



**All the latest news for our
communities for
September 2026
at the start of a new school year**



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 9:00—9:30 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 9:30 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 & 3rd Sunday of the month is Holy Communion, 2nd Sunday is All Aged Worship and Morning Worship on the 4th Sunday.

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

**Weekly Prayer Meetings at 9:00 on Monday &
10:00 on Tuesday via Zoom**

Please email Andrew on
office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk for
access details for these meetings



Clergy Reflection

Encountering God in Silence and Solitude

Matthew 14.13–21

'Let me seek, then, the gift of silence, and poverty, and solitude, where everything I touch is turned into prayer: where the sky is my prayer, the birds are my prayer, the wind in the trees is my prayer, for God is in all.'

Thomas Merton - Thoughts in Solitude

Silent prayer, also known as contemplative prayer or Christian meditation, is an integral part of our Christian tradition, but it has often been lost, forgotten or sidelined over the years. We're very good at being active as Christians, but the contemplative life is often ignored. Yet the contemplative life is at the heart of our Gospel reading for this week: The central event is clearly the feeding of the five thousand, but this miracle, where Jesus nourishes his followers and the crowds, is bookended by two incredibly significant moments, moments which often go unnoticed but are crucial to an understanding of what enabled Jesus' ministry, and an understanding of how we might live our lives as followers of Christ. Why? Because we see Jesus needing to withdraw and pray in silence and solitude, to be in that place where he can commune with his father, where he can rest in that deep relationship he has with his Father, knowing that the Father is the one who sustains, nurtures, and nourishes us.

In these times of solitude and silent prayer we see Jesus at his most human: The Gospel passage opens with these words: *'When Jesus heard about the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself.'* It reveals that feeding of the five thousand came at a time when Jesus was facing sorrow and bereavement: He needed time alone with God to grieve, time to allow God to nurse his wounds as he came to terms with the death of his cousin. It also shows us that Jesus fed of the five thousand not out of a place of power or human strength, but out of this place of human vulnerability and at time when he was coming to terms with the pain in sorrow in this own life. But because of this time spent in solitude, silence and spiritual replenishment, Jesus was then able to assist others when they called upon him and allow God's work to be done.

Immediately after the feeding of the five thousand (the verse just after the above reading finishes), our Gospel reveals that *'Jesus went up the mountain by himself to pray.'*

Clergy Reflection cont...

When evening came, he was there alone'. The demands of ministry upon Jesus are very evident, and, as is the case with all human beings, he needed times or refreshment to recover from with the stresses and strains of life and simply immerse himself in the presence of God.

Jesus praying in solitude occurs in numerous other instances in the Gospels, such as Mark 1.35 when Jesus goes out early in the morning to pray alone, or in Luke 6.12, where Jesus goes up the mountain to pray in solitude before he calls the disciples. In many ways, Jesus 40 days in the wilderness, the time where Jesus begins his ministry, can be seen as an entire time of silent, or solitary, prayer. Perhaps it was these 40 days of prayer that enabled Jesus following years of active ministry.

If silence and solitude were essential to Jesus' prayer life, then perhaps we might do well to see them as essential to our prayer lives as Christians, and the life of the Church as a whole. Do we have enough silence in our prayer and worship? Do we encourage one another to find times of silence and solitude, and if not, what might we do to enable this? Silence and solitude are certainly not the antithesis of actions and deeds and good works: action and contemplation go hand in hand, and the Page 3 of 3 life of any Christian is to find that balance of the two in order to live our lives fully as God would have us, knowing that God is indeed in all. This is summed up well in the words of our former Archbishop, Rowan Williams who said:

"Contemplation is very far from being just one kind of thing that Christians do: it is the key to prayer, liturgy, art and ethics, the key to the essence of a renewed humanity that is capable of seeing the world and other subjects in the world with freedom—freedom from self-oriented, acquisitive habits and the distorted understanding that comes from them. To put it boldly, contemplation is the only ultimate answer to the unreal and insane world that our financial systems and our advertising culture and our chaotic and unexamined emotions encourage us to inhabit. To learn contemplative practice is to learn what we need so as to live truthfully and honestly and lovingly. It is a deeply revolutionary matter."

The Revd Canon Sebastian Harries – Canon Precentor, Diocese of Chelmsford

Taken from The View Weekly Publication Number 307 3 August 2026

Word from the Wardens

A Time for Rest and Preparation

Life in the Church has been a little quieter over the summer months. This year, it has truly felt like a long, warm summer—and the church building has certainly felt warmer for it!

I always enjoy this time of year. It brings a welcome opportunity to rest, while also inviting us to look ahead and prepare for a new term. Just as children are currently getting ready to head back to school, we as a church community are preparing for the coming months.

Looking Ahead to Christmas

This marks my second year serving as Church Warden. With that experience in mind, I want to ensure we prepare for the Christmas period well in advance. Believe it or not, we only have 17 weeks to go!

Join Our Autumn Alpha Course

Another wonderful “back to school” style preparation is happening this September as we launch our upcoming Alpha Classes.

Alpha is a relaxed, welcoming course centered on Christianity and the Bible. It is purposefully designed to be a safe space to openly explore our biggest questions about God, life, and our personal beliefs.

I am incredibly excited to host this group here at St. Margaret’s. It has been many years since I first attended an Alpha course myself (which was held over at St. Stephen's at the time). I am looking forward to ensuring the sessions run smoothly, but I am equally excited to pull up a chair and take part in the conversations. Like many Christians, I still have plenty of questions about God, faith, and the Church!

How to Join Us

If you would like to be a part of this upcoming Alpha course please use the [sign-up sheet](#), or if you simply want to learn more, please get in touch.

- Contact: Rev Anna
- Email: revannadavis@gmail.com

Julie Reynolds

Warden, St Margaret’s

Sharing climate crisis experiences with visiting Kenyan pastor Wednesday 9th September 7.30 St Stephens Church

Chelmsford Anglican Diocese is hosting three Kenyan Clergy in September, to exchange and learn about our experiences of Climate Change.



Colchester will host William, a minister from a rural diocese which is suffering prolonged drought. Life has become very difficult there for many small farmers and communities because of crop failure and the need to adapt to different forms of food production that use less water.

William is staying with Kate and John Clifton from September 5th to 12th. During this time we would like to introduce him to as many of our communities as possible so we can talk about our climate change experience so far and learn about each others' lives and experiences.

So, St Stephens is hosting an open discussion in which anyone is invited to take part whether from St Stephens, Wimpole Rd Methodist Church or St Margaret's.

It will start at 7.30pm. Just turn up...!

John Clifton

Friends of St Leonard-at-the Hythe Newsletter



Please [click here](#) or on the link below to see that latest newsletter:

<http://ststephens-colchester.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/FoSL-Newsletter-Issue-9.pdf>

If you would like a paper copy, please speak to Andrew in the office

Lunch served from 12.30pm



Second Monday of the month (unless otherwise stated)

If you would like to come along, please call Louise on 07598251180

Cost £6 per person

Next Lunch on Monday 14 September

PRAYER FOR ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

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

Week 1. From 6 September— Winsley Road, Beehive Court, Worsnop House, New Town Road, Marasca End, Garrod Court and Thaxsted Walk .

Week 2. From 13 September— Cannon Street, Rebow Street, Victoria Place, Felstead Close and Pebmarsh Close.

Week 3. From 20 September— Belmont Place, Scarlets Road, Recreation Road, Parkland Court, Smith's Field, Darwin Close, Bathurst Close and Perth Close .

Week 4. From 27 September— Brookside Close, Bourn Road, Dudley Close, Bourn Court, Trowel Place, Wall Mews and Spencer Road.

Anybody who wants to Prayer Walk these roads please do.



Deanery Day is on 10th October this year – sign up now

On Saturday 10th October, the Deanery of Colchester are holding another Deanery Day, following the success of last year's event when over 150 people attended. The Day is for all members of the 24 Churches in our Deanery, and we'll be going along. It's at St. John's Church in Ipswich Road Colchester from 9:30am to 3:30pm, and there'll be lots of seminars and workshops as well as worship – with refreshments provided including tea, coffee and pastries as we arrive and a buffet lunch.

This year's theme is Mission; and there's a strong line-up of presenters and seminar leaders, completely different from those who led last year, to help us develop our Church's work. There will be experts on being a Christian at work; in our leisure; in later life; in urban, estate and rural settings; caring for the environment, being welcoming to all, and more.

There are so many seminars that we'll need to go as a Church and spread ourselves out if we want to be part of them all, but we can get together in the breaks and share lunch together. And of course we'll all be worshipping together too

All the topics and biographies of the speakers are on the Deanery website at www.colchesterdeanery.org.uk/deaneryday.

People who went last year said it was good, so let's make up a bigger group this year. We're making a list of who's coming along – put your name down—please speak to Rev Anna or one of the Wardens if you are interested in attending. There's no cost. Let's plan to have a great day out!

Quiet Day '26



Pointers to God's Hope

Saturday 3rd Oct

10am to 3pm

At Jackies

*Please let me know if you can
come 01206530586*

*P.S. Please bring your packed lunch,
a Bible and notebook.*



Friends of St Leonard-at-the-Hythe

Events for 2026

Please see our Facebook page: **Friends of St Leonard-at-the-Hythe Colchester**

@Fosl Colchester

and our Website: www.stleonard-at-the-hythe.org.uk
for further details and up to date information

All are very welcome at all our events and open days. Refreshments available.

Most events are free entry with donations welcomed. Ticketed events are indicated.

We are open every Tuesday from 12noon til 2pm

And Saturdays 2-4pm (normally the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month).

September:

11th Friday 6.30pm

Bellringing

Heritage open days .

Saturday 12th and Saturday 19th

We will open from 10am until 4pm

October:

9th Friday 6.30pm

Bellringing

November:

13th Friday 6.30pm

Bellringing

29th Sunday 4pm

Evening Prayer Service

December:

11th Friday 6.30pm

Bellringing

18th Friday 7pm for 7.30pm **Carol Service**

ALPHA Course Starting Soon

We are delighted to announce that we will be running a new Alpha course starting in the Autumn term, happening at St Margaret's Church 1pm-2.45pm on Thursdays. Our first session will be on Thursday 24th September and all are welcome.



The Alpha course is an opportunity to explore Christianity in a relaxed setting with discussion, questions and food. It is open to everyone, whether they have done the course before, attended church for year, or never set foot in the building and are just curious to find out a bit more about what goes on. There is no obligation and no cost to the course. It will run for approximately ten weeks and finish before Christmas, exact dates will be sent out in due course to those signed up.

To sign up, [please click here and complete the short form](#). To find out more information contact Rev Anna by email at revannadavis@gmail.com

If you are interested in the course but cannot make Thursday afternoons, please do get in touch and let us know.

Best wishes,

Rev Anna

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 on and as well as the "Events" page on our web site.

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



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-colchester.org.uk.

Andrew Toppie



everyday
faith



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Can we 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.

ST STEPHEN'S KIDS' CLUB

**Meeting in the hall or the back of the Church
on**

Sunday 13 & 27 September



St Leonard at the Hythe

On the 5th Sunday in the month, we hold a time of evening prayer worship at St Leonards at the Hythe at 4 pm.



Colchester Keyboard Concerts

St Margaret's Church Hall
Stansted Road, Colchester CO2 8RA

Sundays at 2:30 pm.

Entrance fee £10 (all inclusive)

2026 Concert Programme:

Sunday 13 September — David Ingley
Sunday 11 October — Matthew Bason
Sunday 8 November — Daniel Watt
Sunday 20 December — Chris & Jo



Made with AI

CRAFT FAIR

**FREE
ENTRY**



Saturday
29 August 2026



10.00 – 16.00



**St Leonard-
at-the-Hythe,**
Colchester, CO1 2PN

*Unusual and unique high quality gifts
created by local artists and crafters*

*Refreshments available
with Strawberries and Cream*



www.stleonard-at-the-hythe.org.uk



Friends of St Leonard-at-the-Hythe



friends@stleonard-at-the-hythe.org.uk



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Could YOU give one day a week to change a life?

Join the team at Beacon House!

Make a Real Difference

Support people experiencing homelessness with practical help, kindness, and connection.

Volunteer Roles Available:

- Kitchen
- Laundry & Showers
- Wellbeing Support
- Admin Support
- Prayer Support

No Experience Needed

Just bring compassion, reliability, and a willingness to help.

Be Part of Something Meaningful

Help bring hope, dignity, and belonging to those who need it most.

Join Us Now!

Contact us for an application form or
to find out more at
office@beaconhouseministries.org.uk

*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

COGGESHALL
2026

FLOWER FESTIVAL

• The Women Who Made Us Bloom •

Sat 29th - Mon 31st

AUGUST

St Peter ad Vincula Church CO6 1UD

COGGESHALL

Sat 10 - 5 Sun 11 - 5 Mon 10 - 5



BEAUTIFUL
FLOWER
DISPLAYS



LIVE MUSIC
DURING
EACH DAY



PRODUCE
STALLS



FUN FOR
LITTLE ONES



REFRESHMENTS



COGGESHALLFLOWERFESTIVAL.ORG.UK

LEGO CLUB



Come along brick fans of all ages for a free Lego club on the 4th Saturday of the month at St Stephen's.

Different activities and challenges to join in with lead by The BrickMan.

Children to be supervised.

Running 10am-12midday at The Hub.

**Every 4th
Saturday of the month!**



**PLEASE
JOIN US**



**Explore villages and parish churches by bike or on foot.
Enjoy exercise, meet new people and raise much
needed funds for your church**

On the second Saturday in September each year, 30
counties across the UK 'Ride & Stride' to raise money to
help preserve and improve our historic church buildings.



SATURDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2026

For further information scan the QR code or visit
www.friendsofessexchurches.org.uk/ride-stride



Charity No 236033



**Mal is planning to ride again this year and is hoping to visit
about 30 Churches to raise funds for Friends of Essex
Churches and St Stephen's. If you would like to join him (and
you are brave enough!) please speak to Mal**



People's Emergency Briefing

On the climate and nature crisis

**West Bergholt,
Colchester**



Film screening and discussion with
refreshments

St Mary's Church, West Bergholt
10th September 2026 7pm

16

www.nebriefing.org



GreenChristian

Colchester Group
invites you to

Exploring Eco Church

Greening your Church

Jo Herbert-James

Head of Engagement,
A Rocha UK



Rt Revd Roger Morris,
Bishop of Colchester

(video presentation)
Chelmsford Diocesan
Environmental Lead

Linda Percival

Chelmsford Diocesan
Eco Church Advocate



Saturday 17th October 2026

Christ Church, Ireton Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3AT.

9.30am Registration

10.00am to 4.00pm programme:

- Theology: climate change
- Eco Church: A Rocha's Bronze, Silver and Gold awards
- Workshops

**Suggested
donation: £10**
(payable on arrival)

Please bring your own lunch; drinks provided throughout the day.
Further information: please text to Howard Gardner 07831 101323

Green Christian is a charitable company, reg.no. 328744; charity no. 02445198.





**Wheels
for All**

Wheels for All Colchester

Monday 11am

**Wednesday 10am (school
holidays only), 11am, 1pm
and 2pm**

Colchester Sports Park
Cuckoo Farm Way, Colchester CO4
5YX

Tuesday 10am - 12pm

Old Heath Recreation Ground
Old Heath Road
Colchester CO1 2ER

For any enquiries contact Jo
at

jo.smith@wheelsforall.org.uk

or

07736 974538

Register Here



Wheels for All is the operating name of Cycling Projects, a registered
Charity No.1003309 | Company limited by guarantee Reg. No. 2638968 | VAT No. 673 668294
Emailhello@wheelsforall.org.uk



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

A poster for a 'Bricks and Beer' event. The background is light blue with scattered colorful LEGO bricks (red, yellow, blue, purple). The title 'BRICKS AND BEER' is in large, bold, white letters with a yellow outline. The St Stephen's Church logo is in the top right corner. The text below the title reads: 'COME ALONG ON THE 4TH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH FOR AN GROWN UPS EVENING OF BEING CREATIVE AND BUILDING LEGO! BRING ALONG A FEW DRINKS OF YOUR CHOICE (DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ALCOHOLIC!) AND SPEND SOME TIME WITH US! 7.30-9.30PM AT ST STEPHENS CHURCH.'

**BRICKS
AND
BEER**

**COME ALONG ON THE 4TH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH FOR AN GROWN UPS EVENING OF
BEING CREATIVE AND BUILDING LEGO!
BRING ALONG A FEW DRINKS OF YOUR CHOICE (DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ALCOHOLIC!)
AND SPEND SOME TIME WITH US!
7.30-9.30PM AT ST STEPHENS CHURCH.**

St Stephen's
CHURCH

A poster for a 'Warhammer Games Night' event. The background is dark grey. On the left is a photograph of a Warhammer miniature battle scene with various models and terrain. The title 'WARHAMMER GAMES NIGHT' is in large, white, serif font. The St Stephen's Church logo is in the bottom left corner. The text on the right reads: '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.' At the bottom right are two dice.

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.

St Stephen's
CHURCH



St Stephen's Youth Club



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

Thursdays
term-time only

6.30 - 8pm
School years 5 - 8

8 - 9.15pm
School years 8 - 12

FREE!



Sign up
here

- Meet new people
- Learn new skills
- Access support & advice
- Sports, baking, gardening, music, quizzes, craft & more!

Any questions, please contact:

becky.whitaker@ymcaessex.org.uk

YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you


St Stephen's
CHURCH

Neurospicy

**Support and information for the
neurodivergent and their families**



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 [clicking here](#)**



St Stephen's
CHURCH



ST STEPHEN'S
BADMINTON CLUB
FOR ADULTS

Last Friday of Every Month
7:30 - 9:30pm

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



Join us for...

SINGING FOR FUN

Come along to St Stephen's Church, Canterbury Road
for an afternoon of musical singing fun!

**Sing along to lots of the old time favourite songs
from stage, screen and everything in between!**

*4th Monday of the
month*
12.30-2pm

**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS 12.30-1PM.
SINGING FROM 1PM - 2PM.**

Next Meetings Monday 24 August

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 every
Wednesday afternoon**

Come along for refreshments &
company and a variety of activities
between 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm

On the 4th Wednesday of each month join
us for lunch with "Food for Thought"

12.30pm - 1.45pm

Booking essential for catering purposes.
Please book the week before.



WEDNESDAYS
TERM TIME ONLY

1.15PM - 2.45PM

ADULT AND CHILD FRIENDLY PLAYGROUP

FOR AGES 0-4YRS

EVERYONE IS WELCOME



Baby & Toddler Group

Coffee morning

**Mondays 9 – 11 am
(term time)**

**Toys, singing,
fun and refreshments**



Contact us at: wimpoleroadmcc@gmail.com /

Facebook message / 07847 846292



Little Lambs –

Parent/carer and preschool group
Starting again on 7th September 2026

Monday mornings in term time 9.30 – 11am
£1.00 per family

Playdough



Physical Play



Baby toys



Crafts



Small world –

Cars and garage
Kitchen and food
Animals
Houses and people

10.30 am **Snack time**

followed by

Carpet time - story and rhymes

Everyone Welcome!
St. Margaret's Church
CO2 8RA



Contact:
Carolyn
07748795926

Contact Information

Priest In Charge: Rev Anna Davis

Email: revannadavis@gmail.com

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 9 am– 2 pm , Wednesday 12 noon - 4 pm & Thursday 9 am - 12 noon

Tel: 01206 869091

Email: office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk & office@stmargaretscolchester.org.uk

Safeguarding

If you have a Safeguarding concern please report this to our Safeguarding Offices:

St Stephen's—Corinne Cook safeguarding@ststephens-colchester.org.uk

St Margaret's—Kevin Reynolds safeguarding@stmargaretscolchester.org.uk
or phone 07934 486003

Website: ststephens-colchester.org.uk & stmargaretscolchester.org.uk

Facebook:

St Stephen's Church, Colchester & St Margaret's Church, Colchester

Church Wardens: Ian Brown & Sheila Poole—St Stephen's
Julie Reynolds—St Margaret's

For hiring / bookings contact: Andrew Topple in the Church Office

**For urgent prayer requests contact Rev Anna, our
Community Worker Louise or Andrew in the office**

The October newsletter should be available by Sunday 27 September. Please send any items to Andrew for inclusion as early as possible, and no later than

Tuesday 22 September to:

office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk