



December 2025

Services in December

7 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	6pm	All Saints	Informal Worship and Baptisms
13 th	4.30pm	All Saints	Christingle
14 th	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	4pm	St Mark's	Carols by Candlelight
20 th	6.30pm	All Saints	Carol Service
21 st	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Communion
	6.30pm	St Mary's	Carols by Candlelight
24 th	4pm	St Mark's	Crib Service
	11.15pm	St Mary's	Midnight Communion
25 th	9am	St Mark's	Christmas Celebration with Communion
	10.30am	St Mary's	Christmas Celebration with Communion
28 th	10am	St Mark's	Parish-wide Worship with Communion

Everyone is welcome!

What Kind of King?

As Christmas approaches, you might be caught up in the flurry of writing cards, seeking out suitable presents for the people on your list, and planning who is cooking what. Or you might be choosing to slow down as the nights draw in and the days get chillier, enjoying some winter hibernation. However you find yourself, this Christmas I want to invite you to ponder what kind of king we celebrate. At Christmas, we talk of the arrival of Jesus, the baby in a manger who has come to be King – but what kind of king was this baby to be? We have plenty of kings around! So, what makes this one particularly special?

Christians believe Jesus is God himself in human form, come to be among us, come to be like us that he might *save* us. Eugene Peterson in his paraphrase of the Bible says that in Jesus, God ‘became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish’.

At St Mary’s and St Mark’s this Christmas, we are going to be thinking about what kind of king Jesus is by looking at a very ancient prophecy in Isaiah, written around 700 years before Jesus. The word describes the long-awaited king as:

‘Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.’

Jesus is the wonderful counsellor, the guide of our lives and the bearer of all wisdom: about why the world was created, who we are meant to be, and what our purpose is.

Jesus is mighty God, he is both divine and human and has all the strength, power and justness of God himself, he brings both justice and mercy and he wants to work many wonders in our lives and in our world.

Jesus is everlasting Father; this is a funny one because he is both the Son of God and God himself but he is everlasting, he was there at the creation of the world and he is with us until the end, he is at work making all things new in this world and in the life to come, he is a hope that is unbreakable and eternal. And he chooses to relate to us as a Father, a perfect heavenly Father who knows our needs and offers his love and care of us as his children.

Jesus is the prince of peace; he has the final word in a world of pain and conflict. Jesus speaks peace, a peace that is unshakable, that surpasses all earthly circumstances and a peace that is complete.

The perfect peace of Jesus is on offer to each one of us, and what better time to take hold of this offer of peace than in the midst of what can be one of the busiest seasons of the year. Why not stop and ponder this new kind of king that arrived at Christmas, one who offers true wisdom, a power that holds together both mercy and justice, the love of a good Father, and an everlasting peace that cannot be shaken.

Every blessing to you and your loved ones for this Christmas season,

Reverend Monique
(Curate of West Weald Parish)

Other Events

December

3 rd	10am	St Mary's	Retreat Space
3 rd	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
4 th	8pm	St Mary's	Choir rehearsal
5 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
5 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
6 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
6 th	10am	St Mary's	Retreat Space
6 th	4pm	Handcross Hardware	Light Up Handcross
7 th	1.30pm	St Mary's	Slaugham Society event
9 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
10 th	6pm	The Half Moon, Warninglid	Carols
11 th	8pm	St Mark's	Choir rehearsal
12 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
12 th	4pm	Woodgate Hub	Carols
12 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
13 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
14 th	8pm	St Mark's	Choir rehearsal
16 th	12pm	St Mary's	Mustard Seed Christmas lunch
18 th	8pm	St Mary's	Choir rehearsal
19 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
20 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
21 st	5.30pm	St Mary's	Choir rehearsal
23 rd	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club

January

2 nd	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
3 rd	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
6 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
7 th	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
9 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
9 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
10 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café

Locations for services and events

All Saints: Horsham Road, Handcross, RH17 6DF

St Mark's: Brantridge Lane, Staplefield, RH17 6EJ

St Mary's: Staplefield Road, Slaugham, RH17 6AG

Woodgate Hub: Grace Holand Avenue, Pease Pottage, RH11 9SL

Weekly services take place at our churches, and **everyone is welcome**.

Our current plans are as published here, but they are subject to change. Please look out for email communication, and keep an eye on our social media pages, website, YouTube channel and weekly notice sheet.

The St Mary's services are put onto YouTube, and we hope they will be a blessing to those who cannot attend in person. They can be found here:

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCBQ0W4r1m39ixogQWR3TxoA?fbclid=IwAR2vLqbms97Iq9StSwn8qvgX_vTF11-tg0LV7z80cVFC8BZE034WNbNHhc4

You can subscribe to the sermons as a podcast too. All links are on the website at <https://www.stmarysparish.org.uk/podcasts/>.

Retreat spaces

The final retreat spaces of the year at St Mary's will be on 3rd and 6th December at 10am.

This will be a good opportunity to draw near to God quietly at the beginning of Advent.

Speak to Liz Cox for more details (07813 933134).



The poster for 'Retreat Spaces 2025 @ St Mary's, Slaughtam' features a light green background. At the top left, the title 'Retreat Spaces 2025' is written in a mix of cursive and bold sans-serif fonts. To the right is the 'westweald' logo, which consists of a colorful circular emblem with the text 'westweald' in a stylized font. Below the title, a list of retreat dates and times is presented in purple boxes with white text. To the right of this list is a photograph of the church building, St Mary's in Slaughtam, with several vertical blue bars of varying heights overlaid on it. At the bottom left, contact information is provided in two dark green rounded rectangles. At the bottom right, a red location pin icon is next to the church's address.

Date	Month	Season	Time
19	MARCH	LENT	10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM
8	MAY	EASTER: Resurrection	10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM
22	JUNE	SUMMER	7:00 PM TO 9:00 PM
15	SEPTEMBER	NEW TERM	10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM
3&6	DECEMBER	ADVENT	10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM

To book your free place or for more info:
retreats@westwealdparish.org.uk
www.westwealdparish.org.uk

St Mary's Slaughtam, The Green, Slaughtam, RH17 6AG

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:7



The **West Weald Community Pantry** continues strongly, as it has for the past six years.

The Saturday event is welcomed by so many people, and we call it our 'reducing food waste' event. Several stay for the free tea, coffee and biscuits, and it has become a lovely meeting place for people.

Why not come along and see for yourself?

Every week, Tesco at Broadbridge Heath donates its reduced produce, meat and bread products, as part of the FareShare scheme. We have now carried out 539 collections from Tesco, which is the equivalent of 48,768kg of food saved, as well as the saving of 140,541kg of CO₂!

On Wednesday mornings, we open a foodbank. From the very generous Harvest Thanksgiving donations from schools and churches, as well as those from the Warninglid monthly coffee mornings, we are able to help families and adults who are struggling due to the high cost of living increases and unemployment.

We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has been involved in collecting food, sorting food, helping run the café, chatting to those who come on Saturdays, and generally spreading the message about what we are doing!

We work with schools and the GP surgery to offer a targeted service to those in most need of food, and we have helped several people in this way. Thank you to everyone who has donated food or money, or who has helped with this aspect of the Pantry.

The Pantry is a key ministry for our church, and we are seeing God at work in many ways!

We would like to increase our team of helpers so if you would like to join in and can spare an hour on a Friday evening to help with food collections, time on a Saturday morning to help in the café and chat to those attending, or an hour on Wednesday mornings to help with our targeted service, please talk to Barbara, Phil or the church office, and find out how you can become part of this amazing team!

West Weald Schools Team

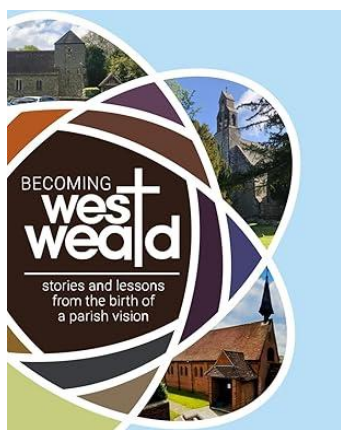
Please pray for Carl and the team as they undertake the vital work in our schools, as well as for the staff and pupils.

Regular assemblies are: Monday, 11am, Brantridge, and Tuesday, 9am, St Mark's Primary

Our local schools and headteachers are: Brantridge (Mr Dafydd Roberts), Handcross Park (Mr Jonnie Besley), Handcross Primary (Mrs Sharon Bondonno), St Mark's CofE Primary (Mrs Laura Kelsey) and Woodgate Primary (Mrs Sarah Neller).

West Weald Parish book published

The book *Becoming West Weald: Stories and Lessons from the Birth of Parish Vision*, written by some members of our church family, is available on Amazon.



In 2023, a former United Benefice of two parishes in Mid Sussex united to form one parish. This reflection recounts what led to that unity, the vision that has emerged, and what God has been doing as a result of it, featuring stories of lives changed and lessons learned, as those in and leading the churches discovered a fresh way of being and doing church.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility!

If you are worried or you are worried about the wellbeing of a child or vulnerable person, please contact us.

- Our Parish Safeguarding Officer: Helen Arnold
- Contact: safeguarding@westwealdparish.org.uk

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child ring Police on 999.

Safeguarding information is in all our churches and on the website.

Regular Notices

Hardship Fund

Financial support is available from the Hardship Fund if you or someone you know (living in the parish) is in need. Forms can be collected from the hardware shop. If you cannot go out, please email Carl (rector@westwealdparish.org.uk) and he will send a form electronically.

Gift Aid

Claiming Gift Aid on donations to our churches provides an important contribution to our income. If you are eligible under Gift Aid rules, please let our treasurer Jane Moss (treasurer@westwealdparish.org.uk) know. Regular giving is most efficient via the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), so please consider using that if you do not so do already. Please speak to Jane or Fae to know more.

Parking at St Mary's

If you park in the car park for a Sunday morning service and are blocking in another car, please put a note in your car window to say who you are and that you are in church. This will make it easier to identify who needs to move if anyone's car is trapped. Thank you.

Handcross Rosemary Club

The club warmly welcomes new members. Everyone is welcome but we particularly look out for isolated, vulnerable and older people in Handcross and the surrounding villages. We meet on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month in Handcross, and most months we have an entertainer for about 45 minutes followed by home-made afternoon tea. At Christmas we have full Christmas Lunch in the hall, our AGM in February has fish and chips as well, and we aim to go on an outing during the year. Visitors are always welcome. Membership is only £15 for the year! For more information, please contact the Chairman, Mrs Helen Arnold, at mrshelenarnold@gmail.com or on 07540 816170.

Notice sheet distribution

If you do not already receive the notice sheet and other notices by email and you would like to do so, please email Fae at churchoffice@westwealdparish.org.uk.

Regular Giving

Recently, the current account of the parish has been running close to its limit, and the PCC has needed to make the difficult decision to call upon some of our reserves to ensure that we are able to cover our costs. The monthly costs of the Diocesan Parish Share, along with paying our staff and the costs of heating and lighting our three buildings, and our desire to be generous through missional giving, are not being matched by the amount coming in through regular giving.

As a charity, 100% of our costs rely on the generosity of those who are in a position to give. At this critical time, we would like to ask of those who worship regularly with us:

- if you currently give on a regular basis, could you possibly consider raising your regular giving? If all who are currently give regularly were to raise their giving by just £10 per month, it would have a significant impact on our ability to be able to cover these costs.
- if you are part of West Weald Parish and are not yet signed up to regular giving through the Parish Giving Scheme, could you prayerfully consider signing up using the link below?

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/slaugham-haywards-heath/>

(This page says 'Slaugham' because it was set up a while ago, but it is for the whole parish.)

You can also use the link to make a one-off donation of any amount.

If you are a UK tax payer, please remember to select the Gift Aid option, to enable us to claim the tax from your donations. And if you give by other means (cash or bank transfer), please ensure you have filled in our Gift Aid form, so that we can claim the tax back on all previous and current donations.

We believe and trust in a God who provides, but we also acknowledge that financial giving is a part of our discipleship, and if you are in a position to be able to increase your support of the mission and ministry of West Weald, we would be very grateful.

Many thanks. Grace and peace,

Carl



 Thank you

**Please
give what
you can**

Scan to make a
one off donation or
to sign up for
regular giving



www.westwealdparish.org.uk

CONTACT

Rev'd Carl Smith

Rector, West Weald Parish

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rector@westwealdparish.org.uk

Rev'd Monique Mendes da Costa

Curate, West Weald Parish

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Phil Hawksley

Lay Apostolic Leader, All Saints

philhawksley@westwealdparish.org.uk

Fae Widdowson

Parish Administrator

01444 400221 churchoffice@westwealdparish.org.uk

Office hours: 9am-12pm Monday & Thursday
(term time only)

Helen Arnold

Safeguarding Officer

07540 816170 safeguarding@westwealdparish.org.uk

Churchwardens

St Mark's

Helen Arnold

mrshelenarnold@gmail.com

St Mary's

Liz Cox

lizcox1@gmail.com

Website: www.westwealdparish.org.uk

Facebook: [West Weald Parish | Facebook](#)



All details are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change.

Christmas services and events

Wednesday 3rd

10:00am - 12:00pm Advent Retreat Space @ St Mary's

Saturday 6th

10:00am - 12:00pm Advent Retreat Space @ St Mary's

4:00pm - 7:00pm Light Up Handcross @ Handcross Hardware

Sunday 7th

10:45am Toy Service @ St Mary's

Wednesday 10th

6:00pm Carols @ The Half Moon, Warninglid

Friday 12th

4:00pm Carols @ Woodgate Hub

Saturday 13th

4:30pm Christingle @ All Saints

Sunday 14th

4:00pm Carols by Candlelight @ St Mark's

Tuesday 16th

12:00pm Christmas Lunch @ St Mary's

Saturday 20th

6:30pm Carol Service @ All Saints

Sunday 21st

6:30pm Carols by Candlelight @ St Mary's

Christmas Eve

4:00pm All-Age Crib Service @ St Mark's

11:15pm Midnight Communion @ St Mary's

Christmas Day

9:00am All-Age Christmas Celebration & Communion @ St Mark's

10:30am All-Age Christmas Celebration & Communion @ St Mary's



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

St Mary's: RH17 6AG | St Mark's: RH17 6EN | All Saints RH17 6DF
Woodgate RH11 9SL | Warninglid RH17 5UB

www.westwealdparish.org.uk

