

# WEPRAY

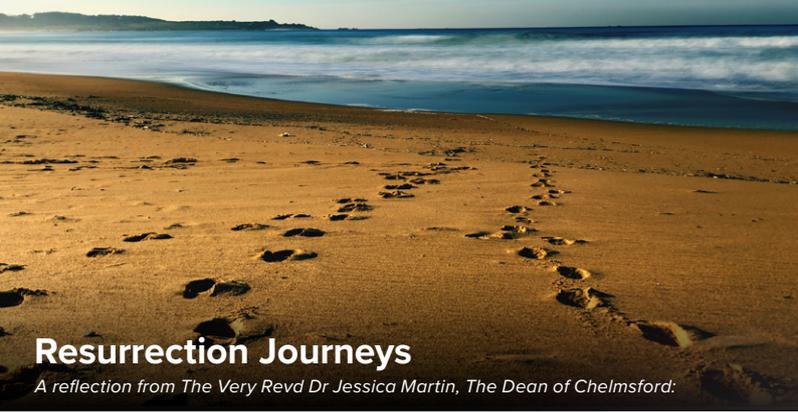
**100** Days of  
Prayer

PAGES 2 & 8

**March - May 26**

**Praying for each other in Essex & East London**

Chelmsford Diocese Prayer Diary



# Resurrection Journeys

*A reflection from The Very Revd Dr Jessica Martin, The Dean of Chelmsford:*

Way back in the time of St Cedd, Christians had a name for the practice of setting out into the unknown. They called it peregrinatio – which meant 'leaving one's homeland and wandering for the love of God'. It was travelling in faith to who knows what, who knows where – understanding you might never come back, that you would be changed by the journey.

St Cedd himself undertook peregrinatio when he left all that he knew to venture into the strange land of Essex.

Scripture is full of wandering. Abraham left all that he knew in Haran. Jesus was 'driven out' into the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry. The apostles found that their faith sent them wandering, taking the good news of Jesus beyond the familiar worlds they knew.

And our own journeys of faith take us to unexpected places. These are the 'resurrection journeys' of our lives, and we pray to travel upon them well together.

During Lent, we embark together on our 100 Days of Prayer, part of the wider discernment

within Sustaining Ministry as we ask God where he calls this diocese. Its presiding scripture is the Emmaus journey (Luke 24.13-35), a road that is both a road of uncertainty and loss (those travelling it are mourning Jesus's death) and a resurrection road (he is walking alongside them all the time). So it is both a wilderness road and a resurrection journey.

This Lent, as we discern our communal way, we also walk in a wilderness of difficult times and uncertain futures.

Yet at the same time we walk towards and alongside the light and joy of Jesus's resurrection, the one who accompanies us even when we do not know it, and who opens up the Word until our hearts burn with joy and purpose.

**You can read more about Travelling Well Together – Sustaining Ministry and our 100 Days of prayer on page 8.**



# March

**Sun 1** **Calendar of Saints: David, Bishop of Menevia, Patron of Wales, c.601**

## THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Please pray for the Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal this year; that people may be moved to give generously to support the Anglican Development Services of Mt. Kenya East and their work in response to climate change and in environmental conservation across our five linked partner dioceses in Kenya.

*Pray for:* The Nippon Sei Ko Kai

**Mon 2** **Pray for: The Deanery of Redbridge**

Area Dean: James Gilder. Lay Chair: Philip Carnelley. All the chaplains who work in the Deanery of Redbridge.

*Pray for:* The Diocesan Advisory Committee and Church Buildings Team.

*Pray for: The Diocese of Toamasina – The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean*

**Tue 3** **Pray for:** The Benefice of Aldborough Aldborough Hatch (St Peter)

Clergy: Vacancy (V). Licensed Lay Minister: Vanessa Cole.

Great Ilford (St John the Evangelist, Seven Kings) Clergy: Vacancy (V). Licensed Lay Minister: Keziah Jimoh.

*Pray for:* The Diocese of Tohoku – The Nippon Sei Ko Kai

**Wed 4** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Church growth**  
**Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qr](http://shorturl.at/r8qr)**

*Pray for:* Aldersbrook (St Gabriel) Clergy: Martyn Hawkes (V), Amy Taylor (A), Rachel Summers (A). Licensed Lay Minister: Henry Lau.

Barkingside (Holy Trinity) Clergy: Chris Szejnmann (V), Kate Szejnmann (AC), Michelle Steptoe (A).

*Pray for: The Diocese of Tokyo – The Nippon Sei Ko Kai*

**Thu 5** **Pray for:** Barkingside (St Cedd) Clergy: Paul Harcourt (PIC).

Barkingside (St Francis) Clergy: Vacancy (V).

*Pray for: The Diocese of Toliara – The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean*

*Please refer to the Notes and Abbreviations on the back cover.*

# DRAW NEAR

LIFE-GIVING  
HABITS FOR LENT

The Church of England's theme for Lent 2026 is Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent.

This year's resources have at their heart the theme of a 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter.

The resources include weekly reflections centred around a summary of the Christian Way from Common Worship, which identifies six activities essential to our calling as disciples.

Each week a different contributor explores a different aspect of Christian discipleship. The Dean of Chelmsford, the Very Revd Dr Jessica Martin, has written the reflection on sharing communion. Other themes for the reflections include – worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, offering service and sharing the good news with others.

These reflections are part of a wide range of resources to help churches and individuals join in with the Lent theme if they wish.

They are available in a printed booklet, people can sign up to receive them via email and

they are available on the Church of England's Everyday Faith App, social media channels and website.

A parallel 40-day challenge booklet for families and children is also available - exploring the life-giving habit of generosity in partnership with 40acts.

Your church or worshipping community can get involved with Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent by updating your A Church Near You page with the details of your Lent and Easter services, accessing and using the printed and digital resources and sharing the content through your church communications.

Lent resources can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org).



**Please pray for all those who will visit their local church this Lent and Easter.**

**May we be encouraged to cultivate habits that will draw us nearer to God and in doing so find, God will draw nearer to us too.**

## Fri 6 World Day of Prayer

**Pray for:** Barkingside (St George) Clergy: Vacancy (V).

Barkingside (St Laurence) Clergy: Chris Burrows (V).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Tonj – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

## Sat 7 Calendar of Saints: Perpetua, Felicity and Companions, Martyrs at Carthage, 203

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Torit – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan

## Sun 8 Calendar of Saints: Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln, 1910 Felix, Apostle to the East Angles, 647 Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, Priest, Poet, 1929

### THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Today is the Day of Reflection across the UK for the COVID-19 pandemic. Dear God, be with us as we think about all that has changed, and help us to trust that you are always with us. Be close to us as we remember those who have died, and help us to trust they are at peace with you. Show us how to reach out to others with kindness and care, so that hope shines out in every heart and home, Amen. (Prayer from the Church of England)

**Pray for:** *The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & The Middle East*

## Mon 9 Pray for: Goodmayes (All Saints) Clergy: Christiana Asinugo (V).

Goodmayes (St Paul) Clergy: Vacancy (V).

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Toronto – The Anglican Church of Canada

## Tue 10 Pray for: Great Ilford (St Margaret of Antioch, St Clement)

Clergy: Josh Peckett (V).

Great Ilford (St Alban) Clergy: Vacancy (V).

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Trichy-Tanjore – The Church of South India (United)



## Join Bishop Guli's Lent and Holy Week Pilgrimage

The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, the Bishop of Chelmsford, is journeying across the Barking Area this Lent and Holy Week, walking the Barking Area Art Trail for her annual Pilgrimage. The Pilgrimage which takes place across six days, began on 25 February and will conclude on 31 March.

People from our churches and worshipping communities across the diocese are warmly invited to join the pilgrimage, for one or more stages of the route.

To join the pilgrimage, simply scan the QR code and complete the short sign-up form.

Full details - including the itinerary, meeting points, and arrangements - will be sent to you after registering.

We'll be sharing pictures and stories from the pilgrimage on our social media channels throughout Lent and Holy week.

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### Remaining Pilgrimage Dates

#### Thursday 12 March

Barking Deanery | 10am start | Approx. 5 miles

#### Tuesday 17 March

Redbridge Deanery | 10am start | Approx. 7 miles

#### Wednesday 18 March

Redbridge Deanery | 10am start | Approx. 5 miles

#### Monday 23 March

Waltham Forest Deanery | 2pm start | Approx. 5 miles

#### Tuesday 31 March

Havering Deanery | 10am start | Approx. 8 miles

**Wed 11** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Discipleship and nurture.**  
[Find out more and access resources: shorturl.at/r8qr1](https://shorturl.at/r8qr1)

**Pray for:** Great Ilford (St Andrew)

Clergy: Riaz Mubarak (V), Hayley Morris (AC).

Great Ilford (St Luke) Clergy: John Brown (V).

Great Ilford (St Mary) Clergy: Gareth Jones (V), Marcel Firth (A).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Trinidad and Tobago – The Church in the Province of the West Indies*

**Thu 12** **Pray for:** Hainault (St Paul) Clergy: Sarah Clarke-Moisley (V).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Truro – The Church of England*

**Fri 13** **Pray for:** South Woodford (Holy Trinity, Hermon Hill)

Clergy: Abi Todd (V), Leslie Crossland (A).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe – The Church of Ireland*

**Sat 14** **Pray for:** *The Diocese of Twik East – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Sun 15** **THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (MOTHERING SUNDAY)**

**Pray for mothers everywhere, give thanks for their love and devotion, and pray, too, for the work of the Mothers' Union and the Women's Institute and all who work untiringly to maintain the values of the home and family life.**

**Pray for:** *The Anglican Church of Kenya*

**Mon 16** **Pray for:** Wanstead (St Mary w Christ Church)

Clergy: James Gilder (AD, R), Rachel Summers (A), David Lappano (A).

Wanstead CE Primary School: Natalie Denchfield (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocesan Print Unit.*

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Udi – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Tue 17** **Calendar of Saints: Patrick, Bishop, Missionary, Patron of Ireland, c.460**

**Pray for:** Woodford Green (St Barnabas) Clergy: William Obedoza (V).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Northern Uganda – The Church of the Province of Uganda*



# Travelling Well Together - Sustaining Ministry

## An invitation to 100 Days of Prayer

This autumn we will begin a conversation about how we can be an enduring missional presence in Essex and East London in the times and context in which God has placed us.

This will be a wide-ranging conversation, addressing some of the challenges we face and the significant missional opportunities that are present in Essex and East London.

Ahead of that conversation, Bishop Guli is inviting people from across the Diocese to join 100 days of prayer that started on 18 February (Ash Wednesday) and will conclude on 29 May.

To find out more and to access a wide range of prayer resources for individuals and groups, visit the Chelmsford Diocese website [chelmsford.anglican.org/sustaining-ministry](https://chelmsford.anglican.org/sustaining-ministry) or scan the QR code.



**Wed 18** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Vocations.**  
**Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qrl](https://shorturl.at/r8qrl)**

**Calendar of Saints: Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, Teacher of the Faith, 386**

**Pray for:** Woodford (St Mary w St Philip and St James)  
 Clergy: Elizabeth Lowson (R) Rachel Summers (A).  
 Licensed Lay Minister: Mark Lewis.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Ughelli – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Thu 19** **Calendar of Saints: JOSEPH OF NAZARETH**

**Pray for:** Woodford Bridge (St Paul) Clergy: Alexandra Podd (V)

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Ukwa – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Fri 20** **Calendar of Saints: Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne, Missionary, 687**

**Pray for:** Woodford Wells (All Saints & St Andrew)  
 Clergy: Paul Harcourt (V), Mark Castleton (AC), Jacob Farley (A)

The Retired Clergy, Readers and ministers who live and work in the Deanery of Redbridge.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Umuahia – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Sat 21** **Calendar of Saints: Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop, Reformation Martyr, 1556**

**Pray for:** *Te Pihopatanga o Te Upoko o Te Ika – The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia*

**Sun 22** **THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (PASSIONTIDE BEGINS)**

**Father, help us to be like Christ your Son, who loved the world and died for our salvation. Inspire us by his love, and guide us by his example. Amen**

**Pray for:** *The Anglican Church of Korea*

**Mon 23** **Pray for: The Deanery of Waltham Forest**

Area Dean: Tim Scott. Lay Chair: Vevet Deer.  
 All the chaplains who work in the Deanery of Waltham Forest.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Uruguay – The Anglican Church of South America*



# The Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal

Communities across the Mt Kenya East region are facing the harsh realities of the climate crisis. Years of recurring drought have devastated harvests, depleted natural resources and pushed many families into increasing hardship.

This year the Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal is raising funds for the Anglican Development Services of Mt Kenya East (ADSMKE), as they lead inspiring, community driven work to restore the environment and strengthen livelihoods across our five linked dioceses - Embu, Kirinyaga, Meru, Mbeere and Marsabit - in Kenya.

Funds raised through the appeal will enable ADSMKE to expand vital climate and conservation projects.

Commenting on this year's appeal, the Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, the Bishop of Chelmsford, said: "Your generosity will enable the Anglican Development Services of Mt Kenya East to expand vital climate and conservation projects that will help communities in the Mt Kenya East region build resilience to climate change, as well as improve biodiversity, enhance food security and create economic opportunities rooted in environmental stewardship.

They are also equipping future generations to care for God's creation with hope and confidence. I'm delighted that, through this year's Lent Appeal, we can play a part in this transformative work".

### Support the appeal – resources & donations

To find out more about the projects supported by this year's appeal, access resources or make a donation scan the QR code or visit



[www.chelmsford.anglican.org/lent-appeal](http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/lent-appeal).

We welcome donations from individuals and churches as well as other groups and organisations. Donations can be made online or by bank transfer using the following details:

Chelmsford Diocese Board of Finance  
**Barclays Bank - Account Number:** 60269603  
**Sort Code:** 20-20-35 **Ref:** Lent Appeal 26

Donations will be accepted until 1 July 2026.

**Please pray for ADSMKE and their work supporting communities across our link partner dioceses in Kenya. Pray too for the success of the Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal this year.**

**Tue 24** **Calendar of Saints: Walter Hilton of Thurgarton, Augustinian Canon, Mystic, 1396**

**Paul Couturier, Priest, Ecumenist, 1953**

**Óscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, Martyr, 1980**

**Pray for:** Chingford (St Peter and St Paul, All Saints)

Clergy: Darren McCallig (R), Hilary Musker (AC).

Chingford CE Primary School: Lindsey Lampard (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Utah – The Episcopal Church*

**Wed 25** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Vocations.**

**Find out more and access resources:** [shorturl.at/r8qrl](http://shorturl.at/r8qrl)

**Calendar of Saints: The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary**

**Pray for:** Chingford (St Anne) Clergy: Jude Bullock (V).

Chingford (St Edmund) Clergy: Ruth Holmes (V).

**Pray for:** *The Annunciation The Diocese of Uyo – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Thu 26** **Calendar of Saints: Harriet Monsell, Founder of the Community of St John the Baptist, 1883**

**Pray for:** Harrow Green (Holy Trinity, St Augustine of Hippo)

Clergy: Polly Kersys-Hull (V).

Highams Park (All Saints) Clergy: David Baker (V).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Valparaiso – Iglesia Anglicana de Chile*

**Fri 27** **Pray for:** Leyton (St Mary w St Edward & St Luke)

Clergy: Al Gordon (PIC), Steven Opie (AC), Farida Pashi (A).

Leyton (All Saints) Clergy: Al Gordon (PIC), Steven Opie (AC).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Vanuatu – The Anglican Church of Melanesia*

**Sat 28** **Pray for:** *The Diocese of Vellore – The Church of South India (United)*



# Holy Week & Easter at Chelmsford Cathedral

The Holy Week preacher is the Revd Professor Ben Quash. His theme 'The Fabric of our Salvation' will follow the story of the Passion through the theme of clothing and cloths within that story, using visual art as a prompt for his reflections.

## Palm Sunday: 29 March

**9.30am** - Sung Eucharist with Palms, Dramatic Passion reading and Sermon.

**10.45am** - Procession with Palms and Donkey.

**11.15am** - Choral Eucharist with Palms,

**3.30pm** - Service of Music and Readings for Passiontide.

## Holy Monday: 30 March

**7.00pm** - Choral Holy Week Service

## Holy Tuesday: 31 March

**7.00pm** - Choral Holy Week Service

## Holy Wednesday: 1 April

**7.00pm** - Service of Tenebrae: a Meditation on Christ's Suffering.

## Maundy Thursday: 2 April

**11.00am** - Diocesan Eucharist and Chrism Mass: Clergy and LLMs are invited to reaffirm their vows and collect the consecrated oils to use in their churches.

**7.00pm** – Solemn Eucharist with the Washing of Feet and Stripping of the Altar.

**8.00pm** - The Watch will be held until Midnight.

## Good Friday: 3 Hour Devotions: 3 April

**12 noon** - Preaching of the Passion

**1.45pm - 3.00pm** - Good Friday Liturgy and Veneration of the Cross

In this service we keep vigil during the time that Jesus suffered on the cross on this holy day (12-3). During the 'preaching of the Passion' we are supported and accompanied by reflections, silence and devotional singing.

All are welcome to come and go throughout the three hours as they need.

## Holy Saturday: 4 April

During this day we are silent before the empty cross until the evening falls.

**7.00pm** - Easter Vigil, with Baptism and Confirmation. We witness to the light in the darkness that is the Resurrection.

## Easter Day: 5 April

**9.30am** - All Age Eucharist for Easter. A family friendly Eucharist to celebrate Easter Sunday.

**11.15am** - Choral Eucharist for Easter Day with Bishop Guli.

**3.30pm** - Festal Choral Evensong. A traditional Choral Evensong with the Cathedral Choir to celebrate Easter Day.

## Sun 29 PALM SUNDAY

Jesus, you rode into your city in triumph of this day, receiving the shouts and welcome of many. Come into our Churches today. Receive our welcomes and our acclaim. Come to rule in the hearts and minds of all who lead us and help us all to go out and proclaim you as King over all the world.

*Pray for: The Anglican Church of Melanesia*

## Mon 30 MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

*Pray for:* Leyton (Christ Church) Clergy: Philip Brentford (V).

Leyton (Emmanuel) Clergy: Ade Ademola (V).

Leyton (St Catherine and St Paul) Clergy: Bill Donoghue (V).

*Pray for:* The Diocesan Human Resources Team.

*Pray for: The Diocese of Venezuela – The Episcopal Church*

## Tue 31 TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

*Calendar of Saints: John Donne, Priest, Poet, 1631*

*Pray for:* Leytonstone (St Andrew)

Clergy: Paul Kennington (V), Jane Richards (AC).

Leytonstone (St John the Baptist)

Clergy: Elizabeth Blackham (V), Pervaiz Khan (AC).

Leytonstone (St Margaret w St Columba) Clergy: Neil-Allen Walsh (V).

*Pray for: The Diocese of Vermont – The Episcopal Church*



# Called to Serve: Young Vocations



## New video series to inspire and encourage young vocations across the Diocese of Chelmsford

The Diocese of Chelmsford has published the first video in a new series - Called to Serve: Young Vocations - created to inspire young people aged 18–32 as they explore their calling. For some, that call (or vocation) is a specific calling to licensed or ordained ministry. For others, it could mean serving God through faithful discipleship in their church community and everyday life.

The series features ministers in Chelmsford Diocese sharing their own vocations stories and the first video introduces the Revd Will Rose Moore, Curate at St John the Baptist Church in Loughton. Will shares his experience of responding to God’s call, training as a young ordinand, and navigating his first year in ministry. He also offers encouragement to young people who think God might be calling them.

In his video Will says: “Sometimes I think we are waiting for a big sign, and actually, God’s waiting for us. There’s something about being active

in our calling. Yes, wait for God – and pray and reflect – but if you feel God has put something on your heart, go for it!”

Alongside the video series, a new young vocations page has been created on the diocesan website. This page brings together information about both lay and ordained ministry and will be home to all the Called to Serve videos as they are released.

For those ready to take the next step on their vocation journey, the webpage includes a short contact form. Once completed, a member of our Vocations Team will be in touch for an informal conversation about possible next steps.

Tayrina Ferguson, Vocations Outreach Officer for the Diocese of Chelmsford said: “We are entering an exciting time for younger Vocations across Chelmsford Diocese and there is a growing recognition that God calls each one of us; our job is to work out what to! God uses

our talents and gifts in a wide variety of ways, from ordained and licensed ministry, to serving as churchwardens, school governors and everything in between! Part of the joy of working in vocations is sharing in the life-giving joy serving God brings.”

### For churches

There are resources available on the new web page which parishes can use to help promote young vocations and The Called to Serve videos within their own church communities, if they would like to do so. These include a poster for church notice boards and a graphic to use on digital screens.

The Called to Serve: Young Vocations video series has been shared on diocesan social media channels. Parishes are warmly invited to share these posts and the new young vocations webpage with their congregations – particularly young people who may be exploring their vocation.

## Aged 18–32 and ready to explore your vocation?

Our Vocations Team can support you in finding your vocation. You can find out more and watch the Called to Serve: Young Vocations video series at: [www.chelmsford.anglican.org/young-vocations](http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/young-vocations) or scan the QR code

@ChelmsDioVocations on Instagram

For the latest information, resources and stories follow our new Instagram page for vocations in the Diocese of Chelmsford - @ChelmsDioVocations.

### A prayer for young people as they explore their vocation:

**Lord Jesus,**

**Shepherd and guide of your people, you called the first disciples to follow you and share your love with the world.**

**We ask you to inspire the young people of our Diocese of Chelmsford.**

**Set their hearts on fire with love for you and compassion for others.**

**Help them to hear your call and to be generous in their response**

**Give them the courage to step forward in faith, to serve your Church, and to build your Kingdom with joy and hope.**

**You are the Way, the Truth and the Life.**

**We trust our future to you.**

**Amen.**



# St Luke's Church of England Primary School at heart of groundbreaking green community energy project

An innovative community energy project that generates green energy from an east London Church of England primary school and shares it with nearby homes has begun delivering its first power.

The pilot project by E.ON Next is designed to maximise the benefits of local solar generation and to make energy more affordable within communities - making cleaner power more accessible and affordable for all, while supporting the UK's net zero goals.

This first-of-its-kind initiative has seen E.ON Next fund and install more than 220 solar panels on St Luke's CEVA Primary School in Canning Town, east London. The school benefits from discounted electricity, with a portion of the power also shared to neighbours at a reduced price.

The project was formally launched in November 2025, with staff and pupils of St Luke's, along with a blessing by the Revd Amy Stott, the vicar of St Luke's Church.

Speaking at the launch of the project, Amy said: "It's so exciting to see this project come together. St Luke's Church and School is an amazing and unique community, and now it's great to also be part of this new generation of innovators and developers leading into this new technological revolution of seeing community buildings serving

the community even more. We are so grateful to E.ON for working with us to see our wonderful school and church become even more at the heart of serving Canning Town."

Also speaking at the launch, Carrie Prior, Chelmsford Diocesan Director of Education, said: "Today is about more than installing solar panels - it's about pioneering a new way of thinking, where schools and communities work together to care for creation and share energy for the common good."

**Please pray for St Luke's Church and School in Canning Town and all those involved in this innovative community energy project. May this project shine as a beacon of faithful environmental stewardship - demonstrating how the community can come together for God's creation and share resources with neighbours.**

St Luke's church recently celebrated its 150th Anniversary. Scan the QR code to watch a video about the church community of St Luke's; the people, the purpose and the promise that keeps St Luke's alive and thriving today.



## April

### Wed 1 WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

**100 days of prayer theme of the week: Wellbeing and sustaining healthy rhythms. Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qrl](https://shorturl.at/r8qrl)**

**Calendar of Saints: Frederick Denison Maurice, Priest, Teacher of the Faith, 1872**

**Pray for:** Walthamstow (St Mary, St Gabriel, St Luke) Clergy: Vanessa Conant (TR), Andrew Stewart (TV), Tim Scott (AD, AC), Jacintha Danaswamy (A). Licensed Lay Minister: Robert Duddridge.

Walthamstow St Mary's CE Primary School: Joe Pitchford (HT).

Walthamstow (St Andrew) [Higham Hill Ecumenical Partnership] Clergy: Vacancy (PIC).

Walthamstow (St Barnabas w St James the Greater) Clergy: Salvador Telen (PIC).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Victoria Nyanza – The Anglican Church of Tanzania*

### Thu 2 MAUNDY THURSDAY

**Pray for:** Walthamstow (St John) Clergy: Kieran Bush (V).

Walthamstow (St Michael & All Angels) Clergy: Vacancy (V).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Virgin Islands – The Episcopal Church*

### Fri 3 GOOD FRIDAY

**Pray for:** Walthamstow (St Peter-in-the-Forest) Clergy: Alex Summers (PIC), Bernard Eaton (A).

Walthamstow (St Saviour) Clergy: Salvador Telen (V), Neil Houghton (A).

St Saviour's CE School: Beverley Hall (Executive HT), Mr Pawley (HT).

The Retired clergy, Readers and lay ministers who live and work in the Deanery of Waltham Forest.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Virginia – The Episcopal Church*

### Sat 4 EASTER EVE / HOLY SATURDAY

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Southern Virginia – The Episcopal Church*

## Bishop Guli's Easter message

*The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, the Bishop of Chelmsford, has written a message for the Easter season:*

I've recently returned from another trip to Israel and Palestine to show solidarity with our Christian brothers and sisters who continue to live under intolerable conditions. In the West Bank, in particular, the increase in the number of checkpoints haphazardly and cruelly dominates daily life and the effect of unrestrained illegal settlements perpetuates violence against Palestinians, driving people from their homes. Communities are being decimated and prospects for a lasting and just peace for all seem bleaker than ever.

During my trip, I was asked to preach at St. Philip's Church in Nablus. But what to say to people living with such pain? I confess I found it quite a challenge. I offered them greetings from that other beleaguered Christian community close to my heart in Iran.

I spoke of Christian hope which persists even through the darkest times, and of the suffering which is at the heart of the Gospel in the way of the cross that Jesus walked. I spoke too of my solidarity and support in the ongoing cry for justice, also a Christian theme.

Finally, I reminded them (and all of us) to continue looking for the good, lest we be overwhelmed by the evil. For there is always goodness, even in the most vile situations. There is good in shared relationships, in small acts of kindness, courageous resistance, support given and received.

These are glimpses of God's love and presence. They are signs of resurrection – of the life that burst forth as Jesus emerged from the tomb on that first Easter and of resurrection life that still refuses to be subdued.

So, whatever your context and experiences, may God give you grace to continue looking for the good, strength to bear your suffering, and courage to continue speaking and working for justice.

I wish you a blessed and joyful Easter.

*+ Guli Chelmsford*

You can read more about Bishop Guli's recent visit to Israel and Palestine on page 26.

### Sun 5 **EASTER DAY**

"The great gift of Easter is hope – Christian hope which makes us have that confidence in God, in his ultimate triumph, and in his goodness and love, which nothing can shake." Basil C. Hume

**Pray for:** The peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6)

**Pray for:** *La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico*

### Mon 6 **Pray for: THE BRADWELL EPISCOPAL AREA**

Please pray for the Bishop of Bradwell: Adam Atkinson and our Archdeacons: Jonathan Croucher (Chelmsford) and Sue Lucas (Southend); and all staff and volunteers in the Bradwell Area Team.

**Pray for:** The Diocesan Finance Team.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Southwestern Virginia – The Episcopal Church*

### Tue 7 **Pray for: The Deanery of Epping Forest and Ongar**

Area Dean: John Fry. Lay Chair: Richard Kinder.  
Assistant Area Deans: Malcolm Macdonald, Peter Smith.

All the chaplains who work in the Deanery of Epping Forest and Ongar.

**Pray for:** The Diocese of West Virginia – The Episcopal Church

### Wed 8 **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Wellbeing and sustaining healthy rhythms. Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qr1](https://shorturl.at/r8qr1)**

**Pray for:** Buckhurst Hill (St John, St Stephen, St ElisabethF)  
Clergy: Ian Farley (TR).

Buckhurst Hill St John's CE Primary School: Jonathan Furness (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wad Medani – Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan*

### Thu 9 **Calendar of Saints: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran Pastor, Martyr, 1945**

**Pray for:** The Vale of Roding Team Ministry: Chigwell (St Mary) Chigwell (St Winifred), Chigwell Row (All Saints), Lambourne (St Mary & All Saints) w Abridge (Holy Trinity) and Stapleford Abbots (St Mary Vn)  
Clergy: Charlie Kosla (TR), Paula Preston (TV), Ann Kosla (AC), Lorraine Smart (AC), Licensed Lay Minister: Sandie Forshaw.

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Waiapu – The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia



## St Nicholas' C of E Primary School pupil presented with High Sheriff's Award

The Revd Canon Janet Nicholls, Chelmsford Diocese Rural Adviser and Agricultural Chaplain, joined the High Sheriff of Essex, Julie Fosh, on a visit to St Nicholas' C of E Primary School in Rayleigh to present a pupil with a prestigious award.

Nine year old James Matthews, the son of a local farming family, received a High Sheriff's Certificate for Outstanding Achievement in recognition of his remarkable fundraising efforts for the Christian farming charity, the Farming Community Network (FCN). At the end of last year, James climbed Ben Nevis to raise funds and awareness for the organisation.

Sharing James' story, the Revd Canon Janet Nicholls writes: "I recently accompanied the High Sheriff of Essex to St Nicholas' C of E Primary School in Rayleigh, where James was presented with a High Sheriff's Certificate for his outstanding achievement.

"In 2021, aged 5, James underwent surgery to create an artificial anterior cruciate ligament and from then on has turned his rehabilitation into something extraordinary, fundraising through walks and climbs. Climbing Britain's highest mountain on his knee, which doctors rebuilt from scratch, has been his toughest challenge yet.

"As fifth generation of a farming family in Battlesbridge, James was particularly keen to raise awareness of the support available to the farming community via FCN. James aimed to raise £500 for FCN and has exceeded this three-fold, raising £1600 so far!"

Anyone in the farming community can access support from FCN via their Helpline 03000 111 999 or by emailing the Revd Canon Janet Nicholls - [jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org](mailto:jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org)

Find out more about FCN at [fcn.org.uk](http://fcn.org.uk)

**Fri 10** **Calendar of Saints: William Law, Priest, Spiritual Writer, 1761**  
**William of Ockham, Friar, Philosopher, Teacher of the Faith, 1347**

**Pray for:** Epping District Team Ministry:  
Epping (St John), Epping Upland (All Saints), Coopersale (St Alban)  
Clergy: John Fry (AD, TR), Vacancy (TV), Jessica Bostock (AC), Liz Gloyn (A).  
Epping St Johns Church of England School: Mike Yerosimou (HT).  
Epping Upland School: Julia Ferguson (HT).  
Coopersale & Theydon Garnon CE Primary School: Dale Bateman (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki – The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia*

**Sat 11** **Calendar of Saints: George Augustus Selwyn, First Bishop of New Zealand, 1878**

**Pray for:** *Te Pihopatanga o Te Waipounamu – The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia*

**Sun 12** **THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**Pray for those who today still risk all to proclaim their faith in an often hostile world. Remember all Christians who struggle to maintain their freedom to worship.**

**Pray for:** *Igreja Anglicana de Mocambique Angola*

**Mon 13** **Pray for:** Loughton (St John the Baptist, St Nicholas, Trinity Church)  
Clergy: Chris Davies (R), Will Rose-Moore (A).

Loughton (St Mary Vn) Clergy: Malcolm Macdonald (AAD, V), Ruth How (A).  
Licensed Lay Minister: Brenda Miller.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wandi – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Tue 14** **Pray for:** The Theydon Parishes: Theydon Bois (St Mary Vn), Theydon Garnon (All Saints), Stapleford Tawney (St Mary the Virgin) w Theydon Mount (St Michael)

Clergy: Sarah Moss (V). Licensed Lay Minister: John Philip.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wangaratta – The Anglican Church of Australia*



## The Porch Pantry at West Mersea

Tucked into the porch of St Peter & St Paul's Parish Church in West Mersea, the Porch Pantry has been supporting the local community for nearly seven years. Launched in the summer of 2018, it had a simple aim: to support local families who relied on free school meals and were struggling during the school holidays.

Very quickly, its volunteers realised that the need reached far beyond school holiday pressures.

Volunteer, Emma Cornwell, who runs the Porch Pantry, explains: "We quickly realised that the need was much greater. Over the years it has become clear that any one of us may need its support. We never know what life may throw at us."

"Even the most secure job can end with just a month's notice. An unexpected vet's bill or car repair can throw off even the most careful budgeting. And for victims of domestic abuse, life often involves choices that are no choices at all. Controlling and coercive behaviour is very real in our communities."

The pantry operates with a deeply rooted principle of no judgement.

Emma continues: "None of us know what goes on behind closed doors. Irrespective of how people 'present' - how big their house is, or what car they drive.



"Our faith guides us and teaches us not to judge others. Mersea is a truly unique community, always ready to step up to support."

The Porch Pantry receives financial donations from Essex and Local Councils, from individuals, and from charities, clubs and societies across Mersea. This generosity helps keep the pantry stocked with essentials as well as seasonal items. The pantry recently received a donation of Easter eggs to share with families this Easter.

Emma's work at the Porch Pantry was recognised more widely when she was nominated last year in the Volunteer category of the BBC Essex Make a Difference Awards.

"It was hugely humbling to be nominated. I went with my husband Aaron and my parents. We enjoyed an amazing evening at Hatfield Place, hearing incredible stories of community engagement," said Emma.

Emma's nomination reflects not only her own commitment, but also the collective effort of volunteers and donors who ensure the Porch Pantry remains a beacon of hope for anyone in the community facing a difficult time.

**Please pray for all who turn to the Porch Pantry, that they may find hope in times of need. We give thanks for Emma, the volunteers, and the generosity of the Mersea community.**

**Wed 15** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Church buildings and the importance of place. Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qrl](https://shorturl.at/r8qrl)**

**Pray for:** Waltham Abbey Team Ministry: Waltham Abbey (Holy Cross & Ninefields St Lawrence), High Beach (Holy Innocents), Upshire (St Thomas) Clergy: Peter Smith (AAD, TR), Jane Yeardon (TV), Jane Begley (AC), Trevor Scott (AC).

High Beech CE Primary School: Jonathan Furness (Exec. HT), Kate Mortimer (HoS).

Waltham Abbey Hillhouse CE Primary School: Jo Willcox (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wanglei – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Thu 16** **Calendar of Saints: Isabella Gilmore, Deaconess, 1923**

**Pray for:** Loughton (St Michael & All Angels) Clergy: Vacancy (V), Deborah Lake (A).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wanyjok – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Fri 17** **Pray for:** Blackmore (St Laurence) w Stondon Massey (St Peter and St Paul) Clergy: Vacancy (V), Jane Marr (A). Licensed Lay Minister: Gail Hughes.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Warri – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Sat 18** **Pray for:** *The Diocese of Washington – The Episcopal Church*

**Sun 19** **THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**Please pray for followers of other faiths, that there may be discussion and understanding between all of God's people.**

**Calendar of Saints: Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1012**

**Pray for:** *The Church of the Province of Myanmar (Burma)*

**Mon 20** **Pray for:** Chipping Ongar (St Martin) w Shelley (St Peter); Greensted juxta Ongar (St Andrew); Stanford Rivers (St Margaret) Clergy: Hazel Aucken (AC), Neil Taylor (AC).

**Pray for:** The Diocesan Vocations Team.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wau – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*



## Chrishall Pupils Shine on Stage with iSingPOP

In the space of just a few days, pupils at Chrishall Primary School experienced an extraordinary transformation thanks to a visit from the iSingPOP team just before Christmas. What began as an ordinary, dark Monday morning became a sparkling Thursday afternoon performance.

iSingPOP, run by the UK-based Christian charity Innervation Trust, works in official partnership with the Church of England. The project helps children and families explore collective worship through vibrant music, energetic dancing and joyful singing.

Hannah and Kirsty from iSingPOP visited the school and taught the children a series of songs complete with upbeat choreography. The pupils rose to the challenge and were soon performance ready.

The Revd James Webster, Rector of the Icknield Way Parish, commented: "The fact that most of the children chose to perform at both concerts - the second one being entirely voluntary - speaks volumes about how engaged they were and how much they loved the experience. The audiences loved it too!"

Building on the momentum, the Icknield Way Parish hosted its first iSingSaturday at the end of January. This child-led, family-focused worship event began with food, drinks and craft activities, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The worship that followed centred on familiar iSingPOP songs, a couple of new songs, an exploration of a Bible story, and some children's prayers.

Reflecting on the event's impact, Revd James added: "We had just over 40 people attend - a mix of children and adults - with only one family being regular churchgoers. The children loved it, and one dad said, 'I never come to church because I don't feel comfortable - but I like this.'"

With such enthusiastic feedback from families and children alike, iSingPOP has clearly struck a chord in the community, one that the parish hopes to continue with future events.

**Please pray for all the children and families involved in these events - may they continue to grow in faith, and may future gatherings provide more opportunities to build community and share God's love.**

### Tue 21 **Calendar of Saints: Anselm, Abbot of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher of the Faith, 1109**

**Pray for:** Fyfield (St Nicholas), Bobbingworth (St Germain) & Moreton (St Mary Vn), Willingale (St Christopher) w Shellow and Berners Roding  
Clergy: Vacancy (PIC).

Fyfield Dr Walker's CE Primary School: Melissa Taylor (Exec. HT), Jenny Dean (Acting HoS).

Moreton CE Primary School: Nikki Batt (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wellington – The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia*

### Wed 22 **100 days of prayer theme of the week: PCCs and governance. Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qrl](http://shorturl.at/r8qrl)**

**Pray for:** High Laver (All Saints) w Magdalen Laver (St Mary Magdalene) w Little Laver (St Mary Vn) and Matching (St Mary Vn) w Matching Green (St Edmund) Clergy: Julia Baldwin (PIC).

Matching Green CE Primary School: Andy Lorkins (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wernyoal – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

### Thu 23 **Calendar of Saints: GEORGE, MARTYR, PATRON OF ENGLAND, C.304**

**Pray for:** High Ongar (St Mary) w Norton Mandeville (All Saints) Clergy: Vacancy (PIC). Licensed Lay Ministers: Katherine Garner, Geoff Willis.

North Weald (St Andrew) Clergy: Mark North (Lead Minister).

North Weald St Andrew's CE Primary School: Katie Henson (HT).

The retired Clergy, Readers, and Lay Ministers who live and work in the Deanery of Epping Forest and Ongar.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wiawso – The Church of the Province of West Africa*

### Fri 24 **Calendar of Saints: Mellitus, Bishop of London, First Bishop at St Paul's, 624 Seven Martyrs of the Melanesian Brotherhood, 2003**

**Pray for:** The Deanery of Brentwood  
Area Dean: Andy Smith. Lay Chair: Paul Betts.

All the chaplains who work in the Deanery of Brentwood.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Willochra – The Anglican Church of Australia*



## Bishop Guli's Visit to Israel and Palestine

In late January, the Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford, travelled with the bishops of Gloucester and Norwich to Israel and Palestine. The visit focused on the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, where they spent time with local Palestinian Christian communities and other groups, listening, sharing, and praying with them.

A day was spent with Father Fadi Diab, Anglican parish priest at St Andrew's, Ramallah. The bishops visited diocesan institutions including the Arab Evangelical School and the Vocational Training Centre. The Arab Evangelical School is the only diocesan school with a majority of Christian students. Its mission is rooted in serving the wider Palestinian community in all its diversity, welcoming students of any religion, race, gender, or socio-economic status.

Staff explained that increasing travel restrictions across the West Bank since the Hamas terrorist attacks of 7 October 2023 have made it more difficult for children and teachers to reach the school. They described a parent's decision to invest in their child's education as a form of resistance. Although "hope" is spoken of mainly at Easter, they said it is practiced daily. Supporting students' emotional and psychological wellbeing is a central priority, with

counsellors available to help children navigate the ongoing trauma of living under occupation.

The bishops then visited the neighbouring parish of St Peter's, Birzeit, where they met Lulu and Sammi Nassir. Their daughter, Layan, aged 25, is serving an eight month sentence in an Israeli prison. She was first arrested in 2021, allegedly for supporting a student-led union, the Democratic Progressive Student Pole, which an Israeli military order later deemed illegal. She is due to be released on in May 2026, when she is expected to resume her work with the YMCA.

Bishop Guli said, "I continue to pray for Layan daily and have had a candle burning in my small chapel at Bishopscourt which will stay alight until she is released."

Other stops on the trip included a visit to the Old City of Nablus, accompanied by representatives of SEEDS, a cultural and educational NGO supporting youth, children, and women; and joining Archbishop Hosam in a service at St George's Cathedral in Jerusalem to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

To read the full report of Bishop Guli's to Israel and Palestine visit [chelmsford.anglican.org/news](https://chelmsford.anglican.org/news)

### Sat 25 Calendar of Saints: MARK THE EVANGELIST

*Pray for: The Diocese of Winchester – The Church of England*

### Sun 26 THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Today is Vocations Sunday. We give thanks to God that he calls us all to varieties of forms of service in his Church and in the world and pray for openness to his Holy Spirit, that each of us may discern the call of God upon our lives. "Christ, you call us to be your people in the world.

*We will follow your call to be our people: our hands will do your work, our feet will walk your way. Christ, you call us. Help us respond to your call."*

*Pray for: The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

### Mon 27 Calendar of Saints: Christina Rossetti, Poet, 1894

**Pray for:** Bentley Common (St Paul) w Kelvedon Hatch (St Nicholas) and Navestock (St Thomas) Clergy: Julie Hardy (R), John Biddulph (AC).

Bentley St Paul's Church of England Primary School: Louise Putt (HT).

Brentwood (St George) Clergy: Justin Hutcherson (V).

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Windward Islands – The Church in the Province of the West Indies

### Tue 28 Calendar of Saints: Peter Chanel, Missionary in the South Pacific, Martyr, 1841

**Pray for:** Brentwood (St Thomas)

Clergy: Mark North (V). Licensed Lay Minister: Carolyn Robertson.

Brentwood St Thomas of Canterbury CE Primary School: Dean Moran (HT).

Brentwood Becket Keys CE Secondary School: Andy Scott-Evans (HT).

Doddinghurst All Saints Clergy: Ann Coleman (PIC), John Biddulph (AC).

Doddinghurst Church of England Junior School: Russell Davies (HoS).

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Wondurba – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan



## Discover the House of Retreat at Pleshey

Located on the edge of a small, moated village in the heart of the Essex countryside, the Diocesan House of Retreat in Pleshey is a place steeped in prayer, where people from all walks of life come to seek God and to search for the spiritual in their lives.

Retreats at Pleshey come in many forms.

You can come alone for quiet reflection, bring a group, stay overnight, or join one of the organised retreats.

The programme is rich and varied: from quiet days to walking retreats, craft themed retreats to guided times of reflection - there is something for everyone, whatever stage of the journey you are on.

Whatever you are seeking - stillness, renewal, companionship or simply space - Pleshey offers a place to pause and be met by God.

To stay up to date with upcoming retreats and events, follow the Chelmsford Diocesan House of Retreat on Facebook, on their new Instagram page, or visit the website:

**Facebook:** @RetreatHousePleshey

**Instagram:** @RetreatHousePleshey

**Website:** [www.retreathousepleshey.com](http://www.retreathousepleshey.com)

**Wed 29** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Stewardship – time, talents and gifts. Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qr1](http://shorturl.at/r8qr1)**

**Calendar of Saints: Catherine of Sienna, Teacher of the Faith, 1380**

**Pray for:** East and West Horndon (St Francis) w Little Warley (St Peter) and Childerditch (All Saints & St Faith) Clergy: Vacancy (R).

Margaretting (St Margaret) w Mountnessing (St Giles) and Buttsbury (St Mary) Clergy: Lee Francis-Dehqani (PIC).

Licensed Lay Minister: Tim Lee.

Margaretting CE Primary School: Sarah Kirk (HoS),  
Melissa Taylor (Exec. HT).

Mountnessing CE Primary School: Holly Obank (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Worcester – The Church of England*

**Thur 30** **Calendar of Saints: Pandita Mary Ramabai, Translator of the Scriptures, 1922**

**Pray for:** Ingrave (St Nicholas) Clergy: Paul Hamilton (R).

Ingrave (St Stephen) Clergy: Paul Hamilton (R).

Ingrave Johnstone CE Primary School: James Rogers (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wulu – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*



## Chaplaincy at West Ham United

### The club chaplain provides spiritual, pastoral and religious care to players, staff and supporters

The Revd Philip Wright writes about his ministry as Chaplain at West Ham United Football Club:

Being Chaplain to West Ham United Football Club is not only a privilege and an honour, it's also a coming home for me! I grew up in Rush Green, which is where the men's first team's training ground is situated, and I have supported West Ham all my life.

The club has had three club chaplains over the years - the Ven. Elwin Cockett was the first in the 90's and then the Revd Alan Bolding took over the role. I worked alongside Alan as the Academy Chaplain which I started in 2015 and when Alan retired, I became the main Club Chaplain. Like my full-time job as Lead Hospital Chaplain for Barking Havering & Redbridge

Hospital Trust, my role at the club is spiritual, pastoral and religious care, however, the majority of what I do is pastoral care.

During the week I visit the First Team training ground, Academy training ground and occasionally London Stadium where I chat with and support all involved with the club. I might be sitting with the players or having a coffee with the coaching staff or manager, or I might be walking the pitches with the ground staff.

I have had players chat to me about difficult decisions they have had to make or about their families and loved ones. I have supported staff who have been ill or their loved ones who have been sick. I have taken funerals and even baptised babies, and I have led services and



prayers at events like Remembrance or at the scattering of ashes for one of the club chairmen who sadly died.

One of the areas of work that has developed over the last year is also being Chaplain to the supporters. I have worked closely with the club's Supporter Services department, have had fans reach out to me for bereavement support and have ministered at funerals for local supporters on behalf of the club.

Being Chaplain to West Ham United is a voluntary role but a role that the club takes seriously and I have access to some privileged areas. In hospital chaplaincy we consider the bedside to be Holy Ground, the chaplain doesn't bring God to the bedside, God is already there, the chaplain may become the conduit for God and the patients, but God is already at the bedside.

It's the same at the football club. I don't bring God along with me on a Friday morning when I visit, God is already there, I'm simply an access point between God and the players, staff and supporters.

Pastoral, spiritual and religious care is so important in all sports, just being around

people building relationships and helping them find their own answers to their own questions in life is vital. I affiliate to Sports Chaplaincy UK which has hundreds of chaplains registered and they do amazing work supporting sports chaplains and ministering through sport.

#### Inspired by this story?

If you would like any further information either about Philip's role at West Ham United or Sports Chaplaincy, email [PWright@westhamunited.co.uk](mailto:PWright@westhamunited.co.uk) or visit [www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk).

For more information about Chaplaincy in the Diocese of Chelmsford and to sign up to our chaplaincy newsletter visit [chelmsford.anglican.org/chaplaincy-news](http://chelmsford.anglican.org/chaplaincy-news).

**Pray for Philip and his ministry at West Ham United Football Club, and for all who offer care through Sports Chaplaincy. May God guide them as they walk alongside players, staff, and supporters.**

**May their relationships be a bridge between their sports clubs and the wider community and may the love of Christ be known through their quiet witness and compassionate care.**



## Parish Giving Scheme enables generous giving at St Mary the Virgin Church in Shenfield

Although St Mary the Virgin, Shenfield is a large congregation located in a relatively affluent part of West Essex, the parish has faced financial challenges for many years. Recognising the need for change, the parish took decisive steps to strengthen its financial sustainability - placing the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) at the heart of this effort.

Churchwarden, James Anderson shares how the parish is successfully using the PGS to enable people in their church to give generously.

James writes: "Under the leadership of a new Rector in 2024, the PCC decided to make a concerted effort to repair our shaky finances. There were a number of actions we put in place around cost reduction, but we also realised we needed to grow our income we substantially.

"We had used the PGS for quite a number of years, but giving had dropped off, and we had fewer than 100 regular givers on the scheme. We decided to make a concerted effort to improve that.

"We focused on a small number of key messages to communicate to the congregation and the wider church community:

- The financial challenge the church was facing would not go away and posed a significant threat to the church as a sole-occupancy parish.
- We were grateful for all giving, but strongly encouraged people to consider PGS.
- PGS offered important advantages over other forms of giving: for the church, a regular and

predictable income to enable better planning; for givers, the assurance that their donation went straight to the church with no commission, and that Gift Aid was handled automatically. Givers also retained full control over their donations.

• Signing up was easy. We placed cards with QR codes in every pew, displayed posters at the back of church, and emphasised that people could also sign up by email or telephone if they were less confident with technology.

"We communicated these messages through multiple channels: the church magazine, social media, and from the front of church in our regular services. We have continued to repeat them consistently for over a year now, and we also give updates on the progress we have made as the months have gone past.

"That progress has been absolutely fantastic! We have now doubled our number of givers to over 200, and the money we receive is nearly 70% up on two years ago. This has made huge inroads into the financial deficit and, alongside other- sometimes difficult - decisions we have made, gives us the real prospect of a financial surplus in 2026."

PGS manages regular Direct Debit and one-off giving and is designed to ease the administrative burden for churches. Our Parish Giving Advisers regularly run webinars to explain the PGS scheme. Scan the QR code to book for a future webinar.



## May

**Fri 1** **Calendar of Saints: PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES**

**Pray for:** Hutton (All Saints and St Peter) Clergy: Andy Smith (AD, R), Lisa Whymark (AC), Alice Smith (A). Licensed Lay Minister: Tino To. Hutton All Saints CE Primary School: Jeanette Manookian (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Wusasa – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Sat 2** **Calendar of Saints: Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 373**

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Wyoming – The Episcopal Church

**Sun 3** **THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**Please pray for the House of Retreat at Pleshey, for all those who work and minister there, for all Pleshey Partners, and for those who visit or stay.**

**Pray for:** *The Church of North India (United)*

**Mon 4** **Calendar of Saints: English Saints and Martyrs of the Reformation Era**

**Pray for:** Ingatstone (St Edmund and St Mary) w Fryerning (St Mary Virgin) Clergy: Lee Francis-Dehqani (PIC). Licensed Lay Minister: Tim Lee.

Ingatstone and Fryerning Church of England Junior Academy: Leigh Johnston (HoS).

**Pray for:** The Mustard Seed Team and their work supporting children, young people and families ministry in parishes across our diocese.

**Pray for:** *Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Tue 5** **Pray for:** Shenfield (St Mary the Virgin) Clergy: Darren Barlow (R).

Shenfield St Mary's CE Primary School: Elizabeth Bundy (HoS).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Yangon – The Church of the Province of Myanmar (Burma)*

**Wed 6** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Stewardship and finance.**

**Find out more and access resources:** [shorturl.at/r8qr1](https://shorturl.at/r8qr1)

**Pray for:** South Weald (St Peter) Clergy: Justin Hutcherson (PIC).

South Weald St Peter's CE Primary School: Iain Gunn (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Yei – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

## Rogation

*A reflection for Rogation from the Revd Canon Janet Nicholls,  
Diocesan Rural Adviser and Agricultural Chaplain*

Rogation is the second agricultural festival of the year. It is the festival that draws our eyes to the good earth. Although Rogation worship might take place in a church building, the associated activities such as Rogation walks, or “Beating the Bounds”, happen outside. Very often, services are open-air too.

If you join a Rogation walk, you will probably be invited to stroll at a slower pace than usual so that you can tread gently and observe carefully as you go.

One of the routes I will walk this Rogation Sunday was flooded during the winter. The excessive rain of January and February saturated swathes of the agricultural land of our diocese. For long periods, our good fertile soil was underwater as the usual safe guards of rivers, ditches and drains were overwhelmed by the excessive rainfall. It was difficult to imagine that this saturated land could nurture growth in future seasons.

And yet, this Rogation Sunday, as our eyes focus on the land of our communities, we might

observe the miraculous signs of growth all around us. Acknowledging the land’s gentle recovery from the harsh winter serves to deepen our thankfulness as we ask God’s blessing on the emergent growth this Rogationtide.

As Agricultural Chaplain, I often observe how the “good soil” of our agricultural land reflects something of the “good soil” of our souls. Our God of Creation holds earth and humanity as one. This Rogationtide might speak especially to those whose hearts and souls are overwhelmed at present. It might remind us that with gentle patience, the season of overwhelm will pass and gradually our good soil will recover, guiding us into future seasons of growth and flourishing.

We are especially pleased to be able to offer clergy in rural multi-parish ministry an extra opportunity during this Rogation season. Our Rural Ministry Conference, entitled “Good Soil”, takes place 9.30am – 3pm on Tuesday 5 May at Chapel Barn, Dunmow. Scan the QR code to book your place.



**Thu 7** **Pray for:** Warley (Christ Church) and Great Warley (St Mary) Clergy: Dawn Butcher (V), Neil Barrett (AC). Licensed Lay Ministers: Julian Pennant, Annie Fraser.  
The retired clergy, Readers and lay ministers who live and work in the Deanery of Brentwood

*Pray for: The Diocese of Yeri – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Fri 8** **Calendar of Saints: Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer, c.1417**

**Pray for:** The Deanery of Chelmsford  
Area Dean: Simon Pearce. Lay Chair: Jill Readings.

All the chaplains who work in the Deanery of Chelmsford.

*Pray for: The Diocese of Yewa – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Sat 9** **Pray for:** *The Diocese of Yiroi – Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

**Sun 10** **THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Christian Aid Week begins.

**God of the impossible, we pray for justice, peace and reconciliation. And when the challenges seem too many, remind us of your resurrection power, and the miracles of your love that happen whenever injustice is dismantled and rebuilt with peace. Help us to hope that the impossible can happen and live as if it might do so today. Amen (Prayer for Christian Aid)**

*Pray for: The Church of Pakistan (United)*

**Mon 11** **Rogation Day**

**Pray for:** Boreham (St Andrew) Clergy: Vacancy (PIC).

Broomfield (St Mary w St Leonard) Clergy: Vacancy (V)

*Pray for: The Diocese of Yokohama – The Nippon Sei Ko Kai*

**Tue 12** **Rogation Day**

**Calendar of Saints: Gregory Dix, Priest, Monk, Scholar, 1952**

**Pray for:** Chelmsford Cathedral (St Mary the Virgin, St Peter, St Cedd) Clergy: Jessica Martin (Dean), Joseph Fernandes (Vice-Dean), Sebastian Harries (Cathedral Precentor), Revd Olivia Maxfield-Coote (AC).  
The Cathedral CE Primary School: Gemma Smith (HT).

*Pray for: The Diocese of Yola – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*



## Thy Kingdom Come 2026

14-24 May

Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus.

Taking place between Ascension and Pentecost, everyone is invited to take part.

There is a new theme for TKC in 2026 - 'God with us' – and it's all about the presence of God. The God who is with us in the everyday – in the joys and sorrows of life (and everything in between) and the One who, through His spirit, longs to reveal Himself to those who do not yet know Him.

From the story of Ruth to the story of Gideon, from the story of Elijah to the story of the early church who waited for the promised Holy Spirit to come- over the 11 days we will explore a different Bible story each day, which

demonstrates God's transformative presence, power and love at work in the lives of people and places.

There's a wide range of resources for TKC 2026 including the Prayer Journal; the Novena – written by Archbishop Sarah Mollally; 11 brand-new discipleship films from a range of contributors and resources for children and young people- including content from the Way UK & The Cheeky Pandas and much more!

Find out more by scanning the QR code or visit [www.thykingdomcome.global](http://www.thykingdomcome.global)



**Please pray for Thy Kingdom Come – that more people come to know Jesus Christ and God's transformative presence, power and love at work in their lives.**

### Wed 13 Rogation Day

**100 days of prayer theme of the week: Our readiness for change.**  
**Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qrl](http://shorturl.at/r8qrl)**

**Pray for:** Chelmsford (The Ascension w All Saints)  
 Clergy: Simon Pearce (AD, PIC), Mark Pape (A)

Chelmsford (St Andrew) Clergy: Simon Pearce (AD, PIC), Mark Pape (A).  
 Licensed Lay Minister: Linda Robinson.

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of York – The Church of England*

### Thu 14 ASCENSION DAY THY KINGDOM COME

**Calendar of Saints: MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE**

**Pray for:** The Chignals (St Nicholas w St James) w Mashbury  
 Clergy: Dan Pierce (PIC). Licensed Lay Minister: Greg Waters.

Great & Little Leighs St Mary Vn, St John and Little Waltham (St Martin)  
 Clergy: Dan Pierce (PIC). Licensed Lay Minister: Greg Waters.

Little Waltham CE Primary School: Stephen Saunders (HT).

Great Waltham (St Mary & St Lawrence) w Ford End (St John).  
 Clergy: Dan Pierce (PIC). Licensed Lay Minister: Greg Waters.

Ford End CEVC Primary School: Sarah Tate (HoS), Melissa Taylor (Exec. HT).  
 Great Waltham CE Primary School: Justine Brooks (HT).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of New York – The Episcopal Church*

### Fri 15 **Pray for:** Pleshey (Holy Trinity) Clergy: Vacancy (PIC)

Roxwell (St Michael and All Angels). Clergy: Tony Cant (PIC).

Roxwell CE Primary School: Sarah Letham (HoS), Melissa Taylor (Exec. Head).

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Western New York – The Episcopal Church*

### Sat 16 **Calendar of Saints: Caroline Chisholm, Social Reformer, 1877**

**Pray for:** *The Diocese of Ysabel – The Anglican Church of Melanesia*

### Sun 17 **THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER /SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY**

**Please pray for the ministry of the Actors Church Union, and everyone involved in the local theatre and entertainment industry in our diocese.**

**Pray for:** *The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea*

## Growing Together in Boreham

Since 2024, St Andrew's Church in Boreham has shared its services, on the second Sunday of each month, with Word Alive Chapel, a Pentecostal congregation within the Redeemed Christian Church of God that normally meets at Boreham Village Hall. Most joint services take place at St Andrew's, with one memorable open-air "Songs of Praise" held outside (pictured).

In January, members of the Word Alive Leadership Team and the St Andrew's wardens met with Boreham's interim minister, the Revd Andy Griffiths, for an evening of conversation and hopeful planning.

Andy explains: "Much of the discussion focused on appreciating each church's distinctive character. Word Alive brings vibrant energy shaped by its many young people and its strong sense of community identity. The congregation's Nigerian heritage deeply influences the community's warmth and faith expression. Their commitment is evident in the long distances many travel each week to attend. The group also believe it is important not to hold communion in morning services, a practice they see as rooted in Scripture.

"St Andrew's, by contrast, offers a historic and contemplative setting, with its altar, stained glass, and written liturgy giving a sense of sacred continuity. Its different service styles—Communion and the Service of the Word—offer varied expressions of worship. Deep links with

Boreham village, and international connections such as a partnership with Kenya, give St Andrew's a strong sense of rootedness in place and story.

"Yet the group also recognised how much the churches hold in common. Both value warm relationships, outreach, evangelism, music that blends hymns with contemporary songs, and a shared commitment to the wellbeing of Boreham. Both also enjoy a degree of denominational flexibility and are eager to build in friendship.

"A major idea emerging from the meeting was a potential summer concert - designed not as a fundraiser but as a relational, invitational event for the village. Hosting and invitations would be shared by the two congregations, with a joint planning group to take the idea forward.

"Other possibilities included a family evening for all ages, a monthly prayer gathering called Transforming Boreham, and even an "intermission" during joint services to encourage new friendships. The evening offered more than plans - it was a glimpse of what God can do when God's people come together with humility, curiosity, and hope."

**Please pray for both the congregations of St Andrew's, Boreham and Word Alive Chapel, that they may grow in faith, hope, and love as they seek to serve their local community.**

**Mon 18** **Pray for:** The Diocesan Parish Giving Advisors  
**Pray for:** Springfield (All Saints) Clergy: Sally Croft (R).  
 North Springfield (St Augustine of Canterbury) Clergy: Vacancy (PIC).  
 Springfield The Bishops' CE & RC Primary School: Greg Waters (HT).  
*Pray for: The Diocese of Yukon – The Anglican Church of Canada*

**Tue 19** **Calendar of Saints: Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, Restorer of Monastic Life, 988**  
**Pray for:** East Springfield (Church of Our Saviour) LEP.  
 Clergy: Andrew Greaves-Brown (PIC), Mandy Hewson (AC).  
 Springfield (Holy Trinity). Clergy: Keith Roddy (V), Ian Fuller (AC).  
*Pray for: The Diocese of Zaki-Biam – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

**Wed 20** **100 days of prayer theme of the week: Our readiness for change. Find out more and access resources: [shorturl.at/r8qrl](https://shorturl.at/r8qrl)**  
**Calendar of Saints: Alcuin of York, Deacon, Abbot of Tours, 804**  
**Pray for:** Writtle (All Saints) w Highwood (St Paul). Clergy: Tony Cant (V).  
 Danbury (St John the Baptist) Clergy: Jacqui Jones (PIC).  
 Danbury St John's CE Primary School: Toby Power (HT).  
*Pray for: The Missionary Diocese of Zambezia – Igreja Anglicana de Mocambique e Angola*

**Thu 21** **Calendar of Saints: Helena, Protector of the Holy Places, 330**  
**Pray for** Downham (St Margaret) w South Hanningfield (St Peter) & Ramsden Bellhouse (St Mary Vn) Clergy: Jacqueline Pearson (PIC), Barry Hobson (AC).  
 Downham CE Primary School: Theresa Walker (Exec. HT), Johanna Bailey (HT).  
 East Hanningfield (All Saints) Clergy: Jacqueline King.  
 East Hanningfield School: Lesley Roche (Exec. HT), Lisa Stainsbury (HoS).  
*Pray for: The Diocese of Central Zambia – The Church of the Province of Central Africa*

**Fri 22** **Pray for:** Galleywood (St Michael & All Angels) Clergy: David Cattle (V), Stephanie Gillingham (AC). Lay Minister: Fiona Selden.  
 Galleywood St Michael's CE Junior School: Rowen Prigg (HT).  
 Little Baddow (St Mary Vn) Clergy: Jacqui Jones (PIC).  
*Pray for: The Diocese of Eastern Zambia – The Church of the Province of Central Africa*



## St Christopher's revive the commemoration of the 1953 North Sea flood

Photo credit: Tim Ireland

On Sunday 1 February St Christopher's, Jaywick revived the village's commemoration service for the floods of 1953.

The service, led by the Vicar, Fr Matt Simpkins, drew over a hundred people: the church's largest congregation for many years.

Reflecting on the service, Fr Matt said: "We were overwhelmed by the response to the commemoration service. With so many people attending, extra mugs and chairs had to be sourced after the service began!

"The Flood of 1953 was a moment that shaped Jaywick's character. Its famous spirit of mutual help and community in part grew from the assistance Jaywick people gave to each other on that night in which 5% of the village's population was killed. The service was a wonderful opportunity to rededicate ourselves to a hope-filled future for Jaywick, shaped by mutual care and a richness of community that any place in England would benefit from."

The 1953 floods claimed the lives of 5% of Jaywick's population at the time, and a memorial was established in St Christopher's Church.

At the service a number of survivors of the tragedy shared their stories and others helped to light the memorial candle. Following a minute's silence, the names of those who died were read.

Memories were shared over refreshments after the service.

Among the honoured guests were Nigel Spencer MBE, Deputy Lieutenant to the Lord Lieutenant of Essex; Cllr Bill Davidson, Chair of Tendring District Council; Carlo Bardetti, Lifeboat Operations Manager, Clacton RNLI Lifeboat Station; and the Rt Revd Roger Morris, the Bishop of Colchester, who preached the sermon.

Following the service, Nigel Spencer MBE wrote to the parish, commenting, "It was a privilege to chat to so many residents, guest and church members. The whole atmosphere was upbeat positive and friendly."

**Please pray for the community of Jaywick as they honour the memory of all who lost their lives in the 1953 North Sea flood. Pray too for all who continue the vital work of protecting our coastal communities today. May God's comfort, strength, and hope surround all who mourn, all who remember, and all who serve.**

**Sat 23** *Pray for: The Diocese of Northern Zambia – The Church of the Province of Central Africa*

**Sun 24** **PENTECOST (WHIT SUNDAY) / ANGLICAN COMMUNION SUNDAY**  
 Father, pour out your Spirit upon your people, and grant us: a new vision of your glory, a new experience of your power, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service; that your love may grow among us, and your kingdom come: through Christ our Lord. Amen

**Calendar of Saints: John and Charles Wesley, Evangelists, Hymn Writers, 1791 and 1788**

*Pray for:* The Episcopal Church in the Philippines

**Mon 25** **Calendar of Saints: The Venerable Bede, Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian, 735; Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, 709**

**Pray for:** Great Baddow Team Ministry: (St Mary Vn, St Paul, Meadgate) Clergy: Vacancy (TR), Lydia Petitt (TV), Mark Petitt (TV), Andy Greaves Brown (AC). Licensed Lay Ministers: Rosalind Coleridge and Anne Heath.

*Pray for:* The Diocese of Zanzibar – The Anglican Church of Tanzania

**Tue 26** **Calendar of Saints: Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, 605 John Calvin, Reformer, 1564 Philip Neri, Founder of the Oratorians, Spiritual Guide, 1595**

**Pray for:** Moulsham (St John the Evangelist) Clergy: John Bloomer (PIC), David Cattle (AC), Stephanie Gillingham (AC).

Moulsham (St Luke) Clergy: Stephanie Gillingham (PIC), David Cattle (AC), Suzanne McAllister (AC).

*Pray for:* The Diocese of Zaria – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)

**Wed 27** **Pray for:** South Woodham Ferrers (Holy Trinity) Clergy: Jacqueline King (V). South Woodham Ferrers Trinity St Mary's CE Primary School: Janet Hoy (HT). Woodham Ferrers (St Mary) and Bicknacre (St Andrew) Clergy: Jacqueline King (PIC).

Woodham Ferrers St Mary's CE Primary School: Theresa Walker (HoS).

*Pray for:* The Diocese of Central Zimbabwe – The Church of the Province of Central Africa



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### Thu 28 **Calendar of Saints: Lanfranc, Prior of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Scholar, 1089**

**Pray for:** Stock Harvard (All Saints) Clergy: Jacqueline Pearson (PIC), Miranda Seaman (AC).

Stock CE Primary School: Gareth Roberts (HT).

West Hanningfield (St Mary & St Edward)

Clergy: Jacqueline Pearson (PIC), Miranda Seaman (AC).

West Hanningfield St Peters CEVA Primary Academy: Jamie Bearman (HT).

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Ziwa Rukwa – The Anglican Church of Tanzania

### Fri 29 **Pray for:** Sandon (St Andrew) Clergy: Vacancy (R).

Widford (St Mary, Church of the Holy Spirit) Clergy: Stephanie Gillingham (R), David Cattle (AC). Licensed Lay Minister: Roger Gillingham.

The retired clergy, readers, and lay ministers who live and work in the Deanery of Chelmsford

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Zonkwa – The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)

### Sat 30 **Calendar of Saints: Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906 Joan of Arc, Visionary, 1431; Apolo Kivebulaya, Priest, Evangelist in Central Africa, 1933**

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Zululand – The Anglican Church of Southern Africa

### Sun 31 **TRINITY SUNDAY**

Holy, holy, holy, merciful, eternal, and mighty, by your grace you have shown us who you are, One in Three, and Three in One. We glorify you as Trinity, even as we worship you in your Unity.

Open our hearts to receive your word to us, that not only in our worship but in our lives, we may serve and reflect your Triune Love all our days. Amen (Adapted from John Wesley)

### **Calendar of Saints: VISIT OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY TO ELIZABETH**

**Pray for:** Trinity Sunday Eglise Anglicane du Rwanda

## NOTES:

Where parochial links are known to exist the names of overseas workers are placed immediately after the appropriate parish. Further information concerning overseas dioceses, including the names of bishops, is contained in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, available on their website [www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/cycle-of-prayer.aspx](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/cycle-of-prayer.aspx)

## ABBREVIATIONS:

A Assistant Clergy; AAD Assistant Area Dean; AC Associate Priest/Minister; AD Area Dean; BMO Bishop's Mission Order; BP Bishop; CHP Chaplain; Exec. HT Executive Head Teacher; HT Head Teacher; HoS Head of School; LLM Licensed Lay Minister; PEV Provincial Episcopal Visitor; PIC Priest in Charge; PP Public Preacher; R Rector; Rdes Rector designate; TM Team Ministry; TR Team Rector; TV Team Vicar; TV des Team Vicar designate; V Vicar; Vdes Vicar designate.

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Chelmsford cathedral



The Church of England  
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Diocese of Chelmsford



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