

# OUR LADY OF RANSOM

26<sup>th</sup> April 2026

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter (A)

Psalter Week 4



The dinner party was going well. The famous actor was cajoled by the gathering to give a soliloquy. So, with great eloquence, intonation and diction, he recited *The Lord's My Shepherd*.... The gathering gave him a great round of applause. Now, an elderly priest also at the party was also cajoled in to reciting the same thing. Nervous, yet confident, with great reverence and obvious inner conviction, he shakily recited the same thing. On finishing, with a slight pregnant pause, the crowd gave him a big applause too. Following the applause, the actor came back and asked if the assembled party had spotted a fundamental difference between them.

To the confused group the actor humbly explained. "Yes, I am a professionally trained actor, I know how to deliver recitals, I know about diction and so on. And I know the psalm *The Lord's My Shepherd*..." "Yes", he said, "I know the psalm, but Father here clearly knows the Shepherd".

Major major difference. We can know our prayers, say them by heart, even 'say' them many times. But do we **know** the Shepherd? Jesus is often seen admonishing people who think they know Him because they 'say and know lots of prayers'. And by their behaviours and attitudes, they do not appear to know Him at all. We are called to know the Shepherd - for ourselves.

To listen to His voice alone. So, the importance of silent prayer. How can we even hope to sense his voice if we are continually saying or thinking lots of things?

Many voices compete for our attention. But there will be one, deep down in our deepest intuitions that we will simply know is Our Lord. But if our mental energies are taken up with saying prayers, reading prayers, or huge amounts of thinking and ruminating, then we never really sense voice of the one true Shepherd? There is too much mental noise drowning out the deeper gentler voice - the voice found at our deepest intuitions. So, we are called to silent prayer and make it a regular practice. It is surely the finest, most honest way to 'discern our vocation (Our Lord's calling) in life.

To 'know' our prayers is one thing - to 'know' the Shepherd is quite another. Our deepest intuitions will always bear out the voice of the Shepherd, where we just know we are being led to truth, mercy, building each other up, peace and love. (If only world leaders and politicians practiced this...) Anything else (largely negative things such as revenge, greed etc) is simply pushing the true Shepherd away. No surprise we see the problems in our world today. If He is pushed away, we ask, who, or what, is the true Shepherd replaced by...? Frightening.

Shall we make listening for the one true voice our regular practice? Wouldn't that make us and the world around us a little happier?

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Acts 2: 14a, 36-41

Psalms: 23: 1-3a. 3b-4.5.6

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading 1 Peter 2: 20b-25

Gospel: John 10: 1-10



<b>MASS INTENTIONS</b>	
<b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>St. Mark</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Marie Griffin RIP – Isobel and Tom Kennedy
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter (Prayer for Vocations)</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Parish Community
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Jean Pye RIP – Mathew Thomas
<b>Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April</b>	
<b>9.30pm Mass</b>	Marie Griffin RIP – Jean Williams
<b>Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Kate Clinch RIP (Anniversary) – Peter and Jean Wood
<b>Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>St. Catherine of Sienna</b>
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Marie Griffin RIP – Eileen McSweeney
<b>Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Alice Allso RIP
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May</b>	
<b><u>8.30am Mass</u></b>	Richard Bright (Ints)
<b>Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May</b>	<b>St. Athanasius</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Marie Griffin RIP – Jane Cook
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Vera Cooling RIP (Anniversary) – Tony Cooling
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Parish Community

All Church Services are now Live Streamed. To take part please go to  
<https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/olor>  
 Masses can be watched “live” or later as a recording

