

St Nicholas, Marston and St Thomas of Canterbury, Elsfeld

MARSTON TIMES

February 2024 stnicholasmarston.org.uk Donations welcome

It is still winter (I gently tell myself); still the season of resting, snuggling down under blankets and needing to sleep. Somehow this year - perhaps more than last - we are rushing ahead with our checklists, booking forms and needing to reorganise, declutter and work out the Meaning of Life before spring is upon us. It is still winter! Slow down: pause.



If life is moving too fast and you feel overwhelmed, here are a few things you can do: go outside and walk (you can jog if you like, but sitting on a bench or a gentle walk

around your favourite park is also good). Submerge yourself in water - honestly this does work. Have a bath, take a shower or go swimming. Thirdly, if all else fails, go somewhere dark and switch off (so no phone or screens). Sitting in your favourite chair with a blanket,



closing your eyes or disappearing under the duvet are all good. I sometimes find it helpful to focus on my breath: for me it becomes a prayer mantra, breathing in more of God and breathing out less of me. The less part represents



my anxieties or worries rather than the things that are seen as failures or wrong.

As I write this, I am hoping this message of rest and recuperation is loud and clear before we switch our attention to Lent. It's an early one this year and so it can add to the feeling of needing to be and do more.

Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's day this year: nothing more romantic, then, to come as a couple and get



matching ash crosses on your foreheads! But

seriously, Ash Wednesday is a service that helps you put your life in perspective. We can rely too much on our own devices and desires, gifts and status to get us in places and spaces, but being marked by ash we are reminded of our own futility and brokenness; there is an equality in it, a feeling of being in it together, as all are marked (even those taking the service). The service moves us from being mindful of our frailty, greed (sin)



and hurt, to being drawn to the One who we ask to help us through this period of fasting and preparation. The 40 days of Lent represent the 40 days Jesus was in the desert, enduring temptations and preparing for the start of his ministry.

This year, here at St Nicholas church, we are joining the Lent Appeal for WaterAid (www.wateraid.org/uk). I will be encouraging us to give something up for Lent, then collect the money



we save/wish to give and donate it to WaterAid. The first Sunday on 4 February will be focused on this and learning more about WaterAid. This is an open invite: it may be for you that something needs to be

dropped or something needs to be picked up during this time, such as joining a home group or coming to Compline. It is ok if it is as simple as less chocolate or more sleep. I think the important thing is that Lent invites us to make our minds and hearts ready for remembering Jesus' life, death and resurrection. This time of Lent can be 40 days where we slow down and pause.



Blessings, Skye

BENEFICE OF MARSTON & ELSFIELD



Welcome to St Nicholas & St Thomas.
Further details can be found on our
website - stnicholasmarston.org.uk
Or call the office on 01865 580354.

Every Wednesday at 9:30am we have Holy
Communion & Thursdays at 5pm Evening
Prayer at St Nicholas Church. at St Nicholas

Sunday 4th - 2nd Sunday before Lent

10am - **Community Celebration Service with Holy Communion**
with Jr choirs/choir & Worship band at St Nicholas Church.
Introducing our Lent Appeal for Water Aid 2024. **Live Streamed.**

6pm - BCP Evensong at St Nicholas Church.



Sunday 11th - Sunday before Lent

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church.

10am Holy Communion Service at St Nicholas Church
with Energy (Sunday School). **Live Streamed.**

A Church For Everyone
St Nicholas Church is
part of the Inclusive
Church Network

14th - ASH WEDNESDAY

9:30am Said Communion Service with Imposition of Ashes at St Nicholas Church

7pm Communion Service with Imposition of Ashes at St Nicholas Church

Sunday 18th - 1st Sunday of Lent

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church.

10am SAID Morning Prayer at St Nicholas Church

10am Holy Communion at St Thomas Church in Elsfield

10am Messy Church in the Hall.

Sunday 25th - 2nd Sunday of Lent

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church

10am Holy Communion Service at St Nicholas Church *with Energy* (Sunday School).
Live Streamed.

