

# The Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen

## Colchester

## Newsletter | July/August 2024



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



### ***The Dormition of Our Most Holy the Theotokos & Ever Virgin Mary***

The Dormition of the Mother of God is not recorded in the Scriptures. What we know of her Dormition (or 'falling asleep') we draw from our Holy Tradition. Some Protestants who believe that the scriptures are the *only* source of authority are troubled by this idea but, as St. John writes at the end of his Gospel, "And there are also many other things... I suppose even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." (**John 21:25**) In our Orthodox Faith, Holy Tradition carries equal weight with the Holy Scriptures. In fact the Scriptures are only truly to be understood through, and are themselves really a part of Holy Tradition.

***The Dormition story is full of wonder.*** The Apostles and Disciples were gathered at her bedside when she reposed, for she died a natural death, being fully human just like each of us. Then Christ Himself descended, took his Mother's soul, and carried it right into Heaven. Mary's body was laid in a tomb in Jerusalem, but when the Apostle Thomas came to say farewell to her three days later, he found the tomb to be completely empty. It is our Tradition that the Holy Theotokos' body was resurrected and she was taken up into Heaven bodily; the Feast of the Dormition is the guarantee that those who imitate her will become temples of the Holy Spirit and will inherit the Kingdom of God. The Dormition story gives all of us hope that Mary's example of meekness, holiness and obedience to God's will, in a sense gathers all of our shared humanity into this wonderful destination.

**Good strength for the Dormition Fast, which starts on the 1st of August!**

***Father Mark***

## NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS

### **Safeguarding**



### **Children**

**Safeguarding:** *Immediately after the Holy Liturgy on Sunday July 7, all parents of school age and pre-school age children who attend church are asked to attend a short meeting with Father Mark to discuss some issues concerning child safety.*

The parish is fully committed to safeguarding our children and young people and there are some important matters to talk about, including the supervision of children by parents in and outside the church building. Again, please make the effort to come and do your part to ensure that St Martin's continues to be a safe and happy place for our little ones.

**PROSPHORA BAKERS NEEDED:** We still need volunteers to take on the important task of baking the prospora bread for the Divine Liturgy. The baking of bread is an absolutely essential task in the parish, for without the bread there can be no liturgy. We have recently had a good response from members of the parish and a few new bakers are now in the making. If you feel you can commit to form part of a team of people to perform this important duty then please speak to Subdeacon George. We have several people who can advise and give lessons.

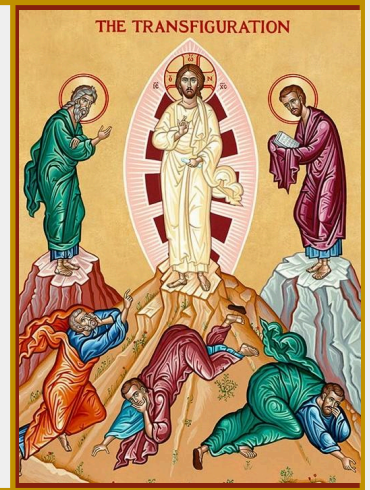
**Church Council Meeting** *The Church Council met after the Divine Liturgy on Pentecost (23/06/2024) and discussed several matters, including: the future of St Helen's Chapel, new ways to allow people to give financially to the parish, safeguarding and facilities management.*

**Church Growth** The number of regular worshippers on Sunday mornings has increased greatly since the early months of 2020 when we might have thirty or so people, it is now quite common for us to have more than 100 people for Divine Liturgy.



This is a phenomenon being witnessed across many Orthodox communities in the West, particularly in the UK and USA. Glory to God that He is bringing in so many new people!

**The icon of the feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ, directs our attention toward the event of the Transfiguration and specifically to the glory of God as revealed in Christ. This event came at a critical point in the ministry of our Lord, just as He was setting out on His journey to Jerusalem. He would soon experience the humiliation, suffering, and death of the Cross. However, the glorious light of the Resurrection was revealed to strengthen His disciples for the trials that they would soon experience. The feast also points to the great and glorious Second Coming of our Lord and the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God when all of creation will be transfigured and filled with light. The feast comes during the Dormition Fast which starts on the 1st of August, and the rules are relaxed to allow fish, wine and oil to be consumed on the feast day.**



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.

#### **Troparion of the Transfiguration of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ,**

**Tone 7:** *When Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, O Christ our God, Thou didst show Thy glory to Thy disciples as far as they could bear it. Let Thy everlasting light illumine also us sinners through the intercessions of the Mother of God. Giver of Light, glory to Thee.*

#### **Additional Services for July & August**

##### **Friday 5 July**

St Athanasius, Founder of the Great Lavra on Mt Athos, Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

##### **Thursday 11 July**

Great Martyr Euphemia the All-Praised, Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

##### **Thursday 18 July**

Martyrs the Grand Duchess Elizabeth & Nun Barbara, Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel.

##### **Thursday 25 July**

The Dormition of the Righteous Anna, Mother of the Most Holy Theotokos, Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

##### **Tuesday 6 August**

The Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ, Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

##### **Thursday 15 August**

The Dormition of Our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos & Ever-Virgin Mary, Hours and Holy Liturgy from 9.30 St Martin's Church

##### **Friday 23 August**

Leavetaking of the Dormition; St Irenaeus of Lyons, Hours and Holy Liturgy from 9.30 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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