

ST MARY'S GAMLINGAY, HATLEY ST GEORGE & ST MARY'S EVERTON



Weekly newsletter 13 March 2026



From Hilary:

This fourth Sunday of Lent can be celebrated, as we are doing in our Benefice, as Refreshment/Mothering Sunday, a break in the Lent fast. The services in the two churches will both be intended as inclusive for families. In Gamlingay the third Sunday Eucharist has a 'wholeness and healing' emphasis. This will be combined with celebrating all who nurture, remembering God as a heavenly parent and Mother Church, as well as recognising our earthly mothers. In Everton a shorter service without Communion will similarly celebrate mothers and nurture.

Mothering Sunday/ Mother's Day

Mothering Sunday was originally a time when people returned to the church where they were baptized or which they attended when they were children, remembering the nurture they received from God through Mother Church. In time, it became customary for young people who were working as servants in large houses to be given a holiday on Mothering Sunday. They could use this day to visit their own mother and would often take a gift of food or hand-me-down clothing from their employers. This became the modern holiday, on which people still visit and take gifts to their mothers. Traditionally, people observed a fast during Lent (the period leading up to Easter, from Ash Wednesday until Good Friday). During this time people did not eat sweet, rich foods or meat. However, the fast was lifted on Mothering Sunday, the day being also called Refreshment Sunday, when a Simnel cake was often cooked and taken to eat with the family. Simnel cakes are now usually associated with Easter itself.



In the early 20th Century, a special day for remembering mothers was inaugurated by Anna Jarvis and, a few years later, fixed as a public holiday on the second Sunday of May in the USA. The two Sundays have merged in the UK, Mother's Day being celebrated on Mothering Sunday which moves with the date of Easter, rather than being on a fixed date.

Synods

Deanery Synod took place last Wednesday with Archdeacon Richard present. With three vacancies in the Deanery including that of Area Dean, Richard has been busy supporting several Deanery parishes and has got to know people in the north of Deanery quite well while leading worship and helping with administrative tasks that would normally fall to the Parish Priest or Area Dean. The pros and cons, and the process required to change Deanery boundaries was discussed, as this had been raised by some of the clergy still in post (currently only three plus a new curate in the Bluebell Benefice). The Bourne Deanery is to extend hospitality to the clergy and lay ministers of the deanery for mutual support in the current circumstances, with a view to exploring future working together. The process for formal rearrangement would be protracted and possibly not worth the time required for meetings and consultations - more thought and discussions will no doubt follow.

Deanery finances will continue to be a challenge without a Deanery Treasurer, and Richard urged the Deanery to try and remedy this. The Deanery Plan was not discussed, as so much is in flux at present.

The next meeting will invite someone from the children's and family's team, probably the person currently working with schools.

Diocesan Synod takes place in the morning of this coming Saturday (14th) in Ely, more next time on this.

LENT STUDY

The Wednesday group meeting at the Rectory was led by Chris this last week on the topic of Sharing Communion. The group started by sharing some outcomes from the previous week on reading scripture, with some having tried the Holy Reading method. Thoughts on what feeds us spiritually, alongside the recognition that physical food is still important in the here-and-now, brought thoughts about Mary and Martha and consideration of how we notice our physical needs before our spiritual ones. The group also thought about to whom we address our prayers. Reflections followed the first three days of the Draw Near booklet (what do we get 'for free'? - is it better to think about what money can't buy in this context?) And a meditation on bread, with bread shared, was followed by shared prayer, especially for the Middle East. This next week's topic is 'Sharing in Service' which explores following in the way of Christ in radical service.

The prayer is.....

'Lord Jesus Christ you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and for ever. Amen'

HOLY WEEK

The week begins with **Palm Sunday**. The Benefice celebration will start with the Liturgy of the Palms at Everton and move to Gamlingay for the Liturgy of the Passion. The Passion reading this year is from Matthew. Hilary will be looking for participants in the hope of presenting a dramatised reading - this year from Matthew's Gospel. There will be three Taizé services at 7pm in each of the three churches of the Benefice from Monday through Wednesday.

The Maundy Thursday service remembers the Last Supper and Jesus' giving of the Holy Communion. The service will take place at Gamlingay; the sacrament will be reserved for Good Friday communion, the altars stripped and the church left bare of decorations for Good Friday. Altars will be stripped in the other churches too and a vigil will be observed. This has been traditional in Gamlingay, please sign up to say if/when you would like to be part of that (between the end of the service and midnight)

Good Friday: There will be a three-hour worship time in Gamlingay, with two hours of reflections and music from 12 noon until 2pm, followed directly by the final hour Good Friday liturgy.

Meditations on the cross will be available in Hatley and Everton for personal or collective use in the morning for those who wish to worship in their local church.

Holy Saturday worship for our parishes will be at the Cathedral where Keith Miller and his daughter Ivy will be confirmed at the service. Our new Easter candles will be lit for the first time there, to be brought into churches for the morning services.

Easter Day There will be services in all three of the Benefice churches followed by Easter Egg hunts.

For the illustrated sheets on transfiguration – being transformed by the light of God's glory – use these links:

[15th February](#) [22nd February](#) [1st March](#) [15th March](#)

NEWS FROM EVERTON

Soup and Social takes place this coming week, the last time, for a while, that the Gamlingay and Everton lunches will coincide.

The PCC is still looking for a date when those involved can meet. The Buildings Group is undertaking a village-wide consultation.

This (Mothering) Sunday an All Age 'Service of the Word' will take place at 11.15am with posies distributed and refreshments to take home. Thank you so much to those who are making up the posies and providing refreshments.