<p><b>PARISH PRIEST</b>            Father Paul Fox            50 London Hill, Rayleigh            Essex SS6 7HP  <b>01268 38.24.99</b>  <b>www.olorchurch.org</b>            email: <a href="mailto:rayleigh@brcdt.org">rayleigh@brcdt.org</a></p>	<p><b><u>Public Mass times:</u></b>  <b>Saturdays 5.30pm</b>  <b>Sundays 8am &amp; 10.00am</b>  <b>Mondays &amp; Tuesdays 9.30am</b>  <b>Wednesdays 10.00am</b>  <b>Thursdays &amp; Fridays 9.30am</b></p>
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**The Sacrament of Reconciliation: 4.30pm – 5pm Saturday evenings (not in the confessional box)** *Please be aware - times and days of weekday Masses are subject to change.*  
 Our Parish is part of The Brentwood Diocesan Trust, Registered Charity Number 23409



**ANNIVERSARIES** Kindly pray for all those whose anniversaries are at this time.  
Especially Hugh Kirkland and David Downes. **May they rest in Peace.**

† **Jean Wood.** Please also keep Jean in your prayers. Jean died recently. Please also keep Peter, family and friends in prayer too. **Jean's Requiem Mass will be on Wednesday May 13<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am .** May Jean rest in peace. †

† **Yvonne Newman.** Please also keep Yvonne in your prayers. Yvonne died recently. Please also keep Helen, Chris, family and friends in prayer too. **Yvonne's Requiem Mass will be on June 4<sup>th</sup> at 12.15pm.** May Yvonne rest in peace. †

**NEWSLETTER ITEMS:** Please ensure all items for the parish newsletter are submitted to the parish office by **11am on Thursdays** at the latest. Thank you

**A copy of the full newsletter is placed on the noticeboard inside the church porch, and parts of the newsletter inside the noticeboard outside the church. Please leave these as they are so as others may see them for quick reference. Thank you.**

***Holy Communion, when receiving, please consume the Sacred Host IMMEDIATELY. The Sacred Host should be consumed before receiving the Sacred Blood from the Chalice, if you do not receive from the Chalice, then consume the Sacred Host straight away in front of the Altar. Thank you.***

**Church Car Park:** anyone who wishes to leave their car in the church car park overnight, or especially over several nights, **must check with the Parish Office first.** This is for reasons such as funeral guests having priority parking during funerals, other celebrations occurring requiring parking. Thank you.

**Printed Parish Newsletters – Reminder:** printed newsletters are left outside the Presbytery for those who have **NO ACCESS** to electronic newsletters. In good conscience, please honour this request. Thank you.

### **Pope John Paul 2<sup>nd</sup> Hall Bookings –**

Please contact Paul Roseman on 07470 691902 for any Hall Booking requests, thank you.

**Wheelchairs and Strollers: Do you have any unwanted or no longer needed?** Or any walking aids? Until recently we had a supply for people to take and use as needed. We have a small supply of aids currently. If you have any that you are happy to donate, please let us

know by calling the Parish Office. Thank you.

### **Wednesday Coffee Morning**

The next Wednesday Coffee morning will be on the 29th April after the 10.00am Mass.

Kindly note that there will be **no coffee morning on Wednesday 13th May.**

If you wish to help about once each month, we very much need you, so come along and make yourself known. We'd love to see you

### **Sunday Coffee Morning -**

Coffee Morning Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April; after the 10am Mass, organized by members of the RCIA.

If you are interested in running a coffee morning after Sunday 10am Mass, for a Charity of your choice, please inform the staff in the presbytery office. Thank you.



### **Our Lady of Ransom Parish Pilgrimage to Knock & Co. Mayo Ireland**

#### **Monday 6th July to Friday 10th July 2026**

You are very welcome to join Fr. Paul and fellow pilgrims on our five-day Parish Pilgrimage to Knock & County Mayo. July is fast approaching, so please consider joining us. As well as spending three days in Knock, we will also be visiting Ballintubber Abbey, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick, and the Fr. Peyton Centre (with lunch provided). We will be staying at the Castlecourt Hotel in Westport, although a 45-minute drive from Knock, provides a four-course dinner each night, a bar and evening entertainment. Flights are from Stanstead Airport with an early morning outbound flight and early evening return. Price £899 per person based on two people sharing. Package includes flight with 10kg check-in luggage; four nights dinner, bed & breakfast; all entertainment, excursions and guided tours. For further information and to register your interest, please contact: Shirley Hegewald email: [shirley.hegewald16@gmail.com](mailto:shirley.hegewald16@gmail.com) mobile: 07900 396256

**Repository** – There are various items available for First Holy Communion gifts.

### **Children's Liturgy**

Children's Liturgy at 10am mass, for children aged 3 years old to school year 6)

There are 2 groups - preschool to school year 2, and school years 3-6).

Parents are welcome to settle the youngest children coming for the first few times, aiming towards them coming independently.

Children do not need to bring anything to the session- any materials needed will be provided. (If your child has special needs, please make leaders aware beforehand - we welcome everyone.

**Schoolchildren's education is being affected** because parents can't afford hygiene products and are too embarrassed to send their children to school. Some children are also experiencing similar embarrassment because they ARE being sent to school but in unwashed uniform.

Please consider donating these items, washing powder/liquid or feminine hygiene items to the Food Bank collection in the porch of our church. Thank you

### **Legion of Mary**

*The Legion of Mary meets every Tuesday at 7pm in the Bethany Room. We visit sick and housebound parishioners, the lapsed and those unable to attend church regularly. Our mission is to support the spiritual needs of individuals through personal contact and encourage them to participate in the sacraments and the community life of the Church. We are looking for new members who have a devotion to Our Lady and are willing to volunteer two hours each week for this purpose. Alternatively, as an Auxiliary member you could support us spiritually through prayer and daily devotion to Our Lady. To find out more, please contact Shirley Tel: 07900 396256. If you know anyone who would appreciate a visit from the Legion of Mary, please get in contact.*

**HARP-** We are very short of items that we give to people who use our services. Here is the list:

Sleeping bags; Hand warmer; Foil blanket, take away cups; Ladies small underwear

Men's boxers small and medium; Leggings; Socks; Deodorants.

If you can help, please do let us know, we are happy to come and collect the items or you can donate to the Bradbury Centre 103-107 York Road, Southend-On-Sea, SS1 2DL.

Thank you for all your support.

that they have felt it an enormous privilege to be invited and to be part of a celebration in the Cathedral, perhaps for the first time in their lives!

**MARRIAGE SUPPORT:** From relationships that are 'Just in a Rut', needing some refreshment or more serious issues - If you are open to try again – Retrouvaille could be the solution. We have helped thousands of couples get their relationship back on track as they rediscovered hope and trust in the marriage. To find out more:

[www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk) +44 797 338 0443

### **Gift Aid**

It is important that we have the current address for anyone who has joined the parish Gift Aid scheme. If you have moved since you signed up to Gift Aid, please email your new address to Sandra Cowdrey, our Gift Aid Organizer, at [olorgiftaid@hotmail.com](mailto:olorgiftaid@hotmail.com)

### **Missio Red Boxes**

For any enquiries re Missio red boxes, please contact Katherine Abel 0790 6844284 [warren\\_katherine@hotmail.com](mailto:warren_katherine@hotmail.com), thank you for your continued support

**NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK:** Please pray for all those living out the vocation to marriage and couples preparing to marry. Support is available for those who need it, and your parish priest can point you in the right direction. If you are celebrating a significant anniversary this year, please let your parish know so that you can be invited to the Mass of Thanksgiving in the Cathedral on Saturday 11th July.

### **Bereavement Group Westcliff RC Church, Our Lady and Saint Helen**

**2nd Saturday of the month, 10.00 AM to 12.00PM,  
at the parish's small hall.**

**St John Bosco Children's Camp – an amazing volunteer opportunity for this summer.** If you are in school year 12 or student age (or any age over 17!) you are very welcome to apply at [www.boscocamp.co.uk](http://www.boscocamp.co.uk). The application process includes references and a DBS check, which we can help with, as well as a training and support before and during Camp. The Camp provides over 100 children a week with a summer holiday – for many their only holiday. As a

volunteer you use your skills in assisting with different sporting and fun activities, as well as the practical aspects of camp life. **Volunteer for 25<sup>th</sup> July – 1<sup>st</sup> August or 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> August.** The Camp is a special work of Caritas Diocese of Brentwood, and also seeks financial donations – all information on the website.

Following the success of **Flame 2025**, we are delighted to be preparing for **Flame 2027** – a fantastic event for young people in Years 10–13 (ages 15–18).

Flame brings together inspiring speakers, award-winning musicians and Catholic organisations, and concludes with Adoration led by the Bishops of England and Wales, offering young people a powerful experience of the Church.

You can find all information regarding this event on the attached letter.

If you wish to bring a group from your Parish or partnership, please request your earlybird tickets here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/KTevSZwGQH>

## **Youth.**

### **World Youth Day 2027 (Seoul, South Korea)**

We have an initial group preparing to attend. There is still time to nominate a young person (aged 19+ by August 2027). Further details are available on our website.

### **Youth Mass**

There will be **no Youth Mass in April** due to this falling on Maundy Thursday, so we are encouraging young people to attend their own parish Masses.

The next Youth Mass will take place on Thursday 7th May, which you are very welcome to attend. Please do just send us a quick message if you are planning to bring a group, to assist with catering arrangements.

### **Diocesan Walsingham Pilgrimage – Saturday 23rd May**

Representatives from the BCYS will be joining the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham, and we would like to invite other young people to join and assist with the liturgy. Please contact us if interested.

### **Flame 2027 – Saturday 6th March, OVO Wembley Arena**

Almost 1,000 young people from the Diocese are already registered. A limited number of early bird tickets (£30) remain available. To book, please complete the form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/KTevSZwGQH>

### **Walsingham House Team Applications**

Applications are now open for those finishing Year 13 or university who are interested in a year of volunteering at Walsingham House.

For further information, please email [clairebailey@brcdt.org](mailto:clairebailey@brcdt.org).

## **Funding Grants for Crises and Funerals.**

**Crisis grants help parish communities to support local individuals or families facing extreme hardship or crisis.**

Crisis grant applications need to be made or supported by the local Catholic parish and the Caritas team. [Parishes can download further information and the application form here.](#)

**Caritas Westminster can offer grants to help specifically with funeral costs in cases of hardship.** Funeral grants can contribute up to £1,500 towards funeral costs. This grant is provided by a third party who wishes to remain anonymous and given through a local Catholic parish in the Diocese of Westminster. [Parishes can download further information and the application form here.](#)

5th May 2026, marks the **National Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse**, with this year's theme focusing on domestic abuse.

[Safe in Faith](#) has created a resource which includes prayers written by survivors of domestic abuse, along with THE LEGACY OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

**St. Francis of Assisi.** As we mark 800 years since the death of St Francis (3<sup>rd</sup> October 1226), Fr Alban McCoy OFM Con will speak about how Francis changed the Church of his day and can help us to renew the Church in our own times. The event will take place in the hall at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park (RM2 6DH) from 11 am until 1 pm on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May. Refreshments available from 10.30. Everyone is welcome to this free event, which is also available by live stream on [www.whatgoodnews.org](http://www.whatgoodnews.org) No booking necessary. suggested prayerful actions that individuals and parishes can take.

### **School Vacancies:-**

#### **CARETAKER - St. Bernard's High School**

**Hours: 37 hours per week, full-time, additional hours maybe required at weekends when required**

**Salary scale 7-12 (£26,403 - £28,598)**

***Calling all Caretakers – we are looking to recruit a Caretaker to join our friendly premises team!***

The role will be challenging at times so you will need to be a team player, pro-active, organised, reliable, adaptable and have a 'can do' attitude to deal with issues that arise. You will support the school to effectively maintain a safe, clean, secure, well-functioning and pleasant learning environment for students, staff and visitors.

#### ***Key Responsibilities:***

- Carry out hands-on maintenance, repairs, and site inspections as required
- Ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, including risk assessments and reporting
- Monitor site security, including opening/closing procedures and emergency response
- Liaise with contractors, suppliers, and management to ensure efficient service delivery
- Ensuring the site is safe for use during adverse weather conditions
- Deliver goods to relevant departments
- Set up rooms for events

#### ***Requirements:***

- Proven experience in a caretaking, facilities, or maintenance role ideally working within a school or similar environment
- Strong practical skills across general maintenance (e.g. basic plumbing, electrical, carpentry)
- Good understanding of health and safety procedures and compliance
- Excellent organisational and communication skills
- Ability to work independently and take initiative
- Flexible approach to working hours when needed

If you would like to apply, please complete the Support Staff Application Form found at the bottom of our Vacancies page on our website (<https://www.stbernardswestcliff.org.uk/about-us/vacancies>) and email it to [recruitment@stbernards.southend.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@stbernards.southend.sch.uk).

#### **Deputy Headteacher - Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Benfleet**

Deadline for applications: 23:59 Thursday 30th April 2026

#### **Headteacher - St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stanford Le Hope**

Deadline for applications: 23:59 Thursday 30th April 2026

[Headteacher - St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School, Colchester](#)

Deadline for applications: 09:00 am Tuesday 5th May 2026

The Governors of **St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Hornchurch**, are seeking to appoint an inspirational and dedicated Head Teacher. **Closing date: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026 at 5pm / Interview Date: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026.** Enquiries can be made by email to [admin@stmcps.co.uk](mailto:admin@stmcps.co.uk), or phone 01708 448430

**THE CANONESSES OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE INVITE YOU TO A TALK BY DR AUSTEN IVEREIGH (ON ZOOM):**

HOPE FOR THE CHURCH IN A CHANGE OF ERA: THE LEGACY OF POPE FRANCIS - Wednesday **6th May at 7pm**

We are delighted to be joined by Austen Ivereigh (British Catholic writer & journalist – known for his two biographies of Pope Francis).

The talk is free of charge and ALL are welcome! For more details and to book your place please see the link via our home page [www.canonesses.co.uk](http://www.canonesses.co.uk)

**You are warmly invited to join the Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark, and Westminster for the 20th annual Mass for Migrants on Bank Holiday Monday, 4 May 2026, at St Antony of Padua Catholic Church.** The

celebration will begin at 12.00 pm with a procession of banners.

This year, the Mass is hosted by the Diocese of Brentwood. Celebrated for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, the Mass is prepared by the Caritas and Ethnic Chaplaincies of the three dioceses and gives thanks for the contributions made to faith, life and work in the UK by all those who have come from other countries to make their home here.

**The preacher will be Archbishop Richard Moth, and the celebrant will be Bishop Alan Williams, sm.**

Music will be provided by Nathan Chan and students from St Antony's Catholic Primary School, St Bonaventure's Catholic Secondary School and St Angela's Ursuline School.

We will also be joined by community organisers from [Citizens UK](http://Citizens UK).

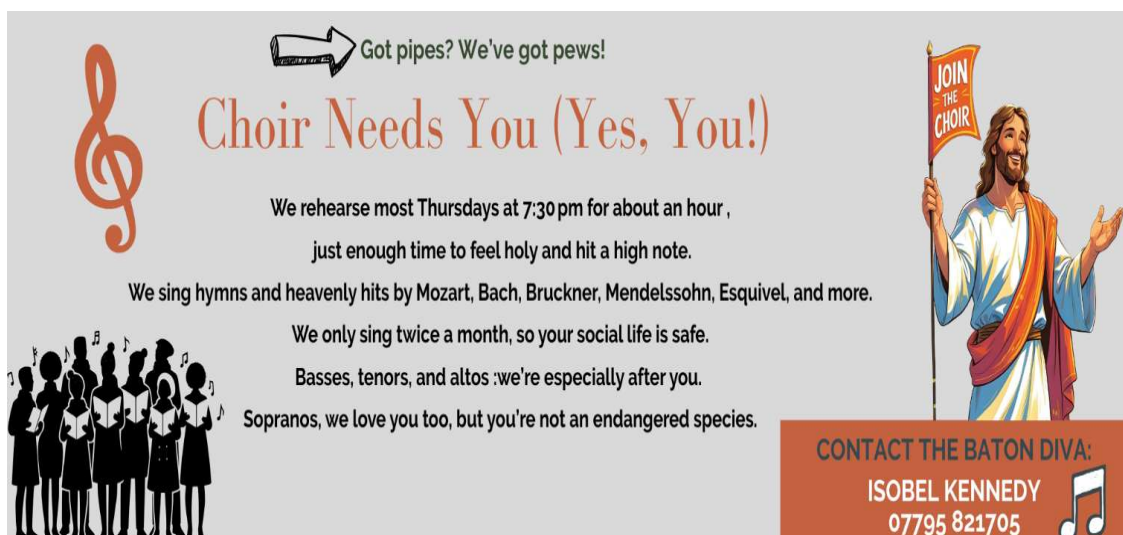
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Please do come along and bring the family, whether you are from a migrant background or not; **all are welcome!** It is a joyful and celebratory occasion, providing a wonderful chance to embrace our communities. Everyone is invited to wear their national dress.

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*Banner bearers are invited to gather at St Bonaventure's Secondary School at 11.15 am, ready for the procession to begin at 12.00 pm.*

*Parish and Catholic organisations are welcome to bring banners for the procession. Please contact: [caritas@brcdt.org](mailto:caritas@brcdt.org)*



Got pipes? We've got pews!

# Choir Needs You (Yes, You!)

We rehearse most Thursdays at 7:30 pm for about an hour,  
just enough time to feel holy and hit a high note.



We sing hymns and heavenly hits by Mozart, Bach, Bruckner, Mendelssohn, Esquivel, and more.

We only sing twice a month, so your social life is safe.

Basses, tenors, and altos :we're especially after you.

Sopranos, we love you too, but you're not an endangered species.

**CONTACT THE BATON DIVA:**  
**ISOBEL KENNEDY**  
**07795 821705**



## TRAIN AS A RELATIONSHIP COUNSELLOR



*Would you like train in relationship counselling and provide couples with professional, effective support, that makes a real difference?*

### **BENEFITS:**

Enjoy full training with certified trainers, ongoing supervision and CPD, and become part of a community of like-minded relationship professionals within a historic and diverse organisation.

Our next **Certificate in Relationship Counselling (CRC)** training course will begin in March 2027 with a **deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June** for applications.

Marriage Care believe that supporting couple relationships is a matter of social justice. Our relationship counsellors enable those in need to access professional counselling – regardless of their ability to pay – by providing two counselling sessions per week on a voluntary basis.

We are looking for those who are **empathetic, understanding** and have an **enthusiasm for supporting adult relationships**. Whilst you do not need experience as a counsellor for this role, **self-awareness** and having the **time and space to commit** to all that the training and role entails is essential.

*Please note that there are costs associated with training on our CRC, including a non-refundable registration fee of around £175. These costs, which are outlined on our webpage, are subject to minor changes and are far lower than with alternative training providers. In line with our ethos as a charity, no one is excluded on the basis of their ability to pay. What we ask in return is your commitment to us and our clients.*

For more information please visit our website: [www.marriagecare.org.uk](http://www.marriagecare.org.uk)  
or email: [volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk)

# Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel



## OFFSHOOTS SINGING GROUP



Join us for a peaceful and uplifting evening of song in  
a beautiful church setting.

**Location:** Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, 61  
London Road, Wickford, SS12 0AW

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> April 2026

**Time:** 8:00pm

Donations in support of our Building and Restoration  
Fund are warmly appreciated.

Refreshments will be served afterwards in St Peter's  
Hall

Raffle - join in for a chance to win great prizes!

✨ All are welcome ✨