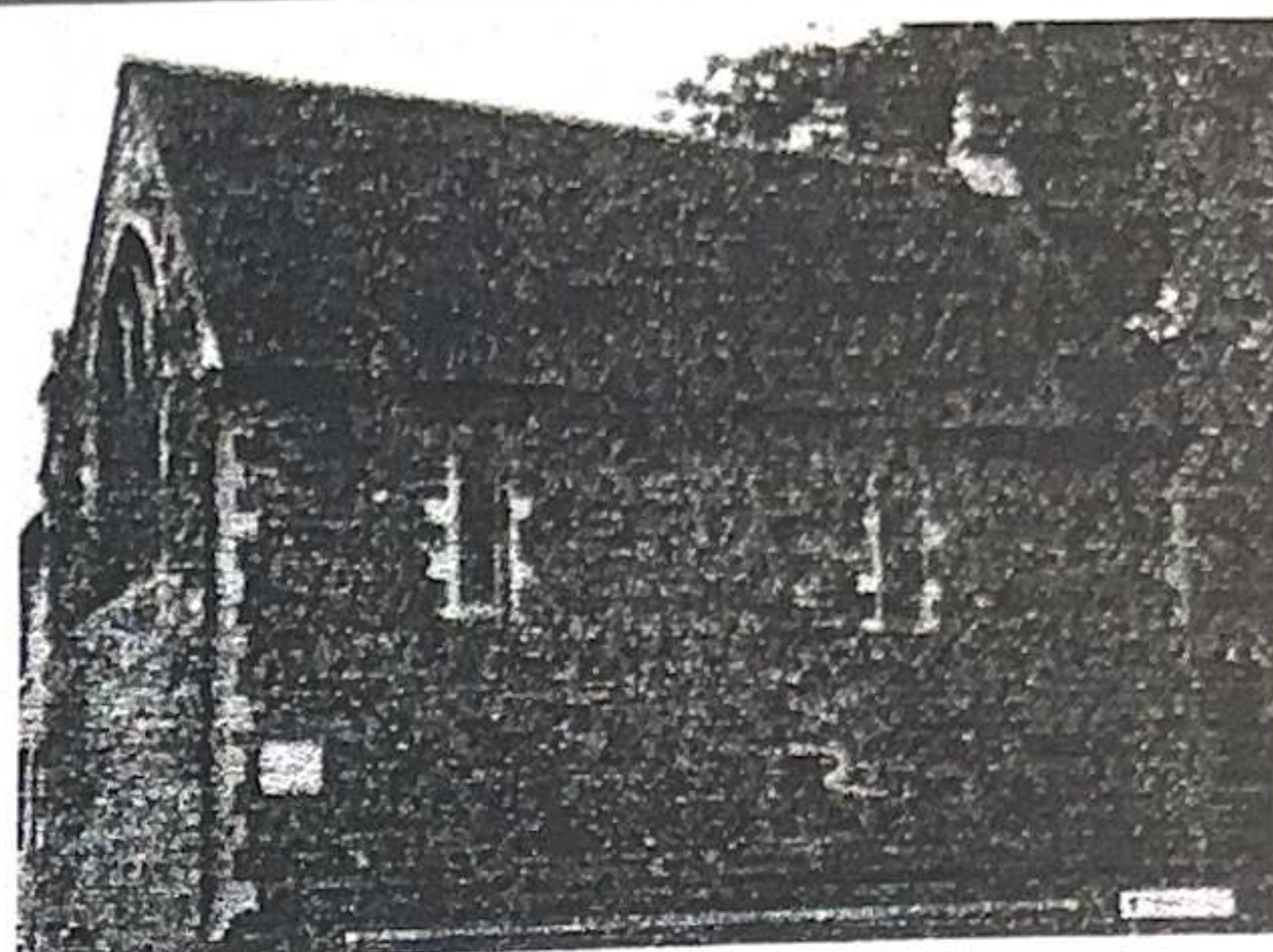


**Ancient Orthodox church – associated with St Helen herself – now in the care of Colchester Orthodox Parish**

# At last – we have St Helen's Chapel ! Our first weekend there is 18/19 November in the Year of Grace 2000



**T**his month of November we are honoured to take over one of Colchester's most historic buildings: St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh Street. It probably dates from the time of Offa, King of Mercia 758-794, overlord of Essex. Certainly it was old in 1076: we know that because it needed to be rebuilt that year.

St Helen, Empress of Rome, was a great Christian, attractive in her stature, accomplishments, and holiness. Through the centuries the people of these islands loved her - and claimed she was British, born in Colchester.

The townspeople here held that she was born at the Castle, and that she had actually built this very Chapel where we will worship, though probably it was erected centuries after her time.

At the Reformation it ceased to be used for worship, at various times becoming a school, Quaker meeting-house, and workshop. It has been restored on a number of occasions, the last being in 1886, under the direction of the great architect William Butterfield, when it became a meeting-place for the Anglican Clergy. More recently it has been offices, but for some years now merely a storeroom for the Castle Museum, entirely closed to the public.

Now at the beginning of the third millennium it is being generously handed to us for a period of two years (possibly extending to four), for the worship of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ – the purpose for which it was built and consecrated, its real and abiding *raison d'être*.

For this Parish, for the Holy Orthodox cause - and, we believe, for the beautiful and beloved Chapel itself - this is a moment of historic significance.

**The year 2000 is indeed a Year of Grace.**

God, his Holy Mother, and St Helen, "Patroness of our Parish and City", be praised!

*Father Alexander*

*This Newsletter's publication has been held back, to allow for news of the move*

## OUR HEARTFELT THANKS

**S**incere thanks to all who have helped us arrive at this stupendous and moving moment, including:

- the Colchester Borough Council, Councillors and Officers, especially the Museums Department, for being glad to free the Chapel and allow our use;
  - the Anglican Diocese, for allowing our use;
  - the Bishop of Colchester, and local clergy of all denominations, for their support and encouragement;
  - Bob Russell, Member of Parliament for Colchester, for his help and enthusiasm;
  - Stephen Lansley, our hard-pressed Solicitor;
- Last, but certainly by no means least - rather the opposite:*
- the Colchester Co-operative Society, particularly the Funeral Department, who have most generously accommodated us for four full years.

May we prove worthy of the privilege we have been given, restoring this wonderful Chapel to the worship for which it was built and consecrated. We recognise the trust being placed in us, and pray the Chapel will continue to be used for Christian worship for ever and always.

## THE MONASTERY'S WORK & PRAYER STRENGTHEN OURS

I am sure you will be delighted that the icons for the new iconostasis have been prepared for us at the Monastery of St John the Baptist at Tolleshunt Knights. Pray for our friends the Fathers and Sisters, as they pray for us.

Read over-page how YOU can:

- Pray and worship
- Help with painting, woodwork etc
- Help with sewing etc
- Make a gift, big or small, for the various items needed for worship

**TIMES  
FOR FIRST  
SERVICES  
OVERLEAF**

**CLACTON:** Because of the starting date at St Helen's, I am sorry to have to  
**CANCEL THE NOVEMBER LITURGY**

**Come, worship with us in this most historic Chapel !**

*Orthodox Parish of  
St Helen of Colchester*

NEWSLETTER 60

NOVEMBER 2000



# - THERE'S A LOT TO DO - Please help prepare and furnish our new Church

We are privileged to set up the first unquestionably Orthodox Parish Church in North Essex for almost 1000 years, using a building dating from the Orthodox period of British history. For Orthodox use, furnishings must be purchased, practical work done – and, more important than anything, much prayer must be offered.

## Here's how YOU can help:

**Practical work:** Turn up to help with:

- Decorating and carpentry (especially constructing the altar floor and iconostasis), if possible immediately we get in there, from Wednesday 8 November at 9.30 am after opening prayers (Contact: DENNIS HINDLE, 01206-868207). Probably this will continue the following week.

- Sewing – cloths for the Holy Table, and for Icon stands, etc

- Cleaning, when we need to get ready for worship.

**Giving:** Provide the whole or part cost of an item of your choice or a gift to general costs – in memory of someone special, if you wish:

- Ask for the list of things we must purchase, and decide what item you would like to give.

- Send a cheque, or a promise to pay shortly.

**Prayer:** Help make this a real place of prayer and true worship:

- Prepare yourself by Confession (before any service)
- If you can, come to some or all the preliminary services – below
- Come if you can to the Saturday and Sunday services



In our Parish Icon St Helen holds the Holy Cross she discovered in Jerusalem in her right hand and her Colchester Chapel in the left.

## Vicariate becomes a Diocese

The Holy Synod of Antioch has raised the Vicariate of Europe to a Diocese. His Grace BISHOP GABRIEL, who resides in Paris, is the first Metropolitan, presumably becoming a member of the Holy Synod.

Various structures of a Diocese will now be established, and Priests and lay-people will be involved in its running. This is all to be welcomed. No further details as yet.

## HERE AND THERE TWO SUDDEN BEREAVEMENTS

• Our sympathy to ALEX and NATASHA TOKLEY of Great Bromley on the sad death of Alex's father BERTRAM, at a great age, just four weeks before their wedding. He had been ill for a long time, but all hoped he would live to enjoy the wedding. Alas! it was not to be, though the wedding indeed was lovely.

• Also to MARY MORRIS and SAVVOS GEORGIU on the sudden death of their father RENOS GEORGIU of North London.

*Memory eternal!*

**HOLY CHRISMATION:** FRANCES ISACKE of Great Bardfield, recovering from illness, will now be received and chrismated on Sunday 12 November at 10.15 am.

**STAFF NURSE:** Congratulations to CAROLINE HAIG, recently qualified at the University of East Anglia, and now on the cardiac ward at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. She has fulfilled the ambition she has had from earliest childhood.

**ST MARTIN'S STILL ON THE AGENDA:** There was a useful Open Meeting of the Church Council recently, dealing with both St Helen's and St Martin's. We still hope to have full-time use of St Martin's eventually – but not for two years, during which the interior restoration will be completed. But we have asked to use St Martin's occasionally this winter, perhaps monthly for Vespers: we have had no answer as yet. Copies of the Minutes of the meeting are available in church – take a copy, or telephone for one.

## OUR FIRST SERVICES IN ST HELEN'S CHAPEL

- Monday - Saturday 13 – 18 November**

9.00 am Blessing of Chapel (20 mins)

