

Welcome to St Mary's Apsley



...and welcome to our service today

26th March 2023, 5th Sunday of Lent

If you need anything during the service, please ask someone sitting nearby, they will be pleased to help.

Please stay after the service for refreshments and a chat in the refectory at the back of the church.

This week at St Mary's

Monday

10.00 -12.00 Working Party
8.00pm Bellringing practice

Tuesday

9.30am Buzzy Bees toddler group

Wednesday

10.00am Eucharist at Florence Longman House
6.30pm Lent Supper at vicarage

Thursday

9.30 - 3.30 Church open for private prayer
9.30am Eucharist
9.30 - 12.00 Foodbank and Community Cafe
10.15am Lent Group
8.00pm Virtual Lent Group

Friday

10am -12.00 Working Party

Saturday

10am -12.00 Saturday Community Café
10.15am Lent group

Sunday

9.00am Bellringing prior to service
9.00am Procession from Florence Longman House to church for Palm Sunday
9.30am Eucharist with enactment of The Passion plus Sunday School

Morning Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 8.30am

Evening Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 5.30pm

From our Vicar

Dear Friends,

This Sunday marks the beginning of Passiontide, as we draw close to the most holy time of Jesus' suffering and death. Holy Week will soon be upon us, and we will mark the time with special services following the chronological events leading up to the crucifixion and, at last, the resurrection.

There are a number of ways to get involved; I will need 12 people (or thereabouts) to have their feet washed during our Eucharist for Maundy Thursday (7pm). We need volunteers to read the various parts of the Palm Gospel next Sunday morning (1st April). We will need helpers on Holy Saturday morning (from 10am), to clean and dress the church ready for Easter Day (if you are not free in the morning, but are in the afternoon, we also need to clean and dress St Benedict's from 2pm). Please let me or Janet know if you would like to take one of these roles.

The loveliest and most exciting service will surely be the 6am Eucharist on Easter Day, with holy fire in the churchyard. The service will end with bacon rolls and coffee, so feel free to consider that a bribe!

Our Gospel today is the story of the death and raising of Lazarus, Jesus' friend. It's an all too familiar story of love and grief (which, of course, is simply love with nowhere to go). There is anger, too, from Lazarus's sisters; if Jesus had been there Lazarus would not have died, or so they think. Jesus weeps at the grave of Lazarus.

The pain of grief is inescapable, there is no comfort or rest. You may know this. I did not really know this until the sudden death two weeks ago of Anna Matthews, my spiritual director.

Lazarus is not resurrected but sort of resuscitated, in the sense that he would eventually have died again in old age. Jesus' resurrection is to everlasting life, those who believe in him shall never truly die. I don't pretend that this is the easy answer. There is nothing easy about the journey through pain and suffering and death, Jesus shows us this. He shows us the hard way, so that our suffering might be eased. May we all learn something new of that ease, and that peace, along the way that lies ahead.

Yours in Christ,
Mother Alice

Prayers

On the cross, Jesus offered himself to the Father for the whole world. At the foot of his cross, we join our prayers with his.

Almighty Father, look with mercy on this your family for which our Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed and given up into the hands of sinners and to suffer death upon the cross; who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Sunday's Collect and Readings (Year A)

Collect

Gracious Father
you gave up your Son
out of love for the world:
lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion,
that we may know eternal peace
through the shedding of our Saviour's blood,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A reading from the book of Ezekiel 37. 1-14

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord GOD, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.' So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.'

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 8: 6-11

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law – indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 11: 1-45

Glory to You, O Lord

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.

cont

Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

Thursday's Collect and Readings (Year A)

Collect

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world:

grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross

we may triumph in the power of his victory;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

A reading from the book of Genesis 17.3–9

Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God.' God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep my

covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John

8.51–end

Glory to You, O Lord

Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death.' The Jews said to him, 'Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets; yet you say, "Whoever keeps my word will never taste death." Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?' Jesus answered, 'If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, he of whom you say, "He is our God", though you do not know him. But I know him; if I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him and I keep his word. Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad.' Then the Jews said to him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?' Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.' So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

Contact Information

Vicar:	Mthr Alice Jolley	01442 615246	mthr.AliceJolley@outlook.com
	Alice's rest day is Saturday		
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Notices

Please send any input for next week to stmarysapsleyend@gmail.com by noon on Wednesday.

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday

and our service will start at Florence Longman House in Weymouth Street at 9am and then process back to the church with palms for 9.30am.

We will also be reading a dramatized version of The Passion in this service. Please speak to either Janet or Dan if you would like to read.

Eucharist at Florence Longman House

All welcome to join this service with the FL residents in Weymouth Street at 10am on Weds 29th March.

Easter Hunt

There will be a hunt in the churchyard after the 9.30am service on Easter Sunday. £2 per hunt with a chocolate surprise. Tell your friends! And tell them they would be very welcome at the Easter service too!



Bishop Alan's garden open Easter Monday

2pm to 4pm. Entrance £4 per adult in aid of Herts and Beds Historic Churches Trust. The address is Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans AL3 4HD but there is no parking in the grounds or in the lane.

Bereavements

Please keep our clergy team and the congregation at All Saints Kings Langley in your prayers following two very unexpected bereavements in the last 3 weeks affecting them all.

Confirmation service St Mary's 21 May

If you are considering confirmation, or even just wondering about it, please speak to Mthr Alice as she will be arranging preparation for this soon.

Taizé

Mthr Alice will be co-leading the Diocese's annual pilgrimage to Taizé in the summer (30th July - 6th of August inclusive). If you are interested in joining, please speak to her. The cost shouldn't be prohibitive and funding may be available.

Organ or flute sponsorship.



If you would like to sponsor an organist – or flautist – for any reason, please contact Janet. We still don't have sponsorship for the Maundy Thursday 7pm service.

New Bulletin layout

Well what do you think of it? To a certain extent it is still in development so constructive comments to the bulletin team (including Alice) are welcome.



Foodbank

At St Mary's the foodbank is currently open 9.30-12.00 on Thursdays with a community café too. We continue to need donations for both foodbanks (St M's and St B's). If you can help, either with donations or with the running of the foodbanks, please speak to Mthr Alice.

Holy Saturday cleaning and flowers



Please join the cleaning and flower party in church on Saturday 8th April from 10.00am prior to Easter Day. The more people that come the better it will be! Please speak to Mthr Alice or Rosemary.

Easter Morning

Will start at St Mary's with a dawn service at 6am followed by breakfast! All welcome.



New PCC members, Wardens and Deanery Synod members

Nominations are needed prior to the Annual Meetings on 23 April. Could you or someone you know in the church contribute to the running of the church in one of these important ways? If so please complete the chart at the back of church (in caps please!). Or speak to Mthr Alice.

Christian volunteers needed

Liberty Tea Rooms and Community Hub are asking for volunteers to be part of their 'Guest Relations Team'. See details on St Mary's website.

Future dates

Palm Sunday	2 April
Holy Week	3 – 9 April
Maundy Thursday service	6 April 7pm
Good Friday services	7 April 11.30am and 2pm
Easter Sunday services	9 April 6am & 9.30am
Easter Hunt in churchyard	9 April 10.30 to 12.30
APCM (annual meetings)	23 April at 2.00pm
Confirmation here	21 May

Rotas – who's doing what when

	Today 26 March	Next Sunday 2 April
9.30am	Eucharist with Sunday School	Eucharist with Sunday School
Music	Peter Lipman	Peter Lipman
Warden	Harry G-Brown	Sylvia Low
Sidesduty	Laura G-Brown	Rosemary Bladon
Welcomers	Trevor & Jan Wilson	Roger & Angela Witts
Reading	Sue Jakeman	Multiple people
Intercessions	Laura G-B	Viv Hagel
Offertory	Ann Wiggins & Katharine Harper	Melanie Henley & AN Other
Chalice	Rosemary Bladon	Janet Wright
2 nd Counter	Trevor Wilson	Colin Rivett
Refreshments	Janet Wright & AN Other	Ann Wiggins & AN Other
Sunday School	Hazel Pritchard	Lilian Hepwood