

St Martin of Tours

Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs

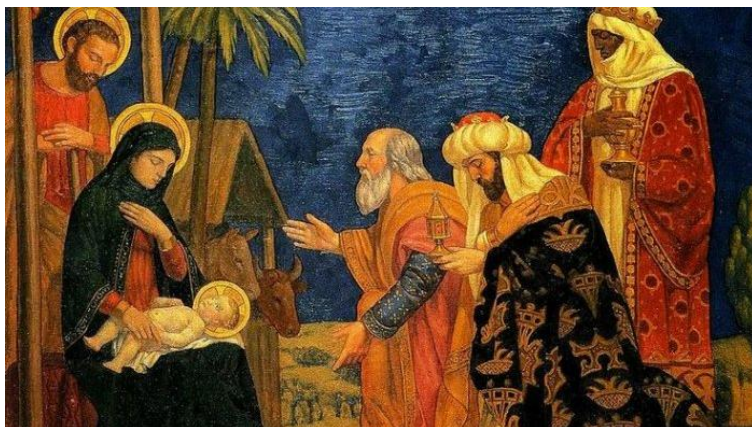
Langley Vale

Registered Charity Number: 1134149

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

SUNDAY 4th JANUARY 2026

EPIPHANY



DIARY

Sunday 4th January Epiphany

9.30am Morning Prayer service at St Stephen's

10.00am Holy Communion service at St Martin's

6.30pm Evening Prayer at St Martin's

Tuesday 6th January

11.00am Contemplative Prayer Group at St Martin's

The Group meets on Tuesday 6th January at 11am in the Lady Chapel at St Martin's. Our starting point will be Isaiah 41.1: '*Be silent before me*'. All will be very welcome. **Adrian**

Wednesday 7th January

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 11th January Baptism of Christ

8.30am Holy Communion service at St Martin's

9.30am Holy Communion service at St Stephen's

10.00am Choral Mattins service at St Martin's

6.30pm Second Thoughts at St Martin's

'Question time'

(refreshments beforehand from 5.45pm)

Chairman – Canon Andrew Haviland, Chaplain Epsom College
Members of the Panel:-

Dr Lynne Scholefield leads the Centering Prayer Group and is 'passionate about text'.

Revd Nick Parish – Vicar of St Martins and St Stephen's on the Downs.

Howard Bluett, whose idea 'Question Time' was in the first place

Questions can be sent in beforehand to Canon Andrew or Adrian Esdaile or invited from the floor on the future of the Church, questions of theology, prayer, liturgy or mission – or anything else!

Scaffolding - update

Work on the ceiling over the dais has been completed and the scaffolding has been removed, so we can be 'back to normal' for services. Scaffolding remains outside the Lady Chapel and will be in place. Access via the north door is still possible but is not step free because of the wooden planks on the floor supporting the scaffolding. If you need help with access, please let us know.

Rob: rob@stmartinsepsom.org or

Sarah: wardens@stmartinsepsom.org

Test of faith – Reviving religion

This 19 minute video from Green Christian is a useful encouragement for this time of climate crisis, I think, highlighting the role and relevance of the Church and its people in offering a space for seeing beyond the current worldly situation and finding a 'home' which looks to more than this. It talks about the climate crisis as a spiritual crisis.

<https://youtu.be/z4MpHw-r7tg>

Helen Williams

Lumos Candlelight concerts in St Martin's Saturday 17th January 5pm & 8pm

Lumos candlelight concerts take place countrywide. The organisation chooses beautiful buildings and spaces for their performances, so we are delighted that they want to hold two concerts in our own beautiful building! There will be two opportunities to enjoy the 'Vivaldi & Mozart Candlelight Experience'. Details of the concerts and booking are on their website - here's a link: [Lumos concert in St Martins](#)

Lay Pastoral Care

Our ministry team at present includes Elaine and Mary as Pastoral Visitors. We would like more people to assist in this work of keeping in touch with people in need, not only the elderly the housebound and those now in Nursing Homes who can no longer get to church.

The 2026 Lay Pastoral Visitors' Training Course will be running over 4 Saturdays in the Spring: 28 February, 21 March, 18 April and 16 May, 9.30am - 4pm. This course is for lay leaders who feel called to serve as Lay Pastoral Visitors in their parish. The role is locally authorised, so those interested need the support of their vicar and PCC. The course is led by Ruth Cornish (Pastoral Care Lead at St Paul's Dorking) with a team of trained pastoral tutors. Lay Pastoral Visitors have an important role to play in visiting newcomers to a church, visiting those who are sick, and praying with those who are visited.

The sessions will cover a variety of topics, including developing listening skills, exploring judgement and prejudice in our response to others, and learning from Jesus' ministry.

Please consider if you sense a call to pastoral ministry. This course may help you decide but should in any case be worthwhile. Please speak to the Vicar or one of us.

Beth Perkins, who oversees our occasional courses beth.perkins@cofeguildford.org.uk - is also available to answer questions.

**Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network - Save the Date! Tuesday 27th January - Sunday 1st February 2026
Festival of Friendship - Ukraine**

The Festival of Friendship - Ukraine celebrates the traditional crafts, skills, and heritage of the Ukrainian community within Epsom, with Ukrainian creatives showcasing and sharing their talents.

The Festival includes workshops, exhibitions, Ukrainian film screenings, performances by the Ukrainian choir Renaissance, bandura player Yuliia Komyshan and other musicians
Organised with Epsom Library, Epsom Picturehouse, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. More details to follow.

STEWARDSHIP – MAKING YOUR DONATION

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:





PRAYER GROUPS

St Martin's offers these options for praying together:

Evening Prayer on Zoom, weekdays 5pm-5.30pm

This follows the Common Worship rite and is led by one of the regular members of the group.

See <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer> All are warmly invited to join on an occasional or regular basis. Find us at:

<https://zoom.us/j/91650281049?pwd=dLiB4jY8FRRdtFcbGBRjaVtMJ9K2Ar.1> or, if you prefer typing details directly into Zoom, use Meeting ID is 916 5028 1049 and passcode 960460.

There is an additional zoom prayer session on the 3rd Thursday at 8pm.

Centering Prayer: Every other Tuesday, 4pm in Church (Tea & biscuits from 3.45pm)

"Be still and know that I am God" *Psalms 46:10*. A small group of us meet to pray together in silence. 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.

Contemplative Prayer: 1st Tuesday of each month, 11am in the Lady Chapel

A time for focussing on God's presence and allowing oneself to be filled with God's grace. It's a time of stillness and quietness. We listen to the words of God or of Jesus in contemplation.

PRAYING FOR OUR CHURCH AND OUR COMMUNITY

Please remember in your daily prayers this week:

Sunday 4th

Our Lay Ministers: Ruth Foxcroft, John Padwick and Howard Bluett. Our Cathedral: Guildford Cathedral, the Dean and Chapter. Our Missions: The Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network. Those living and working in Birches Close, Bridge Road, Bridle End, Bridle Road and Burgh Heath Road.

Monday 5th

Our Church Warden: Sarah Lutton and for someone to join her as the second Church Warden. All users of Church House. Those suffering from drug or alcohol addiction and their families and friends. Those living and working in Burghfield, Caithness Drive and Carter's Road.

Tuesday 6th

Our Pastoral Assistants: Mary Gilbert and Elaine Snook. Our Area Dean: John Marrow. Our Missions: Besom Network. Those living and working in Cedar Close, Cedar Hill, Chalk Lane, Chalk Paddock and Chalk Pit Road.

Wednesday 7th

Our Parish Manager, Church Administrator and Facilities Officer. Those baptised in our churches, past and future, and their families, godparents and sponsors. Swail House and those who are sight impaired. The deaf and hard of hearing. Those living and working in Chantry Hurst, Chartwell Place, Church Road and Church Street.

Thursday 8th

Our Parochial Church Council – officers and members. Our Children’s Church: The Ark – Sarah Jeffery, the children, the parents and volunteers. The Mission to Seafarers and Mission Aviation Fellowship. Those living and working in Chuters Grove, Clayton Road, College Avenue and College Road.

Friday 9th

Our Organist: Iain Macfarlane. Our Welcomers: Meg Topley and the Team. The physical, mental and emotional well-being of the people of Epsom and Langley Vale, local mental health units and Love Me Love My Mind (Our Missions). Those living and working in Copse Edge Avenue, Delaporte Close, Denham Road and Depot Road.

Saturday 10th

St Stephen’s Church: its life, worship and mission to Langley Vale. Safeguarding in our churches: our Parish Safeguarding Officers Revd Judith and Peter Christie, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and everyone who helps to create and sustain a safe welcoming inclusive space for all of us. The Bible Society, Spinnaker Trust (Our Missions) and all those teaching RE locally. Those living and working in Digdens Rise, Dirdene Close, Dirdene Gardens, Dirdene Grove and Dorking Road.

THE POWER OF POETRY – JANUARY

The Feast of Epiphany is celebrated on 6th January, which is when traditionally the three wise men journeyed from afar to see the new born Jesus Christ. I have therefore chosen T S Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*. We have had T S Eliot before – when I selected two extracts from *Little Gidding*. Those extracts were far more difficult to disentangle and I had grave doubts about my understanding. This one is more familiar and straightforward, though not without its theological and spiritual elements.

The poem is written in the first person in a conversational style. One of the magi, is looking back as an old man, many years after the event and reflecting upon it, though not with any great enthusiasm.

Journey of the Magi

*A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,*

*And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly,
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.*

*Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation,
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky.
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.*

*All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.*

I should be glad of another death.

There are three parts to this poem, each of which is written in a ruminative and colloquial way. The beginning is taken from a “Sermon on the Nativity” given by Lancelot Andrewes in 1622. (Lancelot Andrewes was a Bishop of Chichester, Ely and then Winchester, and one of the principal translators of the King James’ Bible. He spoke 15 modern languages and 3 ancient.) His sermon also speaks in the voice of the magi and, as with this poem, describes the detailed conditions of the journey which are not, by the way, given in the Biblical account of the event. The description seems to portray the conditions of a freezingly cold journey in the depths of an English winter (though the camels are somewhat unusual in England!), rather than a description of the Holy Land. Andrewes may have done this to make the story more accessible to the congregation of the time, so that the text could be applied to their own experience. Eliot’s version, with its rather grumpy speaker complaining of the discomforts and inconveniences of the journey, also makes it more relevant to the twentieth century. (There is no mention of the Star, or of their interview with Herod.)

In the second section, the travellers move into a warmer and more sheltered valley. The description hints of a new life, and again seems more English than middle-eastern. There are references too of the future: three trees on the skyline look to the Crucifixion with the three crosses on the hill; the vine leaves growing round a door – the wine at the Last Supper; mention of the lintel is a reminder of the Passover when blood was daubed on the doors; and the dicing for pieces of silver is an obvious reference to the soldiers drawing lots for Jesus’ clothing and also to the money paid to Judas for his betrayal. Then the narrator describes the arrival.

He doesn't describe this with any excitement though - "*It was (you may say) satisfactory*". Nor is there any mention of Mary or of the baby: we are, I suppose, expected to know the details. Rather, the account is almost disappointed, as if he and his fellows were expecting more than they found.

Yet, in the final section, the narrator says he would do the journey again – quite a surprise after the litany of complaints, and apparent lack of any awe or joy. He is reflecting on the meaning of what the Magi had witnessed and finds connections between Birth and Death. He is thinking perhaps of his own death, presumably not far off, but then of the Death of Jesus which is prefigured in the birth narratives of the Bible, and which has changed his world. The narrator mentions that after that journey the Magi were "*never at ease*". After all, the events of Jesus' birth and death meant the eventual death of paganism, and when the magi returned to their own lands the pagan worship was still all about them, making the narrator feel unsettled and, perhaps, puzzled. Somehow he sensed that there was a deep significance in the event though he couldn't quite understand it at the time. Yet despite all, he seems to have faith (albeit somewhat reluctant). Perhaps in the many years since his journey he has found new meaning in what had previously been merely an uncomfortable and disappointing journey. And possibly he has come to realise something of the significance in the newborn child, and finds that he can face his own death.

Mary Gilbert

FOODBANK REQUESTS

This week we need the following:

Cooking Sauce - **Urgent**
Powdered Milk - **Urgent**
Milk UHT - **Urgent**
Long Life Juice - **Urgent**
Hair Conditioner - **Urgent**
Shampoo - **Urgent**
Toilet Rolls - **Urgent**
Washing Up Liquid - **Urgent**
Sponge Pudding - **Urgent we have none**
Tinned Meat
Pasta/Beans with Meat
Tinned Potatoes
Packet Soup
Instant Mash
Instant Coffee
Jam/Honey/Chocolate Spread/Peanut Butter/Marmalade
Ketchup/Mayonnaise/Brown Sauce
Biscuits
Custard
Sugar
Rice Pudding
Shaving Foam
Male/Female Deodorant
Kids Toothbrushes and Toothpaste 0-2 and 6yrs
Adult Toothpaste
Nappies size 5 and 6 ONLY

FREE!

Music @ St Martin's

Spring 2026

Saturday afternoons at 4.30



Saturday 31 January
Mariia Zhornikova - piano
plays Debussy, Granados and works by her fellow Ukrainians

Saturday 21 February
Redhouse Rhythm & Blues
Entertaining and popular duo Chris Hollingshurst & Danny Wignall return to our series



Saturday 28 March
Hammers & Pipes
Peter Lutton shares his enjoyment of playing our fine piano and organ

Saturday 18 April
Women of English Song
Soprano Christine Cunnold and pianist Richard Harker explore some of the best music of female composers



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.

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Registered Charity No 1134149

**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
Website: 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.**