



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

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025

### Church Notices



#### Welcome

A warm welcome to all visitors joining us today.  
Please stay for refreshments after Mass — we look forward to meeting you.



**Today — Sunday 30th November**

**8.00 a.m. — Low Mass**

**10.00 a.m. — Sung Parish Mass**

**4.00 p.m. — Advent Carols**



**Please Pray For  
The infirm and housebound:**

Adam, Ava Mills, Gill Bernhart-Bellaerts, Gaby, Christine & Emma, Clive French, David Beattie, Donna Canning, Joyce & Ralph, Jon Hawkings, Lubomira, Madeline Bates, Naomi & family, Norma Plummer, Noreen Cunliffe, Ronnie, Sheila Townsend, Sharon, Shirley.

**Recently departed: —  
Years' mind:**

- 30th Nov — Glynnes Lawson
- 1st Dec — Grace Draycott
- 2nd Dec — Nellie Georgina Appleby
- 4th Dec — George Porter
- 5th Dec — Marjorie Sawyer

• **St James' Lamp:** For all who have requested the prayers of the Church.

• **Aumbry Lamp:** For the infirm and housebound.

• **Blessed Sacrament Lamp:** Is not sponsored this week.



#### Thanksgiving

- For Church Cleaning
- For the Standing Committee
- For the Whole School Mass at Rolph Church of England School, Thorpe-le-Soken
- For the Whole School Mass at St James the Great Church School



#### THIS WEEK

**Tuesday 2nd December**

• **9.00–10.30 a.m. — Church Cleaning**

• **11.00 a.m. — Ministry of Intercession Workshop (Pilgrim Centre)**

This ministry is open to all with a heart for prayer and reverence.

Essential book: *The Intercessions Handbook* (ISBN-10: 0281065020)

#### Workshop Dates:

- Workshop 1 — **Tue 2nd Dec**, Pilgrim Centre, 11.00 a.m.
- Workshop 2 — **Tue 9th Dec**, in Church, 11.00 a.m.

Please sign up on the noticeboard at the back of church.



#### Sponsored Lamps

### Wednesday 3rd December

- 11.00 a.m. — Mass at Alderwood Care Home

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### Thursday 4th December

- 12.30 p.m. — Mass at St James the Great
- 6.00–9.00 p.m. — Candle-Lit Christmas Carol Concert

In aid of Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (ticket only)

 [bit.ly/Concert4EHAAT](https://bit.ly/Concert4EHAAT)

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### Friday 5th December

- 9.00 a.m. — School Class Mass
- 12.00 noon — Rosary Prayers
- 1.30 p.m. — School Governing Body Meeting

St James the Great Church School Fayre.

### Request for Help

Our church school needs volunteers **on Friday, 5th December, 2.30–5.30 p.m.** to staff stalls at the Christmas Fete. If you can help, please let **Fr Jeff** know as soon as possible.

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### Sunday 7th December

- 8.00 a.m. — Low Mass
- 10.00 a.m. — Sung Parish Mass

### 2.30 p.m. — Christmas Fundraising Concert

We are delighted to welcome *Amoroso*, the Mersea Island choir of which **Lucy Mason** is a

member. They are offering a *free fundraising concert* in aid of St James the Great Church.

Please support Lucy's efforts arranging this concert for us.

### Details:

- Admission: Free (retiring collection for St James)
- Hospitality: Mulled wine, mince pies, raffle, refreshments
- Venue: St James the Great Church, East Hill

✨ Please spread the word!

### Meetings

**Wednesday 10th December — 7.00 p.m.**

**PCC Meeting (Pilgrim Centre)**

### Help Needed to Share Christmas Blessings

We need volunteers to help deliver **4,000 Christmas cards** to every home in the parish.

All cards are bundled by street and organised into **five colour-coded zones**.

A large A1 parish map is displayed in the church hall. Katy and Fr James have prepared all packs — ready for collection.

**Please:** • Collect your colour-coded bundle

• Deliver the cards **between now and Saturday 20th December**

Together, let us share the Good News of Christ with our neighbours this Christmas.

Thank you for your kindness, generosity, and support.

## Parish Finances – A Simple Update

Our weekly running costs remain higher than our weekly income.

**Weekly running cost:** £2,231

**Weekly income:** £1,975

**Weekly shortfall:** £256

This shortfall is currently being met from **General Fund reserves**. Lucy has confirmed that:

- The **General Account** (running costs) will be **depleted by July/August 2026**.

- The **Reserves Account** (supporting Parish Share) will also be significantly reduced.

This situation requires prayerful attention and practical support.

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**How We Can Help Reverse This Trend.** One immediate way to increase income is to strengthen the hire of the Pilgrim Centre, which offers:

- **Attic Floor** — hire available **7 days a week**
- **Ground Floor** — hire available **6 days a week**

It is entirely achievable to raise an additional **£10,000 per year** through effective promotion.

**We need a small volunteer team to work with**

**Fr James, the Churchwarden, and the PCC on:**

- **promoting the Pilgrim Centre**
- **managing enquiries**

- **supporting bookings**
- **raising its profile in the community**

**A committed group will have a real and lasting impact.**

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## Please Pray and Consider How You Can Help

If you are able to review your giving, join the Parish Giving Scheme, or support the Pilgrim Centre project, it would greatly strengthen our parish's mission and ministry.

**Thank you for all you give to St James the Great.**

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## Support Our Church

**Bank:** PCC of St James and St Paul, Colchester

**Account:** 50791466

**Sort Code:** 20-22-67



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

(under the patronage of **St Wilfrid and St Hilda**)

and a member of **Forward in Faith**, under the pastoral and sacramental care of the **Bishop of Richborough**. We strive to proclaim the love of Christ, uphold the fullness of the catholic faith, and foster a community where Christian faith, tradition, and prayer flourish.

## Safeguarding

Our **Parish Safeguarding Officer** is **Mrs Clare Moles**, who can be contacted in church or by calling **07751 329314**.

The **Diocesan Safeguarding Team** can be contacted on **01245 294444**.

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## Parish Prayer Times

- **Morning Prayer:** 7.45 a.m.
- **Evening Prayer:** 6.00 p.m.

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## Licensing

**Out of the Ark Music Licence**  
**Certificate Number:** OOTA-CERT-302926

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## Parish Giving

**Bank Account:** PCC of St James & St Paul, Colchester  
**Account Number:** 50791466  
**Sort Code:** 20-22-67



## Contact Information

**Parish Priest:** Fr James  
McCluskey SSC — 01206 860419

**Churchwarden & Treasurer:**  
Lucy Mason — 01206 386766

**Churchwarden:** Dr Desirée  
Campbell — 01206 617263

**Church Office:**  
infostjamesthegreat@gmail.com

**Website:**  
stjamesthegreat.wordpress.com

**Church School Website:**  
<https://www.st-james-colchester-essex.co.uk/>

## The First Sunday of Advent: Prophets, Hope, and the First Candle.

The First Sunday of Advent opens the Church's year with a call to watchfulness and hope. We listen once more to the **Prophets**, those fearless voices who spoke God's promise into seasons of darkness and exile. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Baruch proclaimed that God had not forgotten His people: *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."* Their witness teaches us that Christian hope rests not on optimism, but on God's unfailing faithfulness.

Today we **light the first Advent candle**, the **Candle of Hope**. Its single flame symbolises the light of God breaking into human darkness, the beginning of a promise unfolding, and the certainty that even a small light can guide a weary people home. It recalls the prophets' longing for the Messiah and the Church's own longing for Christ's return. Advent holds together the humility of Bethlehem and the majesty of the Second Coming. In the Blessed Sacrament, the promised Saviour draws near, strengthening us to wait with confidence, courage, and hope.