



What do you associate March with? The season of Spring perhaps? Certainly the view from my window is very spring-like with daffodils, crocuses and tulips waving at me. The sun was out and doing her thing this morning, but then the wind came and brought



more rain. Will March be full of rain or perhaps a little sun? One thing is for certain, the days are getting longer and brighter!

I feel we are in a time of transitions; liturgically, at St Nicholas we are in Lent, a somber time of repentance, but around us nature is giving us some small but certain signals that new life is coming. This time of transition offers a myriad of wonderful contradictions: birdsong and storms, daffodils and mud, a new dress under a winter coat. As we witness this rebirth and awakening after winter we may find ourselves with more energy, a desire to be outside, or the need to start spring cleaning!

I realise it can seem strange that the church is in a period of penitence and abstinence when around us we have colour and new life emerging. Is this to make Lent even harder for those observing it?



For me, the time of Lent helps me to appreciate the colours, life and rebirth even more and on a spiritual level - the time between now and Easter, or Ostara - is like an inner spring clean. All the things that weigh us down, distract us or stop us from living brightly-coloured lives are sought out, organised, ditched or forgiven.

I feel I can enter Holy Week and Easter day - on the 31st this year - with a different mindset, because I realise how much I need God, and how much I still need to learn in letting go and trusting in God for growth and balance.

On Easter day we will celebrate the rising of Christ from the dead and the new colours and vibrancies of Spring will seem like precursors to this great celebration. They are the hints of the resurrection in the period of penitence, the little pinpricks of light and joy that can keep us going through the times of hardship.



My prayer for you, regardless of your faith or where you are right now, is that March will be a time of new discoveries and new beginnings. I am especially excited that we have our Spring Fun Morning on 23 March just two days after the Spring Equinox: this fun day was delayed from

March 2020 and it will be a wonderful community event.

Do know you are all very welcome to any of our services here in Marston or Elsfield: check out our website (stnicholasmarston.org.uk) and join us for Easter Day. I particularly love the Sunrise service at 6am on Easter Day, although I am aware it will feel even earlier this year with the clocks going forward. Though as I think about the sacrifice of Christ at Easter time, I realise that getting out of bed earlier than I would like is worth it.



Love 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 at St Nicholas Church.

Every Thursday **during Lent we have Compline** at 8pm at St Thomas Church in Elsfield

Sunday 3rd - 3rd Sunday of Lent

10am - **Community Celebration Service with Holy Communion** *with Jr choirs/choir & Worship band* at St Nicholas Church. **LIVE streamed. Shared Lunch to follow at 12noon in the hall.**

6pm - BCP Evensong at St Nicholas Church.

Sunday 10th - 4th Sunday of Lent - Mothering Sunday

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church.

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

Sunday 17th - 5th Sunday of Lent - Passiontide begins

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church.

10am CW Morning Prayer at St Nicholas Church

10am Messy Church in St Nicholas Church Hall

10am Matins BCP Service at St Thomas in Elsfield

Sunday 24th - PALM SUNDAY

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church

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

6pm The Way of the Cross - Special service for Passiontide, Choral and Congregation.

Sunday 31st - EASTER DAY

6am **SUNRISE** Service starting outside St Nicholas Church.
Followed by Breakfast in the Hall.

10am **Celebration** Holy Communion at St Nicholas Church.
LIVE streamed

12noon **BCP** Holy Communion at St Thomas in Elsfield



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



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 March?

The Door of Spring by Ethelwyn Wetherald

How shall we open the door of Spring
That Winter is holding wearily shut?
Though winds are calling and waters brawling,
And snow decaying and light delaying,
Yet it will not move in its yielding rut
And back on its flowery hinges swing,
Till wings are flapping
And woodpeckers tapping
With sharp, clear rapping
At the door of Spring.

How shall we fasten the door of Spring
Wide, so wide that it cannot close?
Though buds are filling and frogs are trilling,
And violets breaking and grass awaking,
Yet doubtfully back and forth it blows
Till come the birds, and the woodlands ring
With sharp beak stammer –
The sudden clamor
Of the woodpecker's hammer
At the door of Spring.

Nature notes: What to see and hear in March?

