

Ahoy there! What's that on the horizon?

Looking ahead we have a **Maritime Service** on Sunday 12th October at 10am at St Nicholas. This will be part of the weekend Shanty Festival. The Rector is working with some of the festival organisers to create a sea-based service. The festival programme is very full and has meant bringing the normal service forward 30 minutes to fit the rest of the Sunday programme in.

Harvest will be marked with our Thanksgiving services on Sunday October 5th.

The **Parochial Church Council** met for the first time since the annual meeting. We now start the meeting by saying 'the grace' to one another and conclude with the short evening service of Compline. There are plans for a lot of work in our buildings; St Nicholas is completing the exchange of all bulbs to low energy ones; St Michael's has a few volunteers completing jobs in and outside the building and All Saints has received the Fryatt Cross which means work will be planned now to create a fitting space for it at the rear of the building. The cross was placed over Captain Fryatt's grave just outside of Bruges and after his body was exhumed and repatriated to England in 1919 the cross given to the Fryatt family who will now entrust us with it.

Advent is that wonderful 4-week season before Christmas that often gets crowded with business and stress. To help us use it well the Rector is delighted to offer another free book called *Comfort and Joy*. Written by Matt Searles, who is also a hymn and song writer, it explores Isaiah chapters 40-55 in 25 short chapters. Advent begins on November 30th this year. And that is when the church year starts with the advent wreath counting down the Sundays to Christmas. Midweek the Rector hopes to offer 4 addresses, over 4 weeks, with the service of Compline, on the 4 Last Things: death, judgment, heaven and hell. That is quite a meaty set but from early days the church used Advent to preach on these topics, so we are restoring a tradition.

Bar-B-Cue or Vicar on the Grill: the Rector would be interested to know if people would welcome some informal evenings, using our Millennium Room, Fryatt Room and Esplanade Hall where questions about our faith, the Bible; things that have intrigued or puzzled you; things going on in the world, could be shared and an attempt given at some answers. I would be very happy to make these very informal and say bring a drink and a glass, we can do it cafe style and perhaps invite a friend.

Stephen Northfield: was Vicar of Ramsey, with Little Oakley and Wrabness 1989-1995, then Vicar of Hatfield Peverel with Ulting 1995-2025. We are delighted he is back in Harwich and seen worshipping in all our churches. He is already a huge help to us and to the deanery. You may notice his rich voice supporting our hymn singing too!

Wrabness: Both Sioux Thorpe and Liz McLeod will be covering a Sunday service to give the Rev. Laura Garnham some time off as she is also now retired and doing a bit less.

Dawn Wallace: begins her training for ordination in London in September. Our prayers are with her as it is a demanding course of evening study once a week for two years.

New leaflet: hopefully you have seen our new, colourful leaflet showing our groups and activities either run by ourselves or taking place in our buildings. Do take one to pass

LIVING FAITH – LOVING PEOPLE

Peninsula Post 4

An occasional magazine from the
Church of England Parish of Harwich
August/September 2025

FOOD BANK SHOPPING LIST

The wonderful food bank at the Salvation Army centre has shared their current list of needed items. Can we have a go at collecting in each of our church buildings the things on here and taking them as one large parcel at the end of the month?

Tuna - tins
Sandwich paste
Jam
Rice – smaller bags are lighter to carry home
Mash – instant type
Squash
Packets of Pasta and Sauce (they use them as a lunch item)
Toilet rolls
Shampoo
Shower gel
Toothpaste
Deodorant

We will aim to leave decent sized boxes in each building to receive the items. You might want to use this as your shopping list.

LYCIG

The letters stand for **Leading Your Church Into Growth**. Five members of our parish went to a fairly demanding 3 day event at Braintree with other churches from the Colchester Episcopal Area to both learn about and think how it might apply to us. There is a strong suggestion that growth is in three dimensions: numerical – spiritual and service. We increase in number. We deepen our faith. We do practical good in the community. Becky Wallace, Sue Sutcliffe and Janet Goodall, with Kirsty and Ian will be feeding back to the ministry team, the PCC and the congregations soon.

ESPLANADE HALL – 150

Did you know how busy the hall is in a normal week?

Here is a rough guide to what is going on and all of these events are free to the people attending:

Monday: MIND – a mental health charity has a welcome cafe 10-11.30
Monday: there is a children's craft group with some food 3-6pm
Tuesday: Butterfly – a women only support group meet in the mornings
Tuesday: Knit and Natter meet in the afternoon to ... knit and natter
Tuesday: the Lounge is open for friendship and food in the evening
Wednesday: Parent and Toddler group meet in the morning
Wednesday: ACL (Adult Community Learning) though they are moving to the new library when it opens is present in the afternoon
Thursday: the Lounge is open all day for friendship and support, with a monthly Parkinson's group in the afternoon (2.30-4.30pm)
Friday: Cooking By Numbers – a group learning to cook and improve their numeracy
Friday: AFIUK (African Families in the UK) a youth group meet in the evening
Saturday: monthly Messy Church 2-4pm

The building is what is left of a school and is 150 years old this year. There is a Friends of Esplanade Hall Association and they have a Facebook page. With the help of volunteers, fundraising and grants they made it possible to open up the hall for use. Among those helping have been Mick Monks, a retired builder; Gallaper wind farm; The Harwich Society and Tendring District Council. The building is owned by St Nicholas church.

The building needs some extensive repairs including new windows, doors and roof! It is in the Harwich conservation area. This means that repairs have to be sympathetic and in keeping with the area and the heritage.

A huge grant has enabled the hall to be open for the events above, free of charge to users, but that funding is coming to an end and new sources of money or a renewal of support is being sought.

The building could be used for other groups and has a kitchen, toilets, tables and chairs.

The Nicene Creed

1700 years old this year and the central statement of belief in God shared by all the mainstream churches, a special booklet prepared by the Church of England as a personal devotional is available in each church as a gift from the Team Rector.

Messy Church

In a wonderful move the two Messy Church activities, one run by us every other month and one run every other month by Central Church are now combining ideas, resources and volunteers so that we can offer this once a month in the Esplanade Hall.

Crime in Harwich – *how shall we pray?*

Searching online for statistics about the town I found Crimerate.co.uk. What I read was a shock: 'Harwich is among the top 5 most dangerous small towns in Essex, and is the 32nd most dangerous overall out of Essex's 315 towns, villages, and cities. The overall crime rate in Harwich in 2025 was 83 crimes per 1,000 people. This compares poorly to Essex's overall crime rate, coming in 21% higher than the Essex rate of 68 per 1,000 daytime population. For England, Wales, and Northern Ireland as a whole, Harwich is the 215th most dangerous small town, and the 1,226th most dangerous location out of all towns, cities, and villages.

In January 2025, Harwich was the worst small town in Essex for other theft, with 13 crimes reported and a crime rate of 0.62 per 1,000 daytime population. January 2025 was also a bad month for Harwich residents, when it was Essex's most dangerous small town for public order, recording 15 crimes at a rate of 0.72 per 1,000 daytime population.

The most common crimes in Harwich are violence and sexual offences, with 867 offences during 2025 so far. 2024's figure was 887 offences. Harwich's least common crime is theft from the person, with 3 offences recorded in 2025 so far, compared to 2024's figure of 4 crimes'.

How did those headlines 'most dangerous small town' and 'worst small town' make you feel? I had to ensure I read them in comparison to other places and get to the end with only 3 thefts from the person this year. But the shock for me was the number of violent and sexual offences and remember these are the reported ones.

I want to turn this into a matter of prayer not worry. I want to ask God to act in this town and across our parish as an answer to our prayers. I hope to see the figures in 2026, 2027 and 2028 show decreases. So ...

Lord God, who created a world where we were to relate to the creation, each other and You in peace and harmony, we pray for our town.

For those who have been the victims of violent and sexual offences; may they have outstanding support and understanding from the police, their families and friends.

For those who have committed violent and sexual offences, that they may be apprehended, begin to understand the crime they have committed and change their behaviour after sentencing.

We pray for our police. For the systems of justice. For witnesses to these acts. As the days pass may these rates of crime reduce as Your Spirit moves across our town.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.