such glorious green, either on trees or grassland. Why? Because it has been the wettest six months from October to April since 1893 and very few frosts. Another thing, my magnolia tree was the best ever for blossom - the earliest it has flowered in its 60 years. I planted it with my Father in October 1964. Talk of trees my 90 year old Merton Glory cherry tree is gradually passing away. In fact half of it has already. I shall cut the dead half out in June and half prune the side which still has life. My Grandfather Harry planted the tree in 1935. Merton Glory is the earliest sweet cherry in England. As a lad I had great moments climbing the tree and picking the fruit. The best were always at the top. Starlings often scrumped them.

What a spring it has been for bluebells and forget-me-nots. The chestnut spinney at the back of the garden has been a delight.



I have now got a fox living in the back garden. He has used an old badger hole for entrance. The badger has created a new set in the bank at the side of the wood. Foxes and badgers do not seem to mind each other. Out of the two, badger is the strongest - a thick-set broad backed animal. But fox is the fastest. Badgers do not run quick. I still have a Muntjac deer visit. He lives in the meadow land near Bourne Pond.



Thinking of the pond, which is only a twenty second walk from my side garden, sadly at this time very few ducks are now on the pond and no swans. Is it bird flu? Or could it annoyingly be water pollution. In the 1950s the water was much clearer than it is now. You could see fish swimming in it and there was a heron and a kingfisher. They were the days, when very few motor cars were on the roads. Most folk walked with the legs they were born with, or it was the faithful bicycle.

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All for now folks. I am just going to gather some parsley for my fish supper, as it is Friday.

So, as always, enjoy your garden, if wild or cultivated. Please remember wild gardens are God's gardens. Cultivated are Man's. Now I am past 70 years, it is the God given one for William. Cultivated has become a little sweated labour. I don't worry - I've got great memories of this garden which was Grandad Harry's. I'm really just a lodger in the old house and large garden.

Finally, a great spring for butterflies- brimstone, common blue and speckled wood. These three butterflies are seen early April and I have also seen a peacock and admiral.

William Jolliffe



You can't plant a seed and pick the fruit the next morning.

Reverend Jesse Jackson



May you walk with God this summer
In whatever you do wherever you go.
Walking with God means...
Walking with honesty and with courage,
Walking with love and respect
And concern for the feelings of others.

May you talk to God this summer
And every day and In every situation.
Talking with God means...
Praying words of praise,
For the beauty of creation.
Saying prayers of thanks
For friends and good times.
Asking God's help in all your decisions.
Expressing sorrow when you have failed.
May you talk with God
Every day
Amen

“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”

— *John Wesley* 1703 - 1791



A Smile

by
Jez Alborough

Smiling is infectious,
you catch it like the flu.
When someone smiled at me
today
I started smiling, too.

I passed around the corner
and someone saw my grin.
When he smiled, I realized,
I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about my smile
and then I realized its worth.
A single smile like mine could
travel right around the earth.

If you feel a smile begin
don't leave it undetected.
Let's start an epidemic quick
and get the world infected.



*“A single sunbeam is enough to
drive away many shadows.”*
~ *St. Francis of Assisi*

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.

June

Sunday 2nd 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Sunday 9th 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Sunday 16th 10.30 am - St Botolph's Day service- we will be joined by Christ Church for a joint service followed by a bring and share lunch

[Tuesday 18th St Botolph's Day]

Sunday 23rd 10.30 am COMMUNION SERVICE

Sunday 30th 10.30 am Service at Castle Methodist Church

July

Sunday 7th 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Tuesday 9th - 10.30 am Everybody Welcome Course

Sunday 14th 10.30 am COMMUNION SERVICE

Sunday 21st 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Sunday 28th 10.30 am COMMUNION SERVICE

August

Sunday 4th 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Sunday 11th 10.30 am COMMUNION SERVICE

Tuesday 13th - 10.30 am Everybody Welcome Course

Sunday 18th 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Sunday 25th 10.30 am COMMUNION SERVICE

September

Sunday 1st 10.30 am MORNING PRAYER

Lord, we praise you for this beautiful, exciting, and restful season. Help us not to let it go by without seeking You in the midst of it. We pray that we would bring you glory with our time, our rest, and our efforts. Amen