

St Mary the Virgin—North Shoebury

JUNE 2022




**SUNDAY 5TH JUNE—PENTECOST
SUNDAY 12TH JUNE—TRINITY SUNDAY
SUNDAY 19TH JUNE—FATHER'S DAY**

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My last “Lead Minister’s” letter

The last three and a half years have been a mixture of hard work and great joy. In this time the church has grown and changed. Often as I look at the list of Vicars, Rectors, Ministers and Curates on the church door, I wonder what changes took place in their own times. The major influence during my ministry here has of course been the Coronavirus Pandemic.

As one of those who in the early days was badly affected, but survived, I am still very cautious. Each day as we share Morning Prayer, the words “As we rejoice in the gift of this new day”, have a much deeper meaning for me now. Until the virus, am not sure that I gave sufficient thanks to God for the gift of life. As a consequence of this, and my ministry here, my life priorities are now very different.

Although we hear that we have seen the end of the pandemic, and the invasion of Ukraine has pushed it out of the news, about a thousand people a week are still dying as a consequence of COVID-19. Once again, I ask you all to take care. Wearing those “awful” masks might be tiresome, but if lives can be saved surely that is price worth paying. One question I have often asked is, “Do we love our neighbour?” Our response to this challenge is telling, isn’t it.

Coronavirus has had, and is still having, an impact on all those whose lives are changed either as a result of bereavement or the terrible legacy of “Long Covid”. It has added great pressure to many relationships, and for many has changed their life priorities.

I have spent much time listening to those who simply needed to unburden their concerns and fears. But it is the role of the church to listen, and to continue to listen, and to help people through “the valley of the shadow of death”.

On the bright side, in the last three and a half years we have been able to welcome many new people into membership of the church community at St. Mary’s. My life has been much enriched by them, and indeed by all the members of our church. The growth of the Thursday Morning service of Holy Communion and the Community Coffee Morning has been very encouraging.

We have been in this place for over eight hundred years, it is our choice whether or not we will be here in eight hundred year’s time.

Two projects were completed in the time I was associated with St Mary's, but for which I can take no credit. One was the completion of the rebuilding of the wall along the car park. It has made our church look so much more appealing. The other major project was the rebuilding of the spire. Both of these make the church look more open and inviting.

We have changed the heating in the church, and I hope that this will make those cold winter mornings easier. We have also improved the lighting within the church making it a much brighter space.

The lighting in the Church Hall is also going to be improved very soon and we will be able to say goodbye to those awful flickering fluorescent lights. We may also finally be able to replace the windows there as well.

These and other tasks that have been completed in the last few years mean that we have also earned the "A Rocha Eco Church Silver Award". I have written about it in a recent Weekly Newsletter, but it is a major achievement for which we all need to be pleased.

This important award marks us out as being a church that cares for God's creation. I think it is difficult to say that we care for one part of creation, but not another part. It is right to show care for each other, and for the place in which we all live.

I retire at the end of June, so we now both face new futures. I am not quite sure how I will fill my days, but I am looking forward to the challenge, and to find what part God will play in the rest of my life.

In my first "minister's letter" to you, I used the words in the style that Paul used as he began one of his letters. This time I am going to finish by using the words in the style he used to close his Second Letter to the Corinthians.

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

God bless

David

Revd. David Pierce

23rd May 2022



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By the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the C of E.

A time to stand up for truth?

An important exhibition is running at the British Library in London until August 21st. It's an exhibition taking a timely look at the news and the role it plays in our society. I'd love many Christians to visit it, *writes the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest and a former communications director for the C of E.*

It comes as 'the news' has never been more contentious and, sadly, the public's trust in journalists – in the UK and around the world – remains low. Yet the increasing persecution of journalists by totalitarian states across the globe shows the importance of a free press to the flourishing of democracy. As Christians, we have a special calling to stand up for truth and, I believe, to support journalists and news organisations seeking to communicate that truth – often in the face of violence, threats and murder.

I've been involved in a project, based in the Anglican Diocese of St Albans, north of London, for the past several years, looking at post-truth, fake news and disinformation. We have brought together a wide group of people to examine issues around post-truth, and to help to formulate a Christian response.

Key findings include the importance of keeping conversations going including with people with whom we disagree, being willing to ask questions about what we are being told, and to refuse to succumb to cynicism. Most importantly, to stand for truth in a climate of mounting disinformation.

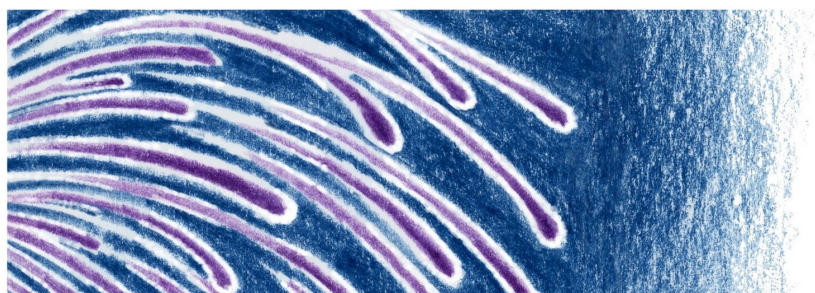
So I welcome the exhibition, 'Breaking the News', the British Library's first major exhibition to spotlight the role news plays in our society. The exhibition aims to prompt big questions including:

How do your opinions and beliefs influence the news you choose?

When does news become propaganda?

Why do we devour crime stories and sensationalism?

Who decides which stories to suppress and which to spotlight?



**June
2022**

At a time when the global trustworthiness of journalists ranks at just 23 percent – with only bankers, business leaders, advertisers, government ministers and politicians ranking beneath them – it’s time for Christians and all people of faith and goodwill to look at how we receive our news, and how we view it.

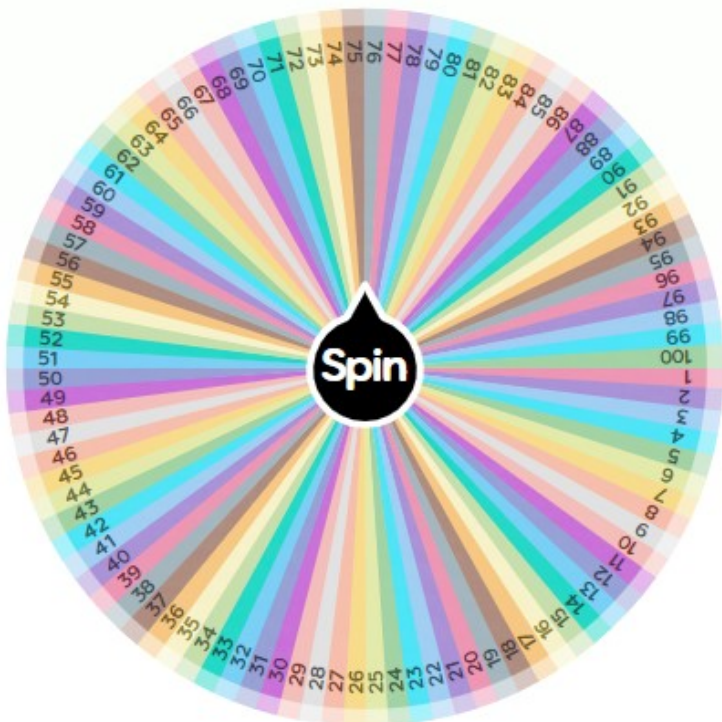
Making a visit to this high-profile exhibition could be the first step in re-evaluating the importance of reliable news sources and the role Christians could play in supporting diverse and trustworthy media.

HAVE YOU ANYTHING FOR THIS MAGAZINE?

Thank you to David and Suzanne 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

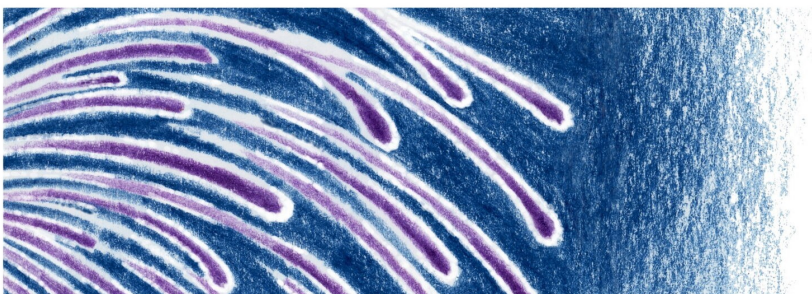


Winning numbers

in MAY are

1st Prize 48 AW

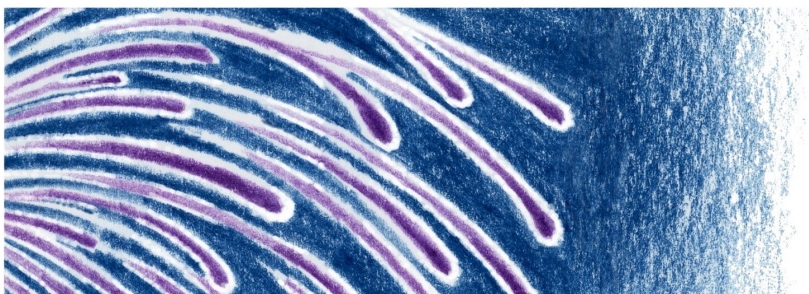
2nd Prize WS 88



**June
2022**



**The Church garden work
party this month will be
on
Saturday
11TH JUNE
from 2-4pm**



**June
2022**

St James the Least of All

Beware all donations!

The Rectory

St James the Least



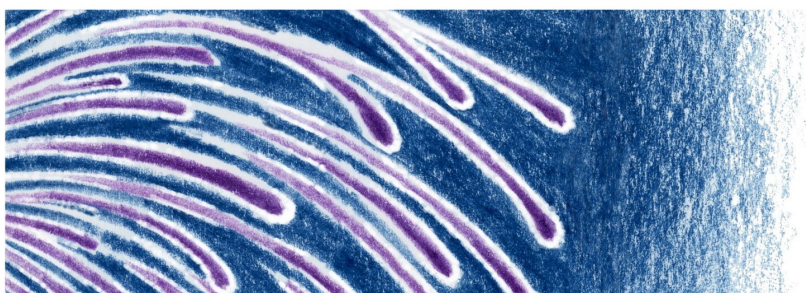
My dear Nephew Darren

This has been an unusual month: we have moved from hysterical excitement to deep disappointment within the space of days.

For many years, our vestry has displayed an oil painting generously donated by the Dowager Duchess of Stansby – given to us, I suspect, because her son, the tenth Duke, would not allow it in his house. It was supposed to depict Daniel in the lions' den, although I always thought it looked more like a prospective adopter visiting a dog rescue centre. The Dowager was less than pleased when it wasn't made the centrepiece in the sanctuary, but we managed to persuade her that her exceptional work of art would be safer from theft if locked away.

Then - our cleaner happened to knock it off the wall. If it had landed in her bucket of disinfectant and been totally destroyed, it would have been a sadness I suspect I could have learned to bear. But something more interesting happened. Some of the Dowager's oil was chipped off – to reveal a painting underneath of what looked like a cherub.

The cleaner told the churchwarden, who instructed her not to tell anyone about the find. This inevitably meant that, within the hour, the entire parish knew of the discovery of what had already been transformed into a priceless pre-Raphaelite treasure. Our churchwarden has yet to learn the fact that if you tell someone something in complete confidence, they assume it means they can only tell one other person at a time.



June
2022

By evening, mutually opposed camps had already formed. Miss Timmins wanted the treasure to be placed in a side chapel, as a shrine, preferably with candles permanently burning beside it. She envisaged St James the Least of All becoming a place of pilgrimage, and that this yet-to-be revealed cherub may work miracles of healing. She was already asking for opinions about where the car park should be built to cater for the thousands of tourists who would soon be flocking here. Another group wanted to sell it as soon as possible and use the money to repair our church tower. A third group insisted the fortune it would raise be given to African missionaries. Meanwhile, the tenth Duke was consulting his solicitors to see how he might get the canvas back to his castle.

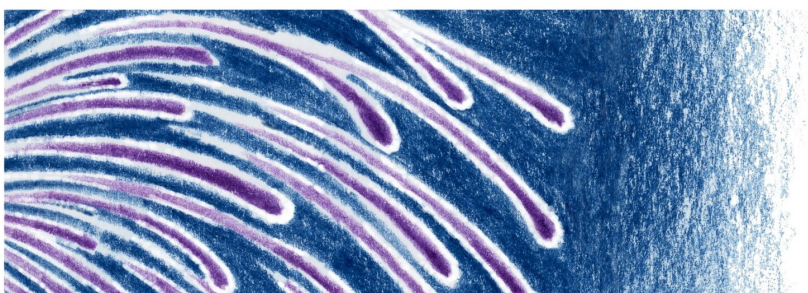
We compromised by getting the thing X-rayed, to see what work of art lay underneath. It turned out to be by a local artist who had painted an advert for the village pharmacist to sell his own brand of gripe water.

Shrines, towers and good deeds were quietly forgotten and the last we heard of the tenth Duke was that he was consulting a second set of solicitors to see if he can get out of paying the first set for the work that they had done to retrieve the painting.

**Your loving uncle,
Eustace**

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

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



**June
2022**

St Mary's Church Hall Week Day Regular Hirers/Activities

Monday	<p>Strollercise Strolling to 50's music 6-7,000 steps (3 miles) Fun, friendly, all ages, no gym kit required 10 -11am and 11.15am -12.15pm Contact: Karen/Tracy 07745 154065</p>	<p>Barling & Lt. Wakering Women's Institute 1st Monday of month, 2 pm Contact Phyl Wickenden 01702 582185</p> <p>U3A Singing Group 2nd & 4th Monday 1.45pm to 3.45pm Contact: Colin E: colin.edwards5@btopenworld.com</p> <p>U3A Knit & Natter 3rd Monday of the month Contact: Jane E: jvpartridge@gmail.com</p>	
Tuesday		<p>St Mary's Bloomers Floristry group 1st Tuesday of month 2pm to 4pm Contact: Jane E: jvpartridge@gmail.com</p> <p>U3A – Crafting 2nd Tuesday of month 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Janet 07810 879673</p>	<p>HIIT Fitness Class 6-7pm Contact Michelle 07903 527799</p>
Wednesday	<p>U3A Ukelele Improvers 2nd Wednesday 09.45 – 11.45am Contact: Peter Bone 07837 562910</p>		
Thursday	<p>St Mary's Community Coffee Morning 10.30 am to 12 noon All welcome</p>	<p>U3A Floristry 1st Thursday of month 1pm – 3.30pm Contact Jane E: jvpartridge@gmail.com</p>	
Friday	<p>Marriott's Tai Chi 11am – 12.00 pm Contact Tracey Cain 07730 610599</p>		

Casual hire fees £13 p/h, £13 admin fee + £50 refundable damage deposit.

Contact ContactStMarysHall@gmail.com for hire form and details.

JUNE 2022

Fathers come in five different types

This month brings Father's Day. The Office for National Statistics tells us that of the UK's 68 million people in 2021, 49% are men (33 million). It also tells us that there were 35 million married couples with children in 2021 and nine million cohabiting couples with children. That all adds up to many millions of fathers in the UK.

Of course, there are many kinds of fathers. In a recent study by the (Christian) American Barna Group on fatherhood, they identified five types:

The *irresponsible father*, who "has literally zero involvement with his kids... they don't even know who he is."

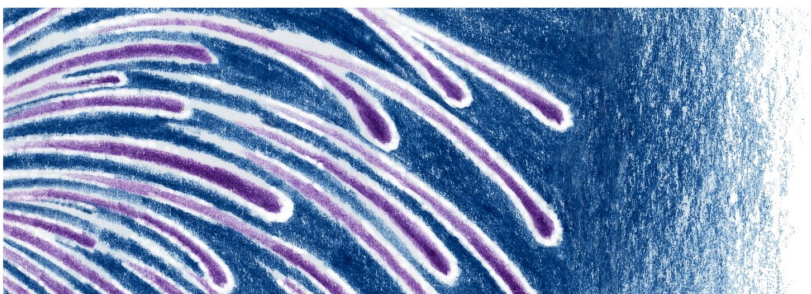
The *ignorant father* "doesn't know anything about being a father, and he doesn't try to learn or improve."

The *inconsistent father* "is torn by personal ambition. He has the capability of doing better at this fathering thing, but instead he prioritises his own job, career, and hobbies."

The *involved father* shows up for his kids in a positive way, but "he never seeks to understand specifically who his children are, and why God gave them to him."

Finally, there is the *intentional father*. He "seeks to understand the children God has given him and wants to form them into young persons who can fulfil their purpose. He sees parenting as central to his call before God and does it with all of his might."

All these types of fathers are probably present in our own community, and so the categories might form the background for thinking about Father's Day this month (Sunday, 19th June) How can we encourage our local fathers to make the most of their vital role?



June
2022

Some simple tricks to save energy

The on-going rise in energy costs is eye-watering. Here are some well-proven ways to save money:

Always turn off the lights when you leave a room. Forget about maintaining an 'ambience' in your home. Turn down your thermostat by at least a degree. Or two. Or three? Get some LED bulbs – they are six times more efficient, last much longer, and use 90 per cent less energy than old-style bulbs.

Shower rather than bath. Don't worry about a bit of dirt on your children. It can strengthen their immune systems and help prevent them from becoming allergic to everything.

Don't boil the kettle all the time – it eats up about six per cent of all your electricity per year. Why not consider making a pot rather than a mug, so that you drink as much overall, but less often?

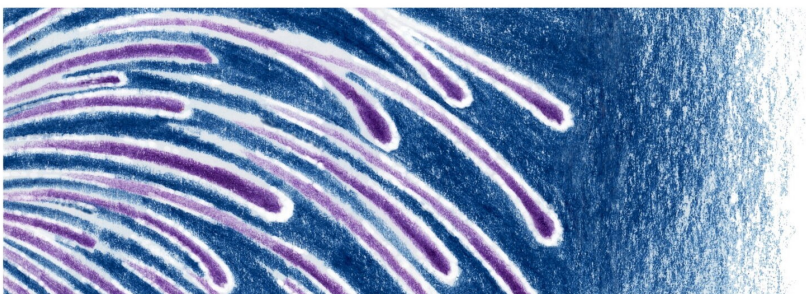
Make a draught excluder - you know, the ones that look like sausage dogs. Don't turn up the heat to combat a draught, fix the draught. Keep doors closed. If you don't need to heat your WHOLE house, don't.

Put some more clothes on. We all know people who like to wear only tee-shirts at home, even in winter. If they belong to your family, get them to put on a jumper, cuddle the dog, wrap up in a blanket, or run up and down the stairs, not turn up the heating.

Set your washing machine at 30. Washing at 30 rather than 40 degrees can reduce your energy consumption by 60 per cent per cycle, according to the energy experts.

Use your electric clothes dryer less. It can account for five per cent of all household electricity. Far cheaper to buy a washing line! Use your oven only when you can fill it up. Never cook just one thing at a time. And when you are done, leave the oven door open to help heat the house.

All of these are small steps, but together they could make a big difference this year.



June
2022

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

This month we celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. She is the longest reigning monarch in British history. Up until recently she attended church every week and still did a full week's work at the age of 96!

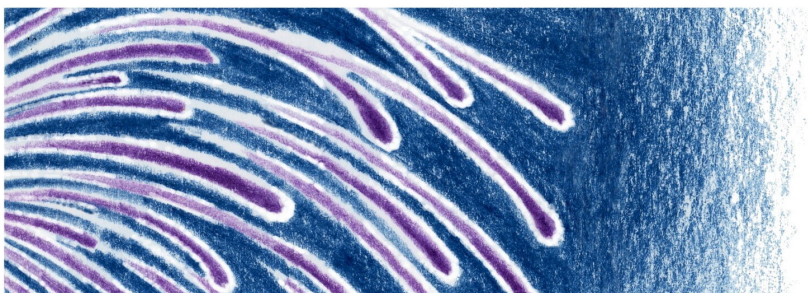


It is her commitment to serving God and the nation which stands out in her life. Even before she became Queen, she made a promise, which she has kept for over 75 years: *'I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service'*

(21st birthday broadcast, 21 April 1947).

What is the secret of the Queen's consistency of character and service? In 2002 she said this: *"I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God."* These are wise words from somebody who draws her strength from the Christian Faith and can inspire all of us who want to make our lives count!

The Queen has been an example of joyful, wise, and generous service on behalf of others all her life. Six months before her coronation she asked the nation and Commonwealth to *"pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my life."* Paul urges us to pray for all in authority, *"that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."* (1 Timothy 2:2).



June
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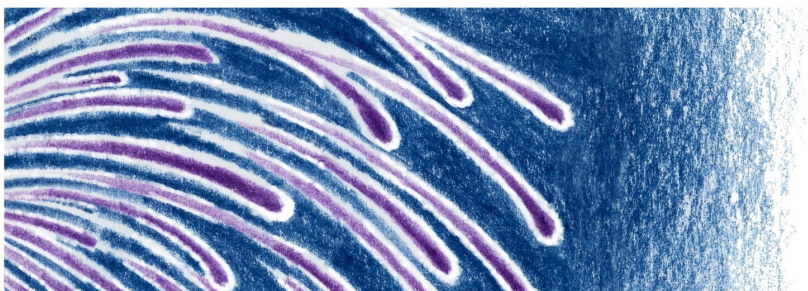
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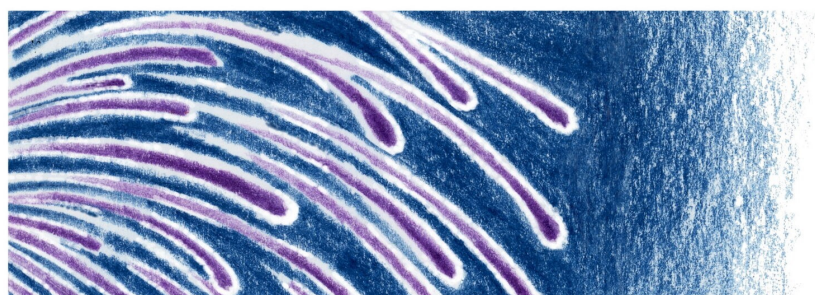
June
2022

Thank you Suzanne for coordinating our application to Eci-Church and gaining our Silver Award status!

What Is Eco Church? From meditation to insulation, from location to invocation, loving God and his creation should impact everything in our church lives. This is why A Rocha UK has developed Eco Church – an award scheme for churches of all denominations in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that they care for God’s earth. With a whole suite of supporting resources, Eco Church will help you ‘go green’ in all areas of your church life, from worship to building management, outreach to personal lifestyle. And the work you do will all count towards a prestigious Bronze, Silver or Gold Eco Church Award. We really hope your church will take part in this exciting initiative, which will challenge and equip you to care for God’s world in all areas of your life together

Who Are We? A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working to equip Christians and churches to protect and restore the environment – for God, nature and all people. We aim to: inspire individuals and families, equip churches and church leaders, build partnerships and manage land for nature and people. In the face of accelerating climate change and species loss, we need more than ever to take action to protect and care for nature today.

Our certificate is on the notice board and we will shortly receive our plaque which will be mounted near the church entrance.



**June
2022**

ECO CHURCH

AN A ROOMA-UK PROJECT

Silver Eco Church Award Certificate

This is to certify that

St Mary the Virgin, North Shoebury

has been a Member Church Award in recognition of their efforts to care for God's earth in each of the following areas (as applicable):

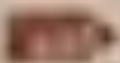
- Worship and Teaching
- Management of Buildings and Land
- Community and Social Engagement
- Other:

Andy Allmon
CEO ROOMA-UK

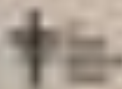
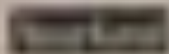
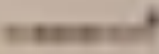
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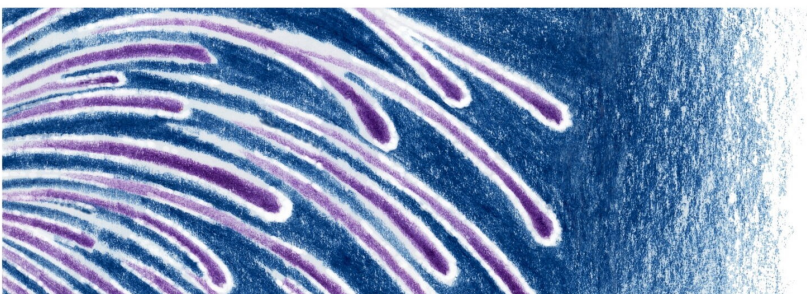
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The next steps towards a Gold award

- Church hosting visitors from Christian environmental organisations (Christian Aid, Tearfund, Green Christian, John Ray Initiative);
- Church arranging visits from local environmentalists;
- Church hosting a green fair, showcasing local produce, local environmental issues etc;
- Church participating in “toilet twinning”; and
- Church considering generating renewable energy on premises i.e. air/ground source heat pump (solar panels probably ambitious!).

We will investigate the options for St Mary’s with the PCC and the congregation.



June
2022

CONTACT DETAILS

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

01702 585289

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	hall@stmarynorthshoebury.org.uk	
PCC Secretary Church Finance & Gift Aid Secretary	Michelle Waters	589026
	Francine Johnson	589244
Electoral Roll Church Diaries Flowers co-ordinator	Sue Arnold	586453
	Wendy Shipperley	588319
	Yvonne & Jane	
Social & Fundraising	Francine Johnson	589244
	Phyl Wickenden	582185
Readers, Chalice Assistants & Sides persons Rota Parish Magazine	Churchwardens Craig Hunter	07932 503644 chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk
Churchyard	Tony Pond	
Safeguarding Officer	Pat Fitch	585289

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