

St Martin of Tours
Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs
Langley Vale

Registered Charity Number: 1134149

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

SUNDAY 11th JANUARY 2026

BAPTISM OF CHRIST



DIARY

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)

Chair – Canon Andrew Haviland, Chaplain Epsom College

Members of the Panel:-

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

Revd Canon Nick Parish – Vicar of St Martin's 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! Copies of the Second Thoughts 2026 programme are available at the back of Church.

Tuesday 13th January

4.00pm Time to Talk - Exploring Epiphany

The season of Epiphany begins on January 6th, and lasts until Ash Wednesday, on 18th February.

The Wise Ones awaited a sign in the sky—a star—to guide them on this journey. Revelations break in, signs appear in dreams, light shines forth, and glory hovers all around. Such things are

from the realms of miracle, awe, and wonder. They surprise and disrupt the normal course of existence. Epiphanies are not of our making. But it would be a mistake to believe that we are only passive recipients of epiphanies. We need to be alert for their arrival.... Revelations can be missed if one isn't attentive or attuned to the possibilities of sacred surprise....

We cannot create epiphanies, but, like the Wise Ones, we can respond to them. Epiphanies grab a hold of us; we can't shake them. Epiphanies beckon. The star invites; it calls to the attentive to do something—to act. Come and join us on the journey!

Wednesday 14th January

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 18th January Epiphany 2

9.30am Morning Prayer service at St Stephen's

10.00am Holy Communion service at St Martin's

**We welcome Bishop Paul Davies, Bishop
of Dorking, to preside at this service.**

6.30pm Choral Evensong at St Martin's

Scaffolding in St Martin's - Update

Following the Christmas and New Year break, work has started again on the ceiling repairs. The scaffolding just inside the North Door has been removed and it is now in the south aisle. This means that step-free access via the North Doors is restored.

Sarah L & Rob

PCC Meeting January 7, 2026 - Summary

At our meeting on Wednesday these were the key resolutions:

Safeguarding: We updated our Safeguarding Policy in line with the Church of England's Policy. This effectively meant changing the phrase 'duty of care' to 'duty to comply'.

ECO Church: We have become one of the Net Zero Pioneer churches in the diocese, committed to reducing our impact on the climate.

Inclusive Church: We voted to become a member of the national Inclusive Church network. Being an Inclusive Church means that everyone is welcome, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender identity, disability, neurodiversity, mental health, sexuality, background or an other factor that might cause exclusion.

Imagination Training: We resolved to support this workshop event on 30th May being held in St Martins. It will be run by Rob Hopkins, whose book 'From What Is to What If' has inspired many to embrace the future with a more positive mindset. The event will be open to all community groups.

These are updates on ongoing matters:

Solar Panels for St Martin's: The faculty has been granted by the diocese for the solar panels to be installed

St Stephen's: We're waiting to receive information from the architects on the companies which have tendered for the repairs so that we can choose who will do the work.

John Chandler Hall: The sale of the building to the developer Nuro Homes should be completed this month.

Church House - repairs to the back of the building following the leak: We are awaiting a 2nd quote.

Contested Heritage: An agreement with the artist Christina Peake to produce a new memorial for St Martin's is being drawn up. The project will begin in the spring.

Celebration Peal on Sunday 11th January, starting at 2pm

St. Martin's Bellringers would like to let you know of this celebration peal taking place to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the first peal rung in the steeple at St. Martins, on 11th January 1776. This historic event is documented on this splendid peal board which hangs in our tower.

A peal can be described as the marathon of bellringing and requires at least 5,000 different sequences or “changes” to be rung, taking around 3 hours. It requires expertise, experience and stamina and has been organised by one of our very experienced ringers, Jenny Heyworth.

Unfortunately, Jenny is now unable to ring but the band on Sunday afternoon will be made up of our own tower captain, Mike Bale along with nine other members of the Guildford Guild. This means that all ten bells will be ringing for the course of the afternoon. Should anyone get a chance to drop by, even for a short while, you should be able to hear our bells being showcased to their full effect.

Ros Hallett



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](#)

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 Komyschan and other musicians. Organised with Epsom Library, Epsom Picturehouse, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. More details to follow.

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.

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.

DAILY PRAYER

Sunday 11th

Our Bell-ringing Team and Tower Captain Mike Bale. Our Ministry Team. All local young families. All in Downs Avenue, Downs Hill Road, Downs Road and Downs Way.

Monday 12th

Our Prayer and Healing Ministry: Contemplative and Centering Prayer. Those who work on our Website, Facebook and YouTube channel. Through the Roof: Wheelchairs for the World (Our Missions) and the Sunnybank Trust (based in Epsom). All in Downside, East Street and Elmslie Close.

Tuesday 13th

Our Church Development Plan: for Renewal and Growth. Those who read the Bible through the Bible Reading Fellowship notes and Didi Steck. Those living locally who are housebound and their carers. All in Farriers Road, Fyfield Close, Grosvenor Road, Grove Avenue and Grove Road.

Wednesday 14th

Our Mission and Evangelism Team. Our Church Finances and Our Treasurer. Our MP Helen Maguire. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council: elected members and officers. All in Hambledon Hill, Hambledon Vale, Harding Road and Hawthorne Place.

Thursday 15th

Our Discipleship and Fellowship Team. Our Premises and Gardens Team. The Emergency Services: Fire, Police and Ambulance. All in Headley Road, Heathcote Road, Hereford Close, High Street and Highridge Close.

Friday 16th

Our Choir and for a new Musical Director who will lead outreach into the community through the gift of music. The growth of our Life Groups, Study Groups, WhatsApp Groups. Our Missions: Operation Noah. All in Hillcrest Road, Hook Road, Hylands Close, Hylands Road, Jackson Close and Kilcorral Close.

Saturday 17th

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. All in Kiln Lane, Kingsdown Road, Laburnum Road, Ladbrook Road, Leighton Way and Leith 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**
Microwave Rice - **Urgent**
Pasta/Beans with Meat - **Urgent**
Milk UHT - **Urgent**
Sweetcorn - **Urgent**
Squash - **Urgent**
Sponge Pudding - **Urgent**
Noodles - **Urgent we have none**
Long Life Juice - **Urgent we have none**
Shampoo - **Urgent we have none**
Tinned Meat
Tinned Spaghetti
Tinned Fruit
Jam/Chocolate Spread/Peanut Butter/Marmalade
Ketchup/Mayonnaise/Brown Sauce
Rice Pudding
Sugar
Shaving Foam
Male/Female Deodorant
Hair Conditioner
Washing Up Liquid
Toilet Rolls
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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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.