



NEWS

from **St. B's**



Winter 2024 - 2025
December/January/February
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
Nicky Phillips - phl1nick@aol.com

Colchester Deanery News - 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/>



May Peace be your gift at
Christmas and your blessing all
year through!

Author Unknown

From the Vicar's Desk



Welcoming everybody

We are St Botolph's Church, and welcome is our thing, so we have invested four months doing the Everybody Welcome course – most of us have read the reading, and nearly half of us have gathered on Tuesday mornings to learn what it is to be a welcoming church.

We finished the course with a sermon on Matthew chapter 25, where we discovered a group of people who thought they would be judged on how they treated Israel – their people... their family... their friends. But we all know that 'love your neighbour' is not just about the person who lives next door to us, and so here is Jesus once more expanding the views of those living in first-century Palestine that their neighbour goes way beyond their people and includes not only their enemies but those they judge to be the least.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Mathew 25:40

2000 years later, it can feel like we have not taken on board what Jesus said because one of the first things we learned when starting the Everybody Welcome course is the scary reality that churches often see themselves as welcoming because they are good at welcoming their friends.

Don't get me wrong. It is lovely that I can welcome my friends to church. It is good that I want to know them and find out how their week is going. It is also not a bad thing that I want to invite them to join me for coffee and biscuits after the service. None of this is a problem! It's just that Jesus calls us to offer an excellent welcome... to the least.

So, when we think about our ministry of welcome at St Botolph's, this means that each one of us must think beyond those people we already know. As I've said – it is great to have friends at church. Those we know and care about. It is great to have friends at church so we can support each other as we try our best to follow Jesus in the ups and downs of life. But following Jesus means listening to Jesus and doing what He says to do.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Mathew 25:40

Continued on page 3/

Continuation/

First this message really is to all of us. Not just the vicar - though I need to hear it. Not just the PCC - though we need to hear it. It is for everyone because Jesus calls us all equally to follow and serve Him.

And it is our recognition of Him – Jesus - as the one who saves and calls us. Our recognition that He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The one worthy of all our praise, and the one worthy of us following that we must personally and with great care attend to His instruction that when we see the person we consider the least, we are to love them like Jesus. Love them exactly the same as we love the one we know to be the highest, greatest, and most worthy.

**Jesus not only says everyone is welcome,
He says we are to welcome everyone with the welcome He deserves.**

What a challenge.

And when we talk about being welcomed, we have been building a healthy picture that welcomed is far more than what happens at the front door. It is right to say, 'Good morning and welcome' and show someone into the building. But, the welcome and care of someone as though they *are* Jesus goes beyond this first step. Beyond showing someone to a good chair and introducing them to the people around them. It even goes beyond inviting them to join us for refreshments after the service. It means drawing them into the centre of church life... and our life.

For each of us, that means anything from inviting someone to join us at the weekly bible study to asking someone to come with us to the Harvest Lunch or even suggesting going out for a cup of coffee.

I realise these might feel like basic steps – but welcome is basic. It is simply helping someone who wants to be part of St Botolph's church to feel invited, safe and wanted.

We can do this!

Our journey with welcome is far from over, but what we have learned in these past months is helping us to make a reality of our desire that St Botolph's would be known for our welcome, which is, of course, Jesus welcome.

If you've got a moment, please pray that God would help us? Praying that God would send us people who need a church family, and praying that we would be ready to receive them as though they are Jesus Himself.



Happy welcoming friends,

Chris



**A statement from the Bishop of Chelmsford
following the publication of the Makin review
and the resignation of the Archbishop of
Canterbury**

Like many others it has been with shame and deep sadness that I have read the recent Makin review. First and foremost in my mind are the victims who had the courage to come forward and for whom this will be a particularly difficult time. We owe the reviewers a debt of gratitude for their careful and insightful report which we must take time to digest.

It is with mixed emotions that I have learned about the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. His decision shows the seriousness with which he takes the criticisms contained in the report and demonstrates his willingness to take his share of responsibility for the failures identified. At the same time, I'm also conscious of so many positive contributions he has made during his tenure, including his drive and commitment to see improvements in the area of safeguarding within the life of the church.

We should make no mistake, the Archbishop's resignation does not alter the challenge for the whole church. The content of Makin should shake us to the core, call us once more to repentance and renew us in our determination to work for a better, safer future.

