



Snowdrops (see more below)



South Cotswold Team Ministry Sunday 25th January

Clergy

Vicar: Rev'd Caroline Symcox– 01285 712467
Curate: Rev'd Vicky Falvey – 07356 23424

carolinesymcox@googlemail.com
revvickyfalvey@gmail.com

SERVICES

Sunday 25th January – 3rd Sunday of Epiphany

8.00 am BCP Holy Communion

10.00 am Family Service

6.00 Healing Service with Holy Communion *Coffee:*
Christine and Stewart Benzie

Sunday 1st February – Candlemas

8.00 am BCP Holy Communion

10.00 am Common Worship Holy Communion

Sidespeople: Eleanor Toby and Jenny Hewes

Readings: Linda Howlett

Intercessions: Meg Ralph

Offertory: Heather Gorton

Prayer Rota: Ann Nicholls and Rev'd Canon Denise Hyde

Coffee: David and Sally Salter

6.00 pm Prayer and Praise

Embracing the Transformation: God's Call for Everyone

Reflection on Galatians 1:11–16a

In Galatians 1:11–16a, the apostle Paul offers a deeply personal testimony of how God's call broke into his life in a way he neither expected nor deserved. Paul is clear: the gospel he proclaims is not something he inherited, earned, or reasoned his way into. It came by revelation—by God's gracious initiative. This passage invites us to reflect on a profound truth at the heart of our faith: God comes for everyone. No one is excluded from the call, regardless of their past, their reputation, or their resistance.

Paul does not soften his story. He reminds the Galatians that he once persecuted the church violently and tried to destroy it. By all human standards, Paul would have been the last person we would expect God to choose. His résumé worked against him. His zeal was misdirected. Yet it is precisely into this life—marked by hostility and harm—that God speaks a new word. “But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me...” Everything changes with that “but when God.”

This is the heart of the gospel: God's call is rooted not in our worthiness but in God's grace. Paul's transformation was not the result of self-improvement or moral correction; it was the result of an encounter. God did not wait for Paul to clean himself up, to understand everything correctly, or to make amends first. God came for him as he was—and loved him too much to leave him that way.

For the church today, this message is both comforting and challenging. It comforts us because it assures us that our failures, doubts, wounds, and even our sins do not disqualify us from God's call. There is no story too broken, no past too tangled, no identity too complicated for God's grace to reach. God is still revealing Christ to people in unexpected places and unlikely lives.

At the same time, this passage challenges us to embrace transformation—not just as a personal experience, but as a communal posture. If God calls those we might least expect, are we willing to welcome those same people? If God is in the business of transforming persecutors into proclaimers, are we open to being transformed ourselves—especially when it disrupts our assumptions or stretches our comfort?

Paul's story reminds us that the call of God is not only about being included; it is about being changed. To encounter Christ is to be reoriented—to have our lives turned outward toward love, humility, and service. As we reflect on Galatians 1, may we see that God's Kingdom is inclusive to all. And may we, like Paul, have the courage to embrace the transformation that His grace makes possible.

Join us for Morning Prayer via Zoom on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 9am every week. Click below for the week starting 26th January.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86481058661?pwd=FeGshzpoy7X6jtffnRmVBJbIFLQ4mC.1>

Meeting ID: 864 8105 8661

Passcode: 548975

From Heather - fairfordpcc@gmail.com or heathergorton31@gmail.com Office: 01285 712611 or home 01285 712428

My office hours are 10.00 to 1.00 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. I am also continuing to work from home so you can contact me at either the office or home. The office is closed on Mondays and Michelle will be in on Fridays from 10.00 to 12.00.

If you are sending in your articles, photos etc. for the bumper copy at the end of the month I will need them by 12 noon on the last Wednesday of the month. For the weekly newsletter I would still like articles in by Wednesday midday.

o0o

Please remember the following in your prayers:

Those who are ill: Grace Slack, Hannah, David and Glynnis Langley, Stewart Benzie.

Those who have died: Bob Skinner, Joan Hall, Mark Vaughan, Liz Hope
Geoff Hawkes.

A memorial service will be held at 2.30pm in Fairford Church on February 7th, and everyone is warmly invited to celebrate Geoff's life.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Community Prayers

All are welcome to come and pray together for the world, the nation and our community along with any prayer requests that are placed in our prayer box in the Lady Chapel. We meet every Monday at 5pm for 30 minutes in the Chancel. Please use the north door.

(Please also note we do not always meet on Bank Holidays, please check notices above for clarification)

For further details contact Rev'd Canon Denise Hyde denisehyde15@gmail.com

Prayer/Thought for the Week

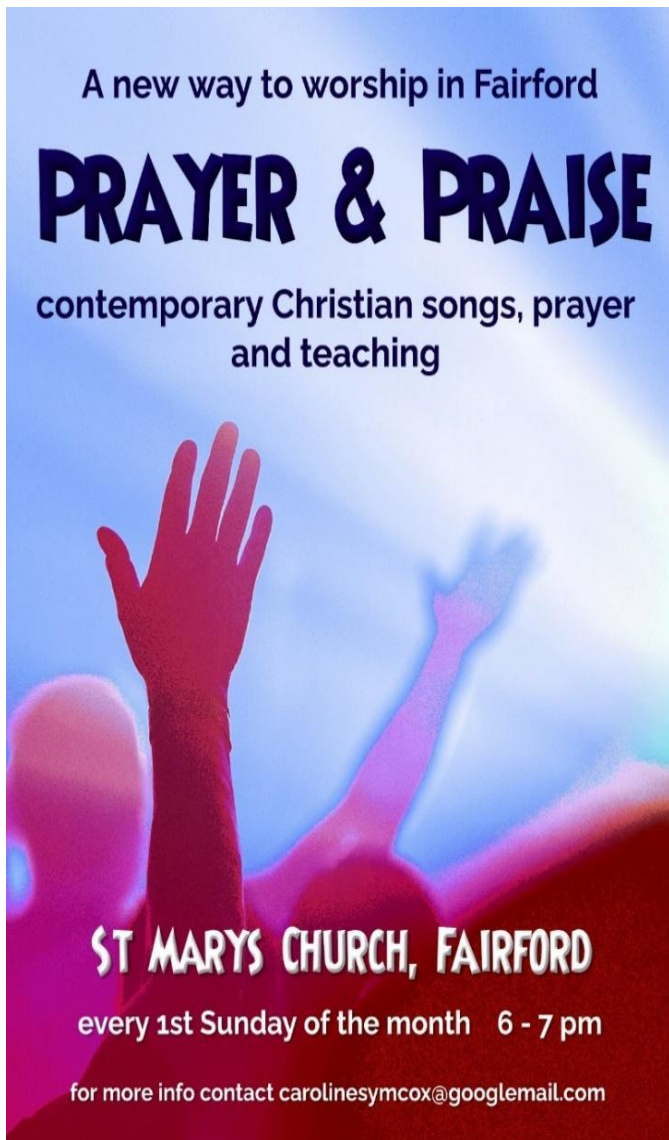
Always pray to have eyes to see the best in people, a heart that forgives the worst, a mind that forgets the bad, and a soul that never loses faith.

Dear Lord, thank you for your faithfulness and loving kindness which you pour out on us every day. Remind us that you always have enough and that we in turn are your hands, your feet, your eyes, help us to care for those who need to be fed, loved and encouraged.

We pray in Jesus name.

AMEN

Next Prayer and Praise – Sunday 1st February



Prayer and Praise – first Sunday of the month 6 – 7 pm

We are delighted to invite you to our contemporary-style service at St Mary's.

Everyone is welcome.

This is a wonderful opportunity to invite family, friends and neighbours to church, especially those who have never been to church, those who haven't been for years or those who have never found a church that feels 'just right' for them. We very much look forward to seeing you at our next service.

For more information please contact:

carolinesymcox@googlemail.com or
pa.wilkins@hotmail.co.uk

NOTICES

Tracey Sheppard – Talk on the Glass Doors

The wonderful artist who designed the art on our beautiful new glass doors, Tracey Sheppard, has very kindly offered to give a talk on the design process and thought behind her work. We should have a date for this very soon, so watch this space!

From the History Society

We were saddened to hear of the death of Geoff Hawkes. He was a founder member and treasurer of Fairford History Society from 2004. He then became Chairman in 2008 when Keith Cottam retired, until 2020. We had been keeping in contact with Geoff through the Fairford Flyer Newsletters which his son, Simon read to him. He was a good leader and gave good support and advice, especially of a grammatical nature – shorter sentences and more commas, Alison. He has been

much missed since leaving Fairford but we shall always have such fond memories of him and Jane.

We have also lost another of our founder members, Liz Hope, who will also be sadly missed in so many aspects of life in Fairford. Our condolences to Phil, Richard and all the family.

Snowdrops

A bit of folklore from Ingrid

After being cast out of the Garden of Eden, Eve sat sobbing in the cold, bitter wind. An angel took pity on her and breathed on a snowflake, sending it fluttering down to earth. Where the snow landed snowdrops grew.

The snowdrop has long been associated with hope and renewal , thanks to being one of the first flowers to emerge in late winter and early spring.

Fun Fact –

Snowdrops produce a type of antifreeze protein that helps them survive freezing temperatures, allowing them to bloom even when the ground is still frosty. Medicinal use - Compounds found in snowdrops have been studied for their potential in treating Alzheimer`s. Galantamine, derived from snowdrops is used in some memory boosting treatments.

Vicarage Telephone

Now back in working order!

Church Flowers

We need more volunteers to arrange the church flowers. If you would like to help please contact me. It is a fortnight at a time and at least twice a year. No need to have any experience but willing to help. Please contact Heather – 712428. Thank you.

I am retiring from running the Church Flowers as from the first Sunday after Easter. My thanks to Beth who is taking over from me and I know she will be very efficient in keeping us all under control! As you are probably aware the cost of flowers has almost doubled in the last few months and it is a lot to ask our flower arrangers to buy two or three bunches of flowers during the winter months. If anyone would like to help us out with a donation it would be very much appreciated especially over Easter when we like to ‘go to town’ on the flowers! Thank you in advance

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time running the flower team and everyone involved has been so helpful and enthusiastic. I am still going to remain on the rota for this year. Thank you.

Heather

Items for Ukraine

The people taking a van to Ukraine no longer have room for bedding, clothing or shoes. They are VERY grateful for all the items on the blue poster here. We will continue to take them to the Ukrainian Church in Gloucester who are transporting them to Ukraine. If you have a question about any other items, please phone us on 0779 555 4102

Thank you *Geoff & Hope*

Annual St. Mary's Outing with the Friends of Fairford Church

The time has come again to think about our Annual Outing. I would welcome suggestions. Please give it some thought and let me know. I have had one suggestion of a visit to Exeter Cathedral with perhaps a garden visit on the way back.

Palmer Hall Recipe Book

If anyone has not had a chance to purchase the Recipe Book please contact me and I can supply one.

THE PALMER HALL

1936



London Street, Fairford GL7 4AQ

Recipe Book

£5



Volunteer Trustees needed at Cirencester Foodbank

Bring your passion and make real impact as a Trustee at Cirencester Foodbank! Be at the heart of our ambitious mission to end local hunger. You'll use your skills to shape strategy, champion your community, and help people in need—all while developing your leadership and charity experience in a supportive team.

- Join a positive, values-led board changing lives in the South Cotswolds.
- Commitment: 4 board meetings per year plus supporting activities (expenses reimbursed).
- No prior trustee experience needed—diverse backgrounds and fresh ideas welcome!
- We're especially keen to hear from people with insight into food poverty or the charity sector, but passion and commitment matter most.

Ready to lead change?

Apply now: Visit <https://cirencester.foodbank.org.uk/support-us/become-a-trustee> or email recruitment@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk to find out more.

Let's end hunger together—become a Cirencester Foodbank Trustee!

WHAT'S ON

TRIPS

Friday 30th January W4W go shopping!
£3 join us for Swindon Orbital.
Contact Mary Ann for your place.



January 2026

TODDLER Group

Fridays term time 930am-11am

£1 per family

United Church

Friday 9th January Peppa Pig theme

16th January Soft Play must book for this session

23rd January Under the sea

30th January Teddy bear picnic.

Bring your teddy bear for cake and story time

Family Hub every Wednesday 1030am-12pm Free refreshments and play and stay Fairford Community centre



WARM ROOM

Tuesday 13th January 1130am-1230pm hot chocolate and cookies. A talk from Ian about his adventures in Antarctica.

Friday 23rd January 12-2pm Afternoon tea and card games.

Friday 13th February Love quiz and toasties.

Sunday 8th March is a community meal in Lechlade 12pm-2pm Roast dinner.



CRAFT AND CHAT

January Craft and Chat will be Thursday 22nd of January this month.

Join Janet our volunteer for Macrame bracelets 7pm-9pm at Fairford Community Centre. £5



COOKING FOR ZERO WASTE

Last year W4W cooked for friendship coming in April we will have sessions for cooking for Zero Waste. Please contact Mary Ann to book your space.

REGULAR EVENTS

- Monday:** Senior Yoga class £3 currently full. Warm room 10am-2pm
- Tuesday:** Digital Drop in 10am-11am Warm Room 10am-2pm
- Wednesday:** Peer movement class 930am-10am
Fairford Talking Cafe 1030am-12pm
Family Hub 1030am-12pm
- Thursday:** Lechlade Talking Café 1030am-12pm Digital Drop in also available . Lechlade Baptist Church

CONTACT DETAILS

Mary Ann
07555738138

maryann.dibbs@w4w.uk




The Jane Kidd Eco Talks

Presented by
St Mary's Eco Church Group Fairford

Thursday
29th
January

**'A No Sandals Look at
Organic Farming'**
by Organic Farmer, Chris Peachy



Farmor Room
Community Centre
Fairford
7pm refreshments
7.30pm start



Future Talks
• Thu 26th Feb



Advanced booking is not required

There is no charge, but donations to help cover costs would be gratefully received



Come along to our very own Songs of Praise Event in the spring - including



**your chosen favourite hymns and songs, followed by tea and cake.
With the Church Choir and Special Guests**

Fill in the Hymn Choice Form in the Church by 31st January

Donations for:



High Five Project 2026 Fundraising for Children's Charities
The Magic Breakfast Glos Young Carers The Rainbow Trust Smile Train
Home Start Cotswolds





High Five Project 2026 Fundraising for Children's Charities our aim is to raise a minimum of £500 for each of the following:

The Magic Breakfast Glos Young Carers The Rainbow Trust Smile Train Home Start Cotswolds



Events Planned For 2026

Jos's Continental Breakfast

Light Summer Lunch

Make Mine Music Concert

Soup & Savoury Lunch

'J'ay for 'J'oy Concert

Cotswold Garden Party

Concert for Christmas Time

Drinks & Fingerfood Evening

Songs & Music in Praise

Cheese & Wine Tasting Call My Bluff

Strawberries & Prosecco Afternoon

Event at The Bowls Club

Fairford Venue Special Lunch

Dancercise

Summer Sunshine Social Event

Afternoon High Tea

Take a look inside the church at the project booklet, or the church website, giving details of the Project Team, Charities Information, and how you can be part of what we're doing.





DONATIONS NEEDED

Calling All Bakers & Party
Lovers!

If you have cake tier stands
you no longer use, please
donate them to W4W.
Help us give them a second
life!



Contact Mary Ann
07555738138

Useful Contacts in Fairford

Dentists: M Milnthorpe and S. Steer,

White Cottage, London Street

01285 713993

Doctors' Surgery: Keble Lawns,

01285 712377

Fairford Community Centre: High Street,

01285 711571

Fairford & District Choral Society:

James Chute, Chair.

07870 383682

Fairford Firecrackers Womens Institute:

President – Beth Bruce-Gardner

07791 841201

Secretary – Hayley Evans

07866 518830

Fairford History Society: Alison Hobson

01285 711768

Lechlade and Fairford Mothers' Union:

Kathleen Hall

01285 712583

Fairford Hospital (Day Centre): The Croft,

0300 4216470

Fairford Pre-School: Leafield Road

01285 713176

Fairford Primary School: Leafield Road,

01285 712543

Fairford Sports Centre

01285 713786

Fairford United Church	01285 712586
Farmor's School: The Park	01285 712228/712302 Flying
Start Nursery School	01285 711711 Friends of
Fairford Church:	
Simon Mumford	simonmumford@outlook.com
Friends of Fairford Hospital	admin@friendsoffairford.org.uk
Library: London Street	01285 712599
Palmer Hall (Bookings): London Street.	01285 712189/711657
Patients Participation Group:	
Chairperson: Emma Saxby	emmasaxby.coach@gmail.com
St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Church	01285712586
Theatre-goers: David & Alison Watkins-Nash	01285 713182
	- bookingftg@btinternet.com
Town Council Offices, Community Centre,	01285 712344
U3A: Sue Snell	membershipsec@fairfordu3a.org.uk
Wellbeing coordinator-Mary Ann Dibbs	-
coordinator@working4wellbeing.org.uk	Mobile 07555738138

If any changes are made to the above please contact the Parish Office with the details. Thank you