



HOBNOB

ON-LINE

THE PARISH MAGAZINE FOR
ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL CHURCH, HORNDON ON THE HILL
ST. GILES AND ALL SAINTS CHURCH, ORSETT
ST. MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH, BULPHAN

JANUARY 2026

SERVICES – January 2026

	HORNDON	ORSETT	BULPHAN
Thursday 1 st January			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 2 nd		No Oasis Café or Edward Bear	
Saturday 3 rd	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments	No Forest Church	
Sunday 4th January <i>2nd Sunday of Christmas</i>		10am All Together Holy Communion Service	
Monday 5 th			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 6 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Thursday 8 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 9 th		No Oasis Café or Edward Bear	
Saturday 10 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 11th January <i>1st Sunday of Epiphany</i>			8.45am CW Holy Communion Service 10am Holy Communion Service
Monday 12 th			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 13 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Thursday 15 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 16 th		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	
Saturday 17 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 18th January <i>2nd Sunday of Epiphany</i>	8.45am BCP Holy Communion Service Holy Communion Service 4pm Refresh Service		
Monday 19 th			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 20 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Thursday 22 nd			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 23 rd		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	
Saturday 24 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 25th January <i>3rd Sunday of Epiphany</i>		8.45am CW Holy Communion Service 10am Family Service	
Monday 26 th			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 27 th	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
	12noon Holy Communion Service		
Thursday 29 th			10am Holy Communion Service
Friday 30 th		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	
Saturday 31 st	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Sunday 1st February <i>Candlemass</i>			10am All Together Holy Communion Service
Monday 2 nd			Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments
Tuesday 3 rd	Open Church 10am-noon with refreshments		
Thursday 5 th			Open Church 10am-noon
Friday 6 th		9-11.30am Oasis Café 9.30-11am Edward Bear Toddler Group At Orsett Churches Centre	

Open Church means that the Church is open for private prayer, refreshments are available at all sessions except Thursdays at Bulphan.



THE PARISH OF HORNDON, ORSETT AND BULPHAN

Website: www.hobnob.org.uk

Facebook: @HOBNOBchurches

RECTOR

VACANCY

PTO*

Rev Max Blake

max@hobnob.org.uk

07716 969772

*(permission to officiate)

PARISH CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Churchwardens	Alastair Macrae	Beverley Macrae	Christine Mortimer
	David Mortimer	Sonia Ward	Frank Woollard
Treasurer	Lynn Bennett		
Secretary	Lynda Robertson		
Parish Administrator	Lynda Robertson		
Deanery Synod Reps	Karen Collier	Alastair Macrae	Janet Wilkins
	Frank Woollard		
Lay Representatives	Jane Barry	Sandra Billinger	Samantha Pankhurst

CHURCH OFFICERS AND CONTACT DETAILS

St Peter & St Paul Horndon-on-the-Hill

Churchwardens	Beverley Macrae	b.macrae@hobnob.org.uk	01375 673327
	Sonia Ward	sonia51anne@yahoo.co.uk	01375 674212
Sacristans	Jane Barry	Beverley Macrae	Judy Rood
Vergers	Robin Clark	Felicity Tarbard	Sonia Ward

St Giles & All Saints Orsett

Churchwardens	Christine Mortimer	c.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk	01375 641485
	David Mortimer	d.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk	01375 641485
Sacristan	Janet Wilkins		
Vergers	Jo Metcalf	Christine Mortimer	Libby Seggons
Tower Captain	Judith Church		01375 891556
Mothers' Union contact	Lucy Bubb		07970 728673
Edward Bear Toddler Group	Karen Collier		01375 370441
Oasis Café	Sandra Billinger		01375 891040
Churches Centre Bookings	Gary Jones	bookings@orsettchurches.co.uk	

St Mary-the-Virgin Bulphan

Churchwardens	Alastair Macrae	Alastairmacrae51@gmail.com	01375 673327
	Frank Woollard	f.woollard@hobnob.org.uk	01375 891034
Vergers	Frank Woollard		
Parish Room Bookings	Lynda Robertson		07974 803471

Parish Administrator

Lynda Robertson l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk 07974 803471

Parish Baptism Co-Ordinator

Christine Mortimer c.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk 01375 641485

Musicians

Jane Barry 07552 199697
Janet McCheyne 07752 836902

Parish Magazine (HOBNOB)

Submit articles to magazine@hobnob.org.uk

Please note to guarantee inclusion in the current month, articles must be submitted by the 21st of the preceding month.

WEDDINGS

To arrange Weddings, please contact Lynda Robertson:
l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk 07974 803471



THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISM

23 Nov Alfie John Tingle (O)
23 Nov Joshua Steven Tingle (O)

FUNERAL

11 Dec Jill Davinia Hollington (O)
17 Dec Mervyn Davies (H)

INTERMENT OF ASHES

17 Dec Jean Pearce (O)



Wedding Enquiries

If you would like to enquire about booking a wedding at:
Horndon, Orsett or Bulphan churches,
please contact: Lynda Robertson: 07974 803471
l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk



Baptism Enquiries

To arrange a baptism, you will need to attend a Baptism Preparation Meeting, where we will discuss the meaning of Baptism, the responsibilities of parents and Godparents, go through the Baptism service and give you the opportunity to ask questions. At the end of the meeting, we can check the diary, and you will be able to book your Baptism.

Forthcoming Baptism Preparation Dates:

Saturday 10th January	12 noon at	Horndon Church
Monday 9th February	7.30pm at	Orsett Church
Saturday 14th March	12 noon at	Horndon Church
Monday 13th April	7.30pm at	Orsett Church

For more information, please contact:
Christine Mortimer: 01375 641485
c.mortimer@hobnob.org.uk

Cover picture

Horndon Church from the Lychgate

Bulphan Churchwarden's Report



But It's Not The Same Bulphan's Christmas Tree

A heads up, Thurrock Garden Centre has been donating a Christmas tree to St Mary's Church Bulphan since the Rev Hugh Crossley was The Rector, some 40 years ago.

Since that time Ron Porter has arranged for the tree to be erected and decorated, and as with everything that Ron does this is always carried out in a very precise and meticulous way.

On Monday 24th November Grahame Pinkerton from Thurrock Garden Centre rang me saying that as Ron was unwell, I was the man to arrange delivery of this years Christmas tree. Slightly taken aback at this realisation, I said that we would be at the church on Wednesday to replace the floor taken up for the architect's inspection of rot.

On Wednesday morning 26th November Colin and Kevin arrived to replace the timber floor and carpet tiles. Besides making the tea I was wondering how on earth do we get the tree sorted this year. Firstly, thanks to Colin and Kevin for the great job they did in replacing the floor. Shortly after the main nave floor was put down, Grahame Pinkerton arrived with a ten-foot Christmas tree under his arm, this usually took Ron and I to carry it. Fortunately, with the help of Grahame, Colin and Kevin the tree was put in its usual position by the side of the altar. As Grahame left, I did remember to thank him and his company for the wonderful gift of the tree, as he left he smiled and said, "yes, but it's not the same".

On previous years Ron has sorted the lights, baubles, star, crib and nativity figures but I did manage to find all of them and put them by the tree. Whilst wondering what to do next, suddenly as if by some miracle Alastair and his team from Castleton School arrived totally unannounced. They were due to go to Horndon Church but as The Community Team were there, they were not needed. It was not long before they were arranging a chain gang and lights and baubles suddenly sprang up all over the tree. At the same time from their mobile phone, we had Christmas music and one of the volunteers discovered Baby Jesus beneath the altar. So, there was a surreal moment of Christmas songs, Baby Jesus, Christmas lights and baubles as the tree emerged fully decorated it was different to how Ron and I had managed it, in previous years, but we got the same result.

The tree, crib and Christmas candles have been well received, we have tried to leave the church open most days and by the number of tea lights used there has been a good number of visitors.

The Bulphan School Christmas Service was very well supported and the Christingle Service was equally well attended, thanks to Rev Sharon from the Gray's Team who led both services. The Bishop of Bradwell Bishop Adam travelled from his home in north Essex to celebrate the 8.45 am Holy Communion Service on Sunday 21st December whilst attendance was small those who did attend thought it was a privilege to hear his wonderful talk.

Thanks to everyone who helps keep St Mary's Church and Churchyard looking so wonderful

Best wishes for a Peaceful New Year Frank & Alastair



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The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan



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Please help raise funds for our churches

Thank you to everyone who has already donated coins or notes. Since August 2021 we have raised, for church funds £2,210.57

Please ask friends, family and work colleagues if they have any unwanted coins or notes.

Donations can be taken to one of our churches or you can email Lynda at l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk and she can arrange collection.

*Knowing and sharing the love of Jesus in the Church and community
Registered charity number: 1199779*

Would you consider donating to support the work of the Parish and help us maintain our three churches?

The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan is registered with the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) which allows you to give to this Parish securely and safely online.

- Give monthly, quarterly or annually by Direct Debit
- Give One-Off amounts by Credit/Debit cards and Apple/Google pay wallets
- You have the option to sign up to inflation-linked giving annually
- If you pay tax you can enhance your gift by having Gift Aid at 25% added to your giving
- You may give securely and donate anonymously, if you prefer

You can set up Parish Giving in three different ways

- set up your Direct Debit online, www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/parish-horndon-orsett-bulphan-essex/
- Fill in a gift form at church
- Or call PGS on 0333 002 1271 and they will take you through it, step by step.

You will need the following information to hand:

- Parish code = 080608339
- Your personal bank account details
- You will need to confirm if you want to increase your gift in line with inflation each year
- Confirm if you are a UK taxpayer and therefore eligible for gift aid

Should you have any questions or need help please contact Lynda Robertson by email: l.robertson@hobnob.org.uk or by phone on 07974 803471



Churchwarden's Report - St. Peter and Paul Horndon on the Hill

It promises to be a busy and important year for our church community. It's hard to believe that we are already four months into the interregnum, and encouraging to see how well we have come through the Christmas season together. I hope you were able to join us for one or more of the services – it was lovely to see so many familiar faces and welcome new ones too.

Early last year Jane and Peter undertook the task of restoring a bronze plaque commemorating the restoration of the church by the architects W.D. Caroe and C.R. Ashbee – both significant figures in the Arts and Crafts movement. The plaque had been removed, we think, during the millennium restorations.

As this is the Church of England, in order to rehang we had to firstly apply for a Faculty. This gets submitted to the Diocesan Advisory committee (comprising of specialists in architecture, art, building conservation and liturgy). They in turn advise the Diocesan Chancellor on whether to approve the Faculty application. Happily, our request moved through the process at rapid speed, receiving approval in just over 5 months!

Peter has now rehung the now beautiful restored plaque, now mounted on wood, back to its original place by the door. It looks fabulous.

We are in the early stages of planning a talk on both architects at the church, exploring their designs and the many artifacts of theirs that remain in place today. Further details will be shared in a future edition of this magazine.

Our sincere thanks to both Jane and Peter for their skill and perseverance in bringing this piece of history back into view.

And finally, it's with much sadness that we said goodbye to Mervyn Davies. Merv was a long standing member of the congregation holding many roles over the years, PCC member, tree officer and lastly sidesman. He was also a very proud member of the Thurrock Male Voice choir and his talent for selling concert tickets was the stuff of legend. If you met him on his morning paper run he would smile and say 'I'm Ok, it's the others' With his gentle Welsh lilt, Merv is deeply missed and our condolences go to Hazel and all the family.

God bless - Bev

ORSETT CHURCHWARDENS REPORT



By the time people read this we will be in the New Year wondering where the "old year" had gone and many of us with the things we had planned, still to do, but the New Year presenting a clean slate for us to get them done.

As ever December was a wonderful month as we counted down through Advent to the birth of Jesus. This period sees services and events that bring families and communities together; school services, Nativities and Carol services. However with no vicar, the running of the school service and family carols, fell to Churchwardens. However across the three churches we are becoming used to this, to provide a degree of normality

Again this year we were delighted to host The Nativity on the Pound, with the village coming together, to celebrate the story of the birth of Jesus. Jackie's team delivered another wonderful evening, with Orsett in Bloom on refreshments and Spectrum Brass' providing the music and there is probably nothing like brass band playing carols.

Having Orsett School coming to the church for a service is a pleasure and their visit this Christmas was no exception. It is obvious the teachers and children had put in a lot of effort and practice to bring a wonderful service that is more like a performance. Probably the highlight is the Reception class singing the first verse of Away In A Manger, when you consider they have only been in school since September, this must be a real sense of achievement for their teacher and helpers.

The final event in Orsett Church this year was the Christmas Eve Family Carol Service, which is lessons and carols, with generations of families coming together. We had readers of all ages who have never read in a service, who all read marvellously. One of the songs was one Orsett School do and learn actions to go with it, children from the school were invited to demonstrate these. All in all a good prelude to Christmas.

Needless to say all of these would not have been possible without people willing to volunteer and may be do things they might not be completely comfortable with. If anyone feels they would like to be involved in any capacity, please let the organisers know.

For the parish, the coming weeks will hopefully bring the news we are waiting for, which is being able to advertise for a new vicar and then praying someone will apply who likes us and we them.

God Bless and Best Wishes to all for 2026

Christine and David Mortimer

W.A.D.E.R.S

JOIN THE WADERS AND
HAVE A SPLASHING TIME

Water Assisted Disabled Exercise & Rehabilitation Scheme
www.waders.org.uk

Exercise in water for people with mobility difficulties
(Supervised by a qualified Aquatic Physiotherapist)

Tuesday:

Laindon Pool
SwimMania, Stannetts,
Laindon North Trading Estate,
Basildon, S15 6DN
7.30pm-8.10pm
8.20pm-9.00pm

Tuesday:

Impulse Leisure Blackshots
Teaching Pool
Grays RM16 2JU
8.00pm – 9.00pm

Friday:

Corringham Leisure Centre
Swimming Pool
Corringham SS17 7NB
11.15am-12.10pm
12.20pm-13.15pm

Please contact a Committee Member before attending your first session
so you know what to expect.

Sharon: 07792 827638 for Laindon
Kay-Anne: 07899 745020 for Corringham
Dawn: 01375 461885 for Blackshots
Email: ask-waders@hotmail.com



The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan

Edward Bear Toddler Group

Edward Bear welcomes his little friends and
their accompanying adults in the
Orsett Churches' Centre Chapel

There is no charge for this Toddler Group

Every Friday during term time
9.30 am – 11.00 am

For further details
please contact:
KAREN COLLIER
on:
01375 370441



In the
Orsett Churches' Centre

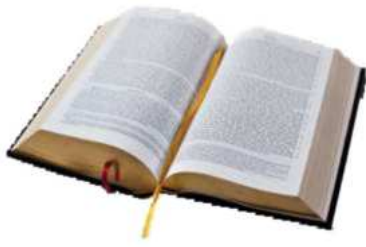
Every Friday during term time
9.00-11.30am

Everyone is welcome

The perfect place to go after
the school run!

The dates of Edward Bear and Oasis Cafe are on our website www.hobnob.org.uk, on the 'What's on' page

Knowing and sharing the love of Jesus in the Church and community



PRAYER DIARY

Some thoughts to include in your daily prayers

January 1 st	For all our hopes for the New Year
January 2 nd	For those living on Hornsby Lane, Orsett
January 3 rd	For people we have not yet met
January 4 th	For the homeless and hungry on our streets
January 5 th	For those living on Horndon Road, Horndon
January 6 th	For those living on Nelson Road, Orsett
January 7 th	For family and friends overseas
January 8 th	For those who suffer in places of drought
January 9 th	For the Deanery Synod
January 10 th	For those who are victims of conflict
January 11 th	For those living on North Hill, Horndon
January 12 th	For our patrons, the Dean & Chapter of St Paul's
January 13 th	For those living on The Paddocks, Orsett
January 14 th	For our twin dioceses in Romania, Sweden, and Kenya
January 15 th	For those living on Annabell Avenue, Orsett
January 16 th	For those living on Pound Lane, Orsett
January 17 th	For those attending our village schools
January 18 th	For those living on Fen Close, Bulphan
January 19 th	For those living on Ridgwell Avenue, Orsett
January 20 th	For those living on South Hill, Horndon
January 21 st	For those living on Robinson Road, Horndon
January 22 nd	For those experiencing financial hardship
January 23 rd	For those living on Sandown Road, Orsett
January 24 th	For St Luke's and all hospices throughout the land
January 25 th	For the leaders of nations
January 26 th	For those living on Randall Drive, Orsett
January 27 th	For those living on Saffron Close, Horndon
January 28 th	For those who are ill in body, mind or spirit
January 29 th	For those living on Southview Cottages, Orsett
January 30 th	For those living on Vincent Avenue, Horndon
January 31 st	For the church musicians

Living God of all that is new,

we ask that this year you will help us to carry your light into every place we go

and share your good news with those we meet.

