

# **St Mary's Church Burghfield**

*Welcoming all, growing faith, serving others*

## **DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER**

**Welcome to our monthly newsletter, which we hope will keep you informed of what's happening in our parish life, the community and also more widely.**

Recently I was transported back to my late teens when studying for my teaching degree. One of our texts for English Literature was Twelfth Night and it was the opening lines I remembered - *If music be the food of love, play on.....*'. The context I was thinking about the quote in, is very different to the original meaning behind Shakespeare's prose. This thought process started as several of us will be following a newly published booklet of Advent daily readings and reflections which is based on Handel's Messiah. (*Hallelujah-Journeying through Advent with Handel's Messiah* by Dave & Sally Gobbett).

Not being particularly familiar with classical music in general and only knowing of the Hallelujah Chorus, so easily recognisable, I of course googled the history of Handel's Messiah! It truly is an inspiring story to hear how Handel composed the music in one long 24 day period using the text by Charles Jennens, compiled from the King James Bible and the Coverdale Psalter. This was the Christian context in which I was thinking about the Twelfth Night quote- 'music, food and nourishment'. Music truly can be an uplifting experience, emotional, evocative, nourishing. And even more so when matched with words straight from scripture. So many modern hymns and some traditional ones too, use words directly from scripture and they are often among my favorites for this very reason. Setting scripture to music is also a good way to learn bible verses that may help sustain, encourage, reassure and nourish you, as much as it does me.

Advent is a time of waiting and preparation and what better way to spend it, than in diving deeper into the bible, learning more of God's relationship with his people and in so doing, 'feeding' our own faith and relationship with our living God. During Advent you may like to set aside some extra time for prayer, spending time with God, and not just speaking, requesting, and listing your prayers, but spending time in silence listening to the '*still small voice*' of God which can often only be heard when we make space and time, and wait in silence. Do also come and join in with one of the Advent Courses on offer, to learn, pray and journey together.

The opening lines of Handel's Messiah are taken from the first verses of Isaiah 40 and are about comfort hope and encouragement for the people of Israel who were in Exile. The same themes apply to us still today as we await God's return. We too are reassured of God's eternal presence, faithfulness and enduring love, as we are invited to 'prepare the way for the Lord' and 'make straight paths' (40.3). In doing so 'God's Glory' will be revealed' (40.5) and throughout it all, God will sustain, strengthen and encourage the faithful. The whole of chapter 40 is an important one in the bible which I commend to you for your reflection through this 'new liturgical year' as Advent begins once again.

The final words of the chapter are particular ones I have held onto for much of my own Christian journey, for hope, comfort and reassurance and I leave you with these as we all embark on our individual and collective Advent journey's.

*With every Blessing*  
*Revd Glynn*

**<sup>28</sup> Do you not know?**

**Have you not heard?**

**The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.**

**He will not grow tired or weary,  
and his understanding no one can fathom.**

**<sup>29</sup> He gives strength to the weary  
and increases the power of the weak.**

**<sup>30</sup> Even youths grow tired and weary,  
and young men stumble and fall;**

**<sup>31</sup> but those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.**

**They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.**

*Isaiah 40.28-31*

## HERE'S WHATS HAPPENING IN DECEMBER

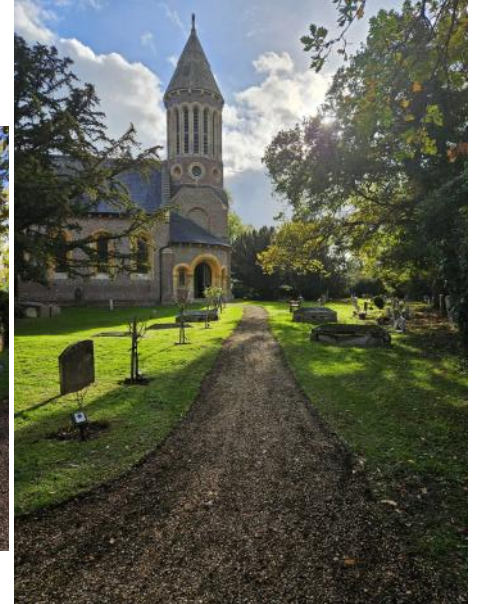
Our Advent Window Trail begins 30th Nov up until Christmas Eve - See page 7 for information

