



February 2026

Our verses for 2026

*I have given them the glory that you gave me,
that they may be one as we are one – I in
them and you in me – so that they may be
brought to complete unity. Then the world
will know that you sent me and have loved
them even as you have loved me.*

John 17:22-23

Alpha



Come along to Alpha!

The Alpha course is an experience that unpacks the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. It's for anyone who's curious, no matter their beliefs or background. Explore life, faith and meaning.

Our Alpha course will begin on **Wednesday 28th January** and will run for seven weeks, mostly at Seaforth Hall in Warninglid (RH17 5UB). Everyone is welcome.

For more information, please contact Rev'd Monique Mendes da Costa at curate@westwealdparish.org.uk.

True Love

As February rolls in, daffodils are starting to bloom, the days are finally getting lighter and the grey days fewer. February brings all the Valentine's Day paraphernalia into our shops, the joy of pancakes for dinner on Shrove Tuesday, and this year, an early start to Lent!

This year, as West Weald Parish, we are dwelling in the gospel of St Matthew, and in particular looking at the beatitudes over the five weeks of Lent. The counter-cultural teachings of Jesus say that it is the poor, the meek, and the mourning who will be blessed by God. They have so much to say to our world today, where we long for leaders and communities marked by humility, justice, peace and compassion.

The Matthew who wrote the gospel has a remarkable story of being called by Jesus. He was not well-liked, being a tax collector – not only would he have been despised as the one who took people's money when they were not very well-off in the first place, but as a Jew who was collecting money on behalf of the Roman oppressors, he had 'sold his soul' in the eyes of his own people. But Jesus picks him out in the marketplace and says, 'Matthew, follow me!' This is the beauty of the unconditional love of Jesus; he often picks out the outcast, the unloved, and those who have messed up, and makes them worthy to follow him, to be his friend.

In this month, when we celebrate the beauty and joy of love, we are also aware that so often our human love is conditional or faulting. Yet we can put our faith in the Jesus who shows us the unconditional and never-failing love of God. The Jesus who called the unloved Matthew, and who calls us today no matter what we have or haven't done, no matter whether we call ourselves worthy to be a friend of God.

Matthew's call, as well as highlighting this perfect love of the Jesus who does not show partiality, links into this season of Lent. In order to take Jesus up on his offer of friendship and purpose, Matthew had to leave behind all his wealth. There is often a very real sacrifice involved in responding to the call to 'follow'. During Lent, the Church's tradition is to fast, or to give up something for the 40 days, partly as a visible outward sign of our hunger for God and our willingness to sacrifice in response to the God who loves us unconditionally. In this Lenten season, our invitation is to give up something we treasure, like Matthew, that we might know what it means to hunger for God and God alone, and to free up our lives to follow Him more closely.

In God's love,

Rev Monique Mendes da Costa

Sunday Services in February

1 st	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
8 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
15 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
22 nd	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	2.30pm	Woodgate Hub Café	Sundays at the Hub

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=IwAR2vLqbms97lq9StSwn8qvgX_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/> .

Other Events

February

3 rd	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
3 rd	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
4 th	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
6 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
7 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
7 th	2pm	St Mary's	Bellringing meeting
11 th	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
13 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
14 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
16 th	7.30pm	Rectory	St Mark's Committee meeting
17 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
18 th	6pm	St Mark's	Ash Wednesday service
18 th	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
20 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
20 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
21 st	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
25 th	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
26 th	7pm	St Mary's	Slaugham Society meeting
27 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
27 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
28 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café

March

3 rd	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
3 rd	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
4 th	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
6 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
6 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
7 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
7 th	7pm tbc	St Mary's	Slaugham Society event
8 th	3pm	St Mary's	Charity concert

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 Holland Avenue, Pease Pottage, RH11 9SL

Seaforth Hall: Cuckfield Lane, Warninglid, RH17 5UB



Dates to note

18/2	Ash Wednesday
15/3	Mothering Sunday
29/3	Palm Sunday
3/4	Good Friday
5/4	Easter Sunday
30/4	West Weald Parish APCM
8/11	Remembrance Sunday



The poster for the West Weald Community Pantry. It features a collage of food items like cans, bananas, and tomatoes. The text includes:

- west weald Community Pantry**
- Free provisions for the local community (serving the residents of Handcross, Pease Pottage, Slaugham, Staplefield & Warninglid)
- Food Waste Reduction** (FareShare logo)
- Every weekend we partner with FareShare to help reduce food waste.
- Come along to the Saturday cafe to help yourself to a selection of fresh and frozen produce.
- Referrals**
- If you are in urgent need of food or provisions then we can help.
- Referrals can be made for you to receive regular essential items for a limited time.
- Referrals can be made by your GP (Ouse Valley Practice), a child's primary school, selected social & family support workers or the local churches.
- Donations**
- If you would like to support the work of the West Weald Community Pantry then you can do so by making donations.
- Non-perishable items can be donated via the wheelie bins located throughout the parish or in any of our churches.
- Financial donations can be made via the churches. Please contact us for more information.
- Free cafe open every Saturday 9:30am-11:30am at All Saints Church, Handcross
- For more information please contact Barbara on 07853 228605 (Mon - Fri 9am - 4pm)

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!

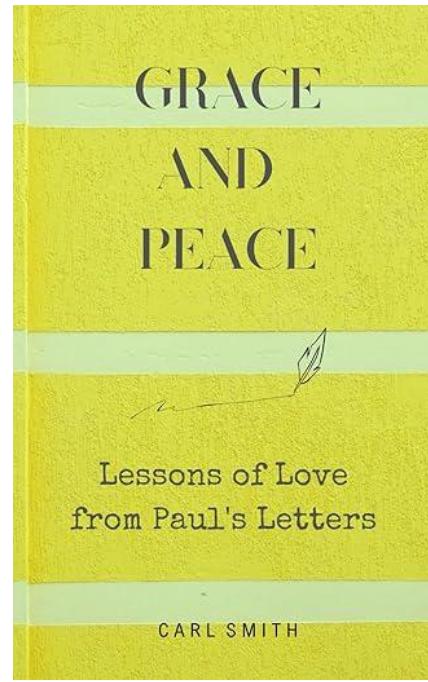
A Good Read

Grace and Peace: Lessons of Love from Paul's letters

This new book, written by our rector, Rev'd Carl Smith, is out now and available from Amazon.

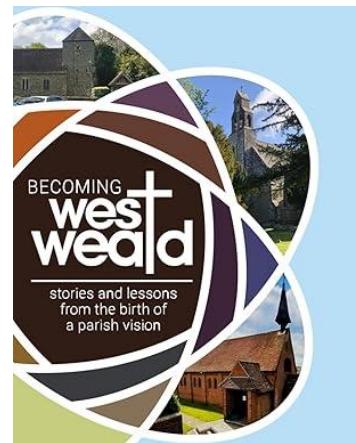
Paul knew how to encourage people when he wrote to or about them. In this book, Carl looks at some of the times that Paul did this well and explores how we can learn how to write to and speak of others with love and encouragement by using Paul's example.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Grace-Peace-Letters-Love-Pauls/dp/B0G5GZ1JYF/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1SIBHBT1RSQ&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.IxBPjsk3Lz_tQGOhTXn7A4yGtX9dkrmnGmDWhSrVMwS1mXcPKmF9vlX7iombAuA5sCDi4KPLqwC8tUfmAeJAK1zQzo_VL2W_SgFulrIWS5b2b5VzrSuvFF1xL1oMptshcT3m5zp5N3zHvtpSwmQtVSNoiMSCO2_udUFBnpEgbAugN1EOLbzKAAcMYp2yhu15eGz7gdza8St5xTwGWChFwaOXOCeYPJzviqLIM0lw.Vlm0x6Ne_6UoHthJArYPS-Kvux6sneU_KrQXL4OabkY&dib_tag=se&keywords=Grace+and+Peace&qid=1765446698&sprefix=grace+and+peace%2Caps%2C301&sr=8-1



Becoming West Weald: Stories and Lessons from the Birth of Parish Vision

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.



This book, written by some members of our church family, is available on Amazon.

Becoming West Weald: Stories and Lessons from the Birth of Parish Vision: Amazon.co.uk: Smith, Carl, Grose, Rick, Arnold, Helen, Frith, Becky, Pickering, Carol, Smith, Lindsay: 9798312414998: Books

Regular Notices

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.

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 do so 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 mrsheleenarnold@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



CONTACT

Rev'd Carl Smith

Rector, West Weald Parish

01444 400221

rector@westwealdparish.org.uk

Rev'd Monique Mendes da Costa

Curate, West Weald Parish

curate@westwealdparish.org.uk

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

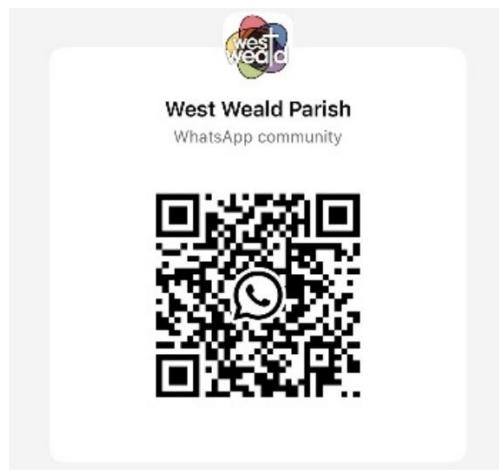
Liz Cox

lizcox1@gmail.com

Website: www.westwealdparish.org.uk

Facebook: West Weald Parish | Facebook

WhatsApp:



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