

Issue 2/26

Sunday 25th January 2026

THE FRONT PAGE

The year ahead... Lots of special things coming up

On the Front Page a couple of weeks ago, I talked about how the planning for our New Church Hall is bound to take up quite a lot of our time and efforts as a church family in 2026. However, it's also important for us to remember that, although very important, it's not the most important thing – which is the mission that God has given us, to reach out to our parish with the good news and to encourage and build each other up within our church family.

So throughout the year we will continue try to make our Sunday Services places where we, together, can praise and worship the Lord, pray to Him, and learn from Him, through His Word. And we will also continue to highlight special events that will help encourage us, challenge us and help us to follow Jesus more closely this year.

So please look out for our **Lent Meetings**, which will be on the **Thursdays during Lent**, starting on **Thurs 26th Feb** (7pm for 7.15). We'll be focusing on God's Mission, both around the world and here – and it will include catching up with some of our Mission Links. We will be hearing from Wycliffe Bible Translators, Catherine Porter telling us about her life in Japan, Hannah and Rachel sharing about their work with young people, Howard from Open Doors speaking about the persecuted church, and Jackie reflecting on some of her own experiences of being involved with overseas mission. We can also look forward to video greetings and updates from Gift and Kathryn in Uganda, and Mark and Ruth at Betel in Birmingham. I'm hoping that these will be well worth coming along to.

Looking further ahead, we will be running our **Summer Weekend** along with other churches again – **Fri 12th - Sun 14th June**. Do keep this weekend free, if you can! Thank you. Mark.

Sunday 25th January 2026

Epiphany 3

Theme: At the town gate

Ruth Ch.4 vs.1-12

(Church Bibles - St. John's pg.269; St. Mark's pg.269)

9.00 am	Morning Prayer in St John's Church (Preacher: Sheila Neale)	Prayer after Church
10.30 am	Morning Worship in St Mark's Church (Preacher: Sheila Neale)	Prayer after Church
11.00 am (Premier)	Online Service on YouTube (Preacher: Mark M) (And also available at any time after this.)	
4.00 pm	Evening Communion in St John's Church	

Activities this week

Mon 26 th	8.30 am	Morning Prayers in St John's Church
	10 - 11.30 am	Little Fishes in St John's Church
	2.00 pm	Bethany in St John's Church Hall
Tues 27 th	11.45am	Stewsdays in St. Mark's Church.
Weds 28 th	8.00 am	Morning Prayers on WhatsApp
	11.00 am	Wednesday Worshippers Holy Communion – St Mark's Church (Preacher: Stuart)
	4.00 pm	Craft Group in St. Mark's Church, “Craftea” please let Pam or the office know if you would like to come
	7.00 pm	Ignite Youth Group - St Paul's Church
Thurs 29 th	7.30 pm	Thursday Evening Group - St Mark's
Fri 30 th	8.30 am	Morning Prayers in St John's Church
	5.00 pm	Prayers for our Mission Links in St John's Church
Sat 31 st	9.30 am – 11.30 am	Coffee Morning in St. John's Church Hall

Morning and Evening Prayers have restarted

It's never too late to join.

If you would like more information, please just ask.

Sunday 1st February 2026

Epiphany 4

Theme: The father of Jesse, the Father of David

Ruth Ch.4 vs.13-22

(Church Bibles - St. John's pg.270; St. Mark's pg.270)

9.00 am	Morning Prayer in St John's Church (Preacher: Mark M)	Prayer after Church
10.30am	Morning Worship in St Mark's Church (Preacher: Mark M)	
11.00 am (Premier)	Online Service on YouTube (And also available at any time after this.)	
4.00 pm	Tea Time Church in St John's Church	

Activities this week

Mon 2 nd	8.30 am	Morning Prayers in St John's Church
	10 – 11.30 am	Little Fishes in St John's Church
Weds 4 th	8.00 am	Morning Prayers on WhatsApp (please ask Mark if you would like to join)
	11.00 am	Wednesday Worshippers – St. Mark's First Wednesday Special "Winter Warmer" Theme of the Service: "Living together" <i>followed by a Soup & Roll Lunch</i>
	7.00 pm	Ignite Youth Group - St Paul's Church
Thurs 5 th	10.30 am to 12 noon	Bethany Again in St John's Church Hall
	7.30 pm	Thursday Evening Group - St Mark's
Fri 6 th	8.30 am	Morning Prayers in St John's Church
	5.00 pm	Prayers for our Mission Links in St John's Church

Prayer after our Morning Services

*There are people available to pray with anyone who asks.
You can ask for prayer for yourself or for someone else*

St. Mark's – 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month

St. John's – we now offer this every Sunday

Sunday 8th February 2026

Epiphany

Theme: Ruth: the four prayers

Ruth Ch.1 vs.8-9a, Ch.2 vs.11-12, Ch.2 vs.19-21, Ch.4 vs.13-15
(Church Bibles - St. John's pg.267; St. Mark's pg.267)

9.00 am	Holy Communion in St John's Church (Preacher: Mark M)	Prayer after Church
10.30 am	Morning Worship in St Mark's Church (Preacher: Mark M)	Prayer after Church
11.00 am (Premier)	Online Service on YouTube (Preacher: Mark M) (And also available at any time after this.)	

Thank you to those of you who helped us plant another **500 Snowdrops** in the Churchyard last weekend.

The cost of the snowdrops is being met out of the Sunday morning refreshment money, which is amassing quite nicely – so thank you very much for your very kind donations. Steph

Leaflet about the New Church Hall is now available

This is for anyone to have a look at – what our plans are and how the funding for these is going. Do have a look!

We are very grateful to Brenda Berry's family who have donated the collections in memory of her to the New Church Hall Fund.

The amazing total is £1,009.03. This is another lovely tribute to all that Brenda has done for us as a church through the years.

Dates for Lent & Easter 2026

These are dates that move around each year, so we thought it might be useful to have them all here together -

Shrove Tuesday – 17th February (the day before Lent starts)

Ash Wednesday – 18th February (this is when Lent starts)

The first of our Lent Meetings – Thurs 26th Feb

Mothering Sunday – 15th March

Palm Sunday – 29th March

Maundy Thursday – 2nd April

Good Friday – 3rd April

Easter Sunday – 5th April

Half Term Holiday Club – Mon 16th – Wed 18th Feb.

We are getting together our final list of leaders and helpers for these days – so if you can help, please have a word with Hannah or Mark, or drop a message to the Church Office.

Summer Christian Camps for young people

We have good links with a number of these, for a range of ages.

We also have received a grant to help with the cost of them. *If you know any families who would be interested see Hannah or Mark.*

Stewsdays

When I first went along to Stewsdays I was very impressed with the table linen, flowers, teapots, cups and saucers (no mugs) and the excellent two course home cooked lunch with tea or coffee, all prepared by a 5-star team. In December 2025 they cooked and served 60 Turkey dinners plus Christmas pudding desserts!

I have collected some comments from some of the guests about Stewsdays....

“It is love in a room. People interact with each other whether they come to Church or not”.

“It is a community lunch where people enjoy each other’s company. Some are lonely usually eating alone at home. It is a joy to eat with other”.

“I love everything about it, the company, the food – such a lovely atmosphere”.

And a team member said:

“I enjoy cooking and it is such a blessing for the support we receive from church members - drivers pick up guests who need a lift in cars”.

In fact, the whole ministry of Stewsdays displays a very loving and caring family.

A HUGE Thank you from all the guests who have enjoyed another year of this very, very special last Tuesday of each month.

May God richly bless you all.

Daisy Cook

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Stewsdays

(LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH)

Tuesday 27th January at St Mark's Church

Please choose: Toad in the hole/Vegetarian Toad in the hole

Doors open at 11.45am, lunch served at 12.15pm

Booking is essential: 01255 475704 (Church Office)

If you think this is something you would like to know more about or get involved with please have a word with Pam Dench

Craft Group

(LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH)

Wednesday 28th January 2026 - 4pm at St Mark's

*This month our Craft Group will enjoy a **Craftea** together.*

There will be an opportunity (but no pressure) to show any crafts that you are working on or have completed recently.

The cost will be £4 and I'll need to know numbers for the catering. So contact the Church Office or me personally if you can be there.

Looking forward to a fun time together. Pam

Unfortunately, there won't be Craft Group in March as I am unable to be there.

Please let any potential Crafters know. Thank you, Pam

Coffee Morning

(LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH)

Saturday 31st January 2026, 9.30-11.30am

in St. John's Church Hall

Catherine Porter's Visit

Catherine will be spending several days with us here in Clacton as part of her time back in this country.

She will be able to tell us lots about what she has been doing in Japan and we will also have a chance to hear her wonderful harp playing.

So let's get these dates in our diaries and on our calendars...

Thursday 5th – Sunday 8th March

Lent Meeting (Thurs, 7pm for 7.15), Harp Concert (Sat 3pm), Sun Morning Services

Please continue to pray for all those families, who we have had contact with, as they mourn the loss of their loved ones.

Please continue to pray for those we know who are not well or are undergoing or waiting for treatment at the moment.

Please continue to pray for the persecuted churches around the world. *Please ask about our regular Thursday Prayer Meetings.*

Please pray for our local schools – for the children and staff, in this new term. Pray for Hannah and Mark as we offer help to them and we try to maintain all of our links with them.

Please pray for the new Archbishop of Canterbury, as she takes up this new role in the coming weeks. She will have an influence on how the C of E tries to work through its present difficulties.

Also, please keep praying for Bishop Rob and all that he does to support churches (like ours) in the Ebbsfleet Network. He has a very heavy workload - pray for strength and for encouragements.

PRAVERS FOR THE NEW CHURCH HALL:

Let's take the opportunity over the coming months to pray for progress on the Church Hall Project. At the moment –

- Pray as we try to complete the Faculty Application
- Pray for the architects as they work on the detailed plans
- Thank God for the amazing funding that we have received and please pray for the remaining money to come in

Afternoon Services in St. John's at 4pm

Sunday 25th January

(Fourth Sunday of the month)

Evening Communion

Sunday 1st February

(First Sunday of the month)

Tea Time Church

Sunday 8th February

(Second Sunday of the month)

Prayer & Praise

Sunday 15th February

(Third Sunday of the month)

Lego Church

Sunday 22nd February

(Fourth Sunday of the month)

Evening Communion

Normal Church Office opening times are

Monday	10.00 am	-	1.30 pm	-	Ann-Marie
Tuesday	10.00 am	-	1.00 pm	-	Anita
Wednesday	10.00 am	-	1.00 pm	-	Anita
Thursday	9.00 am	-	1.30 pm	-	Ann-Marie
Friday	9.00 am	-	3.30 pm	-	Ann-Marie
Saturday	9.00 am	-	11.00 am	-	Anita

(On Fridays 9–10 am we have a Staff Meeting.)

Clergy day off

Mark – day off: Tuesday

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