

All the latest news for our communities for February 2023



be, belong, encounter, grow

Keep up to date on our websites:

www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk

www.stmargaretscolchester.org.uk

Regular Weekly Services and Meetings

**St Stephen's—Sunday mornings at 11:00 am
together with our Wednesday morning Holy Communion or
Morning Prayer services at 10:30 am.**

2nd and 4th Sundays from 9:30—10:00 am (before Sunday Service) a time of Christian meditation

Messy Church on the first Sunday of the month, on the second & fourth Sunday of the month we have Morning Worship, including Holy Communion and Kids Club. The third Sunday we have Café Church in the morning including Breakfast Club and a short service of Holy Communion at 6 pm.

**St Margaret's—Sunday mornings at 9:30 am
and Morning Prayer on Wednesdays at 9:30 am**

1st Sunday of the month is All Aged Worship, 2nd and 4th Holy Communion and Morning Prayer on the 3rd.

5th Sunday of the month (if there is one) joint worship at either St Stephen's or St Margaret's—see notices for further details

**Three Together; St Stephen's, Wimpole Road and
St Margaret's Worship & Meetings**

Weekly Sunday Evening On Line Worship on Facebook at 6:30 pm. This will stream into our Facebook pages. You are able to join us live at the time or take part at an alternative time that better suits you.



Weekly Prayer Meeting at 10:00 on Tuesday via Zoom

[Click here](#) to access Zoom on the internet or Meeting ID: 195 594 506 & Passcode: 011904

You can also access Zoom Meetings via the telephone; please contact Andrew Tople for further information.

Pause for thought Rev Lorraine

As we come to the beginning of this New Year we have had a letter from Bishop Guli and the Diocesan team encouraging us to read reflect on a new paper 'Travelling Well Together'. I have asked Andrew to publish the article in full so that you all can read what has been sent and I have also ordered 100 copies of the Paper for distribution in our churches over Lent. There will also be a copy of the Travelling Well Together document up on the noticeboard in the Churches. Please do try and pray the Diocesan Prayer throughout Lent.



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

Monday 23 January 2023

Dear friends,

We are well into the month of January but want to begin this letter by offering you our warmest good wishes for 2023. We trust you had a blessed and peaceful Christmas season and that

many of you will have been able to take a break or enjoy a period of rest since then.

Travelling Well Together

As you know, over the past 12-18 months we have been on a journey to discern our future direction of travel as a diocese. This started when I (+Guli) first became your Diocesan Bishop and began an intentional period of listening, noticing and praying. My own reflections and discerning were further developed during a 48 hour period away with the Area Bishops when the first draft of the attached paper, *Travelling Well Together*, was produced.

Since then the paper has been further refined and modified through an iterative process, although its essence – that it is an invitational approach, built on values and our calling to love God and neighbour – has remained unchanged. The Bishop's Leadership Team has discussed the approach at some length, over the course of several meetings and the Area Deans engaged with it at a Residential with the Bishops before Christmas. Most recently, Bishop's Council have explored it on an away day, and so now the time has come to share it more widely, across the diocese.

We as your bishops are inviting, and indeed encouraging, you to read and reflect on Travelling Well Together which we are sending along with this letter. We trust that it will be self-explanatory but hope it will be helpful for us to emphasise a few things. First, to stress that this is not designed as a top-down

initiative; there will be no grand unveiling with a programme and a ten-step plan to follow. It is, rather, an invitation to engage with an approach that seeks to empower local contexts to discern for themselves how they are to be faithful in discipleship, mission and ministry.

Travelling Well Together is about how we are as a diocese – it is about being rather than doing and aims to provide a framework for conversations that can help us, in our local contexts, to discern our vocation to be the people of God in our particular part of the Kingdom. As a Bishop's Leadership Team, we have begun to take responsibility for engaging with this material deeply and it is already informing us and shaping us as we seek to be fruitful and faithful disciples. We are therefore confident in commending it to parishes, PCCs, congregations, MMUs, deaneries etc. And, in turn, through a process of diocesan wide consultation we will seek to ensure that central resources are used, as much as possible, to provide the support you need to help you fulfil your calling in a spirit of mutual accountability.

We want to acknowledge that lack of trust still exists in some places between parishes and 'The Diocese', the so-called centre. We know that this lack of trust has grown out of hurt, pain and anger. We are now inviting you to receive this new approach as a gift that can help restore trust and enable us to develop a stronger shared identity, mutually loving and trusting one another, as part of one diocesan family. Not to eradicate or ignore differences that exist but to commit ourselves to continue striving towards that unity to which Jesus calls us: "... that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17. 21)

Whilst this may be a new approach, it seeks to build on all that has been good in the past and brought us to this point. So we encourage you to consider how you are already living by the values articulated in *Travelling Well Together* – how they already reflect something of our shared life - even as you prayerfully consider how they might help us grow further.

This is not the end of a process. We fully expect the conversations to continue. *Travelling Well Together* is offered as an approach for this next phase and we will need to continue being attentive to one another and the Holy Spirit as we discern the future direction of travel faithfully.

At their away day, Bishop's Council, explored the question, "How will we know if the approach is being successful?" and concluded that metrics and outcomes will be difficult to measure and that, in fact, these are not always helpful.

Instead, we can all be looking for “just noticeable differences” in our shared life locally and more widely across the diocese, in how our relationships develop and in how God blesses our intentions to live faithfully and sacrificially.

Paper copies of *Travelling Well Together* will be available as a resource for discussion, reflection and prayer for Parishes and Worshipping Communities. If you would find that helpful, you can order them by clicking [here](#). The resource will also be made available on the Diocesan Website in the coming days.

Living in Love and Faith

All this brings us to say something about Living in Love and Faith, the process of deep listening that has been taking place in the Church of England over the past 5-6 years around relationships, human sexuality and marriage.

We had not planned to share *Travelling Well Together* just at the same time as the College and House of Bishops produced the material that was published and shared last week and which will now go to General Synod in early February. But we regard the timing as God given. It is our fervent hope and prayer that the approach offered in *Travelling Well Together* will provide us with the means to move forward in mutual love, respect and humility despite our deep differences in this area.

As your bishops, all three of us are entirely supportive of the approach taken by the House of Bishops. The material seeks honestly to acknowledge differences that exist between bishops and at the same time offers a way for Christians who engage seriously with Scripture, Tradition and Reason and arrive at different conclusions about same sex relationships, to continue walking together.

We want to reiterate the apology issued to all LGBTQI+ people who have experienced homophobia in the church. We are deeply sorry for the times you have been rejected or excluded; when we have not loved you as God loves you. As the pastoral letter from the College of Bishops says, “we affirm, publicly and unequivocally, that LGBTQI+ people are welcome and valued: we are all children of God.” As bishops in the Diocese of Chelmsford we are delighted that, where parishes wish to, there will now be the option to offer prayers of dedication, thanksgiving and blessing for those in committed faithful same sex relationships and those who have entered same sex civil marriage.

At present there is no consensus among the College of Bishops about equal

marriage and, indeed, there are some differences of understanding and perspective among the three of us also. However, as bishops, we are committed to working together, continuing to talk and listen in love, faith and humility and we urge you to do the same. Our calling is to demonstrate to the world a way of living well with difference.

So we encourage you to use the *Travelling Well Together* document (alongside the LLF Pastoral Principles) as you continue to engage in local conversations. We had hoped to do exactly that during our away day with Bishop's Council last Saturday. As it happened, we were left without the time we would need to have a proper and meaningful discussion but Bishop's Council unanimously agreed that this was probably providential. It felt a little early to engage so deeply, especially as the resources have not yet been to General Synod. We agreed, however, to devote time to this on the agenda when we next meet and will seek (as will the Bishop's Leadership Team) to model a way of being that reflects to the wider diocese our intention to continue travelling well together. Before long we will be sharing some Lent resources around the values for individual or group use. If you already have other plans for a Lent course, the material can be used at any other time.

In the days, weeks and months ahead, we urge you to consider carefully how you express your views relating to LLF in your preaching, your use of social media and in all your communication and relationships. We hope there will be honesty but a gentle honesty that respects the deeply held views of others that may be different from our own. Honesty that acknowledges we are all God's children, seeking to be faithful and committed, in love, to one another.

Finally, we commend for your use, individually and in your local context, the prayer at the end of the *Travelling Well Together* document:

**God of the journey,
you invite us to travel well together as the body of Christ
in the Diocese of Chelmsford: enlarge our hearts with
an awareness of your grace,
the knowledge of your presence, and an openness to your calling,
that, with gratitude for the past,
we may step out with confidence into your future; through Jesus Christ
your Son our Lord,
Amen.**

Please be assured of our ongoing prayers for all of you and our deep gratitude for our shared ministry in Christ.

Yours,

The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford

The Rt Revd Roger Morris, Bishop of Colchester

The Rt Revd Lynne Cullens, Bishop of Barking

Working Together

It has been lovely over the last three years to begin our work together as St Margaret's, Berechurch and St Stephen's, New Town and the Hythe. We now have myself, Rev Dan (Curate), Rev Belinda (Curate), Naomi (Ordinand), Jackie (Permission to Officiate), Christine (Permission to Officiate) and when he's better Andrew King (Reader) all part of the worship team.

As part of the process to join the churches more closely together the Bishop intends to induct me as Priest in Charge of St Margaret with St Michael, Berechurch on the 7th March 2023 at 7.30pm. To which all are warmly invited.

We are really wanting this to be a celebration of our working together and so are hoping for members of both churches to be involved.

Rev Lorraine

Churchwardens' letter February 2023

Already the New Year is speeding by! So here are some things that have been going on.

'St Stephens Building into the Future'

In the last newsletter we wrote that the PCC had agreed the next step in our plans to fix the serious structural problems we have with the church and to reduce our carbon use.

Thank God that that we have now received the promise of £10000 funding from the Colchester Churches Building Fund which will ensure that we have the resources to complete the planning process for the urgent repairs and steps to reduce our carbon output which comprise the project. We have spent or committed around £3000 so far on the structural engineer's report and the schedule of works enabling us to go to tender for a suitable builder to

complete the works. Also, this grant will cover an energy audit.

The structural engineer will pay a visit to the centre in early February to gather some additional information for the schedule. And on 21st January, the ESOS company carried out an Energy Audit of the entire church centre identifying and quantifying small and bigger steps we can take to reduce energy waste and the amount of carbon we emit. This report is promised by the end of January so that, we hope, by the end of February, we will be able to estimate the overall cost of the project and start submitting grant applications.

Paying for the project

The cost of the whole project will be considerable and way beyond our ability to pay for it from our existing funds and voluntary giving. But what we are each able to give is still vital, not just in contributing to the total cost but in demonstrating to grant funders that we are really committed to replenishing St Stephens and all that we do here. Any fund raising we do during this year will be important too for the same reason. Chris and Debbie Liddamore are planning to get the ball rolling on this with a Pie and Mash evening with a Beetle Drive. Details to follow.

Draining the lagoon

Martin has been busy as usual keeping up with urgent repairs. By the time you read this Martin and Chris L will have had another attempt to unblock the soakaway which has caused a lagoon to form in the car park. Martin has already been adjusting the heating in the worship area which is now warmer.

Homegroups: Want to join one?

Homegroups are a great place where people can get to know each other well, support each other encouraging each of us in our faith journeys. If you are not a member of a homegroup and would like to think about it, do speak to Lorraine, Dan or the churchwardens. We have two homegroups at the moment. Both meet monthly and have recently completed the study 'Living in Love and Faith'. One usually meets on the last Friday evening of the month; the other on the third Saturday during the day. There are possible plans for a third homegroup to meet during a weekday.

Church Rota: Boring but vital!

During the pandemic and its aftermath, the rota fell into disrepair and this meant that when we did start meeting, several roles were not carried out.

Belinda has put together a new rota with regular job slots for each service in the month. The roles are operating the sound desk and separately, the laptop; Reading from the Bible; Leading our intercessions; Welcoming people to worship; Preparing and serving teas and coffees after worship and Joining a worship band. *These jobs are all really important for making worship a positive experience and for providing a warm welcome to visitors of which we have had quite a few in recent months.*

One problem with this is that there has been no easy way for people once on the rota to swop places with another person when they cannot be there. Unless we follow data protection regulations, church administrators are not allowed to send out contact details to other church members. Thanks for those of you, therefore, who have signed your agreement to share your contact details with other members. That has been really helpful. Soon we will be able to send out copies of the rota with the contact details of other people who are on the rota to do the same task. When you find you are not able to be present when you are rota'd, please contact someone else to swop you duties. Thanks. Currently we are short of a person to operate the laptop on the third Sunday of the month. If you can help, please talk to one of us. We will train you!

Replacing our struggling laptop

Having installed the new screens, Dan has been working steadily towards the goal of putting all the songs and liturgy on screen rather than relying on paper copies. Our aged struggling laptop is the main obstacle to that ambition. The PCC has agreed to its replacement and Dan, Lorraine and the churchwardens are fully engaged in working out the best of several options that will help us present worship material (liturgy, songs, other slides and videos) seamlessly. Please pray that we will get this right and bring all the work on this issue to fruition.

With our prayers and best wishes,

John Clifton, for John Clifton and Martin Kerins, Churchwardens

Lent and Easter

We will begin Lent with Ashing Services on 22 February in the morning at St Margaret's and at St Stephen's in the evening. Further details about these, Lent Course and Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday services will be available very soon.



It's YOUR Newsletter

Please don't forget, if you have stories or items that they would like to contribute to future Newsletters please contact me at: office@ststephens-colchaser.org.uk .

Andrew Topple



Bishop Guli was the Duty Bishop in the House of Lords

Bishop Guli was the Duty Bishop in the House of Lords in January This Lord's Spiritual Role involves being on duty to respond to business in the House as well as saying prayers at the start of each day and holding meetings with parliamentarians from both Houses. This duty week came unusually soon after Bishop Guli's last duty week in December. This is because duty weeks are scheduled on a calendar year basis. You can read more about Bishop Guli's week as Duty Bishop by [clicking here](#) or on the link below:

<https://chelmsford.anglican.org/summary-of-bishop-gulis-duty-week-in-the-house-of-lords-Jan23>

If you don't have on line access, please speak to Andrew in the office to see how he can help you to access this.



Colchester Soup Run

A good and bad news story all in one!

The bad news, but not unsurprisingly is that this is still needed.

The good news is that the Churches across Colchester are once again united and coming together to provide this. This will be based from Eld Lane Baptist Church

and initially on a Saturday evening between 6:45 and 7:45 pm. (probably on the 4th Saturday of the month).

If you think you might be able to help with this, either making sandwiches and / or serving them please can you speak to or email Andrew Topple (email address: office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk) . Thank you

KIDS' CLUB

**Kids' Club now meets in the hall on
the second and fourth Sundays.**

COME AND JOIN US

on the 12th and 26nd February at 11am.

PRAYER FOR ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

Please pray for the people living in the following roads across out two parishes:



Week 1. From 30th January to 5th February—Lisle Road, Claudius Road, Campion Road, Barrington Road. Bober Court, Merton Court and Prunus Court.

Week 2. From 6th to 12th February. Gilberd Road. Sadler Close, Western Road, Beche Road, Chestnut Avenue, Hetherington Close and Gosfield Road.

Week 3. From 13th to 19th February. Gladstone Road. Granville Road. Mytle Grove, Adelaide Drive, Cairns Road and Armidale Walk

Week 4. From 20th to 26th February. Morant Road. Harsnet Road, Kimberley Road, Berefield Way, Inworth Walk and Queen Elizabeth Way

Anybody who wants to Prayer Walk these roads please do.

Over 60's Lunch Club at St Stephen's on

6 February 2023

from midday for 12:30 lunch

If you are interested in coming along please give Jill a ring on 01206 572 605. Booking is essential for catering purposes. Two courses will be served with tea or coffee to follow for a charge of £5.

Dietary needs can be catered for if known in advance.

Many thanks from **The Lunch Club Team**



Youthy is Back!

on Thursday evenings during time

6:30—8:00 pm for ages 10—13

8:00—9:00 pm for ages 13—17

Simply come along and have a great time

**For further information or if you would like to volunteer to help
email or message Sarah at**

sarah.daniels@ymcachelmsford.org.uk or 07508 151 225

Silver Threads at St Margaret's



A warm welcome awaits you on Wednesday afternoon
Tea and company 1st Wednesday of the month 1.30pm to 3.00pm
Crafting Companions 2nd Wednesday of month 1.30 to 3.30pm
Fun and Games 3rd Wednesday of the month 1.30pm to 3.00pm
Food for Thought 4th Wednesday of the month 12.30pm -1.45pm
Silver Screen 5th Wednesday of the month 1.30pm -3.00pm

Transport to St Stephen's Church

If you'd like to come to Church, but you are struggling and a lift would help, please speak to Belinda and she will see if she can start up a lift rota.

