

The Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen

Colchester

Newsletter | June 2024



The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland | Metropolitan HE Silouan (Oner)

The Ascension of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ

The Feast of the Ascension of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha. By it, the sacred and saving purpose of the Divine Incarnation and becoming man of the Word of God is completed. Through His incarnation, his passion death and third day resurrection, mankind's earthbound nature is released, and its deification, its rising to heaven is made possible.

*And it might be thought that the Ascension, as marvelous and wonderful an occurrence as it is, somehow marks the point at which Jesus takes leave of us; He has gone to be with His Father and we must get on with things as best we can. But the Ascension is **not** the end of a story - it is the **beginning** of a new one; for with His ascension into Heaven comes the promised Holy Spirit at **Holy Pentecost (June 23)**. During His time on earth Jesus, living as a man amongst us, committed to be bound as we are by the ordinary constraints of time and distance (Lord, Martha said to Jesus, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:21). But now we have unlimited access, as it were, if only we will humble ourselves, because Christ has ascended into heaven to sit on the right hand of the Father and sent the Holy Spirit into the world which is everywhere present and filling all things. Now, instead of having to send word by messenger over miles of desert, or oceans, we need simply to pray in heartfelt sincerity, to know that our Lord has heard us! A blessed and Happy Feast to you all -The Lord bless you all!*

Father Mark

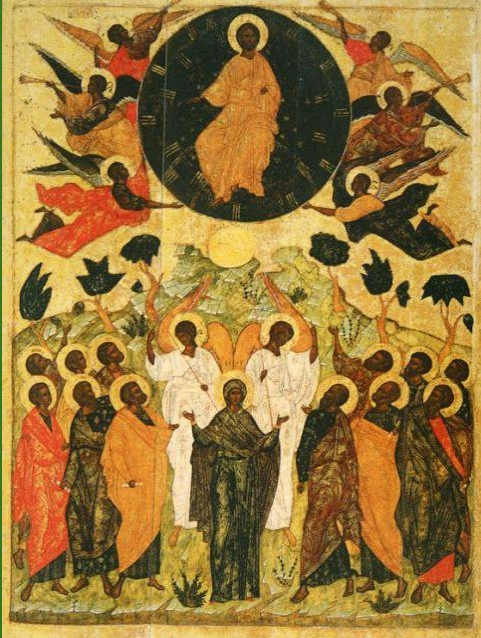
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Visit from Sayedna Silouan and Ordinations

On Thomas Sunday, His Eminence Metropolitan Silouan visited the parish. After the Great Doxology at Orthros, before the start of the Divine Liturgy, Sayedna ordained (now former) Reader **George Harrison** to the order of Subdeacon and **Nicholas Taylor** to the order of Reader. Subdeacon George has served faithfully as Reader in our God blessed community for several years and has given much time and energy in helping to build God's Holy Church in Colchester and beyond. Reader Nicholas (who also works very hard as parish treasurer) puts in a lot of effort ensuring the choir have the proper liturgical resources needed before each service. Sayedna preached on the importance of recognising the resurrection of Christ as a reality in our own lives, and stressed the importance of Holy Communion and Confession as the means of spiritual renewal and resurrection for each of us. *After concelebrating the Hierarchical Liturgy with Father Alexander and Father Mark, Sayedna spoke briefly again to the people, reminding them of the importance of truly giving ourselves to the Church, as Subdeacon George and Reader Nick have done, each in our own way, with our own gifts and talents, whether monastic, clergy or laity.*

Church Roof: Bakers of Danbury will begin the first stage of the repair and refurbishment work at St Martin's early in July. A full manual inspection of the roof will take place to determine the extent of any repairs which may be needed. After the inspection, a schedule of work will be produced to set out what needs doing and when. Work to refurbish the floor is expected to commence after the roof is completed.

....Please pray for a successful and productive outcome for this next phase!

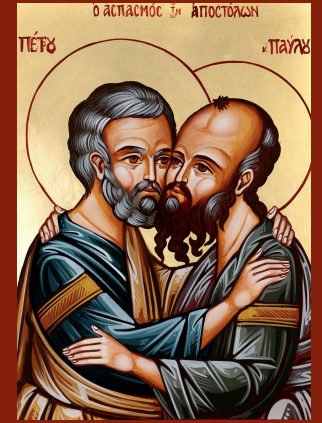




Speaking Engagement: Father Mark gave a talk on Friday 24th of May, to the Orthodox Christian Youth Festival, organised by the Orthodox Fellowship of St John the Baptist. The event was hosted by the Othona Community in Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex and the theme of the festival was 'Philoxenia: The Spiritual Discipline of Hospitality'. Father Mark spoke about this important theme in relation to his secular job as a dementia adviser with the Alzheimer's Society. He and Khouria Paula were warmly welcomed and it was inspiring to see so many young people whose shared love of Christ had brought them together for such an edifying event with varied speakers, many activities and good fellowship.

The Feast of the Holy Glorious & All Praised Leaders of The Apostles, Peter & Paul

Every year on June 29, the Orthodox Church remembers these two great apostles. They are known to have been the founders of our own God protected Antiochian Patriarchate in the first years of the Church at the ancient city of Antioch in Asia Minor (now modern day Turkey) We read in the Acts of the Apostles that Antioch is the place 'where the disciples were first called Christians'. (Acts 11:26) Their feast is preceded by a fast which starts on the eighth day after Pentecost, i.e., right after Sunday of All Saints, and ends on June 28, which is the eve of the feast. The period of this fast may range between one day and 6 weeks, depending on the date of Pascha. If this fast coincides with the feast directly, as it does this year, then it is left out altogether. The icon (*right*) showing them embracing is rich in symbolism, showing at its most basic level the love we must have for each other as Christians, striving always; even in the midst of sometimes necessary disagreements, to be reconciled, in self-emptying love for each other and for Christ and His Holy Church. **+O Lord, through the intercession of the Saints Peter and Paul, have mercy on us and save us, Amen.+**



We are grateful to those continuing to support our church by regular or occasional gifts; may God bless you. Bank details: Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen: Registered Charity No: 1192469 IBAN: GB05BUKB20226780219819 Sort Code: 20-22-67 Account No: 50349364 Appeal Account No: 80219819

Regular Service Times:

Saturdays: Great Vespers 4:30pm

Sundays: Matins & Holy Liturgy from 9:45am

Weekend services ALL at St Martins. Additional (weekday) services usually at St Helen's Chapel unless otherwise stated.

St Helen's Chapel is open daily for prayer and pilgrimage.

Additional Services: June 2024

Thursday June 13
The Ascension of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ | Hours and Holy Liturgy from 9.30 @ St Martin's Church

Wednesday June 19
Holy Apostle Jude, the Brother of Our Lord | Hours and Holy Liturgy from 9.30 @ St Helen's Chapel

Saturday 29 June
Holy Glorious & All Praised Leaders of The Apostles, Peter & Paul | Hours and Holy Liturgy from 9.30 St Martin's Church | Great Vespers 4.30pm @ St Martin's Church



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: Nunns Road, CO1 1EJ.

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

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