

# **All the latest news for our communities for February 2024**



be, belong, encounter, grow

Keep up to date on our websites:

**[www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk](http://www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk)**

**[www.stmargaretscolchester.org.uk](http://www.stmargaretscolchester.org.uk)**

# Regular Weekly Services and Meetings

**St Stephen's—Sunday mornings at 11:00 am  
together with our Wednesday morning Holy Com-  
munion 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 Com-  
munion and Kids Club. The third Sunday we have Café Church in the  
morning including Breakfast Club and a short service of Holy Commun-  
ion 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 Com-  
munion 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 alter-  
native 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.

### **A moment in time with Rev. Christine**

As we progress into the month of February we leave behind the joyful celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany and move into the penitential seasons of Lent and Passiontide. So the feast of the “Presentation of Christ in the temple” (Feb 2nd) commonly known as Candlemas acts as a kind of pivot. It’s as if we are saying “One last chance to look back at Christmas and now we turn towards the Cross”.

(Supermarkets have obviously lost touch with the Church’s time-table of its seasons judging by the pile of Easter Eggs already on the shelves since before the end of January!).

A couple of weeks after Candlemas we come to the official beginning of Lent marked by the arrival of Ash Wednesday (Feb 14th). Both the Candlemas service (often combined with a Christingle service) and the Ash Wednesday service are marked by the use of symbolism. Candlemas, with its many candles illustrating Simeon’s prophecy to Mary and Joseph that Jesus would become the light of the world (Luke 2 v 32) - and the anointing of ashes we use at the Ash Wednesday service – used as a sign of penitence as we move towards the suffering of Christ.

The Church’s use of symbolism enables us to engage all of our senses and imagination as we meet together to worship God.

There are many other forms of symbolism which can assist our worship. For many it is found in the wonder of God’s creation. For others it’s found in the brilliance of scientific or mathematical discovery and yet others have found it in their love of music, art, sailing and you name it!

Since we are all made in the image of God and everything has come from God then there is nothing that cannot speak to us of God provided we have eyes to see, ears to hear and a willingness to be open to God.

I never cease to marvel and thank God for the way he seems to speak to me through words, be it in literature, poetry, film, radio etc. I have quite a collection of words of wisdom which have spoken to me at a really deep and personal way and have helped me on my spiritual journey and yes, even from Dr Who!

## Cont...

So my prayer for us all as we move towards Lent is that we may avail ourselves of the powerful symbolism of the Candlemas/Christingle celebrations and the Ash Wednesday services and be alert to how Jesus- the Lord of time (and Eternity) - can so often speak to us in all sorts of surprising ways.

I'll end with a poem by the Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy:

*Some days, although we cannot pray, a prayer  
utters itself. So, a woman will lift  
Her head from the sieve of her hands and stare  
At the minims sung by a tree, a sudden gift.*

*Some nights, although we are faithless, the truth  
enters our hearts, that small familiar pain;  
then a man will stand stock-still, hearing his youth,  
in the distant Latin chanting of a train.*

*Pray for us now, Grade 1 piano scales  
console the lodger looking out across  
a Midlands town, Then dusk, and someone calls  
a child's name as though they named their loss.  
Darkness outside. Inside, the radio's prayer –  
Rockall, Malin, Dogger. Finisterre.*

Carol Ann Duffy (b. 1955)

**God Bless, Rev'd Christine**

# St Leonard at the Hythe

From March, where there is a 5th Sunday in the month, we have agreed we will evening prayer worship at St Leonards at the Hythe, Colchester.

Further details will follow, but for now please mark this in your diary!



## **Letter from the Churchwardens**

### **A day in the life....**

It is Thursday. The deadline for newsletter copy! I write this in the church office as the building is buzzing with activity and chat. Annie's Home Ed group are in the hall; Louise greets members of the slow cooker club as they come in for coffee and a chat before they pick up their ingredients for this week's dish and tells me about the funding for the club to run at St Margaret's and a link up with Orchard Baptist Church which will extend the project's reach to Easter; Denise and Peter from Wimpole Rd welcome callers for the Foodbank; Kerry from CAB tells me that lots more people are getting into debt with fuel bills because of high fuel prices; endless cups of tea and coffee are made; biscuits appear and disappear; some callers come in to say hallo seemingly just pass the time of day; Andrew greets, chats and gently presides. God is there in the middle of the muddle, confusion, diversity and joy of everyday life. That's where we are called to be his people. Thanks to all those who show up and open themselves to his call.

### **Goodbye to the Rectory?**

The PCC were consulted by the diocese' property department about the plan to sell the rectory in New Town Rd. This obviously follows from the plan for there to be just one priest in charge for St Margaret's and St Stephen's. There is therefore a need for only one rectory and the building in better condition is the house adjacent to St Margaret's. So 24 New Town Rd is redundant. What's more, it is not owned by the parish but by the diocese. The diocese are doing their best to bring its buildings up to current environmental standards by 2030- a huge job! The old rectory would need a lot of money spent to achieve that. Nonetheless, our PCC, along with a range of other folk, including Balliol College (our patron) and the cabinet office (?) were asked for their views on the plan. There is a reluctant consensus that the rectory should be sold. We made the point that members of the church have worked hard over many years to maintain the rectory. It would be only fair as well as strategic for some of the proceeds from the sale to come back to the parish in order to help carry out urgent repairs on our roof and help us install heating that is carbon neutral. 'Strategic' because our church centre is in pretty continual use to offer worship opportunities and serve the community in various ways (see above). This was the view we put to the property managers.

### **PV Panels creep nearer...**

We have a favoured contractor for the plan to put 72 panels on the church hall roof. But we need to get through a lot of rules and regulations to present the idea to the local council and the diocese. Then, we have some monies towards the work but will need to raise a lot more from grants, giving and events. Some progress then, but more to come on this and other aspects of the building project.

## Cont....

Parish profile finished. Hallelujah!

Yes, this has been through both PCCs twice for amendments and has been adapted to comments by Bishop Roger. It has been formatted and expertly designed by Peter Butler and is ready for the next stage of recruitment. You will be able to see this shortly,

God Bless,

**John Clifton**

**For John Clifton and Martin Kerins, Churchwardens**

## 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-colcheser.org.uk](mailto:office@ststephens-colcheser.org.uk) . **Andrew Topple**

## The Hub Café

If you would be able to join this team to help in the kitchen; making and serving drinks and other refreshments, please can you speak to Belinda.

As you will know this is an important part of our fissional work at St Stephen's and has a massif impact on our local community.



**Great News! From our Carol Singing in December we were able to raise £357 to support the wonderful work done by Beacon House. Thank you to everybody who took part and came to sing & play and a huge thank you to all our friends and neighbours in New Town and the Odd One Out pub who gave so generously.**



## KIDS' CLUB IN FEBRUARY

Join us on

**SUNDAY 11th and 25th FEBRUARY**

**when KIDS' CLUB will meet in the hall at**

**11am**



**Can I invite and encourage you to listen to this:**



**Desert Island Discs**

**Guli Francis-Dehqani, Church of England Bishop**

Access via this link: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001vbq7>

# Reminders of Christmas



*All  
Welcome*

  
**St Stephen's**  
CHURCH

# The Hub

**St. Stephen's cafe & community hubbub**  
Saturdays 10am - 12 noon

Coffee  
and cake

Knit and  
natter

Lego  
club

Warhammer  
club

Dear St Stephen's Church

On behalf of all the staff and guests at Beacon House, please accept our sincere thanks for your £357.01 charitable donation from your Carol Singing collection. With more than 250 individuals currently accessing our services, we are deeply grateful for the support of St Stephens Church who enable us to provide essential services to the homeless in our community.

Wow! What a year 2023 has been! We have been blessed with so many organisations who have been willing to work with us in providing group session for our Guests. These include, Blue Owl Pottery, Wellies On Care Farm, Together We Grow Community Garden to name but a few! We have also been

privileged to have heard so many stories of faith through the weekly session called 'Everyone has A Story to Tell' where Guests can be introduced to and experience the love of Jesus and the truth and joy He brings. We are so grateful to those who were willing and are still willing to give up part of their day to share how God has transformed their own lives – Thank you all!

Following a busy December we are looking forward to the year ahead. Starting in January, Occupational Therapy have received funding to start a new group collaboratively with 'Multiply'; a government programme that offers flexible and free courses to improve numeracy skills for adults. This group "Skills for Life" will provide a regular weekly session on a rolling 4 week programme, co-facilitated with the Occupational Therapist and an external training provider from Multiply. With the overall aim to support Guests with real-world numeracy issues and inspire them to pursue further courses to improve the numeracy skills in the future.

It's exciting to see what 2024 brings and we are thankful for those who are with us in this journey!

With kind regards

*Julie Waite*

*Office Manager, BEACON HOUSE*

## PRAYER FOR ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

### PRAYER FOR ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

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



**Week 1. From 4th February—Lisle Road,** Claudius Road, Campion Road, Barrington Road. Bober Court, Merton Court and Prunus Court.

**Week 2. From 11th February.** Gilberd Road. Sadler Close, Western Road, Beche Road, Chestnut Avenue, Hetherington Close and Gosfield Road.

**Week 3. 18th February.** Gladstone Road. Granville Road. Mytle Grove, Adelaide Drive, Cairns Road and Armidale Walk

**Week 4. From 25th 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.**

Saturday  
**6th**  
April  
2024

  
St Stephen's  
CHURCH CENTRE

Free  
Entry

# Arts & Crafts Fayre

Browse stalls of  
handmade items that you  
won't find on the high street!

Date: **Saturday April 6th 2024**

Time: **From 10.00am - 2.00pm**

At: **St. Stephen's Church, Canterbury Road, Colchester CO2 7RY**

See [www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk](http://www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk) for more info

**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.

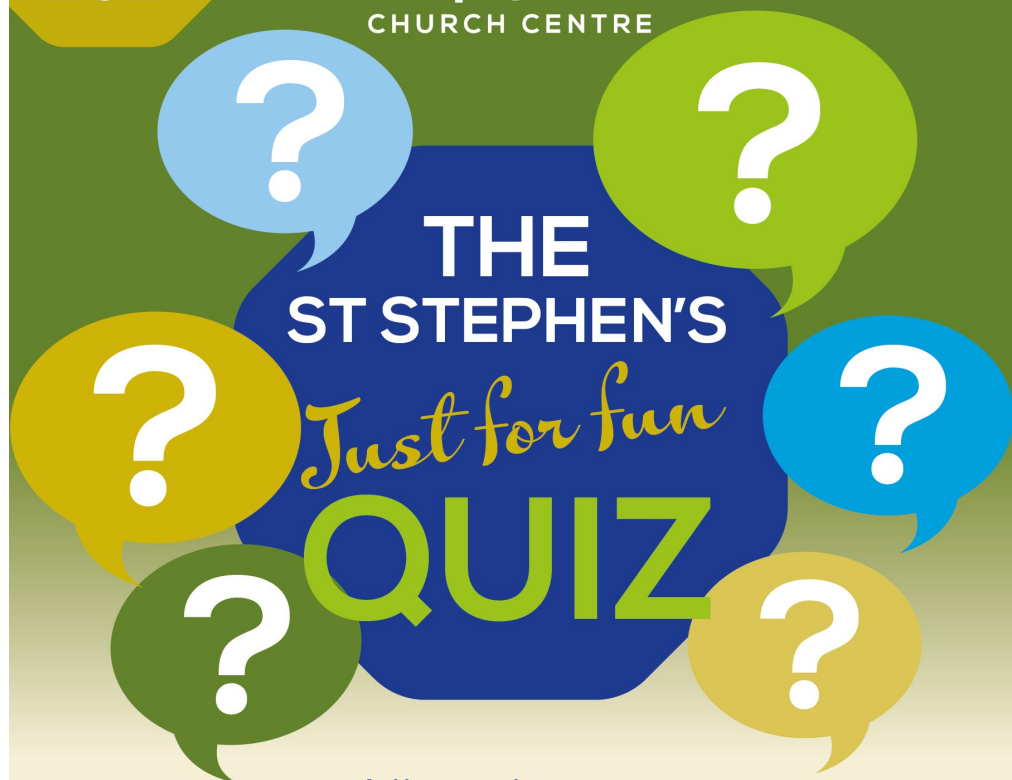
Please [click here](#) to see the Events page



16th  
March  
2024



St Stephen's  
CHURCH CENTRE



All welcome

Come and join us for a family quiz night. Questions will be suitable for a range of ages and abilities. Bring your own drinks and snacks..

Reserve your table by calling Peter on **07876 492622**,

or e-mail **[office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk](mailto:office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk)**

**£20 per table/team, Max 8 people per team**

**Date:** March 16th 2024 **Time:** From 7.00pm - 7.30 Start  
**At:** St. Stephen's Church, Canterbury Road, Colchester

All funds raised go towards supporting the work of the Church.

## GROWING THROUGH A VACANCY

WWW.GROW-VACANCY.ORG.UK

### A PRAYER TO USE DURING A VACANCY

This can be used in the intercessions at church services, by small groups and church prayer meetings, as well as by individual church members.

Heavenly Father we thank you for the ministry of X  
our previous vicar/rector/minister,  
and we pray your presence and blessing upon him/her.

We ask now that you will help us  
to share responsibility,  
grow in faith,  
love one another,  
care for those in need,  
reach out to others,  
and welcome newcomers.

Lord Jesus, guard and grow this church  
as we serve you together in this period without a vicar/rector/minister.

Please guide those who are seeking the right minister for us,  
and those who are seeking the right church for their ministry,  
that together we may discover your way for the future and see your kingdom  
grow.

Amen.

## Parish Giving

Whether by phone, by post or online, you can set up a Direct Debit donation with PGS that will help our parish fund the mission and ministry, enriching the life of our church in our community.

Begin your giving journey in just a few clicks at [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk)

# TOURETTES ACTION



Colchester

Support Group

**A support group for families  
living with tourettes or tic  
disorders**



**WHEN?**

**We aim to meet every 3rd Sunday of the month**



**WHAT TIME?**

**10:30am - 12pm**



**STANWAY LAKELANDS COMMUNITY CENTRE  
STANWAY  
COLCHESTER  
CO3 8WD**

## **Contact Information**

**Group leader Annie**

**07830260537**

**[tourettesactioncolchester@yahoo.com](mailto:tourettesactioncolchester@yahoo.com)**

**[facebook.com/groups/798970467446324](https://facebook.com/groups/798970467446324)**

**Or search Tourettes Action Colchester  
Support Group**



# CHRIST CHURCH PRESENTS COVER STORIES

SATURDAY  
3RD  
FEBRUARY



DOORS  
OPEN AT  
6.30PM

Performance starts  
at 7pm until 10pm

Cover Stories play a friendly informal mix of jazz standards, blues, latin, classic rock and pop songs.

This concert is the first to feature our new singer, Corinne, who will also sing some of her native French chansons.

Tickets cost £10 pp and can be purchased via  
<https://christ-church-colchester.sumupstore.com>

There will be a cash bar so have your purses and wallets at the ready! Throughout the evening there will be a Tombola with your chance to win some fabulous prizes.

All proceeds raised from this event will go towards the building fund





# Let Us Help You Make Your Home Warmer

Grant funding may be available for:

- Insulation for walls, lofts and heating systems
- Draught exclusion
- Changes to windows or doors
- Solar panels
- Air source heat pumps

IMPROVE  
THE ENERGY  
EFFICIENCY  
OF YOUR  
HOME!

Not all of these may be suitable for your property. Our surveyors will advise which measures can be installed if eligible.

Contact us for FREE and impartial advice on email [EnergyEfficientHomes@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:EnergyEfficientHomes@colchester.gov.uk), or scan the QR code

Our next meeting:

Wednesday 31st Jan 2024, 9am-12pm  
Wimpole Road Methodist Church,  
Wimpole Road, Colchester, CO1 2DN



Colchester  
City Council



**HUG**

[colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants](https://colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants)

# 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 Ben at

**ben.gibbons@ymcaessex.org.uk or 07940 543296**

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

**12 February 2024**

**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**



 **St Stephen's**  
Church Centre



# ST STEPHEN'S BADMINTON CLUB FOR ADULTS

MEETING IN THE HALL ON  
THE LAST FRIDAY OF THE  
MONTH

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7:30 - 9:30 pm

St Margaret's Church

# COMMUNITY CAFE

IN CONJUNCTION WITH COLCHESTER  
FOODBANK

All are welcome to our weekly cafe for free refreshments in the church hall.

We also have various community support groups providing drop in sessions as well as the food bank volunteers who are able to issue food parcels for those in need, whatever the reason.

Come along for a cuppa and a chat!

**EVERY FRIDAY**

**11-1PM**



Colchester



# 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

Knit and Natter - 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

**booking essential for catering reasons – to book call 07745 160 621**

**Tea and Chat - 5th Wednesday (when there is one) 1.30-3 pm**

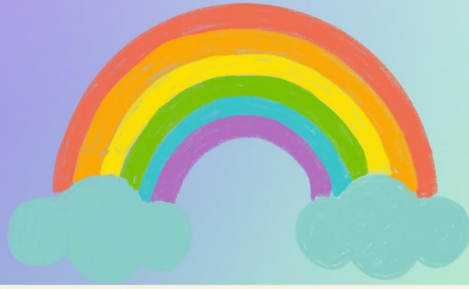
## HELP NEEDED PLEASE



Might you be able to help with St Stephen's Kids' Club on the 4th Sunday of the month?

If you might be able to help, please speak to Belinda or Beryl.

Thank you.



# ***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



**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



**St Margaret's  
Berechurch**

WINDHOLM • EDUCATION • CHURCH

**Contacts  
Carolyn  
07748793926**



# **Baby & Toddler Group**

## **Coffee morning**

**Mondays 9 – 11 am  
(term time)**

**Toys, singing,  
fun and refreshments**



Contact us at: [wimpoleroadmcm@gmail.com](mailto:wimpoleroadmcm@gmail.com) /

Facebook message / 07847 846292

# Contact Information

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

**Curates: Rev Dan Cant & Rev Belinda Kerins**

**Community Worker : Louise Brown**

Email: [communityworker@ststephens-colchester.org.uk](mailto:communityworker@ststephens-colchester.org.uk)

Mobile: 07598 251 180

Administrator: Andrew Topple

The Church Office is open on:

Tuesday 12 noon - 4 pm

Wednesday 12 noon - 4 pm

Thursday 9 am - 12 noon

**Tel: 01206 869091**

**Email: [office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk](mailto:office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.ststephens-colchester.org.uk](http://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 one of the Curates

The March newsletter should be available by Sunday 25 February. Please send any items to Andrew for inclusion as early as possible, and no later than

Monday 19 February to:

[office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk](mailto:office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk)