

NEWSLETTER



The content deadline is 10am every Thursday

Anything received after 10am will be included the following week, if appropriate. Thank you.

Please visit our website stmarysnewicks.church for more information on the various organisations and events and regular activities available to you.

Rector's Ramble

Genesis 1:1-2.3, Romans 8:18-25, Matthew 6:25-34

"In the beginning... God said, 'Let there be light.'"

Dear Friends

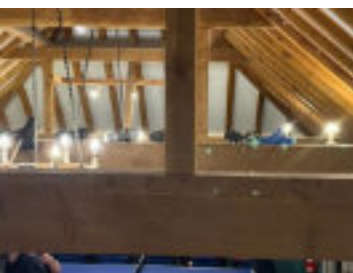
Thank you to everyone who came to our 'St Pete's in the Pub Service' at the Five Bells last Sunday, it was a very special time of Church and community coming together, and more than one person asked if we could do this every month!!!

Well we will be back at the Bells next month for the 1st March where Fr Martin will be presiding and after all the press that we've been given this past week . . . we might need a bigger pub!!

Thank you to Fr Martin for graciously swapping last week to enable me to lead the first Pete's in the Pub and huge thank you to Melle, the team and Tom for their generous hospitality.

Fr Martin and I are swapping again this week so I will be presiding at St Mary's for the 8am & 10am and Fr Martin will be presiding at the 10am at St Martin's Chapel, Chailey Heritage (if you haven't been before do try and attend it's a beautiful and very thin space.)

Next week Sunday 15th February Fr Martin will be leading our Churches together services at St Mary's as Pam & I are taking 18 of our youth group away on retreat with our Youth Worker Lee Buck and I really hope this will be a time of blessing for them all, your prayers would be greatly appreciated, especially after the mischief in the Barn Centre on Wednesday



As part of the retreat we will be looking at Prayers answered and unanswered and what do we understand by Creation – as part of this we will be making a Prayer Wall Graffiti Space and a Creation decoupage Mural – if you have any old magazines you no longer need (they will be cut up) which might have themes about space, our world, countryside, humanity, ecology, community, history, geography or faith, please could you drop off at the back of St Mary's before Friday 13th Feb.

In the midst of this joy and celebration across our churches, our world can feel like it is on a very different trajectory. Abuses of power, arguments and division, lies and betrayal all taking place at the highest levels.

This Sunday is Racial Justice Sunday, continuing an ecumenical custom that began in 1995 in Britain and Ireland. The day was created in response to the murder of Stephen Lawrence, a Black teenager in South London, on 22 April 1993

While many might think that racist attitudes and actions have lessened over the years, the stark reality is that racism today is as persistent and as devastating as it's ever been in the past. According to the charity Stop Hate UK racially motivated hate crimes are the highest reported type of Hate Crime in the UK. In 2021-2022 43% of reported incidents were motivated by race hate.



In 2025 we witnessed emerging Christian nationalism, distinct from mainstream Christianity and criticised for its far-right politics, anti-immigration and opposition to LGBTQ+ rights.

Racial Justice Sunday offers us the opportunity to reflect upon the pain experienced in our country and consider how we might be being called to respond.

We can start by acknowledging the beauty and diversity of our humanity is made in God's image.

In our reading from Genesis this Sunday the scripture opens not with an argument, a strategy, or a policy document, but with a word spoken into chaos.

Before there is shape or order, there is darkness, and before there is action, there is God's voice. Creation begins not with human effort but with divine generosity.

Light is not manufactured; it is given.

That matters when we look at the news around us. Much of the UK's public conversation feels heavy with darkness: anxiety about the cost of living, ongoing debates about housing and migration, warnings about climate instability, and a low-level sense of exhaustion with politics and public life.

The news cycle thrives on urgency and alarm. It often tells us, implicitly or explicitly, that everything depends on us getting things right — now.

Into that atmosphere, Genesis 1 offers a radically different starting point.

Throughout the ancient world an image was believed to contain the essence of that which it represented. Genesis reminds us that all of humanity was created to embody God's qualities.

We are symbols of God's presence to act on his behalf as his representatives in this world.

As his representatives we are invited to think about how we can create safe places of love and belonging by challenging racism, prejudice, discrimination and its effects in our parishes.

God brings light before anything else is sorted out. Before systems, before structures, before solutions. Light comes first. In biblical terms, light is not just visibility; it is meaning, hope, and the promise that chaos does not get the final word.

Creation is not born out of panic, but purpose.

Jesus echoes that same truth in Matthew 6, when he tells his listeners not to worry about their lives — about food, drink, or clothing. These words can sound unrealistic, even irresponsible, particularly when many in the UK are genuinely struggling. Worry, for many, is not theoretical; it is lived experience. Jesus is not dismissing that reality. He is challenging the assumption beneath it: the belief that our security ultimately rests on our own anxious striving.

"Look at the birds of the air," he says. They do not store up reserves or read the markets, yet they are sustained. *"Consider the lilies of the field."* They are clothed with a beauty that outshines even royal splendour. Jesus is not romanticising poverty; he is re-locating trust. He reminds us that life is more than the relentless calculation of scarcity.

That message lands sharply in a culture trained to measure worth by productivity and preparedness.

We are encouraged to worry — about Parish Share, Church Fabric, tithing, and personally our pensions, energy prices, health systems, the future of our children.

Some of that concern is necessary and responsible. But Jesus distinguishes between concern and consuming anxiety. Worry, he says, cannot add a single hour to our lives. It narrows them instead.

Our Christian Stewardship shares something of the process of creation, insofar as it helps us learn the creative 'breaking of rules'. The rules, in this case, are those of worldly prudence. 'Seeking first God's kingdom and his righteousness', being free from the concerns which rule most people's lives, because we have, as Paul put it, 'the first fruits of the Spirit' as the assurance of God's love for us, has some surprising results.

Birds, and grasses, and flowers don't worry, says Jesus. They simply are; their glory is in being what God created them to be.

Human beings, on the other hand, spend so much of their time worrying about what they are to become – or what might possibly happen to them – that we often have no time to be.

At the heart of our stewardship is an affirmation of our potential; an affirmation which says that, as we place what we have in God's hands, we find we become enriched by being free to be most fully ourselves, able to take our part in the dance of creation.

The connection between these two readings is profound.

The God who speaks light into darkness in Genesis is the same God Jesus invites us to trust in Matthew.

Creation itself becomes evidence of God's ongoing care. If God brings light where there was none, and if God sustains birds and flowers, then perhaps the future is not as fragile as the headlines suggest.

Jesus ends this passage with a re-ordering of priorities: *"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."*

This is not an escape from the world, but a different way of inhabiting it.

Seeking God's kingdom means choosing trust over fear, generosity over hoarding, hope over despair, love over hate — even when the news tempts us otherwise.

On this Sunday, surrounded by stories that tell us to brace ourselves for more uncertainty, scripture invites us to remember where everything truly begins: not in darkness, but in light; not in worry, but in trust.

God's first word over creation was not "be afraid," but "let there be light." And that word still speaks.

Have a good week, be joyful, keep the faith and keep doing the little things that make a difference to those you love and those in need.

Paul xx

Hymns for St Mary's

- Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy
- Indescribable
- What an awesome God
- Longing for light, we wait in darkness (Christ be our light)
- The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want

Please remember those on our prayer list:

Francis Bailey, Cole Louise Blackman, Bernice Blundy, Karina Brown, Gabi Brunner,
 Beryl Campion-Smith, Harri Gande, Morris Gee, John and Elizabeth Gould,
 Rubie Geer, Juliette Lucas, Spike MacGuire, Christina McCann, Shirley Mansfield,
 Derek Marshall, George Morrison, Patricia Moss, Ann Parker, Adrian, Andrea and Amber
 Parris, Gemma Peacock, June and Ron Perou, Christine Ripley, Rubie, Yvette Smith,
 Cheryl Stewart, Marcus Thrower, Felicity Veasey, Toni Warrilow,
 Sean Watson, Nasima Wright.

SERVICES - ST MARY'S NEWICKS CHURCH	
JANUARY 2026	FEBRUARY 2026
Sunday 4th Jan - Epiphany 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Ian Reekie 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6, Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12 5pm Evensong Leader: Reader Geoff Clinton Preacher: ALM Patsy Bailey	Sunday 1st Feb - 4th Sunday of Epiphany Septuagesima 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: 1 Kings 17:8-16, 1 Corinthians 1:18-end, John 2:1-11 5pm Evensong Preacher: Reader Jeremy Burdett
Sunday 11th Jan - 1st Sunday after Epiphany 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9, Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17 6pm Worship 2 Leader: Mandy Stockwell	Sunday 8th Feb - 2nd Sunday before Lent Sexagesima 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan Readings: Genesis 1:1-2:3, Romans 8:18-25, Matthew 6:25-end 6pm Worship 2 Leader: Mandy Stockwell
Sunday 18th Jan - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 10am Churches Together @ St Mary's Family Communion & Owls Preacher: Reader Jeremy Burdett Readings: Isaiah 49:1-7, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, John 1:29-42	Sunday 15th Feb - Sunday Next Before Lent Quinquagesima 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan 10am Churches Together @ St Mary's Family Communion & Owls Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan Readings: Exodus 24:12-end, 2 Peter 1:16-end, Matthew 17:1-9
	Wednesday 18th Feb - Ash Wednesday 7pm Imposition of Ashes & Holy Communion Rev Paul Mundy & Fr Martin Morgan
Sunday 25th Jan - 3rd Sunday of Epiphany 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Ian Reekie 10am Family Communion Leader: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: Jeremiah 1:4-10, Acts 9:1-22, Matthew 19:27-30 Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 5pm Healing Service with Communion Preacher: ALM Patsy Bailey	Sunday 22nd Feb - 1st Sunday in Lent 8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Ian Reekie 10am Family Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11
*Denotes standard Year A Lectionary Readings	
Lent Course commences on Monday 23rd February 7pm St Mary's Newick	

Monica Todd is very keen to find a good new home for Peter's Mobility Scooter, so if you know of anyone in need of one; or you are looking for one yourself - please contact Monica on 01825 722660 for more information.



NEWICK AFTERNOON CLUB



Rob Wallace

will speak on

The Romans in Sussex

and the work he and his team have been undertaking in Barcombe.

THURSDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2026

2.30PM IN THE BARN CENTRE, NEWICK

(There is no membership of the Newick Afternoon Club just come – sometimes it may cost a £1, for the hire of the Community Centre/Barn Centre)
In the meantime, if you would like any further information please give one of us a call: Paddy C. 01825 722154, Malcolm S. 01825 722705

OPEN TO ALL IN NEWICK AND BEYOND

A Pastoral letter from Bishop Martin

Whilst we (St Mary's and St Peter's) are doing our own Lent Course, if anyone wanted to use the resources on Matthew for a Home Group or for personal study you would be most welcome.



The Bishop of Chichester
The Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner

February 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

A recent *Ad Clerum* was admirably short and had just four points:

- i. Keeping a good Lent
- ii. Participating in the Chrism Eucharist
- iii. Funding
- iv. Looking ahead

This Pastoral Letter covers similar ground. I hope you will be able to share it within your parish or chaplaincy. And I'll take these four points in reverse order.

Looking ahead

I shall retire from office on 31 May this year. It has been an enormous privilege to work with so many gifted and committed people during my time in Chichester. I shall always be grateful for our partnership in apostolic mission and will hold this joyful household of faith in my prayers as its future unfolds.

The diocese seems to be in good heart after the 950 celebrations. A new diocesan bishop will bring fresh vision and energy, and be supported by a strong, gifted, confident team which is committed to the quality of Christian life in our schools, our parishes, and outreach to those in need.

There are well-established protocols for a diocesan vacancy and appointing a new bishop. Discussion about this is now taking shape. There is little that will change in terms of day-to-day life in the diocese.

The suffragan bishops will together oversee the life of the diocese during the vacancy. They have decided that Bishop Will is to take on the formal duties of acting bishop, subject to consultation with the Bishop's Council.

The Chrism Eucharist

This year the celebration of Holy Week and Easter will provide an opportunity to look back and give thanks for our life in Christ, and to seek its renewal.

At the Chrism Eucharist in the cathedral we shall have an opportunity to commit ourselves afresh to the distinctive work that Jesus Christ has entrusted to us in ordination, and to give thanks for the grace by which the Holy Spirit sustains us in this calling. I look forward to seeing many of you at this year's Chrism celebration in Chichester on Wednesday 1 April at 12.00 noon, when we recall that being fools for Christ is an apostolic virtue (1 Cor 4:10).

Funding

The exciting news of Church of England funding for the continuing work of the diocese commits us to four areas of renewal: in communities of disadvantage and need, in work with young people and families, recognising and investing in focal ministry, and offering grants to support local initiatives.

There is something for every parish in this funding programme. It is a massive investment in parish life, offering us a strategy for knowing, loving and following Jesus today.

Keeping a good Lent

In this *Year of Matthew* we have a great diocesan Lent Course and lots of other resources to enrich this season of grace. St Matthew constantly calls us back to our first love, inspired by the Scriptures through which we encounter and respond to God's search for us. St Matthew's love of those Scriptures teaches us how to remember the future that Jesus opens up for us.

Lent invites us to recover our capacity for delight and participation in the glory of God. Early Christian writers are enthusiastic in their description of the renewal of baptism as deep cleaning, release from things that shame and sadden us. So in giving thanks to God for the call to serve in this diocese I also ask pardon from any of you that I have offended.

And perhaps there is no better way to conclude the call to serve you as a bishop in this diocese than by celebrating with you the Paschal mystery of our rebirth in Christ. This is our faith, it is what we have each received and what we each have the privilege of sharing with the people of this age.

The Easter Vigil and Confirmation on Holy Saturday, the Solemn Eucharist and Solemn Evensong on Easter Sunday offer an open invitation to you to join me in Chichester cathedral to give thanks for our partnership in the gospel. I am also grateful to Fr Paul White, the Rector of Rye, for the opportunity to be at Evensong in St Mary's, Rye on 31 May, the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity.

+*Martin*

The Parishes of Saint Mary, Newick
and St Peter, Chailey

Lent Course 2026
at
St Mary's Newick's Church

“Let the Redeemed tell their story “

Psalm 107

Monday February 23rd
Monday March 2nd
Monday March 9th
Monday March 16th
Monday March 23rd

7.00 pm Coffee and Pudding
7.30 pm Reflection

We know when the early Christians met together they sang psalms and hymns, they read the scriptures and they broke bread.

They rejoiced in the belief that their sins had been washed away by the blood of Jesus and lived, as best they could, lives of righteousness.

They reflected the words of Isaiah when he wrote in Chapter 61 v 10 “he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.”

Christians sometimes live as if they have been clothed in sackcloth and ashes. The world needs more than ever to see us Christians fulfilling our vocation to be lights in this dark world.

Through the Lent Course this year we shall be called on to reaffirm our belief in our salvation and how we wear the robe of righteousness.

We shall think about how we acknowledge the truth,” all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3v23) yet at the same time bask in the forgiveness that restores us.

We shall ask what it means to say in our hearts’ “behold the servant of the Lord be it unto me according to your word” (Luke 1v38).

On one of our sessions we shall indeed sing hymns and psalms delight in the scriptures and break bread together. The climax hopefully will ask what it means to be the Alleluia people. What kind of people are those who are crazy enough to get up very early on Easter Day to welcome our Lord’s victory over sin and death.

Hopefully this will all help to deepen your faith and increase your love for God and neighbour. It will I hope to truly become the Alleluia people.

REGULARS AT ST MARY'S

Children's Choir: 1st Sunday of each month 10am - 11am Barn Centre

Email: churchoffice@stmarysnewicks.church

Web: stmarysnewicks.church/youthchoir

RSCM Voice for Life Sessions with St Mary's Youth Choir - every third Thursday of the Month - 4pm - 5pm in the Barn Centre. £5. Email: churchoffice@stmarysnewicks.church to register.

Citizens Advice: Now at the Community Centre

Lunch Club: Second Monday of the month in the Barn Centre 12.30pm.

To book your place call 01825 722186

Mens Meeting: Monday mornings 7am - 8am in the Barn Centre

NYC & NCT: Fun clubs for the young people of the village. Barn Centre.

Wednesday evenings during term-time:

- Juniors: 11-15 years - 6pm
- Seniors: 16-18 years - 7.30pm

More information: [HERE](#)

Email: youth.newick@gmail.com

Owlets Babies 'n Tots Group: Chat, refreshments and songs for Mums, Dads, Grandparents, Carers and their Babies and Tots. Mondays 9.30-10.30am (term time only) in St Mary's Church. Feel free to contact Pam Mundy for more information

childrenandfamilies@stmarysnewicks.church



Owls: Crafts, Bible Story, Fun LEGO and Refreshments - usually third Sundays 9.55am - 11am, Feel free to contact Pam Mundy for more information

childrenandfamilies@stmarysnewicks.church

Next dates - check the Owls Poster on Website, in Newsletters and up in the Church Porch



Prayer Group: 1st and 3rd Monday 2pm Barn Centre (unless otherwise notified)

Prayers for Church Services: Sundays 9.30-9.45am Barn Centre

Owlets
Babies 'n Tots Group

Chat, Refreshments & Songs
For Mums/Dads/Grandparents/Carers and their
Babies and Tots!
Mondays, 9.30am - 10.30am
in St. Mary's Church
(term time only)
Feel free to be in contact -
Pam Mundy, childrenandfamilies@stmarysnewicks.church




Owls Club


Crafts, Bible Story, Fun!
LEGO & Refreshments

9.55am - 11.00am
Next dates 15th February 15th March
Feel free to be in contact -
Pam Mundy, childrenandfamilies@stmarysnewicks.church





St Mary's
Newick's Youth Choir



When: The 1st Sunday of the month
Time: 10-11am
Ages: All ages welcome
Where: Barn Centre, St Mary's Church, Newick

**Sing, have fun and
make friends**

Call: 01825 724006
Email: churchoffice@stmarysnewicks.church
Web: stmarysnewicks.church/youthchoir

NEWICK YOUTH CLUBS! NYC & NCT
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS (TERM TIME)
The Barn Centre, Church Road, Newick

6.00 - 7.30PM Year 7

7.30 - 9.00pm Year 8 onwards

Go to our [WEBSITE](#) for full details