



HOBNOB

Online

The parish magazine for
St. Peter and St. Paul Church, Horndon-on-the-Hill
St. Giles and All Saints Church, Orsett
St. Mary the Virgin Church, Bulphan

February 2026

SERVICES – February 2026

	HORNDON	ORSETT	BULPHAN
Sunday 1st February <i>Candlemass</i>			10am All Together Holy Communion Service
Monday 2 nd			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 3 rd	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Thursday 5 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 6 th		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	
Saturday 7 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments	4pm Forest Church	
Sunday 8th February <i>2nd Sunday before lent</i>	8.45am BCP Holy Communion Service 10am Family Service		
Monday 9 th			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 10 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
	9pm Holy Communion Service at the Whitecroft		
Thursday 12 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 13 th		No Oasis Café or Edward Bear	
Saturday 14 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 15th February <i>Next Sunday before lent</i>	4pm Refresh Service	8.45am CW Holy Communion Service 10am Holy Communion Service	
Monday 16 th			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 17 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Wednesday 18 th			7.30pm Ash Wednesday Service
Thursday 19 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 20 th		No Oasis Café or Edward Bear	
Saturday 21 st	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 22nd February <i>1st Sunday of Lent</i>			8.45am CW Holy Communion Service 10am Family Communion Service
Monday 23 rd			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 24 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
	12noon Holy Communion Service		
Thursday 26 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 27 th		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	
Saturday 28 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 1st March <i>2nd Sunday of Lent</i>	10am All Together Holy Communion Service		
Monday 2 nd			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 3 rd	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Thursday 5 th			10am Holy Communion Service
Friday 6 th		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	
	12noon World Day of Prayer Service at Wellcome Church, Orsett Churches Centre		
Saturday 7 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 8th March <i>3rd Sunday of lent</i>		8.45am CW Holy Communion Service 10am Family Service	

Open Church means that the Church is open for private prayer, refreshments are available at all sessions except Thursdays at Bulphan.

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THE PARISH OF HORNDON, ORSETT AND BULPHAN

Website: www.hobnob.org.uk

Facebook: @HOBNOBchurches

RECTOR

VACANCY

PTO*

Rev Max Blake

max@hobnob.org.uk

07716 969772

*(permission to officiate)

PARISH CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Churchwardens	Alastair Macrae	Beverley Macrae	Christine Mortimer
	David Mortimer	Sonia Ward	Frank Woollard
Treasurer	Lynn Bennett		
Secretary	Lynda Robertson		
Parish Administrator	Lynda Robertson		
Deanery Synod Reps	Karen Collier	Alastair Macrae	Janet Wilkins
	Frank Woollard		
Lay Representatives	Jane Barry	Sandra Billinger	Samantha Pankhurst

CHURCH OFFICERS AND CONTACT DETAILS

St Peter & St Paul Horndon-on-the-Hill

Churchwardens	Beverley Macrae	b.macrae@hobnob.org.uk	01375 673327
	Sonia Ward	sonia51anne@yahoo.co.uk	01375 674212
Sacristans	Jane Barry	Beverley Macrae	Judy Rood
Vergers	Robin Clark	Felicity Tarbard	Sonia Ward

St Giles & All Saints Orsett

Churchwardens	Christine Mortimer	c.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk	01375 641485
	David Mortimer	d.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk	01375 641485
Sacristan	Janet Wilkins		
Vergers	Jo Metcalf	Christine Mortimer	Libby Seggons
Tower Captain	Judith Church		01375 891556
Mothers' Union contact	Lucy Bubb		07970 728673
Edward Bear Toddler Group	Karen Collier		01375 370441
Oasis Café	Sandra Billinger		01375 891040
Churches Centre Bookings	Gary Jones	bookings@orsettchurches.co.uk	

St Mary-the-Virgin Bulphan

Churchwardens	Alastair Macrae	Alastairmacrae51@gmail.com	01375 673327
	Frank Woollard	f.woollard@hobnob.org.uk	01375 891034
Vergers	Frank Woollard		
Parish Room Bookings	Lynda Robertson		07974 803471

Parish Administrator

Lynda Robertson	l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk	07974 803471
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Parish Baptism Co-Ordinator

Christine Mortimer	c.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk	01375 641485
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Musicians

Jane Barry	07552 199697
Janet McCheyne	07752 836902

Parish Magazine (HOBNOB)

Submit articles to magazine@hobnob.org.uk

Please note to guarantee inclusion in the current month, articles must be submitted by the 21st of the preceding month.

WEDDINGS

To arrange Weddings, please contact Lynda Robertson:
l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk 07974 803471



THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISM

28 Dec

Polly Nightingill

(H)



Wedding Enquiries

If you would like to enquire about booking a wedding at:
Horndon, Orsett or Bulphan churches,
please contact: Lynda Robertson: 07974 803471
l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk



Baptism Enquiries

To arrange a baptism, you will need to attend a Baptism Preparation Meeting, where we will discuss the meaning of Baptism, the responsibilities of parents and Godparents, go through the Baptism service and give you the opportunity to ask questions. At the end of the meeting, we can check the diary, and you will be able to book your Baptism.

Forthcoming Baptism Preparation Dates:

Monday 9th February	7.30pm at	Orsett Church
Saturday 14th March	12 noon at	Horndon Church
Monday 13th April	7.30pm at	Orsett Church
Saturday 9th May	CANCELLED	
Monday 8th June	7.30pm at	Orsett Church
Saturday 11th July	12 noon at	Horndon Church

For more information, please contact:
Christine Mortimer: 01375 641485
c.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk

FEBRUARY COVER PICTURE
Pound Lane, Orsett
from Rowley Road looking north

ORSETT CHURCHWARDENS REPORT



A Happy New Year to one and all.

Each New Year brings opportunities for us to rethink our lives and consider what we can change for the good. This year has begun with major changes for two of our church families.



We have been asked many things since becoming churchwardens but I think the request we received at the end of December was one we were definitely not expecting and one which may well be a first for St Giles. Could we open the church on New Year's Eve for a very special event? Not a problem as we were going anyway. At about 4 pm we welcomed our guests, Taylor & Andrew, and after a short chat made ourselves scarce. Andrew knew how much St Giles meant to Taylor, so he wanted to be in the church when he asked her to marry him. Thankfully she agreed, with many tears and much laughter. Our congratulations to them both and we look forward to a wedding in the near future.

Not all changes bring laughter; some bring a mixture of joy and sadness. It is with this sadness that we learned the Oderinlo family are leaving our congregation to attend a church near to where they live in Thundersley. Although this is sad for us, it will bring joy for Joel, Samuel and Deborah as the church has a thriving youth group. We take this opportunity to thank them for their fellowship and wish all the family the best for the future.

We are also looking at changes inside the church building. If you are on our database you will have received an invitation to complete a questionnaire about such potential changes. We are in the process of printing and delivering these to all households in the parish. These will of course take time to reach everyone and we ask for your patience until you receive your copy. A copy of the draft plans can be found both in and outside each of the churches and we would ask that, if you feel able, you complete the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible. The returns will assist us with a grant application from the National Lottery.

Thanking you in advance
Christine and David Mortimer

PARISH OF
HORNDON, ORSETT AND BULPHAN

*Please come along and enjoy
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LAST SITTING 2PM

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The churches in this Parish are committed to
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The Parish Safeguarding Representative is
Janet McCheyne, who can be contacted on:
07752 836902

or
janetmcc101@gmail.com

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be
contacted on:
01245 294444

or
safeguarding@chelmsford.anglican.org

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Churchwarden's Report - St. Peter and Paul Horndon on the Hill

At our 10am Sunday service, we experienced what can only be described as a **very British emergency**: the toilet door staged a coup.

One moment, everything was peaceful. The next, the notoriously moody toilet handle decided it had had enough of its duties and trapped an unsuspecting worshipper inside. Mild panic fluttered throughout the building.

Alastair leapt into action, armed with the most fearsome tool available from the vestry: a butter knife. Sadly, the door remained unmoved.

Enter Colin from the Gardening Team, clutching Actual Tools. He dismantled the barrel; the door remained firmly shut.

Finally, a congregation member dashed home, returned with the *right* tools, and after some determined fiddling and one heroic shove, the captive was freed — slightly flustered but otherwise unharmed.

And the moral of this tale? Even when the situation looks unsurmountable, a little teamwork can get things moving again.

Our Interregnum has certainly brought its share of challenges and opportunities — depending on how you look at it — and it's highlighted just how much teamwork keeps everything running smoothly. Each month we find ourselves offering many well-deserved thank-yous, and this time we want to acknowledge Peter Woodard.

After the great toilet-door-handle incident, Peter kindly headed over to Basildon on a Sunday lunchtime to buy a replacement and then fitted it in time for the 4pm Refresh Service. A simple act, but a hugely appreciated one.

And the final thankyou is to Rev Max who has agreed to attend Tuesday's Open Church. Not only is he there to talk about spiritual matters, but he also offers a kindly ear to anyone who needs a moment of support or conversation.

God Bless

Bev Macrae

Bulphan Churchwarden's Report



Services continue at St Marys without a rector and for that we must thank Max and the help we have received from Deanery clergy.

Alastair and I are working well and learning all the various jobs that were previously silently carried out by Ron Porter.

We were given nine dressed miniature Christmas trees by Gavin Knowles which were put on the church window sills and were given out after the two Christmas services, some to people Gavin had specified. With the help of Alastair and some of the pupils from Castleton School the Christmas Tree together with all decorations was removed on 7th January.

During the Christmas period we tried our best to leave the church open every day for most of the day, with the decorated Christmas tree, small trees in window bays and illuminated Nativity, it seemed a shame to not make it accessible.

Generally, a busy period.

Frank & Alastair



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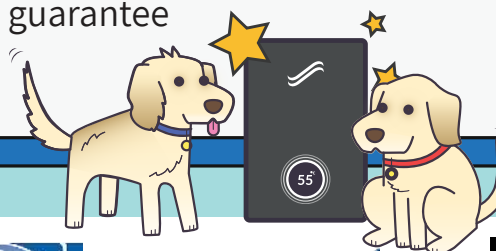
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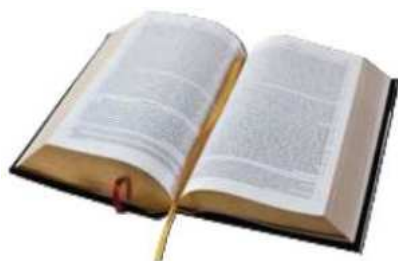
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PRAYER DIARY

Some thoughts to include in your daily prayers

February 1 st	For St Luke's Hospice & all carers
February 2 nd	For Candlemas
February 3 rd	For humanitarian organisations here and abroad
February 4 th	For those living in Baker Street in Orsett
February 5 th	For those who mourn
February 6 th	For those living in The Spinney in Orsett
February 7 th	For those living in South Hill Crescent in Horndon
February 8 th	For those living in Stanford Road in Orsett
February 9 th	For those living in Church Lane in Bulphan
February 10 th	For those living in Mill Lane in Horndon
February 11 th	For our clergy in this Deanery
February 12 th	For members of our congregations who live in Grays
February 13 th	For those living in Prince Charles Avenue in Orsett
February 14 th	For our Orthodox brothers and sisters on the Feast of SS Cyril & Methodius
February 15 th	For those living in Albert Road in Bulphan
February 16 th	For physicians and all health care professionals
February 17 th	For those living in Doesgate Lane in Bulphan
February 18 th	For Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent
February 19 th	For those living in the High Road in Horndon
February 20 th	For those living in Farm Road in Orsett Heath
February 21 st	For those living in Penn Close in Orsett
February 22 nd	For those living in Orsett Road in Horndon
February 23 rd	For those living in Church Road in Bulphan
February 24 th	For those living in The Green in Orsett
February 25 th	For those living in Victoria Road in Horndon
February 26 th	For our twin dioceses in Romania, Sweden, Kenya and Trinidad & Tobago
February 27 th	For the work of Chelmsford Cathedral
February 28 th	For those living in Gordon Road in Horndon

*"To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
and Eternity in an hour"*

William Blake



COMMUNITY INFORMATION FOR HORNDON - ORSETT - BULPHAN

POLICE at Grays **101 or 999**

Community Officer: PC Javier Rodriguez-Perez
email: thurrockcommunitypolicingteam@essex.police.uk

DOCTORS

Horndon on the Hill		01375 642362
Orsett & Bulphan	Orsett Surgery	01375 892082
Bulphan	West Horndon Surgery	01708 852318
	Ockendon Surgery	01277 811770

FORUMS

Horndon on the Hill	Horndonchair@thurrockforums.org
Orsett	apeaford@icloud.com
Bulphan	Bulphaninfo@thurrockforums.org

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Mr David Day	david.day@thurrock.gov.uk	07355 924361
Mr Barry Johnson	BJohnson@thurrock.gov.uk	07831 609714

LOCAL MP

Mr James McMurdock	james.mcmurdock.mp@parliament.uk
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA	

SCHOOLS

Horndon C of E Primary	Headteacher: Mrs D Bradley	01375 673260
Orsett C of E Primary	Head of school: Mr J Dickson	01375 891383
Bulphan C of E Academy	Head of school: Mr J Dickson	01375 891220

Advertising in the HOBNOB

Policy

If you would like advertise in the HOBNOB, we offer space to businesses, contractors and organisations within a 15 mile radius of the parish, excluding the area South of the Thames. It is expected that advertisers uphold ethical working practices and in sympathy with the ethos of the church. Ultimately the decision on placing adverts rests with the PCC.

Please send details of your request to advertise to magazine@hobnob.org.uk



Our annual advertising rates are £50 for a quarter page and £75 for a half page. If the advert is placed part way through the year a pro rata invoice will be issued.



HORNDON-ON-THE-HILL METHODIST CHURCH

4, High Road. Horndon-on-the-Hill
Minister: Reverend Fiona Smith
Senior Steward: Mr Graham Hodgson
<https://www.southessexmethodist.org.uk/>

All are welcome to our services and other activities.

Services February 2026

Sunday 10:30am Worship in the Chapel unless stated otherwise

1 st February	Ms Colleen Weedon	
8 th February	Revd Fiona Smith	Holy Communion
15 th February	Local Arrangement	
22 nd February	Mr Benjamin Harry	

Coffee mornings and lunch

All are welcome to our weekly Community Cuppa and Chat in the Methodist Church Hall on Thursdays between 10:00 – 12:00 noon for the coffee morning with drinks, savouries and biscuits and a soup and a roll between 12:00 noon - 13:00.

Lent e mail course

Maureen McPherson is running an email Lent course called **Walking with Jesus to the Cross**. It's a five-week course with Prayer, scripture, reflection, Benediction and some questions. If you are interested in receiving these please e mail Maureen at mail@south-fields.com

Items for Sale

To improve the use of our space at the Hall we are planning on disposing of some longstanding items. We feel these are of some value and will consider reasonable offers. At present we have:

A 6'x 3' snooker / pool table solid slate bed with support frame. Cushion rubbers, baize and pockets need renewal.

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- A social worker visits on the 2nd & 4th Friday of the month from 2-4pm for adult care and support drop-in sessions
- Regular visits from the Community Police

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*We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of
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Beverley on 01375 671474**

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Zion Hall Mission, Bulphan

Church Road, Bulphan

www.zhm100.wix.com/zionhallmission



We enjoy meeting every Sunday evening for worship and are very pleased to see newcomers. We extend a warm welcome to all. The Sunday services for February are:

1 st February	6:30 pm	Lee Woodward
8 th February	6:30 pm	Peter Crosby
15 th February	6:30 pm	Rev Pholani Ncube
22 nd February	6:30 pm	Rev Fiona Smith

**75th Anniversary
Year**

If you live locally and would like to come along to a service but need transport, or for any other information on our Church or our services please contact the Secretary: Ian Blackburn at the email above or on 07880 235140

This is the third in a short series of articles on the history of the Mission between 1938 – 51 explaining the background to our 75th Anniversary which we held last December. In the previous articles we saw how enthusiasm in the Mission had waned but had been reinvigorated midway through the Second World War and by 1945 members looked with expectation to the future. It was to be a long wait.

Decline and Revival: A history **Part 3 - 1945 to 1948**

With the war in Europe ended, ideas for erecting a temporary structure resurfaced after hearing that the Government had a scheme for selling temporary structures. It transpired though that a considerable waiting list had developed for temporary buildings and costs were high.

It was decided to form a sub committee of four members to steer investigation into a new building. An early idea was a self-build by volunteers with a Mr Hull to provide help as a professional. In July 1945 a letter was sent to the War Damage Commission (set up by the Government under the War Damage Act 1941 to pay compensation for War damage), to find out the '*present position and prospects*'.

Eventually perceiving that the process may become rather bureaucratic, a proposal was made that the Mission ask the Baptist Union to see if they would take up the claim on the Mission's behalf. Mr Tebbit (the Baptist Union General Superintendent for the Eastern Area) and the Rev Keed (Minister at Brentwood Baptist church) were consulted regarding the process for obtaining War damage compensation and visited Bulphan. The Baptist Union though were finding it extremely difficult to get anything done for their own churches and they therefore thought '*that it would be from 2 -5 years before the building would be restored*'

Very helpfully they offered a second-hand hut for £50 plus dismantling and transport costs. The Mission was very interested as it was thought the hut could be used as a Sunday School room after the main Hall had been erected. The secretary was asked to write to the local Council about permissions and conditions necessary to erect the hut to the rear of the former chapel site.

Throughout these years the Mission continued with a number of social events including a visit to Hampton Court, and regular musical services. There was considerable musical talent at the Mission led by the very talented Claude Banks from Horndon who played piano and drums and provided the sheet music. More remarkably he took as much as he could by bike with the

drum kit coming by taxi! Others in the band were Bob Miller and Bill Challis – violins and a Mr Murray also from Horndon

Support from the wider community was also given, for example, members of the Orsett Congregational church (represented by the Rev Fountain) performed two acting sketches raising the very significant amount of £20 and on another occasion £5 from a concert they held.

It is evident from the 1945 AGM that the Mission was growing in terms of numbers with a membership of 34. Attendance at services was about 25. By the 1946 AGM the Mission had grown further and it was noted that the congregation at services sometimes numbered 30 to 40 with an implied membership of 50 plus.

In March 1946 friends of Orsett Congregational Church again generously gave the proceeds from the play '*Mystery at Greenfingers*' to the building fund. Social events continued with the New Year's party, a coach outing and other 'socials' becoming regular features. As further evidence of the community pulling together a donation was received from the village Youth Club.

The forms from the War Damage Commission had finally arrived in December 1945 and it is difficult to ascertain why progress was slow through 1946, but it was agreed at the September meeting to approach an architect, Mr Spencer of Upminster, to draw up plans for a new building. It was decided that it should be built to the rear of where the former church Hall had been allowing for future development in front. However, by December Mr Spencer had yet to visit the site.

Winter days were beginning to bite. It was decided to have a rota of five volunteers to light up the stove early to make the Village Hall warmer for services. This reflects the precursor to the historically harsh winter of Jan – Mar 1947. Notwithstanding this the New Year's party put on by the two brothers Gurnett proved to be a success.

By March 1947 discussions had finally taken place with the architect about plans for the new church building. All the details had been discussed including the interior and even the gates, notice board and lavatory. It appears the brief had been to almost replicate the earlier building perhaps on the thinking that the War Damage Commission would only provide compensation for a 'like for like' building. However, the minutes first note the many difficulties faced by the building industry in the post war period. Owing to the national timber shortage the building would have to have plastered walls instead of matchboard lining and steel sash windows. Perhaps perceiving increasing costs and providing some vision to improve upon the old arrangements, the architect advised that he thought it wise to use some of the chapel's own money in addition to the compensation. The forms from the War Damage Commission were to be completed as soon as possible and Mr Spencer was to continue with the drawing up of plans.

By June Mr Spencer had submitted plans to the Mission for approval and with a few adjustments a planning application was made. By September the Council had still not made a decision regarding the planning application. The architect attributed this to the August vacation and thought that after the holiday season they would hear from them!

At the September 1947 AGM the chairman said he hoped (presumably a hope from 1945) that by this time he would have seen the new building. However, even by December 1947 there was still no response from the Council...

Finally, by March 1948 - good news! the Mission learned that planning permission had been granted for a new building at last.... However, close on its heels came the bad news! The architect reported that there was little immediate hope of getting a Building Licence!

..... to be continued



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Water Assisted Disabled Exercise & Rehabilitation Scheme
www.waders.org.uk

Exercise in water for people with mobility difficulties
(Supervised by a qualified Aquatic Physiotherapist)

Tuesday:
Laindon Pool
SwimMania, Stannetts,
Laindon North Trading Estate,
Basildon, S15 6DN
7.30pm-8.10pm
8.20pm-9.00pm

Tuesday:
Impulse Leisure Blackshots
Teaching Pool
Grays RM16 2JU
8.00pm – 9.00pm

Friday:
Corringham Leisure Centre
Swimming Pool
Corringham SS17 7NB
11.15am-12.10pm
12.20pm-13.15pm

Please contact a Committee Member before attending your first session
so you know what to expect.

Sharon: 07792 827638 for Laindon
Kay-Anne: 07899 745020 for Corringham
Dawn: 01375 461885 for Blackshots
Email: ask-waders@hotmail.com



The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan

Edward Bear Toddler Group

Edward Bear welcomes his little friends and
their accompanying adults in the
Orsett Churches' Centre Chapel

There is no charge for this Toddler Group

Every Friday during term time
9.30 am – 11.00 am

For further details
please contact:
KAREN COLLIER
on:
01375 370441



In the
Orsett Churches' Centre

Every Friday during term time
9.00-11.30am

Everyone is welcome

*The perfect place to go after
the school run!*

The dates of Edward Bear and Oasis Cafe are on our website www.hobnob.org.uk, on the 'What's on' page

Knowing and sharing the love of Jesus in the Church and community

MOTHERS' UNION



Celebrating 150 Years of Mothers' Union: Join Us, Join In – Lighting the Way for Generations to Come

2026 marks 150 years since Mothers' Union was founded in the small parish church of Old Alresford, Hampshire, by Mary Sumner - a home-educated young vicar's wife with a powerful vision. She dreamed of women, regardless of class or status, coming together in faith to support one another and strengthen family life within the church.

From that small flame of an idea, a global movement was born. Today, 150 years later, Mothers' Union has grown to around 4 million members in 84 countries, working to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities around the world. At the heart of all we do is our belief that faith and compassion can transform lives.

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."
(Matthew 5:16)

And shine a light is what our members do. Whether someone finds themselves unexpectedly in the hospital, a family is grappling with a parent going to prison, or a baby is born prematurely, Mothers' Union members are there offering care, support, and love without judgment. We speak out against injustice, create safe spaces for conversation, and run parenting support groups - all helping to build stronger, more resilient communities.

All of our work is guided by our three core pillars of transformation: Ending Violence – promoting peace and safety, Ending Injustice – advancing gender justice and Ending Poverty – fostering self-reliance and resilience

Our global programmes include literacy and savings groups, parenting and resilience training, and domestic abuse awareness campaigns. These initiatives are rooted in local communities - we listen first, then respond with practical, faith-led action. Every day, globally, our members carry out thousands of quiet acts of service that bring hope and healing.

Mothers' Union today reflects the diversity of the modern world. We are a movement that continues to evolve, welcoming people of all backgrounds and identities. While we are a women-led movement, men are welcome to join! 150 years of courage, care, and community, and we're just getting started – so why not join us?

**For more information about how you can join us or to learn more about the work of Mothers' Union, contact
Lucy Bubb on 07970 728673 or email lucy.bubb@mothersunion.org**

Chelmsford Diocese Mothers' Union (CDMU):



There's lots of exciting news this month – and not least, that I have joined the staff of the central Mothers' Union charity as the Faith and Church Engagement Manager! Part of my role is to develop faith resources for churches and members. This year, Mary Sumner Day falls on a Sunday – Sunday 9 August – and we're hoping that as many churches as possible will celebrate the life of Mary Sumner as founder of Mothers' Union. There was a Mothers' Union branch in Orsett for over 100 years so it would be wonderful to have that focus.

Throughout the year, our Diocesan President Maxine will be doing a sponsored 150th Midday Prayer Challenge, visiting a different historic location in the diocese. Maxine's first stop was Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge on 9th January. There will be a special MU fundraising page available soon to sponsor Maxine.

Something else for your diary is our Anniversary Challenge Tea Party on 22nd August at the Chapter House (near Chelmsford Cathedral) as part of our diocesan fundraising challenge for the 150th fund. There will be 3 bookable slots (10.30-12, 12.30-2 and 2.30-4). Tickets are being charged at £10 per adult and £5 per child and numbers for each session are limited. Why not come along? Please let me know if you would like to a ticket or two. .

Did you know that MU prayers are said at midday, each day, on Facebook? www.facebook.com/MothersUnion I will be leading live from the Mary Sumner House chapel on Tuesday 3rd February, and on Saturday 21st February

Celebrating 150 years of Mothers' Union



Don't forget to get your tickets for the 150th Celebratory Service on 10 June 2026 at St Paul's Cathedral with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Annual Gathering on 11 June 2026 at The Emmanuel Centre (next to Mary Sumner House, London)! They are both going to be wonderful occasions! Tickets are available online: <https://www.mothersunion.org/event/150/>

Easter Cards and so much more



The Easter and Spring/Summer gift guide is now available – and there are some fantastic things for sale, from Easter cards to Eco gifts for friends, family and pets!

Why don't you have a look and see what's available: <https://mueshop.org/>

Prayer Diary 2026: February

The theme for February in our 2026 Prayer Diary is 'The selfless love of Christ': 'God proves His love to us in that whilst we were sinners Christ died for us' Romans 5:8. God came to us as man, in Jesus, and



gave Himself for each and every one of us. Jesus never asked for anything from us, except for us to love one another. Do we do that? We are all sisters and brothers in Christ, but do we follow His example and love each other unconditionally? How can we show Christ's love this month? Maybe through the giving of time to MU programme work, sharing a card and prayer with an indoor member?

Monthly Prayer: *Loving Lord, we thank You for the endless and selfless love that You have given to us. We know that every one of Your children is known to You and loved by You, no matter what. We give thanks for the example of love that we see in You. Let those who do not know Your love or those who have not experienced love as a person should, feel Your presence, hear Your word and know Your presence, now and always. Amen.*

Creative Prayer: Dear Lord, Your son Jesus Christ grew to manhood to be a skilled carpenter, constantly learning at the side of His earthly father, Joseph. Encourage, nurture and bless us, with gifts of creativity, enriching us in so many ways, as we work to share our faith and love through the work of Mothers' Union worldwide.

Lucy Bubb, Mothers' Union contact

Not Just Pancakes

This year Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday is on 17th February. Celebrated in many countries around the world, for Christians, Shrove Tuesday is traditionally a

time associated with eating things like eggs, sugar and fats. Many of us mark this with eating pancakes to symbolically use up these foods before the fasting season of Lent begins.

However, Shrove Tuesday isn't just about pancakes.

Historically in the UK, Shrove Tuesday formed part of a more elaborate pre-Lent festival called Shrovetide, which was all about feasting and sports. Games ranged from blood sports like cockfighting to tug-o-wars and skipping. Yet the most widespread and longstanding Shrovetide sport was football.

According to players from Duns, a town in the Scottish Borders, in 1686, it was "an ancient custom throughout all this kingdom to play at football upon Fastens Eve (Shrove Tuesday)". Shrovetide ball games are mentioned from the 12th century onwards, in many communities throughout Britain, several of which in England and Scotland still take place today. Shop windows are boarded up and businesses are closed for the day as whole towns take to the streets to join in the annual Shrovetide football game.

As ancestors to our modern game, folk football matches varied considerably. But generally, players contested a ball with hand and foot, usually towards a goal. These were often the big matches sometimes featuring hundreds of participants. Whether town vs country, or married vs bachelors, teams battled to move the ball through streets and countryside, towards goals like mills, streams or even the church. Due to its destructive potential, these matches often fell foul of the authorities and were banned outright. Medieval royal prohibitions called it "vain, unthrifty and idle", while Puritans deemed it "a bloody and murdering practise".

Others in power obviously saw its appeal, judging from festive sponsorship in many cities and towns. In Chester, in the early 16th century, the Merchant Drapers' Company received a football from the Shoemakers' Company, a wooden ball from the Saddlers' Company and a small silk ball from each man from the city married within the last year. Under the mayor's supervision, the Drapers tossed up the balls (which doubled as prizes) for the craftsmen and crowd to play from the common field to the city's Common Hall. Chester's sponsorship was mirrored throughout the British Isles. Craftsmen and Guilds played key roles as participants and providers of the ball(s). On Shrove Tuesday 1373, skinners (who skin animals) and tailors played in the streets of London. Butchers did the same in Jedburgh, Scotland.

In the late 18th century in Alnwick in Northumberland, the Skinners' and Shoemakers' companies paraded the ball to a match between married and bachelor men. Leather workers like shoemakers were especially important, crafting footballs in 15th century London, 16th century Glasgow and 17th century Carlisle.

In many communities' newlyweds provided the ball. In Dublin, recently married men had to present a ball to city magistrates during the 15th and 16th centuries. Newlywed members of trade Guilds in Perth in Scotland, and Corfe Castle in Dorset also paid a Shrovetide "football due", while a similar custom seems to have existed in medieval London. These were part of a broader folk tradition, where newly married couples owed a "bride ball" or "ball money" to their community. Since weddings were customary during Shrovetide (and prohibited in Lent), it was an ideal time to collect this money. Local governments would gather the "wedding ball" dues, hire drummers and pipers to pump up the crowds, or pay for the footballs directly. Failure to pay your football dues could result in imprisonment, heavy fines or the forced closing of a craftsman's shop. These harsh consequences reflect the worth of Shrove Tuesday football to these communities. To them, it was not a pointless game, but an "ancient and laudable custom" of "goodly feats and exercise" where participation was often obligatory. Officials sponsored games that were technically illegal because Shrovetide football equated with the "common wealth of the city". Participation and patronage of the game reinforced the status and privilege that came with civic membership. Gradually, authorities in most major cities withdrew their support and some simply banned it because of the "many ills" and "disorder".

Others "reformed" the games into less dangerous entertainments, like foot and horse races in 1540s Chester, or a fire-engine display in 1725 in Carlisle. By the middle of the 18th century, officially sanctioned Shrovetide ball games were mostly confined to smaller market towns and villages, which is where some live on to this day.

So, as you reach for the batter this Shrove Tuesday, remember the history of the riotous game we call football and its lesser-known origins as a prelude to pancakes.



WOOLMARKET MUSIC

At our meeting on Thursday 8th January welcomed back the extremely talented Claudio Allodi, who entertained us with a wide range of melodies on his accordion. It was a wonderful evening of playing which took us around Italy, Scotland, France, Ireland and many others besides. Claudio was able to play all our requests for favourite pieces of music and I definitely think he'll be visiting us again!



Coming up

Our next meeting is on Thursday 12th February at 7.45pm but in Horndon Primary School hall.

The larger premises is to accommodate Harmonie Concert Band. They'll be playing a wide range of music including classics, popular and light music, marches, music from films and shows, and more demanding works written or arranged specifically for wind bands. We look forward to hearing them!



Ecology and Social Justice Action Group

Our parish (covering Horndon-on-the-Hill, Orsett and Bulphan) has 3 Church of England churches and they are all taking part in the A Rocha Ecochurch project.

A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment.

Eco Church is a learning community of churches of all shapes and sizes open to all denominations in England and Wales. It provides a framework to support our churches and their leadership to take practical action on caring for God's earth, through the Eco Church survey. The Eco Church survey is a self-assessment tool for churches to connect environmental issues with their Christian faith and mission, and respond with practical action in the church, people's lives, and the local and global community.

There is a free online award scheme which covers five key areas of church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings and energy
- Land and nature
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

The **Ecology and Social Justice Action Group** was one of the 6 action groups established a few years ago - the other action groups are Children, Young People and Families, Communications, Fundraising, Mission Evangelism and Nurture, and Prayer. The aims of the Eco Group (to give it its shortened name!) are:

- To promote Eco Church all year long and work on achieving the next level award
- To promote Fairtrade products and run Fairtrade Fortnight and other related events during the year
- To promote an awareness of issues of social justice and consider how we should respond as Christians
- To promote and encourage the support of chosen Christian charities

Going back to the Ecochurch awards, there are bronze, silver and gold levels. All 3 of our churches gained their bronze award quite quickly. Bulphan then achieved their Silver award, with the other 2 churches being awarded Silver soon after. We are now working towards the much more challenging Gold Award status.

Our churches are the only 3 churches of any denomination with the silver award in Thurrock (All Saints Chafford 100 and Grays Parish Church hold bronze). There are only 4 churches in the whole of Essex with Gold status - 3 in Chelmsford and one in Colchester.

As well as campaigning for social justice locally, nationally and globally, our group is working mainly on improving our buildings & energy, and our land & nature impact.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Ecology and Social Justice Group, or Ecochurch, please contact Lynda Robertson 07974 803471, or Janet McCheyne 07752 836902.

Janet McCheyne



Horndon-on-the-Hill BRIDGE CLUB

In Horndon Village Hall every
Friday from 1.30 - 4.30pm

Admission £2.00 (includes tea/coffee biscuits)

Very friendly atmosphere

Intermediate standard basic ACOL played

For details telephone: Stuart Cameron 01375 673 237

BULPHAN SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB



We are a small, friendly short mat bowls club who meet once a week at Bulphan Village Hall. We are looking for experienced or new players. If you are interested in joining us, you would be made very welcome.

Please feel free to come along and find out more or ring Lesley on 07766 505755

TUESDAY SESSIONS: Tuesday 1.45 - 4.15pm

We have all the equipment for new players to try the game for the first time, and there is always someone who can explain the rules and help you get started.



COMMUNITY RECYCLING

Do you have any unwanted items that you would like to pass on for no charge?

If you do please email or phone

sonia51anne@yahoo.co.uk / 01375 674212

Items must be fit for purpose.

They will be advertised in the HOBNOB for 2 issues.

Please supply a picture and contact details.

Horndon On The Hill Branch

incorporating Stanford, Corringham, Fobbing & Linford

We meet at The Welcome Club
1 Victoria Road, Stanford-le-Hope

Meetings 8.00pm on the last Tuesday each month except in December.

New members welcome, enquiries to the
Chairman stuart.prinn@gmail.com

For all Poppy Appeal supplies contact
aafisher53@yahoo.com



February in history

- 1st 1901 The royal yacht *Alberta* brings the body of Queen Victoria into Portsmouth harbour en route to her funeral in London tomorrow. The Queen, aged 82, died on January 22nd, at Osborne on the Isle of Wight.
- 2nd 1665 British forces capture New Amsterdam, the centre of the Dutch colony in North America. The trading settlement on the island of Manhattan is to be renamed New York in honour of the Duke of York, its new governor.
- 3rd 1730 The London *Daily Advertiser* newspaper publishes the first stock exchange quotations.
- 4th 1926 Malcolm Campbell sets a new world land speed record of 174 mph (278 kmph) at Pendine Sands near Carmarthen Bay.
- 5th 1958 Parking meters first appear on the streets of London's Mayfair district. They were first used in America in 1935.
- 6th 1783 Death of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown the greatest English landscape gardener. His work lives on today throughout the great estates of England.
- 7th 1301 The son of King Edward I of England becomes the first English Prince of Wales.
- 8th 1587 Mary Queen of Scots is beheaded on the orders of her cousin Queen Elizabeth I.
- 9th 1964 73 million Americans tune in to the *Ed Sullivan Show* to watch The Beatles as they appear for the first time
- 10th 1354 Students at Oxford University fight a street battle with local townspeople resulting in several deaths and many people injured.
- 11th 1975 Margaret Thatcher, becomes the first woman leader of the British Conservative Party.
- 12th 1554 At the age of 16, the "nine days queen", Lady Jane Grey is beheaded at the tower of London.
- 13th 1688 A "Glorious Revolution" brings the Protestant William of Orange and his wife Mary (daughter of James II) to the throne of England after the Catholic King James II flees to France.
- 14th 1933 Students at Oxford University, declare that they would not fight for "King and Country".
- 15th 1971 Pennies, thruppenny bits, tanners, bobs, crowns and half-crowns all disappear as Britain goes decimal. The florin (2 shillings/10p) stayed in circulation until 1993
- 16th 1659 A cheque is used for the first time in Britain as Mr Nicholas Vanacker settles a debt.
- 17th 1461 Lancastrian forces defeated the Yorkists at the Second Battle of St. Albans.
- 18th 1478 George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence died in the Tower of London said to have been drowned in a butt of his favourite malmsey wine.
- 19th 1897 The Women's Institute is founded in Ontario, Canada, by Mrs Adelaide Hoodless.
- 20th 1938 Anthony Eden resigned as British foreign secretary after Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain decided to negotiate with Italian Fascist leader Benito Mussolini.
- 21st 1804 Richard Trevithick demonstrated the first steam engine to run on rails along the tramway of the Penydarren Ironworks, in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales.
- 22nd 1797 Over 1,000 French troops attempted to invade Britain, landing on the Welsh coast. The ladies of Fishguard saved the day!
- 23rd 1863 Lake Victoria, in Africa, was declared to be the source of the River Nile by British explorers John Speke and J A Grant.
- 24th 1917 President Woodrow Wilson informs the US nation of the contents of an intercepted message from the German foreign minister offering Mexico an alliance against the US.
- 25th 1570 Queen Elizabeth I is excommunicated by Pope Pius V.
- 26th 1797 The Bank of England issues the first ever one-pound note, following gold shortages caused by the French Revolutionary Wars
- 27th 1782 The British Parliament votes to abandon the American War of Independence. Perhaps they were more concerned about the potential threat to Fishguard!
- 28th 1900 The four-month siege of the British garrison at Ladysmith in Natal, South Africa, ended as a relief force broke through the Boers at Spion Kop.

The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan

2026 LENT LUNCH

Lent lunch will be provided Sunday 22nd February
the lunch starts at 12 noon last serving at 1.45pm
in the Parish Room, Bulphan Church

The menu will be a hearty soup (vegetarian), a chunk
of French stick loaf, fruit and a (Fairtrade) hot drink.

Those attending are encouraged to donate what they would
have spent on a lunch.

At the lunch we will be selling raffle tickets for a
hamper of Fairtrade goods.

Bishop's Lent appeal



Cross off the days as we go through Lent to the
rising of Jesus

14	13	12	WALK THE LENTEN PATH...			
15 🐟	 Lent	11	2 nd Sunday of Lent	10	9 🐟	8
16	Prayer, Fasting & Almsgiving					7
		34	33 🐟	32	31	6
3 rd Sunday of Lent						5
17						1 st Sunday of Lent
18	35					4
19	36					3 🐟
20	37		Happy Easter! He is Risen!!		27 🐟	2
21 🐟		39 Good Friday 			26	
22	38 Holy Thursday 	40 Holy Saturday				1 🐟 ASH WEDNESDAY
	4 th Sunday of Lent	23	24	25	 Lent	

Famous person for February

Mary Rudge

6th February 1842 – 22nd November 1919



Mary Rudge was born in 1842, in Leominster, Herefordshire the youngest child of Dr Henry and Eliza Rudge. Henry was a keen chess player and taught the game to his elder daughters, who in turn taught Mary. As her interest in chess developed she looked for more challenging opponents, taking part in a correspondence tournament in 1872, and a tournament in Birmingham two years later.

Shortly after that tournament Henry Rudge died, and Mary had to move with her sister Caroline, to live with their brother Henry, the curate of a small parish in Bristol.

Mary was now playing chess seriously and the move brought her into contact with the well-known Bristol Chess Club. The club had recently voted to admit women, and Mary was admitted as an associate. Mary had ended up in a place that was going to give her the opportunity to play competitive chess to a high standard.

In 1876 the Rev Henry moved to a new parish, but this post did provide enough income for the siblings and the following year they took over the new Luccombe House Preparatory School on Redland Green. Henry became the schoolmaster, and his sisters probably helped with the teaching. The venture may have started successfully because Henry gave up his curate's post in 1881, but by 1885 things were going wrong and in August the school closed. Henry moved to become curate at North Meols, near Southport, Lancashire, but Mary stayed in Bristol.

While at the school Mary appears to have played little chess, but after its closure she really started to make her mark. She won the Bristol & Clifton Chess Club's challenge cup which was open to men and women in 1889. In the same year she became the first woman to publicly play six people at the same time, beating them all and being hailed as "the leading lady player in the world".

At the time as this success Mary was in desperate straits financially and the club issued an appeal for donations to help her. Perhaps the school venture had wiped out any funds or legacy that had once existed. Mary was reduced to relying on a form of charity, as she became a companion to various ladies.

Over the next few years Mary took part in various competitions, playing for Bristol & Clifton, and for Gloucestershire. She won the Ladies' Challenge Cup in Cambridge in 1890 and was third in Class II.

Despite fears that "the event would be too taxing for the ladies" the first international women's chess tournament was held at the Ladies' Club in London in 1897. Twenty players entered and Mary was only able to attend as friends and chess enthusiasts clubbed together to pay for her to go. Once there, she was unbeatable and fought her way to victory and the £60 prize. Mary was 55 and had reached the pinnacle of her career and was described as "the strongest lady chess player in the world" and "entitled to style herself lady chess champion of the world".

Mary's health deteriorated in the next few years. Her sister Caroline died in 1900 leaving her on her own. In 1912, there was a new appeal for funds. In her later years she suffered from worsening rheumatism and died at Guys Hospital in London in 1919.

You can raise FREE donations for The Parish Of Horndon, Orsett And Bulphan EVERY time you shop online.

Just letting you know that The Parish Of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan are now registered with easyfundraising, which means you can raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online.

Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! These donations really mount up and make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment.

Enter www.easyfundraising.org.uk and then go to 'find a cause' and search for 'The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan'.

How to sign up should be very straightforward.

Thank you so much! Your support would be much appreciated.

You can also get to our page by using this QR code



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Collect **FREE** donations for us when you shop online via easyfundraising.org.uk



The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan

GIFT IN WILLS

In our Parish, we welcome all gifts in wills, however large or small and we promise to use your gift to make a difference to our Parish.

A charitable legacy is a gift of money and this type of giving is commonly referred to as gifts in wills. Gifts in wills can be left to The Parish or an individual church and are exempt from inheritance tax.

Since needs change over the years, we encourage you to leave a gift in your will for the general purposes of the parish rather than for a specific purpose.

You can be confident that your gift will be used to make a real difference to the work of the Church.

We acknowledge gifts in whatever way the donor and/or their executors feel most appropriate. Equally, we can make sure that gifts remain anonymous if the donor prefers.

Further guidance can be found on the Church of England's website
<https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-life/church-legacy>

If you wish to talk to someone in confidence about the sorts of purposes your gift might fund, and how/if you would like your gift to be acknowledged, please contact Revd Sue.

Knowing and sharing the love of Jesus in the Church and community



EST.



1802

The Foxhound
ORSETT



FAMILY RUN PUB IN ORSETT

LARGE BEER GARDEN & PLAYGROUND

FOOD SERVED TUESDAY - SUNDAY

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LIVE SPORTS

LIVE MUSIC

FUNCTION HALL HIRE

DOG FRIENDLY

@THEFOXHOUND PUB ORSETT

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To us, it's personal

Live well,
your way

with care in the comfort of your own home

We can offer you the option to continue living a happy and fulfilled life in your own home. We do this with tailored, personal home support based on what you need.

- Dementia Care
- Companionship
- Home Help
- Personal Care
- Live-in-Care

Home Instead Thurrock

01375 803600

www.homeinstead.co.uk/thurrock

