

St Nicholas, Marston and St Thomas of Canterbury, Elsfeld

# MARSTON TIMES

April 2025 [stnicholasmarston.org.uk](http://stnicholasmarston.org.uk) Delivered quarterly Donations welcome

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

*(John 20:1)*

Joel Denno writes: As a family, we enjoy playing the game 'Herd Mentality'. If you are unfamiliar with it, the rules are as follows: each round consists of a question on something which is matter of opinion. For example, it could be 'Which is the best season of the year?' Every player has to write down an answer to this question, but their goal is to predict the most popular answer, to be part of the herd. So, if my favourite season is Winter, but I think the group's favourite season is Spring, I would write down 'Spring' on my piece of paper.

One of the questions that has cropped up a couple of times when we have played Herd Mentality is this: 'What is the first thing you do when you wake up?' It's a fun question in the context of a game, but it also feels to me like a significant question. What is the first decision we make at the dawn of a new day?



What is the first thought we have? How do these early choices impact on the rest of our day? Maybe it becomes even more significant,

when one asks, what is the first thing you do when you wake up on the first day of the week. Or the month. Or the year. Our first act on waking is significant because it occurs in a moment of absolute potential, before anything has happened to shut down our possibilities. 'Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb'. The Gospels are short on certain types of detail, so we don't have a breakdown of Mary's usual morning routine. We don't know how she would have answered the Herd Mentality question. She may have washed, dressed and eaten before she ventured out.

What we do know, though, is that she went to the tomb early. She went early on the first day of the week, on the cusp of a fresh new beginning. Mary would have known the dawn was just around the corner, but just how much it would change things, she could not have known. This was not just the start of a new week, but of a new epoch. What Mary was about to witness would change the course of human history. As a new day arrives, one of the things of which we are most conscious is the transition from darkness into light. John tells us that Mary came to the tomb when it was still dark and he is fully aware of the symbolic as well as the literal meaning of this fact. When the light comes, the world is transformed and Mary made the journey to the tomb in a world that was on the brink of transformation.

Every year, at Easter, we symbolically reenact the journey that Mary made to the tomb, travelling through the darkness



of Lent to arrive at the start of a new season, a new day. Unlike Mary, we already know that the tomb is empty, yet this festival and this celebration of the risen Jesus still gives us the opportunity to experience a new dawn. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have the chance to leave behind the things that burden us – all of our failures and regrets – and to start again in the light of the day.

What was the first thing that Mary did after waking up? She went to the tomb in the darkness and, as the dawn broke, she found that she had entered into a new world, a world of light and life, a world in which Jesus had risen. This Easter, I pray that you may experience a new beginning, full of light, just as Mary and Christians over centuries have done. Amen.



# BENEFICE OF MARSTON & ELSFIELD



Welcome to St Nicholas & St Thomas.

Further details can be found on our website - [stnicholasmarston.org.uk](http://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.

## Sunday 6th - 5th Sunday of Lent

10am - **ALL TOGETHER** Service with Holy Communion *with Worship band* at St Nicholas Church. **Live Streamed.**

**APCM TO FOLLOW IN THE HALL - ALL WELCOME.**

**12:30 Soup** will be served for Christian Aid

6pm - BCP Evensong at St Nicholas Church.



## Sunday 13th - PALM SUNDAY

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church.

10am Holy Communion Service with the Passion Reading at St Nicholas Church. **Live Streamed.**

**Messy Church** in the hall, but first meet in the church to join the palm procession.



## Sunday 20th - EASTER DAY

6am **SUNRISE** Service at St Nicholas Church.  
Followed by Breakfast in the hall

**10am Holy Communion Service at St Nicholas Church**

**12noon Holy Communion BCP at St Thomas Church in Elsfeld**



## Sunday 27th - 2nd Sunday of Easter

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church

10am Holy Communion Service at St Nicholas Church **Live Streamed.**

**6pm Pause for Thought *Farming in Oxford:*** William & Clare Brown



**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 88516  
Justine McCool 07426 463119

## What to quote in April?

**Home Thoughts from Abroad** by Robert Browning  
Oh, to be in England  
Now that April's there,  
And whoever wakes in England  
Sees, some morning, unaware,  
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough  
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,  
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!  
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge  
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover  
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—  
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,  
Lest you should think he never could recapture  
The first fine careless rapture!  
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,  
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew  
The buttercups, the little children's dower  
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

## Nature notes: What to see and hear in April?

April is a bumper month for spotting wildlife. Swallows arrive after their incredible journey from the southern hemisphere. Queen bumblebees are on the wing - you may spot their zig zag flight close to the ground as they look for a nesting place. Orange-tip butterflies emerge after spending the winter in chrysalis form. They will be looking for garlic mustard, a common hedgerow plant, for food and a place to lay their eggs. Later in the month bluebells appear. Here in Marston we are more likely to see non-native Spanish bluebells but pockets of the more delicate native variety can still be found.



## What to cook in April?

### Traditional Easter biscuits

#### Ingredients

100g butter  
90g caster sugar  
200 g plain flour  
½ teaspoon mixed spice (2.5ml)  
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg (2.5ml)  
½ lemon, juice and grated zest  
1 large egg yolk  
75g currants or other dried fruit.

For the topping:

1 egg white  
caster sugar

## Method

Heat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4/ 350°F  
Grease or line two baking trays. Juice and grate the lemon and set aside. Put all the ingredients for the biscuits (except the currants) in the bowl of your mixer or processor and mix well to combine. Scrape down and mix again until the mixture forms a soft dough. (If you do not have a food processor you can mix by hand with a wooden spoon.) Add the currants and mix in by hand. Dust your rolling surface with flour. Gather the dough into a ball and roll out to about ½ cm thick; cut out rounds with the cutter and transfer to the prepared baking sheet. Gather the dough together and roll and cut again until it's all used up.

Bake for about 10-12 minutes.

Remove from the oven and brush each biscuit, very lightly, with the lightly beaten egg white and sprinkle with a little caster sugar, then return to the oven for 4-5 minutes or until pale golden brown. For best results do one biscuit at a time, ie egg white and sugar. Cool on the tray for 5-10 minutes then lift onto a wire rack until completely cool



## WI

Our next WI meeting will be on Tuesday 8 April at 7:30pm in St Nicholas Church Hall, Elsfield Road, Old Marston OX3 0PR. Our speaker will be John Rogers who will be giving a presentation entitled Isle of Skye - off the beaten track. To find out more about us look on our website [marstonwi.org](http://marstonwi.org) New members are very welcome. A first visit is free, followed by a small charge for the next two.

## Coffee Pot

Our April Coffee Pot will be on 7 April from 10.30am to 12 noon in the Church Hall. Please note this change of date from our usual Monday in order to avoid the Easter Holidays. We welcome all who have been bereaved and others who would like to meet more people. For more details please contact Eileen Palayiwa on 01865 725423.

## Lunch Club

The next meeting of Lunch Club will be held on Fri 25 April: a special Easter lunch of fish & chips and hot cross bun bread & butter pudding! If you would like a place, please contact Debbie on 01865 580354 to book.



### New deliverers for Marston Times needed!

We are looking for two people to deliver the printed Marston Times four times each year (in March, June, September and December) to **i)** Bradlands and Cumberlege Close and **ii)** Ashlong Road, Lewell Avenue and Marsh Lane 1-37, 52-54. Copies are printed, bundled up and set out in church for collection in the preceding month. Please contact Colin Harris: [colingharris31@gmail.com](mailto:colingharris31@gmail.com)

### Support your local library!

It's now ten years since Oxfordshire County Council cut our libraries' budget: this led to the halving of the number of hours our librarian is paid to open Old Marston's branch and the need to find volunteers to fill the gap. We always need more willing hands: if you are prepared to give up 90 minutes a month to help run a session, I would be delighted to hear from you: [janlawrie@btinternet.com](mailto:janlawrie@btinternet.com) Volunteers work in pairs and receive training before they start.



## Benefice of Marston & Elsfield

[stnicholasmarston.org.uk](http://stnicholasmarston.org.uk)

# Holy Week & Easter

### HOLY MONDAY - 14th April

6:30pm Stations of the Cross at St Nicholas Church  
(The Stations of the Cross are a 14-step devotion that commemorates Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man)

### MAUNDY THURSDAY - 17th April

6:30pm Agape Fish 'n' Chips Supper  
at St Thomas Church in Elsfield.  
Booking essential - [james.P@socialinvestgroup.com](mailto:james.P@socialinvestgroup.com)

### GOOD FRIDAY - 18th April

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 - 20th April

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



St Nicholas  
Marston

## Items for the School Blessings Box



These items will be donated to local families

### We need toiletries such as:

- Children's toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Shower gel
- Bubble bath
- Nappies (sizes 3,4,5)
- Sanitary towels
- Washing detergent



Please drop off  
donations at the  
font  
in St Nicholas  
church (OX3 OPR)

## THURSDAYS IN LENT

At St Thomas's Church, Elsfield  
The Benefice of Old Marston and Elsfield

### WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT EASTER?

7.00PM to 8.30PM

with a light meal from 7.00pm

A 5-week series of talks discussing how we understand Easter. We will discuss what death, nothingness and resurrection mean in a context where God seems, at best, irrelevant to most people's lives. We will discuss what Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday mean for the Christian God and for people who believe in that God.

### COMPLINE

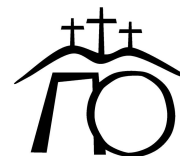
8.30PM to 9.00PM

A candlelit service of Night Prayer, providing space for quiet reflection, contemplation and prayer.



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

DATES:  
MARCH 13th  
MARCH 20th  
MARCH 27th  
APRIL 3rd  
APRIL 10th



you are invited to our



## ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

### Our APCM for



**Sunday 6th of April  
11:30 in the Parish Hall**



**Soup Lunch at 12:30  
Donations towards  
Christian Aid  
most welcome!**

## ECHOES OF ETERNITY



*Celebrating Palestrina's 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with  
Missa Papae Marcelli and music by his contemporaries  
including Victoria, Lobo and others.*

**St Barnabas Church, Jericho, Oxford  
Saturday 5 April 2025 | 7.30 pm**



**£18**

(£8 u25s)

Tickets via the QR code or  
[ticketsource.co.uk/oxfordpromusica](https://ticketsource.co.uk/oxfordpromusica)



**St. Nicholas  
Marston**

Messy Church at St Nicholas, Marston  
2025

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April - Palm Sunday  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July

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!**

**MARSTON  
community  
MARKET**

**SATURDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025**

**11am-2pm**

**Mortimer Hall, Oxford Road  
Old Marston OX3 0PH**


Artisan baker, pottery, arts, crafts, food,  
refreshments, local produce, honey, pre-school  
open day. Free entry - all welcome!





**Bring cash & card**

Supported by Old Marston Parish Council

**marstonmarket.com**






  
**‘Stations of the Cross’**
  
**Holy Monday**
  
**14th April at 6:30pm**
  
**At St Nicholas Church**
  
**Traditional & Reflective**
  
 The Stations of the Cross are a 14-step devotion that commemorates Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as human.

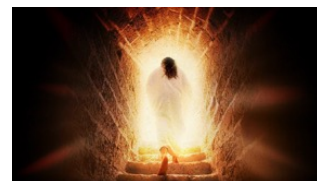

  

  
**Good Friday Liturgy**
  
**10am - 18th April**
  
**Short Service including the Proclamation of the Cross**
  
*Followed by Hot cross buns & Coffee*
  
**Leave St Nicholas church at 11:30 For Churches Together Procession of the Cross**
  




  
**Benefice of Marston & Elsfield**
  
*Maundy Thursday*
  
**Fish 'n' Chip Supper & Agape Communion at St Thomas, Elsfield**
  

  
**17th April 6:30pm**
  
 Book Fish N' Chips with James Plunket  
 james.p@socialinvestgroup.com & 07507 885169 by 10th April  
 (£13 fish, £5 sausage & £8 veg pie)


  
**EASTER SUNDAY 2025**
  

  
**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



## Bellringers' report

On Tuesday 18 Feb a band of Marston ringers rang a quarter peal at Chinnor (6), which was the first quarter on these bells for everyone other than our Tower Captain, Hugh. For three of our ringers it was the first ever time there. Afterwards, suitable refreshments were had in the village café.

Again, a plethora of quarter peals have been rung during the past few weeks across the county and our ringers have helped bolster the numbers, ensuring these have gone off without a hitch, from Bletchington to Witney, with Iffley and St Giles too. The quarter peal at Marston on 2 March was rung for St David's Day and included the aptly named Daffodil Doubles method. For International Women's Day, female bands across the locale were formed to celebrate.

The end of the week saw Jane, Hugh and Roy head to Abingdon to give a short talk and demonstration to the local branch of the MS Society on all things bells. They had a chance to experience handbells and belleplates and a mix of recognisable tunes and traditional change ringing was given.

Our AGM was a quieter affair this year but some excellent progress has been made and a distinct change in how we are operating, even this time last year, is clear to see. We are looking forward to the year ahead. If you would be interested in finding out more and how you can be involved, do get in touch.

## Old Marston Parish Council report for March

At the March PC meeting the council had no concerns about planning applications from 41 Oxford Road and 4 Rylands. The council did have concerns about the property's boundary in an application from 32B Oxford Road, and change of use to HMO from 44 Arlington Drive: the council has requested that both applications be called in.

The chairman and clerk met a group of residents to discuss concerns about speeding and congestion along Oxford Road. They are concerned this will get worse with the developments at Hill View Farm and Almond Farm.

The PC was asked for suggestions for potential names for the new streets at Hill View Farm development. These have been submitted to the Oxford City Council.

The PC is also investigating the installation of bleed kits within the parish. Bleed kits are used as first aid to treat serious injuries while waiting for emergency services to arrive.

A page has been created on the PC website that shows activities for young people in the Marston and Northway area. ([www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk/youth](http://www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk/youth)). Any additional activities will be added as more information is known.

The PC has been made aware that the county council has funding available to tackle flooding in Oxfordshire. Working alongside the county and city councillors the PC is planning to apply for a grant to help residents in Old Marston who have been affected by flooding.

