

The Orthodox Parish of St Martin and St Helen

Charity number: 1192469

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland

HE Metropolitan Silouan Oner



Funeral of Fr Alexander Haig Jr

On July 14, the funeral for the newly departed priest Alexander Haig Jr was held in Southampton, at the city's St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. It was a solemn and prayerful service with many clergy and lay-people from across the wider Orthodox community of the United Kingdom in attendance. Sayedna Silouan presided and preached a moving and convicting homily. The funeral of an Orthodox priest really takes place over two days. Traditionally the body of the reposed in open coffin is brought to the temple the evening before and all four Holy Gospels

are read throughout the night, punctuated by Trisagion prayer services for the reposed. Khouria Paula and I travelled to Southampton on Monday 13th and it was a great blessing to help with this very moving and beautiful tradition. We were also blessed to be visited during Monday evening by Archbishop Nikitas of the Thyateira Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, who served a Trisagion while present. After the funeral service itself, Fr Alexander was buried according to the ancient rites of the Orthodox Church. Continue to pray for the repose of the soul of this faithful and talented priest, taken so young, and for his family, our own dear Fr Alexander Haig Snr and Khouria Hilary; his widow Khouria Mihaela and son Alexander, and for his sisters Margaret and Caroline and her family. We feel this tragic loss so deeply, as of course do the faithful and Fr Alexander's parish in Eastleigh, Twelve Apostles, who also need our continued prayers. O our ever memorable brother, the worthy priest Alexander, may your memory be eternal! **-Fr Mark**



On Saturday the 20th and Sunday the 21st of September this year, we will as in previous years, open both temples to visitors as part of the National Heritage Open Days scheme. This has always been a great way to engage with our wider community and beyond and often leads to wonderful conversations about our Orthodox Faith with people from all backgrounds. We will open both churches all day between 10:00am and 4:00pm Saturday and

both on Sunday afternoon between 1:00pm and 4pm. We need volunteers to staff these morning and/or afternoon slots; usually two or three people per site. The main thing is to welcome people and keep an eye on things and to answer any questions you feel you can. You absolutely do **not** need a degree in Theology! Please see our own Euan (Michael) Ball if you would like to help.

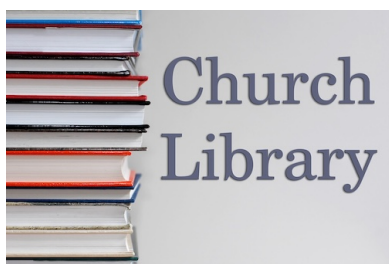
The Indiction - Church New Year

O Maker of all creation, Who hast established the times and the seasons in Thine own power: Bless the crown of this year with Thy goodness, O Lord, and keep our rulers and Thy flock in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, and save us.

(Apolytikion of the Indiction in Tone 2)

September 1st marks what some refer to as the ecclesiastical (or church) new year. Sometimes referred to as the 'Beginning of the Indiction', a term from from antiquity indicating the beginning of a period of civil or local time. In the Holy Land, Asia Minor and the Mediterranean this 'indiction' was closely tied to the harvest. Crops are gathered in, offerings and supplies set aside and the ground prepared for another growing season after the winter. It speaks to the closeness of traditional Orthodox Christianity to creation itself and the cycles of generation, fruitfulness, death and regeneration which God in His infinite wisdom has set as the boundaries for our human lives in the created world. Like those traditional communities of old, we too, in modern times can see our own parish as the place where we labour and grow – spiritually, in love for God and each other, toiling to bring to fruition in the fields of our hearts, our fasting, prayer, acts of mercy and worship. It is important to see our parish in this way; as our home, our 'village', which we rely on for spiritual food, shelter and protection, as well as fellowship and practical help and support in times of need. A worshipping community, like a parish, can only truly be sustained if we look at it this way. If on the other hand we treat it like a bank or a supermarket, somewhere to occasionally 'take' Holy Communion or come only once in a while (once a year at Pascha, or to a wedding) only if we feel like it, then we are really leaving the important and hard work to others, while we merely come every now and again to enjoy the fruit! The world is entering dark and chaotic times and increasingly we will need healthy, spiritually fruitful parishes in which to worship God, support each other and find the strength to grow and endure in our faith. Happy New Year!

Memorials It will be very helpful if you can let me know by message, email or phone if you are planning to bring kollyva for a memorial after the liturgy on Sundays. This is important as there are various times (including some Sundays) when it is not permitted to serve them. General memorial services (Saturdays of Souls), where all the departed are remembered and prayed for, are now held three times a year in our parish: on the Saturday before Great Lent, the Saturday before Pentecost and Demetrios Saturday (the last Saturday before the feast day of the holy martyr-warrior St. Demetrios of Thessalonika on October 26th). Everyone is welcome at these services to bring kollyva and to commemorate all their loved ones who have reposed. Most other Sundays will usually be fine but please note that memorials cannot be held during Holy Week, Bright (Renewal) Week, nor on great feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, nor the feast of the patron saint of the parish. So, as I say, if you are not sure, please ask.



