



August & September 2026

Preparing for a Sabbatical

Having never had one before, I found preparing for a sabbatical to be an interesting and faith-raising process. For those who may not know, a sabbatical is a period of extended paid leave that clergy are entitled to take every 10 years, in order to have a rest from the pressures and challenges of ministry, running church buildings and caring for people. It is an opportunity to study, to rest, to have new experiences, but most importantly to deepen one's relationship with God and focus on developing healthy spiritual practices that can continue as ministry begins again. It's a season for renewal and envisioning and sabbath rest.

But before a sabbatical can happen, there are lots of things that need careful attention and planning. From the running of regular services, to schools work, to pastoral care - the parish needs to be able to run as it normally would. I am a firm believer that the role of a church leader is to make themselves redundant - that means that my role as Rector of West Weald is to see people released into their calling and ministries, and using their God-given gifts and skills to bless those around them, to create a culture in which not everything relies on the vicar. And I love seeing people find joy in serving God! A sabbatical is a great opportunity to see how we are doing with that vision.

"Sabbath rest is God's gift to us to remind us that the world does not depend on us" 😊. And it has been so encouraging to see how easy it has been to cover things with the amazing teams of people that we have in our churches to preach, lead services, support our schools and care for those in our community!

But as well as preparing the church, I also need to prepare myself. Ensuring I have healthy boundaries, that I make good use of the time, and plan for the rest that I need but also the opportunities to deepen my faith in the God that I love and serve. Any church leader can only give what they themselves have received - so the more I am able to strengthen and deepen my relationship with Jesus, the better equipped I am to help others do the same. Or as one saying goes, "occasionally being selfish with God enables us to be selfless for longer" as he fills us to overflowing with his life-giving Spirit, and as he did for Abraham, to "bless us so that we can be a blessing to others".

I know that this sabbatical is a privilege and a gift, and it is not one that I take for granted or lightly. I want to ensure that this time is valued and valuable. And that, for the church, it's not a time where people are counting down the days until the vicar comes back, but rather that in this time they too are going deeper and further with God and seeing God continue to do amazing things.

It's a time for us all to remember who our true leader is and to fix our eyes on Jesus - the author and perfecter of our faith!

Grace and Peace, *Rev'd Carl Smith, Rector of West Weald*

Sunday Services in August

2 nd	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	6.30pm	All Saints	Informal Worship
9 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
16 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
23 rd	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
30 th	10am	All Saints	United Parish Common Worship with Communion

Sunday Services in September

6 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
	5pm	All Saints	Barbecue & Informal Worship
13 th	9am	St Mark's	Morning Prayer
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship with Communion
20 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship with Communion
	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship with Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	Morning Worship
27 th	10am	All Saints	Morning Worship
	10am	St Mark's	United Harvest Service
	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=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

August

1 st	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
1 st	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
4 th	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
5 th	10.30am	Handcross	
		Hardware Shop	Poppy Project group meeting
5 th	3pm	St Mary's	Wedding
8 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
8 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
11 th	1pm	All Saints	Crochet & Handicraft Club
12 th	12.30pm	Joco,	
		Pease Pottage	Poppy Project group meeting
12 th	1.30pm	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
14 th	10am	Seaforth Hall,	
		Warninglid	Poppy Project group meeting
15 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
15 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
19 th	10.30am	Handcross	
		Hardware Shop	Poppy Project group meeting
22 nd	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
22 nd	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
26 th	12.30pm	Joco,	
		Pease Pottage	Poppy Project group meeting
26 th	1.30pm	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
26 th	7pm	Half Moon,	
		Warninglid	Poppy Project group meeting
28 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bellringing practice
29 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
29 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
29 th	1pm	St Mark's	Wedding

September

1 st	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
2 nd	10.30am	Handcross	
		Hardware Shop	Poppy Project group meeting
4 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
5 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
5 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
5 th	2pm	St Mark's	Baptism
8 th	9.30am	St Mark's	Poppy Project group meeting
8 th	10.30am	St Mary's	Peal to commemorate Ernie Arnold
9 th	12.30pm	Joco,	
		Pease Pottage	Poppy Project group meeting
9 th	1.30pm	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
11 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
11 th	10am	Seaforth Hall,	
		Warninglid	Poppy Project group meeting
12 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
12 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
15 th	9.30am	St Mark's	Poppy Project group meeting
16 th	10.30am	Handcross	
		Hardware Shop	Poppy Project group meeting
18 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
19 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
19 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
21 st	7.30pm	St Mary's	PCC meeting
22 nd	9.30am	St Mark's	Poppy Project group meeting
23 rd	12.30pm	Joco,	
		Pease Pottage	Poppy Project group meeting
23 rd	1.30pm	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
23 rd	7pm	Half Moon,	
		Warninglid	Poppy Project group meeting
25 th	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
25 th	10am	St Mary's	Poppy Project group meeting
25 th	7.30pm	St Mary's	Bellringing practice
26 th	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
26 th	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
29 th	9.30am	St Mark's	Poppy Project group meeting

October

2 nd	10am	St Mary's	Creative Expressions art group
3 rd	9.30am	All Saints	Community Pantry & Café
3 rd	10am	All Saints	Poppy Project group meeting
6 th	9.30am	St Mark's	Poppy Project group meeting
6 th	7pm	All Saints	Prayer gathering
7 th	10.30am	Handcross	
		Hardware Shop	Poppy Project group meeting

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

More dates to note

8/11 Remembrance Sunday

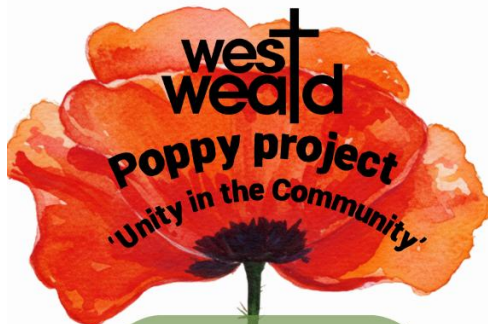
20/12 St Mary's Carol Service

13/12 St Mark's Carol Service

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



You're invited to join our poppy project creating a five-stranded waterfall of crocheted and knitted poppies on the tower of St Mary's, Slaugham! We are looking for people to sew, crochet and knit!

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:
**poppies@westwealdparish.org.uk or
call: 07746015594**



Meeting dates:

Pease Pottage

2nd and 4th Weds 12.30 at Joco

Handcross

1st and 3rd Weds of the month
10.30am at the Hardware Store
2nd and 4th Tues of the month
1.30pm at All Saints
Every Sat 10am-12 at All Saints

Slaugham

4th Friday 10am at St Mary's

Staplefield

Every Tues 9.30am at St Mark's

Warninglid

2nd Friday 10am at Seaforth Hall
4th Weds 7-9pm at the Half Moon



west weald
Community Pantry

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

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 wheellie 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 Warninglid 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).

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.

Regular Notices

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility!

If 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.

Contact

During September, October and November, Carl will be on sabbatical, so please contact the churchwardens instead.

Rev'd Carl Smith

Rector, West Weald Parish

01444 400221

rector@westwealdparish.org.uk

Rev'd Monique Mendes da Costa

Curate, West Weald Parish – on maternity leave from mid-September

curate@westwealdparish.org.uk

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

Helen Arnold

mrsheleenarnold@gmail.com

St Mary's

Liz Cox

lizcox1@gmail.com

Website: www.westwealdparish.org.uk

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

WhatsApp:



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