

Welcome to St Mary's Apsley



and welcome to our service today

18th February, 2024
First 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

Today

9.00am Bellringing
9.30am Parish Eucharist
3.00pm Messy Church

Monday

10.00 -12.00 Working Party
8.00pm Bellringing practice

Tuesday

9.30am No Buzzy Bees – Half-term
12.30-2.30pm Foodbank and Community Café

Wednesday

7pm Lent Discussion Group in the Vicarage

Thursday

9.30 - 3.30 Church open for private prayer
10.00 - 12.00 Foodbank and Community Café
10.15am Study Group in the vestry
8.00pm Lent Discussion Group

Friday

10.00 -12.00 Working Party

Saturday

10.00 -12.00 Saturday Community Café

Sunday 25th February

9.00am Bellringing
9.30am Parish Eucharist



Dear Friends,

Welcome to Lent! Every year this season is different, because we are different people each time. I think Lent can mean/ be a few different things, and there might be a specific focus for each of us. This year I am focussing on resting in/ giving thanks for God's love. You might guess that I don't think this will involve strict regimes of self-denial! Sometimes life offers its own penitence without us heaping more upon ourselves. I want to share this poem, one of my favourites for a season which comes so hard on the heels of the Christmas feast:

Lent - Jean Watt

*Lent is a tree without blossom, without leaf,
Barer than Blackthorn in its winter sleep
All unadorned. Unlike Christmas which decrees
the setting-up, dressing-up of trees,
Lent is a taking down, a stripping there,
A starkness after all has been withdrawn
Of surplus and superfluous,
Leaving no hiding-place, only an emptiness
Between black branches, a most precious space
Before the leaf, before the time of flowers;
Lest we should see only the leaf, the flower,
Lest we should miss the stars.*

What stars might God be encouraging you to notice? What things would it be a shame if you missed? How will you make the most of this most precious space?

Yours,

Mother Alice

Morning Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 9.30am

Evening Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 5.30pm

Sunday's Collect and Readings (Year B)

The Collect

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;
and, as you know our weakness,
so may we know your power to save;
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 Genesis 9.8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.' God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD

A Reading from the First Letter of Peter

3.18-end

For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark 9.2-9

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Thursday's Readings (Year B)

A reading from Esther 14.1-5, 12-14

Then Queen Esther, seized with deadly anxiety, fled to the Lord. She took off her splendid apparel and put on the garments of distress and mourning, and instead of costly perfumes she covered her head with ashes and dung, and she utterly humbled her body; every part that she loved to adorn she covered with her tangled hair. She prayed to the Lord God of Israel, and said: 'O my Lord, you only are our king; help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, for my danger is in my hand. Ever since I was born I have heard in the tribe of my family that you, O Lord, took Israel out of all the nations, and our ancestors from among all their forebears, for an everlasting inheritance, and that you did for them all that you promised. Remember, O Lord; make yourself known in this time of our affliction, and give me courage, O King of the gods and Master of all dominion! Put eloquent speech in my mouth before the lion, and turn his heart to hate the man who is fighting against us, so that there may be an end of him and those who agree with him. But save us by your hand, and help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, O Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Psalms

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Refrain:

Your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever.

- 1 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods will I sing praise to you.
- 2 I will bow down towards your holy temple and praise your name, because of your love and faithfulness; for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.
- 3 In the day that I called to you, you answered me; you put new strength in my soul. [R]
- 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord, for they have heard the words of your mouth.
- 5 They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord.

- 6 Though the Lord be high, he watches over the lowly; as for the proud, he regards them from afar. [R]
- 7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you will preserve me; you will stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand will save me.
- 8 The Lord shall make good his purpose for me; your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever; forsake not the work of your hands.

Refrain:

Your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever.

*Lord our God, supreme over all things,
look upon the humble and lowly
and put new strength into our souls
to complete your purpose for us
in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ From Matthew 7.7-12

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

'Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him! 'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Contact Information

Vicar:	Mthr Alice Jolley	01442 615246	mthr.AliceJolley@outlook.com
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Notices

Please send any input for next week to Sue in the Benefice office on SaintsKL2@fiscali.co.uk by noon on Wednesday and copy it to StMarysApsleyEnd@gmail.com.

Buzzy Bees

Please note no Buzzy Bees this week as half-term. Back next week on 27th February.

Thursday Evening Study Group

During Lent the Thursday evening study group will NOT be via Zoom. We will be meeting in person from 22nd February at 8.00pm following the Lent Discussion course. For further details please speak to the Churchwardens.

Lent Discussion Group

Wednesday 21st Feb

– **What Is Spiritual Discernment?**

Wednesday 28th Feb

– **What is Calling?**

Wednesday 6th Mar

– **What can we learn from Jesus' Sense of his own calling?**

Wednesday 13th Mar

– **How can we discern our own calling in life?**

Wednesday 20th Mar

– **Is there a reliable method for discerning important life choices in prayer?**

Meet at 7pm in The Vicarage,
All sessions include soup and a roll.

Welcome Boxes for Nascent House

Thank you to everyone's response in recent weeks to the request for donations. The needs are now for flannels, sponge bags, sweets (small packets), individual bars of soap, boxes of tissues and plastic boxes with lids (17L to 25L). Please remember that the products must not contain alcohol.
Susan and Viv

Sponsorship for our organists



Our organist today, Ian Hope, is sponsored by an anonymous donor. If you would like to sponsor the organist, perhaps to celebrate a special occasion or in memory of a loved one, please email Janet on janet@apsleyend.co.uk.

Foodbanks at St Mary's and St B's

St Mary's foodbank is open 12.30-2.30 on Tuesdays and 10.00-12.00 on Thursdays with a community café serving simple hot food. We are currently very short of all stock and would value donations either to the church or to Dunelm. We continue to need assistance at both foodbanks and at St B's on Wednesday 9.30-12.00. If you can help, do speak to Mother Alice.

Children's Books

We have had some children's books donated to the foodbank. Feel free to take what you would like and leave a donation that can be used towards heating the refectory when the foodbank is using it.

Dates for your diary

Weds 21st Feb Lent Discussion Group. 7pm @ Vicarage
Weds 28th Feb Lent Discussion Group. 7pm @ Vicarage
Fri 1st Mar World Day of Prayer at Adeyfield Free Church
Weds 6th Mar Lent Discussion Group. 7pm @ Vicarage
Sun 10th Mar Mothering Sunday
Weds 13th Mar Lent Discussion Group. 7pm @ Vicarage
Sun 17th Mar Messy Church
Weds 20th Mar Lent Discussion Group. 7pm @ Vicarage
Sun 24th Mar Palm Sunday
Fri 29th Mar Good Friday
Sun 31st Mar Easter Sunday
Mon 1st Apr Pilgrimage to St Albans Cathedral
Sun 21st Apr Messy Church

Rotas - Who's doing what when

	18 th February	25 th February
	9:30 Eucharist 3pm Messy Church	9.30 Eucharist
Music	Ian Hope	Recorded Music/Harry G-B
Warden	Sylvia Low	Dan Shirley
Sides duty		Sylvia Low
Welcomer	Colin Rivett	Joy West
Reading	Joy West	Dan Shirley
Intercessions	Dan Shirley	Fiona Shirley
Offertory	Shirley family	Rosemary & Peter Bladon
Chalice	Susan Rivett	Rosemary Bladon
2nd Counter	Colin Rivett	Fiona Shirley
Refreshments	Joy West & Ann Wiggins	Susan & Colin Rivett
Sunday School	No Sunday School	Laura G-B