With Guest Speaker Leanne Bell. Facing the Storm: Tackling Domestic Violence.

6pm Pause for Thought at St Nicholas Church.

What is in a Name: Knowledge and Naming of Birds. Rev Prof. Andy Gosler.

A Church For All

Vicar: Skye Denno 01865 202988
Administrator: Debbie Bailey 01865 580354
Churchwardens Judith Piggott 01865 764693

Jan Lawrie 01865 250862
James Plunkett 07507 885169
Justine McCool 07426 463119

What to quote in February?

Don't be scared by Carol Ann Duffy

The dark is only a blanket
for the moon to put on her bed.
The dark is a private cinema
for the movie dreams in your head.
The dark is a little black dress
to show off the sequin stars.
The dark is the wooden hole
behind the strings of happy guitars.
The dark is a jeweller's velvet cloth
where children sleep like pearls.
The dark is a spool of film
to photograph boys and girls,
so smile in your sleep in the dark.
Don't be scared.

Nature notes: What to see and hear in February?

February brings lengthening days and occasional mild spells. Look out for queen bumblebees searching for early flowers and hibernating butterflies, including small tortoiseshell and peacock, tempted out by the late winter sun. It can be a good month for deer watching with roe deer feeding out in the open. There



is a small herd living on the Marston meadows. If you have a garden, do keep feeding the birds - their wild food supplies will be dwindling. You might be rewarded with a less common avian visitor to your garden, such as a great spotted woodpecker or jay.

What to cook in February - Flapjacks

On 20 January some members of St Nicholas choir sang with other choirs and the Christchurch Cathedral Choir at a beautiful Epiphany service at the Cathedral. Helen kindly baked this snack for us: it was very popular and devoured in about 10 minutes!

Ingredients

250g porridge oats
125g butter
125g demerara sugar
(you can use white granulated but brown is better)
2 tbsp golden syrup
1 tsp vanilla essence

Method

Pre heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6.
Line a 20 x20 cm tin (or equivalent size but not bigger) with baking parchment - or grease your tin well.

Put the sugar, butter and syrup into a pan and heat gently until the sugar has dissolved. Stir all the time to prevent burning. Add the oats and vanilla and combine well. Press the mixture into the tin, pushing into the corners with the back of a spoon so that the mixture is flat. Bake for around 15 mins until golden brown. Leave to cool a little before scoring to indicate slices.



Then finish cooling completely in the tin for about 30 mins.

WI

Our next WI meeting will be on Tuesday 13 February at 7.30pm in St Nicholas Church Hall,

Elsfield Road, Old Marston, when the topic will be handbell ringing. The session will be led by Jane Hedges who has extensive knowledge of hand bells and is one of the bell ringing tutors for St Nicholas church bells. New members are welcome and a first visit is free.

Coffee Pot

Coffee Pot will meet in the Church Hall on Mon 19 February from 10.30am to 12 noon. All those who have been bereaved and anyone who would like to meet more people are welcome to join us and enjoy company and light refreshments. Please contact Eileen Palayiwa via eileen.palayiwa@yahoo.com or on 01865 725423 for further details.

Lunch Club

Lunch club will be on Friday 23 February. Ring Debbie on 01865 580354 to book your place.

New deliverer for Marston Times needed!

We are looking for someone to deliver the printed Marston Times four times each year (in March, June, September and December) to addresses in Arlington Drive; the round comprises about 85 households. Copies are printed, bundled up and set out in church for collection in the preceding month. Please contact Colin Harris: colingharris31@gmail.com

News from Divya Shanthi

Divya Shanthi has opened a new outreach centre, located in the suburb of Nandini Layout, in a low-income community of Bangalore. The centre has seen remarkable growth and now has a creche for 16 pre-school children, a tailoring unit for 25 women, after school English classes for children who study in a Kannada medium school, a prayer group and a children's club on Sundays. Divya Shanthi is focusing its vocational training programme on young people who have become jobless in the last six months and who need re-training. Jobs are aplenty in the city but the skills needed are always changing.

FREE Parish event , but limited numbers..



SHROVE TUESDAY

13th February

IS PANCAKE DAY

**Come &
Join us**

**Where? Marston Vicarage (OX3 0PR)
When? 6-8pm**

**Book in advance please - call or email
01865 580354,
administrator@stnicholasmarston.org.uk**



**LENT in the
Benefice**

Marston & Elsfield

**Compline (Evening Prayer)
at St Thomas Church, Elsfield
on Thursdays at 8pm.**

22nd & 29th February, 7th, 14th & 21st March.

Study Groups (Home Groups)

Tuesday evenings (weekly online) Starts 20th Feb
Lent Study will be based on the Booklet *Watch and Pray*

Friday evenings (fortnightly at the Vicarage)

1st & 3rd Fridays. Starts 16th Feb

Lent Study will continue reflecting on the Psalms

More information about Study Groups please email:
administrator@stnicholasmarston.org.uk

EVERYONE is welcome



**Benefice of
Marston & Elsfield**

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday February 14th - at St Nicholas

**9:30am - Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes.
Quiet and reflective.**

**7pm - Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes.
Including Hymns.**

All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return.

Ecclesiastes 3:20




Loaves & Fishes

MARSTON COMMUNITY LARDER

Along with a few essential items there will be fresh produce (bread & veg, fruit etc) from Oxford Food Hub. Any left will be moved into the SESI refill area



Sharing surplus, reducing waste



Marston Community Larder is supported by Old Marston Charity Trust

9-11am

THE GIVING GARAGE


Marston Eco Hub - OX3 0PR

OPEN EVERY SATURDAY


Pick up or drop off FREE plant pots, vases, mugs, wellies and other garden/ household items, and BORROW garden equipment (rakes & spades, ladders, trimmers, wheelbar rows, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, bike rack etc),

Further details email Skype: joskso@yahoo.co.uk or call 01865 202988

PAUSE...



FOR THOUGHT



Program for 2024

Sunday's Pause for Thought at St Nicholas Church

Sunday Feb 25th at 6pm
What is in a Name: Knowledge and Naming of Birds
Rev Prof. Andy Gosler.

Sunday April 28th at 6pm
Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)
Recognising Problems and Finding Solutions
Dr Ginny Stacey (Ross).

Sunday June 23rd at 6pm
Landscape and Belonging
Dr Peter Williams

Sunday October 27th at 6pm
Second Chapter Baking
Catherine Paxton

Sunday November 24th at 6pm
Wellington, Solider, Statesman & Snob
Colonel Nicholas Lipscombe

Starting at 6pm, 40 mins presentation, time for Q&A, with refreshments to conclude. All Welcome!

HOLY GROUND

Gatherings to mark the CELTIC YEAR

Prayers and Reflections are from David Cole's book 'The Celtic Year'



DATES FOR 2023/24. Always starting at 6:30pm

- 21st of September 2023 - Autumn Equinox
- 31st of October 2023 - Winter Season
- 20th of December 2023 - Winter Solstice
- 1st of February 2024 - Spring Season
- 21st of March 2024 - Spring Equinox
- 30th of April 2024 - Summer Season
- 20th of June 2024 - Summer Solstice
- 1st of August 2024 - Autumn Season

Meet around a fire pit outside Marston Eco Hub OX3 0PR
Bring something to share, a chair and a blanket if it's cold.
ALL ARE WELCOME

Elsfield Wine Tasting Evening (and inter-village competition)



Anticipating the end of "dry January" 2024, you are invited to an evening of fine wines, fun facts and quizzical questions.

Individuals and teams are welcome to test their taste buds, tannins and terroirs.

Light snacks will be provided.

Prizes for the best noses

Date: Saturday 3rd February 2024
Venue: Elsfield Village Room
Start: 6.30pm

Tickets: £15 per head payable in advance.

Please contact:
James Plunket – 07507 885169
james.p@socialinvestgroup.com

Peter McCool – 01865 358578
petermccool@hotmail.com

The Swan Community Choir

We meet to sing for fun on
Thursday evenings,
8pm - 9pm in the school hall.



Dates for 2024 (tbc):

11th Jan - 8th Feb & 22nd Feb. - 21st Mar.

Everyone is welcome! Drop in when you can!

All songs learnt by ear, no need to read music; join us
when you can for simple and relaxing music-making.

Since this photo was taken last summer we have
grown to 20 singers and not just upper voices!

We ask £3 per session for swancomm funds:

<https://app.classlist.com/events/#/events/view/1024990640>

Oxfordshire Libraries

eBook Short Story Competition 2024

Enter our 10th annual writing competition!

The winning story in each of three categories will
be published as an eBook for library members to
borrow!

- Short story by an **adult** aged 18+
- Short story by a **young adult** aged 12-17
- Short story by a **child** aged 7-11

Entries open: 11 December 2023

Closing date: 11 February 2024

Adults & YA:
up to 3000
words
Children:
up to 1000
words



@oxonlibraries



Oxfordshire Libraries

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/shortstorycompetition

 OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

Children's Book Club

at Old Marston Library

Perfect for children aged 8-12
who like books, stories, cartoons
and making friends!



We meet on the first Monday
of the month at 4:15pm



 01865 726823

 OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL



St. Nicholas
Marston



Messy Church at St Nicholas, Marston
Spring 2024

Sunday 21st January
Sunday 18th February
Sunday 17th March
Sunday 21st April

10 - 11.30am, Church Hall, Elsfeld Road
Crafts, Bible Stories, Singing,
Prayer, Breakfast

All ages welcome
(children need to bring an adult with them)

FREE!



Bellringers' report

The Christmas and New Year period was extremely busy with many quarter peals and services. Our ringers also ventured to Iffley to help ring in 2024. The bells were rung half-muffled before midnight and without muffles when the new year arrived.

As January ticked in we rang our first quarter peal on New Year's Day at St Nicholas Marston since 2020. A staggering 30 method variations were rung. We received some lovely messages over winter. Readers may remember previously the dedication to Sir Brian Smith who died last year. A lover of the bells, a special dedication was made to him in the summer. We heard how over Christmas, the family returned to Marston to visit his grave and the bells began ringing, purely coincidentally, as they reached the cemetery. There truly is something magical about them.

January started with some more outreach work. Our handbells ventured with Roy and Jane to Kennington to teach 16 Beaver Scouts how to play, and in the course of an hour they learnt safety, handling, a few tunes with harmonies, and even performed to parents. Further ringing has been supported at Bletchington, Cuddesdon, and Horspath (all 6s).

Coming up in the next few weeks is the Oxford City Branch AGM, a handbell visit to Old Marston WI and on Fri 23 Feb, we hold our own AGM in the vestry of St Nicholas at 7pm. You would be most welcome to meet us, hear what we've been up to and have a go if you would like.

Roy

Children's Book Club

We meet at the Mortimer Hall and Old Marston Library on every first Monday of the month, from 4.15 to 5.15pm. Suitable for 8 – 12-year-olds. Free and relaxed session.



Marston Community

Gardening AGM

takes place on **Mon 26 Feb 7pm – 9.30pm online.**

We would love to see as many people as possible. We will be reviewing the year's projects, including the Giving Garage, Eco-Hub, Community Allotments, Community Chickens, Marston Forest Garden and Northway and Marston



Community Kitchen. If you would like to come, please email: hello@marstoncommunitygardening.org.uk or ring 01865 766620.

Old Marston Parish Council report for January

At the January PC meeting there were planning applications from 78 Oxford Road and 25 Fairfax Avenue, to neither of which had the council any objections. OCC has informed the PC that applications from 21 Haynes Road and 32B Oxford Road have been approved while one from 28 Cavendish Drive has been refused.

There are still complaints from residents from St Nicholas Mobile Home Park about the development at Marston Paddock in Butts Lane. The clerk has again made the OCC aware.