May we walk and work in unity to reveal your love and goodness.

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Min Daily Order £8.95 for Thurrock and £11.00 for Havering (to cover our travel
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Feel free to book just 1 day, 2 days or any amount of days between 1-7 as we
are flexible

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Visit our website above for further information and call or text to arrange a
meeting to onboard your loved one with us ASAP



'Forget-Me-Not' Coffee morning



**In Horndon Woolmarket
from 10 am – 12 pm**

*We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of
each month for anyone who
would like a cuppa and a chat.
Everyone is welcomed!*

Bring & Buy and Raffle

*All proceeds go to the
Havens Hospices in Essex.
Havens Hospices provide specialist care
and support for people of all ages, and
their families, who are living with
incurable conditions*

**For further details contact
Beverley on 01375 671474**

Bulphan

Community

Café and Post Office



**A warm welcome to all.
Comprehensive Post Office services;
hot and cold drinks;
licensed bar;
cakes (including gluten free),
crisps and biscuits Free Wi-Fi**

Thursdays & Fridays from 1.30 - 4.30pm

- *Local councillors Barry and Dave visit regularly*
- *A social worker visits on the 2nd & 4th Friday of
the month from 2-4pm for adult care and
support drop-in sessions*
- *Regular visits from the Community Police*

The Games Café

at

**Horndon on the Hill Village Hall
EVERY FRIDAY EVENING**

7.30pm to 9.30pm



We have 2 Short Mat Bowls
carpets, so up to 12 people can
play in teams of 2 or 3
No previous experience needed



We are all '**have a go**' amateurs
who welcome and encourage all new-comers

£5 per week
Just come along
No need to book



Come alone,
or with
friend/partner

Please text or call Allison for more information
07773 539345



We play cards and board games:
SkyJo, Sequence, Dobble,
Trominoes, Bananagrams and
many others.
Guest games always welcome!

Please note: There is a £10 joining fee payable on your third
visit, to cover set up costs, replacement games and low
attendance weeks. Thank you.



HORNDON-ON-THE-HILL METHODIST CHURCH

4, High Road. Horndon-on-the-Hill

Minister: Reverend Fiona Smith

Senior Steward: Mr Graham Hodgson

<https://www.southessexmethodist.org.uk/>

All are welcome to our services and other activities.

Services January 2026

Sunday 10:30am Worship in the Chapel unless stated otherwise

4 th January	Revd Fiona Smith	Covenant Service with Holy Communion
11 th January	Mr Ian Brown	
18 st January	Revd Brenda Gutberlet	
25 th January	Revd Fiona Smith	

The Christmas Bazaar held jointly between HOB Parish and the Methodist Church on the 29th November was an enjoyable and fun afternoon and made a profit of £504 shared between the two churches.

Advent Course - Revd Fiona led us in a course through advent in which we explored some of the hidden gifts of the Christmas season.

A Christmas Carol - On 16th December in the chapel we were treated to an excellent performance of Charles' Dickens 'A Christmas Carol' put on by The Complete Commedia Company. This family-friendly, comedic and slapstick retelling of the timeless story was well received by a full house and ended with audience participation as we celebrated along with Scrooge, the joy of Christmas.

Covenant Service 4th January - In this service the Church joyfully celebrates God's gracious offer that "I will be their God and they shall be my people". This idea of Covenant was basic to John Wesley's understanding of Christian discipleship. He saw the relationship with God in Covenant as being like a marriage between human beings (both as a community and as individuals) on the one side, and God in Christ on the other (cf. Ephesians 5.21-33). All are welcome to our Covenant Service and indeed to all of our services. For more information on the Covenant Service see <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about/what-is-distinctive-about-methodism/the-covenant-service/>

Items for Sale - To improve the use of our space at the Hall we are planning on disposing of some longstanding items. We feel these are of some value and will consider reasonable offers. At present we have for sale:

- A 6'x 3' snooker / pool table solid slate bed with support frame. Cushion rubbers, baize and pockets need renewal.



- A 'G Plan' sideboard

For further information contact Graham Hodgson graham.hodgson122@btinternet.com on 07775 861322

Coffee mornings and lunch All are welcome to our weekly Community Cuppa and Chat in the Methodist Church Hall on Thursdays between 10:00 - 12:00 noon for the coffee morning with drinks, savouries and biscuits and a soup and a roll between 12:00 noon - 13:00.



Zion Hall Mission, Bulphan

Church Road, Bulphan

www.zhm100.wix.com/zionhallmission



We enjoy meeting every Sunday evening for worship and are very pleased to see newcomers. We extend a warm welcome to all. The Sunday services for January are:

4 th January	6:30 pm	Evening Worship
11 th January	6:30 pm	Rev Max Blake
18 th January	6:30 pm	Rev Pholani Ncube
25 th January	6:30 pm	David Raj

75th Anniversary
Year

If you live locally and would like to come along to a service but need transport, or for any other information on our Church or our services please contact the Secretary: Ian Blackburn at the email above or on 01375 891522.

This is the second of a short series of articles on the history of the Mission between 1938 and 1951 explaining the background to our 75th Anniversary which we held last month. In the first article we saw, for reasons known and implied, that by September 1942 the future of the Mission was looking very uncertain.

Decline and Revival: A history **Part 2 - 1942 to 1944**

The seminal General Meeting of 6th September 1942 marked something of an end but more importantly a new beginning. A promising leader had been found in the form of Mr Bernard Gurnett of Grays who chaired the meeting. The meeting decided that with one of the original Trustees, Mr George Beard, now being in very ill health, and another Trustee, Mr Harris being away from the district, the oversight for the mission needed to be reinvigorated. Two new Trustees Mr William Challis and Mr Arthur P. Miller were appointed *pro tem* and a Committee with ten members was also set up.

In just an hour and a half it appears that the vision of the Mission had been rekindled. Symbolic of the move to get a grip on the doldrums of the past couple of years and to look positively to a new future the meeting ended with the words '*Some goods from the old chapel were found to be taking up valuable space... and it was agreed that they be sorted out and disposed of*'. The Mission had been meeting in the Parish Hall and I'm sure those responsible for the Hall would have said '*Amen*' to that!

A Committee meeting was convened nine days later with offices being allocated and no time was lost in organising the first revived activity, a Harvest Thanksgiving Service at the end of September and in disposing of goods from the old chapel.

Attention again turned to working with other churches. The first idea was that the ministerial oversight of a larger body would be helpful. The Chairman of the Mission Bernard Gurnett was a member at Grays Baptist Church and hence it was natural that that Church should be considered in this context. Although the Mission is part of the Christian religious mainstream it has always been independent of any specific denomination, that is a recognised Christian grouping and there was reluctance to lose the interdenominational character of the Mission. It was therefore agreed to link with them '*for the express purpose of coordinating our efforts in Christian work*'.

The proposal was well received by the Baptist Church. The other idea was that the Mission work more in cooperation with St Mary's Church in Bulphan.

Even from the end of 1942 it appears that there had been some thinking about rebuilding the Mission Hall and enquiries had been made of Thurrock Council although it is not clear what these were nor their response. A sign of the drawn-out process that was to follow is reflected in a *Minute... 'Regarding rebuilding Mr Gurnett brought along some forms but remarked that they did not get us much further'*. The main thoughts at this time were that a prefabricated or demountable building of some kind be used on a temporary basis which may serve later as a Sunday School room and a search had been made for such.

A Building Fund had been started and a fundraising event included a social at Horndon-on-the Hill. Moves were also made to improve the band and arrange musical services. Three dozen 'Building Fund' boxes were obtained and these would be kept in the homes of members of the congregation for small change. In July 1943 the building fund reached £43 rising to £72 by September.



Crowdfunding 1940's style!

In August 1943, following a long illness, founder member and trustee, Mr George Beard, died and his son Mr Herbert Beard, was elected trustee. Within a year the Mission now had three new Trustees and strengthened oversight.

Although the Mission was now moving ahead, setbacks were still to be experienced. A Sunday School was set up under Mr Rodgers during the summer of 1943. Unfortunately numbers declined such that this was again discontinued early the next year.

The Mission had historically had little in the way of a constitution but the matter of having a formal basis for church and committee membership was raised and it was especially thought that this would be of help in retaining young people in fellowship. More pragmatically it was felt that by being more formally constituted this would be of help in making a claim to the War Damage Commission. To this end a constitution was drawn up and adopted in April 1944. At the meeting the tradition of having a large Committee open to all foundation members was adopted and an initial wave of 19 people put their names forward.

In order to raise funds for rebuilding 'socials' are frequently mentioned through 1944 and the tone of the AGM that year was markedly different from that of two years earlier. The Chairman remarked that he was grateful for the help of friends and the progress made and closed with the encouraging words of *'We shall make headway if we are willing to build on the foundation of God'*.

At Christmas the remarkable proceeds of over £5 (£250 today) from carolling were added to building fund and the frequent holding of 'socials' continued into 1945.

Enquiries with the Baptist Union regarding receiving support had proved successful with a letter having been received from them saying they were appointing a minister who would have an itinerant ministry and they in turn enquired whether the Mission could help support the minister. The Mission whilst very grateful of the offer had to write back to say that what they could contribute would be very small in the light of saving for the new building.

As the War entered it's final throes thoughts were turning to the site of the old chapel and it was agreed that boards claiming 'ancient lights' be displayed either side of the site of Zion Hall to safeguard light historically enjoyed by the old chapel into the future.

8th May 1945. The War in Europe was finally over.... but the battle for a new building was just beginning! to be continued

MOTHERS' UNION

Chelmsford Diocese Mothers' Union (CDMU):



Our AGM on 24 November was well attended. It was quite a serious morning with worship based on the 16-Days of Activism and presentation by Dan Pratt and Olivia Maxwell-Coote about modern slavery. This is a situation which is happening not far from home. There will be more to come in the New Year with the MU Campaign now launching at the end Quarter 1 (March).

There are lots of plans for celebrating 150 years of MU. We are planning our Anniversary Challenge Tea Party on 22 August at the Chapter House as part of our diocesan fundraising challenge for the 150th fund. There will be 3 bookable slots (10.30-12, 12.30-2 and 2.30-4). Tickets are being charged at £10 per adult and £5 per child and numbers for each session are limited. Members are encouraged to bring friends and/or family members along in support of our Join Us Join In theme. Please let me know if you would like to come along.

Don't forget that you can join Midday Prayers on the MU Facebook page every day. Lucy will be leading on Saturday 17 January.

Loving Lord, as we take the first steps along the path of this New Year, we rejoice in the fact that you will be our constant companion through the ups and downs of all that lies ahead. We rejoice in your promise to never leave or forsake us. Amen.

Celebrating 150 years of Mothers' Union



Finally, we've reached our 150th anniversary! Don't forget to get your tickets for the 150th Celebratory Service on 10 June 2026 at St Paul's Cathedral and the Annual Gathering on 11 June 2026 at The Emmanuel Centre (next to Mary Sumner House, London)! Tickets are available online: <https://www.mothersunion.org/event/150/>

Christmas Appeal 2025



Thank you for supporting this year's Christmas Appeal, fundraising for the Kingdom Savings & Credit Programme, which empowers women to support each other by creating self-managed savings groups. We achieved in excess of £68,000, which was our Big Give match funding target!

Prayer Diary 2026: January

The theme for January in our 2026 Prayer Diary is 'Wonder and gratitude – looking back and looking forward': As we



begin this new year, we are full of wonder and gratitude! Mary Sumner had a vision of women supporting and encouraging each other in their faith and families. The ripples have gone out over those years – to 4 million members in 84 countries, changing families and communities. One woman in one parish began it all.

One small boy had a picnic – but in the hands of Jesus, it fed a multitude, with 12 baskets of leftovers – nothing was wasted! In His hands, every small offering of service and prayer from each of us is used and multiplied, and nothing is wasted.

Monthly Prayer: *God of every moment, we pause with wonder at the journey behind us, the grace that carried us, the lessons that shaped us, the beauty we didn't expect. With grateful hearts, we look ahead, trusting that the same love will guide our steps. Open our eyes to possibility, our hearts to purpose, and our lives to Your unfolding story. May we walk forward in faith, rooted in gratitude and filled with awe at what is still to come. Amen.*

Creative Prayer: Try starting the new year with action – by using a prayer of movement. Find a hymn or worship song that speaks to you and then move your body to the music in worship to our Lord and King. Let's start the new year as we mean to go on, with action and praise. This can be done from a chair if you feel more comfortable seated. Use scarves or flags to send your praise heavenward!

Lucy Bubb, Mothers' Union contact



Horndon-on-the-Hill BRIDGE CLUB

In Horndon Village Hall every
Friday from 1.30 - 4.30pm
Admission £2.00 (includes tea/coffee biscuits)
Very friendly atmosphere
Intermediate standard basic ACOL played
For details telephone: Stuart Cameron 01375 673 237

BULPHAN SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB



We are a small, friendly short mat bowls club who meet once a week at Bulphan Village Hall. We are looking for experienced or new players. If you are interested in joining us, you would be made very welcome.

Please feel free to come along and find out more or ring Lesley on 07766 505755

TUESDAY SESSIONS: Tuesday 1.45 - 4.15pm

We have all the equipment for new players to try the game for the first time, and there is always someone who can explain the rules and help you get started.



COMMUNITY RECYCLING

Do you have any unwanted items that you would like to pass on for no charge?

If you do please email or phone
sonia51anne@yahoo.co.uk / 01375 674212

Items must be fit for purpose.

They will be advertised in the HOBNOB for 2 issues.

Please supply a picture and contact details.

Horndon On The Hill Branch

incorporating Stanford, Corringham, Fobbing & Linford

We meet at The Welcome Club
1 Victoria Road, Stanford-le-Hope

Meetings 8.00pm on the last Tuesday each month except in December.

New members welcome, enquiries to the
Chairman stuart.prinn@gmail.com
For all Poppy Appeal supplies contact
aafisher53@yahoo.com



Famous person for January

Thomas Michael Bond CBE 13th January 1926 – 27th June 2017

(Thomas) Michael Bond was born on 13th January 1926 in Newbury, Berkshire. He grew up in Reading, where his visits to Reading railway station to watch the Cornish Riviera Express pass through started a love of trains. His father was a manager for the post office. He was educated at a strict Catholic school, Presentation College, in Reading. His time there was unhappy. He said in November 2014 that his parents had chosen the school "for the simple reason [that his] mother liked the colour of the blazers ... she didn't make many mistakes in life, but that was one of them". He left education aged 14 in 1940, despite his parents' wishes for him to go to university. World War 2 was underway, he went to work in a solicitor's office for a year, then given his aptitude for building wireless sets, into transmitter engineering for the BBC.

On 10th February 1943 he survived an air raid in Reading. The building in he was working in collapsed under him, killing 41 people and injuring many more. Shortly afterwards he volunteered for aircrew service in the Royal Air Force as a 17-year-old, but was discharged after being found to suffer from acute air sickness. He was given the option of going down the mines or joining the Army, he served in the Middlesex Regiment until 1947.

After leaving the Army, he returned to the BBC and got behind a camera in the improvisatory days of TV, shooting everything from Dixon of Dock Green to Blue Peter: "It was live ... everything was held together by string and there was always some disaster going on behind the scenes."

Late on Christmas Eve, 1956 he nipped out for a stocking filler for his first wife, Brenda. Out of pity he bought a bear glove-puppet, rejected and alone on a shelf in Selfridges. Bond had been scribbling for over a decade – his first short story was completed in an army tent outside Cairo in 1946. He bashed out the bear story in 10 days in the spring of 1957.

He located the book in the world around Paddington and Notting Hill, and created the bear out of his memories of evacuee children in the second world war, luggage-labelled against loss in transit. Paddington's friend Mr Gruber was based on Hungarian refugees Michael Bond worked with at the BBC's monitoring service at Caversham Park, with their attaché cases packed with sad pasts, and their careful English. Initially Paddington came from "darkest Africa", but it was pointed out that Africa no longer had native bears, so Bond amended it to "darkest Peru". In later life, Bond was touched by many letters from child immigrants who told him about their own fresh starts in England, just like Paddington's. Many liked the way the bear politely challenged authority. The good-hearted Brown family was based on his own father, Norman, and the safe, warm house his mother, Frances, kept, smelling of Brasso and Reckitt's bath cubes.

Seven publishers rejected the book, A Bear Called Paddington, then Collins paid him £75, and brought it out in 1958: there were 13 sequels, though later illustrators never matched the original, Peggy Fortnum, who inked Paddington as stubborn, catastrophe-prone and kitted out in duffle coat, this was like one Bond had been wearing as an outside cameraman, when he found the original bear.

By 1965 Bond was able to give up his BBC job to work full time as a writer. Paddington's adventures have sold over 35 million books, published in over 40 languages, and have inspired pop bands, race horses, plays, hot air balloons, movies and adaptations for television. Bond stated in December 2007 that he did not plan to continue the adventures of Paddington Bear in further volumes, but in April 2014 it was reported that a new book, entitled Love From Paddington, would be published that autumn. In Paddington, a 2014 film based on the books, Bond had a credited cameo as the 'Kindly Gentleman'.

He began to make serious writing money in the 1970s, when Graham Clutterbuck and Ivor Wood created a BBC TV series using an appealing animatronic bear (with a great hard stare) and simple, drawn backgrounds. The stories were narrated by Michael Hordern, who remarked, his most challenging roles had been God, Lear and Paddington Bear.

Although he and his first wife divorced in 1981 they remained friends, and they kept joint custody of the Christmas bear, always considered a member of the family: "We ring each other and say, 'He feels like coming to you now'. I wouldn't go on holiday without him."

Bond also wrote two short films for the BBC: Simon's Good Deed, which was shown on 11th October 1955, and Napoleon's Day Out, shown on 9th April 1957. He also wrote one episode of the series The World Our Stage, an adaptation of the short story "The Decoration" by Guy de Maupassant, which aired on 4th January 1958. However his best known television work is possibly as the creator and writer of the children's television series The Herbs and The Adventures of Parsley, again for the BBC.





Bulphan WI

Bulphan WI December 2025

Members arrived in their sparkles and fancy dress ready for an enjoyable evening. Plates of sweet and savoury food adorned the two tables, and mulled wine and hot drinks were on offer.

Our entertainment for the evening was a local band, The Travelling Tilbury's, and the picture shows them in full voice.



They played for over one and a half hours in all, and we certainly had a great time singing and dancing. Our programme secretary, Sally, was kept busy selling raffle tickets and some lucky members went home with fantastic prizes.

Earlier in the evening, Sharon Williams, who is involved with the play being staged at Bulphan village hall on 28th February 2026, told us about its content around staying safe on the internet. It is restricted to those over the age of 15, and a few of our members expressed an interest in attending.

Recently some members visited the Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest in Tilbury to wrap presents for those using the centre, and a group went to see the Southend pier poppy display.

Next month the theme of the meeting could be said to be recycling, as we are holding a swishing event. Any number of good items of clothing or accessories can be brought along to be swished, or swapped, for free. Other goods, such as books or kitchen items or duplicate gifts, can be donated to our sales table. The money raised from the sales table goes towards helping with the running costs of our WI. Put the date in your diary, Wednesday 14th January 2026. All women are welcome to attend and the first visit is free, we just ask for a donation for tea/coffee and cake.

Lesley Crisp
Secretary Bulphan WI

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IT'S ONLY A LITTLE SHOP, BUT IT CERTAINLY OFFERS A LOT

FOREST CHURCH

There isn't a Forest Church in January

The next Forest Church will be at Orsett Church
at 4pm on Saturday 7th February
The theme will be Saint Valentine



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CHRISTMAS SERVICES

December in Church is one of the times when communities and families come together. In our parish, our churches have hosted; a Christingle in Bulphan, The Nativity on the Pound and Christmas Eve Family Carol Service in Orsett and a Carols by Candlelight in Horndon. The photos on the next couple of pages will give flavour of these.

Nativity on the Pound – This was until recently an outdoor service held at the Pound in Orsett after which it has been hosted by St Giles and All Saints. A special thanks to Jackie Firman and her team of volunteers from the village who get the participants ready, Orsett in Bloom for seasonal refreshments and Spectrum Brass for providing the music.



Christingle – Through the day children from Bulphan CofE Primary School were busy making Christingles for the service in Bulphan Church, later in the afternoon.





Carols by Candlelight
- An old favourite returned to Horndon this year, Lessons and Carols with the addition of candles.



Christmas Eve Family Carols - The Family Carol service at Orsett proved as popular as ever.



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The churches in this Parish are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within the church community; especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is Janet McCheyne, who can be contacted on:
0775 283 6902

or
janetmcc101@gmail.com

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on:
01245 294 444

or
safeguarding@chelmsford.anglican.org

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Woolmarket Ladies

Our usual meeting in December was replaced by a lovely Christmas meal at the Ship in East Tilbury, with 19 members were in attendance. The meal was very tasty, the staff very friendly and attentive, and a good time was had by all. Many thanks to Elaine for organising the evening, Jan for sorting the mini bus and Bernie for the free raffle.

There will be no meeting in January but if you would like to meet up in the Swan at 7pm on the evening of Tuesday 6th January it would be great to see you.

Our next scheduled meeting at the Woolmarket will be on Tuesday 3rd February. This will be our usual Burns Night and the meal will start at 7.30. Please let Elaine know if you will be attending.

We would like to wish all our members readers of HOBNOB a peaceful and a healthy and happy New Year.

Please remember that new members to our group are always welcome. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 8.00 pm on the ground floor of the Woolmarket.

Gill Woodgate

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January through history

- 1st 1622 The Catholic Church adopted January 1st as the beginning of the New Year (instead of March 25th).
- 2nd 1769 The Royal Academy, founded through a personal act of King George III on 10th December 1768, was opened in Piccadilly, with painter Sir Joshua Reynolds as president. Its purpose is to promote the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate.
- 3rd 1924 English explorer Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, near Luxor, Egypt.
- 4th 1809 Louis Braille was born in France. Blinded as a boy, he later invented a reading system for the blind using punch marks in paper.
- 5th 1818 The first regular trans-Atlantic shipping service begins between Liverpool and New York.
- 6th 1066 Harold Godwin, Earl of Wessex was elected by the Witan to be the next King of England.
- 7th 1558 English forces were ousted from the French port of Calais. The town's burghers had surrendered to an invading English army in 1346.
- 8th 1800 London opened its first soup kitchens for the poor.
- 9th 1816 Sir Humphry Davy tested his Davy safety lamp for miners at Hebburn Colliery.
- 10th 1918 The House of Lords gives its approval to women over the age of 30 the right to vote.
- 11th 1954 George Cowling, a 34-year-old meteorologist, gave the first televised weather broadcast.
- 12th 1970 The first Boeing 747 Jumbo jet arrives at London's Heathrow Airport after completing its maiden transatlantic flight from New York.
- 13th 1964 Capital Records grudgingly released the first Beatles record, 'I Wanna Hold Your Hand', in the US to, as they said 'see how it goes'. It became their fastest selling single ever. Within only three weeks, a million copies had been sold.
- 14th 1896 The first public screening of a film in Britain, at the London headquarters of the Royal Photographic society.
- 15th 1559 Elizabeth I was crowned Queen of England at the age of 25.
- 16th 1707 The Act of Union was passed, merging the English and Scottish parliaments and paving the way for the new country of Great Britain.
- 17th 1773 Captain Cook's ship and his crew, aboard 'Resolution', became the first Europeans to sail below the Antarctic Circle.
- 18th 1919 Bentley Motors Limited was founded by Walter Owen Bentley, but the manufacturer did not make a complete car for 27 years, only engines and chassis.
- 19th 1915 German Zeppelin airships crossed the eastern coast of England to bombard towns in East Anglia, more than 20 people were killed.
- 20th 1265 England's first Parliament meets at Westminster Hall in London. Representatives from towns and villages across the country meet for the first time in one chamber.
- 21st 1846 The first edition of the Daily News, edited by Charles Dickens is published in London.
- 22nd 1927 The first live radio commentary of a football match anywhere in the world, between Arsenal and Sheffield United, at Highbury.
- 23rd 1901 Marconi carried out his first radio transmission experiments, receiving a Morse code signal across the water from St. Catherine's on the Isle of Wight to the Lizard in Cornwall.
- 24th 1965 Sir Winston Churchill died at the age of 90. His body was laid in state in Westminster Hall, London.
- 25th 1858 Mendelssohn's Wedding March was first played, at the wedding of Queen Victoria's daughter Princess Victoria and Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia.
- 26th 1908 The 1st Glasgow Boy Scout group, the first Scout group ever, was registered.
- 27th 1926 Inventor John Logie Baird demonstrates his new television machine to members of the Royal Institution in London. Some suggested that this could one day provide every home with a substitute for the cinema.
- 28th 1807 London becomes the first city in the world to be lit by gas lights.
- 29th 1942 The first broadcast of Desert Island Discs on BBC radio, devised and presented by Roy Plomley.
- 30th 1790 The first purpose-built lifeboat, The Original, was launched on the River Tyne at South Shields. The boat was 28 feet long and was rowed by up to 12 crew for whom cork life jackets were provided.
- 31st 1983 It became compulsory in Britain to wear car seat belts.



COMMUNITY INFORMATION FOR HORNDON - ORSETT - BULPHAN

POLICE at Grays **101 or 999**

Community Officer: PC Javier Rodriguez-Perez
email: thurrockcommunitypolicingteam@essex.police.uk

DOCTORS

Horndon on the Hill		01375 642362
Orsett & Bulphan	Orsett Surgery	01375 892082
Bulphan	West Horndon Surgery	01708 852318
	Ockendon Surgery	01277 811770

FORUMS

Horndon on the Hill	Horndonchair@thurrockforums.org
Orsett	apeaford@icloud.com
Bulphan	Bulphaninfo@thurrockforums.org

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Mr David Day	david.day@thurrock.gov.uk	07355 924361
Mr Barry Johnson	BJohnson@thurrock.gov.uk	07831 609714

LOCAL MP

Mr James McMurdock	james.mcmurdock.mp@parliament.uk
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA	

SCHOOLS

Horndon C of E Primary	Headteacher: Mrs D Bradley	01375 673260
Orsett C of E Primary	Head of school: Mr J Dickson	01375 891383
Bulphan C of E Academy	Head of school: Mr J Dickson	01375 891220

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If you would like advertise in the HOBNOB, we offer space to businesses, contractors and organisations within a 15 mile radius of the parish, excluding the area South of the Thames. It is expected that advertisers uphold ethical working practices and in sympathy with the ethos of the church. Ultimately the decision on placing adverts rests with the PCC.

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