Spring has arrived and from the equinox on 20 March there will be more day than night. Yellow is the colour of early spring. Look out for dandelions, lesser



celandines and primroses on grass verges, in hedgerows and parks. These early flowers all provide a much-needed source of nectar for bees and butterflies. March is a busy time for birds: listen for the rich dulcet tones of the blackbird. They are early risers and up well before other birds. They are also early breeders and can have as many as four broods in a good year, with young appearing into late July.

What to cook in March?

Enough chocolate already: try this.

Gluten Free Almond Cake

Ingredients

200g softened butter

200g golden syrup

4 eggs at room temperature.

1 tsp almond essence

150g ground almonds

50g gluten free flour

40g flaked almonds

Method

Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Butter a 20cm round cake tin and line with baking parchment. Beat the butter, syrup and sugar together until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the almond extract. The mixture may look separated at this stage but it will come together once the flour is added. Combine the ground almonds and flour and fold into the mixture. Tip into the prepared tin and



scatter the flaked almonds over the top. Bake for 40-45 mins until golden and a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Leave to cool completely in the tin before serving.

WI

Our next WI meeting will be on Tuesday 12 March at 7.30pm in St Nicholas Church Hall, Elsfield Road, Old Marston. New members are welcome and a first visit is free.

Coffee Pot

Coffee Pot will meet in the Church Hall on Mon 18 March from 10.30am to 12 noon. We welcome all those who have been bereaved and any who would like to meet others. Please contact Eileen Palayiwa on 01865 725423 for further details.

Lunch Club

Lunch Club will be on Friday 23 March, since its usual last Friday of the month slot is Good Friday). All are welcome! 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

Benefice of Marston & Elsfield
stnicholasmarston.org.uk

Holy Week & Easter

PALM SUNDAY - 24th March
6pm The Way of the Cross at St Nicholas Church
Special service for Passiontide
Choral & Congregation music

MAUNDY THURSDAY - 28th March
6:30pm Agape Fish n' Chips Supper
at St Thomas Church in Elsfield.
Booking essential - james@checkemian.com

GOOD FRIDAY - 29th March
10am Good Friday Liturgy at St Nicholas Church
followed by Hotcross Buns
11:30am Walk of Witness with the Cross
starting at St Nicholas Church

EASTER DAY - 31st March
6am Sunrise Service followed
by Breakfast in St Nicholas
Church Hall
10am Celebration Communion
at St Nicholas Church
12noon BCP Holy Communion
at St Thomas Church

BENEFICE OF MARSTON & ELSFIELD



**PALM
SUNDAY**

**A celebration:
Including a Procession of Palms
& Holy Communion**
10am



PALM SUNDAY
REMEMBERING JESUS' ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

St Nicholas
Marston

**Spring
Fun Day**

St Nicholas Parish Hall,
Elsfield Road, OX3 0PR

23rd March 10-1pm

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

EGG HUNT, CRAFTS, CAKES, FACE PAINTS

**28th
March
2024**

Benefice of Marston & Elsfield

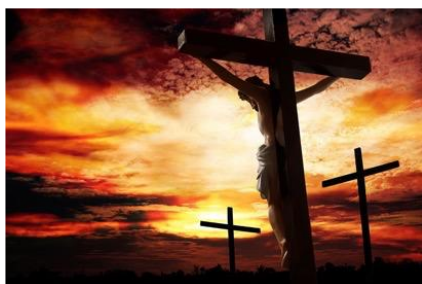
Maundy Thursday

**Fish n' Chip Supper
& Agape Communion**

6:30pm

Book Fish N' Chips with James Plunket
james@checkemian.com &
07507 885169 by 24th March
(£10 fish & £7 veg pie)

stnicholasmarston.org.uk



Good Friday Liturgy 10am - 29th March

Short Service including the
Proclamation of the Cross

Followed by Hot cross buns & Coffee

Leave St Nicholas church at
11:30 For Churches Together
Procession of the Cross



31
MARCH

EASTER SUNDAY
2024



6am
Sunrise
Service

Starts outside St Nicholas Church
Followed by Breakfast in the Church Hall

10am Family Communion
at St Nicholas Church, Marston

12noon BCP Communion
at St Thomas Church, Elsfield



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

GREEN CHURCH

Programme for 2024

stnicholasmarston.org.uk

Sunday Feb 25th 6pm - Talk: What is in a name:
knowledge & naming of birds. Andy Gosler

Sunday April 21st 10am - Short Celtic Service
followed by help at the Allotments

Saturday May 4th 6am - Bird Walk
followed by breakfast

Sunday June 30th 10am - Short Celtic Service
followed by Wildlife Walk

Sunday Sept 29th 10am - Short Celtic Service
followed by Litter Picking

Outdoor activities are weather permitting
Short Celtic gatherings will be held in the memorial garden with
chairs provided.



