



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,

July 2023

I am delighted to have taken up the post of Rector in these two parishes. Hannah and I moved down from Cambridgeshire a few weeks ago and we have been finding our feet in Stevenage. Within days of our arrival, major works began literally on our doorstep on the North Road, but we have survived so far!

Thank you to all who have helped to ease the transition for us. We are particularly grateful to the working party who came to the garden on Sat 24 June and did an awful lot of weeding and heavy lifting (including disposal of a dilapidated shed). You can come to admire the results of their work at the **Vicarage Tea Party** on Saturday 8 July, 2pm to 5pm.

Thank you even more so to all of you who have served the churches in new ways during the vacancy period between ministers. The churchwardens Mike, Karen, and Eunice have all shouldered particular additional responsibilities and have done so faithfully and energetically. Thank the Lord for those who take on those positions.

The Installation Service in St Nics on Mon 19 June was a happy occasion with many from the parishes as well as well-wishers from further afield in the building. The Bishop's sermon included a charge to me that the gospel of

God's grace in Christ be front and centre in my ministry here - I shall certainly strive to ensure that it is.

I am beginning to get to know members of the two churches and will try to do so as fast as possible, but please bear with me in the meantime. No doubt it will help us to get to know one another if you can make it to the **Vicarage Tea Party** on Sat 8 July!

My first sermon was from Ecclesiastes 5:9 – *'this is gain for a land in every way – a king committed to cultivated fields'*. The Lord Jesus is such a king – one who gives and provides for our essentials in life. He doesn't just live 'the good life' in heaven, but his eyes and heart are towards 'the fields', down here, where the ordinary people are.

As we follow the Lord, may we likewise be committed to 'cultivated fields' – not in the literal sense of all becoming farmers, but in the spiritual sense. This means looking out for others and tending to their 'essentials' in life, not least the ultimate need for peace with God through Christ. I shall certainly be committed to 'cultivating the fields' of these parishes.

In July and August our sermon series will turn to Ephesians, which should be a wonderful means of strengthening for the churches. There is much in the epistle about 'spiritual knowledge' – understanding of our state as Christians. May we grow in this week by week and so walk more closely with God and one another.

Meanwhile, church opening and door to door visiting will continue during the summer. Some of us may be away at times on holidays – if that is you then I hope you have a super break and are refreshed for life in the second half of 2023.

Before I sign off, did I mention the **Vicarage Tea Party**?! I do hope to see you there.

Best wishes,

Revd Edward Keene - Rector, St Nicholas Stevenage and St Mary Graveley

SPECIAL EVENTS THIS JULY

Tea Party at the Vicarage – Saturday 8th July from 2pm to 5pm. Please do bring either;

- A cold plate (e.g. sandwiches)
- A soft drink
- A dessert

Please RSVP by email to Edward, Mike, or Karen.

The Orpheus North Herts Choir - Saturday 15th July at 7pm at St Nicholas Church. The programme will be devoted to 500 years of English music and will contain sacred, secular and popular pieces. It will also include an organ solo and two readings.



*St Nicholas Church
Rectory Lane, Stevenage
SG1 4DA*

**Orpheus Choir
of North Hertfordshire**

Conductor: Anne-Marie Hetherington
Organist: Clifton Hughes

***The King
Shall Rejoice***

A wide selection of music;
Mass for 4 Voices by Byrd,
My Fair Lady,
and more...

 Complimentary
glass of wine

7:00pm Saturday 15th July 2023
Tickets £10 cash at the door – proceeds to the church

Equipping the Saints: Equipped to engage with stories – a session with Tony Watkins from Tyndale House Cambridge. 5pm to 6:30pm on Saturday 15 July at Grace Community Church.

Donations of non-perishable food items for a hamper for The Leys School - for families in need over the summer holidays. Please bring in your donations before the 16th July. See Lynda Matthews for more details.

St Nicholas Church Walking Group – The next walk is on **Thursday 3 August**. Meeting 10am at the Rusty Gun pub in St Ippolyts. More details to come in the weekly email.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Unless otherwise stated, both churches will have services of Holy Communion (HC) on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, and Services of the Word (MW) on 1st and 3rd Sundays. 5th Sundays will be joint Services of the Word - starting at 10:30am, with the venue moving between the two churches.



2 nd July	Ephesians 1: 1-14	(MW)
9 th July	Ephesians 1: 15-23	(HC)
16 th July	Ephesians 2: 1-10	(MW)
23 rd July	Ephesians 2: 11-22	(HC)
30 th July	Ephesians 3: 1-13	(MW)

NB. 30th July will be a Joint Benefice Service of the Word at St Nicholas at 10.30am

MIDWEEK ACTIVITIES



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 \(saintnicholaschurch.org.uk\)](https://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*

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.

KEY CONTACTS

RECTOR: Revd Edward Keene, 2A North Road,
Stevenage, SG1 4AT Tel: 01438 356610

Day off: Saturday

rector@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk

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

Equipped to Engage with Stories

Sunday 16th July 5-6.30pm

Be equipped to unpack several big themes found in all the stories in popular culture, and to show how each of them echoes the Bible and points to Jesus.



Speaker: Tony Watkins

Fellow for Public Engagement
at Tyndale House, Cambridge.
He interfaces biblical insight with
the stories and media of our day.

Hosted by Grace Community Church (SG2 9XJ)

In partnership with Longmeadow and St Nicholas Churches