

St Martin of Tours  
Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs  
Langley Vale

Registered Charity Number: 1134149

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

**SUNDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026**

**CONVERSION OF PAUL**



*Domenico Morelli, “The Conversion of St. Paul,” 1876*

## DIARY

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January Conversion of Paul**

9.30am   Holy Communion service at St Stephen's  
10.00am   Morning Prayer service at St Martin's  
4.00pm   Service for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
                  at King's Church, Longmead Road, Epsom  
6.30pm   Compline at St Martin's

### **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm   Deanery Synod at St Mary Ewell

### **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January**

10.00am   Holy Communion

### **Saturday 31 January**

4.30pm   Music @ St Martin's



Pianist Mariia Zhornikova plays Debussy, Granados and works by her fellow Ukrainians.

Having moved to the UK after the start of the war in Ukraine Mariia has continued her piano studies in Oxford

and has given a number of solo recitals in London and beyond.

We're delighted to welcome her to be a part of our Saturday afternoon Music @ St Martin's concerts. She plays works by Debussy and Granados and introduces us to the music of her fellow Ukrainians - Lyatoshinsky, Sylvestrov and Shukailo.

The concert lasts about an hour.

Admission is free, but donations are asked from those who can.

## **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February Candlemas**

- 9.30am   Holy Communion service at St Stephen's**
- 10.00am   Holy Communion service at St Martin's  
(Children's Church, 'The Ark', meets)**
- 6.30pm   Evening Prayer at St Martin's**

**Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network - Save the Date! Tuesday 27th January - Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

### **Craft Group**

It has been suggested that we should start a craft group, and to find out how many people would be interested we are having a meeting on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2.00pm. If you are interested, please contact me on

[maureensuatt@virginmedia.com](mailto:maureensuatt@virginmedia.com) or 01372723675

**Maureen Suatt**

**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.**

## Net Zero Event

On 17<sup>th</sup> January we went to a multi-diocesan Net Zero event at St John's Church Stoke, Guildford. There were reps from Portsmouth, Chichester, Guildford and Winchester (more bishop-purple shirts together in one room than I've seen in a while!) with visitors from Salisbury, all compèred by Paul, Bishop of Dorking. St John's is a 'demonstrator' church, open to sharing the results and experience of its Net Zero journey. There were other organisations there, including Christian Aid and A Rocha, sharing their knowledge and resources.

We came away with:

- Practical ideas to consider for St Martin's
- Learning about some pros and cons of certain projects
- A reminder of the financial and knowledge resources available

We were reminded of the importance of MISSION – that sustainability is 'care for all creation', not just ONE part of what we love to do, but is actually the warp and weft of what we do as a church (the presence of 'creation care' in all five Marks of Mission, not just the fifth, was particularly highlighted).

Something St John's modelled was having a team involved in the 'Net Zero' plans - 8-10 people! We are currently two, and although we do get generous support from others, it would be so helpful to have a larger group in the 'Eco Team'. What talents and energy can you bring? What is your skill in making St Martin's a place the whole community wants to visit? Perhaps there are projects we can link up on which would then become more effective... We value your support, in prayer and in practical matters – please speak to us and let us know how you would like to be involved! Thanks, **Helen Williams and Rob Jeffrey**

## Celebration Peal at St Martin's

On Sunday 11th January 2026 there was a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the first peal of bells rung in the Steeple of St Martins on the 11th of January 1776. A marathon of bellringing of 10 bells lasting 3 hours rang out across Epsom sounding magnificent.



## MISSION FOCUS – JANUARY

The focus for our mission giving this month is 'Besom', a Christian network of charities across the country. Besom connects people who want to give time, money, skills or goods with people in need. Local Besoms, such as Ashtead, provide items such as furniture and household goods. Churches Together in Epsom want to establish a Besom in our own community. Referrals are from social workers but families in need can also self-refer for help. The service is free and the charity emphasises the importance of prayer in its operations. For more information please click on this link: <https://www.thebesomnetwork.org/>

***Meg Topley and David Stamp***



## **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](mailto: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:



### 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.

## 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.

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

"Be still and know that I am God" *Psalm 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: 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

There is an additional zoom Contemplative Prayer session on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 8pm. Find us using the same Zoom details cited above for Evening Prayer.

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

Please remember in your daily prayers this week:

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>**

The Vale School: children, parents, the Co-Heads, staff and Governors. Scouts (especially our 3rd Epsom (St Martin's) Scout Group), Cubs, Beavers, Guides, Brownies and their leaders. Local refuse collectors, those who deliver the post and other items. Those living and working in Station Approach Stevens Close, Strand Close, Sunnybank, and The Grove.

### **Monday 26<sup>th</sup>**

Our 'Second Thoughts' programme on the second Sunday at 6.30 pm. Education and training in the Parish and future courses. Our Missions: PHAB (bringing together disabled and non-disabled to create an inclusive world). Those living and working in The Hayes, The Oaks, The Parade, The Ridge, The Ridings, Tintagel Close and Treadwell Road.

### **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>**

All involved in planning and leading Family services. Christian Aid and its annual collection in May and the projects it supports. Local prisons and their chaplains: Downview and High Down. Those living and working in Upper High Street, Victoria Place, Warren Hill and Waterloo Road.

## **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup>**

All who are bereaved and grieving, and local funeral directors.

Our young people and teenagers – our vision for the future.

USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel). Those living and working in Westgate Close, Wilmerhatch Lane and Wimborne Close.

## **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup>**

All parents and toddlers. Users of Langley Vale Village Hall:

Sean Porter, Chair of the Village Hall Committee. Care and

nursing homes in the Parish. Those in sheltered housing. Those living and working in Woodcote Close, Woodcote End, Woodcote Green Road, Woodcote Hurst, Woodcote Park Road and Woodcote Side.

## **Friday 30<sup>th</sup>**

Epsom College, staff and students: Chaplain Andrew Haviland.

May all who enter our churches find peace and welcome. Epsom & Ewell Foodbank (Our Missions) and the Leprosy Mission.

Those living and working in Wootton Close, Worple Road, Wyeths Mews, Wyeths Road, Yeomanry Close and Yew Tree Gardens.

## **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>**

May the choirs who give concerts at St Martin's and their audiences feel God's presence in our church. Those in our church family who now live elsewhere. Our borough libraries: their librarians, volunteers and those who use them. All who attend our churches and live in roads outside the Parish boundary.

## THE POWER OF POETRY – JANUARY

The Feast of Epiphany was celebrated on 6<sup>th</sup> January, when traditionally the ‘three wise men’ journeyed from afar to see the newborn Jesus. 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.*

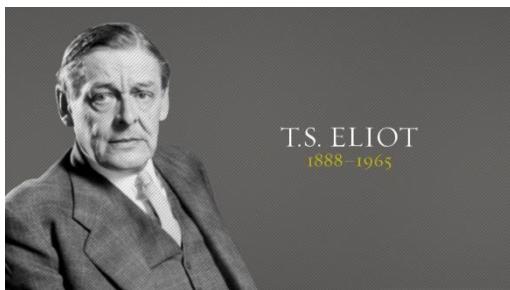
*All this was a long time ago, I remember,  
And I would do it again, but set down  
This set down  
This: were we led all that way for  
Birth or death? There was a Birth, certainly,  
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,  
But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
Hard 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 written in a ruminative and colloquial way. The beginning is taken from a “Sermon on the Nativity” given by Lancelot Andrewes in 1622. His sermon spoke in the voice of the magi and, as with this poem, describes the detailed conditions of the journey which are not given in the Biblical account. 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:**

Honey – **Urgent**  
Washing Up Liquid – **Urgent**  
Pasta/Beans with Meat - **Urgent we have none**  
Custard - **Urgent we have none**  
Sponge Pudding - **Urgent we have none**  
Shampoo - **Urgent we have none**  
Hair Conditioner - **Urgent we have none**  
Cooking Sauce, Tinned Meat  
Packet Soup, Tinned Spaghetti  
Tinned Fruit, Sugar  
Milk UHT, Powdered Milk  
Long Life Juice  
Jam/Chocolate Spread/Peanut Butter/Marmalade  
Ketchup/Mayonnaise/Brown Sauce  
Shaving Foam, Toilet Rolls  
Male/Female Deodorant  
Nappies size 5 and 6 ONLY

### **Parish Office:**

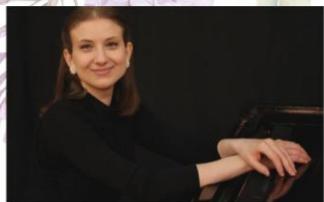
**The parish office is open from 9.30am – 12.30pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.**  
**Church House, Church Street, Epsom, KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567**  
**E-mail: [office@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:office@stmartinsepsom.org)**  
**Website: [www.stmartinsepsom.org](http://www.stmartinsepsom.org)**

# Music @ St Martin's

## Spring 2026

### Saturday afternoons at 4.30

**FREE!**



**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 Wignal 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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