



# NEWS

from **St. B's**



**Autumn 2024**  
**September/October/November**  
**St Botolph's Church,**  
**Colchester**

# ST BOTOLPH'S CHURCH

Everyone is welcome

Sunday services – 10.30am

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

## Church Office

Emily Gooch - 01206 542307 -  
stbotolphscolchester@outlook.com

## Vicar

Revd Chris Smith - 07458 197461

## Churchwardens

David Poppleton and Colin Nicholson

## Parish Safeguarding Officer

Sarah Butcher

## News from St B's Team

Ann Levy – 01206 574210 - annpatricialevy@gmail.com  
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Colchester Deanery News - [www.colchesterdeanery.org.uk/news](http://www.colchesterdeanery.org.uk/news)

St Botolph's Church has been a place of welcome and music that helps people discover Jesus since 1837. Would you like to give generously so we can continue that work for years to come?

**You can give in person, via the church office or using this link:**

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/colchester-st-botolph-colchester/>

01206 542307 – [www.stbotolphs.org](http://www.stbotolphs.org)



Autumn -  
When the bold branches  
Bid Farewell to rainbow leaves  
- B. cybrill -

## From the Vicar's Desk



### Awesome... Amazing... Close!

We've been talking about how well the church has communicated a sense of God's awesomeness. God is incredible, powerful and wonderful – we could go on until we run out of words. And the other thing we have been talking about is how this amazing, all-powerful God wants to be close to each one of us.

This second truth - God's desire to be close to us - is often missing or downplayed in church life, so we need to bring it back to the forefront and discover how to hold the whole picture of the incredible creator God who longs to spend time with his creation.

The Bible is the story of the God who loves us. We were created for intimacy with God; He made us so that we might be with Him. And this is the great tragedy of the fall; humanity losing out on that intentional closeness with God. The rest of the story then falls into place; God the loving creator working to restore relationship with His people.



God loves you is the heart of the Christmas message - we celebrate the arrival of Jesus as Immanuel, meaning 'God with us'.

God loves you is the heart of Jesus' ministry while he walked on earth - loving ordinary people, getting close to them, sharing life with them, touching the untouchable and being with those who didn't stand a chance of being part of the 'in' crowd.

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God loves you is the heart of the Easter story - Jesus suffering and rising with us to clear away every obstacle so we can be close to Him again.

God loves you is the heart of Pentecost - His Holy Spirit poured into our hearts so we can journey each day with God living in us.

And God loves you is our eternal destiny - when our earthly life is finished, we are promised the closest possible relationship with God forever.

What a promise. It is great to know our destiny and our great hope for life beyond the grave. But just one step back from this final promise is our present reality – we live in the days of God having already done everything necessary for us to enjoy a close, personal relationship with him, knowing that His Spirit lives in each of us. We don't have to work for it, or earn it – it is a wonderful gift from our loving God.

The challenge is to receive this truth and live each day knowing that God has already made all the big, bold moves required for us to be close to him. And then, the decision is whether we want to open ourselves fully to God and experience the relationship he offers.

Let's pray...

*Father God, thank you for all you have done to restore our relationship with you. Help us to, as we learn to experience your closeness every day. Help us to grow in intimacy with you. We ask this in Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*





## NOTES from St Botolph's PCC

There have been two PCC meetings since the last magazine

**12th June**

### **Vision**

- After contact by Revd Chris and Revd Emma with St John's Green School it is hoped to hold a Harvest Festival Service for the school in the church.
- The vicar would contact the university chaplain and ask if there was a list of churches welcoming students and if so, could our church be added.
- A response from the DAC was still awaited as to where and what signage we could put up to make our presence felt as a worshipping church. Until that happened the centre panel of our outside notice board would be cleaned up and relevant information added.

### **Correspondence**

- The Colchester Archaeological Trust had requested agreement to a survey of All Saints Churchyard as they believed that there could be Roman remains there. If so, they would like to do a second survey by digging a couple of points. Subject to response from the Archdeacon, agreement to the request was duly proposed, seconded and agreed..
- The Friends of the Priory had noticed that people walking from the Britannia Car Park took short cuts across the grass making the grass beyond repair and requested we agree to them asking the Council to make hard tarmacked paths where people walked. This was agreed and they would be informed.

### **Reports**

- Fabric –Only one quote for refurbishing the toilet in the Welcome Area had been received , although three plumbers had been to look, they had declined. There was still one more to quote.
- The full quinquennial report had now been received. There are several items that had to take priority, much of it being work on the Hall, and the aim is to complete them in a year. At a guess this work would cost in the region of £20,000 and it was agreed to research obtaining grant possibilities Two new cupboards had been installed in the south porch which had tidied it up, and it was agreed to arrange a day to give the whole church a thorough clean.

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- Finance – The Acting Treasurer presented the accounts to the end of May. The red bucket charity for The Red Cross had raised just over £100 which included Gift Aid.
- Bookings – Marion was now in the process of handing the bookings diary over to Emily. To carry on hiring the church for concerts we needed more stewards.

## 17th July

### Vision

- A quote for replacing the sound system had been received as it was more likely to receive grants for a larger project including the Quinquennial work, it was agreed to put the two projects together. It was decided to prepare a budget for the quinquennial work and the sound system. The Vicar would speak with the Archdeacon as to whether Faculty or Archdeacon's certificate would be needed.
- There had been more contact with St. John's Green School. The Vicar and Revd. Emma took part in an Assembly and in October the Vicar would take a lesson with Year 4 children.
- A draft of a contact card in a postcard size with room for names and address was approved. These cards would be available in several places in the church and a post-box for returning the cards would be prepared. The Vicar had also prepared a baptismal leaflet explaining what baptism was and what was entailed. These would also be found at various points in the church.
- It was agreed that we now needed to hire a caretaker for Saturday evenings. This would include clearing up after concerts and making sure that the church was ready for a Sunday Service. It was agreed that we proceed with writing a job description.
- **Ordination service** at St Botolph's in September:  
We were asked to welcome visitors entering the church and provide refreshments after the service.

### Policies

- Health and Safety – This policy needed updating to ensure that hirers took full responsibility for the safety of their members, particularly with the erecting and taking down of the staging. PCC members were asked to review our existing policy and bring suggested updates to the September meeting.
- Organist Contract. This contract had been drawn up from the Royal School of Church Music and saw a 5% pay rise for our organist. It was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously that we adopt this contract.

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- Discipline and Grievances Procedure – This document having been circulated prior to the meeting all were in favour of adopting this policy.

### **Reports**

- **Fabric** - A second quote for upgrading the toilet in the Welcome Area had been received and was cheaper than the first quote. Other companies asked to quote had not replied. The work would need an Archdeacon's certificate which would not be given immediately so in the meantime the second contractor be told that he had secured the work.
- **Cleaning Days** –Two cleaning days, Friday 6<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September were suggested. Both these days fell during Heritage Open Days so only one person would be needed to steward as others would be working in the building.
- **Finance** – The Treasurer predicted that a surplus of £10,000 at the end of the year.
- **Worship** – 15 pastoral care forms had been sent to people who were no longer able to get to church physically or had a connection to St. Botolph's. Pauline Palmer has so far received 8 forms, and more are expected soon.
- **Bookings** – Marion handing over her role as Booking Secretary to Emily was going well. July and August were quiet months for bookings. T & C's for the hiring of the premises needed updating and incorporate safety conditions. The Vicar thanked David and Marion for all their work.

### **No PCC Meeting was held in August.**

The next PCC meeting will be Wednesday, 11th September 2024  
in the church at 2.00 pm.

*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



## THE FABRIC OF OUR CHURCH

Our lovely Church building needs looking after, and as soon as one task is completed others appear in need of action.

The PCC have already planned for the up grading of the toilet in the Welcome Area and quotations are in hand for the much-needed improvements to our Audio and Visual facilities.

