



Registered Charity Number: 1134149

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

**SUNDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025**  
**LENT 2**

***All the people confirmed last Sunday, including John, Richard and Natalie from our congregation. Congratulations!***



# DIARY

## **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March LENT 2**

- 9.30am Morning Prayer at Langley Vale Village Hall
- 10.00am Holy Communion at St Martin's
- 4.00pm Lent Group in the Headley Room
- 6.30pm Choral Evensong at St Martin's

## **Tuesday 18th March**

**4.00pm Centering Prayer (tea and biscuits from 3.45pm)  
‘Be still and know that I am God’**

### **Psalm 46:10**

A small group of us meet every other Tuesday at 4pm, at the back of church, to pray together in silence.

If you would enjoy some time for silent prayer with others, please come along.

We begin with something to reflect on - perhaps a biblical passage or Psalm. After our 20 minutes of silence, we might share something that we have noticed during our time together.

Do Join Us - all are welcome.

Any questions please ask Lynne Scholefield

## **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March**

**10.00am Holy Communion**

## **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March LENT 3**

- 9.30am Holy Communion at Langley Vale Village Hall
- 10.00am Holy Communion at St Martin's
- 4.00pm Lent Group in the Headley Room
- 6.30pm Evening Prayer at St Martin's

## **St Stephen's Update**

The first part of the works have been completed with the removal of the existing rotten Gable End Wall. Unfortunately, during this work it was discovered that the window frames, when originally fitted, were potentially contributing to the rot within the frame, as any rainwater would have flowed through the uPVC framework into the wooden frame. Consequently, we have had to seek the professional advice of our architect, structural engineer and builder to advise us on the best design of the new framework to ensure that the wall is weatherproof for many years to come. We are still waiting for the final quotes to come back to us but have been advised that the costs are likely to be a lot higher than the original quotes and we are expecting the project to cost in the region of £100,000 to complete.

The PCC has to apply for grant funding to pay for these works as we don't have enough in our reserves to cover the costs, and will be discussing how we move forward, and what options we have, next week. We can then talk with the congregation and community accordingly. Meanwhile, do keep looking for updates to the project via the Church Newsletter and the St Stephen's Facebook Page. In the meantime, if you have further questions, please do email [rob@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:rob@stmartinsepsom.org).

Rob Jeffery, Chair of Fabric

**TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH      \*UPDATED INFO\***

**7.30pm    A special service to mark the international day of remembrance for victims of slavery.**

**Bishop Christopher Herbert, visiting Professor of Christian Ethics at the University of Surrey\***, will be preaching at this important service for St Martin's. We are in the process of commissioning a memorial to the enslaved of Barbados and elsewhere, partly in recognition that we have memorials to people who were slave owners and partly in recognition of the gospel imperative of freedom in Christ. The service will give us the chance to acknowledge the injustices of the past and re-commit ourselves to the cause of justice in the present. **Please support this service as we join with churches in many countries marking this important day.**



- *Bishop Christopher replaces Bishop Paul, who has had to postpone his visit to us*

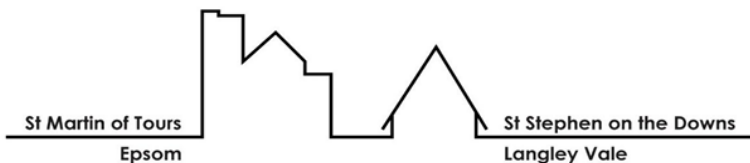
**Music @ St Martin's – Saturday 12 April 4.30pm**

Nigel Blomiley – cello

Viv Mclean – piano

Cello sonatas by Beethoven & Brahms

The next concert in our series features the exceptional talents of cellist Nigel Blomiley and pianist Viv Mclean. The duo performs works by two of the 'greats' of the classical era - Beethoven's Sonata No.3 in A major, and Brahms' Sonata No.1 in E minor. The music is both beautiful and profound, so if you wanted to be lifted out of the ordinary for an hour or so, come along! Free admission – donations welcomed from those who can.



# St Martin's Lent Reflection

## 'All Welcome'

This Lent, the focus of our study is *'how can we be a Church where everyone feels welcome, and that they belong?'* The theme will be explored in our preaching and in a Sunday afternoon study group. What unites us? What divides us? What issues may make it harder for someone to feel they belong in this worshipping community? The 6 week course will give you the chance to share your insights and experience, as well as looking at Bible material, Christian beliefs and Church teaching. The course uses resources from the 'Inclusive Church' movement and elsewhere.

Meeting In the **Headley Room in Church House from 4-6 pm**  
(with refreshments).

Led by Dr Lynne Scholefield, Dr John Padwick and  
Revd Judith Mitchell.

Sunday 9 March	Introduction. Gender.
Sunday 16 March	Wealth & Poverty
Sunday 23 March	Disabilities & Differently Gifted
Sunday 30 March	Sexuality
Sunday 6 April	Ethnicity
Sunday 13 April	Mental Health. Final Reflections

## **Cosmic Insignificance Therapy**

1— A Lent Reflection by Nina Schuurman-Drenth

Author Oliver Burkeman, in his book *Four Thousand Weeks*, writes about what he calls Cosmic Insignificance Therapy. “Cosmic insignificance therapy is an invitation to face the truth about your irrelevance in the grand scheme of things,” writes Burkeman. “To embrace it, to whatever extent you can. Truly doing justice to the astonishing gift of a few thousand weeks isn’t a matter of resolving to “do something remarkable” with them. In fact, it entails precisely the opposite: refusing to hold them to an abstract and over-demanding standard of remarkableness, against which they can only ever be found wanting, and taking them instead on their own terms, dropping back down from godlike fantasies of cosmic significance into the experience of life as it concretely, finitely— and often enough, marvellously— really is.

When Lent arrived, you went to church to have ashes smeared on your forehead, and you were told that you are dust, and to dust you will return. And you walked back to your seat feeling small, and that’s because you are. This person you are now, a few pounds heavier than you wish you were, a bit more snappy to your partner than you intend to be, and much more tragically finite than you like to believe, is all you are. This life is all you have.

The Lenten impartation is not a reminder to hustle harder to be someone grander and finer and more put together. It is a reminder to love the only life you have. Love the bike rides and the compost piles and the moments of rest where you get to —

thank God — waste a few minutes going down an internet rabbit hole because the only way to waste this life you've been given is to resent it.

Many Christians use this season of Lent as a time of fasting. Historically, and still now in many Christian traditions, it means giving up meat and a few other food items and eating very simply for the forty days leading up to Easter. Other people give up social media, chocolate, coffee or any number of things they find to be a vice. This is something I like to do most years, and one year I decided I wanted to give up sugar. So I marked Ash Wednesday in my calendar and avoided sugar. The first few days were okay; I could feel the absence of my after-dinner piece of chocolate, but it was alright. I was getting by.

And then maybe a week or so in, I swear I woke up jittery. It was like my body was going into withdrawal or something. And all I could think of was, *what I wouldn't give for a chocolate croissant*. And I told myself, no Nina, you're fasting. It's Lent. Maybe pray instead or something. But I couldn't get it off my mind. So later that night when my husband and I walked down to a festival in our city, I noticed what I think was some sort of heightened sense of smell for sweet treats. My husband wanted a cup of tea, so we walked into a cafe, and I admit, I caved in. I had one of their brownies and I scarfed the whole thing down without a second thought.

Except that I did have a second thought. When we walked out of the shop, I thought, *oh crap. I told myself I was fasting from sugar, and I didn't need that sweet treat at all, and there I went, doing what I said I wouldn't do*. And then another excited thought

fired up in a different part of my brain: *maybe now I get to give up on my fast?* The whole rest of Lent was like that. There were good days where I did what I said I would do, and there were lots of bad days where I ate what I said I wouldn't eat for no other reason except that I wanted to.

As you walk through Lent and engage in whatever fast God may have called you to, remember this: those moments of failure, of eating the sweet treat when you said you wouldn't, of having that cup of coffee you intended not to, of re-downloading Twitter just this one time when you said you would take the season off of it — those are not the moments that break your connection with the God you seek to find amidst your fast. Those are actually your moments of salvation. They are the whole point of the fast. You fast not as a self-improvement project. You fast not as a Christian kind of New Years Resolution. You fast not to prove your strength, but to come face to face with your weakness. To recognize how bad you are at fasting, that is what makes worthwhile your Lenten journey. That is your Cosmic Insignificance Therapy.

The joy amidst the soberness of Lent is the recognition that just as you will die, so Christ died. And when he did, he was put in that tomb to go down to the depths of all our darkneses to shine a light there. He arrived at the lowest low of the pit where all our failures, weaknesses, bad diagnoses, unfinished fasts, unfinished lives are found and said, "Let these bones live."

"And the one who believes in me will live, even though they die," cries the firstborn from the dead. And so, let us love the life we actually live — the one Christ gave us.

## ST MARTIN'S 200 – 13TH & 14TH SEPTEMBER

This is our celebration weekend for the Georgian western end of St Martin's nave. These are the key events that will be happening in our wonderful building: There will be an exhibition on the history of our church throughout the weekend. Saturday is also the annual 'ride and stride' event, when people visit churches, so we hope to have lots of visitors.

### **Saturday 13th**

**7.30pm** - A performance of *Pride & Prejudice* by the touring theatre company 'This is my Theatre'. Jane Austen, a citizen of Georgian England, has her own anniversary celebrations this year.

### **Sunday 14th**

**10.00am** Our guest speaker will be the Co-Head of our Church school, Maggie Down.

**3.00pm:** As part of our 2nd Thoughts series, historian Peter Ross presents 'Dining with James and Jane: Eating at Home with the Georgians'

**4.00pm** Celebration Tea

**5.30pm:** Choral Evensong, when the preacher will be the Bishop of Dorking.

## **(Eco) Ideas, info, action...**

There's a church Eco WhatsApp chat. I'm in similar groups (including a couple in other churches!) and it's helpful to hear what others have discovered, what they are finding tricky, and what they are involved in. If you would like to be part of the sharing of questions, seeking, ideas and (some) answers about what we can do, individually and as a church, to 'tread more lightly' on God's earth, speak to me or contact me through the church office and I will add you to the group. (If you don't have a smartphone, keep an eye on the Eco Church noticeboard), and, of course, keep having those conversations about what you are discovering.



### Creation Care

Congratulations... go to Erin, Dara, Banke and Dolapo for achieving Bronze in the scheme. They did this by going online and answering some (fairly easy, though sometimes challenging, in a good way) questions about the way they care for creation in their daily lives. They are the first

household linked to St Martin's to have completed this. Who's next? Well done!

***Helen Williams, Eco Rep***

## **St Martin's & St Stephen's website - your help please!**

If you are a 'regular' at church, I expect you don't look at our website often. However, you'll know that for any organisation, it's essential that its website is kept up-to-date. Rob does the technical side and I upload the information on upcoming services and events. I do my best to include everything that's happening, but I can't guarantee that sometimes things won't get missed-off!

So, it would be very helpful if members of the congregation can cast an eye over the website from time to time. Let Rob know if there's a technical issue and tell me if you spot error or you want to make sure I know about an event or service that needs to be advertised. Thank you! Sarah Lutton & Rob Jeffery.

Website address: <https://www.stmartinsepsom.org/> Our emails are: [rob@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:rob@stmartinsepsom.org) [wardens@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:wardens@stmartinsepsom.org)

## **PRAYING FOR OUR CHURCH AND OUR COMMUNITY**

Please remember in your daily prayers this week:

### **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>**

Our Choir, and our vision for a new Worship Band. The growth of our Life Groups, Study Groups, WhatsApp Groups. Our Missions: Redress (justice against torture). Those living and working in Hillcrest Road, Hook Road, Hylands Close, Hylands Road, Jackson Close and Kilcorral Close.

### **Monday 17<sup>th</sup>**

Our Livestreaming Team led by Rob Jeffrey. Our Sacristan Mary Holloway-Neville and chalice assistants. University of the Creative Arts, Laine Theatre Arts staff and students. Those living

and working in Kiln Lane, Kingsdown Road, Laburnum Road, Ladbrook Road, Leighton Way and Leith Road.

### **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>**

Vocations to Ministry, ordained and lay. Churches Together in Epsom: Russell Holding (Chair). Our Missions: AMECA (for Malawi, Epsom based). Those living and working in Langley Close, Langley Vale Road, Links Road and Lintons Lane.

### **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>**

Our Home Communion Team and those to whom they take Communion. Our Flower-Arranging Team: Yvonne Parish. Staff at local Citizens' Advice Bureau, Age Concern and Job Centre. All those seeking their help and/or in need of work. Those living and working in Longdown Lane South, Longdown Road, Lynwood Avenue, Lynwood Road, Mannamead, Mannamead Close, Middle Close and Middle Lane.

### **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>**

Our Deanery Synod: Howard Bluett and John Padwick. Our Eco Church Team: Helen Williams. Our Missions: A Rocha (caring for creation). Those living and working in Milburn Walk, Mill Road, Millers Copse, Milton Gardens and Mospey Crescent.

### **Friday 21<sup>st</sup>**

Our vision and work for Social and Racial Justice. Our Readers and Intercessors. Local schools and nursery schools. Those living and working in Oak Hill, Oakmead Green, Old Barn Road, Pikes Hill and Pine Hill.

## **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

All who offer welcome and hospitality and serve refreshments at our churches. Those to be married in our churches. Our Missions: Mercy Ships. Those living and working in Pitt Road, Portland Place, Prospect Place, Providence Place and Randolph Road.

## **FOOD BANK**

### **This week we need the following:**

Cooking Sauces

Tinned Fish, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Spaghetti

Instant Mash, Powdered Milk, Long-life Milk

Tea bags, Instant Coffee, Squash, Long-life Juice

Ketchup/Mayonnaise

Chocolate Spread/Peanut Butter/Honey

Crisps

Sugar (500gr), Custard, Tinned Fruit

Long life Sponge puddings

Savoury Biscuits, Chocolate Biscuit Bars

Deodorant (Male/Female), Shower Gel, Shampoo & Conditioner

Adult Toothpaste, Washing Up Liquid, Washing Powder

Strong shopper bags and bags for life

## THE POWER OF POETRY – MARCH

It was with a poem by George Herbert, priest and poet, that I began this monthly series of poems just over a year ago in February 2024 and, as a favourite of mine, here he is again. Herbert considered prayer to be very important – public prayer particularly – and was very concerned that prayer should be given equal weight with the sermon. His was a time when puritanism was on the rise and sermons were both popular and lengthy. Herbert said that sermons were often too long and should be no longer than an hour so I can only guess at the average length in the seventeenth century. I think if Nick were to preach for an hour or more there could well be a riot. (But then they didn't have TV so maybe a sermon was considered great entertainment!) Herbert preferred *public* prayer to private devotions, public prayer being socially stronger and warmer. At one point in Herbert's life he was much involved with the restoration of a church in Leighton Bromswold and insisted that the church contain two pulpits, of identical design and height. One was for sermons, and the other for prayer.

In the poem which follows, *Prayer 1*, Herbert lists the qualities of prayer:

*Prayer, the church's banquet, angels' age,  
God's breath in man returning to his birth,  
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,  
The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth,  
Engine against the Almighty, sinner's tower,  
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,  
The six-days world transposing in an hour,  
A kind of tune, which all things hear and fear;*

*Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and bliss,  
Exalted manna, gladness of the best,  
Heaven in ordinary, man well drest,  
The milky way, the bird of Paradise,  
Church-bells beyond the stars heard, the soul's blood,  
The land of spices; something understood.*

The poem is a list of 26 metaphors, some with links to the scriptures. They are not all obvious. The first line for instance refers to Holy Communion and eternity (angels as we know live forever), the next line refers to Genesis when God breathes life into Adam, and when we die this gift – the breath of life – returns to God. Reference is next made to the complex emotions we put into prayer, and then prayer as part of our journey to God. When in prayer we are sounding the depths of heaven as sailors sound the depth of water. Later there is reference to Creation which took six days but prayer can transform in an hour. As a tune may be transposed into another key, so an hour of prayer may be transposed into something pleasing to God. In line 5 there seems to be a comparison of prayer to battle with reference to a siege tower which could be used to climb to God, and this may be a reflection of Herbert's own battle, when his desire for worldly success fought against his growing desire to dedicate himself to God's service. There is a change of tone in line 9 ("Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and bliss") hinting that prayer is not so fearful. In line 13 "the soul's blood" is saying that as blood is needed to keep the body alive, so the soul needs prayer in order to flourish. I won't explain every line, but notice the use of reversal – the breath of God in man and man breathing life back to God in prayer, the plummet (plumb line) going downwards to earth in its usual way, but also going up towards the heavens. I like the end,

*“something understood”*: what we understand is often partial and moves beyond our grasp, it can be intangible, fleeting, sometimes exasperating when for a moment we felt we had the key to the meaning of ..... but then it has gone again.

**Mary Gilbert**

## STEWARDSHIP

For general and stewardship giving you can give online via the Charities Aid Foundation. Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit. To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:  
<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>
- OR
2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below:



# Electoral Roll 2025

This year the Parish electoral roll has to be re-done, this is your opportunity to be part of it!

## What is the Electoral Roll?

It is a list of the names and addresses of all the members of the church. It allows you to be a part of and vote in the APCM. It also makes you eligible to be on the PCC and represent the views and opinions of the church congregation

## Why should I sign up?

To be part of your church - having lots of people signed up the Electoral Roll allows us to show that we have a strong and vibrant community of people here at St Martin's & St Stephen's.

## Key Dates

The Electoral Roll is open now for enrolment and will close on 23rd April 2025  
The Roll will re-open after the APCM on the 12th May 2025

## How to sign up

Check your email - if we already have your contact details we have sent the link directly to your inbox

Use the QR code to sign up to the Electoral Roll

Speak to somebody if you can't get online and we will help



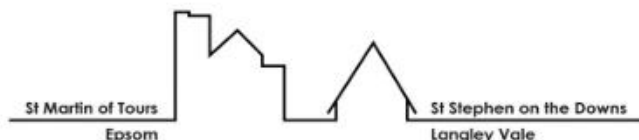
**St Martin  
of Tours**

Church Street  
Epsom, KT17 4PX



**St Stephen  
on the Downs**

Rosebery Road  
Langley Vale, KT18 6AF



## Commemoration of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade



**We Remember... We Repent... We Repair**

**Tuesday 25 March 2025, 7.30pm**

**St Martin's Church, Church St, Epsom, KT17 4PX**

**With refreshments after the service**

**[www.stmartinsepsom.org](http://www.stmartinsepsom.org)**

Registered Charity No. 1134149

# Music @ St Martin's

## Spring Recital Series

**FREE!**



**Saturday 11th January, 4.30pm**

*Peter Gould & Martin Hall - Organ Recital*

*A varied programme of organ works. Peter & Martin are both highly experienced church and concert musicians.*



**Saturday 8th February, 4.30pm**

*Mark & Iva Butler - Violin duo*

*Iva Butler, a violinist passionate about period performance collaborates with her husband Mark Butler, a member of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields*



**Saturday 1st March, 4.30pm**

*Epsom College Chamber Choir & Orchestra*

*Epsom college music scholars return to give their annual concert at St Martin's - always an exciting programme with a whole host of talented young musicians*



**Wednesday 26th March, 5pm**

*Epsom College Lower School*

*Chapel Choir Choral Evensong*

*An opportunity to hear the Epsom College Lower School Chapel Choir lead the worship in this Midweek Evensong*

### St Martin of Tours

Church Street  
Epsom, KT17 4PX

Admission to the recitals is free but we ask for donations to enable us to continue offering great music at St Martin's

You can also use our QR code to support the series at any time.



**f** [stmartinsepsom](https://www.stmartinsepsom.org) • [www.stmartinsepsom.org](https://www.stmartinsepsom.org) • [office@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:office@stmartinsepsom.org) • 01372 722 567

Registered Charity No 1134149

# Epsom Good Friday



CHURCHES  
TOGETHER  
in Epsom

April 18th 2025

Join us 10:30 am in  
Rosebery Park, by  
the pond, as the

## Jesus Drama

unfolds: moving to  
Epsom marketplace  
for the final acts

All are welcome



**Submitting an item for the newsletter:  
Please ensure that all items are emailed to the office marked  
'For Newsletter' in the title by  
12 noon on Wednesday, to be included for that week.**

**Parish Office:  
The parish office is open from 9.30am – 12.30pm every  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday.  
Church House, Church Street, Epsom,  
KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567  
E-mail: [office@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:office@stmartinsepsom.org)  
Website: [www.stmartinsepsom.org](http://www.stmartinsepsom.org)**

**If you would like to be added to our mailing list so that you receive the newsletter and orders of service weekly, please email the parish office. Please contact clergy and lay ministers via the office.**