

UNITED BENEFICE OF

ST. MARY'S ST. MARK'S
SLAUGHAM STAPLEFIELD COMMON

Serving the communities of Handcross, Pease Pottage, Slaugham, Staplefield & Warninglid



August & September 2023

Church Services in August

1 st	7.45pm	All Saints	Prayer Gathering
6 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	All-age Worship
13 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10.45am	St Mary's	Communion
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
20 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Informal Praise
27 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	5.30pm	All Saints	Meal & Worship

Church Services in September

3 rd	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	All-age Worship
5 th	7.45pm	All Saints	Prayer Gathering
10 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10.45am	St Mary's	Communion
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
17 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Informal Praise
24 th	10am	St Mark's	United Harvest
	5.30pm	All Saints	Meal & Worship
27 th	10.30am	All Saints	Spotlight

All Saints: Horsham Road, Handcross, RH17 6DF

St Mark's: Brantridge Lane, Staplefield, RH17 6EJ

St Mary's: Staplefield Road, Slaughtam, RH17 6AG

Weekly services are taking place at our churches, and **everyone is welcome**. Our current plans are as above but they are subject to change. Please look out for email communication, and keep an eye on our social media pages, website, YouTube channel and weekly notice sheet.

The St Mary's services are put onto YouTube and we hope they will be a blessing to those who still cannot attend in person. They can be found here:

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCBQ0W4r1m39ixogQWR3TxoA?fbclid=IwAR2vLqbm97lq9StSwn8qvgX_vTF11-tg0LV7z80cVFC8BZE034WNbNHhc4

Or search for: United Benefice of St Mary's and St Mark's.

You can subscribe to the sermons as a podcast too. All links are on the website at <https://www.stmarysparish.org.uk/podcasts/>.

Our verses for 2023: Romans 12:9-13

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.

Summer

So here we are in August - high summer. Apparently, to the author Henry James, 'summer afternoon' was the most beautiful combination of words in the English language. (He was, mind you, born in North America, so perhaps his experience of summer was slightly more reliable than our British one.)

I tend to agree with him. I so enjoy the warmth in the air and the abundance of colour and fragrance in our gardens. I'm always enchanted by the green tunnels that get created in our Sussex lanes - something I've not seen quite this way in any other county. It feels that the moment I step outside, there are sights at every turn to appreciate - even on my humdrum walk to the supermarket. I pass under bushes that hang over the pavement from the railway embankment and a gorgeous scent makes me look around and find honeysuckle above me. I breathe it in deeply and can't help but say thank you.

A writer that I like says this:

"Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it's a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars." (Barbara Brown Taylor - An Altar in the World)

An altar in a church is a place where we often kneel - in prayer, in worship. From Adam to Moses, altars were usually built upon the tops of mountains, often at a place where God had somehow made himself known to people. So I love the idea that altars are all around us and God is always at the ready to show something of himself to us.

It seems to me that August is an extra good time to find yourself called to pause and find God in a moment of beauty on a lazy summer afternoon - to recognise how God loves to give himself to us in so many ways and in so many places of our lives. To stumble into an altar.

I've recently been listing my altars - here are a few of them:

- ✦ the array of wild flowers in the scrubby patch of grass (not grass) at the back of our flats
- ✦ the huge smile of a friend who was glad to see me again after three years
- ✦ a hug I received at church
- ✦ a handwritten letter that came in the post
- ✦ a huge prehistoric-looking stork that filled the sky in a walk at Knepp recently
- ✦ and roses! Aren't they stunning right now?

Doesn't it do us good to be taken out of ourselves in moments of wonder, even if fleetingly? Good for our mental health, good for our physical wellbeing and certainly good for our emotional and spiritual lives.

So I'm just off to bang my shins on a few more altars - you're welcome to join me!

Liz Cox

Handcross Community Pantry and Café

The Pantry was set up and is run by the churches in our Parish: All Saints in Handcross, St Mary's in Slaugham and St Mark's in Staplefield. Pease Pottage, Woodgate and Warninglid are also in the parish. **We offer weekly provisions of food to those within the parishes who are in need of help and support.**

We invite anyone in need to get in touch via our rector Rev Carl Smith at handcrossrectory@gmail.com or on 01444 400221. You are very welcome to call in to **All Saints on a Saturday morning between 10 and 11.30am**. Stay for free tea, coffee and biscuits, and chat to someone on our friendly team.

You can donate non-perishable items at:

- Handcross Hardware & Craft in the High Street.
- The Victory Inn in Staplefield.
- All Saints Church on a Saturday morning.
- St Mary's in Slaugham.
- St Mark's in Staplefield.

Financial donations can also be made: cash, marked 'Pantry', to the hardware shop, or by BACS (sort code 40-24-33, account 81842242, account name Slaugham PCC, reference 'Pantry' or 'CP').

If you would like to be a donation point for collection, or need any other information, then please get in touch. For any Pantry questions, please contact Barbara Butfoy at butfoybabs@hotmail.co.uk or on 07853 228605. Thank you.

Come along to our events!

On **12th August**, there will be a **bric-a-brac sale** from 2pm to 5pm at All Saints Church.

If you would like to know more, or if you can help, please contact Barbara Butfoy (butfoybabs@hotmail.co.uk, 07853 228605).

Parish Magazine

We are in the process of reviewing how we communicate to the wider community through the Parish Magazine. If you are passionate about editing or design and would be interested in being involved in future production and development of the magazine, please speak to Carl Smith or Fae Widdowson on 01444 400221.

CONTACT

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Office hours: Monday & Thursday 9am-12pm

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