



*March 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

## The invitation of Lent

The other day, we realised that one of our fish was getting a bit too large for the fish tank we had, so we decided to move up to a larger tank size. Long story short – it didn't go well. Anyone who has dealt with tropical fish before would be able to tell you that moving fish from one environment to another is fraught with risk – just the slightest difference in temperature or chemical imbalance can cause problems.

As is often the case, when things went wrong I turned to YouTube. I found the answers I was looking for, but I discovered that the answers came from two main sources – places that sold fish or individuals who are obsessed by fish! One of the latter that I found was a self-confessed fish addict, and his home was full of fish tanks of every shape and size.

I realised in watching his videos how easy it is for something that starts as a hobby to become an obsession – sometimes quickly, but more often over a period of time, when you don't recognise it is happening until something gives you some perspective, and then you realise that this thing is what you are always thinking about and spending your time and money on. There's a famous saying that goes: if you want to know what someone loves most, look at their bank balance. For this particular individual, his obsession with fish would have been undeniable.

In Lent, we have the opportunity to reflect on the habits and hobbies in our lives that have become, or are in danger of becoming, obsessions. Things that can distract us from the more important things in life, such as our relationships. But even those good things can become obsessions that distract us away from the most important relationship of all – our relationship with God.

In this season of Lent, I have been asking God not only what habits do I need to lay down but also what habits and hobbies could I take up that could potentially lead to me becoming more obsessed (in the healthiest way) about Jesus. What would help me to spend more of my time thinking about Him, working for Him, spending my money on the Kingdom of God – so that even my bank account can show how much I love Jesus.

This season of Lent, which is an invitation more than anything else, works so much better when we ask God about these things. When we allow Him to show us the things that are in danger of becoming obsessions – not so that He will condemn us, but so that He can invite us to remove those things that are a distraction, and then take up the things that will lead us to be more in love with Him.

*Rev'd Carl (Rector of West Weald Parish)*

## Sunday Services in March

1 <sup>st</sup>	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
8 <sup>th</sup>	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
15 <sup>th</sup>	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
22 <sup>nd</sup>	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
29 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's	Parish-wide Worship

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=IwAR2vLqbms97lq9StSwn8qvgX\\_vTF11-tg0LV7z80cVFC8BZE034WNbNHhc4](https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCBQ0W4r1m39ixogQWR3TxoA?fbclid=IwAR2vLqbms97lq9StSwn8qvgX_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

### March

3 <sup>rd</sup>	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
3 <sup>rd</sup>	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
4 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
6 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
7 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
7 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	St Mary's	Rehearsal
8 <sup>th</sup>	3pm	St Mary's	Charity concert
11 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
11 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	St Mary's	Slaugham Society meeting
13 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
14 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
16 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	St Mary's	PCC meeting
17 <sup>th</sup>	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
18 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's	Lent retreat space
18 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	Seaforth Hall	Alpha
20 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
21 <sup>st</sup>	6.30pm	All Saints	Quiz night
27 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
27 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bell ringing practice
28 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
31 <sup>st</sup>	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club

### April

3 <sup>rd</sup>	10am	Handcross	Walk of Witness
4 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
7 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
11 <sup>th</sup>	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



### Dates to note

18/2 Ash Wednesday

15/3 Mothering Sunday

29/3 Palm Sunday

3/4 Good Friday

5/4 Easter Sunday

30/4 West Weald Parish APCM

5-7/6 Parish weekend

8/11 Remembrance Sunday



**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 cafe 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 wheelex 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 cafe 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 CO<sub>2</sub>!

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!

# 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).

## Books

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

This 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=eyJ2ljoimSJ9.lxBLpJsk3Lz\\_tQGOhTXn7A4yGtX9dkrmnGmDWhSrVMwS1mXcPKmF9vIX7jomBAuA5sCDiJ4KPLqwC8tUfmAeJAK1zQzo\\_VL2W\\_SgFuIrIWS5bZb5VZxrSuvFF1xL1oMptshtC3m5zp5N3ZHvtPSwmQtVSN0iMSCO2\\_udUFBnpEgbAUgN1EOLbzKAAcMYp2yhu15eGz7gdza8St5xTwGWChFwaOXOCeYPJzvjgLIM0lw.Vlm0x6Ne\\_6UoHthJARYPs-Kvux6sneU\\_KrQXL4OabkY&dib\\_tag=se&keywords=Grace+and+Peace&qid=1765446698&srefix=grace+and+peace%2Caps%2C301&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Grace-Peace-Letters-Love-Pauls/dp/B0G5GZ1JYF/ref=sr_1_1?crid=ISIBHBT1RSOQ&dib=eyJ2ljoimSJ9.lxBLpJsk3Lz_tQGOhTXn7A4yGtX9dkrmnGmDWhSrVMwS1mXcPKmF9vIX7jomBAuA5sCDiJ4KPLqwC8tUfmAeJAK1zQzo_VL2W_SgFuIrIWS5bZb5VZxrSuvFF1xL1oMptshtC3m5zp5N3ZHvtPSwmQtVSN0iMSCO2_udUFBnpEgbAUgN1EOLbzKAAcMYp2yhu15eGz7gdza8St5xTwGWChFwaOXOCeYPJzvjgLIM0lw.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***

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.

This book, written by some members of our church family, is available on Amazon.

[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-and-Lessons-from-the-Birth-of-Parish-Vision/dp/B0C8Y8Y8Y8/ref=sr_1_1?crid=ISIBHBT1RSOQ&dib=eyJ2ljoimSJ9.lxBLpJsk3Lz_tQGOhTXn7A4yGtX9dkrmnGmDWhSrVMwS1mXcPKmF9vIX7jomBAuA5sCDiJ4KPLqwC8tUfmAeJAK1zQzo_VL2W_SgFuIrIWS5bZb5VZxrSuvFF1xL1oMptshtC3m5zp5N3ZHvtPSwmQtVSN0iMSCO2_udUFBnpEgbAUgN1EOLbzKAAcMYp2yhu15eGz7gdza8St5xTwGWChFwaOXOCeYPJzvjgLIM0lw.Vlm0x6Ne_6UoHthJARYPs-Kvux6sneU_KrQXL4OabkY&dib_tag=se&keywords=Becoming+West+Weald+Stories+and+Lessons+from+the+Birth+of+Parish+Vision&qid=1765446698&srefix=grace+and+peace%2Caps%2C301&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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:churchoffice@westwealdparish.org.uk).

## CONTACT

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**Phil Hawksley**

Lay Apostolic Leader, All Saints

philhawksley@westwealdparish.org.uk

**Fae Widdowson**

Parish Administrator

01444 400221 churchoffice@westwealdparish.org.uk

Office hours: 9am-12pm Monday & Thursday  
(term time only)

**Helen Arnold**

Safeguarding Officer

07540 816170 safeguarding@westwealdparish.org.uk

**Churchwardens**

St Mark's

St Mary's

Helen Arnold

Liz Cox

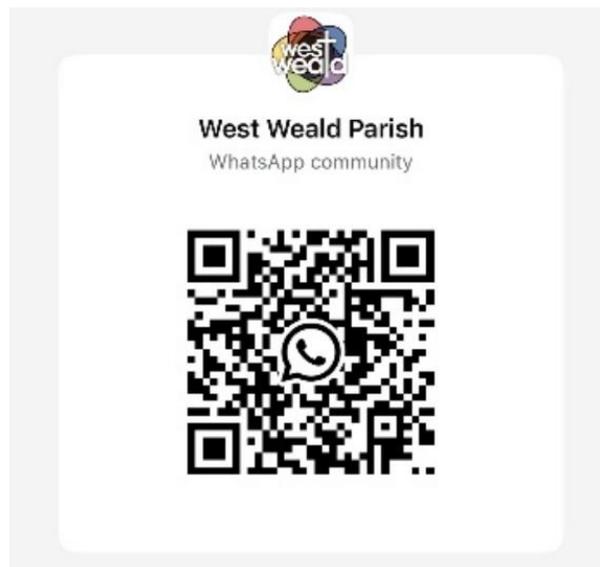
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Facebook: [West Weald Parish | Facebook](#)

WhatsApp:





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[www.westwealdparish.org.uk](http://www.westwealdparish.org.uk)



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