- Saturday 18 November**

4.00 pm VIGIL – Great Vespers & Mattins

Supper at Macdonalds or as desired

7.00 pm LESSER BLESSING OF WATERS

- Sunday 19 November**

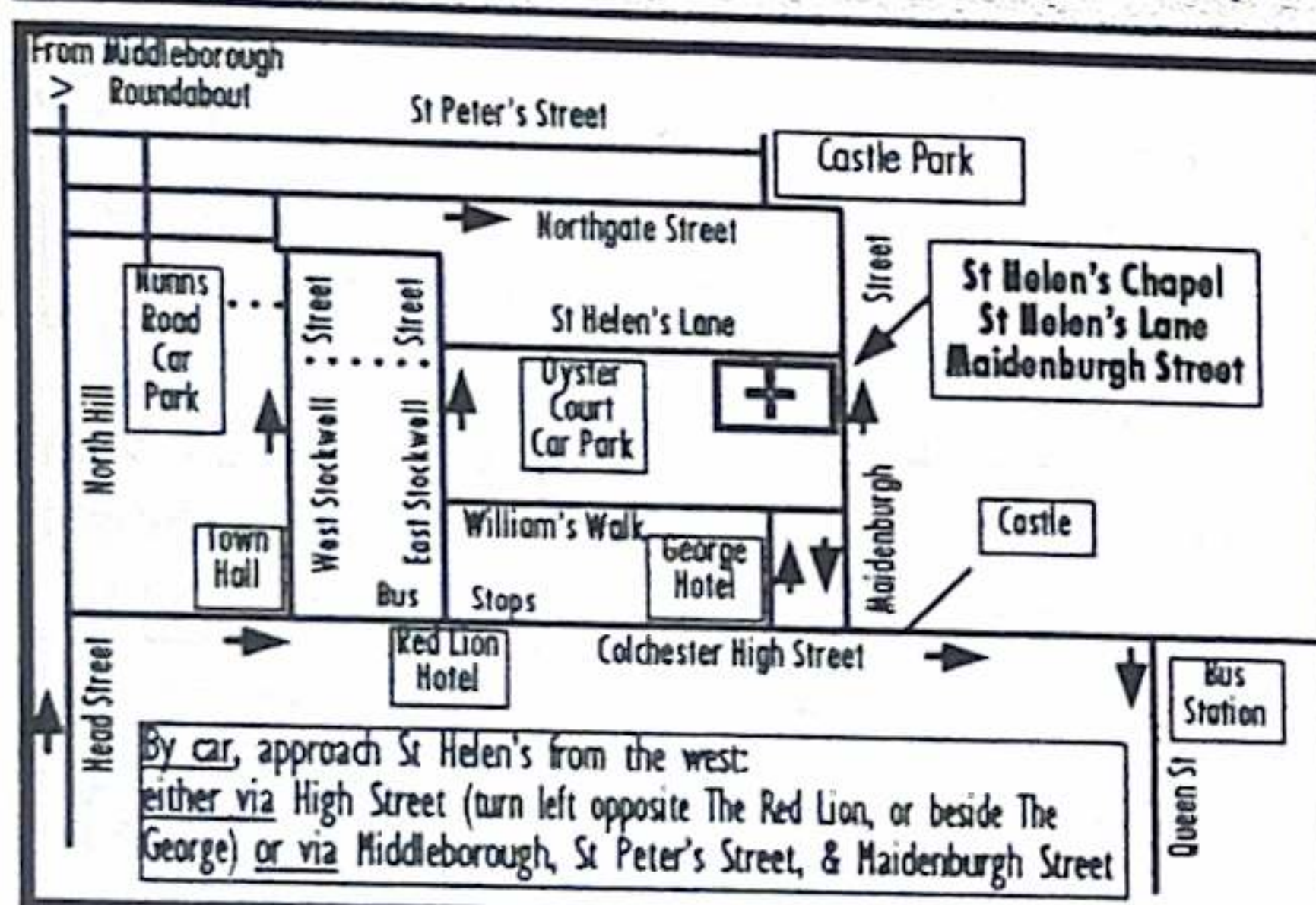
10.00 am BLESSING OF ST HELEN'S CHAPEL

Third and Sixth Hours

HOLY AND DIVINE LITURGY

Celebration Lunch together

3.00 pm Thanksgiving Te Deum (30 mins)



## ST HELEN'S CHAPEL IS EASY TO FIND

It is in Colchester's famous Dutch Quarter, just down the hill behind The George Hotel in the High Street. But mind, streets here are narrow! CAR-PARKING – SUNDAYS ONLY

We been able to arrange Sundays-only parking for worshippers, at Oyster Court, close to the Chapel in St Helen's Lane, by the generosity of the local Mental Health NHS Trust. At other times we shall have to use the public car-parks.

NO LAVATORY AT THE CHAPEL

There is no loo at the Chapel, though we may be able to provide one later on.

## Usual Services at St Helen's

Saturday: Great Vespers usually 6.30 pm (check before coming)

Sunday: Mattins or Hours 9.45 am; Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

**At St Fursey's Chapel, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton, Norfolk**

Divine Liturgy first or second Saturday of month 10.00 am

**At St James Anglican Church, Clacton-on-sea**

Divine Liturgy usually third Saturday of month at 10.00 am

**At the University of Essex, Colchester**

Divine Liturgy one Saturday per term at 10.00 am

**Confessions:** Saturday after Vespers, or by arrangement

**Holy Marriage, Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc:** by arrangement

**Parish Priest:** Father Alexander Haig

66 Wimpole Rd, Colchester CO1 2DN Tel: 01206-795275

Email: orthodox.colchester@aspects.net

**Reader:** Stephen Weston, St Fursey's House, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton NR12 9RR

**Parish Web Site:** www.aspects.net/~orthodox/

## SERVICES AT THE CHAPEL

It is anticipated that Saturday evening and Sunday morning service-times will stay the same.

On most weekdays, either Mattins or Hours, and Vespers will be served – particularly on Wednesday evenings – with Holy Liturgy on great feasts, and possibly one Saturday a month.

It really remains to be worked out in practice. At first, times will be announced only on Sundays: phone if you want to know them.

Obviously, I shall welcome any – Orthodox Faithful or visitors – to worship here whenever they can come. No doubt some will sensibly combine "church" with "a bit of shopping"!

## NOVEMBER DAYS

Wed	1 Holy Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian
Sun	5 Pentecost 20
Wed	8 Holy Archangel Michael & Bodiless Powers
Thu	9 S Nektarios of Pentapolis
Sat	11 S Martin of Tours
Sun	12 Pentecost 21, S John the Merciful
Mon	13 S John Chrysostom
Tue	14 Holy Apostle Philip, S Gregory Palamas
Wed	15 Beginning of Nativity Fast
Thu	16 Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew
Fri	17 S Hilda of Whitby
Sun	19 Pentecost 22
Tue	21 Entry of Holy Theotokos into the Temple
Sat	25 Holy Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria
Sun	26 Pentecost 23
Thu	30 Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called

A full list of the month's feasts and fasts is available on request