



**1 to 8 APRIL 2026**

With prayer & faith in God we seek to engage with the community - *inside* we enrich & equip: *outside* we give & care.

**A warm "Welcome Home" from Rev Sally Letman and everyone at St Mary's & St John's!**



As Rev Sally continues to recover from her arthroplasty (new knee joint operation) she sends this message to all at St Mary's and St John's.

*"I am making really good progress after my new knee, although it has been very painful and I would love a good night's sleep!  
"Thank you so much for all your kindness, gifts of food and lovely cards!  
"I have felt overwhelmed with your love, the love of St Mary's and the enduring love of God.  
"Have a blessed Easter and I look forward to being back with you all soon."  
Sally x*

Since it is crucial that Rev Sally gets as much rest as possible during her recovery period much of our Easter services will be led by Rev Adrian, Jim Kelland and Christina Volkmann.



## ***EASTER WORSHIP TIMELINE***

*St Mary's is open for private prayer every day.*

**2026**

- 1 Apr, 10.00am, St Mary's, *Benefice Holy Communion*
- 2 Apr, 7.00pm, St Mary's, Maunday Thursday, *Compline Service & Strip the Altar*
- 3 Apr, Good Friday, 9.30am *Walk of Witness, Churches Together*. Starting at Capel Community Church  
7.00pm, St Mary's *Compline Service*.
- 4 Apr, Holy Saturday, 7.00pm, *St Mary's Compline Service*.
- 5 Apr, Easter Sunday, 9.30am St John's, *Holy Communion*.  
10.45am, St Mary's, *Holy Communion*.

*With St Mary's Choir & Baptism*



## Readings for Palm Sunday (prior Sunday)

### Matthew 21, 1-11

#### *Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King*

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, *"Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her.*

*Untie them and bring them to me.*

*"If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."*

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

*"Say to Daughter Zion,  
'See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on.

A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted: *"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"*

*"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"*

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, *"Who is this?"* The crowds answered, *"This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."*



### Rev Adrian's Reflection

*It's coming home - A short reflection for Palm Sunday Matthew 21:1-11*

The story surrounding Palm Sunday reflects a phenomenon observable in our modern society, demonstrating how the human heart can often be transactional. In July 2021, following approximately 18 months of lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions, Marcus Rashford emerged as a national figure—not solely for his footballing prowess but also for effectively advocating to the government for the provision of free school meals for the most vulnerable children.



The England men's football team advanced to the Euro Finals amid widespread national excitement; with the chant "*Football's coming home*" resonating throughout the country.

In front of an audience of 67,173 spectators, England's Luke Shaw scored in the second minute, marking the fastest and earliest goal ever in a European Championship final. After a 1-1 draw in extra time, England initially gained a 2-1 lead in the penalty shootout; however, the last three players missed their attempts, resulting in Italy's 3-2 victory.

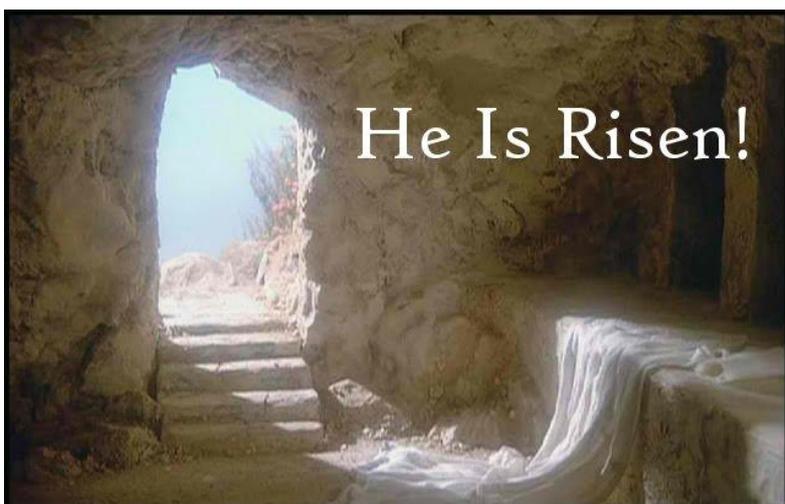
Similarly, the crowd in Jerusalem turned against Jesus within a span of five days; their expectations of a king capable of defeating Roman conquerors contrasted sharply with their demand for his crucifixion.

The shift at Wembley was precipitated when three players—Rashford, Sancho, and Saka—missed their penalties, transforming public sentiment into hostility.

Ultimately, these narratives serve as cautionary tales, illustrating that the human heart is susceptible to "palm-branch loyalty"—quick to rejoice in prosperity, yet equally swift to cast blame when adversity arises.

## *Readings for Easter Sunday*

### *John 20, 1-18: The Empty Tomb*



Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "*They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!*"

So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the

other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head.

The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

## **Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

They asked her, "*Woman, why are you crying?*"

"*They have taken my Lord away,*" she said, "*and I don't know where they have put him.*" At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.



He asked her, "*Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?*"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "*Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.*"

Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "*Rabboni!*" (which means "Teacher").

Jesus said, "*Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father,*

*to my God and your God.'*"

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "*I have seen the Lord!*" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

## **Rev Adrian's Reflection**

This Easter we reflect on John's Gospel Chapter 20:1-18, where Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and moves from grief and confusion to recognition and hope.



The absence of Jesus' body reveals a different kind of power—not worldly dominance, but God's life-giving power over death, which renders all earthly power temporary and equalises all people in mortality.

The risen Jesus is first mistaken for the gardener, showing how resurrection can appear ordinary and unexpected, until everything changes when he speaks Mary's name. In being personally known and called, Mary is transformed into the first witness of the resurrection.

Easter is not only a past event but a present reality, offering forgiveness, hope, and the assurance that the risen Lord still calls each of us by name.

Just as Easter Sunday turned Mary's grief into joy and purpose, this Easter morning, we also celebrate the joy of new life in the baptism of a child starting her walk with God.





**A MESSAGE FROM MEL OUR CHURCHWARDEN**

*"Our annual spring clean on Saturday 21st March went very well. Eight people attended but it would have been lovely to see a few more helpers.*

*"However all the jobs I had hoped would be done were done and we now have a cleaner Church and hall ready for the Easter celebrations.*

*"We all worked hard and were grateful for refreshments before we headed home.*

*"My thanks go out to the people who attended."*

The eight volunteer spring-cleaners achieved the following:



- *Chancel area polished and swept;*
- *All church chairs washed and dusted;*
- *All window sills in the nave cleaned;*
- *All blue stacking chairs in the hall washed and cleaned;*
- *All hall tables scrubbed clean;*
- *Hall window sills washed and cleaned.*



**WELL DONE TEAM!!**



# ST MARY'S PRAYER LIST



## PRAYER LIST FOR 29th MARCH 2026

We pray for all the conflicts in the world, especially the war in the Middle East and Ukraine.

We continue to pray for David Jacobs as he bravely travels back and forth to Ukraine.

Please continue prayer support for Becky Garland the new East Bergholt school chaplain.

### LONG-TERM SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

Pat Gladwin, Becky Carpendale, Rachael Martin, Brenda Green, Zoe and family.

### SICK

Kevin Austin, Penny & David Thompson, Rev Stephne, Molly & Mike Johannsen, Sandy Mansfield, Geoff Cox, Pauline Stark, Andrew Skinner, Barbara Rogers, Doreen Parker, Eric Doe, Malcolm & Chris Fenn, Peter Ellis (Methodist) Angie Heath Jane Hubert, Rosie Waller

### FOR THOSE MAKING A RECOVERY

Shirley Streatfield, Laura Towells, Zena Steward, Carole Cowgill

### FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

Mark Easton

Please contact Maureen Hill [mo.hill02@live.co.uk](mailto:mo.hill02@live.co.uk)

For new entries - or if people have made a recovery.

And with thanks to St Mary's Prayer Team



# CONTACT NUMBERS FOR BENEFICE MINISTERS

Priest in Charge      Rev Sally Letman      311505 (But during her recovery please contact initially either churchwardens:

Church wardens

@ St Mary's      Mel Sutcliffe      310967

Valerie Franklin      314179

@ St John's      John Cresswell      311975

Diana Hunt      310441

Pastoral care

@ St Mary's      Rev Sally, Mo Hill and her team

PCC Secretary

@ St Mary's      Jenny Hickley      310991

Hall bookings

@ St Mary's      Valerie Franklin      314179

Check out our website: [www.capelstmarychurch.org.uk](http://www.capelstmarychurch.org.uk)

