

St Mary's Newsletter

5th February 2026



Sunday Services

Sunday 8th February

10.30 All Age Communion

Sunday 15th February

8.30 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.30 Morning Worship with All Stars ****GUEST PREACHER****

4.00 Service of Hope – a time to share our stories of God at work



Discipleship

Lent course where we will be looking at Baptism using various Bible verses and conversation. It will be in the Paddock Room at 7pm on Wednesdays. A great way to try out a homegroup format if you are not already a member, or a short course if you can't commit to regular attendance at homegroup.

Confirmation – confirmation is a step of faith following baptism. It's usually for older teens and adults of all ages and is a way of publicly declaring our faith. If this sounds interesting, then speak to Gail – there is a service on 26th April, and she'll be running preparation sessions for those interested.

Or perhaps you'd like to read something about why we teach and prepare ourselves for important events? Read Bishop Steven's latest essay on Substack.

https://bishopstevencroft.substack.com/p/a-very-short-history-of-catechesis?img=https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2Ffac2ea04e-3275-4c32-919b-e1d6f3527488_1200x400.png&open=false

There are also some interesting opportunities for study locally via the Diocese, including

ChurchWorks Summit

Central Hall, Westminster. Friday 27 February

Join The ChurchWorks Summit to explore how faith and policy can work together for the social good. The invitation is for anyone, whether you're a senior church leader, an active member of your local congregation, or simply interested in the ways churches are working with government to make a difference.

[Find out more and buy your tickets.](#)

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 are planning a Pancake Party – there will be a sign up sheet this Sunday (8th Feb)

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

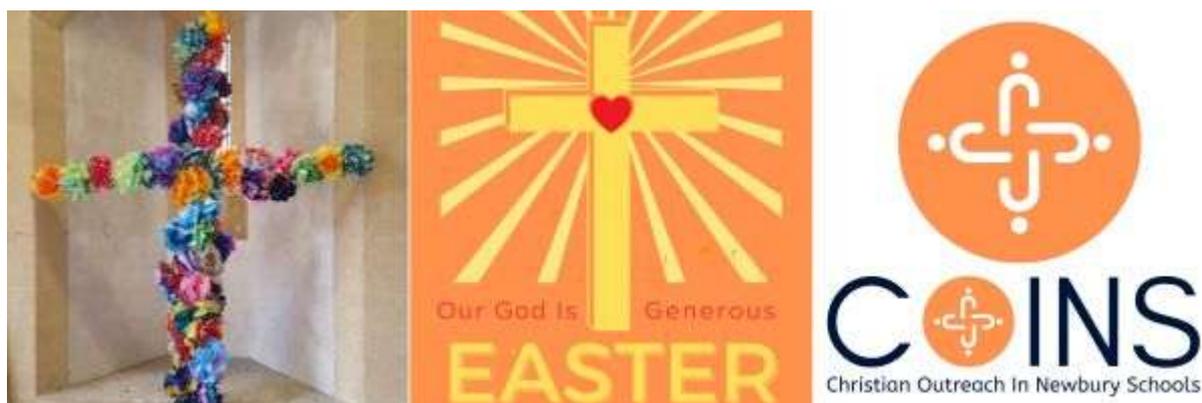
This is a prayer that I pray every day, please do use it when you pray for our church. I encourage you also to pray for specific things that you feel we need.

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

Faith in Action

COINS (Christian Outreach In Newbury Schools) are hosting the children from Year 6 at Willows Primary School to an event called Easter Eggslored. It's here at St Mary's on Friday 20th March in the afternoon (12.30 – 3.30). They need some additional volunteers – is that you? Please do get in touch with them directly hello@coinsnewbury.org or speak to Gail.

If you would like to help but can't make that date there are plenty of other dates at other churches with other schools so do get in touch; it's God's work and is also amazing fun.



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.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) - 19th April after the 10.30 service.

This is the meeting where we celebrate our church and everything we've been up to. It's also the meeting when we elect the new members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) who oversee the work of St Mary's, including making sure we fulfil all our legal responsibilities.

This is an exciting time to be part of the PCC as we make plans for the next part of story.

Please pray about whether you feel God is calling you to **be part of the PCC**. We need representatives from every part of our church family – old and young, confident and quiet, new and of long-standing. All that is required is a desire to do God's work in this way and that you are aged 16 or over, take communion and have been on the Electoral Roll for at least 6 months prior to the APCM. You are usually elected for a term of 3 years. You will be required to complete Safeguarding Training but we can help you with that.

We have 5 vacancies – 3 to be part of the PCC and 2 to also sit on Deanery Synod (the next level up of governance – see me if you are really interested). Please chat to me, to Brian, or to anyone who is on PCC for more information.

We also have a vacancy for a **Churchwarden**. Before his illness, Chris had indicated to me that he did not intend to stand for election again and so I will honour that decision. Churchwardens are elected each year for a period of 1 year, so you are only committing yourself for that length of time. Please chat to Rob or to me if you feel God is calling you to this role, which is one of real legal, practical and spiritual significance.

We do not need 2 churchwardens in order to operate – it is better that we rely on God to call and equip the person who is right for this role so please pray for that calling and equipping.

We will also need a new **Parish Safeguarding Officer**. Liz Jones has carried out this work for the past few years and will happily talk to you about what is involved. A strong pastoral heart and sense of justice are vital for this work. Full support and training are available for this vital part of God's work in caring for the most vulnerable members of God's family.

Reading

This is a different translation to the one we will have on Sunday, but the essential truths remain the same.

Exodus 20;1-17

Then God spoke all these words:

² I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³ you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸ Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. ⁹ For six days you shall labour and do all your work. ¹⁰ But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹² Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

¹³ You shall not murder.

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ You shall not steal.

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.