



May 2026

You are the Salt

I'm cheating for my contribution to the newsletter this month - I'm stealing some words from my recent sermon. So if you think they sound familiar, then you were listening on Sunday!

The subject was salt and light, and I learnt a few things in my preparation.

According to a *New York Times* bestselling book on the history of salt, "from the beginning of civilisation until about 100 years ago, salt was one of the most sought-after commodities in human history".

In the days of Jesus, salt was so valuable that Roman soldiers were sometimes paid with special salt rations. That is where our word "salary" actually comes from. It's also why, when someone is not doing their job, we sometimes say "they are not worth their salt".

So when Jesus, in the sermon on the mount, looked out across the crowds and said to them, "you are the salt of the world," it had a different ring to their ears than it might to us today. Salt wasn't one of the cheapest things that you could pick up from the local supermarket. It was highly valuable and extremely useful. Jesus was presenting his listeners with a vision of their significance. He is shaping their understanding of themselves, imbuing them with dignity, worth and purpose. He saw them as agents in the new Kingdom that he had come to establish.

The poet Jan Richardson writes, "Jesus's words are meant to waken us, to remind us of what we carry in our bones, the living presence of God, who bids us to be salt in his world in all our savoury particularity, to be light in the way only we can blaze."

I think that not uncommonly when we think of Jesus's declaration that we are the salt of the world, we tend to focus on how poorly we do at making a difference. But I would like to invite you to pause for a little moment and think back over your life for the last week and call to mind all the various ways that you have been salt in your world - by the way you gave someone time, in your faithfulness at work, by bearing with someone who is difficult, by expressing appreciation for something, through some creative act which brings forth beauty, by volunteering, in your praying, by an act of kindness, in your generosity, through words of encouragement... Any of these things may seem small in themselves, but as Mother Teresa once said, "We can't all do great things, but we can do small things with great love." Thank you for being who you are - the salt of the world!

Liz Cox (Churchwarden, West Weald Parish)

Sunday Services in May

3 rd	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
10 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
	4pm	St Mark's	Choral Evensong
17 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
24 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
31 st	10am	Handcross Recreation Ground	Parish Worship Service

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

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

May

1 st	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
2 nd	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
5 th	10am	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
5 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
5 th	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
6 th	7pm	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
8 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
9 th	12.30pm	All Saints	Wedding
12 th	10am	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
13 th	2.30pm	St Mary's	Exploring Prayer
13 th	7pm	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
15 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
16 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
16 th	1.30pm	St Mark's	Wedding
16 th	7pm	St Mary's	Jazz charity concert
18 th	8pm	St Mary's	PCC meeting
19 th	10am	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
19 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
20 th	7pm	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
22 nd	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
23 rd	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
27 th	2.30pm	St Mary's	Exploring Prayer
29 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bellringing practice
30 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café

Please note that there will be no Community Pantry and Café on 9th May.

June

2 nd	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
5 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
6 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
6 th	3.30pm	St Mark's	Baptism
9 th	10am	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
10 th	7pm	All Saints	A Walk through the New Testament
12 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
13 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

Dates to note

30/4 West Weald Parish APCM

27/9 Harvest

5-7/6 Parish weekend

8/11 Remembrance Sunday

27/6 Retreat Space

A Walk through the New Testament



A Walk through the New Testament

10 Sessions walking you through the storyline of the New Testament

**Tuesday morning
10.00-11.30
or
Wednesday
evening 7.00-8.30**

**Starting
28th/29th April
for 10 sessions
at All Saints
Handcross**

west world

**allsaints
HANDCROSS**

Contact Phil for more information - 07880844766



A Walk through the New Testament

10 Sessions walking you through the storyline of the New Testament

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HANDCROSS**

Course Dates

**Tuesday 10-11.30am or Wednesday 7.00-8.30pm
All Saints Church Handcross**

Week 1 - April 28/29	Intro & Arrival
Week 2 - May 5/6	Jesus Ministry 1
Week 3 - May 12/13	Jesus Ministry 2
Week 4 - May 19/20	Jesus Passion
Week 5 - June 9/10	New Church
Week 6 - June 16/17	Expansion 1
Week 7 - June 23/24	Expansion 2
Week 8 - June 30/July 1	Paul's Letters
Week 9 - July 7/8	Other Letters
Week 10 - July 14/15	Review

Contact Phil for more information - 07880844766

Retreat Space

Our regular retreat spaces give an opportunity to give time to God, to be still, to listen, to hear what God might want to say to us.

The next retreat space will be on Saturday 27th June at St Mary's from 10am to 12 noon. For more details please contact Philip Robinson at harradine8@yahoo.co.uk.

Exploring Prayer

This prayer group explores different ways of deepening our relationship with God in prayer. We will be using well trusted ways of praying that have been used in the church for centuries - Lectio Divina, contemplative gospel meditation and the Examen.

Dates for the next six sessions are: 29 April, 13 May, 27 May, 1 July, 15 July, 22 July.

Time: 2.30pm to 4pm at St Mary's.

Everyone is welcome to come to any or all of the sessions.

For more information, contact Liz Cox (lizcox1@gmail.com) or Gina Howard (ginajobscastle@gmail.com).

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

Charity Concert



A CONCERT/DANCE IN AID OF St. Catherine's Hospice

Spring into the Rhythm

Saturday 16th May
7.00 - 9.30pm
At St Mary's Church, Slaugham

An evening of swing and jazz
featuring the
Perdido Players Big Band
Refreshments available
£5 entry, tickets on the door

Handcross Rosemary Club

The Handcross Rosemary Club has been bringing together the people of Handcross and its surrounding villages for 64 years. It's an informal chance to meet, chat and enjoy a variety of entertainments and talks, with a homemade afternoon tea!

We meet every third Wednesday of each month at 2.30-4.00 in the Parish Hall, Handcross. Yearly membership is just £15 , with £2 on the door at each meeting which includes tea, sandwiches and cake. As well as the monthly entertainment, we have occasional outings, a fish-and-chip treat during our AGM, and a much-anticipated Christmas Lunch.

The goal of the Rosemary Club is to keep our community connected, especially those who are less physically able or isolated. Chat, laughter and listening are powerful and welcome tonics in this increasingly complicated world.

Please come along to any of our meetings to see if you would like to become a member. We would love you to join our welcoming group.

For more information please contact our Chairman Karen Baker at klb2755@gmail.com or on 07747 741684.



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 CO₂!

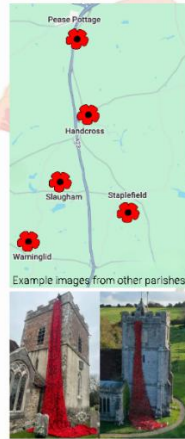
On Wednesday mornings, we open a foodbank. From the very generous Harvest Thanksgiving donations from schools and churches, as well as those from the Warminglid monthly coffee mornings, we are able to help families and adults who are struggling due to the high cost of living increases and unemployment.

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!



There are groups gathering in all five villages in the parish, details on the next page.

All red wool is provided but we are taking donations of black wool or buttons - please get in touch if you would like to get involved, either to join from home, join a group or donate to the project:
curate@westwealdparish.org.uk



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.

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.

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.

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.

 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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Curate, West Weald Parish

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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

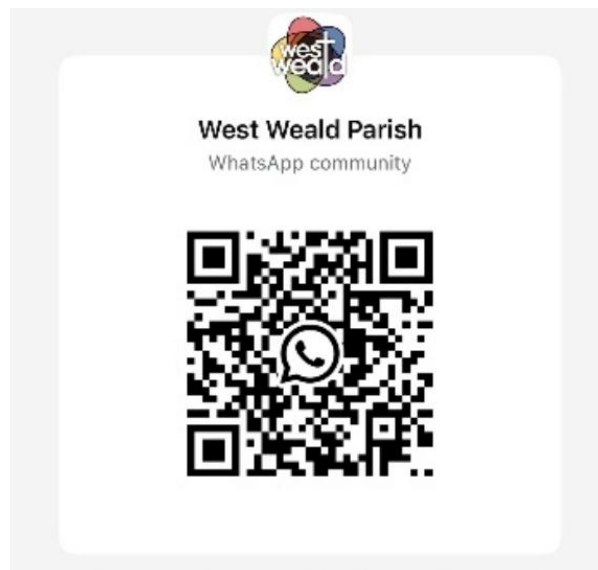
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Facebook: [West Weald Parish | Facebook](#)

WhatsApp:



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