

“The Newsletter”

For MARTLESHAM & BRIGHTWELL

Sunday 1 February 2026



In the eucharistic prayers – the prayer we use before communion – there is a statement that says of God: From the beginning you have created all things and all your works echo the silent music of your praise.

This week Rob and I had a time of planning and praying together and we walked from St Mary's to Woodbridge as we did so. This was a productive time as we thought about future plans and a lent sermon series. But also it was a time of peace as we marvelled at God's creation – the beauty of the river at low tide with the wading birds in the mud, some of which (with the help of google) I was able to identify. We saw a number of curlews and lapwings.

But perhaps the most striking was the dead trees on the opposite bank that were full of cormorants. What made these stand out was the way they sit with their wings out in a cross shape. I realise this is them drying their (non-waterproof) wings, but to Rob and I, it was a reminder of the way in which nature praises God.

What ways have you seen nature encouraging you to praise God this week? What have you seen that has pointed you to the creator and brought you joy? Remember to thank God for the beauty of the world around.

“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? Job 12:7-9

Toby

Sunday 1 February

9:30am - Breakfast Church – St Michael's

11:00am – Holy Communion – St Mary's

Monday 2 February

8:30 - Morning Prayer - St Mary's

Sunday 8 February

10:00am – Holy Communion – St Michael's

3:00pm – Evensong – St John's

Monday 9 February

8:30 - Morning Prayer - St Mary's

Wednesday 11 February

10:00am Holy Communion – St Michael's

Sunday 15 February

10:00am – Morning Worship – St Michael's

11:00am – Holy Communion – St Mary's

Monday 16 February

8:30 - Morning Prayer - St Mary's

Wednesday 18 February (Ash Wednesday)

10:00am Holy Communion – St Michael's

Sunday 22 February

10:00am – Holy Communion – St Michael's

3:00pm – Evensong – St John's

Monday 23 February

8:30 - Morning Prayer - St Mary's

Wednesday 25 February

10:00am Holy Communion – St Michael's

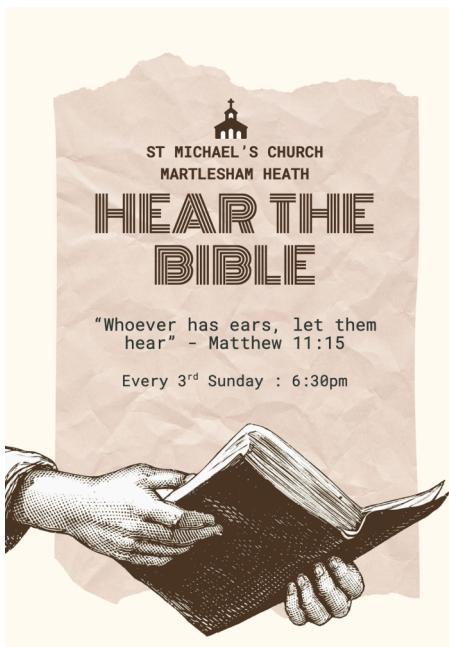
Hear The Bible

The early church, when first meeting together, would only ever have heard the Bible read aloud. In that same spirit, every third Sunday of the month we are going to read aloud a book (or books) of the New Testament. By November, we will have heard most of the New Testament said aloud, just as the early Church would have done. You are all invited to come and listen, read, and be shaped by God's Word.

We'll be meeting at 6.30pm at St Michael's Church on the dates below. You are welcome to come and read a chapter out loud, to follow it through yourself as others read, or just sit and listen to God's Word being spoken.

- 15th February : Mark
- 15th March : Luke
- 19th April : Acts
- 17th May : Romans
- 21st June : Galatians & Ephesians
- 19th July : Hebrews
- 16th August : 1 & 2 Corinthians & Philippians
- 20th September : Colossians & 1&2 Thessalonians & 1&2 Timothy & Titus & Philemon
- 18th October : James & 1&2 Peter &1, 2 & 3 John & Jude
- 15th November : Revelation

Rob



Home and Away Days

18th and 19th April 2026

You are all invited to join us for an away day at home in April. We plan to have a day for all the church where we will have some teaching from a guest speaker – Revd. Chris Hood, time to chat and eat together and time to meet with God.

The plan is to gather at St Michael's on **Saturday 18th April**, start the day with coffee and pastries, have a time of worship and some teaching, followed by lunch together. In the afternoon we plan to have more interactive teaching sessions, some free time with suggested activities like a prayer walk, bible journaling, board games etc. and to close with worship. All food and drink will be provided, and the day will be from **9.30am – 5pm**. There will be no charge for the days but donations towards the cost of food are welcome.

On the Sunday we will start with breakfast together for those that want it, followed by an informal communion service at St Michael's.

Please put the dates into your diaries and prioritise coming to this. We hope that this will help us as a church to get to know each other better and to get to know God better. To help with the catering, it would be really useful to know how many people are coming and if there are any dietary issues and we will produce sign-up sheets nearer the time. To make this work, the planning team would love some help with setting up, serving refreshments and clearing up, but your presence is much more important than your help.

Finally, please do pray for the weekend – that we may see God at work in our lives and in our benefice. Any questions please speak to the planning team – Toby, Christine and Jo Stuckey.

Toby

Breakfast Church - The Bible Course

Over the coming months, at our Breakfast Church Services, we are going to go through The Bible Society's 'The Bible Course'. Using a unique storyline, The Bible Course illustrates how all the books, characters and events in the Bible are part of God's big story, from Genesis to Revelation.

We will start this **Sunday (Feb 1st) at 9.30am** with the usual breakfast, tea and coffee. Then at around 10am we start with the first session called 'Introducing the Bible', followed by 7 further sessions over the coming months.

Each week there will be a video from the Bible Society, during which we will pause for the usual table discussions. We will have a free guidebook (donations welcomed but not expected) that will help us through what we will be watching and talking about. Whether you know very little about the Bible, or have been studying it for years, this is an exciting way of looking at the big story of the Bible. You are all very warmly invited.

Rob



What would you like to see our church doing... for you, or for the community?

Over the next few weeks, the leadership team are considering all the activities within the life of the Church. As the Church is made up of many parts, we are opening these questions to all Church members.

- Are there things that you would like to see more or less of?
- Or something completely different?
- What do you think is going well?
- What do you think we can do better at?

Especially thinking about elderly people who may struggle with mobility but still want to be involved in the life of the church. How would you like to be involved, what can we do to help?

Acknowledging that we won't be able to do everything or make it perfect for everyone, please send thoughts and comments to rob@martleshamcofe.org.uk

Rob



Refreshments for Crocus Visitors

During February we are hoping to provide refreshments on Saturdays for the many visitors who come to St. Mary's to admire the crocuses and snowdrops in the churchyard. We intend to provide teas, coffees and biscuits between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon.

If we get enough volunteers, we may extend the time to 2.00 pm. If you have an hour or two to spare on a Saturday, please talk to **Roger or Pam** who will be happy to add you to the Rota. The refreshments will be set up first thing. All you will need to do is pour the teas or coffees and chat to the visitors.

Roger

(Crocus photo from last year - Ed.)



Prayer Diary February 2026



Carolyn

- 1 that we may be a light to others
- 2 give thanks for the diversity of creation
- 3 all researching treatments for cancer
- 4 the residents of Elm Close
- 5 for midwives and paediatric nurses
- 6 for all who are lonely
- 7 give thanks for moments of joy in busy times
- 8 that we may worship God wholeheartedly today
- 9 for pupils not coping well at school
- 10 for young people's safety on the internet
- 11 for the residents of Farriers Close
- 12 for staff at our GP surgery
- 13 for those living in fear of violence
- 14 give thanks for all those we love

- 15 give thanks for God's love for everyone
- 16 for school staff and pupils during half term week
- 17 Shrove Tuesday: for our Lent preparations
- 18 Ash Wednesday: thank God for his forgiveness
- 19 for the residents of Felixstowe Road
- 20 for those struggling with anxiety and depression
- 21 for our ministry team
- 22 may we come closer to God in Lent
- 23 for the work of Christian Aid
- 24 for businesses and charities in The Square
- 25 for the residents of Forest Lane
- 26 for foster parents and their families
- 27 those waiting for results of medical tests
- 28 for our district councillors

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