The PC asked for a meeting between the county council and city council to look at existing and potential traffic congestion and speeding issues throughout the parish. With the potential developments within and surrounding the parish these issues are only likely to get worse. County Councillor Mark Lygo organised the meeting. There were some suggestions which the clerk is following up but otherwise the outcome was to see what affect the bus gates on the Marston Ferry Road have before making any further changes.

The next OXCLEAN is on Saturday 2 March at 10am in the Mortimer Hall.

The next meeting will be on Monday 5 February at 7pm in the Mortimer Hall.

The clerk, Tim Cann, can be contacted by phone (203139) Mon to Wed from 9am until 1pm.

Otherwise a message can be left or emailed via: clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk

For information and agendas go to www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk, Facebook or Twitter. A complete record of minutes of all Parish Council meetings can be found on its website: <https://www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk/>

Save these dates



Please join us at St Nicholas church Marston **on Fri 1 March at 2pm** for the World Day of Prayer, this year praying for all people of the Holy Land. Refreshments will be served.

Marston Gardens Open Afternoon

Mark **Sunday 9 June 2-5pm** in your diaries. Tickets and refreshments will be available in the Church Hall.



Parish Organisations

Allotments Associations

Court Place Farm, Boults Lane. Chair: Jane Wilson
membership@cpf-allotments.org.uk

Sunday mornings 8.30 am – 11.00 am07530 068977

Mill Lane Chairman: Dr. M. Unkovskaya.....07771 702548

Treasurer Dana Vlad07919 493580

Secretary Christine Mitchell07789 991051

Baby and Toddler Club Weds 9.30-11.30 term time in Parish Hall

Gill Hale, 64 Arlington Drive01865 248260

Bellringers:

Practice Friday 7.30pm Learners welcome

Hugh Deam, Tower Captain.....01865 247574

Roy Peach, Secretary.....07788 746157

Choirs and Musicians at St Nicholas

Junior Choir, SATB Choir, Music Group

Practices at various times.

Neil Barker.....musicdirector@stnicholasmarston.org.uk

Coffee Pot

Coffee morning, monthly, Monday

Eileen Palayiwa, 27 Ouseley Close01865 725423

Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Ranger Units

Evenings throughout the week. Adult volunteers as well as girls welcomed!

District Commissioner, Lesley Dentry,.....07765 418067

Leisure:

OXSRAD Sports and Leisure Centre,
Court Place Farm, Marsh Lane.01865 741336

Library (next to Mortimer Hall) opening hours

Tuesday 2-5pm; 5.30-7pm

Thursday 2-5pm; 5.30-7pm

Friday 10-12noon; 2-5pm

Saturday 9.30-12.30pm01865 726823

Hedena Health Medical Centre.01865 597023

Marston Community Gardening

Alistair Morris01865 724081

Kate Robinson01865 766620

Marston Saints Football Club

Andy Winchester (Treasurer).....www.msfc.org.uk

Mortimer Hall (Village Hall)

Chris Crane, 2 Raymund Road01865 727995

Oxford City Council (Marston Representatives)

Mary Clarkson, 8 Dunstan Road, Oxford OX3 9BY01865 751493

Alistair Morris, 55 Arlington Drive, Oxford OX3 OSJ.....07804 847285

Oxfordshire County Council (Marston Representative)

Mark Lygo07765 665 726

Oxford Preservation Trust

10 Turn Again Lane, Oxford OX1 1QL.....01865 242918

Parentline

Confidential helpline for parents.....01865 726600

Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Tim Cann, 8 Nicholas Avenue01865 203139
(Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm)

Chairman: Duncan Hatfield07706 998224

Pre-school at Mortimer Hall

open 9 sessions a week07818 236348

Royal British Legion Club Hall:

Steward01865 243991

Schools

Friends of St Nicholas School.....01865 242838

Scouts — 43rd Oxford (St. Nicholas) Scout Group, Boults Lane

Group Scout Leader, Tim Greaves..... tim.greaves@keble.oxon.org

Beaver Scout Leader, Sue Springett01865 251515

Cub Scout Leader, Matthew Kennedy.....matthew.kennedy500@gmail.com

Scouts Leader, Linda Phillips07804 925705

St. Nicholas Church Hall and Committee Room

Debbie Bailey, Parish Office.....01865 580354

Women's Institute

Meetings at 7.30 second Tue of each month - new members welcome!