I'm deeply aware that there will be many in our parishes who may be feeling despondent, disorientated, angry and confused. I want to encourage you to be gentle with one another, hold one another in prayer and keep your eyes firmly fixed on Christ who is ever before us. Safeguarding is fundamental to our life of discipleship and we must continue striving to create communities where we hold one another accountable, treat one another with love and respect, and challenge unhealthy power structures. I want to express my profound thanks to all those who, across the Diocese, are working to create safe spaces in which all God's children are valued equally.

In the coming days, I will have in my thoughts all those affected by the events of recent days and will continue to pray for God's mercy, compassion and healing.

+Guli Chelmsford



NOTES from St Botolph's PCC

There have been three PCC meetings since the last magazine

September

Vision : A visit by the DAC and representatives of the City Council and Civic Society has been arranged for 17 October to decide promotion of the existence of the church.

Children and Young People: Revd Emma had made contact with St Johns Green School and had visited both school sites, taking part in their harvest assemblies

The Vicar suggested that Emily, the Administrator (shared with Christ Church) could work at St Botolph's on a Friday morning doing administerial work and preparing the service sheets and the PCC agreed to increase her hours by two paid hours a week.

Fabric The cost of the new PA system, the refurbishment of the toilet, the roof repairs and other items in the Quinquennial report would amount to around £55,000, of which it was hoped that half that amount would come from grants.

The Accounts to the end of August were presented to the meeting. Fund raising events would be needed and the Parish Share for next year would rise by 5% to £31,870. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to accept the finance report.

It was agreed that the red bucket collection for the Harvest Festival would be for the Food Bank

October

Vision : D M Audio would begin putting in the new system on 6th January 2025.

Children and Young People : A paid young Families and Young People's Enabler would be sought. A letter will be given to each member of the Church and associates saying there will be a Gift Day on the last Sunday in October.

The City Council wished to place a security camera on the NE corner of the church to overlook the Priory. The Archdeacon had granted a certificate for this and the camera will be in place by the end of the week. The cable would be connected to our Wi-Fi by crossing the church roof and entering the church through the vicar's vestry. The city Council will monitor the Priory but also, our building.

The Vicar thanked everyone for their part in making the Ordination service a wonderful occasion. He and Revd Emma had received messages of thanks that referred to the welcome people had enjoyed at St Botolph's.

Continuation/

The Bishop had requested that he would like to hold an event to raise money for Christian Aid at St. Botolph's. As it was a fund-raising event the bishop was hoping that he could have the church free of charge. At that time of year heating would be required and our normal practice for charity events was to charge the normal rate but give a £200 donation. It was proposed and agreed that we charge our normal fee and donate £200 towards this.

When the Vicar meets with the DAC, he has created a list of the PCC's proposals to put before them as to how we can improve the church building.

The Vicar asked if the PCC would approve him experimenting with some discreet security cameras in the worship space and hall. Everyone agreed.

Fabric—Grants were still being applied for without much success as most grants were for community projects that were to enhance facilities benefiting the community, not for building repairs.

Finance – The Accounts to the end of September were presented to the meeting but did not show the £12,000.00 paid for the initial payment for the PA system. Money was awaited from NET for the use of electricity in the tower. The contactless payment station was now being used regularly and donations using this method during Heritage Week increased when visitors were in the church.

The church would be decorated for Christmas on Tuesday, 3rd December starting at 2.00 pm.

November

Matters arising from previous PCC meeting:

- a) The hobs in the kitchen had been checked and the electric ovens were safe to use but not the hobs. The gas has now been turned off and a notice stating that it was not to be used.
- b) It has been confirmed that Holy Trinity Church is not in our parish but in that of St. Peter's. However, the original parish of Holy Trinity is now in the parish of St. Botolph's

Vision –

The visit of the DAC along with representatives of the city council and civic society took place on 17th October and many encouraging suggestions were made.

- Rather than replace the blue doors with glass, replace the panels with glass.
 - The front could be cleaned to show the white Suffolk bricks
 - Lighting accenting parts of the building and tower
 - It was recommended that we engage a signage consultant regarding all our signs and notice boards
 - The shed by the boiler house was not in keeping with the church building.
- Representatives from the church were invited to give their input on the redirection of footpaths through the Priory from the Railway Station to the Castle Park.

Encouraging members in their personal life of prayer and bible study.

An Advent booklet with a reading for each day of December to be given to each household. Revd. Emma was holding four Advent bible study sessions, beginning on Wednesday 27th November.

