

Your Rector's letter

Dear friends,

Sunday 4 November 2018: a historic date for Wivenhoe

St Mary's church has a history of more than 700 years and has seen some great changes over this long period. Throughout the years people made decisions about modifications, alterations or additions to the church. Let just list a few changes in the history of our church that have influenced the life of our church and in our community. Decades after the building of a stone church in 14th century, people decided to add a bell tower. In the Victorian age a complete make-over of our church had been carried out, and soon after the completion of this project an organ was purchased and installed in church. Nearly 40 years ago the PCC voted in favour of flexible seating in the north aisle of the church. All these are historic dates with an impact on the life, liturgy and worship at St Mary's.

And now we are able to add another historic date and it is amazing that we will all be part of it. This date is Sunday 4 November 2018. On that day two events will be organised which will have influence the life of the church and our community for many generations.

Please be seated

On 4 November immediately after the morning service the Nave reordering team will present information about the options for new seating and flooring in the church after which people will be invited to complete a survey. Several samples of seating will be in church for people to try out. The presentation will last 20 minutes followed by an opportunity to ask questions. The consultation may help the PCC in their negotiations with the DAC, other historic building institutions and grant making bodies with a well-informed and strong dossier.

Stronger together

The second event on that day is the commissioning service of the Mission and Ministry Partnership at St Matthew's church, Harwich Road, Colchester at 2pm. This is not just another Sunday service; it is the start of working together with other churches and communities in the region. For years we have been preparing this day. But now, on that famous 4th November, the Bishop of Colchester Roger, Archdeacon Annette and all people of the churches in Greenstead, St John's Colchester and St Mary's will celebrate the start of our partnership.

See you there

Bottom line is, don't book a holiday or a short break on that day, so you can be part of it. On 4th November you'll be consulted about your opinion regarding new seating/flooring and are invited to the commissioning service of our Mission and Ministry Partnership, the first ever in the history of our church.

11 November 1918: a historic date for the world

This year sees the centenary of Armistice day which brought to an end one of the most horrible conflicts in Europe. This day was initially associated with establishing permanent peace in Europe. But only 20 years later this precious peace was swept aside by the creeping -isms of the 1930s that still today creep into the relationship between nations: nationalism, racism, protectionism and populism.

When we remember the end of the first world war on Remembrance Sunday, and give thanks for peace and pray for peace-makers, we also need to link Armistice day with V-day, and with the formation of the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the European Union, the fall of the Berlin wall, the end of the cold war, the Good Friday Agreement etc. A century after World War I and 73 years after V-day these historic signs of hope for everlasting peace seem to be less inspiring to populations and their leaders. This illustrates how fragile world peace is and how hard it may be to convince people of the value of the institutions, treaties and agreements that establish peace.

It also tells us how important education is, so people learn from the mistakes in the past. Education is the foundation of a just, peaceful and fairer world for all. I hope one day the 19th century German philosopher Hegel is proven wrong, as he wrote: 'We learn from history that we do not learn from history'.

Pray for peace.

Erwin