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, strimmers, wheelbarrows, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, bike rack etc),

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

Places available at

MORTIMER HALL PRE-SCHOOL

Ages 2-4 **MON-FRI 9AM-3PM**

mortimerhallpreschool.com

Oxford Road, Marston

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, Elsfield Road
Crafts, Bible Stories, Singing, Prayer, Breakfast

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

FREE!

Messy CHURCH

SAVE THE DATE!

Marston Community Market

Saturday 6 April 11am – 2pm

Mortimer Hall, 50 Oxford Road

Old Marston OX3 0PH

Cakes, bread, jams, gifts, plants and more
Details to follow - look out for the posters

CELESTIAL HARMONIES

Kerensa Briggs | Requiem

Tallis | Gaude Gloria
Durufle | Quatre Motets



Exeter College Chapel, Oxford
Saturday 2 March | 7.30pm

Oxford Pro Musica Singers

Mark Jordan | Conductor

Imogen Russell | Soprano
Bartosz Thiede | Organ

£15 (£5 under 25s)

via the QR code and ticketsource.co.uk/oxfordpromusica



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>

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

Bellringers' report

With February on our doorstep, the ringers answered a plea from the Clewer Initiative who were looking for contributions to mark the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking. This year they created a video that included a montage of ringers ringing in solidarity. Only a few seconds of film were used – see if you can spot us in the video on our website:- <https://oldmarstonbells.we/bs> or our Facebook page.

On 3 February we decamped to Horspath (6) for the Branch AGM, which covers the Oxford area. New committee members were elected and there was 75 minutes of open ringing with ringers from different towers ringing with friends from other locations. Congratulations to new Marston ringer Carolina Redolfi who only started with us a couple of months ago, is making excellent progress and was nominated and accepted to Branch membership at the AGM.

10 February saw a visiting band from Cheltenham ring a quarter peal on the Old Marston Bells as part of an outing and on 13 February the handbells enjoyed yet another outing, this time to the WI where there was a chance to learn about the bells, see them in action and have a go. So many people have enjoyed their sound over the past year due to our team doing these visits.

Our AGM was held on 23 February with our first ringing outing of the year the following day, and we will provide an update on these in the next Marston Times. If you would like to support us by joining as a ringer, helping with repairs or even some fundraising, please do get in touch.

Roy

Baroque performance in Jericho

Luceat Choir and Baroque players will be putting on a performance of 'Incoronazione', a reconstruction of the Imperial Coronation of Charles V in Bologna 1530 on 9 March at 19:30 at St Barnabas church, Jericho, 50 Cardigan St, Oxford OX2 6BS.

Tickets at <https://www.luceatchoir.co.uk/events>

World Day of Prayer



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

Old Marston Parish Council report for February

Planning applications from 2 Mortimer Drive, 139A Oxford Road and a variation to the Pavilion in Marsh Lane met with no objections. OCC have informed the PC that its application to install a noticeboard in the bus shelter in Elsfield Road has been approved.

There have been more complaints from residents from St Nicholas Mobile Home Park about the development at Marston Paddock in Butts Lane. The clerk is arranging a meeting with the development site manager.

The PC reviewed notes from the meeting between the parish, county and city councils to look at existing and potential traffic congestion and speeding issues in the parish and decided to look at funding a survey to provide data on speed, volume, vehicle type, times etc. A working party has been formed to look at locations around the whole parish suitable for monitoring traffic.

Despite the efforts of OC councillors, the parish clerk and several residents, the water leak on the Oxford Road has still not been resolved. It recently became dangerous with the water frozen and people slipping on the ice. Oxford Direct Services and Thames Water are each stating it is the other's responsibility. The clerk is contacting the Oxford Mail, asking it to highlight the situation and prompt a resolution.

The next OXCLEAN is on Saturday 2 March at 10am, meeting outside the Mortimer Hall. Sacks and litter pickers will be provided. All volunteers will be very welcome and we look forward to see you there.

The next meeting will be on **Monday 4 March 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/>



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 7.15pm 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 ONP.....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 OQS.....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.....taylordannyuk@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 ORX01865 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