Children and Young People – “How can it happen again?”

We need to employ an Enabler for both St. Botolph's and Christ Church. There was a discussion about finding times for both a Tots group and a Saturday 'Brick Café' at St. Bots. A Tots group, unless it was held on a Friday it would have to take place in the church since Crafty Drama used the hall from Monday to Thursday. A monthly Lego café for junior children would need to be on a Saturday morning and could be held monthly. The enabler would need help from church members to volunteer at these groups

Safeguarding – The Safeguarding Officer read out a statement received that day from the Bishop of Chelmsford on the Makin review. and the resignation of the Bishop of Canterbury.

The Vicar reported that the sound upgrade had been completed and we have had good feedback from the congregation. Plans for Christmas were going ahead. Christmas cards advertising our Christmas services are ready for distribution in the parish.

Welcome Areas and Prayer Cards

It had been proposed that we had some prayer cards available in the Welcome Area for visitors and congregation. Revd. Emma had a sample of cards 'Explore Christianity' which come as a set of 50 x 12 cards with a display holder. It was proposed and agreed that we purchase a set of these cards

The PCC received reports on the following :

Fabric– Work on the quinquennial report was beginning at the end of the month. This would include work on the roof and guttering, repairing the window in the vicar's vestry and refurbishing the toilet in the welcome area.

Finance – The Gift Day generated promises amounting to £1,300.00. Grants received so far amounted to £19,000.00. The accounts, up to the end of October had been circulated.

Worship –The Red Bucket collections for the coming year will be: -

The Children's Society -*Christmas* : DEC – Gaza and Lebanon - *Easter*: CMA Debt Centre – *Pentecost* Humanity First Disaster relief – *Harvest*

The next PCC meeting will be Wednesday, 18th January at 2.00 pm. 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



Deanery Synod

There was a meeting of Deanery Synod on 16th October, held at St Peter's, North Hill. Revd Canon Erwin Lammens, Area Dean, welcomed Bishop Roger and everybody to the meeting, and thanked Revd Mark Wallace and the team from St. Peter's Church for their hospitality.

Revd Hannah Cooper hosted the Q&A Panel.

- *What was the aim of the away day?*

Representatives of several parishes gave their reports.

Revd Chris Smith – for each of our two churches.

"It was a chance to listen to each other and spend some time with God.

St Botolph's went into the day knowing that we hold a strong value of where Jesus is – and how we have a vision of welcoming everyone with a building that says the opposite. Came away with nine action points.

Christ Church with a 'new' building after our extension work and new facilities where do we go in the future – what makes us Christ Church? What is most important right now? Came away with three clear objectives."

There was discussion and comment on the reports given and Bishop Roger then spoke briefly about raising the profile of our 'nurture' courses and spoke of a challenge to double the number of young people in our churches. He said that he hoped this has given people a real sense of excitement. It had been great "*but don't make it a 'one-off'. Let's make time to bring people together to spend time with God and see what ideas we can come up with.*"

He then thanked Synod for inviting him along and the team at St Peter's for their hospitality.

The Area Dean gave notices and there were various items of Parish/Deanery News.

The next Deanery Synod will be held on Wednesday 12th March 2025

The full Minutes of the Deanery Synod can be obtained from the Deanery Rep.

Full details of Deanery news can be found on the Deanery website :
www.colchesterdeanery.org.uk/news

May the Lord give strength to his people!
May the Lord bless his people with peace!

Psalms 29 verse 11

An interesting Year

Although at the time of writing the year is not over, life at St Botolph's has been engaging. This will be the first full year that Revd. Chris and now Revd. Emma have been with us and that with our links to Christ Church has led us into a new era, looking forward with hope for the future of St. Botolph's.

Our Quinquennial inspection took place in June and whilst the report did not require any major structural changes, it did indicate that we needed to do several smaller tasks to keep our building in good shape. Our microphone and speaker system has also not been performing well with congregations and concert audiences not happy with sound quality.

With all of this in mind the PCC agreed to expenditure to, we trust, cure some of the building matters and improve the quality of not only the speaker system but also to upgrade the toilet in the Welcome Area. This expenditure was we hoped to be supported by grants from outside organisations and a Gift Day for Church members to pledge their support for our on-going work.

Whilst I am happy to tell you that with the promise of in the region of £20,000.00 in Grants and about £1,300 at our gift day we are on our way to meeting the around £58,000.00 cost, we still do however have some way to go to meet our commitments.

You will over the next few months see work progressing on the building, and today, Armistice Sunday, we were able to experience a very successful improvement in our microphone and speaker system, now using the latest technology, plus our ability to screen pictures on a large TV style monitor. Do come and enjoy worship with us and experience the new systems yourselves.

David Poppleton - Churchwarden.

St. Botolph's December Concert programme

Saturday 7th December - Headway Christmas Concert;

Sunday 8th December - Colchester Choral Society;

Wednesday 11th December - Army Benevolent Essex Christmas Concert

Saturday 14th December - West Bergholt Concert Band;

Sunday 15th December - Colne Endeavour Band

Monday 16th December - Christian Aid Christmas Sing-Along

led by Chris Read



Ordination Service at St Botolph's

On the 28th September there was a special service at St Botolph's. It was a wonderful occasion, the Church was full of people and a wonderful atmosphere. We had musicians (not too intrusive) fantastic singing and I can only say that if I ever felt the presence of the Lord, it was in Church on that Saturday.

All in all a wonderful occasion and many happy memories especially as our very own Rev. Emma was Ordained. *Pauline*



Congratulations
May God's
blessings be upon
Rev. Emma as she
begins her new
ministry.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own
understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.





BETTY WARNER 1931 -2024

-a lifetime of memories.

I was born in February 1939, 8 years younger than Betty and 2 months younger than her brother, Raymond.

I lived in Jarmin Road and the Pickerings lived 2 doors away round the corner in Catchpole Road. Our fathers were firemen at the Colchester Fire Station. In those days as soon as they could run around, children played out together in the street. I was an only child and Betty took me under her wing along with her brother

Raymond.

When we were a little older we went to Saturday morning Cinema at the Hippodrome together. Betty could sing and remember all the words to the song "We come along on Saturday morning" in her latter years. On one occasion I forgot my Membership card. Betty promptly tore hers in half and gave me half and we got in ok!

Raymond and I can remember her reading us stories and also making up some of them. One we can remember was "Tommy and his gang". She would have loved to have been an actress or singer and took part in the many early St. Botolph's drama and social events.

We went together to St. Paul's Church until I was 10 years old. At that time she was going out with Norman. She then joined Norman in St. Botolph's Choir and persuaded Raymond and myself to join too.

When Betty and Norman married in St. Botolph's I was in the choir. On seeing the photographs again recently I counted 31 in the choir!!



I cannot remember dates for when we formed Three's Company but we performed together for 22 years. Norman was a natural performer too, playing guitar, performing monologues and singing.

We entertained various groups, the W.I., OAP homes and charities in various venues in and around Colchester. On one occasion at a Golf Club the audience was bit noisy but Betty sternly told them to "BE QUIET" !.

Three's Company had a large repertoire of Fun, Traditional and Folk songs. Three favourites were - Have you got a light boy?, The Court of King Caractacus and The English are best.

Continuation/

In 1999 during the ABC show in St. Botolph's our Bishop of Colchester was in the front row. Playing the part of Molly Windley {she smokes like a chimney} Betty sang the line " have you got a light Bishop?" and showing him 3 dolls – one black she added " look what smoking's done for me". That got a huge laugh from the audience (and the Bishop).

Over the years Betty and Norman hosted many parties at 8, East Hill and there was always entertainment, word games and quizzes. When Chris and I got married in 1996 Betty and Norman kindly laid on a wonderful reception. It was a great family production. Norman and daughter Rachel made beautiful decorations and Raymond's wife, Christine, made a beautiful cake. All brought together by Betty, it was a memorable occasion.

Betty was a wonderful, life-long friend. She always called me her "Buv" of which I am very proud. I miss her greatly.

Roy Kidd-Stanton

Anne Hollis

It was with sadness that we learnt of the death of Anne.

She died on Wednesday, 24th October at her home in Sudbury. Until a week before she died, she continued to potter around her house and garden, but needing care a few times a day to help her along. She was in her nineties and had, until just before the pandemic, been coming to St. Botolph's for almost forty years.

Her husband was ordained and when he retired they loved coming to St. Botolph's to worship. After he died, she continued driving to church from Sudbury.

Anne was a lady of faith, Strength and determination. She loved gardening, reading and knitting and enjoyed staying in touch. She had a large family of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren living around the UK and in some cases, around the world. A life well lived.

WOMEN'S GET TOGETHER (WGT)

On many occasions you may see that WGT have a meeting on a Monday at Castle. Several of our church congregation meet with Castle members to have social contact with each other. Sometimes we have a speaker, and at other times we provide our own entertainment.

Each time we meet we pay a small subscription of £2.00 which helps us to provide speakers. Our Soup 'n' Snack lunches are very popular, and all the profits go into our funds.

Annually at our AGM we then have funds to donate to charities. This year we had £700.00 to share between several charities and the meeting decided that the following charities would benefit: -

DEC for Gaza - £200.00

Colchester Cancer Wellbeing Centre - £200.00

The Colchester Food Bank – £150.00

The Bridgeway Mission (A Colchester mission for refugees)- £150.00

Our programme of meetings is on the Notice board in the Welcome Area and we would welcome any visitors to our meetings. You can pick and choose. Gentlemen are welcome too, if they would like to hear a speaker. You won't be alone!

If you would like more information, please contact Gill Poppleton

ST BOTOLPH'S COLCHESTER AN EVENING OF BELTING OUT THE CHRISTMAS POP SONGS LED BY THE AWARD WINNING MUSICIAN CHRIS READ



**...ALL IN SUPPORT OF CHRISTIAN AID
MONDAY 16th DECEMBER - 7.30 pm**

Tickets via eventbrite at

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/now-thats-what-i-call-a-christmas-sing-along-tickets-1085158039909?>

Word from West Bergholt

Open the Book!

Here in West Bergholt, the highly-regarded primary school (Heathlands) is a church school and there is a very positive relationship between the school and the local church (St. Mary's). This is helped by the fact that they happen to be next door to each other! A couple of times each term, a small group of us from the church attend school assembly (collective worship) at the end of the school day and act out Bible stories under a Bible Society initiative called 'Open the Book'.

We are warmly welcomed into the school for these events, and we ensure that we fully comply with appropriate safeguarding measures. Our performances are enjoyed by both pupils and teachers, and we enjoy ourselves dressing-up(!) and acting out scripted passages from the Bible. Our Priest-in-Charge, Heather, usually acts as the narrator and we endeavour to involve the children as much as we can.

Stories that we have covered so far include Jonah and the whale, the healing of Naaman, the widow of Zarephath's jar of oil and Daniel in the lion's den (when some of the children took great delight in acting as the lions!).

This initiative of 'Open the Book' not only reinforces the link between the church and the school but it also helps to familiarise the children with biblical stories.

Here are two photographs of tulips and irises to cheer up the dark winter days.

With best wishes,

Michael Foster





*The five finger prayer is another way of praying.
As a musician, I have always regarded hands as very
special indeed.*

The five finger prayer

Thumb (people who are close to you) - We thank you for our friends and family and we ask for your protection of them.

Index (leaders) - We pray for our earthly leaders, teachers and church leaders. May their thoughts, words and deeds bring glory to your name.

Tall finger (people different to us) - Help me to love my neighbour as myself.

Ring finger (those in need) - We pray for people and animals who are sick or treated badly. We pray for your blessing upon them.

Little finger (yourself) - Thank you God that you know what I need before I ask. Please help me to grow in mind, body, and spirit. AMEN.

*Here are some more thoughts on prayer - not mine but from a
lovely hymn I have always found inspiring.*

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or expressed
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

O Thou by whom we come to God,
The life, the truth the way
The path of prayer Thyself has trod:
Lord, teach us how to pray.

Words by J Montgomery 1771-1854

PAT FRENCH



Thoughts from William's Garden

Remembering 16th October 1987 - in the garden.

As we end 2024, I look back on what has been a very wet year. It was not long ago that in 2022 we had the driest year since 1921. So far this year of 2024 could beat the wettest year on record, which was 1912. These variants have nothing to do with global warming. It is a God given change which modern man must accept in this ghastly technology age, which has no respect for our natural world.



Now folks, I bring great news - the pond, at last, has two swans back. There was only one swan for ten months, so it is back to normal, thank God.

Back to the weather, again. I am sure everyone remembers 16th October 1987 at 5.30 am. I was awoken from bed by a screaming, howling noise. On pulling open the curtains, the trees in the wood were touching the ground. I got up immediately and called out to old Dad that "there's a hurricane". Dad said "Are you dreaming - don't wake Mum up". I didn't wait. I was up and dressed by 6 am and outside. It was great. I had never known anything like it in my, then, 34 years.

