



ST. JAMES'S PALACE  
LONDON SW1A 1BQ

11th May 2007

Brethren of the 'Cluster of Colchester Lodges' and Visiting Guests,

Thank you for your kind agreement to be involved with this year's 'Colchester group of Lodges' cluster meeting. I am sorry I am unable to attend, but I hope you all enjoy the evening's presentations.

Thirty years ago, in October 1976, I had the great pleasure of officially opening the St. Giles Masonic Centre, and today it gives me great pride and satisfaction that the tenets & principles of Freemasonry continue to be strong within the Province of Essex, and furthermore that the building within which you now sit continues to be a focal point for Colchester Masons and Brethren from outlying districts.

This evening you will have heard, from Bro. Paul Masters, about the history of St. Giles' Church prior to its use as a centre for Freemasonry. As you reflect on this unique story, consider the valuable resource you maintain today and how it can be preserved for the generations to come. I am sure you will also remember that, whilst the building is privately owned, its history belongs to the people of Colchester, of Essex and indeed the whole of this Country. I very much hope that that long and occasionally turbulent history can be made more easily accessible.

You, yourselves, should take pride in your part in reaching this milestone. I wish you all well and may you continue to have many happy times within the Centre.

**HRH The Duke of Kent, KG**  
**Grand Master**  
**United Grand Lodge of England**