



THE HERALD

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



www.saintnicholaschurch.org.uk

www.stmarysgraveley.org.uk

Dear friends,

April 2023

Last Sunday we were able to announce the wonderful news that Revd Edward Keene has been appointed as Rector of St Nicholas and St Mary's and yet again yesterday we had more good news to announce that Edward would be Licensed as Rector on the 19th of June at 7.30pm in St Nicholas.

As wardens, we thank everyone so much for the part they have played in helping us to arrive to this point. We had 22 people helping us put the church profile together and 22 people involved in each of the interview days plus all those praying at the same time as the interviews were taking place. It really has been a time of us all working together. God has been so good; He is so faithful to us and has guided us through the interregnum. Please pray for Edward and Hannah as they prepare to move to Stevenage and for Edward as he seeks God's wisdom for the Benefice.

As we enter **Holy Week**, we rejoiced yesterday that the King of Kings rode into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9.

We have quiet evening services in St Nicholas 2nd – 5th April 7.00 – 7.30pm. Please come along to spend time with Jesus as He goes to the cross.

As we walk with Jesus this week, we can see how Jesus and the disciples shared their last meal together. The King of Kings washed their feet, showing that we need Jesus' spiritual cleansing, and we all need to serve one another. We watch how Judas betrays Him. The disciples are still assuming that Jesus will be leading some kind of

revolution or a takeover. But we watch in the Garden of Gethsemane as Jesus prepares to carry the sin and sorrow of the whole world on His shoulders and the disciples cannot keep awake to be with Him.

Please come and share a meal with us on Thursday at 6.00pm and the Maundy Thursday service at 7.30pm, for soon Jesus would be poured out on our behalf. Yet He remained faithful to who He is and what He came to do.

On Good Friday, we have meditations at 3pm at St Mary's. Come and ponder as we see Him pierced for our transgressions as He hung on the cross (Isaiah 53:4). Watch as they mocked Him; mockingly called Him "The King of the Jews" - but actually *is* truly the Messiah!

Although Jesus came to us in flesh and blood, in the end He was despised, and no worth was attributed to him (Isaiah 53:3). He suffered the agony of separation from His Father, as He bore the punishment for our sins. He let out a loud cry and breathed His last. The centurion witnessed His death and said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:37,39).

The 'good' in Good Friday is because He walked silently to the cross, like a Lamb to the slaughter, He was the perfect lamb without sin, not protesting the punishment that was given to Him. As the curtain in the temple was torn in two this gave us access to God and Jesus became the temple in Whom we meet God. Because of this we have hope. Jesus was rejected by God so that God would not reject us. As the promise given through Jeremiah put it: "I will be their God, and they will be my people" (Jeremiah 31:33).

Can you see as the centurion did, the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and He has paid the price for our salvation? As we rejoice and greet Jesus on Easter morning, we can say without a shadow of doubt. **'He is risen indeed!'**

So on Easter Sunday, come and rejoice with us at St Nicholas 9.30am or St Mary's 11.30am. Rejoice on resurrection morning. Ponder anew the deep darkness Jesus saved us from and celebrate the incomprehensible truth of what Christ's resurrection truly means: through trusting in Him we have been brought to eternal life.

Wishing you a happy Easter!!

Karen Walker, Church Warden, St Nicholas

EVENTS THIS APRIL

Nightly evening prayer services - Sun 2nd – Wed 5th April – 7 – 7.30pm – at St Nicholas Church - following the Lectionary readings.

Maundy Thursday: meal at 6pm, followed by a service at 7.30pm, at St Nicholas Church. Revd Andy Thomas will be taking the service.

Good Friday – Meditations at St Mary's at 3pm – Graham Squires will be preaching.

Easter Saturday Family Fun Day – 1 - 4pm. Easter egg hunt, teddy bear zip wire, Easter bonnet competition, Flower Group stalls, tea and cakes in the Parish Room.

Easter Sunday Family Communion – Revd Ray Porter will be taking the services.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN STEVENAGE - Good Friday Walk of Witness - 10.45am from the playground at King George V Playing Field, the service will begin at 11am then the walk to the Joyride in the Town Centre for 11.30am.

FLOWER ARRANGING - please see Chris Chambers for more details – full training given. Thurs 10am-12pm, & 6.30pm-9pm at St Nicholas. More info and meeting dates are on the notice board in the parish room.

WESTON MUSIC SOCIETY – Sat 22nd Apr at 7.30pm at St Nicholas – Recordare (a capella choir) Led by prize winning conductor Harry Bradford, this outstanding a capella group consists of alumni from the Genesis Sixteen scheme, the Royal Academy of Music and former choral scholars from some of the UK's leading collegiate choirs. **For Recordare tickets click [here](#)**

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH WALKING GROUP – The next walk is on **Fri 28th Apr** from the George & Dragon Graveley at 10am. Approx 5-mile circular walk on Forster Country. Suitable clothing & footwear as fields might be muddy. Let Karen Cattell know if walking and if you wish to book lunch.

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

St Nicholas Annual Parochial Church Meeting – Sun 14th May at 11am after the morning service - Anyone who is on the Church Electoral Roll may vote at the meeting, but even if you are not on the Electoral Roll you are warmly encouraged to stay and listen.

PATTERN OF SUNDAY WORSHIP: Unless otherwise stated, 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.

Advance notice! Just for MAY, this pattern will be reversed – Holy Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays and Service of the Word on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.



Every Wednesday, there will be an Act of Prayer at St Nicholas Church – either a Benefice Prayer Meeting at 7.30pm, or a service of Evening Prayer at 7pm – check the church calendar for details: [Calendar – St Nicholas Church \(saintnicholaschurch.org.uk\)](#).

Every other Wednesday, on the same week as Home Groups, there will be an Early Morning Prayer meeting on Zoom.

*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*



2nd Apr John 12: 12-19 9th Apr John 20: 1-31
16th Apr Luke 6: 12-26 23rd Apr Luke 6: 27-36
30th Apr Luke 6: 37-49

Preachers for April:

2nd Apr: Jon Woodrow (MW)

9th Apr: Revd Ray Porter (HC)

16th Apr: Stephen Lovelock (MW)

23rd Apr: Revd David Miller (HC)

30th Apr: Revd Andy Thomas (HC) **NB. Joint Benefice Holy Communion at St Mary's at 10.30am**

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

General enquiries and for weddings, funerals and baptisms – 07733 995779

admin@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk



ST NICHOLAS CHURCH
EASTER
SATURDAY
FUN DAY
SATURDAY 8th APRIL
1pm-4pm
TEDDY BEAR ZIP WIRE
EASTER EGG HUNT
EASTER BONNET COMPETITION
FLOWER GROUP STALLS
TEA + CAKES

For more details see
www.saintnicholaschurch.org.uk

Celebrate Easter at St Nicholas and St Mary's

Palm Sunday Services

2nd April – 9.30am at St Nicholas and
11.30am at St Mary's Graveley.

Nightly evening prayer services

Sun 2nd – Wed 5th April at 7–7.30pm
at St Nicholas Church,
following the Lectionary readings.

Maundy Thursday Service

6th April - 7.30pm at St Nicholas Church.

Good Friday Meditations

7th April - 3pm at St Mary's Graveley.

Easter Saturday Family Fun Day

8th April - 1-4pm at St Nicholas Church.

See overleaf for details

Easter Sunday Family Communion Services

9th April - 9.30am at St Nicholas and
11.30am at St Mary's Graveley.

For more details see:

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