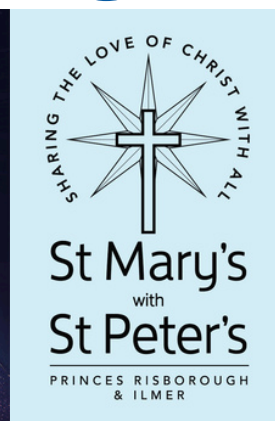


St Mary's Monthly Message



A Note From Andrew

'PRAYER is exhaling the spirit of ourselves and inhaling the Spirit of God.'

Edwin Keith

In our hectic lives it all too easy to get consumed by the work we do, the lives we lead and the people we meet. God can too easily get pushed out. Our prayer times become more petitionary as we have a list of demands for God that we want him to do or solve. Prayer also becomes shoved into those moments where we remember... 'Oh, I'd better pray'. They get done on the go, or in-between events in the diary, or become short times during bible study. Wouldn't it be great if we could exhale the 'Spirit of ourselves' and inhale the 'Spirit of God'? I love that quote, slightly adjusted for modern times. It expresses what we all need to do. We need to stop, pause for a while, breathe, and then inhale. Not just inhale anything, but allow God's Spirit to become part of us.

Hopefully the sermons we are preaching throughout May will give you some useful insights into prayer. To help us focus a little more we will also be taking part in 'Thy Kingdom Come' as we have done in previous years. This initiative which has been ongoing since 2016, is a world wide global prayer movement to help us all get praying. It covers the period from Ascension day on May 14th, to Pentecost Sunday on May 24th. We will have some resources for you to use in church, or you may like to download one of their resources to use electronically (see <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/thy-kingdom-come-2026>).

Prayer should be one of the most important parts of our lives and it is not just enough to 'fit it in'. I'd love to encourage you to think about taking time out of your daily schedule during those ten days. Work out how you can reduce what you do, to help you focus your prayer times. After all, this is what Jesus did often.

'Early in the morning, while it was still dark, he rose up and went out, and departed into a deserted place, and prayed there.' (Mark 1.35)

It might not be easy to do what Jesus did, especially if you have others at home who rely on you. To help, we are opening up St Mary's on Saturday 16th May for a day of prayer from 8am to 8pm, with some specific prayer sessions during the day, and open times for personal prayer. There will be some different prayer activities set up to guide or help as you come into church to pray. Or you may simply like to use the church for quiet prayer.

The important thing will be to take time out with God. Where we can exhale the spirit of ourselves, the world and all that inhabits our lives. Then inhale God's Spirit, allowing God to speak to us, and allow his Spirit to work with us.

Andrew



Rev'd Andrew Walmsley

What's inside?

- *Focus on Prayer activities at St Mary's*
- *Day of Prayer Saturday 16 May 8am to 8pm*

In Other News...

Dates for your Diary

Prayers for this month

Focus on Prayer at St Mary's

We asked members of our different prayer groups to give an insight into these church activities and also what inspires and encourages them in their prayer life.

Claire Barbary, Life Group Coordinator

When preparing for our communal prayer meetings at church, we find it is always helpful to meet together to pray and listen to what God is leading us to do. In my experience, communal church prayer, praise and waiting on God, is encouraging, inspiring and a real opportunity to see the moving of God's Holy Spirit.

Prayer in our life groups can give time for a deeper level of relational prayer. Sharing and praying with people we know and trust can also provide real pastoral support.

It is such a blessing to know that we can talk, pray and listen to our Father God, at any time! Being a "morning person", I find the rhythm of starting my day seated in a chair where I can see the small cross on the wall and a view of our back garden. As I sip my tea, I thank God for all that He is doing and say sorry for anything that I feel led to say sorry for. I then read the bible reading for the day, which is currently by Joyce Meyer. At this season in my life I am then able to go out most mornings for a prayer jog or walk in "God's gym". I find that this is a really good time to listen to God as well as pray for the surrounding community I am passing. Anything significant, I will then write in my prayer journal on my return.

The Yurt Monday & Friday Prayer Group, Hugh Thomas-Davies

A number of people meet for prayer in the Yurt at Church Farm on Mondays and Fridays at 7:30am for a 30 minute prayer session. The format is generally to use the Lectio 365 app* for the day, the participants reading it between them. Each session incorporates scripture, reflection and prayer and our sessions also include a time of open prayer. These sessions are always a blessing and we would gladly welcome anyone who would like to join us for either, or both sessions.

*Lectio 365: Created to help you develop a deeper, daily connection with God.

Inspired by the ancient practice of Lectio Divina, daily devotionals guide users to pray the Bible through Scripture, reflection, and prayer each morning, midday and evening. Since launching in 2019, Lectio 365 has helped thousands of people make prayer a regular, life-giving habit – wherever they are and whatever their day holds.

You can download the App from: [Lectio 365.com](https://lectio365.com)

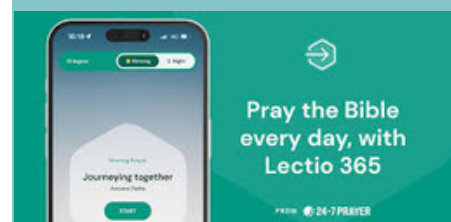
9am Wednesday Prayers via Zoom, Peter Cline

We start with a Bible reading and in the past year we have been reading some of Paul's letters. A weekly 'thought' expanding on the passage to be read is circulated on the preceding Tuesday to those who regularly attend*. After reading the passage, we go on to pray for those in need, together with situations of concern both within the Church family and worldwide. This regular Wednesday morning prayer has been running for over ten years and the number of positive responses to our prayers over the years has been amazing – living proof that the power of prayer is considerable.

All are welcome to join the Zoom prayers - please email the Parish Office and we will send you the link.

Sunday Morning Prayer Ministry, Averil Stephenson

Prayer Ministry is offered in person at the end of the 11.15am service each week. Our values are always to respect the person's safety and dignity, to respect their confidentiality, to pray reflecting the love of Jesus Christ for them and welcoming the power and gifting of His Holy Spirit. In addition, when requested, we have been available to pray in pairs for individuals in their homes. Please contact Averil via the Parish Office if you would like to find out more.



What's happening this month?

Ascension Day commemorates the day on which Jesus bodily ascended into Heaven. Following the account of Acts 1:3 that the risen Jesus appeared for 40 days prior to his Ascension, Ascension Day is traditionally celebrated on a Thursday, the fortieth day of Easter. A service of Holy Communion for Ascension Day will be celebrated at St Mary's on **Thursday 14th May at 7.30pm**.

St Mary's is holding a **Day of Prayer on Saturday 16 May from 8am to 8pm**. The day will begin with a short service of morning prayer and there will be other sessions of led prayer at 12 noon, 4pm and 7.30pm. The church is open all day for anyone to come into church and pray in the quiet. There will be resources around the church providing themes for prayer. All are welcome to spend as long as you wish in church.

This Day of Prayer forms part of the global wave of prayer '**Thy Kingdom Come**' running from 14th to 24th May. This year's Thy Kingdom Come is all about the presence of God through His spirit. The God who is with us in the everyday – in the joys and sorrows of life (and everything in between) and the One who, through His spirit, longs to reveal Himself to those who do not yet know Him. Prayer Journals will be made available in church for everyone to take home for their personal use.

For more information go to: thykingdomcome.global

Chiltern Arts Festival 2026 is holding two evening concerts at St Mary's as part of its 'Rooted - The natural world in words and music' series. On **Thursday 21st May** you can start the day at 6.30am on Whiteleaf Hill to hear the 'Dawn Call' with Ben Goldscheider on French Horn and Naomi Taylor, reader. In the evening Ben will be performing 'A Dusk Gathering' at St Mary's accompanied by Richard Uttley on the piano. The following evening, **Friday 22nd May**, Charles Owen and Katya Apekisheva will perform Stravinsky's 'The Rite of Spring' on the piano. Both performances begin at 7.30pm and drinks will be available in the interval. For more information and to buy tickets, go to: chilternarts.com.

Future dates for your diary

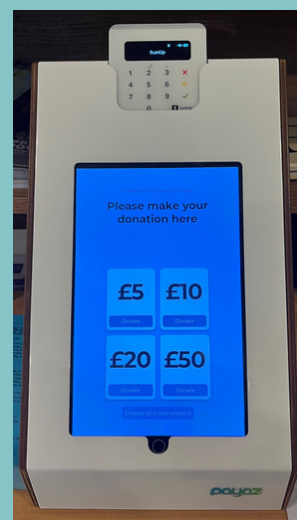
St Mary's looks forward to hosting the annual **Lighthouse Quiz Night on Saturday 6th June – prompt 7:30 pm start and tickets cost £5 person**.

Teams of up to 8 people, raffle and heads and tails game. Bring your own drinks and nibbles (no red wine please as it stains the floor.) Prizes for the winning team! To book a table, please contact Jamie Carter on 01844 273286 (booking essential). If you would like to come and are not part of a team, please contact Jamie and he will find you a team to join. Offers of raffle prizes appreciated. Please contact Jamie if you would like to donate one. Cash only on the night.

Steve will be leading an '**Overview of Philippians**' exploring the background to this warm and encouraging letter which forms the basis of the June/July sermon series: 'Life with Jesus'. You can come along to the Chapter House at 2pm or to the church in the evening at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9 June.

Unplugged, an evening drawing closer to God through relaxed contemporary music, will be on **Sunday 14th June at 6.30pm**.

St Andrews Bookshop in Great Missenden will be running their annual **Literature Festival from 12–13 June**. The programme includes speakers such as John Lennox, Michele Guinness, Gavin Calver, Patrick Regan, Rachael Newham and Al Gordon, alongside creative workshops and an art exhibition: www.stalitfest.co.uk



*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

Ladies Breakfast: Sat 2 May, 9am in the Church Hall with speaker from 'Chosen'

Lunch Club: Wednesday 6th May and 4th June, 10am-3.30pm in St Mary's Church

Men's Breakfast: Sat 9 May, 8.45am, Church Hall with speaker from Prostate Cancer UK

Maker & Fixer: Sun 10 May, 3pm in the Old Dairy, Culverton Farm.

Bereavement Drop-in Group: in the Chapter House, 3pm on Monday 11 May

Day of Prayer: in church on Saturday 16 May from 8am to 8pm

Chiltern Arts Concert: Thurs 21 May at 7.30pm in Church - 'A Dsuk Gathering'

Chiltern Arts Concert: Fri 22 May at 7.30pm in Church - 'The Rite of Spring'

Safeguarding Training for Volunteers: Sat 30 May, 9.30am to 12 noon, Chapter House

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 24 May

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

Sundays

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.

St Peter's Evensong with shortened Holy Communion on Sunday 17th May at **6pm**

Mid week Holy Communion at St Mary's: Wednesdays at 10.30 followed by coffee.

Ascension Day Holy Communion on Thursday 14 May at 7.30pm

For your Prayers this month

PRAY: You may find this a helpful pattern for your private prayer times.

- **P - Pause**
 - Be still, and know that I am God. (Psalm 46: 10)
- **R - Rejoice**
 - This is the day that the Lord has made; let us Rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118: 24)
 - Let us Thank God for all His many Gifts but also Rejoice in the Giver rather than the Gifts.
- **A - Ask**
 - Gently place all those people and situations that are on our hearts into the Hands of God.
 - With God anything is possible. Ask for Forgiveness for our own shortcomings.
- **Y - Yield**
 - Take time to listen for the still, small voice.
 - Offer yourself to be the answer to your prayers.
 - Ask God to use you to further His Kingdom and His Will.
 - Recommit yourself.

We uphold in prayer: All those bereaved, including the families of David Coleman, Gary Clack and Raymond Bushaway.

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

We give thanks for: the baptisms of Margaret Garland and Archie Naismith.

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, or go to the prayer page on the website.

Contact the Parish Office
parishoffice@stmarysrisborough.org.uk

Tel: 01844 273300