



The monthly newsletter from the churches of
St Nicholas Stevenage + St Mary's Graveley.



www.saintnicholaschurch.org.uk

www.saintmarysgraveley.org.uk

Dear friends,

August, 2022.

At the end of my teacher training course, I was privileged to have been asked to give the speech at our valedictory dinner. It was a poignant evening; full of joy for what we had achieved together and for what lay ahead, but it was also tinged with great sadness. One of our year-group had died during the course, others hadn't qualified, but above all we knew that most of us would never see each other again.

As I write this, my final column, I have some of the same feelings. Looking back over the last 11 years we have, by God's grace, accomplished a lot together. And whilst the changes to the St Nicholas church building are the most obvious, the longest lasting is the impact on lives and souls. The LORD promises that his Word does not return empty, and it's been such a joy to see faith growing and lives changed as Judy and I have sought to teach the scriptures, proclaim the gospel and point people to Jesus. Where we have failed to live and love as well as we might have, we would ask your forgiveness. And where you have found our ministry a blessing, we ask that you direct your thanks and praises to the one who sent us, and who is now leading us on. It's been a great 11 years. Countless sermons and services, myriad weddings, funerals and baptisms, missions, and lots of fun days, tea parties, courses, PCC meetings and time spent in prayer and worship with dear brothers and sisters in Christ. We shall miss you.

Amongst the joys there have been many sadnesses, not least the fact that some who started to walk with Jesus have fallen away. May the LORD stir their hearts to seek him again and bring them back. Others have moved away to new churches, and still others have gone on ahead of us into glory. They have finished the race and are now enjoying the eternal

rest with the LORD that we who trust in Jesus will also one day receive. Only let us be faithful and true to the end!

I'm sure Judy and I will pop back occasionally, but it may be that we won't see some of you again. That is a sadness, of course, but we will have all eternity to catch up. So when we say goodbye on 14th August, let's remember that for Christians, any earthly goodbyes are always temporary.

Judy and I would obviously value your prayers as we move, both for the practicalities to fall into place, and for the LORD's blessing on the parishes we are going to serve. In return we will continue to pray for you. For your eyes to be always on the LORD and for you to stay rooted in and obedient to His Word. For there to be even deeper love and affection between you, and across the 2 congregations, that unbelievers may see and be brought to Jesus through seeing your love. For wisdom and insight as you seek to appoint a new Rector. And for there to be a far greater harvest of souls saved and disciples made in this benefice than has been the case over these past years. May the LORD do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine!

The coming week gives us a chance to unite in prayer for the LORD's blessing. If you haven't signed up yet, please do. Details are later in this newsletter. And of course, the coming months give further opportunities to seek and serve the LORD. I'm pleased to report that all but one preaching slots are filled between now and the end of February, but as the Wardens, as the Bishop's officers, carry the responsibility of the church on their shoulders, how might you support them?

Continued prayer will, of course, be vital. So why not commit yourself to praying for them and with them at our weekly gatherings? They'll need your love and encouragement- how can you show extra care for them over these coming months? But how about rolling up your sleeves and serving God and this the church family in more practical ways? Eunice, Mike and Karen serve in so many ways: on the intercessions rota, in music, as welcomers, with refreshments, and are active in home groups and with evangelism- all on top of their CW responsibilities! A brilliant way to help them- and to help build God's kingdom- is to offer yourself to serve in these ways.

Serving the LORD amongst you for the last 11 years have been a joy and a privilege. May He continue to bless you and use you, to fill you and change you. For his glory and your greater joy.

Grace and peace,

Dave

Special Events this August

Ladies of St Nicholas + St Mary's!
You are invited to an Evening with Queen Esther

Come to our story banquet at the Palace of St Nicholas Church on Friday 5th August at 7pm. Carriages 9:30pm.

RSVP to Judy 01438 213587 or mrsvicar16@gmail.com



Gents of St Nicholas + St Mary's...
 You are invited to join us for a round of crazy golf at Graveley Fruit Farm at 6pm- followed by a curry in the Old Town.

If you're interested, please sign up in church or email Dave at revdmbrown@gmail.com

Men's Curry + Golf Evening
 Friday 5th August, 2022



HILARY THOMPSON: Weather permitting, Hilary's flight will now take place on Monday 8th August. She'll take off from the airstrip in Graveley and after a flight around the area will land at Old Warden at 3pm- where some friends will meet her for a bring and share afternoon tea. Do come along if you'd like to join us! (You will need to pay to get in!)

OUR 24 HOURS OF PRAYER starts at 9pm on Tuesday 9th August to 9pm on Wednesday 10th August. The focus of this will be to pray for our churches during the interregnum, for our mission, our congregations, the churchwardens and PCCs, and for all involved in choosing the next Rector.

The time has been divided up into 24 one-hour slots, and whilst you can pray anywhere during your chosen time slot, we would suggest that those praying between 9pm Tuesday and 5am Wednesday pray at home, and where possible, those praying between 5am to 1pm Wednesday do so at St Mary's Graveley, whilst those praying from 1pm to 9pm come down to St Nicholas. The 24 hours of prayer will end with our regular prayer gathering taking place from 7:45pm-9pm, and we hope many of you will come along and pray together. Sign up in church or email Dave. The current list of bookings is attached so you can see what times are currently free.

DAVE AND JUDY'S LAST SUNDAY will be on Sunday 14th August. On this day we will join together for a joint service at St Nicholas at 10:30am, after which there will be a bring and share lunch. Sign up sheets are now in church so you can say what food you will be bringing.

CHANGES TO THE PATTERN OF SUNDAY WORSHIP. From 21st August onwards, both churches will have services of Holy Communion on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, and Services of the Word on 1st and 3rd Sundays. 5th Sundays will be joint Services of the Word- starting at 10:30am, with the venue moving between the 2 churches.



This month our **prayer gatherings** are as follows:

Tuesdays 7am-8am on zoom: 2nd, 16th + 30th

Wednesdays 7:45pm-9pm in St Nicks: 10th + 24th

St Nicholas will also be open for visitors and private prayer on Tuesdays from 2-4pm, Wednesdays from 12noon-2pm and Thursdays from 10am-12 noon



7th Hebrews 8: 1-13 14th Revelation 1: 1-8
 21st Hebrews 9: 1-28 28th Hebrews 10: 1-18

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

St Nicholas Church Walking Group - Thursday 4th August from The Crown at Aston End, meeting at 10.15 am and walking towards Bennington and Walkern. Around 5 miles. Contact Karen Cattell by email if you wish to join the walk and stop for lunch.

KEY CONTACT DETAILS

St Nicholas Church, Rectory Lane, Stevenage, SG1 4DA
 St Mary's Church, Church Lane, Graveley, SG4 7LY

CHURCH WARDENS:

St Nicks Mike Wilton – 07946 140909
 St Nicks Karen Walker – 07427 576870
churchwardens@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk
 St Mary's Eunice Sirkett – 07709 248625

Enquiries for weddings, funerals and baptisms –
 07733 995779 or admin@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk