

St Mary's Newsletter

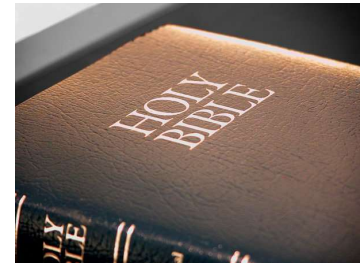
12th March 2026



Sunday Services

Sunday 15th March

- 8.30** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 Mothering Sunday All Age Worship



Sunday 22nd March

- 10.30** Parish Communion with All Stars

Discipleship

Did you know that the Diocese has lots of courses on offer and most of them are free? You can choose from Bite-Size all the way to training for various types of ministry. Have a browse on the Learning Hub.

<https://learn.oxford.anglican.org/>

Gail plans to run some of the Bite Size courses during the year so watch this space.

Unpacking the theology of Christian nationalism

Online. Monday 16 March. 5pm-6.30pm.

Join to unpack the theology, the ideology of this movement and learn how churches can respond with courage, clarity and compassion with the Revd Dr Helen Paynter, a national expert on the topic.

Sign up here. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/unpacking-the-theology-of-christian-nationalism-tickets->

Thursday 19th March

7.30pm Downland Filling Station – see attached poster

Faith in Action

We are all invited to join the CAP South East region for a special 30-year anniversary celebration day in Woking on Tuesday 9th June. The day is packed full of worship, celebrations, testimonies and lunch/refreshments, and the main speaker will be the founder of CAP - Dr. John Kirkby (CBE). See Gail for how to book.

Lent and Easter



This year we are thinking about Journeys. Lent and Easter are all part of the same 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. I hope your journey is going well, here is a reminder of what is still to come.

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 – 2pm (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

I hope this is now a familiar prayer and that you use it regularly. At present I am particularly drawn to the prayer for depth of faith, I wonder which part stands out to you?

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

Family News and Events

Church Hall Refurbishment

Are you excited by the thought of a fresher, tidier church centre which is ready to serve the needs of our church and our community? Would you like the church centre to return to financial stability? Maybe you have ideas for new ways we could use it?

Then why not be part of a small team planning a refurbishment. We plan to begin making plans in the next couple of weeks so speak to Gail soon.

Teams

Wasn't it great to see our Worship Team celebrated and commissioned?

Gail is working with our **Pastoral Team**, bringing together those of us who lead homegroups, outreach groups and do the valuable work of showing God's love to those who need it. Please pray for us in this phase of coming together as a team.

Meanwhile Brian is working with the **Audio Visual Team** – the folks who make sure that we can see and hear what's happening at the front on Sundays. They are looking at what works, what needs attention and much more. Please pray for them as they do this often unseen and underappreciated work.

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 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

You might like to read this a few times through; something that is easier with a shorter passage. Follow each time of reading with a pause in which you notice where your attention is drawn. Then meditate on that word or phrase and invite God to speak more. Finally, allow that time of meditation and listening to lead you into prayer.

John 19:25-27

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.