



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,

October 2023

My most dreaded diary appointment is not with a primary school assembly or even with the archdeacon but with the dentist. Perhaps you have a similar relationship with that particular healthcare professional?

Much though the dentist may put us through some excruciating sessions in the chair, we all know they are (usually) trying to help us. They often help by identifying something we cannot always see for ourselves – tooth rot.

A habit which we can see and control (consuming sugar and neglect of brushing) leads to a real situation which we cannot easily perceive (tooth rot), leading to an unpleasant future event (fillings – or worse).

We saw a similar pattern in Psalm 1 recently as we began the new series on Sunday. A habit which can see and control (neglect of God's word) leads to a real situation which we cannot easily perceive (being like wind-driven chaff), leading to an unpleasant future event (judgement).

Thankfully the Psalm also presented us with the much happier alternative version of this progression, from Bible meditation, to being like a well-watered tree, to enjoying God's protection at the last day.

*'the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.'*
(Psalm 1 verse 6)

In which of those progressions do we wish to partake? It all starts with dwelling in God's word – listening to it, reading it, thinking seriously about it, praying it over individually and collectively.

This stark reality is part of why cultivating lifetime habits of feeding on God's word, Sunday by Sunday, and midweek, is so important. There is more going on than meets the eye as we gather and listen and consider. This Psalm been a salutary reminder to me and I pray a useful one to you also.

As a fresh (though thankfully less intense) wave of covid comes by, do keep in touch if you are feeling poorly and make use of the church livestream if confined!

With love & best wishes

Revd Edward Keene

**Rector, Stevenage (St Nicholas)
and Graveley with Chesfield (St Mary)**

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Unless otherwise stated, both churches 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 are joint Services of the Word - starting at 10:30am with the venue alternating between the two churches.



1 st October	Psalm 1	(MW)
8 th October	Psalm 2	(HC)
15 th October	Psalm 3	(MW)
22 nd October	Psalm 4	(HC)
29 th October	Psalm 5	(MW)

**NB. 29th October will be a Joint Benefice Service
of the Word at St Mary's at 10.30am**

MIDWEEK ACTIVITIES



There are benefice **home groups** currently meeting on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings and Wednesday afternoons. Please ask Edward if you wish to join one.

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. Ask Edward for details.

*St Nicholas will also be open for **visitors and private prayer** on Tuesdays from 2-4pm, Wednesdays from 12noon-2pm and Thursdays from 2.30-4.30pm.*

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.

OTHER EVENTS COMING UP

Christianity Explored Course – starts on 12th October – speak to Edward or sign-up in church.

St Nicholas Church Walking Group – The next walk is on Friday 6 October starting at 10 am from The Horns Pub, 82 Bramfield Rd, Datchworth SG3 6RZ. Approx 4.74 mile circular walk. As always, wear suitable clothing and footwear for time of year and bring a drink/water. Please let Karen Cattell know if you are walking and wish to stop for lunch.

Growing Good Course – The Stevenage Deanery will run the Church Urban Fund's *Growing Good* course over six Saturday mornings (10am to 12 noon) in the Autumn.

- 7 Oct at St Hugh & St John's, Chells
- 14 Oct at St Hugh & St John's, Chells

If anyone from the benefice would like to attend, please let Edward know to get signed up.

Bridge Builders Open Day in their new office – Tuesday 17th October from 10am-2pm. United Reformed Church, Cuttys Lane, SG1 1UL admin@bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk 01438 314314 There will be tea, coffee, cakes, Christmas cards...

Women's Breakfast – Saturday 28th October at 8.30am at The Standing Order Pub in the Old Town. Sign-up sheet in church at St Nicholas.

Lunchtime Recital at St Nicholas Church – Wednesday 1st November at 1pm. Tom Coates (Violin) and Ben Ward (Piano) performing pieces by Edvard Grieg, Cesar Franck and Astor Piazzolla. Admission £5 on the door.

Christmas Brass Band Concert at St Nicholas Church – Saturday 2nd December at 7.30pm. All proceeds to be split between the WGC Band and Bridge Builders Christian Trust. Tickets £7.50 on the door, children free.

SAVE THE DATE of the Benefice Weekend Away – Fri 22 to Sun 24 March 2024 at Sizewell Hall, by the beach in Suffolk. More details TBC.



KEY CONTACTS

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