

DIARY FOR THE WEEK *Starting on Monday 23rd February 2026*

(All events held in St John's Church Hall unless stated otherwise)

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|---|
| Mon | 10am | GroW Toddler Group |
| | 12.45pm | GroW Babies Group |
| | 7pm | 1 st Grove Guides |
| | 7.30pm | Lent course at home of Nick & Claire Page, Challow |
| Tues | 7pm | 2 nd Grove Guides |
| Weds | 9.15am | St John's Toddler Group |
| | 2pm | Badminton on Wednesdays |
| | 7.30pm | Lent course with Rev Margot & Martin Hodson, Grove |
| Thurs | 10am | Mid-week Holy Communion, St Nicholas, Challow |
| | 2pm | Bible Study Group Lent Course, Lower SJR |
| | 5.30pm | 1 st Grove Brownies |
| | 8pm | 'Assessing Church IT needs' meeting, Small SJR |
| | 8pm | St John's Badminton Group |
| Fri | 7.30pm | Online Lent Course (contact office or Alec Gill for link) |
| Sat | 8.30am | Morning prayers at Frances Gillott's house |
| | 1pm | Blessing & Thanksgiving service, St John's, Grove |
| Sun | 6.30pm | Senior Youth Club |

BENEFACTIVE MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICES

There will be a Holy Communion at St John's, Grove, on Wednesday 1st April at 10am (Holy Week).

There will **not** be a Holy Communion at St Nicholas, Challow, on 2nd or 9th April

NOTICES for inclusion in the newsletter must be sent to the editor by the preceding Tuesday midday at news@valebenefice.org.uk, not to the benefice office. Thank you. It will help both the office and the editor. Items for newsletter inclusion will be for 2 weeks. Please re-send your content if you wish for your notice to go into the newsletter again. If anyone has specific prayer requests, please email confidentially to prayer@valebenefice.org.uk.

CONTACT DETAILS

Vicar: Rev Alec Gill: 07739563894 vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk

Associate Vicar: Rev Miriam Jones: 07474095190 vicarmiriam@valebenefice.org.uk

Licensed Lay Minister: Sarah Shackleton: 07587776609 SarahLLM@valebenefice.org.uk

Benefice Office: Grove Parish Church, Main Street, Grove, OX12 7L

Open: Mon–Fri. 10–12 noon. 01235 771479. office@valebenefice.org.uk

VALE BENEFICE NEWSLETTER

22nd February 2026

First Sunday of Lent

Readings selected from:

Genesis 2.15-17,3.1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5.12-19; Matthew 4.1-11

We don't have to look far to see that sin is real. On the world stage and in our own thoughts and actions, things go very wrong. It's as if the stream has been polluted at its source. And no one is free of it... except one: Jesus Christ. It's through him that we may be freed of its sting, as David celebrated in his psalm and as Paul explains in detail in Romans.

Our Shared Worship

22nd February - First Sunday of Lent

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Miriam Jones

9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney - Rev Geoff Maughan

10am Parish Communion, St James', Denchworth - Rev Miriam Jones

10.15am Morning Worship, St John's, Grove - Sarah Shackleton (LLM)

11am Parish Eucharist & Baptism, St Nicholas', East Challow -
Rev Miriam Jones

Forthcoming Services

1st March - Second Sunday of Lent

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Frances Caroe

9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney - Rev Charles Draper

10am Parish Communion, St James', Denchworth – Rev Alec Gill

10.15am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove – Rev Miriam Jones

11am Parish Eucharist, St Nicholas', East Challow – Rev Alec Gill

BENEFICE NEWS

For details of Benefice Lent courses please see separate sheet

ST JOHN'S is looking for a new CHURCHWARDEN to be appointed at the APCM on 16th May

The role of the churchwarden is to be:

- The Bishop's Officer
- A support for the Vicar and Associate Vicar
- Foremost in representing the Laity
- Responsible for services and buildings
- A 'caretaker' during Vacancy

Please pray that someone will step forward for this important role - is God calling you?

For more information, please speak to Alec, Miriam, Nick or Colin

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER Friday 6th March 2.30pm Grove Methodist Church

Come and join with prayers written by women of Nigeria, followed by refreshments

WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST Saturday 28th February 8.30am

Stanford in the Vale village hall. Theme: 'God in the Garden: Gardening for the soul'. Places limited – leave a message on 07880 655102

FRIENDS ON FRIDAY There will be no meeting on 6th March – please do go to the 'World Day of Prayer' service at the Methodist Church instead.