Mon 1st Dec	<b>1st - 3rd Dec Rev Glynn on leave</b> 9.30am Bumps, Babies & Toddler Group in Church
Wed 3rd Dec	7.30-9pm Advent Course held at The Rectory 1/3
Thurs 4th Dec	10.30-12noon Advent Course held at The Rectory 1/3
Fri 5th Dec	Afternoon - Christmas Tree Festival set up in Church
Sat 6th Dec	12-4pm Christmas Tree Festival 12-4pm Christmas Craft Market in the Parish Centre 7pm Music, Words & Canapes around the Christmas Trees in Church
Sunday 7th Dec	<b>TOY SUNDAY</b> - 10am Parish Communion service & via Zoom 12-4pm Christmas Tree Festival
Mon 8th Dec	8am Morning Prayer 9.30am Bumps, Babies & Toddler Group in Church
Wed 10th Dec	8.30am BSM School Nativity rehearsal in Church 1pm Funeral Service in Church, RIP Patricia Salmon 7.30-9pm Advent Course held at The Rectory 2/3
Thurs 11th Dec	8.30am BSM School Nativity rehearsal in Church 10.30-12noon Advent Course held at The Rectory 2/3 6pm BSM School Nativity in Church
Fri 12th Dec	6-10.15pm South Berks Concert Band rehearsal in Church
Sat 13th Dec	3-10pm South Berks Concert Band rehearsal & Concert in Church & PC
Sunday 14th Dec	10am Parish Communion service & via Zoom 12-3.30pm Private party in the Parish Centre 6pm Sunday@6 service in Church - Theme 'Rejoice'
Mon 15th Dec	8am Morning Prayer 9.30am Bumps, Babies & Toddler Group in Church - Last of term 4pm - 10.15 Toby Concert in Church and the Parish Centre
Tues 16th Dec	1-3.30pm Vivace Voices rehearsal in Church
Wed 17th Dec	1- 5pm Vivace Voices Concert in Church and Parish Centre 7.30-9pm Advent Course held at The Rectory 3/3
Thurs 18th Dec	10.30-12noon Advent Course held at The Rectory 3/3 11am Communion service at the Hollies Care Home
Sunday 21st Dec	9am Breakfast@Church, 10am Parish Communion Service & via Zoom 6pm Nine Lessons & Carols Service in Church
Monday 22nd Dec	9am Morning Prayer
Wed 24th Dec	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> - 3pm & 5pm Christingle Service in Church 11.30pm Midnight Communion Service in Church & via Zoom
Thurs 25th Dec	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> - 10am All Age Service in Church (no Communion)
Sunday 28th Dec	10am Parish Communion & via Zoom with Revd Juliet Straw

# COMMUNITY CHURCHYARD WORK PARTY

We just wanted to say a huge thank you to all the team that showed up and worked tirelessly for the morning to get our Churchyard looking spick & span ready for the Remembrance Service and the coming winter months.

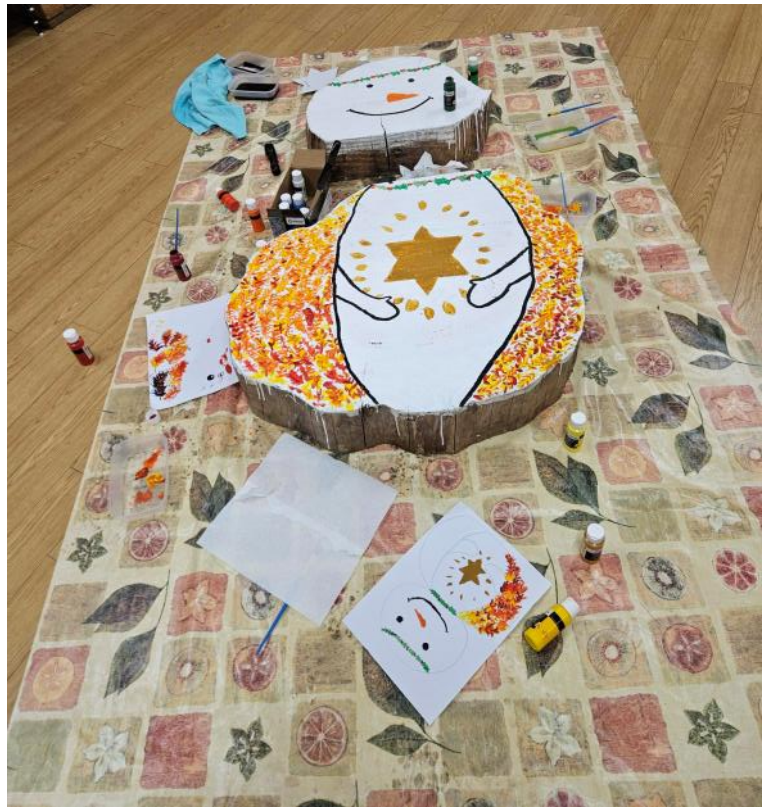
A shout out goes to Tactical Facilities Management team for coming along to help tidy and removing approx. 7 bulk bags of leaves which was a huge help.



# Youth Club

Not many photos of our last group as we were super busy but here is a snapshot. One of our exciting activities was to design & paint a snowman for the Englefield Snowman Trail which takes place over the Christmas holidays, so here is a peek at it and hopefully you will be able to go out and hunt it down during the Christmas break, we would love to see your photos of it in situ. Send them in to [stmarysburghfield@outlook.com](mailto:stmarysburghfield@outlook.com) and we will get them posted on our Facebook page.

We look forward to seeing you all back on January 16th 2026.



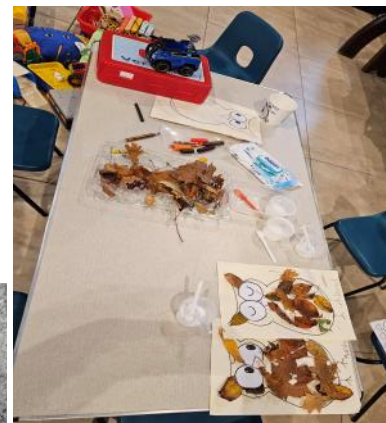
# Crafty Church

We had a wonderful time at our Christmas Crafty Church, lots of crafty mess took place and so many smiling happy faces at the end of the session. Thank you to everyone that came along and of course a huge Thank You to our team of volunteers who without their help and time we couldn't hold these events.



## Bumps, Babies & Toddler Group

We have had a lovely few sessions recently, singing, crafting and catching up with friends.  
A lovely way to spend those cold Monday mornings.



# Advent Window Trail



From Advent Sunday,  
30th November until Christmas Eve there  
will once again be a fun family trail  
around Burghfield Common, hosted by  
some of our church families.

**The theme is "Christmas Animals"**

Visit all our Advent Windows, enjoy the  
Christmas story again, and collect the  
puzzle letters. Bring the completed puzzle  
back to church (to any of our events in  
the build up to Christmas) & receive a  
special Christmas prize!

If you have any questions please contact us.

Email: [stmarysburghfield@outlook.com](mailto:stmarysburghfield@outlook.com)

Phone: 07979 871608



**St Mary's Church Burghfield**

Welcoming all, growing faith, serving others

**COME AND SEE THE TREES**

# *Christmas Tree Festival*

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December &

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December

12-4pm

All trees are decorated by groups, businesses  
& charities in our local community,

& are displayed in our beautiful Church

**All welcome**







# Christmas Craft Market

Saturday 6th December 2025,

12-4pm



to run alongside our annual Christmas Tree Festival

Parish Centre, St Mary's Church Burghfield,  
Church Lane, Burghfield Village, RG30 3TG



**st Mary's Burghfield**

Welcoming all, growing faith, serving others



**st Mary's Church Burghfield**

*Welcoming all, growing faith, serving others*

**Music & Words,**



# **Wine & Canapes Evening**



**Saturday 6th December 7.00pm**

*Enjoy Words & Music and a social time amongst our  
Christmas Tree Festival Lights.*

*Admission £10 to include tasty canapés.*

*There will be a Bar selling wine and soft drinks*

*All funds raised will go to support the work of the Church*

Book via

<https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NTEzMC0xMA/t>

or Anne Pocock on 07713911748

or [bannepocock@aol.com](mailto:bannepocock@aol.com)



# Toy Sunday – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Our PCC are very excited to announce that we will be doing something new for our annual 'Toy Sunday' this year! We are participating in the 'Cowshed-Tree of Hope', see information below, and we would like to invite you to join in with us.

Our 'Tree of Hope' is up in church with some tags still to buy the gifts. You are welcome to bring them (the gifts along with their tags, though unwrapped) back to church at any time after that, or specifically in time for our Toy Sunday service on 7<sup>th</sup> December, where we will bless all the toys. The Cowshed will then come and collect, wrap and distribute them all before Christmas.

Anyone is welcome to collect tags and please spread the word to your family and friends. We hope to support as many families as possible, so their children can receive a Christmas gift this year and enjoy some light and joy despite their circumstances.

If by any chance we run out of tags (I've ordered 100), please do still bring gifts of your choice as they will still be used and very much appreciated.

If you have any questions do get in touch.

*Revd Glynn and St Mary's PCC*

## Community Christmas Tree is up!

Here are a couple of photos of our Tree being erected in preparation for our Community Carols on the Hatch taking place on 30th November (photos in next months newsletter) Huge Thank you to Clive, Colin, Jeff, Don & Brian for helping to get the tree looking wonderful for us all to enjoy.





A Service every second Sunday of the month.  
An informal service for **all ages** including worship,  
teaching, prayer and of course  
refreshments.

We look forward to seeing you!

The next service is

**on Sunday 14th December 2025 at 6pm**  
**Theme 'Rejoice'**

## CHURCH FLOWERS

I have been on the Church flower rota for at least 40 years and have been organising the rota for 20 and I now feel the time has come to retire from the organising (I will remain on the rota)

At present we have 5 flower arrangers so we are looking for someone who will organise the rota and any volunteers who would like to join the flower arranging group. The flowers in Church are appreciated by many and it would be sad if we no longer have any flowers. If you are willing to take on either of these roles please give me a ring on 0118 9833562

and I will explain what it entails.

Thank you

Margaret Towle





**Local Outlet -St Oswald's Church on Fridays between 1-3pm**

local food collection points are as below: **St Mary's Church-** collection point in our church porch.

**Tesco Express** in Burghfield – opening hours 6.00am –11pm

**Co-op** in Mortimer—opening hours 7.00 am –9pm

Donations may be made directly to their bank account, with the following details:

**Lloyds Bank, Newbury: Sorting Code 77-95-05, West Berks Foodbank: Account No. 72784660**

Or, you may send a cheque payable to “West Berks Foodbank” and send to: The Treasurer, West Berks Foodbank, 23 Charter Road, Newbury, Berks. RG14 7EW.

You may also wish to complete a **Gift Aid form to add 25% value to your donation**

**Please copy & paste this link <https://westberks.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/> to find out what food donations are urgently needed at the foodbank.**

**St Marys Food Bank contact person:**

Anne Eatwell

07747 535540 or

0118 9832666

If you have any questions or would like to offer help in any way please get in touch with Anne.

Foodbank have Instagram a page that you can follow and add to your Instagram



Spread some joy to vulnerable households in your community  
Please consider donating the 12 items listed below

Putting your donation in a Xmas Gift Bag will make it even more special!



**12 Days of Christmas**



**What is a 'Reverse Advent Calendar'?**

A reverse advent calendar is where you pick one item a day to donate to your Foodbank. This is a great way to show that Christmas is about giving as well as receiving. This year's calendar is about re-stocking our empty shelves, see our 12 Gifts of Christmas initiative for seasonal treats and extras



<b>1st</b> UHT Milk	<b>2nd</b> Jam	<b>3rd</b> Instant Coffee	<b>4th</b> Tinned Vegetables	<b>5th</b> Tinned Soup
<b>6th</b> Cereal	<b>7th</b> Tinned Fish	<b>8th</b> Baked Beans	<b>9th</b> Pasta	<b>10th</b> Instant Mash
<b>11th</b> Pasta Sauce	<b>12th</b> Sugar	<b>13th</b> Tinned Fruit	<b>14th</b> Non Bio Laundry	<b>15th</b> Rice
<b>16th</b> Deodorant	<b>17th</b> Fruit Juice (Longlife)	<b>18th</b> Confectionary	<b>19th</b> Tinned Custard	<b>20th</b> Toilet Roll
<b>21st</b> Washing Up Liquid	<b>22th</b> Tinned Tomatoes	<b>23th</b> Tinned Meat	<b>24th</b> Rice Pudding	

**What do I do with it when it is finished?**

Please take it to our warehouse, 80 Greenham Business Park, RG19 6HW (Mon-Fri between 9am & 12pm)

**Please deliver on or before Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**

relieving hunger  
restoring dignity  
reviving hope



West Berks  
**Foodbank**  
Together with Trussell



**PLEASE PUT WEST BERKS FOODBANK IN THE HAT  
THIS YEAR AND LET YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT REALLY  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Instead of doing your traditional office Secret Santa, please consider using your budget to buy food for the food bank this Christmas or making a cash donation

Cash donation can be made to our Just Giving account using the below QR Code



Food donations can be made to our warehouse or in our donation bins in shops or supermarkets



80 Greenham Business Park, Thatcham, RG19 6HW

# Burghfield & Mortimer's Christmas Concert

WITH SOUTH BERKS CONCERT BAND

Platinum Award Winners



7pm, Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2025  
St Mary's Church, Burghfield, RG30 3TG

Adults £10 | 6+ Adults £9 each | Accompanied U16s free  
Tickets from: The Fruit Shop in Burghfield, Baobab in Mortimer,  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/south-berks-concert-band>  
or [SBCB\\_Music@yahoo.com](mailto:SBCB_Music@yahoo.com)

Raffle & Refreshments in aid of The Loddon School



[www.southberksmusic.org.uk](http://www.southberksmusic.org.uk)



# Fundraising Concert

Money raised will be going to the Toby Davies' Memorial Fund

Monday 15 December 2025, 7.00pm

Performances by Berkshire Youth Bassoon Ensemble, our student led Saxophone Ensemble, Reading & West Berkshire Open Voices Choirs and Out of the Attic Orchestras



St. Mary's Church  
Church Ln, Burghfield RG30 3TG



## Vivace Voices

Director of music: Ian Westley

Pianist: Mary Westley

and featuring Sue Edmonds on flute

## Christmas Concert

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2.30pm

St Mary's Church, Burghfield RG30 3TG

Tickets £5 On The Door (Cash or Card)

Refreshments & Raffle

All Profits to Motor Neurone Disease Association



*Here are details of 3 wonderful concerts taking place in Church throughout December.*

*All details on how to book your tickets are on the posters.*

# St Mary's Fundraising



## 2025 Dates for your diaries

More details for each event as we near them but if you could pop the dates into your diaries you'll be sure not to miss out - .

6<sup>th</sup> December, 12-4pm – Christmas Craft Market

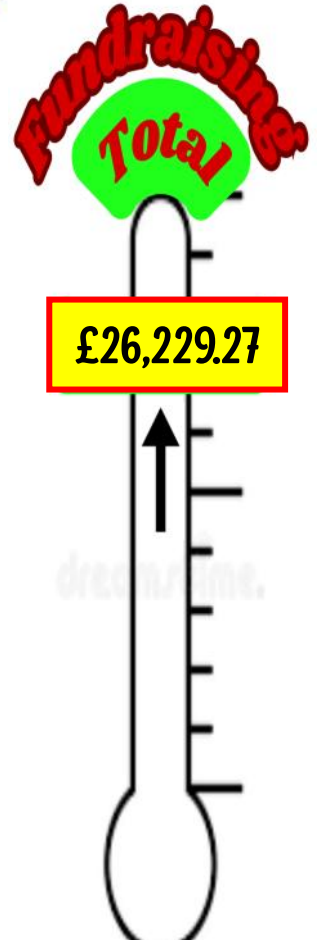
6<sup>th</sup> December, 7pm – Music/Words, Wine & Canapés

\*\*\*\*\*

23<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2026 Quiz & Curry Evening

For more information & to book your place at any of the above please contact Anne Pocock on

[bannepocock@aol.com](mailto:bannepocock@aol.com) or 07713 911748



**The cost to run our Church in 2024 was £9,244 per month which is £303 per day !!**



Our Last box raised an amazing £19.15! So please keep your empty cartridges coming

What an amazing total of Funds raised since June 2022!  
A huge Thank you to everyone that has contributed & to all those that put in an amazing amount of time & effort behind the scenes to provide us with such wonderful events throughout the year.



A totally FREE way to raise funds for our Church. Sign up and every time you spend money online through a participating store they donate to us, it's so easy and costs you nothing so please sign up today. Click this link (you might need to copy & paste it) to sign up or refer friends & family to the scheme, then search **St Mary's Burghfield**  
[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause/step-1/?char=49900&invite=lvzji&referral-campaign=s2s&utm\\_campaign=web-referral](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause/step-1/?char=49900&invite=lvzji&referral-campaign=s2s&utm_campaign=web-referral)



## Emmaus

### What's Emmaus about?

It's a group of friends who meet twice a month



on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday mornings of the month (10-11.30am) to enjoy reading & talking about the Bible together, drinking coffee, munching biscuits & generally have a good chat. You don't need to be a

Bible scholar because we all learn together & help each other along the road. We usually meet at Margaret's house in Loves Close.

Just ask Margaret, Susan Potter or Lesley Brigden about it.

We'd love you to join in.

**ECO CHURCH**  
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT

### Silver Eco Church Award Certificate

This is to certify that

#### St Marys Church Burghfield

has won a Silver Eco Church Award in recognition of their efforts to care for God's earth in each of the following areas (as applicable):

Worship and Teaching  
Management of Buildings and Land  
Community and Global Engagement  
Lifestyle

Signed *Andy Atkins* Date 26 January 2025  
CEO, A Rocha UK



ecochurch.arocha.org.uk  
arocha.org.uk



We at St Mary's now offer an online donation page!

If you would like to donate, please scan the QR code

Thank you for supporting our ministry and mission



### Contact Details

**Rector** -Revd Glynn Lautenbach

07979 151598 or Email: [rector@stmarysburghfield.org](mailto:rector@stmarysburghfield.org)

**Parish Administrator** Tuesday –Friday 08:45 –12:45 Office location & Homebased

If you need a face to face meeting please email or call on the below to arrange a date and time

Office Mobile– 07979 871608 Email: [admin@stmarysburghfield.org](mailto:admin@stmarysburghfield.org)

**To Contact the Churchwardens:**

Michael Wood– Email: [mike.wood@stmarysburghfield.org](mailto:mike.wood@stmarysburghfield.org)

Alison Eves—Email: [alison.eves@stmarysburghfield.org](mailto:alison.eves@stmarysburghfield.org)

Website: [www.stmarysburghfield.org](http://www.stmarysburghfield.org)

Find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/stmarysburghfield) too! Photos and news of upcoming and recent events on our page “St Mary's Church Burghfield”.

Address: Church Lane, Burghfield Village, Reading, Berks, RG30 3TG

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin Burghfield is a Registered Charity No.1167639



# Groups and Clubs held in our Parish Centre

## MONDAY

Pilates with Heather 9.30 & 10.30am (upper room)

Call Heather on 07785 254313 or [hsfitnessuk@mac.com](mailto:hsfitnessuk@mac.com)

Pilates For Life with Marianne 6.30pm (upper room)



## TUESDAY

Pilates For Life with Marianne 6.30pm (upper room)

Contact on 07985 085597 / [hello@pilatesforlife.org.uk](mailto:hello@pilatesforlife.org.uk)

## WEDNESDAY

Yoga with Janet 9.45-11.45am (upper room)

Contact: [janetdacre@hotmail.com](mailto:janetdacre@hotmail.com)

 WeightWatchers with Sarah 5.50-7.30pm (lower room)

Pilates with Heather 6.30 & 7.30 pm (upper room)

## THURSDAY

Yoga with Julie 7.30-9pm (upper room)

Contact: [julie\\_yoga@btinternet.com](mailto:julie_yoga@btinternet.com)



Burghfield & Mortimer Photo Club 7.30pm (lower room)

Contact: [burghfieldccsec@gmail.com](mailto:burghfieldccsec@gmail.com)

## FRIDAY

Yoga with Amanda 9.15-10.30am (upper room)

Contact: [amandacfox@protonmail.com](mailto:amandacfox@protonmail.com)

Pilates with Heather 12.30-1.30pm (upper room)

## SATURDAY

Yoga Dance with Julie 10-11am (upper room)

Fitsteps with Burghfield Dance Club 10.30-11.15am (lower room)

Contact Ewa: [burghfielddanceclub@gmail.com](mailto:burghfielddanceclub@gmail.com)



PLENTY OF FREE PARKING FOR ALL GROUPS USING THE PARISH CENTRE



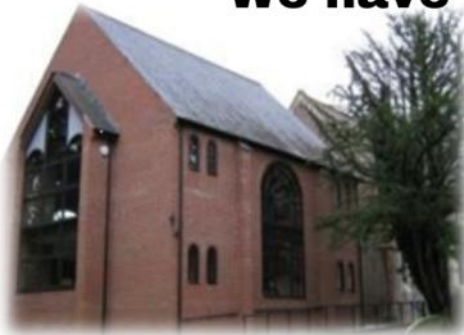
# St Mary's Burghfield

Welcoming all, growing faith, serving others



**Do you need a venue for a  
Work Lunch Meeting, Venue for Training,  
Childs Birthday Party,  
Social Occasion or a Community Class?  
St Mary's Parish Centre could be the ideal  
location for you.**

**We have plenty of FREE Parking.**



**Downstairs Room**



**Upstairs Room**



**Upper Room Mobile Served**

**Please contact our Parish Administrator if you would like to book or have a look around our facilities.**

**Either by calling 07979 871608 or email to [stmarysburghfield@outlook.com](mailto:stmarysburghfield@outlook.com)**

**Hire charges are:- Weekdays up to 6pm £14.65 &  
Weekdays after 6pm & Weekends £17.40**