In April this year we received our Architect's report following the Quinquennial Inspection of the Fabric of our building, and whilst there is no major task, there are many lesser, though important, matters that need attention during the next 12 months. These include replacement of a quantity of slates on the nave roof, re-rendering of part of the lower walls around the hall, re-pointing brickwork around the whole building, waterproofing plus relaying of the patio outside the hall and choir vestry and some timber repairs and repainting.

All of the above will require considerable funds that will, if not replaced, deplete our reserves, and whilst there are limited grants available, (most grant making bodies like to see more community benefits) we will need to raise most of the cost by local appeals and fundraising.

Please do let the Churchwardens know if you are able to facilitate or help with fund raising.

We must all care for our buildings, which when well-kept are attractive to all who both visit and hire the facilities we offer.

***David Poppleton***





## A VISIT TO LINCOLN

When asked why I was going to Lincoln, I replied, “Because I’ve never been there!” I travelled up by train, and on arrival, checked in at the Premier Inn (other hotels are available), then explored the lower part of the city.

The next morning I walked up Steep Hill, formerly Ermine Street. All the way up this attractive, cobbled and, yes, steep street are terraced cottages, independent shops and inns. The steepest part has a 1 in 5 gradient and is only passable by foot. There is a handrail on one side.



At the top are the castle and the cathedral. In the castle can be seen one of only 4 copies of the Magna Carta in the country. The walk along the castle wall is lovely.



John Ruskin considered Lincoln Cathedral to be “the most precious piece of architecture in the British Isles”. The earliest parts were completed in 1092, severely damaged by an earthquake in 1185, rebuilt in Gothic style. Later the towers were heightened, and a 160-meter central spire made it the tallest building in the world until the spire’s collapse in 1548.

Lincoln is the largest cathedral in the UK (5,000 sq m).

I love great Gothic cathedrals and wandered in the naves, the aisles and the Choirs. High in the Angel Choir is the tiny, inconspicuous carving of the Lincoln Imp – the symbol of the city – which probably represents the devil looking at Lincoln with malicious envy.



In the afternoon I went to the Medieval Bishops’ Palace, the bishops’ main residence for centuries until much of it was ruined in the Civil War. The diocese extended from the Humber to the Thames! I strolled in the ruins, reading informative boards, with the cathedral in the background. Very peaceful until suddenly I heard a squealing cry: the Lincoln Cathedral peregrines were flying round the towers. Four chicks had fledged from their nest on the Bell Tower a few weeks before.

On the last day I walked past Brayford Water and Lincoln University buildings, and along the Fossdyke Navigation, lined with attractive narrowboats.

Lincoln did not disappoint me. It has everything – a wonderful cathedral, historic streets, independent shops and cafes, restaurants on the waterfront, and a large M&S in the city centre! - oh, and peregrines.

*Nicky Phillips*

## Word from West Bergholt

### Have you Sampled the Psalms?

There is a danger that the Psalms can be neglected in both our personal Bible reading and in our public worship, but they can be a source of insight and inspiration as they cover a very wide range of human experiences and emotions.

The Psalms were the hymns of the ancient Jewish people. Because King David was noted as a composer, his name was attached to many of them – but they actually came from a number of pens over a long period. They were primarily intended for use in public worship, and especially for the great festivals at Jerusalem. They were sometimes sung to a secular tune and often to an instrumental accompaniment by the people as a whole or by a choir of Levites (the servants of the Temple) with the people responding ‘Hallelujah’ (praise God) or ‘Amen’ (so be it).

Psalms were of various kinds: hymns of praise, laments, thanksgivings or meditations. Several were intended for royal occasions such as a coronation or a wedding. Some were sung at the daily Temple burnt offering, some by pilgrims on their way to and from Jerusalem, some at the Passover festival. Some expressed rage and hatred. Between them, they represented the whole range of ancient Jewish spirituality – and even today they have a remarkably modern resonance for our times. So next time you’re seeking spiritual refreshment and wisdom, try sampling the Psalms.

