



St Mary's Church, South Benfleet – Newsletter October 2026

Dear St Mary's Family,

September has been a busy month. While we await news about an Associate priest, we have been glad to see Fr Pete and a new face, Rev Chuks, who celebrated Mass with us on Sundays (twice each).

On Sept 3rd, Fr David Wylie was licenced to the benefices of St Mary's and St David's Eastwood. The service was held at St Mary's and followed by refreshments. Bishop Adam Atkinson (Bradwell), Bishop Luke Irvine-Capel (Richborough) and Archdeacon Susan Lewis (Southend) held the service. The church was full – it was good to see so many people supporting Fr David and we welcomed members of the congregations from St David's and St Margaret's.

On Tues 22nd, "our" Fr Pete Hillman was made a Canon of Chelmsford Cathedral at evensong there. Our congratulations to him.

We had a lovely memorial service for Diana Hawkins on Sat 12th. The church was full again – so many people came to remember such a special lady. Fr Leslie Drake took the service, and the family eulogies were very moving.

We had two social events in the church hall this month:

- Maz Morgan held another tea and quiz on Sun 6th – some 30 people attended for sandwiches, tea, cake and a fun quiz. They raised £334 for church funds. Well done Maz!
- There was a 70s night on Sat 26th, attended by 25 people. Lisa did an amazing job of organising this, providing food, music, a 70's themed quiz and (of course) a raffle. Well done to her and Eileen, Jan and Maz. Several people (including Lisa) even dressed the part! The event raised £300, again for church funds.

Harvest Festival

This coming Sunday, October 4th, is our Harvest Festival – usual time 1130 am. Please try to come and bring any donations you can. All donations will be taken to the Methodist Church as usual for their outreach programme.

Easyfundraising

You can help to raise funds for St Mary's by signing up to Easyfundraising, and selecting St Mary's church South Benfleet as your cause. Lots of online retailers support this (Amazon, M&S, John Lewis, Tesco etc etc) and will make a donation to your chosen cause every time you order. All you have to do is sign up and choose the cause. You then log into the app each time before you place your order. It's very easy and costs you nothing!

Dates for your diary:

- Sunday Oct 4th – St Mary's – Harvest Festival – 11:30am Mass
- Tuesday Oct 13th and 27th – Juliet's Keep Fit class at St Mary's church hall – 10am
- Fri – Sun Oct 16th to 18th – Knitting exhibition at St Mary's. 10am to 4pm on Friday & Saturday, 1pm to 4pm on Sunday.
- Friday Oct 23rd – St Mary's church hall – Lisa's Fish & Chip Quiz Night – 7pm

After October:

- Saturday Nov 7th – St Mary's church hall - Craft Fair
- Saturday Nov 14th – St Mary's church – Sid Bolan Big Band concert 7:30pm
- Saturday Nov 28th – St Mary's church – Winter open day
- Monday Dec 7th – Benfleet Tandoori – Curry night
- Saturday Dec 19th – St Mary's church – Allegro Choir 7:30pm

David Goulder