NEWS FROM GAMLINGAY

Simple Lunch takes place this next week.

The APCM gave special thanks to the people who have worked so hard this year.

The meeting elected Ann Davis as warden, with the new PCC the same as before but with thanks to Peter Macrow who has stepped down this year, although offering continuing help where needed.

Chris Miller will take up his place on the PCC as LLM (Reader), possibly not attending all the meetings but, bearing in mind Hilary's retirement, offering support for the work that will arise in vacancy.

Accounts had been approved and printed up subject to examination by the External Examiner, Colin Airey, with a noted anomaly that could not be tracked down. Colin had identified the problem and signed off the accounts just before the meeting, where details were reported verbally. A revised version of the accounts will be available for inspection and added to the report as agreed by the PCC and approved by the APCM.

This (Mothering) Sunday posies will be distributed at the 9.30am Eucharist which will include a healing time. Posies will be made up on Saturday afternoon at the Church Hall. Donations of flowers and foliage will be most welcome - around 50 posies are needed, all help welcome!

Funeral of Alec Charles Deeble RIP will take place at St Mary's on Thursday 26th March at 1.30pm followed by burial in St Mary's Field cemetery. Thoughts and prayers continue with the family.

How the Bishop of Jarrow becomes The Bishop of Ely

Following the announcement of Bishop Sarah's nomination to be the next Bishop of Ely on 27th January, many of you are wondering what the process is from hereon in. Therefore, here is an outline of the journey for us and for Bishop Sarah as she is on her way to becoming the 70th Bishop of Ely.

On Monday afternoon, 2nd March, Bishop Sarah became the Bishop-Elect of Ely:

The Election of the Bishop (who herself was not present) is a formal and legal act led by the Dean, in the presence of the Registrar and a Solicitor as witness. The full College of Canons of Ely Cathedral elected Bishop Sarah, the key moment being the Dean publicly declaring "that Sarah Elizabeth Clark has been duly elected to serve as the 70th Bishop of this See of Ely."

Next step: Confirmation of Election

This takes place with Bishop Sarah on Friday 17th April, 5pm, at St Mary Le Bow. This church is the traditional home of the Court of Arches and unfortunately, due to its limited seating capacity, it is an invitation only service. It will be led by the Archbishop of Canterbury and includes weighty legal proceedings. At the conclusion, Bishop Sarah takes the Oaths and makes and subscribes the Declaration of Assent, and the Archbishop gives her Charge to Bishop Sarah. The Confirmation of Election marks the beginning of Bishop Sarah being legally the Bishop of Ely. She will, however, not take up her public ministry until her installation.

Final step: Installation in Ely Cathedral

There will be a big festive service of Installation at the Cathedral, and this celebrates the beginning of Bishop Sarah's public ministry among us. This should take place in early summer, and the date will be confirmed as soon as we are able. At a date yet to be determined, she will also pay homage to HM The King, as is required of every Diocesan Bishop.

Please continue to pray for Bishop Sarah as she prepares to leave Durham and move to Ely.

We praise and thank you, God of the journey, for all your gifts to us in the past.

We look to you as fellow traveller and faithful companion on the way ahead.

By your Holy Spirit, strengthen and guide Bishop Sarah, the people of the Diocese of Durham, and us, that we may walk with you and together may serve you as generous and visible people of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Benefice Services and Events

Midweek said Eucharist services take place at St Mary's in Gamlingay every Wednesday at 9.30am but watch for late cancellations especially during holiday seasons.

March and April/Easter

Sunday 15th March: Lent 4 , Mothering/Refreshment Sunday

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay with posy distribution
11.15am Family Service (no Eucharist) at St. Mary's, Everton with posy distribution

Sunday 22nd March: Lent 5

9.30am Parish Eucharist with healing time at St. Mary's, Gamlingay
11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

Thursday 26th March

1.30pm Funeral of Alec Charles Deeble

Sunday 29th March: Palm Sunday (clocks forward) Holy Week Begins

9.30am Liturgy of the Palms at St. Mary's Everton
10.00am Liturgy of the Passion at St Mary's Gamlingay

Monday 30th March

7pm Taizé-style compline service at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

Tuesday 31st March

7pm Taizé-style compline service at Hatley St. George

Wednesday 1st April

7pm Taizé-style compline service at St. Mary's, Everton

April 2nd: Maundy Thursday Service with washing of feet and stripping of altars

7.00pm St. Mary's. Gamlingay.

April 3rd Good Friday: Memorials of the Crucifixion in Everton and Hatley St. George

12-2pm Gamlingay St Mary guided reflections followed by.....
2.00pm Final hour Good Friday liturgy with communion from reserve sacrament

April 4th Holy Saturday (Churches decorated for Easter)

8 pm Easter Vigil with Baptism and Confirmation at Ely Cathedral

April 5th Easter Sunday, Festival Eucharist/Communion in all three churches with Easter Egg hunts.

8.00am Hatley St. George
9.30am St Mary's, Gamlingay,
11.15am St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 12th April: Easter 2 (first Sunday after Easter)

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay
11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 19th April: Easter 3 (second Sunday after Easter)

9.30am Parish Eucharist with healing time at St. Mary's, Gamlingay
4.00pm Evensong at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 26th April: Easter 4 (third Sunday after Easter)

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay
11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

*A reminder that if you are temporarily or permanently unable to attend church services and would like to receive communion in your own home, please let us know. For Gamlingay and Hatley contact Hilary or Valerie.
For Everton contact Hilary.*

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**Please let Brenda Elcome have any articles or pictures for the newsletter by Wednesday afternoon to
Brenda.elcome@ymail.com**