

CALENDAR

Sunday	01-Feb-26	9am All Age Eucharist at St John the Baptist 10.30am All Age Holy Communion Service at St Andrew's 6.30pm Book of Common Prayer Evensong at St John the Baptist
Monday	02-Feb-26	9am Monday Coffee Morning at The Wilshire Hall 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer 7.30pm Monday Life Group at St Mary's, St Margarets
Tuesday	03-Feb-26	9.30am Prayer Group at Sue Hardwick's house 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	04-Feb-26	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at The Wilshire Hall Midday Holy Communion at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	05-Feb-26	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshire Hall 10.30am Life Group at The Wilshire Hall 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Friday	06-Feb-26	9am Eucharist at St John the Baptist
Sunday	08-Feb-26	10.30am Holy Communion St Andrew's
<i>2nd Sunday before Lent</i>		
Monday	09-Feb-26	9am Monday Coffee Morning at The Wilshire Hall 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer 9.30am Prayer Group at Sue Hardwick's house
Tuesday	10-Feb-26	7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	11-Feb-26	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at The Wilshire Hall Midday Prayer at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	12-Feb-26	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshire Hall 10.30am Benefice Coffee Morning (The Red Lion) 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Friday	13-Feb-26	9am Eucharist at St John the Baptist
Sunday	15-Feb-26	10.30am Morning Prayer at St Andrew's 10.30am Holy Communion at St Mary's, St Margarets 4pm Make Church at St Andrew's
<i>Sunday next before Lent</i>		
Monday	16-Feb-26	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer 12pm Make Lunch Club at The Wilshire Hall
Tuesday	17-Feb-26	7.30pm Monday Life Group at St Mary's, St Margarets 9.30am Prayer Group at Sue Hardwick's house 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	18-Feb-26	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets
<i>Ash Wednesday</i>		
Thursday	19-Feb-26	10.30am Life Group at The Wilshire Hall Midday Ash Wednesday Holy Communion at St Mary's, St Margarets
Friday	20-Feb-26	10.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer 12pm Make Lunch Club at The Wilshire Hall
Sunday	22-Feb-26	9am Eucharist at St John the Baptist 10.30am Holy Communion St Andrew's
<i>1st Sunday of Lent</i>		
Monday	23-Feb-26	9am Monday Coffee Morning at The Wilshire Hall 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Tuesday	24-Feb-26	9.30am Prayer Group at Sue Hardwick's house 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	25-Feb-26	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at The Wilshire Hall Midday Prayer at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	26-Feb-26	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshire Hall
Friday	27-Feb-26	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Saturday	28-Feb-26	10am Benefice Breakfast at The Wilshire Hall



The 3 Churches Benefice

NEWS & NOTICES ~ FEBRUARY 2026

It was a very wet wintry day when I went to school with my wooden Noah's Ark, the animals going two by two, and Mr and Mrs Noah. It felt very appropriate that the rain was hammering on the ceiling as I talked about God washing the world clean through the Great Flood. I enjoy taking the props for Godly Play into school to help tell the stories, and I'm always amazed at how engaged the children are when you quietly tell the story with the objects you bring.



Several of our Life Groups are reading Andrew Ollerton's new book *God's Book: an honest look at the Bible's 7 toughest topics*, and through it we have been exploring the big story of the Bible and how it relates to difficult questions about war and suffering. One of the many new connections and clearer concepts that has really struck me has been around God's plan for dealing with sin and evil in the world.

When I tell the story of Noah to the children, part of the script is to say that God 'washed the world clean'. Evil had to come into the world, and people had started to do evil and terrible things, so God washed the world clean. But afterwards God sent a rainbow, and promised that he would never do that again. Does that mean that the world was free of sin and evil again? By no means! (As St Paul would say). Noah gets off the Ark, and immediately gets drunk! In the Great Flood, God washed away the evil people, and saved Noah and his family, who were righteous through their faith in God. However, God's ultimate plan is much more complicated. God's plan is not to wash away the sinful and evil people, but to wash the sin and evil out of people.

So that's what I told the children. God sent the rainbow as a promise that he would never again wash the evil people away, but he would wash the evil out of people.

When we live in difficult times, and seeing the evil in the world is so easy, it can be tempting to think that the world would be a much better place without the evil people. We don't have to go far to imagine the conflicts that might stop if the 'evil people' were 'washed away'. But as we approach Lent, we need to look again at God's BIG plan, and remember that Jesus came to wash the sin and evil out of people. Not just out of those people, but out of us people; you and me.

It is not the easy route, or the fast one. It is the route of transformation, forgiveness and holiness, and it takes a lifetime. It takes our consent and courage, our willingness to reflect and seek God's face, our humility and perseverance. This is what the season of Lent is for; to remind us of our commitment to walk with God, to seek the holiness given to us in Christ, and to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, day by day.

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NEWS & NOTICES

The Three Villages Magazine **FREE**

If you or someone you know is not be able to get out and collect a copy of the print magazine, you can now call or text (07488 914972) for a copy. Copies are available to collect at the back of each church.

Warm Welcome Spaces

Please do join us at our Warm Welcome Spaces: Morning Coffee Morning on Monday mornings, 9–11am at The Wilshire Hall, offering a warm drink and a fun activity; and The Community Hub Drop-in on Wednesdays, 10.30–11.30am at St Mary's, St Margarets, offering a cuppa and chat, as well as practical help if needed. These are FREE and open to everyone.

Snowdrop Garden open days

The Bishop of St Albans' Garden will be open (Abbey Gate House, Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans AL3 4HD) for two weekends in February for people to come and look at the display of snowdrops, possibly for the last time. Spring opening days are 14–15 February and 21–22 February, 2–4pm. Entrance is £5 per person (children free) and dogs on leads are welcome. Please wear footwear suitable for the time of year. All money raised is donated to the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust.

Ash Wednesday Service with the Haileybury Chapel Choir

There will be a special Ash Wednesday Sung Eucharist Service at Haileybury College with Imposition of Ashes on Wednesday 25th February, starting at 7pm. Haileybury Chapel Choir singing. Everyone is invited to join this special service, which is happening a week late owing to half term.

MAKE LUNCH CLUB

Make Lunch Club will be back for half term! Make Lunch Club offers a chance for you and your school-aged children (and their younger siblings) to get together, share a meal and have some fun during the school holidays.



Make Lunch Club

WHEN: 12 to 2 pm on Monday 16th and Friday 20th February 2026

WHERE: The Wilshire Hall, St Andrew's Church

If you feel called to help with Make Lunch Club, please do get in touch with the Vicar. That doesn't have to be volunteering at the sessions, it might be providing a pudding or praying for the team.

To book a place or find out more, email makelunch@3churches.net

FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

Draw Near: Life-Giving Habits for Lent



Draw Near is the official Church of England booklet for Lent 2026. It invites you to develop a rhythm of life that will help you grow as a disciple of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the mystery of God's saving love at Easter. Each week a different contributor explores a different aspect of Christian

discipleship: worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others. Booklets are available for FREE in the churches, so please do pickup a copy.

PRAYER MINISTRY

The Ministry Team is always happy to pray for anyone. If you have a prayer request, please don't hesitate to get in touch by phone or email and we will be very happy to support you.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following people and their loved ones in your prayers this month:

Baptisms

- Emilia Taylor-Ward on 3rd May 2026 at St John the Baptist.

Weddings

- Charlotte Adams and Taylor Smith on 4th September 2026 at St Andrew's.

Deaths

- David Hopkinson on 8th December.
- Florence Reynolds on 10th December.



UPCOMING DATES IN MARCH

15th ~ Mothering Sunday

15th ~ Make Church, 4pm at St Andrew's

29th ~ Palm Sunday

30th ~ Holy Week Compline, 7.30pm at St Andrew's

31st ~ Holy Week Meditation, 7.30pm on Zoom



USEFUL LINKS

Online Zoom Services & Events
www.tinyurl.com/3churcheszoom

A Church Near You
Benefice Page
<http://tinyurl.com/3churchesBenefice>

The 3 Churches Website
www.3churches.net