Our next meeting will be Holy Communion on 20th March in St John's Hall

CORNERSTONE NEWS: Email: office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk Tel: 772280

Open from 9.30 to 4.00 on weekdays and 10.00 to 3.00 on Saturdays. Please do continue to support the coffee shop and browse for cards and books.

There are a number of **Lent Study books** and personal devotionals on the shelf.

The new Take Note selection includes some of this year's new titles with good discounts.

TODAY - SUNDAY 22nd FEBRUARY – Craft and Fellowship afternoon 2.30-4.30pm We plan to continue holding Craft & Fellowship afternoons on the 4th Sunday of the month in St John's Church Hall. The next session is today (22nd February) and we'll be doing a little crochet. Anyone over 18 is welcome to join us.

CAN YOU HELP? Little People have asked if anyone has some girl's clothes (aged 4 years) for a family who were recently flooded. Please contact the office if you can help. Thank you

ST JAMES' CHURCH, HANNEY – Due to ongoing building work, all information regarding St James' church services is provisional. Services may be changed/cancelled at short notice. See local notices.

FUNDRAISING EVENT – Chris O'Neil will be running the London Marathon in April in aid of **Marie Curie** and prior to that is holding a 'Karaoke Classics music bingo' evening at The Bell, Grove on Saturday 28th February at 8.30pm. More details on poster in foyer or at : www.tinyurl.com/chrislm26

GROVE CHURCH VOLUNTEER ROTAS: Thank you all for being on the volunteer rotas and serving our Lord in our church this way. The rotas for March-end August have now been emailed out. If you have sent me absent dates, I have ensured you are not rostered on those dates. If something comes up and you cannot do a duty on the rota please try and swap with someone (and let me know). If you can't find a swap let me know and we'll sort something out. If you would like a hard copy, please let me know. Benefice Office

ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

If you would like to subscribe to receive our Church & Community Newsletter to your inbox, please email nigel.langford@me.com

There is a good mix of articles to read and you are free to unsubscribe at any time.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Health and healing: Shelley S, Mary L, Rev Dick French, Norah L, Rob S, Peter Ch, Pat B, Susanne C, Wendy R, Katherine S, Laura C, Ursula G & Richard H

Friends and families mourning: Alan Tranter, Linda Alder, Linda Sandels, Thomas Palmer and Thelma Lockwood

Those living in: Albermarle Drive, Catmore Close, Boucher Close, Woodgate Close, Broadmarsh Close (Grove); Field Gardens (East Challow); Lambale Walk, Davies Meadow (East Hanney)

Archbishop Sarah Mullally caring for those bruised by last week's General Synod; those involved in selecting the next Bishop of Oxford

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

| | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Mon | Psalms 10,11 | Genesis 41.25-45 | Galatians 3.23-4.7 |
| Tue | Psalms 44 | Genesis 41.46-42.5 | Galatians 4.8-20 |
| Wed | Psalms 6,17 | Genesis 42.6-17 | Galatians 4.21-5.1 |
| Thu | Psalms 42,43 | Genesis 42.18-28 | Galatians 5.2-15 |
| Fri | Psalms 22 | Genesis 42.29-end | Galatians 5.16-end |
| Sat | Psalms 59,63 | Genesis 43.1-15 | Galatians 6 |

BENEFICE LENT GROUPS

WEDNESDAY EVENING LENT COURSE

7.30-9.00pm: 'A Christian Look at the Environment'

Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about caring for the natural world? How does this fit with our understanding of the Gospel? Martin and Margot Hodson will lead this course for five evenings during Lent (25th February to 25th March) at their home in Grove. Contact: martinjhodson@yahoo.co.uk, tel: 07799 226759 (or contact the Benefice office)

ONLINE LENT COURSE

Starting on Friday 20th February until 27th March (inclusive) (7.30pm-8.30pm) with Rev Alec Gill and Anne Cheeseman. We will be studying Jesus' final week. No course books needed. The link to join online will be sent out next week to the Benefice distribution list. If you are not receiving newsletters, please contact Alec for the link separately.

THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY LENT GROUP

The Thursday Bible Study Group will meet weekly during Lent on 26th February, 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th March in St John's Lower Room from 2-3.30pm. We will be using Paula Gooder's course: 'Lentwise (Spiritual essentials for real life)'. All welcome.

CHALLOW LENT COURSE

There will be a Lent Course in Challow at the home of Claire and Nick Page starting on Monday 23rd February at 7.30pm. It will be based on the Diocesan material 'Come and See: Discovering Jesus through the Eucharist'. For more information contact Nick, Claire or the Vicars