

**St Mary the Virgin—North
Shoebury**

JANUARY 2022



Jesus
KING OF KINGS

SATURDAY 1ST JANUARY—NEW YEAR'S DAY

MONDAY 3RD JANUARY—BANK HOLIDAY

WEDNESDAY 5TH JANUARY—12TH NIGHT

TUESDAY 25TH JANUARY—BURN'S NIGHT



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Change!

First of all, I hope everyone had a good Christmas, and I would like to wish you all a Happy and Blessed New Year.

Although I am writing this on Boxing Day Bank Holiday 2021, I am looking forward to 2022. The new year is a time to both evaluate the last year and anticipate the next year. I wonder what will be different in twelve month's time.

As St. Mary's Church goes into the new year, there are going to be many changes, some minor, some major. At the moment we do not know what they are going to be. But I wonder, what changes would you like to see at St. Mary's? I would love to know your hopes for the future. Maybe you could let me know when you see me, or maybe send me an e-mail.

I and the PCC are now preparing for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) which will be held before Easter. I know there seems lots of time, but Easter is not that far away. As my father used to say, "You can tell it is Christmas because there are Easter Eggs in the shops." I saw Hot Cross Buns in the shops before Christmas. Hot Cross Buns are of course traditionally eaten on Good Friday.

In preparation for the APCM, all the reports need to be written, gathered in and distributed in good time before the meeting.

At the APCM, the members of the church will read and hear the reports of the PCC. After the reports are read, we then elect a new PCC. Anyone who is on the Electoral Roll is able to stand to become a new member of the Parochial Church Council (PCC). If there is sufficient response, we will hold elections.

Legally the PCC is responsible for the financial affairs of the church parish and the maintenance of its assets, such as churches and church halls. The PCC also assists the clergy in the management of church affairs in the



This is a very important role in the life of the church. Nothing happens unless someone makes it happen. So if you feel that you would like to share in this, please talk to either Craig Hunter or Tony Pond, who are our Churchwardens.

If you are not on the Electoral Roll, please talk to Sue Arnold who will add your name.

On Sunday 26th December, "The Feast of Stephen", I preached about how in the early years following the crucifixion, the disciples of Jesus lost direction, and it appears that they forgot much of what Jesus taught them.

So they elected "outsiders" to do what Jesus taught them. Stephen was one of those "outsiders", and he was so successful they contrived to have him killed. He was stoned to death, and Saul, later known as Paul, was there. Stephen was the first Christian Martyr. I wonder if his death must have shocked Paul.

At St. Mary's, I hope that there are no "outsiders". Everyone who comes to church as part of the congregation is welcome and of course encouraged to take part in the running and development of the church.

It has been a really busy Christmas, in the two weeks either side of Christmas we must have welcomed about two hundred and fifty people to St. Mary's. We hope that everyone felt welcome, and part of the church.

As our church grows, there will inevitably be change. I hope and pray that you will become part of that change.

God bless

Rev David Pierce

Lead Minister – St. Mary's Church North Shoebury


28th December 2021



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Date for your diary—Saturday 22nd January—1-3pm

Lunch in the Church Hall

In November Tony & Craig attended an online course over three days which gave us many ideas for building and growing our church not only as a place of worship but as a resource for the local community. We would like to meet with you all - THE WHOLE CONGREGATION to:-

- **Build a plan for the coming 12 months**
- **Get your help and support, ideas and experience**
- **Share some of the materials from the course**

One of the foremost things we can do to build our strength and ensure our future as the Parish Church is to grow in numbers and in service to the local community.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!





**The Church garden work
party this month will be
on
Saturday
8TH JANUARY
from 2-4pm**



Thank you Wendy!

After many, many years of selflessly (often solely) planning, preparing, delivering, maintaining the floral displays in Church, Wendy has decided to step down as our flower co-ordinator. I am sure you will all join with me in thanking her for her dedication and talent in preparing for us many superb and memorable displays.





My dear Nephew Darren

Your annual accounts – all 146 pages, bound in their plastic covers and laid out in faultless detail – really are most impressive. I was rather envious to note you have a clergy ‘discretionary fund’; if I were to be given such a thing, my cellar of claret would improve immeasurably – although that is perhaps the reason why I am not given one.

The size of your office expenses makes me wonder if you have a staff rivalling that of the European Community. I suppose that at least you are doing your bit for job creation. Our dear Miss Marigold, who spends two hours a week randomly filing pieces of paper, mistyping rotas and failing to re-order stationery, is only rewarded by being the first to find out who are booking marriages and having their babies baptised – and if they do not happen in that order, that will be another piece of information remembered for future use. All this is information beyond the price of jewels in village communities.

Our accounts have more by way of charm than they do of accuracy, generally consisting of one sheet of handwritten paper. There are only ever three copies for circulation, as that is the limit of Colonel Denster’s carbon paper. It seems to be an unalterable tradition that they never balance, until we find the following year that the missing £20 was found months later under the teapot on the mantelpiece. One footnote to this was the occasion when the Colonel suspected an unaccountable £5 had been eaten by his Labrador. Our greatest expenses by far are categorised as ‘miscellaneous’, which is a catch-all for everything that our treasurer is unable to recall where it really went.

The thousands paid on church maintenance and diocesan fees are nodded through without comment – but if the money spent on Easter lilies or packets of tea for the Summer Fete increases by anything more than 50 pence, there will be much agonised debate and speculation about whether this is an indication of money laundering.

I see that your accounts were professionally audited. Fortunately, it does not matter too much about the accuracy of our own, as I have an arrangement with our auditor who lives in the village: if he refuses to sign them off, then I refuse to baptise his grandchildren.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

If you would like to sponsor a magazine, for a birthday, anniversary, in memory or for thanksgiving, please contact Francine.

Thank you Craig for sponsoring this month's Magazine in memory of others.

£35 colour gift aided or not, would cover the professional printing of a monthly magazine.

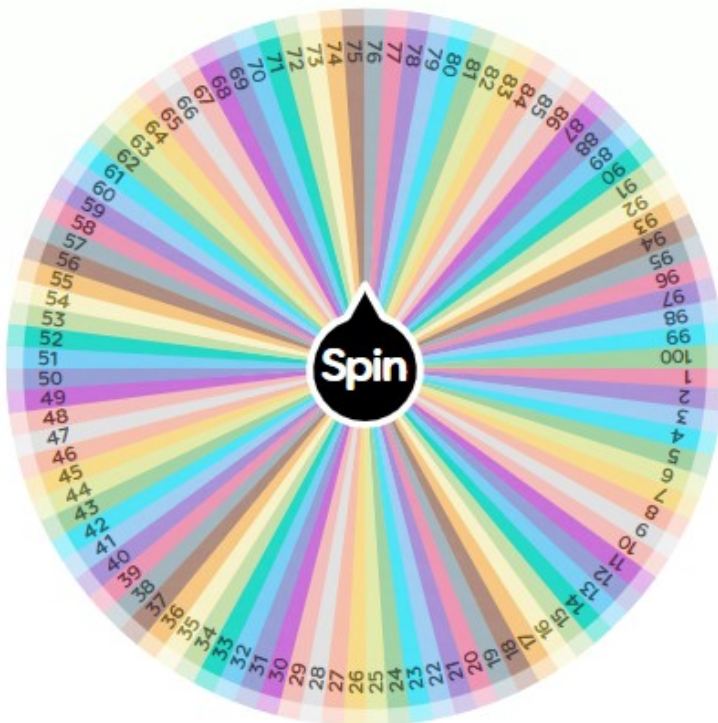


HAVE YOU ANYTHING FOR THIS MAGAZINE?

Thank you to David and Francine for their contributions. If you have anything which would be of interest, please contact the editor, Craig Hunter early in the month, so that your space can be reserved.

Please send any material for the Magazine by the 17th of the month

numbers 1 - 100



**Winning numbers
in DECEMBER were:**

1st Prize £20.25

Number 97 DP

2nd Prize £12.25

Number 20 JH

ST MARY'S LOTTERY 2022

We are hoping that everyone will continue into 2022 and you will receive an email reminding you to subscribe early in January. Please remember to invite friends family and colleagues to join us with the chance of winning up to £25 each month!

All of your numbers have been preserved and payment will be best made by bank transfer to:-

- **Account name: North Shoebury Parish Church Council**
- **Sort code: 20-79-73** **Account number: 00679666**

St Mary's Church Hall

Week Day Regular Hirers/Activities

Monday	Strollerclase Strolling to 50's music 6-7,000 steps (3 miles) Fun, friendly, all ages, no gym kit required £4 per hour No need to book 10 -11 am & 11.15am -12.15pm Contact: Karen/Tracy 07745 154065	Barling & Lt. Wakering Women's Institute 1st Monday of month, 2 pm Contact Phyl Wickenden 01702 582185 USA Knit & Natter 3rd Monday of the month Contact: Jane E: jvpartridge@gmail.com	Kels Bod Squad Ladies bootcamp 7.30 – 8.30 pm Contact: Kelle 07847 249618
Tuesday	USA – Local History 2nd Tuesday of month 10.15 am to 12.15 pm Contact: Mick 01702 622356	St Mary's Bloomers Floristry group 1st Tuesday of month 2pm to 4pm Contact: Jane E: jvpartridge@gmail.com USA – Crafting 2nd Tuesday of month 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Janet 07810 879673 USA – Gardening Group 3rd Tuesday of month 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Liz 07791 340859	
Wednesday	USA Ukulele Improvers 2nd Wednesday 09.45 – 11.45am Contact: Peter Bone 07837 562910		
Thursday	St Mary's Community Coffee Morning 10.30 am to 12 noon All welcome	USA Floristry 1st Thursday of month 1pm – 3.30pm Contact Jane E: jvpartridge@gmail.com	Kels Bod Squad Ladies bootcamp 7.30 – 8.30 pm Contact: Kelle 07847 249618
Friday	Marriott's Tai Chi 11am – 12.00 pm Contact Tracey Cain 01702 290461		

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A New Year's Resolution from Micah

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression...? He has shown you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you: To act justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:7-8)

I quite like olive oil; not the Popeye character but the cooking ingredient. Although I am not sure what I would do with even one river of oil, and I have nowhere to put a ram.

Still, this is one of my favourite Bible passages, and it is an ideal one for lawyers. It sums up in a very simple but helpful way what true religion should be. That makes it a good verse to start the year. The message is simple: God does not want empty promises or lip service, but our real devotion, from our heart.

What does it mean for us?

Do justly - Be honest and open in our dealings with others this year. Be dependable. We should say when things are going wrong and be appreciative when they go well. Be fair in our dealings, whether at home or at work or in church. Keep confidences and never pass on gossip.

Love mercy - Give people the benefit of doubt, do not take advantage of others and do not always criticise or complain. Accept apologies and explanations where we can, and be generous.

Walk humbly - Quietly get on with things. Do not make a big show of what we do.

Lastly, we are *required* to do these things. They are not options or choices but requirements. Like many requirements in the Bible, they are simple to understand, but not always simple to do. Happy New Year.



St Mary's Church Hall

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Casual hire fees £12.50 p/h, £12.50 admin fee + £50 refundable damage deposit. Contact franchisejohnson@gmail.com for hire form and details. October 2021|

Heating the Church

Here is some chilling news about the church's heating and electricity bills: they could be doubling this year. The energy crisis is hitting the UK hard, and churches are not protected by the domestic energy cap.

That could leave many churches in the same plight as St George's in Rugby, which fears it will have to pay £10,000 for gas and electricity in 2022 – double what it paid last year.

Some churches have already turned off all their heating, apart from pew heaters for services.

We will have our contractor Masons working in the church from Monday 17th January to update our electrical system and lower the heaters, hopefully making things much warmer—as long as we can afford to turn it on!

Call for action to free Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

The Bishop of Chelmsford, Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, is calling upon the British Government to repay its £400-million debt to Iran, and take immediate action to secure the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe was first jailed in Iran five years ago, accused of crimes that involved plotting against the Iranian government. Last year she lost her appeal against a second prison sentence and was then ordered to return to prison for another year, with a further year of a travel ban. Late last year her husband engaged in a 21-day hunger strike outside the Foreign Office, to try and persuade the British Government to take action.

Britain owes Iran £400 million over the purchase of Challenger tanks. It is an acknowledged historical debt. It is widely assumed that the debt is linked to the continued imprisonment of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.



CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries, including weddings, baptisms, blessings etc.
please, in the first instance, contact Pat Fitch.

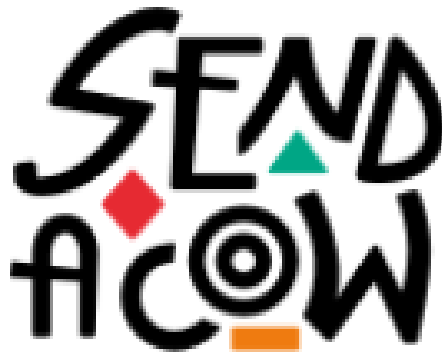
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Phone numbers are all area code 01702 unless stated

Lead Minister	Revd. David Pierce	07305 710265 david@revdavidpierce.net
Churchwardens	Craig Hunter	07932 503644 chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk
	Tony Pond	07960 678219 tonypond899@gmail.com
Hall Bookings	Phyl Wickenden	582185
	Francine Johnson	589244
PCC Secretary	Michelle Waters	589026
Church Finance & Gift Aid Secretary	Francine Johnson	589244
Electoral Roll	Sue Arnold	586453
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Flowers co-ordinator	Yvonne & Jane	
Social, Hall & Fundraising	Francine Johnson	589244
	Phyl Wickenden	582185
Readers, Chalice Assistants & Sides persons Rota Parish Magazine	Churchwardens Craig Hunter	07932 503644 chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk
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THE CHURCH WEB SITE

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Our first quarter fundraising was a resounding success - thank you everyone who made it possible by contributing money, time and commitment.

• Hamper Raffle	£190
• Birthday fundraiser	£245
• Coffee Morning	£ 50
• Cash donations	£150
TOTAL	£635

Sue and Michelle will be leading and announcing our designated charity for the first quarter of 2022. Please generously support this effort to meet or surpass the amount raised last quarter.



Our sponsored Charity effort for January—March will be The Children's Society



Campaign

Help us create a society that is built for all children. Together we will listen to young people, give them a voice, and campaign for the change they need.



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[The Children's Society | UK children's charity
\(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)



“Now, Joseph, is that really what your teacher taught you?” his mother asked, somewhat alarmed.

"We're looking for something to help us survive our church's early morning Winter services"

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When you were married, your partner brought you here.

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