Books/Library

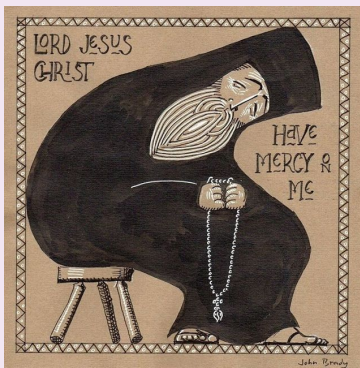
During September we will sort out the many books we have been given by generous donors over the last couple of years to begin the establishment of a parish library. We hope that this will help deepen peoples' faith and provide wisdom and inspiration to our community. We have not yet worked out exactly how the library will 'work', so watch this space!

The Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

By your nativity, O most pure virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life
(Kontakion)

This feast of the birth of the Most Holy Mother of God and Virgin Mary, the Theotokos on September 8th is the first of the church year, just as her falling asleep (dormition) is the last, on August 15th. These two feasts enclose the whole feastal year, just as her womb, in a mystery and by the Holy Spirit enclosed or contained that which cannot be contained. Mary stands as the example 'par excellence' of how we should strive to be before God: humble, receptive, self-giving and willing to do His will in all of our life, no matter the cost. Like her we should 'commend ourselves, each other and all our lives unto Christ our God'. In this way, our humanity is not destroyed or obliterated but sanctified, united with God and set on its proper course. This is what we were created for. This is our Orthodox Faith. Happy Feast!

From the Fathers



"When we strive with diligent sobriety to keep watch over our rational faculties, to control and correct them, how else can we succeed in this task except by collecting our mind, which is dispersed abroad through the senses, and bringing it back to into the world within, into the heart itself, which is the storehouse of all our thoughts."

(St Gregory Palamas)

Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen
September/October 2026 Services

Tuesday 1 September	Indiction: Church New Year Hours & Divine Liturgy 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 5 September	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 6 September	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church
Tuesday 8 September	The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mar Hours & Divine Liturgy 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 12 September	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 13 September	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church
Monday 14 September	Hours & Divine Liturgy: Great Martyr Marina (Margaret) of Antioch 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 19 September	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church (Heritage Open Day 1)
Sunday 20 September	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church (Heritage Open Day 2)
Thursday 24 September	Hours & Divine Liturgy: Holy Protomartyr and Equal to the Apostles Thecla 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 26 September	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 27 September	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church
Thursday 1 October	Hours & Divine Liturgy: The Protection of Our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos & Ever-Virgin Mary 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 3 October	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 4 October	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church
Wednesday 7 October	Hours & Divine Liturgy: Martyr Princess Osyth 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 10 October	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 11 October	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30 St Martin's Church
Saturday 17 October	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church

Sunday 18 October	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30 St Martin's Church
Saturday 24 October	St Demetrios Commemoration of the Dead: Hours and Divine Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church. Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 25 October	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30 St Martin's Church
Monday 26 October	Hours & Divine Liturgy: Holy Martyr Demetrios of Thessalonika 8:10am St Helen's Chapel
Saturday 31 October	Great Vespers 4:30pm St Martin's Church
Sunday 1 November	Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:30 St Martin's Church
+Confessions on Saturday evenings after Great Vespers or by appointment.+	

2026 Fasting Calendar

LEGEND:
Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil, wine
Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil
Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish
Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs
Abstain from meat

Note: On the day of a parish's patronal feast, fish, wine and oil are allowed if it falls on a fasting day.

January						
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April						
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May						
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July						
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August						
					1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September						
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October						
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December						
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

When fasting, please consult your spiritual father for guidance.



STANDING ORDER FORM

To My Bank Manager:

Bank Name	
Bank Address	
Bank Account Number	
Bank Sort Code	

Please Pay:

Payee Bank Name	BARCLAYS BANK
Payee Account Name	The Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester
Payee Sort Code	20-22-67
Payee Account Number	50349364
Payment Amount	
Payment Frequency	
First Payment Date	
Please Quote Ref:	XP-Giving

My Details:

Name	
Address	
Signature	

The Orthodox Parish of St Martin and St Helen, Colchester

(registered charity number: 1192469)

Gift Aid Declaration

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made (tick ALL relevant boxes)

☐ today ☐ in the past 4 years ☐ in the future

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by The Church from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

By completing this form you confirm:

"I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference."

Title	Forename or initials*	Middle name or initials	Surname*
Address*			
Signature:			
Date:			

***Please note that the details marked with * are mandatory.**

Please notify the Parish Treasurer if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at a higher rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HMRC to adjust your tax code.

giftaid it