



All the latest news for our communities for March 2024



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

(these may vary from time to time)

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.

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

<u>Click here</u> 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 Topple for further information.

Refection from Rev Dan

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

As we approach the season of spring, already there are signs of new growth as the trees and shrubs begin to bud and flowers present an array of colour into what has been a dreary winter. As many hope for the warm of spring – if only to cut down on pricey heating costs; there should be a sense of the winter worries coming to an end. However, there is still raging war, high living costs - and have you notice fuel rose by 3 pence in three days too! The worries of last season for many seem very present in this season. However, there is hope on the horizon!

Hope indeed! As I set off for my normal midweek pre—Holy Communion walk around New Town; I couldn't help noticing the small congregations of snowdrops that are now blooming, along with the first of the daffodils displaying their sun-yellow flowers, with all declaring that we are just a few weeks from the start of spring. I even noticed a few delicate little purple and yellow crocuses growing from between the concrete slabs of the pavement. This prayer time has giving me a chance to pray for various needs, concerns and anxieties for the community, churches and personally too. I would highly recommend a slow walk, taking in all that nature has to offer in our urban settings; there are many little surprises.

Upon concluding the midweek Holy Communion service at St. Stephen's, I preached upon Mark 7:14-23. I spoke about the types of activity and "things" that defile and harden the heart. After sharing a couple of humours anecdotes about overindulgence, I then focused upon the heart. As I drew my preach to a close, I spoke about the need to guard our hearts against the works and deception of the enemy – protecting ourselves from anxieties. I suggested that the best way to protect our hearts, nourish our bodies and guard ourselves, is to practice daily engagement with scripture, attendance of regular worship, prayer, and fellowship. I suggested that Jesus' teaching provokes us to drive deep into context and meaning, both in scripture and in our own contemporary time. I invited the congregation and you too, to spend more time in prayer. The congregation and I acting upon that invitation, by holding an extended period of silence listening out for any words or images from our LORD.

After a few minutes of that uncomfortable silence had past (you know that silence that only really affects those of us that suffer from a degree of British reservedness) and we relaxed, placing the uncomfortableness behind us, many began to hear the LORD. When we spoke of what we had heard and of images we had been presented with, it soon became apparent that there was a majority all with a sense of the LORD calling us to enter into a 24-hour period of prayer.

A small number of people have come forward and will observe 24 hours of prayer, both observed at their homes and in the Chapel at St. Stephens. The

Cont...

group will be praying specifically for the softening of hardness hearts of global leaders, for our future incumbent that we serve across both churches and our future partnership. The prayer session will start on Saturday 3rd March at 9:30am.

If you are interested in joining with this act of 24-hour prayer, that is great there is no specific way of praying, other than just as you feel lead by the Holy Spirit. I would be very interested in hearing of people's prayer responses, so I can collate these and bring them to churches. The general feeling is that the LORD has something to reveal to us — exciting indeed!

Rev Dan

St Leonard at the Hythe

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



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

Churchwarden's letter March 2024

Hello everyone. Good news to report to you.

Recruiting a new Priest in Charge

Good news No.1. We have heard from Archdeacon Ruth and the recruitment process for our shared Priest In Charge post is moving ahead with purpose. Ruth thanked us for a "fantastic parish profile" so thanks once again to all those who contributed to it. Thanks too to everyone who is praying that we will recruit the right person for the job.

The advert for the post (informed by the profile) will appear on the diocesan website for the week beginning 26th February for up to three weeks. This means that the vacancy will be available to potential candidates from all other diocese as well as Chelmsford. In addition, Ruth and Bishop Roger already know two candidates within the diocese who are interested in the post and who would be "strong candidates". The deadline for applications will be 18th March with shortlisting in the days afterwards.

Cont...

The best dates for interviews are being identified in mid to late April. On the interview day, the candidates will visit the parishes and the vicarage. Each parish has been asked to appoint two people to take part in the shortlisting and the interviews. By the time you read this, the St Stephen's PCC will probably have appointed two representatives.

Please continue to pray for God's guidance in this process. If you have questions about this, please ask a member of the PCC.

Net Zero Carbon Demonstrators Project

Good news No.2. St Stephens has been selected as one of 5 or 6 churches out of 400+ in the diocese to be put forward for this national CoE initiative. The aim is to make extra help, support and monies available to churches who are taking action to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 (that includes us!). These churches would then become exemplars to other churches, encouraging them to find ways forward that suit their situations. We will know later in the summer whether we have been accepted as a carbon demonstrator church.

St Stephens is seen as an example of a church in an urban setting with comparatively high carbon use (due to the number of hours each week that the church is used for a variety of activities) and with a passion for mission including creation centred change.

Our twin building projects are moving forward, slowly but deliberately. Currently, we are gathering the information we need to apply to the planning authority and the diocese for permission to install an array of photovoltaic panels on the church hall roof. These will help reduce our electricity bills and, we hope, combine later with air source heat pumps to remove our reliance on fossil fuel. When we have the necessary permissions we will share a lot more about this.

We are also rebooting our plan to fix the leaks in the flat roof and associated issues following a parting of the ways with our previous contractor. Please pray for wisdom as we seek the best way forward with this.

Blessings,

John Clifton

On behalf of Martin Kerins and John Clifton, 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 . **Andrew Topple**

Sunday services during March

There will be a few changes to our regular Sunday worship during this month with Mothering Sunday falling on 10 March and Palm Sunday on 24 March.

At St Margaret's:

Mothering Sunday will be our All Age Service and as a consequence the usual All Age for the first Sunday of the month, will instead be Holy Communion. On Palm Sunday we with worship jointly with Orchard Baptist Church at 10:30 am.



At St Stephens:



On both Mothering Sunday and Palm Sunday we will be celebrating All Age Holy Communion and there will be activities in the church for our youngsters.

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 mission work at St Stephen's and has a massif impact on our local community.



Easter Walk Monday 1st April.



Hello everyone have no fear it's not a April fool. Our Friday night house group would like to arrange a few get togethers this year and this is the first.

We are organising a walk from Walton train station to Walton on the Naze Tower a walk of about 1.5 miles.

We plan to catch the 10.07 train from Colchester Town (St Botolph's) station. We propose meeting at 9.50 to sort tickets as if we get a group save ticket and travel together the cost is £6.55 per adult return and £2 for children. (For a group save a minimum of three adults must travel together although train tickets can be a bit complicated, but this is the price I found).

If you do not fancy travelling by train, please meet at 11am at Walton train station. There is parking at Walton train station.

If you fancy just joining us at the Naze there is parking, there and cafes. I guess we will be there around 12 noon.

At the Naze Chris Poole may organise a short nature sightseeing wander if the weather is good. We may also have a few games again if the weather is ok.

Feel free to bring a picnic for Lunch. Or take advantage of the cafes on site.

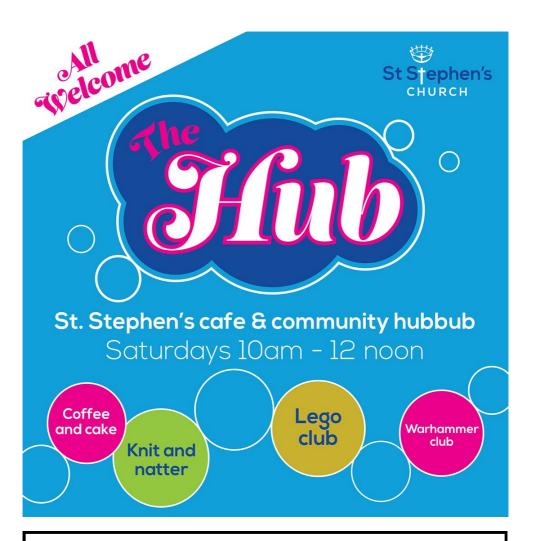


We will then return the walk back to the train station with the trains at 2 mins to the hour. Everyone is welcome.

If it is bad weather, we plan to still meet at the church for a picnic and activities. This would take place from 11am. Feel free to call on the day on number below to see which activity we will be doing.

Thank you

Chris and Debbie Liddamore on behalf of the Friday night house group 07752 369 612



Church Camping Weekend at Thorington

5 – 7 July

Please see later for more details or speak to Chris Liddamore (07752 369 612)



Camping at Thorrington Friday 5th July to Sunday 7th July 2024

We have booked a return to Thorrington for a camping extravaganza. I think this is our ninth year of going. However, if you have not been we would love you to join us for all or part of our weekend away.

We have the indoor accommodation which can sleep 14 people (in bunk beds) and then the fallen log campsite which is a lovely big open camp site set in the



woods. Thorrington is a lovely quite big campsite on the way to Brightlingsea, it is the scout campsite, but they allow us to use it as a church group.

The weekend is open to all ages and some people come for two nights, one night, one day or just the Saturday evening. It is really flexible it doesn't matter if you are on our own or in a family. Everyone is welcome.

The rough plan for the weekend is arrive around 4.30pm on the Friday set up camping and then have some fish and chips which Sheila Poole as offered to collect and bring to the site for us. Nearer the time we will place an order.

We then relax around the fire while enjoying a sip of your favourite tipple. If we are lucky some people sing and play any instruments they bring.

The Saturday is relaxed and we will probably book some of the onsite activities . We also set up some sport activities on our site. Some people sit and read; some people go for a walk. If we are lucky Chris Poole may arrange a nature walk. For tea we arrange a group BBQ and share food which people bring. This is sometimes where people join us for the evening. We sometimes then attend the large campfire for a sing song, run by the site wardens before returning to our site for a more relaxed fire.

On Sunday we may attend the "Scout's Own" 15 minute outside act of worship before normally breaking camp after lunch. The site is around 20 minute drive from our church.

All the above is very relaxed there is never any pressure to do anything. People dip in and out of whatever they fancy. People bring their own food and we find this works well. We have a fully working kitchen in the indoor accommodation. There are showers and toilets on site.

We are still finalising the prices per person per night but think this will be £8 per person if you are camping and over 5 under-fives are free. The indoor accommodation is likely

to be £15 per person per night. This indoor accommodation has increased quite a lot over the last few years. These prices will hopefully include two activities we will book to do on the Saturday. We really want people to come and have a small fund set aside that people can access if you the cost is difficult.

If you haven't been before we hope to see you and please ask us if you have any questions. Thank you

Chris and Debbie Liddamore 07752 369612

Andrew King's research about St Mary Magdalen

You may be aware of the work which Andrew did exploring the history of St Mary Magdalen Church and it was his wish that this work not be lost and if possible taken on and continued by somebody else with a passion for it.

If you are that person, please can you contract Andrew Topple in the office (office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk) and can then arrange for you to make contact with Andrew's executors to progress this.

Andrew Topple

PRAYER FOR ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

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

Week 1. 3 March, Artillery Street, Victor Road, New Park Street, King Steven Road, Morella Court, Marasca End and Garrod Court.

Week 2. 10 March, Kendall Road, James Street. Charles Street, Goodey Close, Finchingfield Way, Thaxsted Walk and Felstead Close.

Week 3. 17 March, Winnock Road. Wimpole Road, Terling Close, Middlewick Close and Beeleigh Close.

Week 4. 24 March, Old Heath Road, Winsley Square, Onslow Crescent, Darwin close and Bathurst Close.

Week 5. 31 March, Artillery Street. Victor Road, New Park Street, King Stephen Road, Peerswood Road, Hornbeam Close and Fallowfield Road

Anybody who wants to Prayer Walk these roads please do.



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







CHURCH CENTRE

ST STEPHEN'S Just for fun

?QUIZ?

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**

£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.



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

Are you aged under 50? Did you know you're more at risk of dying by suicide than any other means?

Reach Out for Mental Health are hosting a footballing event to get the conversation started. We're offering an opportunity to get together with other men, have a kick around, get puffed out, have some fun, and get the opportunity to listen to other men's experiences.

5th March 6-8pm Colchester Sports Park, CO4 5YX

Email us at info@reachoutfmh.co.uk
to book your place
Remember, this is to you all.
We won't be asking you to cover costs,
supply kit or pay match fees.





Hands tied by debt?



Previously Colchester CAP Debt Centre

Our friendly team are ready to come alongside and work with you to find financial freedom

> Call: 0300 102 4478

email: hello@colchestercmadebtcentre.co.uk

cma

Freedom from debt Hope for the future

CCDC registered charity 1152204 working in partnership with the national charity Community Money Advice 1111436

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

11 March 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 BADMINTON CLUB FOR ADULTS

MEETING IN THE HALL ON THE LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

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











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. Isoiah 40 v.11



Contacts Carolyn 07748793926



Baby & Toddler Group Coffee morning

Mondays 9 – 11 am
(term time)
Toys, singing,
fun and refreshments

Contact us at: <u>wimpoleroadmc@gmail.com</u> / 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

Mobile: 07598 251 180

Administrator: Andrew Topple

The Church Office is normally 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

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 one of

the Curates

The April newsletter should be available by Easter Sunday 31 March. Please send any items to Andrew for inclusion as early as possible, and no later than Monday 25 March to:

office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk