



UPDATE #26

HARVEST THANKSGIVING SUNDAY — this weekend

This Sunday is our Harvest Thanksgiving Service. Do please join us at either 9:30am or 11:15am, as we celebrate...

Gifts for Beacon House. At both services this Sunday there will be an opportunity to present Harvest Gifts, which are then used to support Beacon House, a charity helping the homeless in Colchester (for more information: please see beaconhouseministries.org.uk).

Gift Day Pledge Forms. These forms can be offered up in church this weekend, or posted if preferred. Thank you to all those who have reviewed their giving this year (whatever conclusion you have come to!). Please continue to pray that the the Lord might provide for all our needs as a church, especially our financial needs.

THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS — Wednesday 21st October

The Annual Church Meetings will take place on Zoom (meeting ID: 852 9966 7982 // passcode: 667404), at 7:30pm on 21st October, according to the new regulations introduced by the Church of England this autumn. Please contact the Church Office if you have any questions or concerns about these Meetings, and please pray for the process of elections and appointments. There will be vacancies for 2 Churchwardens, for 1 Deanery Synod Representative, and for 6 people to serve on the PCC. If anyone would like an informal conversation about any of the roles, or about the process of nominating someone for one of the roles, please feel free to contact Mark (572641 or towncentrevicar@gmail.com).

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Shoebbox season is here! *Operation Christmas Child* hopes to collect enough shoebbox gifts to reach children in need around the world this year again. A simple shoebbox filled with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items, packed with love and fuelled by prayer can have a huge impact. This year, there are two ways to send shoebbox gifts:

1. **Traditional packing.** Despite the current circumstances it is still easy to pack shoeboxes in the traditional way and take them to a nearby reduced-handling, socially-distant drop-off location. The National Collection Week will be 9th-16th November.
2. **Shoebbox Online.** If getting out is tricky this year, *Shoebbox Online* makes it easy to get involved from home. Simply select your gifts online and they will be packed and shipped for you. Deadline for *Online* shoe boxes is 31st Dec.

For more information, please visit the Samaritan Purse website ([click here](#)). The church office has some preprinted shoeboxes; if you would like to collect one (or more!), please contact Bernice.

'JERICHO ROAD' MINISTRIES — an update from the Working Group

Last week, some of us met up via Zoom to explore the possibilities in partnering with Beacon House and reaching out to the homeless in the town centre. If you would like to join our little working group, or if you would like to be kept in touch with developments, please do contact Dan Watts (dpwatts@essex.ac.uk / 866630).

NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- We are now offering two services on a Sunday morning to allow more people to attend. Everyone is welcome to either service, but booking is still required. You can book via our website (under Service booking), or contact Bernice (572529 or towncentreparishoffice@gmail.com), but please book before 10:00am on the Friday before the service.
- *Equip* events from Oak Hill College aim to help us live out our faith in our daily lives. Held online on Thursday 15th October at 7.30pm (repeated on Saturday 17th October at 9.30am), College Director Dan Strange will be speaking on 'Engaging our culture for Christ'. The event will look at what culture is, how we can make sense of it and how we can engage with it faithfully and fruitfully. For further details and to book tickets (£5 each) please [contact Oak Hill](#).
- There will not be a prayer meeting on WhatsApp on Wednesday 21st October because of the AGM that evening.
- The first meeting of the new PCC will be on Tuesday 3rd November, via Zoom, starting at 7:30pm.

SOME READINGS AND THE COLLECT FOR HARVEST

In a change from our regular pattern, here are four passages reflecting on the biblical theme of the harvest. Over the coming days, perhaps read a passage each day, reflect on the questions beside it, and finish with the Collect.

- Matthew 13.1-43 — what spiritual truths does the harvest demonstrate? which is the greatest challenge for you here?
- 2 Corinthians 9.6-15 — what lessons does the harvest teach us about life? what attitudes are commended here?
- Matthew 9.35-38 — what is the harvest likened to by Jesus here? how should this affect our prayers?
- Psalm 107.33-38 — how does the Lord display his righteousness? how should we respond to the Lord (see 107.43-43)?
- Isaiah 17.10-14 — what is the warning here?! why don't people see this more clearly?

The Collect for Harvest Sunday: Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well being; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday 18th October [the 19th Sunday after Trinity]

- 9:30am — **The Nine-Thirty Service** (in church, booking required)
- 10:00am — **Church Family Worship Online** (available on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#))
- 11:15am — **The Eleven-Fifteen Service** (in church, booking required)

Wednesday 21st October

- 7:30pm — **Annual Church Meetings** (via Zoom: meeting ID: 852 9966 7982 // passcode: 667404)

Sunday 25th October [the 20th Sunday after Trinity]

- 9:30am — **The Nine-Thirty Service** (in church, booking required)
- 10:00am — **Church Family Worship Online** (available on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#))
- 11:15am — **The Eleven-Fifteen Service** (in church, booking required)