



January 2026

Our verses for 2026

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17:22-23

Alpha

A poster for an Alpha Taster Evening. The top half features a landscape photograph of a person standing on a rocky peak in a mountainous area, with the word 'explore' in large white letters and 'life faith meaning' below it. A red Alpha logo is in the top right. The bottom half is a solid red background with the text 'Alpha' and a stylized arrow, followed by 'taster evening' in large black letters. Below this, it lists the event details: 'A chance to explore whether an Alpha course could be for you.', 'free meal', 'introduction', and 'discussion'. The date and time are 'Wednesday 14th January 2026 7pm-9pm*'. The location is 'Seaforth Hall, Cuckfield Lane, Warninglid, RH17 5UB'. A small note at the bottom left states: '*7 week course will begin on 28th January. Attending the taster session does not commit you to the rest of the course.' A white button at the bottom right contains the text 'For more info' and the email 'curate@westwealdparish.org.uk'.

Come along to the Alpha taster evening!

The Alpha course is an experience that unpacks the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. It's for anyone who's curious, no matter their beliefs or background. Explore life, faith and meaning.

We will be running Alpha in 2026, and there will be a taster evening from 7pm to 9pm on Wednesday 14th January, held at Seaforth Hall in Warninglid. Come along to explore whether an Alpha course could be for you, and enjoy a free meal too!

(Coming to the taster evening will not commit you to coming to the whole course.)

New Year

So, we have turned the page over into another new year - welcome to 2026!

I wonder what mix of feelings you find within you as step into January? Braced against the cold? Anxious in a world of uncertainty? Ready to get back to a more normal rhythm after Christmas? Determined to adopt some new habit? Exhausted before you even set out? Excited by the prospect of what the year might hold? Longing for a winter getaway to somewhere warm? Or something entirely different? No doubt for each of us there is a unique mix of things going on.

A new year, in lots of ways, is a random thing - the overnight from December 31 2025 to January 1 2026 is no different from any other overnight - but it can provide a moment of liminal space, a threshold that I can cross consciously, noticing in myself how I am. Noticing too perhaps what my desires are, my hopes, my prayers.

Wherever it is that we do find ourselves, the one sure thing is that we are not alone there. The truth of Christmas will journey with us into this new year - God has come into our world, God has taken on flesh. God knows what it's like to be human. God gets it. God walks alongside us in all the shades of our moods - the God who is attentive to our feelings, compassionate towards our sufferings, patient and gentle with us in our struggles. The God who can fill our hearts with the wind of his spirit when we are ready to fly, and sit silently present with us in our griefs and losses. This is the one who is with us - the Wonderful Counsellor, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, Mighty God. He isn't just for Christmas!

Perhaps I can leave you with a couple of reflective questions from the wonderful priest and spiritual writer, Henri Nouwen:

"Is there a quiet stream underneath the fluctuating affirmations and rejections of my little world?

Is there a still point where my life is anchored and from which I can reach out with hope and courage and confidence?"

It's worth searching for that quiet stream, that still point - we are bound to need it at some point in this year ahead.

Liz Cox

Churchwarden

Sunday Services in January

4 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
11 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
18 th	10am	All Saints	Parish-wide Worship with Communion
25 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	2.30pm	Woodgate Hub Café	Sundays at the Hub

Weekly services take place at our churches, and **everyone is welcome**.

Our current plans are as published here, 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 cannot attend in person. They can be found here:

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCBQ0W4r1m39ixogQWR3TxoA?fbclid=IwAR2vLqbms97Iq9StSwn8qvgX_vTF11-tg0LV7z80cVFC8BZE034WNbNHhc4

You can subscribe to the sermons as a podcast too. All links are on the website at <https://www.stmarysparish.org.uk/podcasts/>.

Other Events

January

2 nd	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
3 rd	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
6 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
7 th	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
9 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
9 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
10 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
14 th	7pm	Seaforth Hall, Warninglid	Alpha taster evening
16 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
16 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
17 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
19 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	PCC meeting
20 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
23 rd	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
23 rd	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
24 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
24 th	7pm	St Mary's	Slaugham Society event
30 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
30 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
31 st	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café

February

3 rd	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
4 th	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
6 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
6 th	8pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
7 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café

Locations for services and events

All Saints: Horsham Road, Handcross, RH17 6DF

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

St Mary's: Staplefield Road, Slaugham, RH17 6AG

Woodgate Hub: Grace Holland Avenue, Pease Pottage, RH11 9SL

Seaforth Hall: Cuckfield Lane, Warninglid, RH17 5UB

West Weald Schools Team

Please pray for Carl and the team as they undertake the vital work in our schools, as well as for the staff and pupils.

Regular assemblies are: Monday, 11am, Brantridge, and Tuesday, 9am, St Mark's Primary

Our local schools and headteachers are: Brantridge (Mr Dafydd Roberts), Handcross Park (Mr Jonnie Besley), Handcross Primary (Mrs Sharon Bondonno), St Mark's CofE Primary (Mrs Laura Kelsey) and Woodgate Primary (Mrs Sarah Neller).



west weald
Community Pantry

Free provisions
for the local community
(serving the residents of Handcross, Pease Pottage,
Slaughton, Staplefield & Warminglid)

Food Waste Reduction	Referrals	Donations
 Every weekend we partner with FareShare to help reduce food waste. Come along to the Saturday café to help yourself to a selection of fresh and frozen produce.	If you are in urgent need of food or provisions then we can help. Referrals can be made for you to receive regular essential items for a limited time. Referrals can be made by your GP (Ouse Valley Practice), a child's primary school, selected social & family support workers or the local churches.	If you would like to support the work of the West Weald Community Pantry then you can do so by making donations. Non-perishable items can be donated via the wheelie bins located throughout the parish or in any of our churches. Financial donations can be made via the churches. Please contact us for more information.

Free café open every Saturday 9:30am-11:30am
All Saints Church, Handcross

For more information please contact Barbara on
07853 228605
(Mon - Fri 9am - 4pm)

The **West Weald Community Pantry** continues strongly, as it has for the past six years.

The Saturday event is welcomed by so many people, and we call it our 'reducing food waste' event. Several stay for the free tea, coffee and biscuits, and it has become a lovely meeting place for people.

Why not come along and see for yourself?

Every week, Tesco at Broadbridge Heath donates its reduced produce, meat and bread products, as part of the FareShare scheme. We have now carried out 539 collections from Tesco, which is the equivalent of 48,768kg of food saved, as well as the saving of 140,541kg of CO₂!

On Wednesday mornings, we open a foodbank. From the very generous Harvest Thanksgiving donations from schools and churches, as well as those from the Warminglid monthly coffee mornings, we are able to help families and adults who are struggling due to the high cost of living increases and unemployment.

We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has been involved in collecting food, sorting food, helping run the café, chatting to those who come on Saturdays, and generally spreading the message about what we are doing!

We work with schools and the GP surgery to offer a targeted service to those in most need of food, and we have helped several people in this way. Thank you to everyone who has donated food or money, or who has helped with this aspect of the Pantry.

The Pantry is a key ministry for our church, and we are seeing God at work in many ways!

We would like to increase our team of helpers so if you would like to join in and can spare an hour on a Friday evening to help with food collections, time on a Saturday morning to help in the café and chat to those attending, or an hour on Wednesday mornings to help with our targeted service, please talk to Barbara, Phil or the church office, and find out how you can become part of this amazing team!

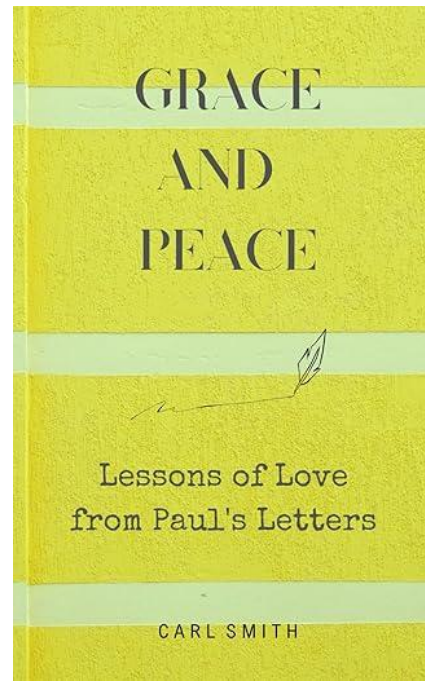
A good read

Grace and Peace: Lessons of Love from Paul's letters

This new book, written by our rector, Rev'd Carl Smith, is out now and available from Amazon.

Paul knew how to encourage people when he wrote to or about them. In this book, Carl looks at some of the times that Paul did this well and explores how we can learn how to write to and speak of others with love and encouragement by using Paul's example.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Grace-Peace-Letters-Love-Pauls/dp/B0G5GZ1JYF/ref=sr_1_1?crid=ISIBHBT1RSOQ&dib=eyJ2IjoiaMSJ9.LxBLpJsk3Lz_tQGOhTXn7A4yGtX9dkrmnGmDWWhSrVMwS1mXcPKmF9vIX7jombAuA5sCDiJ4KPLqWC8tUfmAeJAK1zQzo_VL2W_SgFulrIWS5bZb5VZxrSuvFF1xL1oMptshcT3m5zp5N3ZHvtPSwmQtVSN0iMSCO2_udUFBnpEgbAUgN1EOLbzKAACMYp2yhu15eGz7gdza8St5xTwGWChFwaOXOCeYPJzviqLIM0lw.Vlm0x6Ne_6UoHthJArYPS-Kvux6sneU_KrQXL4OabkY&dib_tag=se&keywords=Grace+and+Peace&qid=1765446698&srefix=grace+and+peace%2Caps%2C301&sr=8-1



Becoming West Weald: Stories and Lessons from the Birth of Parish Vision

This book, written by some members of our church family, is available on Amazon. In 2023, a former United Benefice of two parishes in Mid Sussex united to form one parish. This reflection recounts what led to that unity, the vision that has emerged, and what God has been doing as a result of it, featuring stories of lives changed and lessons learned, as those in and leading the churches discovered a fresh way of being and doing church. [Becoming West Weald: Stories and Lessons from the Birth of Parish Vision: Amazon.co.uk: Smith, Carl, Grose, Rick, Arnold, Helen, Frith, Becky, Pickering, Carol, Smith, Lindsay: 9798312414998: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Becoming-West-Weald-Stories-Lessons-from-the-Birth-of-Parish-Vision/dp/B0C8J8J8J8/ref=sr_1_1?crid=ISIBHBT1RSOQ&dib=eyJ2IjoiaMSJ9.LxBLpJsk3Lz_tQGOhTXn7A4yGtX9dkrmnGmDWWhSrVMwS1mXcPKmF9vIX7jombAuA5sCDiJ4KPLqWC8tUfmAeJAK1zQzo_VL2W_SgFulrIWS5bZb5VZxrSuvFF1xL1oMptshcT3m5zp5N3ZHvtPSwmQtVSN0iMSCO2_udUFBnpEgbAUgN1EOLbzKAACMYp2yhu15eGz7gdza8St5xTwGWChFwaOXOCeYPJzviqLIM0lw.Vlm0x6Ne_6UoHthJArYPS-Kvux6sneU_KrQXL4OabkY&dib_tag=se&keywords=Becoming+West+Weald+Stories+and+Lessons+from+the+Birth+of+Parish+Vision&qid=1765446698&srefix=Becoming+West+Weald+Stories+and+Lessons+from+the+Birth+of+Parish+Vision&sr=8-1)

Regular Notices

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility!

If you are worried or you are worried about the wellbeing of a child or vulnerable person, please contact us.

- Our Parish Safeguarding Officer: Helen Arnold
- Contact: safeguarding@westwealdparish.org.uk

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child ring Police on 999.

Safeguarding information is in all our churches and on the website.

Hardship Fund

Financial support is available from the Hardship Fund if you or someone you know (living in the parish) is in need. Forms can be collected from the hardware shop. If you cannot go out, please email Carl (rector@westwealdparish.org.uk) and he will send a form electronically.

Gift Aid

Claiming Gift Aid on donations to our churches provides an important contribution to our income. If you are eligible under Gift Aid rules, please let our treasurer Jane Moss (treasurer@westwealdparish.org.uk) know. Regular giving is most efficient via the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), so please consider using that if you do not so do already. Please speak to Jane or Fae to know more.

Parking at St Mary's

If you park in the car park for a Sunday morning service and are blocking in another car, please put a note in your car window to say who you are and that you are in church. This will make it easier to identify who needs to move if anyone's car is trapped. Thank you.

Handcross Rosemary Club

The club warmly welcomes new members. Everyone is welcome but we particularly look out for isolated, vulnerable and older people in Handcross and the surrounding villages. We meet on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month in Handcross, and most months we have an entertainer for about 45 minutes followed by home-made afternoon tea. At Christmas we have full Christmas Lunch in the hall, our AGM in February has fish and chips as well, and we aim to go on an outing during the year. Visitors are always welcome. Membership is only £15 for the year! For more information, please contact the Chairman, Mrs Helen Arnold, at mrshelenarnold@gmail.com or on 07540 816170.

Notice sheet distribution

If you do not already receive the notice sheet and other notices by email and you would like to do so, please email Fae at churchoffice@westwealdparish.org.uk.

Regular Giving

Recently, the current account of the parish has been running close to its limit, and the PCC has needed to make the difficult decision to call upon some of our reserves to ensure that we are able to cover our costs. The monthly costs of the Diocesan Parish Share, along with paying our staff and the costs of heating and lighting our three buildings, and our desire to be generous through missional giving, are not being matched by the amount coming in through regular giving.

As a charity, 100% of our costs rely on the generosity of those who are in a position to give. At this critical time, we would like to ask of those who worship regularly with us:

- if you currently give on a regular basis, could you possibly consider raising your regular giving? If all who are currently give regularly were to raise their giving by just £10 per month, it would have a significant impact on our ability to be able to cover these costs.
- if you are part of West Weald Parish and are not yet signed up to regular giving through the Parish Giving Scheme, could you prayerfully consider signing up using the link below?

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/slaugham-haywards-heath/>

(This page says 'Slaugham' because it was set up a while ago, but it is for the whole parish.)

You can also use the link to make a one-off donation of any amount.

If you are a UK tax payer, please remember to select the Gift Aid option, to enable us to claim the tax from your donations. And if you give by other means (cash or bank transfer), please ensure you have filled in our Gift Aid form, so that we can claim the tax back on all previous and current donations.

We believe and trust in a God who provides, but we also acknowledge that financial giving is a part of our discipleship, and if you are in a position to be able to increase your support of the mission and ministry of West Weald, we would be very grateful.

Many thanks. Grace and peace,

Carl

 **Thank you**

**Please
give what
you can**

Scan to make a
one off donation or
to sign up for
regular giving



www.westwealdparish.org.uk

CONTACT

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Facebook: [West Weald Parish | Facebook](#)



All details are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change.