

UNITED BENEFICE OF

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

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



December 2023



Dear Friends and Neighbours,

We all hear pleas for help from those who are poor and, quite rightly, Christmas is a season when the pressure to give becomes most acute.

Jen and I have a friend called “Rabecca” (not her real name) who lives in Uganda. This week we had a long WhatsApp call with another friend, Byaruhanga, through whom we are trying to support “Rabecca”. “Rabecca” and her four children are in desperate need.

Let us tell you more about “Rabecca”. This is *not* a plea for you to give her money – but *is* a plea to consider carefully what our response should be towards those in need within our own circles of awareness.

The answer is different for each of us.

“Rabecca” is the eldest of a family of five who were orphaned when young during a time of civil war. She took her responsibility seriously, supporting her younger siblings, helping them through school, feeding and clothing them while neglecting herself.

Then “Rabecca” had a break; a missionary sponsored her to train as a seamstress and she started to make money sewing and selling school and student uniforms. With others, Jen and I became involved, buying a sewing machine and materials for her.

She developed a customer base, got married, and gave birth to four children, then, in quick succession, her unfaithful husband abandoned her, the sewing machine was stolen and she developed a rare, potentially fatal, tumour in her jaw. Treatment cost over £10,000 (there is no NHS in Uganda) and involved complex surgery using bone from her leg to construct a new jaw.

“Rabecca” recovered, but her needs remain overwhelming.

Do we draw a line now, and say, “we’ve done our bit”?

A rich man came to Jesus asking, “what must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus’ answer: “Sell everything you have, give to the poor, and follow me.” (Mark Chapter 10:17,21)

That’s a tough call! There are many like “Rabecca”.

Mark told this story to show us what matters in life, what has eternal consequence, and to guide over our attitude to possessions.

How should we respond?

Have a wonderful Christmas!

Rob & Jen

Services in December

3 rd	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Breakfast
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	4pm	All Saints	Christingle Service
5 th	7.45pm	All Saints	Prayer Gathering
6 th	4pm	Pease Pottage	Carols on Woodgate Green
7 th	6pm	Warninglid	Carols at Seaforth Hall
10 th	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	4pm	St Mark's	Carol Service by Candlelight
13 th	10.30am	All Saints	Spotlight
17 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Breakfast
	6.30pm	St Mary's	Carol Service by Candlelight
22 nd	6pm	All Saints	Carol Service
24 th	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	4pm	St Mark's	Crib Service
	11.15pm	St Mary's	Midnight Communion
25 th	9am	St Mark's	Christmas Celebration with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Christmas Celebration
31 st	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Communion

All Saints: Horsham Road, Handcross, RH17 6DF

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

St Mary's: Staplefield Road, Slaugham, 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=IwAR2vLqbms97lq9StSwn8qvgX_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/>.

Celebrate Christmas



Sunday 3rd

4:00pm Christingle Service @ All Saints

Wednesday 6th

4:00pm Carols on Woodgate Green, Pease Pottage

Thursday 7th

6:00pm Carols @ Seaforth Hall, Warninglid

Sunday 10th

4:00pm Carols by Candlelight @ St Mark's

Wednesday 13th

10:30am Spotlight Christmas Service @ All Saints

Thursday 14th

12:00pm Christmas Lunch @ St Mary's

Saturday 16th

3:00pm - 5:00pm Children's Christmas Party @ All Saints

7:30pm Family Christmas Film @ All Saints

Sunday 17th

6:30pm Carols by Candlelight @ St Mary's

Friday 22nd

6:00pm Carol Service @ All Saints

Christmas Eve

10:00am Informal Communion Service @ All Saints

4:00pm All-Age Crib Service @ St Mark's

11:15pm Midnight Communion @ St Mary's

Christmas Day

9:00am All Age Christmas Celebration & Communion @ St Mark's

10:30am All Age Christmas Celebration @ St Mary's

St Mary's: RH17 6AG | St Mark's: RH17 6EN | All Saints RH17 6DF
Woodgate RH11 9SL | Warninglid RH17 5UB



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'd 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.
- All Saints Church on a Saturday morning.
- St Mark's Church in Staplefield.
- St Mary's Church in Slaugham.
- The Victory Inn in Staplefield.

Financial donations can also be made: cash, marked 'Pantry', to the hardware shop, or by BACS (sort code 40-24-33, account 22095041, account name Slaugham Parochial Church Council Pantry Account – please note the recent change of account details).

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.

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.

CONTACT

Church Office:

01444 400221, slaughtam@btinternet.com

Office hours: Monday & Thursday 9am-12pm

Rector, Rev'd Carl Smith:

01444 400221, handcrossrectory@gmail.com

 [@stmarysandstmarks](#)

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 contact Carl Smith or Fae Widdowson at slaughtam@btinternet.com.