It was a successful OXCLEAN this year with twelve enthusiastic volunteers helping to litterpick and make Old Marston litter free. Thank you to Duncan for organising.


The next PC meeting will be on Mon 12 April at 7pm in the Mortimer Hall. The Annual Parishioners Meeting will be held on Monday 19 May at 7pm, also in the Mortimer Hall. All welcome.

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](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk)

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

**PAUSE...**



### Programme for 2025

Sunday's **Pause for Thought**  
at St Nicholas Church

Sunday Jan 26th at 6pm (in the hall)  
*Our place in the observable Universe*  
Prof Stephen Smartt (University of Oxford)


Sunday Feb 23rd at 6pm (in the hall)  
*Understanding Dementia*  
Katie Smok.

Sunday April 27th at 6pm  
*Farming in Oxford*  
Will & Clare Brown

Sunday May 25th at 6pm  
*Penicillin and the story of Norman Heatley  
and Old Marston*  
Dr David Cranston

Sunday July 27th at 6pm or Sunday October 26th at 6pm

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



## Parish Organisations

Allotments Associations  
Court Place Farm, Boults Lane. Chair: Jane Wilson  
Sunday mornings 9-10.30am.....shed.cpf-allotments@gmail.com  
Mill Lane Chairman: Dr. M. Unkovskaya..... 07771 702548  
Treasurer Dana Vlad .....07919 493580  
Secretary Christine Mitchell ..... 07789 991051

Baby and Toddler Club Weds 9.30-11.30 term time in Parish Hall  
Helen Norman.....07852 213974

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 Close ..... 01865 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 9.30-12.30pm .....01865 726823

Hedena Health Medical Centre..... 01865 597023

Marston Community Gardening  
Alistair Morris ..... 01865 724081  
Kate Robinson ..... 01865 766620

Marston Saints Football Club  
Andy Winchester (Treasurer) .....www.msfc.org.uk

Mortimer Hall (Village Hall)  
Chris Crane, 2 Raymund Road .....01865 727995

Oxford City Council (Marston Representatives)  
Mary Clarkson, 8 Dunstan Road, Oxford OX3 9BY..... 01865 751493  
Kate Robinson .....07483 011488

Oxfordshire County Council (Marston Representative)  
Mark Lygo ..... 07765 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 Avenue .....01865 203139  
(Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm)  
Chairman: Duncan Hatfield .....07706 998224

Pre-school at Mortimer Hall  
open 9 sessions a week .....07818 236348

Royal British Legion Club Hall:  
Steward ..... 01865 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 Springett ..... 01865 251515  
Cub Scout Leader, Matthew Kennedy....matthew.kennedy500@gmail.com  
Scouts Leader, Linda Phillips .....07804 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 Young ..... [marstonwi.org](http://marstonwi.org)

## Trade Directory

Architectural services for Planning Permissions/ Building Regulations  
Digby Architectural: 4 Broughton Close .....07979 756918

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 Road .....01865 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

Decorating  
Kerr-Brown painting/decorating [hkbdecorating@gmail.com](mailto:hkbdecorating@gmail.com) 07944 605502  
Dog grooming service in Old Marston village.....07877 183281

Electricians  
Brian Turner: Registered NICEIC domestic installer .....01865 728729  
All work guaranteed 33, Salford Road .....07538 382683  
..... brian.r.turner@ntlworld.com  
Craig Holloway Electrical Ltd: ..... 07868 706392  
.....enquiries@craigholloway.co.uk

Oxfordshire Foot Clinic: We provide fast & efficient foot treatments,  
including nail cutting and corn/callus removal. We visit you at home.  
Appointments ..... 07742 964282

Pedilicious Foot Care: treatment following initial medical consultation,  
including foot soak, toe nails trimmed, corns and calluses removed, half leg  
and foot massage. Contact Patricia Anson (with almost 40 years of  
experience) .....01865 200963 or 07881 366350

Funeral Directors  
C S Boswell Independent funeral services.....01865 553737  
Homewood Funerals (Family-owned and managed)  
14 Cherwell Drive, Marston OX3 4LY .....01865 570000  
Garden & small machinery service/repair.....taylordannyyuk@yahoo.co.uk  
Danny Taylor, 5 Ouseley Close, Marston OX3 0JS.....07796 573319

Hair and Beauty  
Fiona's Hair Salon:  
Salford Road, Old Marston OX3 0RX .....01865 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.....07710 390980

S. J. Moore: Installation and servicing for all gas appliances.  
Gas Safe Reg. 146337.  
76, Arlington Drive.....01865 724037, 07970 470176

Tree Surgery, Fruit Tree Pruning  
R. Timms: 80 Oxford Road .....01865 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