President, Judy Youngjudithyoung732@gmail.com

Secretary, Jennie Burrow.....jennie.burrow@gmail.com

Trade Directory

Architectural services for Planning Permissions/ Building Regulations

Digby Architectural: 4 Broughton Close07979 756918

Bakery: a weekly collection service. Contact baker@painedmain.co.uk

Bathroom installation, plumber, glazier, tiler

Roger G Turner.....07914 925757

Building/Builders Services

Colin Simpson: High Class painting, decorating and coving etc:

10 Dent's Close OX3 0NP.....01865 742842

Trevor Dines: No job too small - plumbing, complete bathrooms

from fitting a door to building an extension. Free estimates.

8, Raymund Road01865 452851, 07889 263140

Daniel Kelly: Painting and decorating services:07917 607949

Cleaning Carpets & Upholstery

Grimebusters: Quality carpet, rug & upholstery cleaning at competitive

rates. Free estimates.....01865 726983

Complementary Medicine

Oxford Therapies: pain relief, stress, management & more

www.oxford-therapies.com.....07913 503257

Oxford Reflexology: relaxation, stress-relief and rebalance

www.oxfordreflexology.co.uk.....07726 312719

Holistic Therapies with Dr Paola Bisicchia: Massage, Reiki, 07722 474735

Chakra Reading, Life Coaching email: info@yourawakeningpath.com

Dog grooming in your own home by Tania (NVQ level 3)

20 Harlow Way, Oxford OX3 0QS.....07877 183281

Electricians

Brian Turner: Registered NICEIC domestic installer01865 728729

All work guaranteed 33, Salford Road07538 382683

.....brian.r.turner@ntlworld.com

Craig Holloway Electrical Ltd:07868 706392

.....enquiries@craigholloway.co.uk

Elderly wellbeing

Foot Clinic

Oxfordshire Foot Clinic: We provide fast & efficient foot treatments,

including nail cutting and corn/callus removal. We visit you at home.

Appointments.....07742 964282

Funeral Directors

C S Boswell Independent funeral services.....01865 553737

Homewood Funerals (Family-owned and managed)

14 Cherwell Drive, Marston OX3 4LY01865 570000

Garden & small machinery service/repair.....taylordannnyuk@yahoo.co.uk

Danny Taylor, 5 Ouseley Close, Marston OX3 OJS.....07796 573319

Hair and Beauty

Fiona's Hair Salon:

Salford Road, Old Marston OX3 0RX01865 241632

Home decluttering & organising: Marie Kondo certified.....07877 183281

Monumental Mason

Reeves Memorials: New memorials, removal for burials, added

inscriptions & renovations.

147A Magdalen Rd, Oxford. OX4 1RL.....01865 251231

Plumbing, Heating & Gas

Lemarsh Building Services – plumbing and heating

22 Marsh Lane.....01865 761896, 07484 274331

S. J. Moore: Installation and servicing for all gas appliances.

Gas Safe Reg. 146337.

76, Arlington Drive.01865 724037, 07970 470176

Andrew Job Plumbing & Heating Ltd:

Gas Safe Registered Engineer 125206...01865 761896, 07710 390980

Tree Surgery, Fruit Tree Pruning

R. Timms: 80 Oxford Road01865 244608

Window Cleaning - MRF Window Cleaning Services

Mick Fry: 37, Green Hill Oxford OX4 7UD. Fully insured member of the

Federation of Master Window Cleaners .. 01865 777889, 07887 515168

**Copy deadline for March's (print) issue is
Thursday 15 February**