If you could help with proving lifts to people, please also speak to Belinda.



Worship Song Suggestions

You may have spotted the box at the back of Church asking for suggestions for worship songs. Thank you to everybody who has already made suggestions. We would like more ideas and suggestions, so if you have songs that you would like the worship teams to consider using please don't hold back! Pop your suggestions in the box which remain in Church.



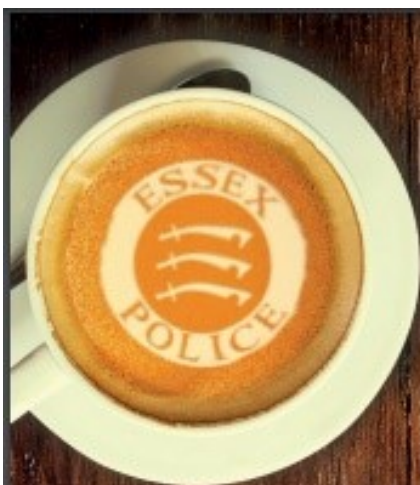
A colorful poster for 'Community Day'. At the top left, a rainbow with red, pink, and yellow bands curves across the frame. The word 'Community' is written in a light blue, rounded font, and 'Day' is written below it in a large, yellow, cursive font. Several stylized flowers in red, pink, and yellow are scattered around the text. The background is a light pink color.

Community Day

At
St Stephen's Church Centre,
CO2 7RY

Save the Date
14th February
Times to be confirmed

Table top sales, tombola, bouncy castle, face painting and 'Coffee with a Cop'
If you're interested in helping, or 'having a table'
Please speak to Denise via
office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk



coffee with cops.



Your chance to get to know your Local Community Policing Team over a coffee. Ask questions, voice concerns – tell us how we can help you.

Location:

Wimpole Road Methodist Church, Colchester, CO1 2DL

Date / Time:

Wednesday 22nd February 2023 09:30 - 11:30





coffee with cops



Your chance to get to know your Local Community Policing Team over a coffee. Ask questions, voice concerns - tell us how we can help you.

Location:

St Stephens Church, Canterbury Road, Colchester, CO2 7RY

Date / Time:

Saturday 25th February 2023 10am - 12pm



WE NEED YOUR HELP

Will you join the conversation?

We're inviting you to a community talk about the climate crisis and what we can do about it.

Come and hear the facts, and find out about **THE BIG ONE**, a peaceful campaign uniting climate, nature and social justice groups to bring 100,000 people together in London from April 21st this year.

Members of your local community will also share their experiences of organising and taking action to play their part in creating a healthier and safer planet for everyone.

We invite you to come and mingle, sit down, and chat with like-minded people from your community.

Everyone is welcome – let's decide together what we can do to change things for the better.

It's time to stop feeling powerless and alone, and get to know other amazing local people who want to make a difference too.



COME ALONG ON:

Thursday January 26th,

7.00pm-8.30pm

Hythe Community Centre,

1 Ventura Drive,

Hythe CO1 2FG.



TOGETHER WE CAN
CHANGE THINGS



joinxr.uk/colchester

Cantus
firmus

“still be my vision”

A service with a Celtic Christian theme

Sunday 12 February 2023 6pm
West Mersea Parish Church CO5 8QD



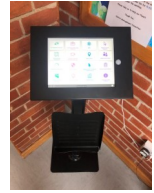
with Cantus Firmus Choir

Conductor: Norman Eastbrook MBE Accompanist: Sharon Tidbury
Service leader: Howard Gardner

More information at cantusfirmus.org.uk

Fixed Access Data Point

This can be found in the Foyer and is for all to us to use to access key sites on the internet . Thank you to the Digital Access Support Team at Colchester Borough Council for providing this.



Join the ParkPlay Team!

Be a PlayLeader and make a positive impact on your community



ParkPlay are looking for enthusiastic community members who are local to Monkwick to help launch ParkPlay in this area. We are looking for paid PlayLeaders to drive this ParkPlay and also volunteers to help support. You do not require any previous sports background for this, we are looking for influential and passionate people who are excited to bring the community together for free fun every Saturday. If you are interested please get in contact <https://park-play.com/playleaders/> or amber@park-play.com

Colchester ParkPlays

Old Heath ParkPlay

Old Heath Recreation Ground
every Saturday from 9:30am

Greenstead ParkPlay

Hickory Avenue Playground
every Saturday from 12.00pm

No kit, expense or skill required, kids and
adults welcome

Register at park-play.com



**KEEP UP TO DATE WITH WHAT'S
GOING ON AT CHURCH AND
AROUND THE
LOCAL AREA**



**Watch our Facebook pages for all sorts of information about what is going and as well as the
“Events” page on our web site.**



FAIRTRADE

Many thanks to everyone who supported the stall in January.

Our next stall will be after the service on



26th February

This marks the beginning of

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT (27th FEBRUARY—12th MARCH)

when you will probably see more Fairtrade promotions in the supermarkets, particularly the Co-op who are really good at supporting Fairtrade.

Did you know that cocoa, bananas and coffee could soon be much more difficult to find on our shelves?

Climate change is making crops like these harder and harder to grow. Combined with deeply unfair trade, communities growing these crops are being pushed to the brink.

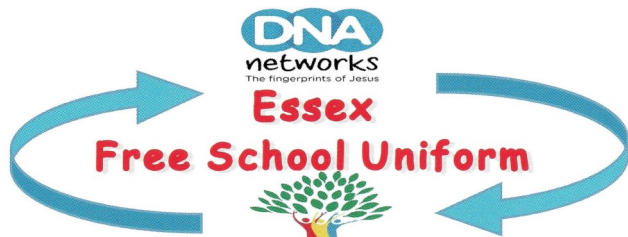
But here's the good news.

More of us choosing Fairtrade means extra income, power and support for those communities as they work to build sustainable and prosperous futures.

So not only is choosing Fairtrade best for people and planet, it could help save everyday treats like chocolate, bananas and a hot cuppa!

Beryl and Alison

At Wimpole Road Methodist Church
Wednesday 15 February 9:00—12 noon



Please get in contact if you or someone
you know needs free school uniform



Donations
Welcome



Free Uniform – subject to availability

Is your child
in need of
a school
uniform?



Would you
like to ex-
change for
another size?



Contact

Essex Uniform Exchange
on 01206 861180

Referrals to:

Uniform@dnanetworks.org





Rainbow Tots

A warm and friendly group for you and your little one to meet and make friends in your local area.

**Wednesdays
(term time)**

**Fun free play
sessions with
rhyme time to
finish!**

1.15pm-2.30pm

**St Stephen's
Church
Canterbury Road
CO2 7RY**

**Snacks for the tots
& refreshments for
the adults**

**£1.50 per child
(+50p
additional
child)**

Little Lambs

parent and pre-school group



Last session
this term -
18th July.

Starting
again 5th
September

Mondays in term time 9.30-11am

Everyone welcome

£1.50 per family

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. Isaiah 40 v.11



Contact:
Carolyn
07748795926



Baby & Toddler Group

Coffee morning

**Mondays 9 – 11 am
(term time)**

**Toys, singing,
fun and refreshments**



Contact us at: wimpoleroadmc@gmail.com /
Facebook message / 07847 846292

A free **Community Café**
in conjunction with
Colchester Foodbank
at
St Margaret's Church Hall

Stansted Road, Colchester, CO2 8RA
Every Friday from 11:00am to 1:00pm

The café will offer free refreshments and everyone is welcome. We will also have different community groups and charities from week to week providing support and care to the local community. So come along for a chat and a cuppa.

Every Friday

the following partners will be available this week



 **mind** Mid and North East Essex

Contact Information

St Stephen's Church Centre, Canterbury Road, Colchester CO2 7RY

Rector: Rev Lorraine Badger-Watts

Curate: Rev Dan Cant

Curate: Rev Belinda Kerins

Administrator: Andrew Topple

The Church Office is open on:

Tuesday 12 noon - 3 pm

Wednesday 12 noon - 3 pm

Thursday 9 am - 12 noon

Tel: 01206 869091

Email: office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk

Website: www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk

Facebook: [St Stephen's Church Members -Colchester](#)

Church Wardens: John Clifton and Martin Kerins

For Centre bookings contact: Andrew Topple in the Church Office

For **urgent** prayer requests (Prayer Tree) contact Andrew in the office or Rev Lorraine

The March newsletter should be available by Sunday 26 February. Please send any items to Andrew for inclusion as early as possible, and no later than

Monday 20 February to:

office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk