

The Parish of St. Martin's, Chipping Ongar with St. Peter's, Shelley

Charity No. 1214524.

The Reverend Hazel Aucken

The Rectory, Shakletons, Ongar

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NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

To be a growing church, God's gift to the community

Letter from The Rectory …



950th Anniversary

Huge thanks to Andrew for a splendid quiz raising over £500 for church funds. I joined the Ongar Millenium History Society team and much to our relief we did really well on the Ongar History round scoring 9/10. Sadly we couldn't remember the name of the new development opposite Chipping Ongar School (Haycroft Gardens). As promised, the OMHS Secretary, Michael, had brought some draft information sheets for our 950th Exhibition, and he and his colleagues greatly valued the feedback they received. We look forward to receiving the finished display in time for my re-licensing service on 11th November (7.30 pm in the church, I'd love to see you all there!) if not for our All Souls' service (4 pm Sunday 1st November).

Remembrance

We are having lots of remembrance celebrations this year, all culminating in the Re-licensing Service on Remembrance Day itself which is, of course, St Martin's Day. Elsewhere in this Newsletter you'll find an article about St Martin's Day celebrations in Hungary, where St Martin was born, though he ended up in France as the Bishop of Tours. Some of the information I'd known before, but Martintide, as the time to taste new wines, was news to me. As it happens, our editor Sue King, who is managing the catering, has suggested we serve prosecco after the service (with sparkling elderflower as an alternative) so we will be sort of honouring that tradition. In providing the food, Sue will be joined by Ongar News Editor Karen Bush and members of the congregation. I wonder if we are unique in have two newsletter editors as our caterers!

On Remembrance Day morning our midweek 10 am communion will move to St Peter's so that we can stay on for the 10.45 am Remembrance Service complete with 11 am two-minute silence and the names of St Peter's fallen. Again all are welcome, and if you didn't pick one up last year, do take one of the booklets David Irving has compiled with the help

of Andrew Bowtle telling the stories of many of those young men. We're hoping Sam Pelly will be joining us not only to play the organ but also his trumpet for the last post.

St Martin's war-dead will be remembered on Sunday 8th November at our 10.30 am Remembrance Communion. At 2.30 pm I and many others from the Ongar community will gather at the Ongar War Memorial Health Centre for our civic celebration at which many local groups will lay wreaths and remember the fallen – who are listed on memorial boards in the waiting room, so you only get to see those as and when you have an appointment there. This time I anticipate it will be The Ongar Academy headteacher, Mr Sands, playing the last post as he did last year – as a music teacher and a member of the Salvation Army he is eminently qualified, and it is lovely to have live trumpet rather than recording. Hopefully he will again invite us back to the Academy for refreshments and a chance to talk to other attendees without the noise of passing traffic.



Advent

The last Sunday of November is Advent Sunday, when for the last several years Ongar has held a Christmas Festival complete with Father Christmas and the big Christmas Tree lights switch-on (which I'm assured by the organisers will definitely be at 7 pm this year). Because it is our 950th, St Martin's will be open and inviting our community to come and join our former organist Susannah Brooks and myself in traditional carol-singing . The local schools are hoping to bring some young singers for us to listen too, and the 950th Exhibition will be on display. Please do make sure you take the time to look at it over the next two months. It contains some fascinating snippers of information both about the building itself and the people linked to it in some way.

The following Saturday is of course our Advent Fair, so keep that in your diary as well. Please do have a word with Linda Wright, or myself, if you'd like to be involved. We encourage both stalls raising funds directly for the church, and those raising funds for the stall holders, who then pay a fee for their table. Linda will need help setting up and clearing away afterwards, and we can always do with more volunteers to help serve tea and cake, and spend an hour or so behind one of the church stalls.

Light Up a Life

This year we are returning to host a Light Up a Life service in aid of St Clare Hospice. Details are on a poster elsewhere in the Newsletter and I would encourage you to spread the word to anyone you know who might wish to remember a loved one ten days before Christmas. We will do things slightly differently this year, with a Christmas tree in the chancel (plain decorations for Advent, bling for Christmas) to hang stars on. Those at the service will be invited to write the names of loved ones on wooden stars provided by Bennetts Funeral Directors and then come forward to hang them on the tree themselves before lighting tealights as a thank-you prayer. The new(ish) hospice chaplain Becky will be speaking at the service so it will be a good opportunity to meet her. Please do pass flyers you'll find in the church to friends and neighbours, as it would be lovely to have a really full house.

Stewardship Update

St Ita, a 6th century Celtic nun who founded a monastery in Ireland, once said the three things most pleasing to God are:

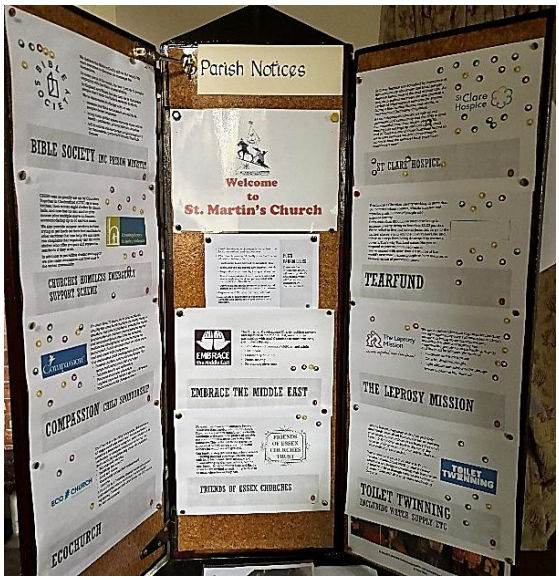
1. true faith in God with a pure heart,
2. a simple life with a grateful spirit,
3. generosity inspired by charity.

The three things that most displease God are

1. a mouth that hates people,
2. a heart harbouring resentments,
3. a too great a confidence in wealth.

I rather like those as a set of guidelines for living. What do you think?

Mission Sunday



Thank you so much to all who voted on our shortlist of ten Christian charities we might support as a church. The posters are on display on 'the tardis' with the coloured sticker votes from the One Big Family congregation. I've received the votes from the 10.30 am HC congregation last Sunday and once I've collected votes from the 8 am and Wednesday communion congregations plus any from the Church@Home folk, I'll take them to our November PCC (Parochial Church Council) meeting. Our goal is to select 3 - 6 charities with whom we feel we can really make a difference both locally and overseas and contribute to all five marks of mission. Remember those?

Tell – the good news about God's kingdom
Teach – new believers ensuring they become mature disciples
Tend – those in need with loving service
Transform – unjust structures of all societies and challenge violence to pursue peace
Treasure – all of creation to renew and ensure the sustainability of all life on earth

Hopefully I'll be able to reveal the results in the December Newsletter – and then of course the question will be "How are we going to support those we've chosen?"!

With blessings for a reflective, restful Remembrance Season.

Hazel

Revd. Hazel

St Martin's Day in Hungary

Geese and New Wine

November 11th is St. Martin's Day in Hungary (Márton nap), a traditional feast day celebrated by tasting the new wine and eating geese. This day falls right around the time when the geese born in the spring and early summer gain their necessary weight and are ready to be slaughtered. It is also the time when the first new wines are opened after the season's grape harvest, making it a perfect pairing for the St. Martin's Day festivities. Throughout the month of November many restaurants offer special St. Martin's Day dishes and winemakers proudly show off their first new wines. St. Martin's Day traditions date back hundreds of years and there are several tales surrounding its origins and the connection between St. Martin, the geese and wine.

The History of St Martin

According to legend the story begins with Martin, the son of a Roman tribune, who was born in the city of Savaria (near Szombathely, Hungary) in the Roman province of Pannonia around 316-317. On a cold night in Amiens, France serving as a soldier for the Roman emperor, Martin saw a scantily dressed beggar and offered up half of his warm cloak so that he wouldn't freeze to death. That night Jesus appeared in his dreams as the beggar dressed in his cloak. The dream confirmed Martin's faith and he eventually left the army to serve god. His good deeds and his compassion and empathy for the poor became legendary and by popular demand he was appointed to be the bishop of Tours. Martin was so humbled by the news that he hid in a stable full of geese to avoid the deputy coming to pick him up. The geese with their loud honking made so much noise that his whereabouts were soon uncovered and Martin was ordained as Bishop of Tours, France in 371. He dedicated the rest of his life to help the needy.

According to another legend the St. Martin's day traditions date back to Roman times when November 11th marked the end of the farming season and the beginning of the winter quarter in the Roman calendar. The Romans celebrated Aesculapius, the God of healing and medicine, by slaughtering geese the sacred bird of Mars, the go of war. Geese were frequent companions of Roman war gods, as they once saved Rome with their honking from a Gaul attack. They also made their way into the Christian calendar, based on old etymology of their roman name 'avis Martis' the bird of Mars (the god of war), as 'Martin's Bird'.



A service will be held at 4 pm on Sunday 1st November 2026 in St. Martin's Church



CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER
All Services are in St. Martin's unless otherwise stated

Sun 1	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	One Big Family Service
	11.00 am	Church@Home *
	4.00 pm	All Souls' Service
Wed 4	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Holy Communion in the Chancel
Sun 8	10.30 am	Holy Communion
	11.00 am	Church@Home *
Wed 11	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Holy Communion in **St. Peter's**
	10.45 am	**Remembrance Service in St. Peter's**
	7.30 pm	**Hazel's Relicensing and St. Martin's 950th Birthday Celebration**
Thurs 12	2.30 pm	Julian Meeting today **at St. Peter's**
Sun 15	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	One Big Family Service
	11.00 am	Church@Home *
Tues 17	8.30 pm	The Third Tuesday Club meet at **The Cock**
Wed 18	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Holy Communion in the Chancel
	7.30 pm	PCC meets at The Rectory
Thurs 19	1.00 pm	SmartyCraft meets in **The Church Rooms**
Sun 22	10.30 am	Holy Communion
	11.00 am	Church@Home *
Wed 25	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Holy Communion in the Chancel
Sun 29	10.30 am	Holy Communion with Healing
	11.00 am	Church@Home *

**If you haven't attended Church@Home before and would like to attend, please contact Shirley Dudeney (shirleydudeney@btinternet.com) for the necessary link.*

Are you holding an event?

If you don't tell **Sue King** *it won't appear in the Calendar. My contact details are:- email: susan.roger.king@ntlworld.com - Mobile: 07887 996278*

REMEMBRANCE

At St Peter's Church, Shelley

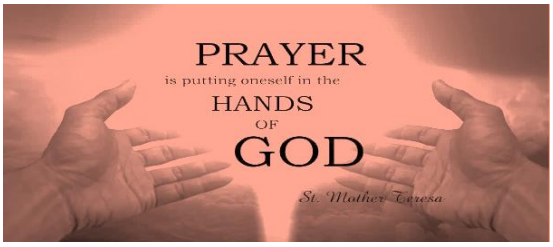
Wednesday 11 November

Holy Communion Service at 10am

Remembrance Service at 10.45am
All Welcome

THERE WILL BE AN ACT OF REMEMBRANCE AT 10.45AM AND TWO MINUTES SILENCE WILL BE OBSERVED TO MARK ARMISTICE AT 11.00AM





Morning Prayer each Wednesday at 9 am in St. Martin's Church

STREETS TO BE PRAYER FOR week beginning:-

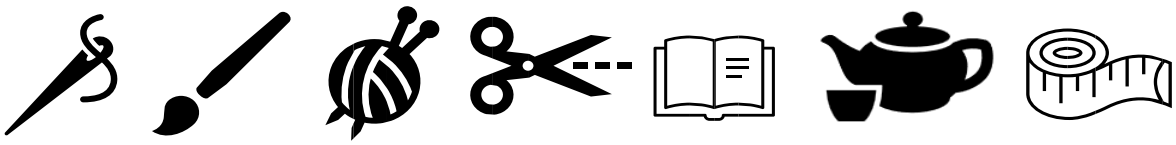
01.11.2026	Coles Close, Abigail Court and Finch Court
08.11.2026	Cripsey Avenue and Cripsey Court
15.11.2026	Crossbow Court
22.11.2026	De Lucy Place
29.11.2026	Elstar Road
06.12.2026	Epping Road

The above is taken from a newly updated list and so you may notice some recent duplication

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FROM THE REGISTERS:

Baptisms / Confirmations:
Weddings / Renewal of Weddings Vows:
Funerals:
Internment of Ashes / Memorial Services / Cremations:



SMARTYCRAFT

Why not join us at our SmartyCraft session on **Thursday 19th November** **from 1 pm until 3 pm in St. Martin's Church Rooms.**

Our projects for 2026 are:-

November 19th - Christmas Craft for Advent Fair

Please come and relax and chat with our latest craft project. Jill will provide a short Bible reflection for you to ponder on and refreshments will be provided

Hope to see you there ... **Jill**



Advent Fair

St. Martin's Church, Ongar

DECEMBER

SATURDAY | 5 | 10AM - 2PM

RAFFLE · CAKES · GIFTS · CRAFTS · PLANTS & MORE

Plus 'Christmas Through the Ages' displays by local schools to celebrate St. Martin's 950th anniversary.

SPONSORED BY

Delimores Cafe


St Clare Hospice
Light up a life 2026
Remember and celebrate the life of someone special
WHEN
15th December 2026
7:30pm
WHERE
St Martins Church
Chipping Ongar
Ongar
CM5 9AT
Hazel Aucken
hazel.aucken@outlook.com
SCAN HERE
01279 773750
light@stclarehospice.org.uk
stclarehospice
stclarehospice
stclarehospice.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1063631

Ongar & Shelley Ladies' Thursday Group

Commonwealth War Graves

Linda introduced Mark Godson who came to give our group a talk about the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Mark is a volunteer who showed us a short film and informed us where most of the cemeteries are and how they are maintained. There are around 23,000 locations around the world including Iceland, Canada and Japan, some larger than others and each Commonwealth country helps to fund looking after the graves. To have a grave, one had to be a serving member of the Forces and die in the First or Second World War; also included were nurses, stokers on ships, members of the special services and civilians.

All the grave stones are similar in size and do not discriminate between rank or religion. Some of those who died were able to be returned to their native country for burial.

Mark had done some research in the Ongar area and told us a story of a serviceman who was buried at Stanford Rivers Church.

Keeping the graves looking clean and tidy is an ongoing job only made possible by the many of volunteers across the world. Linda thanked Mark for a very interesting talk.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 5th November at the URC. 2 pm for a 2.30 start. New members welcome and their first visit will be FREE. The talk will be about 'Adventures in Alaska'.

Jan Turnbull - October 2026



November News from St. Peter's Church, Shelley

Lest We Forget – Wednesday 11th November

Please join us at St. Peter's for our Annual Remembrance Day Service on **Wednesday 11th November at 10.45 am**, when we will remember those from Ongar and Shelley who gave their lives in the service of their country.

During the service, the names of the fallen recorded on our memorials will be read aloud, with a candle lit in remembrance of each. There will also be an opportunity for members of the congregation to light a candle in memory of someone special to them. The service will include the sounding of the Last Post, the traditional two-minute silence at 11 o'clock and the Reveille.

The church will remain open throughout the day as a haven of peace and quiet, offering everyone the opportunity to spend a few moments in private prayer, reflection or remembrance.

Whether you join us for the service or simply call in during the day, you will be most welcome. Refreshments will be served following the service.

Shelley Loops – What a Wonderful Year!

What a way to finish our first season of Shelley Loops!

Our October walk took us from St. Peter's to the beautiful St. Andrew's Church at Greensted and back – a little over 10 kilometres and our most ambitious walk yet. We were blessed with a glorious autumn day, wonderful countryside and some stunning scenery along the way. It really was a lovely way to spend a Saturday morning, even if a few legs were beginning to complain by the time we returned!

Looking back, Shelley Loops has been a tremendous success this year. What began as a simple idea to encourage people to get outdoors, enjoy our local countryside and perhaps get a little fitter along the way has developed into something rather special.

A huge thank you to everyone who has joined us, helped organise the walks or simply encouraged us along the way.

We are now giving our walking boots a well-earned rest for the winter, but plans are already taking shape for next year. These include an even longer walk to St Nicholas' Church at Fyfield and a more moderate loop taking in St Martin's Church in Ongar and the historic Ongar Bailey.

Shelley Loops will return in March, hopefully with spring flowers, a little sunshine and plenty of enthusiasm for another year of exploring the wonderful countryside on our doorstep.

Julian Meetings

Our Julian Meetings continue on the second Thursday of each month at 2 pm. We begin with a short reflection and music, followed by a period of silent meditation, and finish – naturally – with tea, cake and plenty of conversation.

These meetings offer a welcome opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life for a little while. Newcomers are always very welcome, whether you are familiar with silent prayer or simply curious to discover what it is all about.

A Date for Your Christmas Diary!

Our traditional **Nine Lessons and Carols Service** will take place at **2.30 pm on Sunday 20th December**.
There is something rather special about St Peter's at Christmas, with familiar carols, beautiful readings and the warmth of a small country church coming together to celebrate the season.

And, of course, no Christmas service at St Peter's would be complete without mince pies and mulled wine afterwards!

What better way to begin your Christmas festivities? Please put the date in your diary, bring your family and friends, and come and join us.

If you would like to know more about life at St Peter's, Shelley, or get involved in any of our activities, please contact David Irving on 07950 267880. New faces are always very welcome.

Eco Tip of the Month from St. Peter's Church, Shelley

November – Keeping Warm Without Wasting Energy

November has a way of reminding us that winter is just around the corner. The clocks have gone back, the evenings are drawing in, and across Ongar and Shelley the central heating is beginning to earn its keep.

For many households, this is also the time when thoughts turn to energy bills. Keeping our homes warm and comfortable is important, but so is making sure we are not wasting precious energy in the process.

At St Peter's, our Eco Church journey has encouraged us to think more carefully about how we use energy. It is easy to forget that every time we switch on the heating, turn on a light or use an electrical appliance, there is an environmental cost as well as a financial one. The good news is that saving energy doesn't have to mean sitting in the cold or making expensive changes to our homes. Often, it is the small, sensible things that make the difference.

Keep the warmth where it belongs.

A surprising amount of heat can escape through gaps around doors and windows. Simple draught excluders, curtains drawn at dusk and making sure radiators aren't hidden behind furniture can all help our heating work more efficiently. If the sun makes an appearance during the day, open the curtains and let its warmth in. Even November sunshine is free energy!

Make the heating work smarter.

Heating an empty house unnecessarily wastes both energy and money. Using heating timers and thermostats sensibly can help ensure our homes are warm when we need them without running the system longer than necessary.

Of course, keeping warm is particularly important for older people and anyone with health concerns. Saving energy should never come at the expense of health or comfort.

Don't forget the little things.

Lights left burning in empty rooms, televisions on standby and appliances running longer than necessary all contribute to energy consumption.

One light might not make much difference, but multiply that by every home in Ongar and Shelley and the savings soon begin to add up.

Switching to LED lighting is another straightforward improvement. At St Peter's, we have already made that change as part of our efforts to reduce the church's environmental footprint.

Think beyond our own front doors.

November is also a good time to remember those in our community who may be struggling with the cost of keeping warm.

Checking on an elderly neighbour, sharing practical energy-saving ideas, or simply offering a little help can make a real difference. Caring for creation and caring for one another often go hand in hand.

There is something rather comforting about November. The countryside settles into its winter rhythm, the trees stand bare, and the shorter days encourage us to spend a little more time indoors. But as nature adjusts to the changing season, perhaps we can adjust a few of our own habits too.

At St Peter's, we are learning that being an Eco Church isn't just about wildlife, trees and flowers. It is also about how we use the resources we have been given, making thoughtful choices and avoiding unnecessary waste.

So this November, let's keep warm, look out for our neighbours and make every bit of energy count. A warmer home, a smaller bill and a lighter footprint on the planet. That's a combination worth striving for.

This month's eco action:

As colder evenings arrive, look for one simple way to conserve warmth and energy at home. Close curtains at dusk, check for draughts, or switch off unnecessary lights. And spare a thought for someone who may struggle to keep warm this winter. **David Irving**

ECO PRAYER OF THE MONTH

November - A Time to Remember, A Time to Care

"It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter."
Psalm 74:17

God of every season,
As November brings shorter days,
and the trees stand bare against the autumn sky,
we thank you for the changing rhythms of your creation.
For the fields and hedgerows settling into winter,
for the creatures finding shelter,
and for the quiet life that continues
even when the earth appears to rest.
In this season of remembrance,
we give thanks for those who have gone before us,
for the sacrifices made for peace,
and for the world entrusted to our care.
Remind us that we too have a responsibility
to those who will come after us.
Teach us to protect what is vulnerable,
to use the earth's resources wisely,
to waste less and share more,
and to remember those who struggle
with the cold and darkness of winter.
As the days grow shorter,
may our care for your creation grow stronger.
Help us to leave behind a world
where nature can flourish,
where kindness is abundant,
and where future generations
can enjoy the beauty of your creation.
In Jesus' name, **Amen**



The following words by Nick Fawcett are the words associated with 'Prelude to Lavenham'

Lord, there are times when I have to ask, 'What?' –

times when your love is not easy to spot.

What is life's purpose and what of me here?'

Grant me some answers, Lord, make your will clear.

Lord, there are times when I have to ask, 'How?' –

times when what's preached doesn't square with life now.

Wrestling with doubt I ask, 'How can this be?'

Grant me some answers, Lord, help me to see.

Lord, there are times when the questions run fast –

times when I fear that my faith may not last.

Help me, support me, Lord, help me get through.

Lead me through darkness till light shines anew.

With thanks to Monica who used this poem to end her intercessions on the 11th October

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, in financial resources
and in love and service in our local community.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord … Amen

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

IT'S NOT JUST POLICY, IT'S PERSONAL

Building confidence in reporting safeguarding concerns



"Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God."

- Micah 6:8

We know that reporting safeguarding concerns can feel difficult

Scan here for resources to help you

When someone shares a concern, it is important they are listened to and taken seriously. You are not expected to investigate. Keeping people safe and ensuring concerns are recorded and referred appropriately is all of our responsibility.

Recognise

Be alert to signs or disclosures of abuse.

Respond

Listen carefully and take what is being said seriously.

Record

Make a written record of what has been shared.

Refer

Share the concern with the Safeguarding Officer and relevant authorities.

Weald Hall
CARE HOME·EPPING
CM16 6ND





Weald Hall Community Dementia Café in Ongar

Last Wednesday
of every month
11:30am - 1:30pm

Ongar Council
Banson Way,
Ongar,
CM5 9AS

We warmly invite you to join us at Weald Hall Care Home Community Dementia Café

Our sessions provide a safe and welcoming space for residents of Epping and surrounding areas for the elderly and care community to meet, connect and enjoy time together.

We offer dementia-friendly activities in an inclusive, supportive environment, open to people living with dementia as well as family members, friends and carers.

Scan me

01277 568 430
alice@premiumcaregroup.co.uk
Weald Hall Care Home, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood, Epping, Essex, CM16 6ND
www.wealdhallcarehome.co.uk

Part of
Premium Care Group

Unable to get to church?

Well why not go to?

A Church @ Home



Want to know more?

Well, contact Shirley Dudeney

shirleydudeney@btinternet.com

for more information

and the Zoom Link

HOME COMMUNION … Is there anyone who, for one reason or another, cannot be in Church as they used to be? For those of you who would like it, we can offer home communions. If this is something you would like, please contact either myself, Sue on 07887 996278 or Shirley on 01277 364143, and we can arrange a convenient time to bring the sacrament to you.

ST. MARTIN'S, CHIPPING ONGAR

Times of Services & Private Prayer



Sunday Services

First & Third Sundays – 8 am - Holy Communion

First & Third Sundays - 10.30 am – One Big Family for All (non-Communion)

Second, Fourth & Fifth* Sunday - 10.30 am – Holy Communion *With Healing

Wednesday

9 am – Morning Prayer

10 am – Holy Communion

St. Martin's Church is usually open for Private Prayer each day between 9.30 am and 5 pm or until dusk whichever is the earliest

Please adhere to any notices displayed

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU!

Please do remember to visit us on the 'A Church Near You' website https://www.achurchnearyou.com/

OUR 2026 / 2027 TEXT TO REMEMBER



For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not die but have eternal life.

John 3.16



THE TUESDAY CLUB



… meets at …

The Cock
on the
Third Tuesday of the month at 8.30 pm

Come along and enjoy good conversation and banter

ALL WELCOME !

PARISH VISION

To be a growing Church, God's gift to the community.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

In the light of God's call and our situation here, our mission is:

to be a more evident presence in our community, witnessing to God's love for all;
to be God's hands and feet within the Church and beyond through worship and prayer;
listening and serving;
acceptance and welcome;

to be a people who are growing towards a closer relationship with God, creation and each other.