



Fr Edward Green SMMS

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Dearest friends,

Since we arrived in the Benefice, members of the congregation at St Mary's have independently remarked to myself and Stephen Dove that the current service time of 9:30am is difficult for them to manage. I have also met a number of people who state that they used to attend regularly and no longer do, precisely because of the early start time. Furthermore, we have a suspicion that the current time makes it harder for new people to join us for a range of reasons. For all these reasons, the ministry team and Parochial Church Council believe that, if these sentiments are shared more widely, it might be helpful to move the service to a later time.

I am therefore writing to ask for your feedback. After considering the variables, we think that the best options to consider are **10:15am or 10:30am**. I therefore ask that as many people as possible tell me their views on the idea of moving the service to one of these times. And if your answer is that you don't want the time to change, or that you don't mind either way, please do tell me so explicitly.

If we do go ahead with this change, it will take effect from the first Sunday in September (6/9/26), and will proceed on a trial basis until Easter. A decision will then be made whether to continue with the new time permanently, or revert to 9:30am.

Please let me know in person, by telephone or by email what your thoughts are on this possible change to the service time. The consultation will close at the end of Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August, and the outcome will be announced on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August at the latest.

Whatever we decide to do, my prayer for our parish is that together we may grow together and heed the advice of the Letter to the Hebrews: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works."

Yours in Christ,

Ed Green, Vicar