

St Mary's Newsletter

29th January 2026



Sunday Services

Sunday 1st February – Candlemas (the Presentation of Christ in the Temple)

8.30 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 Café Church in the Church Hall

Wednesday 4th February

7.45pm Prayer meeting in Church

Lent and Easter

This year we are thinking about Journeys. Lent and Easter are a journey. There is a moment where Jesus turns towards Jerusalem and begins his journey to the cross and through death to resurrection and new life. Lent and Easter are our opportunity to accompany Jesus or to have Jesus accompany us on a spiritual journey of our own. Therefore, I encourage you to start well and to do the whole journey, I promise it has such meaning for us all as individuals and a community when we go the whole way together.

Shrove Tuesday (17th February)

We'd love to have a Pancake Party – see Gail if you are able to organise it.

Ash Wednesday (18th February)

Ashing service at 6.30pm

Come and find out why this is a great way to begin the journey. Everyone is welcome regardless of your age and stage of faith. Especially if you don't know what this is all about.

Lent Group – Wednesday evenings at 7pm in the Paddock Room

Maundy Thursday (2nd April)

Holy Communion with foot washing at 7pm.

Gail will strip the altar after this service, everyone is welcome to help and to stay for a period of quiet reflection.

Good Friday (3rd April)

Hour at the Cross 2pm.

A quiet, meditative service as we wait with Jesus. If you can't make it to church or quiet will be tricky there will be resources to use at home.

Holy Saturday (4th April)

Prayer Spaces in church 10am – 4pm (self guided)

An opportunity to reflect in various ways

Easter Vigil 8pm

We gather after dark to read scripture together and remind ourselves of the story of God's saving work, from creation through to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in anticipation of what is to come. Everybody is welcome to this atmospheric service.

Easter Sunday

Dawn Service at Greenham Control Tower 6am (exact time to be confirmed)

Come and celebrate the return of light and life and hope to the world. There will be fire.

Celebration Communion 10.30am

A joyful celebration of resurrection and eternal life

Prayer for our church community

This is a prayer that I pray every day, please do use it when you pray for our church. I encourage you also to pray for specific things that you feel we need.

God of Mission,
Who alone brings growth to your Church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give,
Vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions,
Joy to our worship
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
In spiritual commitment to you,
And in service to our local community,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Discipleship

Faith communities and AI

With NASA soon set to fly around the moon for the first time in half a century, the famous Earthrise picture is in the news again. The picture, taken from Apollo 8 in 1968, was the first ever view of Earth from the perspective of the moon. In his latest Substack, Bishop Steven considers how the act of exploration always offers new perspectives on what it means to be human and looks at what part faith communities should play in the AI debate.

[Read Bishop Steven's Substack.](#)

Wider Church

Don't forget that the consultation for our new Diocesan Bishop ends on 4th February. If you have not already taken part in the consultation, then please make sure your voice is heard.

https://oxford.anglican.org/who-we-are/how-we-are-governed/diocesan-synod/vacancy-in-see/consultation.php?utm_source=Diocese+of+Oxford+Mailing+Lists&utm_campaign=82fcf861c7-

[EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2026_01_26_08_27_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0 - 364d0bc1e2-1238848528](https://oxford.anglican.org/who-we-are/how-we-are-governed/diocesan-synod/vacancy-in-see/consultation.php?utm_source=Diocese+of+Oxford+Mailing+Lists&utm_campaign=82fcf861c7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2026_01_26_08_27_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0-364d0bc1e2-1238848528)

And PRAY...

Faith in Action

Open Doors are one of our Partner organisations. This week they sent us this video to show how our support has a real impact. [Your amazing impact this year on Vimeo.](#)

Family News and Events

Men's Group

Meets on 21st February in the Paddock Room for coffee and a conversation about the Greenham Railway. 9.30 – 11ish. Chat to Tony for more details

tony@stmarysgreenham.org

Greenham's Got Talent

Polish your tap shoes, oil the ventriloquist dummies and charge up those magic wands – the Talent Show is on 28th February and Chris Smith has the signup sheet ready and waiting.

Reading

This is such a beautiful reading, showing the Holy Family living out their faith. It brings the Nativity to an end; from this week we begin our turn to the Cross. Take time to read this through more than once, perhaps find an audio version. Try to build an image in your mind. Who are you – are you watching the scene or part of it? How do you feel, what draws you in and what troubles or challenges you? Perhaps you are drawn to speak words to Mary or Joseph, to question Simeon or Anna or simply gaze on Jesus again.

Luke 2:22-40

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord’),²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, ‘a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.’

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ ‘Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.’

³³ And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.