

St. Catherine's Church



A little history, both ancient and modern together
with details of our services times and open
afternoons during 2018

Parish of East and West Tilbury and Linford
www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk

About St. Catherine's church

St. Catherine's is the parish church and, if you live in the parish, it is your Church of England church. It is a place of Christian worship and has been for hundreds of years. We have a regular Sunday service as well as Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. For a guide to what's on see the back page of this leaflet.

From March 2015 through to February 2016 there was a major programme of development which included building an extension to provide toilets and a kitchen, providing a proper modern heating system and the replacement of old and inappropriate paint finishes. The existing pews were also replaced with chairs which have made the building more suitable for a variety of worship settings as well as for other, secular, activities.

During the course of the work several points of historic interest were noted including the discovery of an unknown vault in the chancel. Much more about this find and other historical observations can be found in an article written by our Rector, Canon Paul Robinson, in the journal of the Thurrock Local History Society "Panorama" no. 54.

The Coalhouse Fort project and local schools are among those that have used the building since these changes were made. St. Catherine's was one of the venues used for the 90th Birthday celebrations for Queen Elizabeth II. It was also used as a venue for the 2016 and 2017 Thurrock Art Trails. The changes have also enabled us to hold our annual Christmas Bazaar here rather than at the village hall which previously was the case.

As a result of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's decision to support the repair of the roofs of listed churches we were able to have the roof stripped and re-tiled and we hope in the future to start on a project to have repairs made to the exterior of the building.

Apart from the government funding for the roof we are very grateful for grant support from the Veolia North Thames Trust, the Friends of Essex Churches, the London over the Border fund, the Diocese of Chelmsford together with gifts from members of the congregation and other friends of the parish. All of the blocks to build the extension were donated by Tarmac and came from their Linford block works.

St. Cedd and St. Catherine's

We believe that a church was founded here by the saintly Bishop Cedd, Bede in his famous 731AD *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, recorded Cedd coming up the Thames and founding a church and monastery at Tilaburg (East Tilbury) most probably in 654AD.

Tilaburg had been the lowest crossing point of the Thames since Bronze Age times, and most probably the Thames was then shallow enough at low tide for there to be a ford linking Essex and Kent. In Emperor Cladius' time, in 43AD, the Roman General Plautius and his legionaries marched south along the Roman road from Chelmsford and Billericay to East Tilbury and on to Kent across the ford. As the Thames river levels rose, the crossing was by ferry and by 1293 it was run by the Prioress of Higham in Kent and on the pilgrimage route to Thomas a Becket's shrine in Canterbury. This pilgrim route was still in use until at least the mid 16th Century.

In Cedd's day, as this Thames crossing was either still a ford or a shallow ferry route, it meant that the crossing at Tilaburg was the limit of navigation by sea going ships up the Thames. So Bishop Cedd and his companions would have left the boat that had brought them from Lindisfarne and began their mission in Essex at Tilaburg where they had landed and established what Bede called "a community of the servants of Christ" here under the patronage of the newly baptised, Anglo Saxon King Sigbert.

What made Cedd unique as a missionary, and what we at St Catherine's specially celebrate, is not that Cedd was a pioneer missionary going to communities that had never heard the Gospel. The East Saxons **had** been Christians but the imported and imposed Christianity of the Roman missionaries and bishops like Augustine and Mellitus had just not stuck in this part of England. Importantly for the Church today, Cedd showed the Christian Faith could be re-ignited where it had become, at best, dying embers.

But secondly, St Cedd's gift came from his Celtic heritage which earthed the Christian faith in the life and experiences of the people he preached to. Those who are familiar with the history of mission will recognise this same pattern in other eras and mission areas, most distinctively in our time perhaps by Vincent Donovan in his "Epistle from the Masai – Christianity Rediscovered". This time, the Gospel brought by Cedd took root and Bede celebrates how Cedd's "the Gospel of eternal life made daily headway throughout the province".

Worship at St. Catherine's

1st Sunday of the month at 10am "The Family Service"

Other Sundays at 10am a service of Holy Communion

**There is also a service of Holy Communion at 10am
each Wednesday at the St. Francis Centre in Linford**

**To talk about Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals please
contact Churchwarden, Colin Strong on 07591-708955**

e-mail: warden.colin.stcatherines@gmail.com

Open afternoons for 2018

**The church is open on the following afternoons between 2pm
and 5pm when tea / coffee and homemade cakes are usually
on sale.**

Sunday 29th April

Sunday 6th May (Rogation at West Tilbury)

Bank Holiday Monday 7th May

Sunday 27th May

Bank Holiday Monday 28th May

Saturday 16th June - Summer Fete

Sunday 24th June

Sunday 29th July

Sunday 26th August

Bank Holiday Monday 27th August

Sunday 30th September

Sunday 28th October

*For more information about our parish and events including activities at St. Francis
Linford, see our parish magazine "Pewtalk" or our website at:-
www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk*