

April 2026

# St Mary's Monthly Message



## *A Note From Steve*

HAPPY EASTER!

Two words so easy to say and yet which might mean so many different things to different people.

Like celebrating Christmas reflects how the birth of Jesus shines light into the darkness of the world's spiritual winter, so celebrating Easter always encourages a sense of spiritual springtime. It's a season of hope - new life emerging, new colour, new possibilities.

For Christians, hope is something we can carry with confidence not uncertainty. This is because the hope God gives us is rooted in the fact that Jesus is raised from the dead.

There are no shortage of things in our news on a daily basis which could give us cause for despair. Traumatic events which can trigger our own memories, or are so beyond our ability to influence, we can become overwhelmed. Moreover, the things which are close to home can in comparison seem insignificant. They are not. These are the experiences in which the Lord loves to meet us.

The faithful women who went to tend Jesus' body on that first Easter Sunday were, we are told, both afraid and full of joy. They scarcely understood what had happened. With beautiful honesty, the Bible records their bewilderment and despair, as well as their joy and hope.

The cross is the place where, in the words of a lovely Graham Kendrick song "the worst we can do met the best that God does, where unspeakable hate met the gaze of unstoppable Love".

Jesus' cross gains its meaning from his empty tomb. And his empty tomb vindicates everything that Jesus claimed to be. In Jesus, "we have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." (Hebrews 6:19)

As you mark this Easter season, may your own soul know a springtime of hope as you dwell on all that God has done for us in Jesus.

HAPPY EASTER!

**Steve**



*Rev'd Steve Benoy*

## *What's inside?*

- *Interview with Steve & Helen Orchard*
- *Reflection on the Lent Study 'Digging Deeper into Romans'*

## *In Other News...*

*Dates for your Diary*

*Prayers for this month*

# *An Interview with Steve and Helen Orchard*



We met at university in the 70s. Steve is a Bucks farmers son and has worked all his life in the county. Helen, a vicar's daughter, spent most of her childhood in the Midlands. We lived in Leighton Buzzard for 35 years bringing up two sons, worshipping and filling multiple roles in Baptist churches.

A 2011 retirement move brought us to Radnage and two St Marys – Princes Risborough and Radnage. Both continued to shape our faith. Radnage brought a weekly rhythm of worship within walking distance of home, good friendships, and opportunities to contribute to church life. We also learnt a lot. Christian faith is revealed in many ways, some quiet and reflective, some loud and noisy. We grew accustomed to different, but meaningful, styles of 'doing things' in a traditional village church – like a weekly communion service of quiet reflection and fellowship, but also many familiar hymns sung with great vigour! Village churches can be hard work, because their congregations are small. However they also bring great opportunities to share life with people who may not loudly articulate their faith, but are deeply rooted in it. Deeds can indeed speak louder than words.

At the same time we also felt welcomed by St Marys Risborough, with periodic visits to the TGIS service which had started under David Williams leadership. He always greeted us with huge enthusiasm, knowing who we were and accepting that our main commitment was in Radnage. Without fail other members of the congregation would also greet us, whether they thought us occasional visitors or there for the first time. It was good to join with a form of worship that the village church could not offer and which, at that time, was more familiar to us.

Then COVID struck! With churches closed we joined online services at Risborough. They were a lifeline. Also online was the Refresh home group, which Helen joined towards the end of 2019. And Steve had become part of Pints Of View (a St Mary's Life Group). What great God-timing! Weekly online slots and David Wallace's regular communication with POV members held and sustained us both through the isolation.

As live services restarted, we gradually felt more drawn to Princes Risborough. It was time for a change. So that is where we have been most Sundays over the last 5 years. The church has been a place of refreshment and renewal that we have loved and are sorry to leave. Regular small groups, varied and thoughtful preaching and new friendships have supported us as we continue our Christian journey.

Now we move on again. This time to Banbury where our younger son and his family live. We don't yet know where we will worship. But are sure God will show us. And we're looking forward to more time with the grandchildren!



St Mary's Church, Radnage



Pints of View  
coordinator: David Wallace



# Reflections on the Lent Bible Study: 'Digging Deeper into Romans'

**Stuart King**

Our in-depth study of Romans has been both spiritually rewarding and very challenging. Paul's style is often obtuse and his arguments repetitive. Instead of coasting down through Lent to Holy Week, this year has been a strenuous climb, trying to grasp what the Apostle is teaching me. His broad teaching is quite clear but it is easy to get lost in the detail. The best way for me to sum up my learning is by quoting some key verses which have resonated with me.

Romans 5. 3-5: *suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.*

Romans 8.1: *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 8.31: *If God is for us, who is against us?*

Romans 8. 38: *...neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 10.12-13: *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

Romans 12.2: *Do not be conformed to this world...*

Romans 12.16: *Live in harmony with one another, do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are...*

**Michael Hoey**

Paul's Epistle to the Romans is long, repetitive and sometimes like an indigestible meal. That is not an "easy read" for someone who's never done a "bible study" before. So, after 5 Tuesday evenings, was I lost and confused, and even suffering from indigestion? Well, surprisingly, no! Because, the "meal" was treated with helpful "gravy" provided by Steve and Andrew, who clarified much of the turgid stuff, even if each added some challenging ideas for us to grapple with.

What hit me?

First, Paul explained how God's Wrath is aimed not at the Sinners (that's all of us!), but at the Sins. That is reassuring.

Second, the Grace part of his letter was much more compact and interesting, and confirmed that God is with us - Hurray!

Third, his bit about the Jews and the Gentiles was clearer and made sense; Christianity is for ALL!

Fourth, God's Will directs us on how we should handle relationships with many, including: with God, with enemies, with neighbours, with governments. Mostly clear, except for that last one, where we need to understand God created the "governors", even if they are "horrible". That was tricky!

Finally, the 40 of us attending truly appreciated the careful thought and much preparation given by Andrew and Steve; my thanks to them.



**Don't forget**  
**You can make regular**  
**or one-off donations**  
**to St Mary's at the**  
**Payaz Terminal**

## GIVING ...

... keeps St Mary's going.

From services and AV  
to lighting and courses,  
we rely on

**Regular Planned Giving.**

Please support the Church.

To get started, please contact  
the Giving Secretary:

Michael Hoey

01844 275192

mhoey@btinternet.com

**Sign up for our weekly**  
**e-news by going to the**  
**homepage on our**  
**website. Receive all the**  
**news from St Mary's**  
**direct to your phone!**

## *Dates for your Diary*

**Lunch Club:** Wednesday 1 April 10am-3.30pm in St Mary's Church

**Maker & Fixer:** Sun 12 April, 3pm in the Old Dairy, Culverton Farm. This month we will be decorating candles and making pots / planters out of pre-used materials.

**Bereavement Drop-in Group:** in the Chapter House, 3pm on Monday 13 April

**Morning Prayers at The Yurt:** Mon & Fri mornings, 7.30am to 8am, Church Farm, Saunderton, HP27 9NJ

**Yurt Gathering:** Wednesday evenings, 7.30pm - see Carole Edwards for more info

**Tea for All** in the Chapter House at 2.30pm on Sunday 22 March

**Play Cafe:** Tuesdays during term time from 9.30am to 11am in Church

**Youth Group:** Sundays during term time from 6.30pm to 7.45pm in the Chapter House

## *Services at St Mary's and St Peter's*

### **Holy Week**

**Maundy Thursday** 7.30pm Holy Communion

**Good Friday** 9.30am Approaching Easter - a families service

**Good Friday Act of Witness with Churches Together**, 11am Duke Street Gardens

**Good Friday: An Hour at the Cross**, 2pm

**Easter Day Sunrise Service** on Whiteleaf Hill, with Churches together, 6.30am

**Easter Sunday - 8am, 9.30am and 11.15am services as usual**

**Holy Communion at 8am** (*said*)

**Parish Communion** at 9.30 on Sundays in church and live streamed to your home.

See the St Mary's website for the link to our YouTube channel.

**Live@St Mary's** all age service at 11.15 in church. Kid's Church welcomes children to join them for activities in the Parish Hall during this service - contact the Parish Office for further info on sessions.

**Mid week Holy Communion** is on Wednesdays at 10.30 followed by coffee.

**St Peter's Evensong** with shortened Holy Communion on **Easter Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April**, 6pm and also on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April. **Note** Summer Time of **6pm**

## *For your Prayers this month*

### **An Easter Blessing**

May the joy of the risen Christ fill your heart with peace, hope, and love.  
May His victory over death remind you that nothing is impossible with God.  
May you walk in His light, live in His grace, and rejoice in His endless mercy.

And may this Easter bring you and your loved ones  
renewed faith, deep joy, and everlasting peace.

He is risen! He is risen indeed!

**We uphold in prayer:** All those bereaved, including the families of Norman Wingrove and Pearl Knight.

All those known to us suffering ill health or facing operations.

**We give thanks for:** Nicci Maxwell, our CMS sponsored missionary, who enjoyed revisiting her former hospital in Uganda for a few days. Catch up with her blog at: <https://niccimaxwell.wordpress.com/author/niccimaxwell/>

### **Please pray for:**

- The situation in the Middle East, that peace may prevail.
- For Archbishop Sarah Mullally following her installation at Canterbury Cathedral
- Those affected by the cost of living crisis and the agencies such as One Can Trust working to alleviate food poverty.

*Copies of this newsletter are available in Church for you to collect and pass on to friends and neighbours. They are also on the website.*



*Join our weekly prayer meeting on Zoom every Wednesday at 9am – Zoom invite available from the Parish Office .*

*We encourage everyone to pray for one another. Ask the Parish Office if you would like to receive details of prayer requests.*

**Contact the  
Parish Office  
[parishoffice@stmarysrisborough.org.uk](mailto:parishoffice@stmarysrisborough.org.uk)**

**Tel: 01844 273300**