
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

Holy Week & Pascha 2026



The great cycle of feasts and fasts brings us once again to Great & Holy Week and Holy Pascha. I encourage you all to attend as many of the services of Holy Week as you can and to enter into the spirit of holiness and devotion which they inspire, and come at Pascha, not just to light a candle and leave early but to stay for the joyous and wonderful Divine Liturgy. The troubles of the world, the chaos, war and upheaval we all see in the news, and which seem to draw increasingly nearer to our own everyday lives, will pass away, as will all things of this world. Our Lord Himself tells us: *'I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.'* (John 16:33). The joy and truth of Pascha is not only true once a year, but at all times and in all places, and it is this: *Christ has overcome and*

destroyed death! By His saving death on the cross and resurrection He has granted us eternal life. We are rescued from the clutches of our bitter enemy and set free. Let us not be anxious then but remember also the Apostle Paul's words to the Philippians: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* (Phil. 4:6-7). A happy and blessed Feast to you all from Father Mark and Khouria Paula.

**Christ is Risen, Χριστός Ανέστη! Христос воскрес! Христос воскрес! Hristos a înviat!
Christ is risen!**

Church Council

The church council met on Sunday 22 March. Various matters were discussed including parish income, the forthcoming roof repairs and cleaning. Any member of the parish who wishes is welcome to stay and observe these meetings. We will meet again in late June.

Offerings

Gifts of olive oil, wine (Mavrodaphne of Patras) and incense are always welcome. We have moved away from candles with plastic sleeves in all our sanctuary/altar and iconostasis lamps to using olive oil exclusively. We also welcome bags of good quality plain white flour for the baking of prosphora loaves.



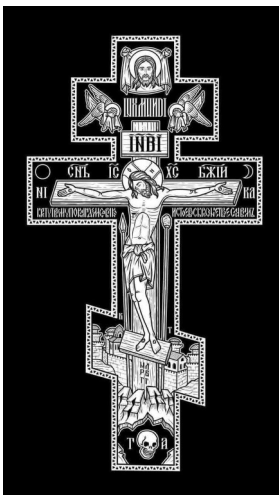
Ordination News

Congratulations to my dear friend Jonathan Reeve, now ordained as Father Deacon Theodore to the Holy Diaconate. Jonathan and his wife Maddie have visited the parish several times. Fr Dcn Theodore will serve with Fr Philip Hall at All Saints of Lincolnshire in Lincoln. We pray for him and his ministry, for his family and their God blessed parish. We hope, with Sayedna’s blessing, to see him at St Martin’s sometime in the future. **Axios! Axios! Axios!**

I ask you to pray for our parish community, specifically that, if it is pleasing to God, He will send someone righteous to become a deacon or another priest to help me in our own parish. There are many more of you these days who need pastoral care and I would also like to be able to offer more services, bible study, visiting the sick and teaching.

From the Fathers: O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life reigns. Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave. For Christ, being risen from the dead, is become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

From the Paschal Homily of St John Chrysostom



Seeing thee crucified, O Christ, the whole creation trembled. The foundations of the earth shook with fear at thy power. For when thou wast raised up today, the people of the Hebrews was destroyed. The veil of the temple was rent in twain, the graves were opened, and the dead rose from the tombs. When the centurion saw the wonder, he was filled with dread. And thy Mother, standing by thee, cried with a mother’s sorrow: “How shall I not lament and strike my breast, seeing thee stripped naked and hung upon the wood as one condemned?” Thou wast crucified and buried, and thou hast risen from the dead: O Lord, glory to thee.

From the Praises of The Orthros of Holy Friday

SERVICES FOR GREAT & HOLY WEEK AND HOLY PASCHA 2026

Lazarus Saturday 4 April	<i>Great Vespers 4.30pm St Martin's Church</i>
Palm Sunday 5 April	The Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem. Matins 9.30am, Divine Liturgy 10:30am, St Martin's Church.
Great and Holy Monday 6 April	Bridegroom Matins (sung in anticipation of Holy Tuesday) 6pm.
Great and Holy Tuesday 7 April	Bridegroom Matins (sung in anticipation of Holy Wednesday) 6pm.
Great and Holy Wednesday 8 April	Service of Holy Anointing, 6pm.
Great and Holy Thursday 9 April	Vesperal Liturgy of St Basil 9:30am The Twelve Passion Gospels 6pm.
Great and Holy Friday 10 April	Women and girls to decorate bier/epitaphios with flowers 9:00am Vespers & Deposition 12pm Matins (Lamentations) & Procession 6pm.
Great and Holy Saturday 11 April	Vesperal Liturgy of St Basil 9:30am Acts of the Apostles & Midnight Office from 10pm.
<u>Holy Pascha:</u> The Resurrection of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ	Divine Liturgy 1am Agape Vespers 4.30pm

Services for remainder of April 2026

Saturday 18 April	<i>Bright Saturday, Great Vespers, 4.30pm St Martin's Church</i>
Sunday 19 April	<i>Thomas Sunday, Matins 9.30 am, Divine Liturgy 10:30am, St Martin's Church.</i>
Thursday 23 April	<i>Holy Glorious and Right Victorious Great Martyr George, Hours and Divine Liturgy from 08:10, St Helen's Chapel.</i>
Saturday 25 April	<i>Great Vespers, 4.30pm St Martin's Church</i>
Sunday 26 April	<i>Holy Myrrh Bearing Women, Matins 9.30 am, Divine Liturgy 10:30 am, St Martin's Church.</i>
Thursday 30 April	<i>Holy Apostle James, the son of Zebedee, brother of St John the Theologian, Hours and Divine Liturgy from 08:10, St Helen's Chapel.</i>



2026 Fasting Calendar

LEGEND:
Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil, wine
Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil
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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									
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February						
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March						
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31									

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29	30								

December						
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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.

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