The force of the wind was terrific. I could hardly stand up. On looking at the garden, a huge sycamore was felled, also the hazelnut tree and, in the cemetery, a huge 150 year old Cedar of Lebanon was right across Mersea Road. As for the wood, over half the chestnut trees were down. It did one marvellous job - the wood was in need of coppicing, so that saved that hard job. From my window I could see the pond and ducks and swans again. It was amazing how the garden and everything recovered. Nature is quite amazing at self healing.



One final thing, that hurricane gave a good supply of logs for five years, to keep the home fires burning.

Now back to the present in the garden. This year has been great for Bramley apples, blackberries and many soft fruits. Even my old Pershore Purple plum tree gave a good harvest. Pershore Purple is even sweeter than the Victoria Plum.

Continuation/

It has also been a good year for flowers: nasturtiums, marigolds, petunias, geraniums and lobelias. Also fuchsias and hanging baskets.

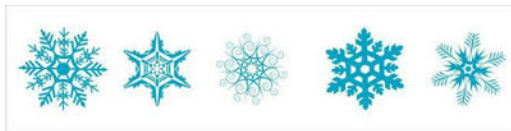
That's all for now folks. As always enjoy your gardens if wild or cultivated. I nearly forgot for the second year running No Wasps sadly. Wasps are good in gardens. I have just remembered that on 29th September I was sitting in the garden and a squirrel ran past me with a mouse in its mouth. I have never seen that before. This garden is full of God given moments.



It will soon be 2025. Let's hope for deep snows and hard frosts that will keep the awful motor cars off the roads.

Happy Christmas All.

William Jolliffe



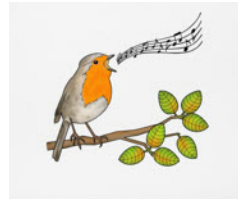
Thank you Father for seeing us through another year and for all the blessings you bestowed upon us. Thank you for your gift of mercy and grace, for your unwavering faithfulness, forgiveness and never ending love. May we enter into the New Year with gratefulness in our hearts for these gracious gifts you so lovingly bless us with each day.

As we continue our journey of Faith in 2025 let us be mindful of the extent of your love and devotion to us through the gift of Salvation by way of your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Help us Father to spread your Word and send the light of joy and hope into the world and fill us with the Peace of the Holy Spirit so that we may share it with everyone around us.

Thank you for hearing this prayer dear Heavenly Father. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

"I heard a bird sing in the dark of December. A magical thing. And sweet to remember. We are nearer to spring than we were in September. I heard a bird sing in the dark of December."

— *Oliver Herford*



Here is Barney, the Editor's faithful and constant companion, who will be 10 years old on 1st December



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

St Botolph's Church is open for public worship, and Sunday morning services start 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.

December

Sunday 1st 10.30 am – Advent Sunday - Morning Worship with
Covenant Renewal Service at St Botolph's

Sunday 8th 10.30 am – Holy Communion

Sunday 15th 10.30 am – Morning Worship

Sunday 22nd 10.30 am – **Carol Service at St Botolph's**
- suitable for all ages and followed by Christmas nibbles.
6.30 pm - **Carols by Candlelight at Christ Church**

Tuesday 24th **Christmas Eve**

5 pm - **Carols for Kids at Christ Church**

6.30 pm - **Christmas Communion - at St Botolph's**

11.30 pm - **Midnight Communion - at Christ Church**

Wednesday 25th **Christmas Day**

11.30 am **Christmas Communion at Christ Church**

*[Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you;
he is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2:11]*

Sunday 29th Joint Service at Castle

January

Sunday 5th 10.30 am – Morning Worship

Sunday 12th 10.30 am – Holy Communion & Kids' Church

Sunday 19th 10.30 am – Morning Worship

Sunday 26th 10.30 am – Holy Communion

February

Sunday 2nd 10.30 am - Morning Worship

Sunday 9th 10.30 am – Holy Communion & Kids' Church

Sunday 16th 10.30 am - Morning Worship

Sunday 23rd 10.30 am – Holy Communion



2025

"A New Year has tiptoed in. Let's go forward to meet it.

Let's welcome the 365 days it brings.

Let's live well with love in our hearts towards God and all people.

Let's walk through its corridors with praise songs on our lips"