

Welcome to St Mary's Apsley & St Benedict's Bennetts End



and welcome to our services today

23rd March, 2025
The Annunciation

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 & St B's

Today

9.00am NO Bellingring at St Mary's
10.30am Team Eucharist at Holy Trinity

Monday

9.15-10.45 Little Bears at St Benedict's
10.00 -12.00 Working Party at St Mary's
8.00pm Bellingring practice at St Mary's

Tuesday

9.30am Buzzy Bees at St Mary's
12.30-2.30pm St Mary's Foodbank & Community Café
7.30 – 9pm Lent Course Week 4
at St Benedict's Vicarage

Wednesday

9.30-11.30am Foodbank at St Benedict's

Thursday

9.30 - 3.30 St Mary's Church open for private prayer
9.30am Eucharist at St Mary's
10.00 – 12.00 St Mary's Foodbank & Community Café
10.15am Study Group in St Mary's Vestry
8pm Home Study Group

Friday

10.00 -12.00 Working Party in St Mary's Church & Churchyard.
10.30-11.45 Coffee Morning at St Mary's

Saturday

10.00 -12.00 Saturday Community Café at St Mary's
10.00 – 11.30 Lent Course Week 4 at St Mary's

Sunday 30th March – Mothering Sunday

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St Mary's
11.15am Parish Eucharist at St Benedict's



The Annunciation, the story of Gabriel's message to Mary—infused with doubt and belief, joy and sorrow, fear and comfort is a story sharing space with both devastation and hope, and this means it is a story for all of us, whoever we are and wherever we are in life.

The Annunciation seems almost forgotten today. But it's newness, that radical new beginning it brought about, was once felt more readily. Lady Day, exactly nine months before we celebrate the birth of Jesus, was once the beginning of the new year. Filled with promise and yet also that abruptness, that shock, that fright, the risk of new beginnings always brings. The Annunciation is a story ripe for both the rejoicings and the questions and uncertainties that life carries, and it's about opening up and receiving all of it.

This is Mary's story and at the same time the story of each of us, of any of us, met with the perfect love of God in the midst of our fear, our struggle, our poverty and weakness, our insecurity and doubt and hearing the words: 'The Lord is with you, do not be afraid'. And it is an opportunity for each of us to respond, to enter into that risk, that freedom, that openness; to say 'yes' to such a love. And this opportunity is gifted to us because the story is as much or more about God's opening up to us as Mary's opening up to God's plan and salvation. Mary opens up and receives God—among-us, Emmanuel, but God in Christ is also opening up and welcoming human life and experience. At the root of the Annunciation is the new, radical, earthy manifestation of 'The Lord is with you'. The God of the universe opens up entirely to us, entirely to the weakness and beauty of humanity—God in the womb, in the manger, who walks among our streets, holds little children, touches lepers, who dies in human flesh. There is no greater welcome, no wider openness, no fuller embrace, and no invitation more joyful than this.

Mary's 'yes' is the vessel through which God—among-us steps into our world and opens up to us as one of us. Our 'yes' today is not a claim to perfection or a statement of moral superiority any more than the days we can only bring ourselves to say, 'no, I just can't' mark us out as deficient or failures. The openness of God's love is unending, so that wherever we find ourselves we are welcomed and embraced. So whatever these strained circumstances and whatever insecurity they may cause, 'the Lord is with you, do not be afraid'.

Sunday's Collect and Readings (Year C)

The Collect

We beseech you, O Lord,
pour your grace into our hearts,
that as we have known the incarnation of your
Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel,
so by his cross and passion
we may be brought to the glory of his
resurrection;
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 Isaiah 7.10-14

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

A reading from Hebrews 10.4-10

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God"

(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).'

When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Hear the Gospel

According to Luke

1.26-38

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Thursday's Readings (Year C)

A reading from Jeremiah 7.23-28

But this command I gave them, 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you.' Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but, in the stubbornness of their evil will, they walked in their own counsels, and looked backwards rather than forwards. From the day that your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; yet they did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks. They did worse than their ancestors did.

So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. You shall say to them: This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their lips.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Psalms 95.1-2,6-end

- 1 O come, let us sing to the Lord; ♦
let us heartily rejoice in the rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving ♦
and be glad in him with psalms.
- 6 Come, let us worship and bow down ♦
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
- 7 For he is our God; ♦ we are the people of his
pasture and the sheep of his hand.
- 8 O that today you would listen to his voice: ♦
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
on that day at Massah in the wilderness,
- 9 'When your forebears tested me, and put me to
the proof, ♦ though they had seen my works.
- 10 'Forty years long I detested that generation and
said, ♦ "This people are wayward in their hearts;
they do not know my ways."
- 11 'So I swore in my wrath, ♦
"They shall not enter into my rest."

Hear the Gospel According to Luke 11.14-23

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

Now he was casting out a demon that was mute; when the demon had gone out, the one who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed. But some of them said, 'He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.' Others, to test him, kept demanding from him a sign from heaven. But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? —for you say that I cast out the demons by Beelzebul. Now if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his castle, his property is safe. But when one stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away his armour in which he trusted and divides his plunder. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Contact Information

Vicar: Mthr Alice Jolley ☎01442 615246

General Enquiries: Please contact the Benefice Office
Monday – Friday 8.30am – 12.00pm

Administrator/Benefice Office:

Sue Bassett ☎ 01923 266596 or 07503 950315 or
info@beneficeoflangelei.org.uk

Facebook: St Mary's Apsley End

Twitter: @StMarys1871

Churchwardens: Sylvia Low ☎ 07742 610932
SylviaLow@gmail.com

Harry Graham-Brown ☎ 07918 071542
Harry.GB63@gmail.com

Safeguarding: Katharine Harper ☎ 07881 602024
KatharineHarper23@gmail.com

Website/calendar: www.BeneficeofLangelei.org.uk/StMarys

Notices

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

Friday Coffee Morning 10.30 - 11.45am

Come join us on the second and fourth Fridays of the month in the refectory at St Mary's. This activity runs alongside the working party and is open to all. There will be the opportunity to chat, have a cuppa and biscuits, play simple games eg dominoes, discuss issues or whatever the group would like. Any questions, please ask Joy West

Preparation of a new electoral roll at St Mary's and St Benedict's

This year the Church of England requires all churches to prepare a new electoral roll. This means that everyone who wants to be on the electoral roll must once again fill in the application form. Forms will be available from 13th April and must be handed in by 25th April. The new roll will be displayed on the notice board on the 26th April. Please see Marina, a church warden or Alice if you have any questions.

Sponsorship for our organists



If you enjoy having the organ accompany our worship you can be a sponsor. You can mark a Birthday, Anniversary or a notable event or just because. Please contact one of the churchwardens – Harry G-B or Sylvia Low for more information.

Donate to St Mary's

Please support St Mary's by using this QR code to donate. Thank you.



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. St Benedict's foodbank is open Wednesdays 9.30-11.30. Donations of in date non-perishable, unopened food or household essentials are much appreciated eg LL Milk, Pasta Sauce, Tin Meat/Beans & Sausages or see needs list: either to the church or to Dunelm gratefully received.

Assistance at all foodbanks gratefully received. If you can help, do come and see us.

Welcome Boxes for Nascent House

Thank you to everyone who has donated items for the welcome boxes. We are currently in need of packets of sweets, toothbrushes, pocket tissues, bars of soap, nail brushes, notelets, pens and boxes with lids (171 -251). Please note items must not contain alcohol. If you would like further information about this scheme, please speak to Susan or Viv.

Dates for your diary

Tues 25 th Mar	Lent Course Week 4 at Vicarage
Fri 28 th Mar	Coffee Morning at St Mary's
Tues 1 st Apr	Lent Course Week 5 at Vicarage
Tues 8 th Apr	Lent Course Week 6 at Vicarage

Rotas - Who's doing what when		
	23 rd March	30 th March
	10.30 Team Eucharist Holy Trinity Leverstock Green	9.30 Parish Eucharist Mothering Sunday
Music		Mark Terry
Warden		Sylvia Low
Sides duty		Ann Wiggins
Welcomer		Angela Witts
Reader		Katharine Harper
Prayers/ Intercessions		Sue Jakeman
Offertory		Susan Rivett and Colin Rivett
Chalice/ 1 st Counter		Katharine Harper
2nd Counter		Viv Hagel
Refreshments		Susan Rivett and Colin Rivett
Sunday School		