



# Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen Colchester

SERIES 2 NO 6 | JUNE 2023

## The Time of Pentecost

*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you. (Ezekiel 36: 24-28)*

This promise of God's transformative power to remake the heart of each human being, proclaimed by the holy prophet Ezekiel, is read at Great Vespers on the Saturday evening before the Feast of Pentecost. It is a clear message and promise broadcast down the centuries not only of the events which took place in Jerusalem fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus but to each of us Christians throughout time and to us here, now. At the Holy Liturgy on Sunday morning, instead of the usual epistle reading, we hear the account of Pentecost as told in the Book of Acts, which starts: *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. (Acts 2:2)*. This verse signifies that Pentecost, the dramatic pouring out with power of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, does not come randomly or out of the blue, but is a culmination, the completion of a process. Pentecost comes after a long and arduous period of preparation for the disciples: their life with Christ during His earthly ministry; the darkness, drama and despair of His arrest, torture and death; the wonder and joy of His resurrection and the strange majestic glory of His ascension into Heaven. And it is in this gathering that the disciples, along with Mary the Mother of God and the other women, having faithfully traveled this momentous path and now gathered as one body in prayerful unity, will have a new and glorious path opened to them. This complete inner renewal by the Holy Spirit which so radically changed the lives of those present on that day is available to us also.



We too can 'gather together in one place', both withdrawing in prayer into our own hearts and joining with each other, the saints and the Theotokos for worship in the temple. Holy Pentecost, the birth of the Church, stands as an icon of the fruition of our personal spiritual lives: first we feel our souls reaching towards Christ, to try to follow Him, broken and fallen as we are; then we begin to experience the spiritual realities of this discipleship, in our relationships with each other, our passions, pain and suffering and our struggles in prayer. Finally, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, our whole souls are filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit and true love for God and our neighbour; establishing the reality of real union with God. Amen!

**Father Mark**

## Regular Service Times

Saturdays: Great Vespers 4:30 pm St Martin's Church  
Sundays: Matins & Holy Liturgy from 9:45 am St Martins Church

## Services for June 2023

<b>Thursday 1 June</b>	Holy Liturgy, Martyr Justin the Philosopher 9:30 am St Helen's Chapel
<b>Monday 5 June</b>	Holy Liturgy, Day of the Holy Spirit 9:30 am St Helen's Chapel
<b>Wednesday 14 June</b>	Holy Liturgy, The Prophet Elisha 9:30 am St Helen's Chapel
<b>Thursday 22 June</b>	Holy Liturgy, St Alban Protomartyr of Britain 9:30 am St Helen's Chapel
<b>Thursday 29 June</b>	Holy Liturgy, Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leaders of the Apostles, Peter & Paul 9:30 am St Helen's Chapel

## Confessions

Father Alexander: from 5pm after Vespers or by arrangement |  
Father Mark by arrangement

*Holy Marriage, Holy Baptism, funerals, memorials etc by  
arrangement*

## News and updates of the month:

On Saturday 13 May, several of us attended the Pilgrimage to the Saints of Barking, at Barking Abbey. In the morning there was a Divine Liturgy in St Margaret's Church in the old abbey grounds followed by lunch, talks and Great Vespers in the afternoon. The liturgy was served by Father Joseph Skinner and many of his dear people from the Orthodox parish of St Andrew the First-Called in Romford attended. This is the first time the pilgrimage has taken place since before the pandemic and it was wonderful to once again venerate these important British saints, cruelly martyred for their great faith in and love for Christ in Orthodox times. Glory to God!



**Foodbank Collection:** there is a box in St Martin's for items to be donated to Colchester Foodbank, please check the sign on the box for suitable items.

