



St. James the Great Church & St Paul's Church

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time 31st August

Church Notices



This Week's Gospel Insight

"The Kingdom is not about climbing higher, but taking the lower place. The newly invited — the poor, the unseen, the overlooked — reveal the wideness of God's mercy."

👉 Read the full reflection inside the notices.

Today's Services

🕒 8:00 a.m. Low Mass

🎵 10:00 a.m. Sung Parish Mass We are grateful to the visiting clergy who have supported the parish during Father James's convalescence through their ministry of word and sacrament. Following his recent surgical review, his

recovery is progressing well. He has been advised to measure recovery in months, not days, and will remain in convalescence for a few more weeks, with a carefully paced return to ministry in the lead-up to — and beyond — Father Jeff's Ordination and First Mass.

Please Pray For The Infirm

and Housebound: Adam, Ava Mills, Eileen and Ed, Gaby, Gill Bernhart-Bellaerts, Christine & Emma, Clive French, David Beattie, Joyce & Ralph, Jon Hawkings, Lubomira, Madeline Bates, Naomi & family, Norma Plummer, Ronnie, Sheila Townsend, Sharon, Shirley, Rev. Michael Pitts & Mrs Killiki Pitts.



Our Mission and Leadership - St James the Great Church is a parish of The Society

(under the patronage of S. Wilfrid and S. Hilda)

and a member of Forward in Faith, under the pastoral and

sacramental care of the Bishop of Richborough. Together, we strive to proclaim the love of Christ, upholding the fullness of the catholic faith and fostering a community where Christian faith, tradition, and prayer flourish.

Bank Account: PCC of St. James & St. Paul Colchester, Account no: 50791466

Sort Code: 20-22-67

SAFEGUARDING Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is Mrs. Clare Moles contacted in church or by calling 07751329314

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted by telephoning the duty number 01245 294444

Prayer: Morning at 7.45am. Evening at 6pm

Out of the Arl Music License Certificate Number: OOTA-CERT-302926

Father James McCluskey SSC - 01206 860419 Churchwarden/Treasurer: Lucy Mason 01206 386766 Churchwarden: Dr. Desirée Campbell 01206 617263

Visit the web site of our Church School: - <https://www.st-james-colchester-essex.co.uk/> Church office infostjamesthegreat@gmail.com

Recently Departed: Ann Alford.
John Edward Hyam Clarke (Katy
McCluskey's father)

Blessed Sacrament Lamp:

Sponsored in blessed memory of
Tony Keat. Requiescat in Pace

St James the Great Lamp:

Sponsored in Blessed memory of
Reverend Canon Father Alan
Cross SSC (Pr).

Year's Mind:

31st. James Connor,

1st Charles Glenn, Anne Phillips

2nd Reverend Canon Father Alan

Cross SSC (Priest) 3rd Dorothy
Hatcher. Francis Mettrick.

4th Frederick Dickerson, Charles

Stebbing (Pr) 6th Barbara Raffé,

Lillian Went, Edna Clarke

Florence Ethel Carter.

✠ **The Repose of the Soul of**

Ann Alford ✠ It is with
solemn hearts that the repose of
our dear parishioner, **Ann
Alford**, is announced. She
departed this life on **Tuesday,
26th August 2025**, surrounded
by her family, who kept a holy
vigil with her. She was fortified
by the sacraments and received
the last rites of Holy Church.

As a faithful member of our
parish family, Ann bore witness
to the quiet strength of Christian
devotion. Her soul is now
commended to the unfathomable

mercy of God, and the prayers of
the faithful are invited: for her
eternal rest, and for the comfort
of **Keith and their family**, who
mourn her passing.

In the Anglo-Catholic tradition,
the last rites are a profound
sacramental gift, by which the
faithful departed are commended
into God's hands through the
grace of the Church's prayer.

While the deep sorrow of parting
is felt, the Church holds fast to
the promise of the resurrection
and the tender mercy of God.

"The souls of the righteous are in
the hand of God,

and no torment shall touch them."
(Wisdom 3.1)

**Details of her Requiem Mass
and funeral will be shared in
due course.** *May she rest in
peace and rise in glory.*


This Week

Tues. 2nd Sept. 9:00–10:30 a.m.

— Church Cleaning

🎵 **Summer Lunchtime
Concert – 1:00 p.m.**

We are delighted to welcome **Dr
Emma Gibbins**, Director of
Music at Chelmsford Cathedral,
for this month's lunchtime
concert. Dr Gibbins will offer a
varied and uplifting programme
of organ music — and it's a
privilege to host her here at St
James. ☕ *Light refreshments
from 12:15 p.m.*

 *Free admission | Retiring collection for church music projects.*

Bring a friend and enjoy a peaceful midday moment of music in our beautiful church.


Thu. 12:30 p.m. – Low Mass

Fri. Midday – Rosary Prayers



Young Church Is Back!

Term Time Young Church


resumes  *Sunday 7th*

September during the 10:00 a.m. Parish Mass


We are delighted to welcome children and families back as Young Church begins for the new term!

Children start in church with their families, then head to the Pilgrim Centre for their own time of story, prayer, and activity, before rejoining the congregation for the rest of the Mass.

 For children aged 3+

 Fun, faith-filled teaching rooted in the Gospel

† Helping children feel at home in the worshipping life of the Church

 Supporting families to grow in faith together

Our Leaders and Safeguarding
All Young Church leaders are

DBS-checked and highly experienced. This ministry is led by our **Deacon and Curate, Fr Jeff Graham**, a retired headteacher and former member of the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Education. He is supported by a trusted team, deeply involved in the formation of toddlers, children, young people, and adults.

Parents are welcome to accompany their children until they're confident.

If you're new or visiting — we'd love to welcome you!

“Let the little children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.” (Mark 10:14)

Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. **8th September**



It is Our Lady's Birthday!

Join us at Midday Mass as we mark this great feast — a day of joy not only for Mary, but for the whole Church. In celebrating her birth, we celebrate the beginning of the unfolding of God's plan for our salvation.

Born to **Saint Joachim and Saint Anne** (see

Protoevangelium of James, c. AD 150), Mary is the dawn before the rising Sun, the child prepared by grace to become the Mother of the Saviour.

Her birth is a sign of hope — the first light before Christ, the Light of the world.

“From her He took flesh, by whom all things were made.” — *Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Come and give thanks for Mary’s life, her “yes” to God, and for the love and faith of her parents, who trusted in God’s promise.

Saturday 13th September – A Big Day in Parish Life

On Saturday 13th September, three major events will take place at St James — all of which deserve your support and prayers:

1 Heritage Open Day

St James will open its doors to visitors as part of the national Heritage Open Day weekend, welcoming guests to learn about our church’s history and sacred architecture.

2 Ride & Stride


As part of the Essex Churches Trust fundraiser, cyclists will visit St James. Half the sponsorship money raised returns to our parish. Forms available at the back of church.


3 Children & Families


Mission Day


Theme: *Pilgrimage and the Pilgrim*


A day of evangelism and outreach focused on children, young people, and families. What does it mean to be a pilgrim? Together, we will explore how to walk in faith, follow Jesus, and live as modern-day pilgrims — with joy, trust, and love.

 **Guests:** Jane Southward and Caroline Ward, Walsingham Education Department

 **11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

 **Lunch provided for all**

 **Registration required on the day**

 **Your prayers, encouragement, and participation will make all the difference.** To offer help, speak to **Fr Jeff or a member of the Mission Steering Group.**

Volunteers needed for:

- Welcoming visitors
- Church security
- Refreshments
- Ride & Stride reception.

Ordination and First Mass of Fr Jeff Graham

We are delighted to announce that **Fr Jeff Graham** will be ordained to the **Sacred Priesthood** at **2:00 p.m. on Saturday 27th September 2025**, at St James the Great, by the **Bishop of Richborough**, with the **Bishop of Colchester** present as Diocesan representative.

He will celebrate his **First Mass** on **Sunday 28th September** at **4:30 p.m.** here at St James.

RSVP Required — Deadline Today!

Please confirm your attendance for both days to ensure enough seating, catering, and printed materials.

Help Needed:

- Friday 26th – Church prep, marquee setup
- Saturday 27th – Pilgrim Centre hosting


- Sunday 28th – Refreshments, clean-up


Ordination Gift

Please give generously towards a gift to mark this sacred milestone. “The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.” (1 Thess. 5:24)

Deanery Day – Saturday

11th October 2025  **One day. One church. One Deanery.**

 **9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

 **St John’s Church & Community Centre, Colchester CO4 0HP**

The whole Colchester Deanery — 24 parishes strong — gathers for a day of **inspiration, worship, fellowship, and vision.** It’s free to attend (lunch included!) and open to everyone.

Why come? Because this is more than just another event. It’s a chance to stand together, be encouraged, and catch a fresh vision of what God is doing in Colchester.

Unmissable highlights

Patrick Regan OBE – international speaker on faith, hope, and wellbeing.

Revd David Senior – broadcaster and evangelist, sharing the story of revival.

Bishop Roger Morris – “Meet the Bishop” and hear his heart for our Deanery.

Archdeacon Ruth Patten – on finding joy in PCC life (!).

Workshops & seminars – music, social media, calling & vocation, youth ministry, wellbeing, safeguarding, church buildings, and more.

Children & teens – their own activities, plus a Young People’s Choir leading the closing worship.

The flavour of the day

☕ Coffee and pastries to begin

🙏 Worship that lifts the heart

💡 Ideas to spark fresh imagination

🍽️ A buffet lunch for everyone

🎵 Closing worship led by our young people.

👉 **Register now at** colchesterdeanery.org.uk/deaneryday or add your name to the church sign-up list.

Let’s go together. Let’s be inspired. Let’s see what God will do.

🔔 A Gentle but Serious Reminder 🔔 Health & Safety in Church during rising Covid cases

As people of faith, we are called to love one another and protect the vulnerable in our midst. With Covid and other seasonal illnesses increasing, please be extra diligent in how we gather.

💧 **Sanitise hands** on entering and leaving church.

🤝 **Be considerate:** some may prefer no handshakes or close contact.

🤒 **If unwell, please stay at home** and join us in prayer until you are better.

🧑‍🤒 **Cough or sneeze responsibly** and dispose of tissues straight away.

🍷 **At Holy Communion,** follow the directions given to receive reverently and safely.

This is not about rules for their own sake, but about **Christian love in action** — caring for the weak, the elderly, and those with fragile health.

✝️ *“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”*
(Galatians 6.2)

Thank you for your care, patience, and love. Together, we keep our church a safe place of worship.



Parish Giving Scheme – Moving Fully to PGS

Our parish is now moving fully to the **Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)**. This means those who already give by standing order or Gift Aid envelopes are encouraged to switch.



Your generosity is honoured and valued



The parish receives a secure, regular income



Gift Aid is added automatically (25% extra at no cost to you)



You can choose to index-link your giving to inflation



Admin burden is reduced, freeing more time for ministry



Forms available at the back of church



Watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9MxcXudSGg>

Please speak with **Lucy Mason** (Churchwarden/Treasurer/Gift Aid Officer) for assistance.

“This is not simply about administration: it is about ensuring that our giving today provides for the life of the Church tomorrow.”



Gospel Reflection –

Luke 14:1, 7–14 Jesus accepts the invitation of a leading Pharisee. As the guests jostle for position, he tells a parable that reveals how God’s Kingdom reverses our instincts.

At a banquet the best seats meant prestige. Jesus exposes this scramble for recognition as folly, because in God’s economy the measure of greatness is not self-advancement but self-forgetful love.

Taking the lowest place is not false modesty. It is a re-orientation of desire: to live from the verdict of God rather than the shifting applause of others. Humility, in the biblical sense, is not humiliation but freedom — the confidence of knowing that our identity rests secure in God’s gracious call. Yet Jesus does not stop with our inner posture. He turns to the host and names the radical shape of Kingdom hospitality: *“Do not invite friends or wealthy neighbours.”* Why?

Because such invitations simply reinforce circles of reciprocity and exclusion. Instead, bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame. These are not symbolic placeholders but real people. They are the newly invited, whose presence at the table witnesses to the wideness of God's mercy.

Here lies the challenge. The church is not to mirror the social arrangements of the world, but to embody an alternative: a community where the overlooked are honoured and the outsider is welcomed.

The Gospel presses us to examine our own practice. Do our gatherings unconsciously cater for the familiar and the powerful?

Or do we have sight for the newly invited — the ones who cannot repay, yet whose place at the table reveals Christ's Kingdom?

The Apostolic Fathers were clear. Clement of Rome urged believers to "cling to those who are humble and gentle," warning that rivalry disrupts the Body of Christ. Ignatius of Antioch, writing on his way to martyrdom, reminded the churches that belonging to Christ means bearing with the weak and honouring the forgotten.

The *Didache* commanded Christians to welcome the stranger and the poor, recognising in them the presence of the Lord himself. From the beginning, the Church understood this parable as a mandate to live differently.

The Fathers also read the banquet through a Eucharistic lens. St John Chrysostom declared that when the poor are welcomed, "the altar of Christ is filled." The *Didache* describes the Lord's Table as the place where scattered grains are gathered into one loaf, with no division of rank or privilege. Augustine preached: "Be what you see, and receive what you are — the Body of Christ."

This is the solid centre. At every Mass we are summoned to the lowest place, where pride is humbled and grace alone feeds us. We come unable to repay, yet Christ gives himself as food. And having shared his banquet, we are sent to live its pattern: to honour the poor, to embrace the outsider, and to anticipate the resurrection banquet where the last are first and Christ himself is host.

Amen. In the Cross of Christ
Fr James McCluskey.