

UNITED BENEFICE OF

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

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



January 2024

Services in January

2 nd	7.45pm	All Saints	Prayer Gathering
7 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Breakfast
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
14 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
21 st	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Breakfast
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
24 th	10.30am	All Saints	Spotlight
28 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	5.15pm	All Saints	Meal & Informal Worship

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=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/>.

Happy New Year

Welcome to 2024! Another new year. The fact that they seem to come faster and faster is one of the ways in which I know I'm not as young as I used to be.

I'm always grateful for the many opportunities life gives us for new beginnings – a new day, a new week, a new season – and as we step into January, we have the invitation of a whole new year. January is, of course, named after the Roman god Janus, who had two faces so that he could look two ways – to the past and to the future.

With every new beginning, there is also a leaving behind. As dawn comes (and thankfully now every day it is a tiny bit earlier), we leave behind the night. As 2024 comes, we leave behind 2023. Media channels will have generated a lot of looking back over the last few days, recalling for us what 2023 contained, and perhaps also attempting to predict what might unfold in this new year.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare puts these words into the mouth of a shepherd: "Now bless thyself: thou met'st with things dying, I with things newborn." The line captures this moment of being in the space of no longer and not yet, and recognises that there is something sacred in it – an opportunity for a blessing.

A writer that I like says this: "Can we believe that God blesses all that is past? All of the last dying year? The projects, the relationships, the successes, the failures? Can we then turn and receive the blessing of all that will come to birth in the year ahead and in all our years to come?" (Margaret Silf)

I wonder what might help you receive this blessing that God wants to give? A few moments of simply opening up your heart heavenwards? Taking time to listen to what feels hopeful, and draws you towards light and life? Perhaps even calling into to one of the churches in our parish and sitting in the stillness for a while? God's heart is always open to those who come looking. May you know the love, compassion and faithfulness of God in this new year that we are stepping into.

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'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.

CONTACT

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Office hours: Monday & Thursday 9am-12pm

Rector, Rev'd Carl Smith:

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 [@stmarysandstmarks](#)

Parish Magazine

If you are passionate about editing or design and would be interested in being involved in future production and development of the parish magazine, please contact Carl Smith or Fae Widdowson at slaughtam@btinternet.com.