

# All the latest news for our communities for November 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 10:15 am together with our Wednesday morning Holy Communion or Morning Prayer services at 10:30 am.

Every Sundays 9:30—10:00 am in the Chapel (before Sunday Service) a time of silent Christian meditation. Please can an effort be made to be quiet if arriving at Church before 10:00 to avoid disturbing the meditation in the Chapel.

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 10:15 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.

#### **Clergy Reflection**

#### "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:20

I apologise in advance for this reflection. I know I have jumped the start line with this, but I couldn't help myself in writing a sharing my recent reflection with you. Besides I won't get another opportunity to write this before Advent and Christmas.

Recently, I have been rewatching the Lord of the Rings movies. They are a rich source of J.R. Tolkien's Christian wisdom. The time spent watching these movies has become somewhat of a pilgrimage, a time of reflection and prayer after every period of watching. This week as I reflected, it struck me that for many we have how entered the planning period for Christmas! As the shelves in the shops fill with freaky merchandise for Halloween, fireworks for Guy Fawkes Night and everything sparkly for Christmas the countdown to Christmas begins. My reflection, rather than planning, turned to the discipleship of an unlikely bunch of lads. I began to think about embracing discipleship in a modern Middle-Earth.

As Christians or those questioning, we are all fellow travellers on this earthly pilgrimage from birth to death! As the gentle chill of autumn whispers the pending arrival of winter and Christmas in 60 days at the time of writing, we find ourselves with the perfect opportunity to reflect upon our journey as disciples of the greatest story ever told—the Gospel. Much like Frodo and Sam embarking on their epic quest in J.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings," we, too, find parallel inspiration in the path of discipleship.

#### The Fellowship of Believers

In our lives, much like in Middle-earth, the journey of faith is best undertaken in the company of others. Christianity teaches us that discipleship is not a solitary path. Hebrews 10:24-25 encourages us to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together." Just as the Fellowship set out to destroy the One Ring, rallying support and friendship, we too must rely on our community—the Fellowship of Believers—to strengthen our path toward spiritual growth.

Humour, as Tolkien so deftly demonstrates through characters like Merry and Pippin, plays an essential role in our journey. Their light-heartedness amidst daunting challenges reminds us of Proverbs 17:22: "A cheerful heart is good medicine." As you prepare for the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season, remember to introduce moments of laughter into your day. Tell a silly joke at the dinner table, share a funny story with a friend, and let joy infuse your countdown to Christmas.

#### The Call to Discipleship

The journey of discipleship is akin to the quest to Mount Doom—both daunting and transformative. Jesus's call to His first disciples in Matthew 4:19, "*Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,*" invites us to a life of purpose and service. Frodo didn't choose the task of ring-bearer lightly, nor should we take our call to discipleship casually. It's a daunting task yet filled with opportunities for growth and fulfilment.

#### Countdown to Christmas: Preparation and Anticipation

Advent is that magical time when anticipation builds, much like our excitement as we turn the pages of a thrilling tale. As we look forward to unlocking each day on our advent calendars, (Don't forget you buy yourself an advent calendar) let's fill our hearts with expectation—not just for holiday gifts and gatherings, but for deepening our relationship with God and understanding His purpose for us.

Just as Tolkien filled his writings with rich history and intricate details, the Bible is packed with stories that shape our faith. Take this time to delve deeper into Scripture. You might consider a daily devotional or a Bible study group to enhance your understanding. Perhaps embark on a spiritual quest of your own, seeking answers to the questions the Christmas story stirs within you.

#### Encouragement Along the Way

Be encouraged, dear friends, that no journey is devoid of challenges. Frodo faced many obstacles and temptations, yet he had Sam by his side—a steadfast companion who never gave up hope. In the same vein, Jesus assures us of His unending companionship in Matthew 28:20, saying, "*Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*"

Unexpected trials may arise as we approach Christmas, but they are an opportunity to grow stronger in faith. Channel your inner Samwise Gamgee, offering support and encouragement not only to yourself but to those around you. As you interact with family, friends, or even strangers, be the beacon of hope and love that the Christmas season embodies.

#### A Challenge to Undertake

Here's a small challenge for you as we prepare to enter this year's Christmas season: undertake one act of unexpected kindness each day, mirroring the acts of service our faith calls us to. Whether it's a note of thanks, a call to someone long unheard, or helping a neighbour, let these acts reflect the spirit of Sam's loyalty and love. By taking on this challenge, we emulate the discipleship pathway, serving as ambassadors of Christ's love in our world. Remember how every small gesture contributes to a greater good, much as each character in "Lord of the Rings" played a crucial role in the grand narrative.

Make this this pending Christmas season different, as we journey towards Bethlehem in our hearts, we are all given the choice to embrace discipleship with open arms. Let the courage of Tolkien's characters and the wisdom of the Scriptures, emerge each as we journey together in Christmas preparation and celebration transforming and inspiring.

Let us be both humorous and heartfelt, adventurous and anchored in faith, as we walk together on this illuminated path toward Christmas. Merry journeying, and may you find your soul enriched and ready to celebrate the greatest gift of all—Christ in our midst.

Peace and blessings, Revd Dan

#### A Word from the Wardens

Hello all, I hope everyone is well. This time of year is so exciting! Autumn leaves and fresh winter air!

Anna joining us has been a true blessing. As we now start our services at 10:15am that extra 45 minutes has brought back more numbers of people attending Sunday mornings, they are also more like me more awake. This has given us the opportunity to absorb Anna's teaching and be blessed.

Macie Ovenden Church Warden at St Margaret's

#### **Confirmation Service**

We are delighted that on Thursday 28th November, we will be having a confirmation service at St Stephen's, at 7.30pm, which will be led by Bishop Roger.

Confirmation is a special church service in which a person confirms the promises that were made when they were baptized. If you were baptized at a christening when you were a child, your parents and godparents made these promises on your behalf. As a young person or adult, you may be ready to affirm these promises for yourself and

commit your life to following Jesus Christ. At a confirmation service, you make these promises for yourself.

We already have several people from the last Alpha course who are being confirmed at this service, although attending an Alpha course is not essential. If you are interested in being confirmed, at this service or possibly in the future, please contact Rev Anna <u>revannadavis@gmail.com</u> or Rev Belinda <u>blin.church@yahoo.com</u> who would be very happy to talk it through with you. There is still availability for you to join this coming service if wanted.

A warm invitation is extended to everybody to attend this special service, to support and pray for the candidates as they make this declaration of their faith.

#### <u>ALPHA</u>

Following the success of our last joint AL-PHA course with Wimpole Road in the summer, we have plans to run a further course for 6 weeks starting on Tuesday 7 January. The ALPHA course is an opportunity to explore the basics of the Christian faith through discussion assisted by watching short videos. It is open to all people; regardless of where they might be on their



faith journey to simply understand more about Christianity and what it might mean to us in the world today. During the course we will be exploring topics such as:

Is there more to life than this? Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus die? Why and how do I pray? How and why should I read the Bible? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does the Holy Spirit do?

If you would be interested in coming along or know anybody who you think would find this helpful please speak to Rev Anna (email address <u>revannadavis@gmail.com</u>) or Rev Belinda (email address <u>blin.church@yahoo.com</u>) at St Stephen's & St Margaret's or Rev Hannah at Wimpole Road.





The Church of England in Essex and East London

Diocese of Chelmsford

### An invitation to explore what God has in store for you

Welcome to **Colchester Episcopal Area Vocations Morning**! Join us at **St Mary's Church** for a morning filled with inspiration and guidance on exploring your calling. This in-person event is a fantastic opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and discover more about how your unique gifts and talents can be used in God's service. Whether you are considering ordained ministry or simply curious about the many lay vocational paths, this event is for you. Come ready to engage in discussions, workshops, and reflection. We can't wait to see you there.

The morning is open to anyone over the age of 16.

Saturday 23rd November 2024, 9.30am – 2pm. Venue: St Mary's Church, New Church Road, West Bergholt, CO6 3JE.

Coffee will be available from 9.00am ready for a prompt 9.30am start. Please bring a packed lunch.

Book your free place through Eventbrite: <u>https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/</u> <u>e/colchester-episcopal-area-vocations-morning-tickets-1036625343307</u>

Please speak to Rev Anna if you would like to discuss this further or would simply like to know more.

#### Community Work Update

Six weeks have flown by so both of the Slow Cooker Clubs have now finished at St Margaret's and at St Stephen's. It has been wonderful to welcome everyone into the churches and see them build up relationships with each other and those who attend at the churches on the mornings they take place.

We were incredibly lucky that Kendall Primary School have been growing produce to support the slow cooker club at St Stephens, and they brought these items with them when visiting for the harvest festival at the church; please see the picture on the front page of this edition of the Newsletter.

We are also really thankful for the support and grant funding we have had to run these projects - and I am already looking at calendar dates for running these again in the new year!

The over 60's lunch club has been full and busy with lots of new members and delicious dinners served. We are currently at capacity for the numbers we can cater for too....Hopefully there will be some good news with the new oven soon!

The new group Neurospicy will be starting on the 5th November - the leaflet is in this newsletter and shared online also, so please do share and let people know about this group coming up, and your prayers and support would be appreciated for!

Louise Brown Community Worker

#### **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

# St Leonard at the Hythe

On the 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!





Neurospicy is a new group starting on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024. Run on a Tuesday between 10am and 12pm term-time only, the group is designed to offer support and information to the neurodivergent and their families.

# Would you be able to spare a few hours a week to help welcome people and make them a cup of tea?

We are looking for people to help run each session. We need people who can welcome attendees with warmth and empathy and signpost them towards other agencies when appropriate.

All volunteers must complete the Diocesan safeguarding training to Intermediate level and are subject to an Enhanced DBS check. Confidentiality and a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is essential.

Further information can be found on the Notice Board in the Foyer.

Please contact: annieporteousbutler@gmail.com



#### For further details please <u>click here</u> or speak to Annie Porteous-Butler (annieporteousbutler@gmail.com)

#### 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

#### PRAYER FOR ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

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

**Week 1. From 3 November;** Cannon Street, Rebow Street, Victoria Place, Launceston Close and Canberra Close.

Week 2. From 10 November; Winsley Road, Beehive Court, Worsnop House, New Town Road, Littlefield Road, Elmwood Ave and Lordswood Road.

Week 3. From 17 November; Belmont Place, Scarlets Road, Recreation Road, Parkland Court, Smith's Field, Hitherwood Road, Breachfield Road and Eight Acre Lane



Week 4. From 24 November; Brookside Close, Bourn Road, Dudley Close, Bourn Court, Rose Allen Avenue, John Hammond Close and John Mace Road

**Week 5. From 1 December;** Gladstone Road. Granville Road. Mytle Grove, Berechurch Hall Road, Lethe Grove and Friday Wood Green

Anybody who wants to Prayer Walk these roads please do.



This year marks the 30th anniversary of the first ordination of women in the Church of England— our Christine was one of that 1994 cohort and was delighted to be involved in the celebration service in St Paul's Cathedral a few weeks ago.



#### **Becoming a School Governor**

As I am sure you are aware there are a number of schools across our two parishes all of which will have some form of governing body.

Becoming a school governor can be an excellent way for members of our congregation to support the local community. Governors play a crucial role in shaping the future of local schools, helping to ensure that they provide the best possible education for all children. We are often contacted from the schools to ask whether we know of anyone would be interested from our church community in taking up a governor role when there are vacancies.

It really is a wonderful way to give a little something back and help within the school community! No prior experience is needed either.

Do you think this is something that you could perhaps lend your time too?

Or do you have some questions about what it means to be a governor?

Please do have a chat with me if this is something that you are interested in.

Louise Brown, Community Worker

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# th OF ENGLAND

If, like me you are finding that you can go weeks and weeks without going near a bible can I recommend the 'Everyday Faith' app which popped up on my FaceBook recently? It's developed by the Church of England and is a 5 minute read / listen which includes a bible reading, brief commentary, prayer and action point. Easy to download from the App store (easy as in I managed it). If you don't 'do' apps here is a link to use online which you might want to explore...

https://everydayfaith.churchofengland.org/s/preview

Hope you find this resource useful for taking your journey of faith into your weekly routine.

### citizens advice

#### Free, impartial and confidential advice for all

#### **CONTACT US**

Online: www.colchestercitizensadvice.org.uk

Email: advice@colchestercab.org.uk

#### Freephone: 0808 278 7853

#### We can offer help with a wide range of issues including:

- Debt or money advice
- Energy bills, efficiency and budgeting
- Benefit checks or help to make a claim
- Family or personal
- Housing
- Employment
- and more!





#### **Click above to access WePray**

#### 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 <u>click here</u> to see the Events page

#### WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US



# ALPHA COURSE

FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE AND DISCUSS THE BASICS OF CHRISTIANITY AND LIFES BIG QUESTIONS WITH OTHERS IN A SUPPORTIVE GROUP SETTING, A MEAL WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED EACH WEEK.

Six weeks starting 7th January 2025 7-9.15pm at St Stephen's Church and Wimpole Road Church For more information please get in touch.





St Margaret's Berechurch

#### By kind permission of the Rector and PCC Cantus Firmus presents

# **Taizé**

### Service for Evening Worship

#### Sunday 10 November 2024

6.00pm service begins 7.00pm ends approx.

St Andrew's Church, Rectory Lane, Abberton, Essex CO5 7NJ

> Light refreshments will be served Retiring collection

Parking is in the church carpark. Please bring torches as lighting is limited Further details from David Gunton: davidgunton@cantusfirmus.org.uk and the website: cantusfirmus.org.uk



Cantus Firms Trust is a UK-registered charitable incorporated organisation no. 1192862



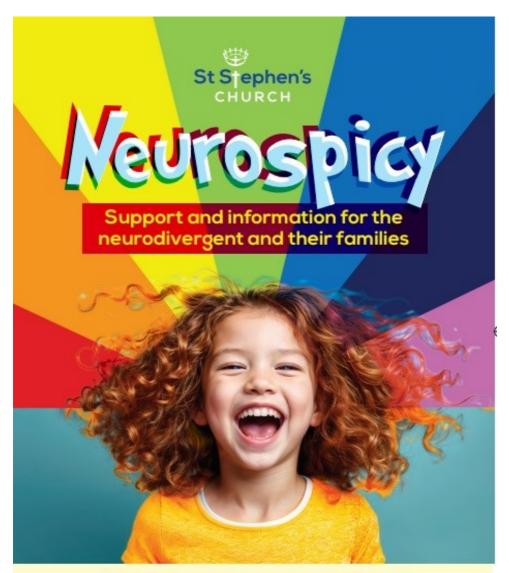
COME ALONG TO ST STEPHENS CHURCH FOR AN AFTERNOON OF MUSICAL SINGING FUN!

JOIN US TO SING ALONG TO LOTS OF THE OLD TIME FAVOURITE SONGS AND MANY OTHERS TOO!

Fourth Monday of the month

12:00 - 1:30 pm

Next sessions on Monday 28 October & 25 November



Join us for a cuppa and a chat Tuesday 10am - 12pm (term time) St Stephen's Church, Canterbury Road, CO2 7RJ

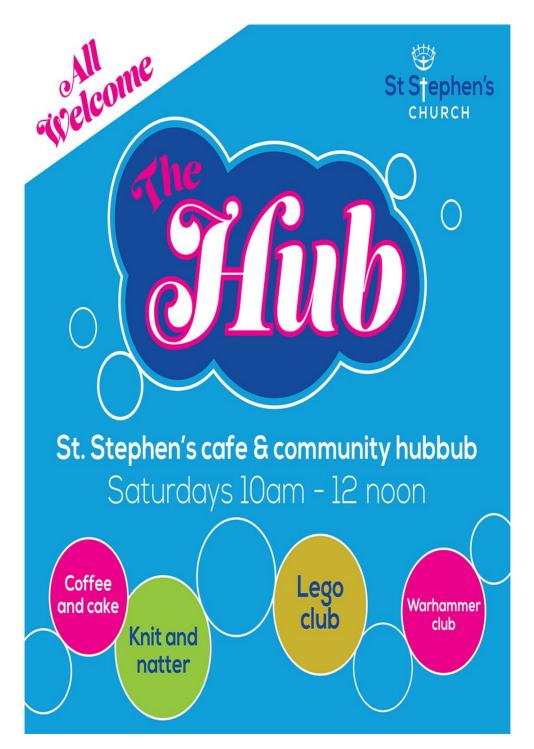
#### Further details can be found about this group

by <u>clicking here</u>

# **KIDS' CLUB**

# Join us on 10th and 24th NOVEMBER when Kids' Club will meet at 10.15 am









## WARHAMMER GAMES NIGHT



Come along with your army and join us for a game's night - adults only.

You are welcome to turn up or get in touch us or the Warhammer Club leaders for more information. 8pm, 3rd Friday of the month at St Stephens Church.



# Help us design an accessible playground!

We have some design ideas for accessible playground equipment, and we'd love to get your thoughts and suggestions.

We'll also be sharing the results from the consultation we held earlier this year.

When: Wednesday 30 October from 1 – 2pm Where: Castle Park Main Playground

### We need your feedback!

Come and chat with us about how we can make the playground more accessible for all children.

You can also email us at parks@colchester.gov.uk

Colchester City Council

www.colchester.gov.uk/parks

# 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!



### Singing Mamas

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RECHARGE | NOURISH | CONNECT

# Singing releases happy hormones

#### Who wants a dose?

Singing together is clinically proven to improve wellbeing and treat postnatal depression and anxiety. As featured BBC Radio 4 CHILD Ep. 25

A relaxed and nurturing singing group for women, where songs are taught by ear. No singing experience is necessary. Mums, grandmas, bumps, babies, toddlers, and women without children are all welcome. Come and join us, tea and cake is guaranteed!

Monday: Oak Tree Centre, CO4 3DH Thursday: St Stephen's Church, CO2 7RY

#### Book your FREE taster session

Recommended by health professionals

#### kate@musikate.co.uk / 07905 675090

# COLCHESTER KEYBOARD CONCERTS

Sunday 11th February - David Last Sunday 3rd March - Michael Wooldridge Sunday 14th April - Pete Shaw Sunday 12th May - Robert Davies Sunday 9th June - David Ingley Sunday 14th July - David Thomas Sunday 14th July - David Thomas Sunday 11th August - Claire Grieg Sunday 8th September - Andy Nix Sunday 13th October - Michael Carter Sunday 10th November - David Harrild Sunday 15th December - Matthew Bason

All at 2.30pm £10 Entry Including Refreshments St Margarets Church Hall Stansted Road Monkwick Colchester CO28RA

Follow Us On Facebook www.facebook.com/colchesterkeyboardconcerts

#### Friends of St Leonard at-the-Hythe Events 2024

#### **Free events**

#### **Refreshments**, donations please

Poetry Book Launch Joan Norlev Taylor Sat 6th April 2pm

> Local Jazz Band Cover Stories Sat 18th May 7.30pm

Essex Book Festival Launch Sat 1st June

> CCT Community Day Thurs 27th June

Cafe Chantant Outdoor Concert Sat 31st August 3pm Celebrating St George & Shakespeare Sun 28th April 2pm

Book Event Holly Pester Fri 31st May 7pm

Folk Singer - Song Writer Pete Morton Thurs 6th June 7pm

Heritage Weekend 7-8 September

Carol Service Bells 7pm, Service 7.30pm Thurs 19th December

**Evening Prayer with Rev Belinda Kerins** Sundays 4pm. 31st Mar, 30th June, 29th Sept, 29th Dec

Please see Facebook for full details and dates or email: st.leonard.at.the.hythe@gmail.com

#### Controlled Modern Forced Owned slavery is Abused Afraid Isolated Dehumanised arou Constrained Bought & Sold us in Threatened In debt Colchester SCAN ME

Find out more at www.colchester.gov.uk/modern-slavery

#### CONCERNED SOMEONE COULD BE A VICTIM? DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

For advice or to report concerns call Modern Slavery Helpline 08000 121700.

Email Safer Colchester Partnership on safer.colchester@colchester.gov.uk

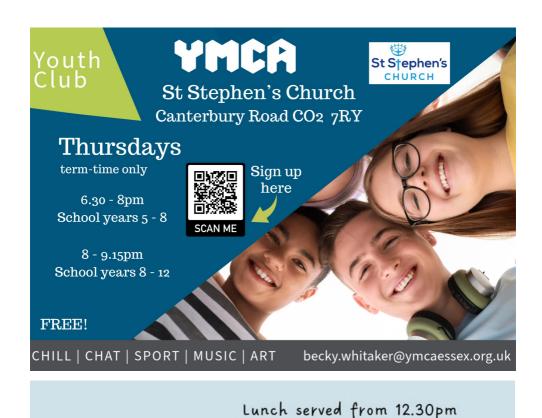
For Essex Police report online www.essex.police.uk or call 101 or in an emergency 999.





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

Thank you.





Second Monday of the month (unless otherwise stated)

If you would like to come along, please call Jill on 01206 572605 Cost £5 per person

# Next Lunch on Monday 14 October 2024



# ST STEPHEN'S BADMINTON CLUB FOR ADULTS

MEETING IN THE HALL ON THE LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

7:30 - 9:30 pm

# **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)



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# 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



Little Lambs – Parent/Carer and preschool group

Monday mornings in term time 9.30 – 11am £1.50 per family 9.30 – 10.30 Free play







10.30 am Snack time Followed by Carpet time story and rhymes

**Everyone Welcome** 

Starting again on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September



# Contact Information

Priest In Charge: Rev Anna Davis

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: Martin Kerins & Ian Brown

For Centre bookings contact: Andrew Topple in the Church Office

For urgent prayer requests contact Rev Anna, one of the Curates or Andrew in the office

The December newsletter should be available by Sunday 24 November. Please send any items to Andrew for inclusion as early as possible, and no later than Monday 18 November to:

office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk