

ST MARY'S

WEST BERGHOLT



Part of the King's Ridge Parishes

Registered Charity No.1213670

Editor: lizdixon177@gmail.com

Sunday Services

4 October – 9.30am Holy Communion

11 October – 9.30am Messy Church

18 October – 9.30am Morning Worship with Baptism

25 October – 9.30am Café Church & 3pm Memorial Service – see below

Memorial Service -Sunday 25 October @ 3.00pm



All our welcome to our annual Memorial service for those who have lost loved ones, offering a place to remember, reflect and light a candle.

Church Open on Halloween

The church will be open on Halloween evening between approximately 5.00pm and 6.30pm for hot chocolate and treats, offering light and space for young people and families.

October 2026



- Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes
- Fairtrade Stall at Café @ St Mary's – Sat 3 October
- Youth Alpha – Sunday evenings
- Mother's Union – Tues 6 October
- Bereavement Café – Tues 27 Oct
- Eco News – Fairtrade - p 3

Message from Rev Heather Wilcox

A firm place to stand

It could be said, that in many aspects of life today, we face uncertain, and in some cases, difficult times. The world is troubled, there are tensions rising between nations, distrust, fear and anxiety, which bubbles up into violence.

This last summer has been extremely hot and dry and we have seen wildfires sweep devastatingly across swathes of land, destroying precious ecosystems, and we are being warned that the El Nino will bring storms and rain this autumn, and potentially an even hotter summer next year.

So, what do we do when life seems difficult?

Whilst walking the Camino, one of my hardest days, was a very steep, rocky descent from the highest point, into the town of Molinaseca, the path was treacherous, and at one point, I found myself walking alone for what seemed like ages, I could see no one in front and no one behind.

I had started the day, reading a couple of verses from Psalm 40:

'I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.'

As I walked, I found myself crying out to the Lord, asking him to give me a sign, that I wasn't alone, that if I fell, someone would find me!

Immediately, from behind I heard the familiar and unmistakable sound of a second set of walking poles, it was as if, though not literally, my feet had been set on a rock, and I had been given a firm place to stand. I had the reassurance I needed, that I was not alone, indeed that I am

never alone, God is always there, before, behind, beside, above and inside me.

We don't need to feel overwhelmed by the troubles of the world, we just need to wait patiently on the Lord, knowing that he is with us, he has not abandoned us, he will set our feet on the rock and give us a firm place to stand.

May God bless you
Reverend Heather

King's Ridge Parishes Mothers' Union – 6 October @ 2pm

All are welcome to join us for our next meeting on 1 September with guest speaker Tim Clarke talking about **Operation Christmas Child** – see below for more details.

Operation Christmas Child



As in previous years, St Mary's will be partnering with Boxted Church to fill empty shoeboxes with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items, for the

Operation Christmas Child project. The shoeboxes will be delivered to children overseas and represent a tangible expression of God's love to those in need.

This year's appeal is being organised by Tim Clarke, who is based at Boxted Church, but you can leave your **filled shoeboxes inside the church from now until 12 November**. (The church is open weekdays between 10am and 3pm).

You can also donate individual items if you are not able to fill a whole shoebox, and there will be a donation box in the church together with a leaflet with suggested items and some preprinted shoeboxes.

For more details please contact Tim on 07792 060597 or timclarkie03@gmail.com

Youth Alpha – Sundays @ 5.30pm

We are running a **Youth Alpha** course during the Autumn term, meeting weekly throughout October & November. This is a great opportunity to find out more about the Christian faith in an informal setting with a meal included and is particularly aimed at those in year 6 and above.

Bereavement Café – Tuesday

27 October 2pm-3.30pm

Our next bereavement café takes place on 22 September and is open to anyone who has had a bereavement at any time. It's an opportunity to share experiences over a cup of tea. The café is hosted by volunteers from St Mary's and staff from St Helena Hospice.

Fairtrade Stall at the Café @ St Mary's – Sat 3 October @ 10am

To support Fairtrade Fortnight, a selection of fairtrade products will be available to buy at the Café @ St Mary's on Saturday 3 October. See page 3 for more details about Fairtrade.

Our Team at St Mary's

Priest in Charge: Revd Heather Wilcox,
RevHWilcox@outlook.com 01206 240906,
mob: 07503 151715

Curate: Revd Dominic Sheil 07748 305727

Church Wardens: Peter & Caroline Finlay
pm.cmfinlay@gmail.com

Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs): Richard Chadborn 01206 240541, Liz Dixon 07914 001212, **Evangelist:** Ron Seymour 07772 241178, **LLM Emeritus:** Michael Foster & Joy Budden

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Jenny Noakes—07963 304018 or
jeninoakes@aol.com

Church Administrators: Donna Luxton & Jo Russell—01206 243683,
6parishescolchester@gmail.com Office
Hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri 10am—midday

Hall bookings: Through the Parish Office—see above,

Website: Stmaryswestbergholt.co.uk

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ECO NEWS

FAIRTRADE

Fairtrade Fortnight

As part of working towards our Gold Eco Church award, St Mary's Eco Team will be registering as a Fairtrade Church, and supporting Fairtrade Fortnight which this year runs from 21 September to 4 October.

What is Fairtrade?

Fairtrade works with small-scale farmers and workers around the world to build a fairer trade system - one where they can earn a decent income, work in safe conditions, and invest in their futures as they see fit. Here's just some of what they do:

Fairer prices: They set a Minimum Price, a safety net that protects farmers and workers when market prices fall, but still allows them to earn more when prices rise.

Fairtrade Premium: Farmers and workers receive the Premium - extra money which they decide how to invest, whether it's for schools, healthcare, or farming improvements.

Fairer working rights: Their standards include rights at work, safe conditions, and democratic structures in producer cooperatives, ensuring farmers and workers have a stronger voice.

Building sustainable futures: Fairtrade support smallholder farms to adopt climate-smart practices, improve crop quality, and invest in their long-term resilience.

Ethical business partnerships: They work with brands, retailers, and governments, advising on ethical sourcing, certification, trade policy, and supply chain integrity.

Campaigning for trade justice: Through grassroot campaigner groups and lobbying, Fairtrade builds public support and pushes for fairer trade policies and practices.

How Fairtrade works

Fairtrade supports the people who grow your coffee, cocoa, bananas, tea, and more - using a system built around fairness, trust, and long-term relationships.

The Fairtrade system is made up of:

- **Three regional producer networks** representing more than 1,930 organisations of farmers and workers in Africa and the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- **More than 25 Fairtrade organisations** that market and promote Fairtrade products in their countries.
- **Fairtrade International**, the umbrella non-profit organisation that creates the internationally agreed Fairtrade Standards and coordinates Fairtrade worldwide.
- **FLOCERT**, the independent certifier for Fairtrade.

Real Stories, Real Impact

People are at the heart of Fairtrade. With almost two million farmers and workers in more than 71 countries forming part of the Fairtrade system, - each one has a story to tell. Their stories show what's possible when trade puts people and planet first. **This is Amani's story:**

As Deputy Secretary of the Women's Association at her co-operative, Amani Adèle Yao leads a growing group of women who are reshaping their roles in cocoa farming and household decision-making. '[Through] Fairtrade, our husbands gave us plots of land,' she says. 'Now we have become more independent.' This shift has meant that women can take on new responsibilities and contribute more directly to their households.

The Fairtrade Premium – an extra sum of money paid on top of the selling price – that Amani receives after selling her cocoa has been transformative. 'The [Fairtrade Premium funds] we receive after selling our cocoa are a big help. Before their arrival, our resources were running out. These bonuses allow us to cover unexpected expenses, such as medical care or children's school fees,' Amani explains.