The photographs below mark the changing of the seasons. The sunflowers were taken in a field in West Bergholt last autumn, and the tree was in Ardleigh.

With best wishes,

***Michael Foster***



## FIFTY YEARS AGO

Yet again I have been re-reading the magazines called, 'The St. Botolph's Review' of fifty years ago. In October 1974 there was great change at St. B's for we said goodbye to Revd. and Mrs. Murray on the last Sunday of October and in just one month we had the licensing of Revd. Peter Evans, who arrived with his wife and their two children on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Whilst very few will remember William Murray, far more will remember and know Peter Evans. On leaving, Revd. Murray commented that in all the parishes he had worked in he had never experienced such warmth and friendship that he had found at St. Botolph's but it was time for a younger man at the helm so that church life will go forward.

In the November magazine of 1974, I came across this article which is still pertinent today, It was written by Edie Buck, the Vergeress, a real character whom several readers will remember. She lived at 3, Priory Street, now a Mosque

### TIME FOR THOUGHT

*How many of us, I wonder, go into Church look around, perhaps at the stained glass windows, admire or dislike them, say they are old and that's that, never thinking about the people in whose memory they are installed. Much to my surprise, quite recently, a lady visitor, one of many, was looking around the Church, then spoke to me about the window under which her relative's name (Bawtree) was inscribed. (The family attended the church and taught in the Sunday School.) Imagine how pleased and excited she was on reading the inscription and seeing the window. This made me think, how easy it is to go into church regularly and take, not only the windows but everything else in the Church for granted, forgetting about those who in their way gave something to the Church. Think about it, is this true of us that we take everything for granted?*

*E. Buck.*

Have we changed? In more recent years we have many memorial gifts used in our services.

**Gill Poppleton**

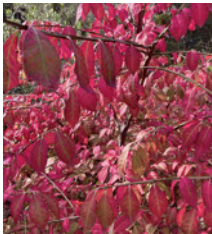


Joel 2:23: "Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God, for He has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before."

## My Spindle Tree

For some years now I have been nurturing a Spindle tree that I grew from a cutting. I had seen them in Friday Woods, and when I found a branch that had been broken off I could not resist taking a cutting. This year my tree has made an enormous amount of growth and is now several metres high.

Spindle tree, also known as European spindle tree (*Euonymus europaeus*) is a native deciduous tree and mature trees grow to 9m and can live for more than 100 years. The small, yellowish green flowers have four petals and grow in clusters in May and June, and are pollinated by insects.



The trees are largely unnoticed for most of the year, but then more than make up for it in autumn, when its leaves and fruits take centre stage. The foliage turns bright shades of red, which are complemented by pink fruits that split open to reveal orange seeds (known as arils). The fruits remain on the tree for some time and, as well as being attractive,



they are an excellent source of food for birds in winter. Outside autumn, spindle is a fantastic wildlife plant, as its leaves are eaten by several species of moth, including the spindle moth, and its inconspicuous flowers are visited by pollinators. Spindle is an ancient-woodland indicator.

If you spot it while you're out exploring, it could be a sign you're standing in a rare and special habitat.

European spindle wood is very hard, and can be cut to a sharp point. In the past it was used to make 'spindles' for spinning and holding wool (hence its name), as well as skewers, toothpicks, pegs and knitting needles.

My tree has had flowers for the last couple of years, but this year is the first time it has shown signs of fruiting. I can't wait to see the pretty little fruits. But then, this winter, I must prune the tree back before it overtakes the garden.

*Ann*

## Thoughts from William's Garden

### WAS IT A RED SQUIRREL - I WONDER?!

An unusual thing occurred on the morning of July 16th, at 7 am. I glanced out of my front window, looking onto a hanging basket, which is on a long wooden post. At the top of the post, to my amazement, was a squirrel that looked russet in colour. Was it red? When I looked again, it had gone.



I have masses of grey squirrels about, as this garden and woodland area has hazelnuts, Kentish cob nuts and also a huge walnut tree and about 200 chestnut trees in the wood. There are red squirrels on Mersea Island, which, from my garden is just 8 miles along Mersea Road. I may not see it again, but it could also have been sunlight on the back of a grey. Still, it was a magical moment.

This summer has been good for dragonflies - they have been everywhere, hovering from bush to tree at great speed.



Sadly, for the first time ever, since my arrival here in 1958, there are no stag beetles. I used to love them when they came out at dusk on June evenings. When we had Dutch Elm, disease the old tree stumps that had rotted created large armies of them.



One evening our garden cat, Ginger Tom, had one stuck on his tail. Old Tom was a very feisty cat and he tried to remove the beetle himself, but to no avail. So I had to release it for him, with Tom hissing and snarling at my efforts.

My favourite garden bush in summer is the Buddleia. The quickest growing shrub in the whole country, it is also great for bees and numerous butterflies. The harder you prune it in March, the thicker it grows.

It has been a great year for daisies, buttercup, dandelions, stinging nettles and brambles. All good for many insects. Talking of stinging nettles, as a lad of 10, I used a rip hook to cut some down. On losing my balance I fell into

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the centre of the nettles and was stung from head to foot. Old Great Aunt Babs, who lived here then, said : "Don't worry lad, this dock leaf will solve the problem" - and it did!

All for now folks - enjoy your gardens, if wild or cultivated. I'm just off to the lower part of the garden to pick blackberries for supper. I will have to be careful I don't fall in on the brambles.

Talking of falls, on June 30th, while walking in the wood, my right leg went into a foxhole from foot to hip. It took 10 minutes to get it out. I had a cut leg, pulled leg muscle. Still that's life in a large area. Thank you God for life's daily interest, especially in this ghastly man-made digital age (which I can't stand).

*William Jolliffe*



### **The Parable of the Growing Seed**

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

Mark 4 26 - 29

O God of the nations,  
as we look to that day when you will gather people  
from north and south, east and west,  
into the unity of your peaceable Kingdom,  
guide with your just and gentle wisdom all who take  
counsel for the nations of the world,  
that all your people may spend their days in security,  
freedom, and peace,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

"There is something so  
special in the early leaves  
drifting from the trees—as if  
we are all to be allowed a  
chance to peel, to refresh,  
to start again."

— *Ruth Ahmed*



Good St. Francis, you loved all of  
God's creatures.  
To you they were your brothers and  
sisters.

Help us to follow your example  
of treating every living thing with  
kindness.

St Francis, Patron Saint of animals,  
watch over my pet  
and keep my companion safe and  
healthy.

Amen

And as you remember them,  
remember us, O Lord; grant us peace in  
our time and a longing for the day  
when people of every language, race,  
and nation will be brought into the  
unity of Christ's kingdom. This we ask  
in the name of the same Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen.



## **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](http://www.stbotolphs.org)*

*and will also be in the parish newsletters.*

*Reasonable hygiene precautions are in place.*

### **September**

Sunday 1st 10.30 am – Morning Worship

Sunday 8th 10.30 am – Holy Communion and Junior Church

*6th - 15th September - Heritage Open Days*

Sunday 15th 10.30 am – Morning Worship

Sunday 22nd 10.30 am – Holy Communion

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> 10.30 am – Ordination at St Botolph's  
Revd. Emma and others will be priested by the Bishop

Sunday 29th 10.30 am – Holy Communion (Castle Methodists  
and Christ Church join us)

### **October**

*[Friday 4th St. Francis' Day - The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi]*

Sunday 6th 10.30 am – Morning Worship and Harvest

Sunday 13th 10.30 am – Holy Communion

Sunday 20th 10.30 am – Morning Worship

Sunday 27th 10.30 am – Holy Communion and Junior Church

### **November**

*Details of November services were not available at the time of preparation of the Autumn News from St B's, but will be available on the website.*

*But a reminder that :*

Sunday 10th November – 10.30 am - Remembrance Sunday