**Study Sessions: Introduction to Holy Orthodoxy: Faith and Life:** Father Mark will be holding fortnightly study sessions for catechumens and those interested in learning more about our ancient faith. Next session on the Holy Trinity is on Sunday 4 June at 2:30 pm in St Martin's Church. Please check the parish website for full programme details:

<http://www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk/hm/catechesis-teaching/>

**Church Council Meeting:** The church will meet after Holy Liturgy on 4 June to discuss various matters concerning church buildings and for regular council business.

**Also in June: Saint Columba (9 June).** Saint Columba, meaning 'dove of the church', was born at Garten, in Donegal. He became a disciple of St Finnian of Clonard and was one of the twelve apostles of Ireland. He founded many monasteries and Iona is one of the most famous ones. There is a very trustworthy and detailed account of the life, achievements, miracles, visions and prophecies of this celebrated saint in the work called 'The Life of Saint Columba', written in Latin by Venerable Adomnan, the ninth abbot of Iona, who is a venerated saint himself. Saint Columba was an excellent scribe and created many manuscripts, author of many commentaries on the Bible, prayers, and hymns, as well as a splendid copy of the Gospel called 'Cathach of Columba' (561) which still exists and is kept at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin.

## Saint Luke of Crimea, the Blessed Surgeon

Born in 1877, Doctor of Medicine, Professor and State Prize winner, since 1944 he was the Archbishop of Tambov and Michurinsk, and later of Simferopol and the Crimea. While he was serving the church as an Archbishop, he was also practising as a surgeon and taught and published many books and articles on regional anaesthesia and surgery.

Born with the name of Valentine, his family members were civil servants to Lithuanian and Polish Kings. His family was impoverished over time but Saint Luke remembers that he received his religious inheritance from his pious father. Having exceptional drawing abilities, he graduated from Kiev Academy of Fine Arts however he decided to follow a career where he could help people who suffer, and chose to be a physician. At age 26, he graduated from the medical school where he excelled in anatomy. He married Anna, a nurse, and together they had four children. Saint Luke never requested funds from his patients, nor would he turn anyone away because of his ethnic background or personal beliefs. When his wife died, Valentine never remarried, and he just looked for someone to care for the children.

Despite the dangers of the Lenin regime, he refused to operate without the Icon of the Mother of God and he fearlessly attended theological discussions arranged by Archpriest Mikhaïl Andeev. At the age of 44, he was ordained priest and eventually Fr Valentine was arrested and put on trial, falsely accused, and later convicted to 16 years imprisonment. He reposed on 11 June 1961, and at that time the government made every effort to make his funeral as inconspicuous as possible. However, God had different plans, and people went against the government and chanted 'Holy God' at his funeral despite the atheistic times. In 1966, St Luke's remains were disinterred and his heart was discovered incorrupt, a testament to the great love bore towards Christ and His people. His relics continue to work countless miracles in the Church of the Holy Trinity, at Sagmata Monastery in Greece, and throughout the world.



**A word from the Fathers: St Basil the Great on the Holy Spirit: The effects of the Holy Spirit's action.** 'Who is there who can hear the names of the Holy Spirit and not feel exaltation in his soul, not lift up his thoughts to that supreme nature? (...) To the Spirit all creatures turn for their sanctification; all who live virtuously seek him, and are, by his influence, refreshed and helped toward their own natural end. He is the source of holiness, the light of our understanding, for to every mind he offers his own light for the discovery of truth.'

**St Martin's Church, West Stockwell Street, CO1 1HN**  
**St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh Street, CO1 1UB**

Both temples are off the High Street, but accessible from there only on foot. Nearest car park NCP Nunn's Road, CO1 1EJ.

Confessions: Saturdays 5pm, after Vespers or by arrangement.  
Holy Marriage, Holy Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement.

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We are grateful to those continuing to support our church by regular or occasional gifts: God bless you.

### Bank details:

**Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen: Registered Charity No: 1134418**

**IBAN:** GB05BUKB20226780219819  
**Sort Code:** 20-22-67  
**Account No:** 50349364  
**Appeal Account No:** 80219819

**Parish Website:** <http://www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk/>