

PEWTALK

£1

March 2026



EAST & WEST TILBURY AND LINFORD PARISH MAGAZINE

Parish web site: www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk

BITs AnD PiECes

100 Club - Revd. Michèle drew the 100 Club on February 1st and the winner was John Blackbond. John and his family have supported the 100 Club from the beginning and I think John, Lindy and Simon have had wins and his late wife Gena on one occasion won the £50. John kindly returned the £10 as a donation. We are halfway through the 100 Club so if you join before July you have four chances of getting your £10 back and a chance of winning £50 in July. *Norman.*

A reminder that if you have a Children's Society collecting box, then June Schroeder would like it to have it for opening so that she can forward the money to the society. If you don't currently have a box but would like one for your loose change, just get in touch with her.

During March there are a couple of changes to our usual service pattern. On Sunday 15th - 'Mothering Sunday' the 10am service at St. Catherine's will be Holy Communion and there will be no afternoon service at St. Francis. The 29th March is a 5th Sunday and there will be a joint morning service with the Linford Methodist congregation at St. Catherine's at 10.30am.

The Thurrock foodbank are always in need or supplies of non-perishable food and their AdLent appeal which started on Ash Wednesday, continues throughout March. In each day of Lent there is a suggested foodstuff that you might like to donate and the complete schedule is published elsewhere in this magazine. Donations can be left at St. Catherine's on Sunday mornings (11am -

noon), or at St. Francis during the Wednesday morning drop-in (10.30am - noon) or on Thursday when the foodbank is in session (11am - 1pm).

Our Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the election of Churchwardens and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held on: **Sunday 10th May, 11.30am at St Catherine's.**

This year, in preparation for the annual meetings, the Electoral Roll will be revised rather than renewed.

At the annual meetings this year

Church Wardens, PCC members and Deanery Synod Representatives will be elected.

Sides People – sides people are appointed by the PCC and elected after the annual meeting.

More information and key dates will follow in the weekly newsletter.

Parish Report – if you lead a group or a particular activity as part of our Church Life please submit your reports as soon as possible. They can be emailed to Revd/ Michèle or Chris Ford.



Easter Lilies – If you would like to buy a Easter Lily, which will become part of the Easter flower arrangements, in memory of a loved one then please speak to Pam Painter or Kathy Bird. The Easter Lilies will £3.50 each.

A prayer for all those affected by sickness and ill-health

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Reflections from The Rectory



Our journey through Lent has begun and we continue journeying towards Easter Sunday which this year we celebrate on **Sunday 5th April**. And if you've ever wondered why Easter Sunday falls on a different date each year (*sometimes it comes at the end of March; other years it happens in April*) then please read on....

Easter is always on the first Sunday after the first full moon that follows the spring equinox. The spring equinox this year falls on Friday 20th March. The first full moon (Paschal Moon) after this is on Thursday 2nd April and therefore Easter Sunday on the 5th April.

So how did all this come about? And why do we use the Moon to calculate the date of Easter?

Easter marks the date of Jesus' death and resurrection, which, according to the Bible, happened around the Jewish Passover. Like the date of Passover, the date to mark the Resurrection was calculated using the lunar calendar, which is based on the cycles of the Moon. This threw a spanner in the works, as lunar cycles were calculated in various ways back in the Middle Ages. Moreover, different Christian groups disagreed on the date to celebrate the Resurrection. Some celebrated it on Passover itself, some the following Sunday. This made things quite complicated.

In 325 AD, Emperor Constantine called the Council of Nicaea, the first council of the Christian Church. As well as discussing other key beliefs, the Council wanted to settle the issue of the date of Easter. It was decided that all Christians should celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. That should have put the issue to bed once and for all. But different traditions kept calculating it in different ways, backing up their choice with different Gospels.

In England, for example, Irish monks forcefully argued that their way of doing it had started with John the Evangelist. But Roman monks claimed their calculations had begun with St Peter himself. One year, Northumbrian King Oswy – who followed the Irish tradition – celebrated Easter at different times from his Kentish wife, who followed the Roman tradition. So, in the year 664, a meeting of the clergy was organised in Whitby Abbey to sort the matter out. King Oswy had the final say and decided the Roman tradition should be adopted in the whole of England.

At the end of the 16th century, things changed *again*. Christians had, up to this point, followed the Julian calendar (named after its inventor Julius Caesar). In this system, there is a repeating pattern of three years of 365 days followed by a leap year of 366 days. However, this calendar overestimated the length of the tropical year, the time from one equinox to the next, which also affected - you guessed it - the date of Easter. To solve this, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII suggested knocking off a few days from the calendar and adjusting the frequency of leap years. That year, in all countries that went with the Pope's plan, 4th October was to be followed by 15th October. But, by that point, England was largely a Protestant country. The change suggested by the Catholic Pope proved to be quite controversial and wasn't implemented.

In the 18th Century, Parliament declared that enough was enough. It was decided that Wednesday 2nd September 1752 would be followed immediately by Thursday 14th September 1752, and from then on England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland would follow the same calendar as most of Europe.

Today, although the Gregorian calendar is the international civil calendar, it's still not used by all churches. The Orthodox Church (Eastern Church) follows the Julian calendar, so the Orthodox Easter normally falls a bit later (in 2026 it will be marked on Sunday 12th April.)

Talks of fixing the date of Easter continue every now and then but, for the foreseeable future, it will remain a movable feast. So, if you always want to know when Easter Sunday is going to bethe easiest thing to do is make sure you get a copy of Pewtalk because we will know the date and will warmly welcome you to all of the lovely services and events we hold during Lent, Holy Week and the Easter weekend. **This March and April** join us for:

Lent Lunch at St Catherine's – 12noon Sunday 1st & 22nd March

Lent Lunch at St Francis – 12noon on Saturday 7th March

Lent Supper at St Francis – 5.30pm on Saturday 28th March

Lent Course Bible Study at St Francis – Mondays at 10.30am on 23rd February; 9th, 16th & 30th March

In Holy Week:

Maudy Thursday 2nd April 6pm at St Francis: *we gather at St Francis for a 'bring and share Agape Meal with Holy Communion'. As we sit and eat we reflect on the time that Jesus did the same thing with his friends the disciples for the very last time.*

Good Friday 3rd April 2pm at St Catherine's: *we come to a time of quiet reflection and the Last Hour at the Cross Service. Through music, hymns, bible readings, poetry and times of silence we remember the sacrifice Christ made for us all.*

Easter Saturday 4th April 2-3.30pm at St Catherine's: *come along for our 'Come and make an Easter Garden' family event with lots of crafts and activities focusing on the story of Holy Week and Easter. The session is free but you will need to book a place and children must be accompanied by an adult.*

Easter Sunday 5th April 10am at St Catherine's: *on Easter Sunday we gather as a Church family to rejoice in the resurrected Lord and His triumph of love over death. Join us for our Easter Sunday All-age Holy Communion.*

I hope that you will be able to join us and take part in some of these lovely services and activities. However you plan to celebrate Easter and the new life that it symbolises I wish you and your families' happy days in warm sunshine and with every blessing.

Stay safe and keep well,

Revd Michèle.

Lent Lunches & our Lent Charity Collection

Everyone is very welcome to come and share food and fellowship.

At the lunchtime meals it will be soup and a roll. At the Lent Supper we will be having Jacket potatoes. The meals are free but all donations will be going towards '**The Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal**' which is raising funds for Anglican Development Services of Mt Kenya East (ADSMKE) to support their work in response to climate change and in environmental conservation across our five linked partner dioceses in Kenya. Communities across Mt Kenya East are facing the harsh realities of the climate crisis. Years of recurring drought have devastated harvests, depleted natural resources and pushed families into increased hardship. In response to these challenges, ADSMKE is leading inspiring, community-driven work to restore the environment and strengthen livelihoods.

Funds raised through the Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal will enable ADSMKE to expand vital climate and conservation projects that: Build community resilience to climate change; improve biodiversity and restore damaged ecosystems; Enhance food security through sustainable agriculture; Create economic opportunities rooted in environmental stewardship and Equip future generations to care for God's creation. Projects include: Tree planting and Tree nurturing; investing in Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR); investing in Agroforestry Systems and Farming God's Way.

Share the Easter story – with an Egg

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

There are six types of eggs to choose from. Each Real Easter Egg comes with an Easter story in the box, the stories range from simple guides to 24-page activity book versions. So, buy a 2026 edition Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

The 2026 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarkets, but the full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or by calling 01925 877004.

Record number of young adults join ministry experience year

A record number of young adults have joined a year-long placement scheme to experience ministry in the Church of England.

The Ministry Experience Scheme (MES) intake this year is 121, the largest the scheme has had since it was founded more than a decade ago. This year's total means that more than 1,000 young adults, including this year's intake, have been part of the Scheme since it was set up in 2013.

The January meeting of the P.C.C.

The P.C.C. met at St. Francis on 26th January with apologies from Pat Webb.

After opening prayer the minutes of the November meeting were approved.

The Churchwardens reported on the following significant matters:-

1. The electrical works at St. Catherine's had been completed and the relevant safety certificate issued. However a completely different issue has been identified in that, when the 'smart' meter was installed, it appears to have been set up with the wrong tariff. We are in contact with Ecotricity but progress is slow.
2. The P.C.C. had received 3 quotes for the tree surgery needed in the churchyard and agreed to ask Eastside Tree Care to do the work.
3. The fire extinguishers at both churches have been inspected and re-certified with two being replaced as they were now out of date.
4. We have received our architect's Quinquennial report on the condition of St. Catherine's and the inspection of St. Francis will be made on 5th March.

Norman King presented his Treasurer's report and explained that in 2025 our income exceeded expenditure and the church's balances were in a good state. However, the P.C.C. needed to be aware that the Quinquennial inspection highlights very significant (and therefore expensive) repairs needed in the short to medium term.

There were no safeguarding issues or wider church matters to report.

In the review of Church life since the November meeting the Christmas activities and services were discussed and met with general approval. It was particularly pleasing to note that Revd. Michèle had been involved in several sessions with the Primary School and these had been well received.

Looking forward, dates for future events were set including for Lent and Easter, the open afternoons and joint services with the Linford Methodist congregation.

Revd. Michèle outlined the arrangements that were needed for the Annual meeting in May and reminded everyone that annual reports for January to December 2025 should be with her and / or Chris Ford a.s.a.p. so that the complete report can be prepared in good time.

The next meetings were set for 2nd March and 13th April.

The meeting closed with the grace.

Our love affair with our phones

It was 150 years ago this month, on 10th March 1876, that the world's first telephone call was made. Alexander Graham Bell called his assistant and said: "Mr Watson, come here. I want you."

That phone call was the beginning of a worldwide addiction to phones. Phones spread quickly, constantly improved, and after more than 100 years of landlines, mobile phones arrived.

The first was introduced by Motorola in 1983 in the USA. The Motorola DynaTAC 8000X weighed nearly two pounds and cost around \$3,995.



The first smartphone, the IBM Simon Personal Communicator, was released in 1994, combining phone calls with PDA features like email, fax, and a calendar on a touchscreen. It was so expensive it sold only about 50,000.

But by the late 90s, the BlackBerry had become a top favourite, with its popular email and messaging services beloved by Barack Obama, among many others.

Then in 2007, Apple released the first iPhone, informally known as the iPhone 2G, with an advanced multi-touch interface and app ecosystem.

Fast forward nearly 20 years, and there are now about **7.5 billion** active smartphones in the world. The total number of all connections (SIMs/devices) now even exceeds the human population of about 8.3 billion.

Granny retired? You've got to be kidding....

The idea that grandmothers retire into an unburdened world of gardening and tea-drinking, golf and knitting is no more than a pleasant fantasy these days.

Instead, nearly 63% of grandparents provide some sort of childcare to their under-16-year-old grandchildren. That amounts to around seven million older people, aged mostly between 55 - 74.

As many as one in three is doing the school run. Nearly one in five is spending more than 10 hours a week giving other childcare.

America has a nickname name for them: the 'granny nannies.'

Granny nannies do it for good reason: to enable their own children to be able to work longer hours. But granny nannies not only care for their grandchildren, they may also be providing comfort for elderly relatives of their own – and hold down a part-time job at the same time.



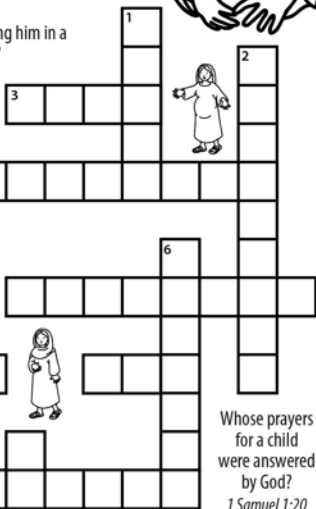
Mouse Makes

The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.



Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

*Exodus 2:1-3
and 6:20*



Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?
Genesis 17:19



Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?
1 Samuel 1:20

Across

3. **Obed's** mother
Matthew 1:5
4. **John's** mother
Luke 1:57-60
7. **Reuben's** mother
Genesis 29:32
8. **Joseph's** mother
Genesis 30:22-24
9. **Jesus' mother**
Acts 1:14

Down

1. **Boaz's** mother
Matthew 1:5
2. **Solomon's** mother
1 Kings 1:11
4. **Timothy's** mother
2 Timothy 1:5
5. **Ishmael's** mother
Genesis 16:15
6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother
Genesis 25:21-26



Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?
Genesis 4:1-2



PARISH DIARY FOR MARCH

All services and events may be changed in the light of any new developments.

Please see our weekly newsletter for the latest Information. It can be found on our

Website: www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk

1 Mar	2nd Sunday of Lent Holy communion service at St. Catherine's Lent lunch at St. Catherine's	10.00am 12noon
2 Mar	P.C.C. Meeting at St. Francis	2.00pm
4 Mar	Mid week Communion at St. Francis <i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>	10.00am 10.30am-noon
5 Mar	Foodbank at St. Francis Linford Womens' Institute meet at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm 2.00-4.00pm
7 Mar	Lent lunch at St. Francis	12noon
8 Mar	3rd Sunday of Lent Holy Communion at St. Catherine's	10.00am
9 Mar	Lent Bible Study and Fellowship Group at St. Francis	10.30am-noon
11 Mar	Morning Prayer at St. Francis <i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i> Clergy Chapter Meeting at St Francis	10.00am 10.30am-noon 7.30pm
12 Mar	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
15 Mar	'Mothering Sunday' Holy Communion service at St. Catherine's	10.00am
16 Mar	Lent Bible Study and Fellowship Group at St. Francis	10.30am-noon
18 Mar	Morning Prayer and at St. Francis <i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i> Funeral Service followed by burial at St Catherine's.	10.00am 10.30am-noon 11.30am
19 Mar	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
22 Mar	5th Sunday of Lent Holy communion service at St. Catherine's Lent lunch at St. Catherine's	10.00am 12noon
25 Mar	Morning Prayer at St. Francis <i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>	10.00am 10.30am-noon
26 Mar	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
28 Mar	Lent Supper at St. Francis	5.30pm
29 Mar	Palm Sunday Joint service with the Linford Methodists at St. Catherine's Service of Holy Baptism at St. Catherine's	10.30am 2pm
30 Mar	Lent Bible Study and Fellowship Group at St. Francis	10.30am-noon

'Life Events' during February

Baptism

8th February Penelope Jane Jones

Weddings

None

Funeral

None

Committal of Ashes

Supporting our Parish Finances

There are a number of ways of making financial donations to help Parish Finances. These include the cash collection at services and by using the weekly envelope scheme . There are now more modern methods which include by Bank Transfer (BACS) and by digital donations at Church events and services or by accessing our fundraising site using the 'QR' code in this magazine (below). Perhaps less known methods are:-

1. 'easyfundraising'

By shopping online at many of the large retailers including the likes of Argos, Marks and Spencer, Tesco and John Lewis etc. If you are making an online purchase it is worth checking on the 'easyfundraising' website which can be accessed easily from our website. Although not being all that computer literate I have managed to arrange a donation for St. Catherine's using this method. If you are booking a holiday or using a comparison website to buy an insurance policy it is worth checking to see if they do operate with easy fundraising as significant donations are available.

2. Shopping at East Tilbury Coop

For a few years St. Catherine's has benefited from shoppers using their Community Card in the store..

East Tilbury Coop is no longer part of Chelmsford Star Co-operative and the current Cards are no longer recognised..

The East Tilbury store is now part of the larger Central England Co-operative and I have joined the Central Coop for £1 and I am waiting for guidance re. helping the Community in East Tilbury.

Norman



If you would like to support the work of the parish and the churches of St. Catherine and St. Francis, this 'QR' code will take you to our 'Give A Little' donation page.

The Priest in charge

REVD. MICHÈLE MARSHALL

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The Usual Service Pattern

- ◆ 1st, 2nd & 4th Sunday's, 10am at St. Catherine's, Holy Communion
- ◆ 3rd Sunday's, 10am at St. Catherine's, Family Service and at 3.30pm at St. Francis, a service of Café style Holy Communion.
- ◆ 5th Sundays a joint service with the Linford Methodist congregation

Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. at St. Francis 1st of the month Holy Communion,
other Wednesdays, Morning Prayer

For Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals please contact Revd. Michèle Marshall

Our Churchwardens

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St. Francis Centre

The centre is available for hire at very reasonable rates. To discuss availability please contact Sheila King at:-

sheila.king9987@gmail.com

Copy Dates for Pewtalk

22nd March 2026

22nd April 2026

22nd May 2026