

June and July 2025



GRIDIRON

The Magazine of the Parish Church of
Saint Laurence Upminster

£1



Fruits of the Spirit

Service Times

The service schedule may change at short notice. Please refer to Porchtalk or contact the Parish Office for up-to-date information.

Sundays

Holy Communion 08.00
Sung Parish Mass 09.30
Sunday Schools 09.30
Evensong 18.30
(see Parish Diary
for details)

Weekdays

Wednesday Morning Prayer 08.45
Mass 11.00
Evening Prayer 16.15

Footsteps

This Service for pre-school children and grown-ups normally takes place monthly on a Monday at 09.30 in the Lady Chapel. The next service is on **30th June**.



Additional services on Saints' Days are shown in the Diary in the back pages.

Baptisms and Wedding Banns

These are administered during public services.
Please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements.

Confessions

By appointment with the clergy.

**Please inform the Parish Office or Revd Susannah
of anyone who is ill or in need of a pastoral visit.**

See back pages for useful telephone contact numbers

www.upminsterparish.co.uk

Parish Office ☎ 01708 220696

parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk

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From the Rector

As we conclude the celebration of Eastertide, we celebrate a number of festivals - with this year, all of them falling in June - which elaborate upon the meaning of Easter and particularly upon the value of relationships between humans and with the Divine. The first is Pentecost, when we celebrate the sending of the Holy Spirit upon the first disciples, enabling them to go out and speak to many people, from a whole variety of nations, about what they had witnessed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The coming of the Holy Spirit reassured those first disciples that God's presence had not left them, and gave them greater courage and ability to go and seek connections with other people and to explain to them that God was also calling them into relationship with him.

The second in this succession of feast days is Trinity Sunday. Unfortunately this has not always been given the importance it should have - it is often somewhat dismissed as the day when we have to try and understand or explain something that is ultimately beyond the powers of human explanation - the Trinity. Yet if we focus too much on the mechanics of what it means to say that God is one being and three persons, we miss its meaning - both the beauty and importance of the relationship between God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and the wonderful possibilities this opens up both for us to relate to God and for us to model our own relationships upon the relationship that we find within the Godhead.

Finally, on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, we come to Corpus Christi, also known as the Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion. This is an opportunity to celebrate, in a focused way, how Christ comes to be with us in the sacrament of the Eucharist - the wonder and simplicity of God choosing to be present in such a simple but tangible way, and the extraordinary fact that people across the world, in all sorts of situations, have sought relationship with God through this sacrament for nearly two thousand years.

These festivals are all important celebrations in the Christian calendar, and set the tone for how we seek to live as 'Easter people'. They continue to remind us that, because of the cross and resurrection, God is always present with us,

nothing can separate us from God, and God calls us to love one another as he loves us.

With my prayers and best wishes
Susannah

Building Faith - A new, informal early morning service for primary school aged children with their parents/carers with refreshments, prayer, Bible story and building blocks activity. 1st June and 6th July, from 8am to 8.45am in the Main Hall, St Laurence Church. For more information please contact the Parish Office: parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk 01708 220696.



BBQ - Saturday 21st June at 4.30pm
in the Church grounds.
Food, fun and games for all the family.
– Look out for more details in ‘Porchtalk’
nearer the time

Confirmation Congratulations to Paul!



Several members of St Laurence enjoyed celebrating with Paul O'Neill and his family as he was confirmed by Bishop Lynne at St Nicholas, Elm Park on Sunday 27th April. Confirmations take place in the Diocese throughout the year - if you would be interested to know more about what is involved in taking this step in faith and commitment, please do speak to Susannah.



From the Editors

Dear Readers

Welcome into the pages of our June and July magazine. May the articles included encourage you to explore your faith through the forthcoming liturgical festivals mentioned in Susannah's article; give you a chuckle or two in Rob's article on the next page or inspire you to visit a re-generated area of London in his article 'The Churchyard of St Pancras Old Church, St Pancras / King's Cross'; or to venture into our wilder places and immerse yourself among the fields and flowers, trees and glades. Whatever your thing, may you encounter God in all you see and do - be blessed and be a blessing.

Joanne Chapman, Editor

From the Parish Registers

BAPTISM

We welcome into the family of the church and pray for:

4th May Dolcie Buffoni Venables

18th May Florence Cutting
 Arthur Roberts

MARRIAGE

We offer our congratulations to and pray for:

17th May Alexander Bryzak and Louise Brand

FUNERAL

We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of:

3rd April Barbara Playle

21st May Rosemary Watkins

INTERMENT OF ASHES

We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of:

1st April James and Doreen Munday



August and September Magazine Deadline

Items for inclusion in the August and September edition of *Gridiron* should reach the editorial team by **Friday 2nd July**. We would prefer to receive items by e-mail at gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk. Paper copy is acceptable but should be submitted to us as early as possible. The **August and September** Magazine will be on sale from **Sunday 27th July**.

The Last Word - Epitaphs and Memorials *by Rob Brabner*

I am indebted to the author and broadcaster Gervase Phinn, former school teacher and inspector, for these reported epitaphs, and in particular his book 'Mangled English' first published by Dalesman, an imprint of Country Publications Ltd, in 2013.

Gervase reports that a former headmistress of Doncaster Girls' School, who had died in the 1920s, had requested the inscription 'She was thine' on her headstone. Unfortunately, the apprentice stonemason assigned the work omitted the letter 'e' so it read 'She was thin'. The lead stonemason became aware of the error and asked the apprentice to add the 'e'. It then read 'E, She was thin'.

Some epitaphs are reminders of the deceased's former profession or pastime:

'Here lies poor but honest Bryan Tustall.
He was a most expert Angler
Until Death, envious of his merit,
Threw out His line, hooked him
And landed him here on the 21st day of April 1790'

'Stranger, tread this ground with
Gravity
Dentist Brown is filling his last
Cavity'
Tombstone in St George's Church, Edinburgh

'Going, Going, Gone!
John H Wells, auctioneer'

'Here lieth John Cruker, maker of bellows,
His craft's master, and king of good fellows;
Yet when he came to the hour of his death,
He that made bellows could not make breath.
John Cruker, bellows maker'

'The Defence Rests
Mason Thornbury, attorney-at-law'

Sometimes epitaphs are amusing, some unintentionally so:

'He died in peace

His wife died first'

Inscription at Ilfracombe, Devon

'She lived with her husband of fifty years

And died in the confident hope of a better life'

Alice Mary Johnson 1883-1947

'In loving memory of my beloved wife, Hester, the mother of Edward, Richard, Mark, Penelope, John, Henry, Michael, Susan, Emily, Charlotte, Amelia, George, Hugh, Hester, Christopher and Daniel. She was a great breeder of pugs, a devoted mother and dear friend'

Nineteenth century grave, Hemel Hempstead

'John Edwards who perished in a fire.

None could hold a candle to him.'

In Malton, Yorkshire an inscription reads:

'Here lies the father of 29

It would have been more,

But he didn't have time.'

And finally, erected by a 'grieving' widow:

'Under this sod lies another one.'

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Ghost Moths

by Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust

A few years ago, as the sun set over the South Downs, I was wandering through a wood on a twilight hike. Through the trees I noticed about a dozen figures decked out in brilliant white gathering in a small clearing. I hit the floor and, buried amongst the bracken, watched as other white figures joined them. Each individual slowly started swaying, swinging hypnotically like a pendulum suspended on an invisible wire. The whole silent scene felt eerie, otherworldly, ancient. I was spellbound and barely breathing, scared I would be discovered and this mesmerising performance would end. As some of the figures swung fixed to their stations, others oscillated wildly, whirling and crashing into each other. The light was fading fast and as my surroundings dissolved into shadow the swaying white figures seemed luminous against the gloom. Then, as the full moon rose and illuminated the glade, the action slowed, the figures retreated and I was left alone in the gloaming.



The ritual I had witnessed was the dance of the Ghost Moths: elaborate courtship behaviour performed by the males on warm summer evenings across Sussex. That moonlit glade had been temporarily transformed into a miniature moth disco where these incredible insects pirouetted, pranced, swaggered and strutted in an attempt to attract a female. More 'Saturday Night Fever' than 'The Wicker Man'.



And, like tiny Travoltas, the male Ghost Moths know that to stand out on a crowded dance floor you need a flashy white suit. Their wings are whiter than white and look as though they have been hand-painted with Tipp-Ex. The

female Ghost Moth has a more subdued wardrobe and wears pale yellow wings with elegant orange swirls. Males also have another trick up their sleeve (or in this case their trouser legs). Their hind legs contain furry scent-brushes, which release pheromones into the air like an overpowering aphrodisiac. Once the ladies are lured, it's the individual moth's dancing which seals the deal. It can be murder on the dance floor and scuffles start as the males try to assert their positions. It's a behaviour known as lekking and the dominant dancers will lead a lucky lady of the lek into the surrounding shadows. In days gone by the moth's mysterious, ethereal waltz was interpreted as something

supernatural and it has been suggested that the dance of the Ghost Moth gave rise to local legends of fairies and will-o'-the-wisps.

For many years I believed an empty dance floor, Stevie Wonder's 'Superstition' and a splash of Brut 33 were all that was needed for the ladies to fall under my spell. Yet the ghost moths seemed to have more success. I knew I should have gone for the white suit.

Ronald Blythe - A Legacy to Cherish

by Rob Brabner

The Essex Wildlife Trust reported in the winter edition of their magazine on the legacy left to them by the author Ronald Blythe, who died in 2023 at the age of 100.

Ronald 'Ronnie' Blythe was the author of 'Akenfield' which made him known and read across the world and in all he wrote over 80 books. 'Akenfield' was an elegiac portrait of vanishing life in the countryside, and a portrait of him and Akenfield made a memorable edition of ITV's South Bank Show. As a writer he is regarded as one of the founders of contemporary nature writing, but he was also a very active churchman and had a regular column in The Church Times called 'Word from Wormingford' which was extremely popular. Wormingford is in north Essex near the border with Suffolk, and Ronnie served as a Pastoral Minister there with two adjacent parishes for many years.

When Ronnie was younger he worked with Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears as part of the team on the annual Aldeburgh Festival.

In his will he has generously left his 16th century yeoman's farmhouse 'Bottengoms' to the Essex Wildlife Trust with the intention that the estate becomes a nature reserve which includes a studio to inspire writers, artists, photographers, nature historians and historians for future generations.

'Bottengoms' has an interesting history itself. Ronald Blythe inherited it from his friends, artists John Nash and his wife Christine. John was a significant artist and a World War I veteran and has works displayed in various museums and galleries, including London's Imperial War Museum and Tate Britain.

The Essex Wildlife Trust is working on plans to fulfill Ronnie's wishes in developing his vision and stewarding the estate and gardens.

'Blythe Spirit: The Remarkable Life of Ronald Blythe' written by Ian Collins is available to purchase at the Essex Wildlife Nature Discovery Centres.

The Churchyard of St Pancras Old Church, St Pancras / King's Cross

by Robert Brabner



One of the most vibrant areas of London these days is the newly regenerated area behind King's Cross St Pancras, London train station. With much new development including markets, the Central St Martin's School of Art (part of London University), Kings Place Concert Hall, the refurbished and listed 'Gasholders' area, newly built residential and commercial spaces, plus

canal and narrow boat activities. The green spaces also include a nature park and, of course, plenty of coffee shops, bars and places to eat.

Close by is St Pancras Old Church, one of the oldest sites of Christian worship in London, which possibly dates back to the 4th century. The attractive building is generally open and is an active, Anglo-Catholic Parish Church. This article however, concerns the churchyard and gardens, which also have considerable interest.

To one side of the graveyard is the tomb of the feminist icon Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), author of 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman' published 1792. She tragically died 11 days after giving birth to her second daughter, also Mary, who, under her married name of Mary Shelley, wrote 'Frankenstein'. In 2020 a controversial statue to Mary Wollstonecraft was unveiled in Newington Green, where, in 1784 she and her sister had opened a school for girls.

Another prominent grave is of the architect Sir John Soane (1753-1837), which Soane himself originally designed for his wife Elizabeth who predeceased him. Soane was involved with the design for the original Bank of England, the first public Picture Gallery at Dulwich, the then Houses of Parliament and also Soane House in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which is a fascinating museum. Giles Gilbert Scott, designer of the K2 kiosk, Britain's first red telephone box, is said to have been inspired by Soane's tomb design.

In the Victorian era the burial ground was subject to part requisition to make way for the Midland Railway during the 1860s. Arthur Blomfield, the architect responsible for the nave of Southwark Cathedral, was engaged to supervise the

exhumations and reburials at St Pancras Churchyard, and Blomfield asked his assistant Thomas Hardy to undertake the task – yes, this was Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) who became much better known in later life as the famous novelist and poet. His ashes lie in Westminster Abbey, though his heart was interred at Stinsford, Dorset where his parents lie.

At St Pancras Churchyard, Hardy enterprisingly ordered the displaced gravestones to be arranged in pairs around the base of an ash tree, radiating away from the trunk. Sadly the Ash tree blew down in 2023 but the roots of the tree remain and over the years the gravestones have become distorted. Hardy must have spent a considerable time working in this churchyard and his experience here must have inspired him in the composition of the poem 'The Levelled Churchyard'.

An extract from 'The Levelled Churchyard' (1880-81)

O passenger, pray list and catch
Our sighs and piteous groans,
Half stifled in this jumbled patch
Of wrenched memorial stones!

We late-lamented, resting here,
Are mixed to human jam.
And each to each exclaims in fear,
'I know not which I am!'



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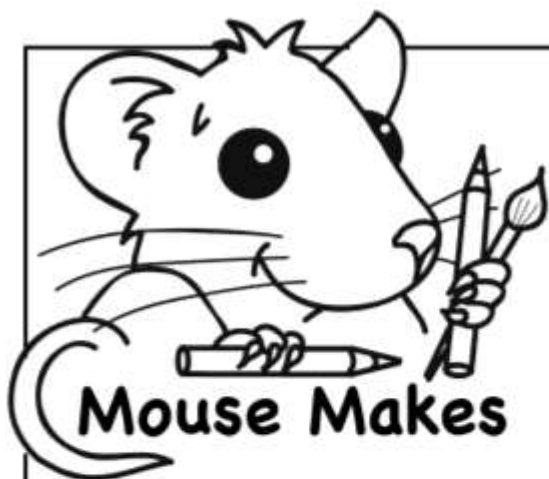


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 ROME • CRETANS
 ARABIANS • GOD



READ
 Acts
 2:1-41

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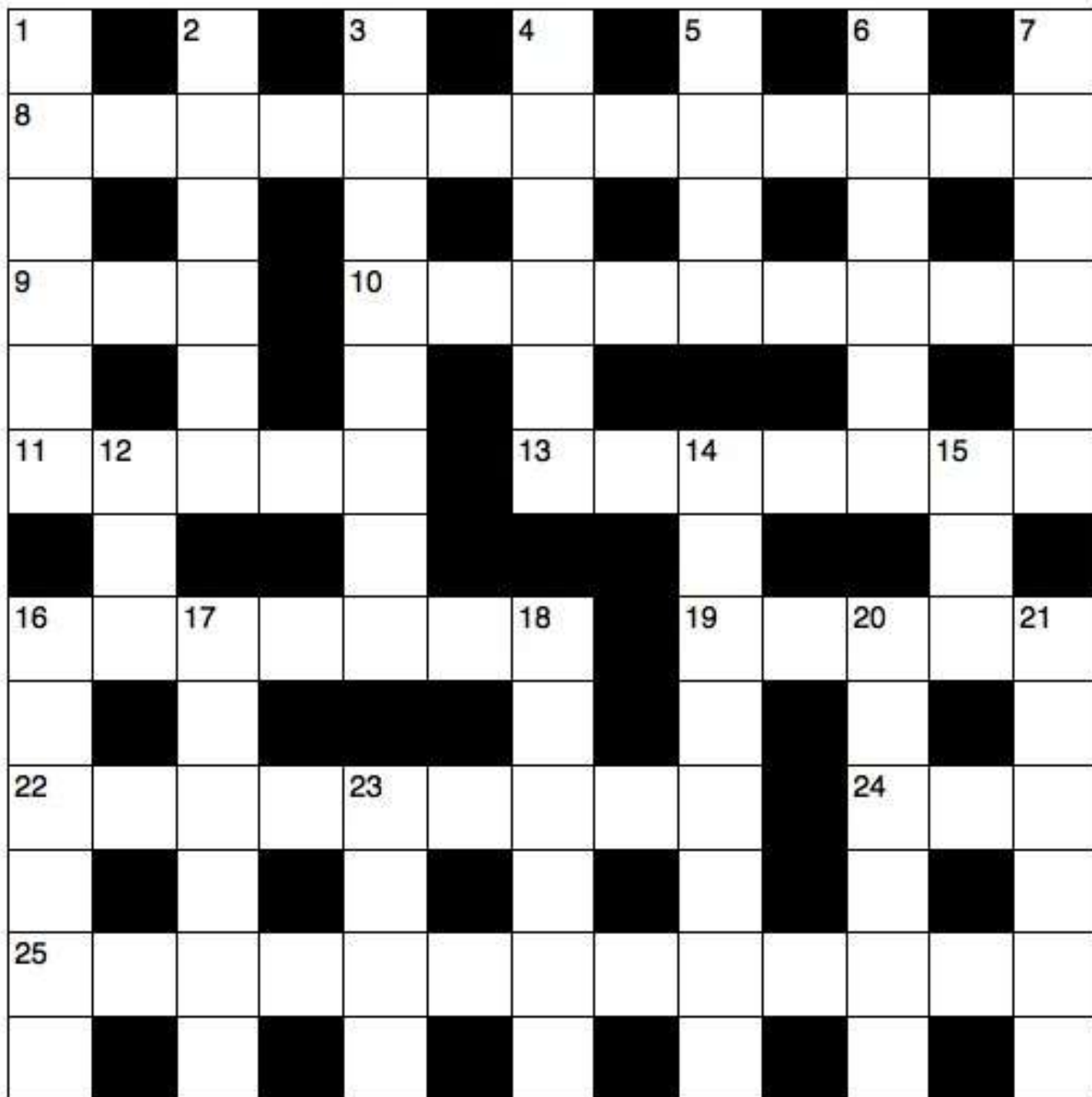
It was fifty days since **Passover**, and Jews from many countries had come to **Jerusalem** to celebrate Passover. As the **Apostles** were gathered together the **Holy Spirit** came upon them and they began to speak in other **languages** as the Spirit enabled them.

The crowd that were listening were amazed as they heard about God in their own language.

How many people heard, believed and were baptised that day?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Bible or parts of the Bible have now been translated into over 3,000 different languages since it was first written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.



Across

- 8 Laban complained he had not been allowed to kiss them when Jacob fled with his family (Genesis 31:28) (13)
- 9 In favour of (3)
- 10 'The child's father and mother _____ at what was said about him' (Luke 2:33) (9)
- 11 Swagger (Psalm 12:8) (5)
- 13 'Terrors _____ him on every side and dog his every step' (Job 18:11) (7)
- 16 Bay bits (anag.) (7)
- 19 Preach, address an audience, speak in public (5)

- 22 Holy Communion (9)
- 24 'On their way to _____ out the land, Joshua instructed them, "Go and make a survey of the land"' (Joshua 18:8) (3)
- 25 Joseph advised Pharaoh to appoint these to administer his grain storage plan (Genesis 41:34) (13)

Down

- 1 'Assyria's pride will be brought down and _____ sceptre will pass away' (Zechariah 10:11) (6)
- 2 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in _____ with God and men' (Luke 2:52) (6)
- 3 The descendants of Esau (Genesis 36:9) (8)
- 4 The components of the crown that Jesus was made to wear before his crucifixion (John 19:2) (6)
- 5 Colour of cloth which was to cover holy objects in the tabernacle when moving camp (Numbers 4:6–12) (4)
- 6 One of the gold articles plundered from the Midianites offered to the Lord by the Israelite army 'to make atonement' (Numbers 31:50) (6)
- 7 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set — — ' (Jeremiah 31:29) (2,4)
- 12 Ate (anag.) (3)
- 14 'We ourselves... groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our — as sons' (Romans 8:23) (8)
- 15 Abram's nephew (Genesis 14:12) (3)
- 16 Rupture (Job 30:14) (6)
- 17 'Yet to all who received him... he gave the right to — children of God' (John 1:12) (6)
- 18 'I... asked him the true meaning of all — . — he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things' (Daniel 7:16) (4,2)
- 20 Military units (Exodus 14:20) (6)
- 21 'Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to — her to public disgrace' (Matthew 1:19) (6)
- 23 Diva (anag.) (4)

Answers to April and May Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Cosmic. 4 Thomas. 8 In his. 9 Delaiah. 10 Falwell. 11 Water. 12 Recovered. 17 Sidon. 19 Radiant. 21 Centaur. 22 Broil. 23 Eleven. 24 Prison.

DOWN: 1 Cliffs. 2 Scholar. 3 Issue. 5 Holy war. 6 Moist. 7 Sphere. 9 Deliverer. 13 Candace. 14 Deacons. 15 Psyche. 16 Stolen. 18 Dance. 20 Debar.

Charity of the Month

June - Friends of the Earth

‘Together we can create a greener, fairer future.’



Friends of the Earth is a leading environmental organisation working to create a sustainable and fair future. They fight for climate justice through local task groups, community campaigns and legal action. Whether that's using the law to stop fossil fuel projects or pushing for greater rights to protect nature and the environment.

Their first action was to return thousands of empty bottles to the London HQ of Cadbury Schweppes, to promote re-use and better use of the planet's resources. This was in 1971 and set the tone for a peaceful and effective style of campaigning.

Their work encompasses climate and energy, nature and environment and system change.

July – Christian Aid

Christian Aid is a global movement of people, churches and local organisations working together to eradicate poverty. Everyone is equal in the sight of God, and yet, we live in a world where poverty still persists.



That truth has inspired people to stand together in solidarity with the most marginalised people around the world. Not just people professing a Christian faith, but people of all faiths and those of no faith, too.

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. Christian Aid seeks to eradicate extreme poverty by tackling its root causes, standing up for dignity, equality and justice and creating lasting change.

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£11 per issue. Please contact the Editors at
gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk**

Parish Diary for June

See inside front cover for regular Sunday service times

Sun	1 st	7th Sunday of Easter 8am Building Faith, Main Hall, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	2 nd	6pm Group visit to church, Parish Office closed
Tues	3 rd	<i>Martyrs of Uganda, 1885-7, 1977</i> , Parish Office closed
Wed	4 th	<i>Petroc, abbot, 6th cent</i> , Parish Office closed
Thurs	5 th	<i>Boniface (Wynfrith), bishop, martyr, 754</i> , 8pm Choir Practice, Parish Office closed
Fri	6 th	<i>Ini Kopuria, founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood, 1945</i> 10.30am Coffee Morning, Parish Office closed
Sun	8 th	Pentecost, 6pm Churches Together Service, Upminster Baptist Church
Mon	9 th	<i>Columba, abbot, missionary, 597; Ephrem, deacon, hymn writer, teacher of the faith, 373</i> , 8pm Church Building Improvements Project Committee Meeting on Zoom
Wed	11 th	<i>Barnabas the Apostle</i>
Thurs	12 th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	13 th	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sat	14 th	<i>Richard Baxter, puritan divine, 1691</i>
Sun	15 th	Trinity Sunday, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	16 th	<i>Richard, bishop, 1253, Joseph Butler, bishop, philosopher, 1752</i>
Tues	17 th	<i>Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, social reformer, 1913 and 1936</i> , 10.30am Adventurers' Leaders Meeting, Parish Office, 11am Wedding Rehearsal
Wed	18 th	<i>Bernard Mizeki, martyr, 1896</i>
Thurs	19 th	<i>Sundar Singh, sadhu (holy man), evangelist, teacher of the faith, 1929</i> , Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of the Holy Communion (Corpus Christi), Corpus Christ Mass at All Saints' Church, Cranham (<i>please see Porchtalk nearer the time</i>)
Fri	20 th	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sat	21 st	12pm Wedding, 4.30pm Church BBQ
Sun	22 nd	1st Sunday after Trinity 9.30am Parade Service Mass, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	23 rd	<i>Etheldreda, abbess, c678</i>
Tues	24 th	Birth of John the Baptist, 8pm CM&FG Meeting, Parish Office
Thurs	26 th	8pm Choir Practice

Fri	27 th	<i>Cyril, bishop, teacher of the faith, 444, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	28 th	<i>Irenaeus, bishop, teacher of the faith, c200</i>
Sun	29 th	Peter and Paul, Apostles, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	30 th	9.30am Footsteps in Church

Parish Diary for July

See inside front cover for regular Sunday service times

Tues	1 st	<i>Henry, John and Henry Venn, priests, evangelical divines, 1797, 1813, 1873, 1.20pm Group visit to church</i>
Wed	2 nd	1.20pm Group visit to church
Thurs	3 rd	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	4 th	<i>Thomas the Apostle, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sun	6 th	3rd Sunday after Trinity 8am Building Faith, Main Hall, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Thurs	10 th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	11 th	<i>Benedict, abbot, c550, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sun	13 th	4th Sunday after Trinity, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	14 th	<i>John Keble, priest, poet, 1866</i>
Tues	15 th	<i>Swithun, bishop, c862, Bonaventure, friar, bishop, teacher of the faith, 1274, 1.15PM Group visit to church</i>
Wed	16 th	<i>Osmund, bishop, 1099, 7.30pm PCC Meeting, Parish Office</i>
Thurs	17 th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	18 th	<i>Elizabeth Ferard, deaconess, founder of the Community of St Andrew, 1883, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	19 th	<i>Gregory, bishop, and his sister Macrina, deaconess, teachers of the faith, c394 and c379</i>
Sun	20 th	5th Sunday after Trinity, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Tues	22 nd	<i>Mary Magdalene</i>
Wed	23 rd	<i>Bridget, abbess, 1373</i>
Fri	25 th	<i>James the Apostle, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	26 th	<i>Anne and Joachim, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>
Sun	27 th	6th Sunday after Trinity, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Tues	29 th	<i>Mary, Martha and Lazarus, companions of Our Lord</i>
Wed	30 th	<i>William Wilberforce, social reformer, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson, anti-slavery campaigners, 1833, 1797 and 1846</i>
Thurs	31 st	<i>Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, 1556</i>

Details of dates, times and venues of all meetings and events need to be recorded in the Parish Diary (Parish Office 01708 220696)



Get in touch with

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