

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



Weekly newsletter 20 March 2026



From Hilary:

Suitably refreshed from last week's Mothering/Refreshment Sunday services, this coming fifth Sunday in Lent is called Passion Sunday, the start of Passiontide, the run-up to Easter and the final week of Lent. Chris Miller will be preaching at both services. Next weekend, Holy Week itself starts with Palm Sunday.

Diocesan Synod took place last Saturday morning with lay and ordained representatives from all the Deaneries of the Diocese alongside senior Diocesan staff. Representatives from the Deanery of Huntingdon led the opening worship. This was +Dagma's last Synod in Ely Diocese, and her address, in which she referred to some items from General Synod, was warmly received. She will cease to be legally Bishop in this Diocese on 29th May and installed in Edinburgh on 30th of May. +Sarah will be legally Bishop of Ely on 17th April but not fully in post until her installation on 21st June. +Martin Seeley and +Graham King (both retired and in this Diocese) will be covering the gap. Chancellor Anthony Leonard will continue in post for a further 2 years having been granted an extension to serve beyond his 70th birthday.

Archdeacon Richard explained how the Mission and Pastoral committee works and delegates its responsibilities and presented a motion to enable some of this, which was approved.

Diocesan reports on finances for the last year and budget for the year to come were presented with reasons for differences between projection and actual for the previous year.

New Diocesan Secretary (George Wood) and Head of Finance (Neil Green) are very recently in post and will be reviewing current practice with the intention of simplifying/making more transparent some reporting and budgeting systems.

Presentations on Safeguarding and Mission and Ministry- particularly work with young people (16-24) were discussed, with a questionnaire on what was happening in parishes and encouragement to include young people in decision-making by a young member of Synod.

The Granta Deanery brought a motion, which was approved with some amendments, concerning shortening vacancies (9 months maximum quoted to aim for) and working towards filling a post once the leaving date is public for the departing minister.

LENT STUDY

The group meeting on Wednesdays at the Rectory was led by Hilary this last week on the topic of 'Sharing in Service' - exploring the ways in which following in the way of Christ in radical service work out in our lives. The challenges of allowing ourselves to be served and dealing with missed motives for doing things for others were explored in the light of what God's love really means in our lives.

This next week's topic is Sharing Good News; the prayer is as follows:

God of Heaven, you send the gospel to the ends of the earth and your messengers to every nation: Send your Holy Spirit to transform us by the good news of everlasting life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen'

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](#) [22 March](#)

Holy Week Reminder

Holy Week begins next weekend with **Palm Sunday** when clocks go forward, so it will feel an earlier start for the Benefice celebrations which begin with the Liturgy of the Palms at Everton, commemorating Jesus' triumphal entry to Jerusalem riding on a donkey among cheering crowds. Palm crosses will be blessed and distributed at this service and brought to Gamlingay for the following service of the Liturgy of the Passion where a long passion Gospel is read at the Eucharist.

The Passion reading this year is from Matthew. Hilary already has some volunteers to read but there is still room for more, parts will be divided up on Sunday. There may be a run-through on Wednesday morning after the communion service, but attendance for that will not be essential, it will only happen if there are enough to take part.

Taizé services, each at 7pm will take place in one of the three churches of the Benefice from Monday through Wednesday. The format of the service will follow the order of Compline.

Maundy Thursday

In addition to the service itself there will be a meal at 6pm in the Church Hall, remembering Jesus' last meal and its connection with Passover in the context of hospitality, and a time for reflection. Hilary will be offering roast lamb; there will also be baked potatoes and other accompaniments for those who don't eat lamb. It will be helpful to know numbers, and any offers of help with setting up, clearing away and producing accompaniments to the lamb will be welcome though not essential. Please contact Hilary directly to let her know you are attending and with any offers of help.

NB: The service is at Gamlingay at 7.30pm (not 7pm as has been inadvertently advertised previously) remembering the Last Supper and Jesus giving of the Holy Communion. 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 long 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 a service in all three of the Benefice churches followed by Easter Egg hunts.

NEWS FROM EVERTON

Soup and Social took place with all four soups eaten up this week. This is the last month for a while that the Gamlingay and Everton lunches will coincide.

Thank you to Jane B for last week's Mothering Sunday posies and to Jane and Dorothy for treats after the service. Well done!

The PCC is meeting this Thursday, more information next time.

NEWS FROM GAMLINGAY

Simple Lunch took place on Tuesday with 14 participants and donations amounting to £26.06.

Thank you to last week's Mothering Sunday posy-makers, all grandmas - Ann, Jane, Lindy and Hilary, with little Emma very patient in attendance. Well done!

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

Forthcoming Fundraising event

Our next fundraising event after Easter will be on Saturday 9th May when guided tours of the church followed by refreshments will be on offer. This will be advertised in the April Gazette and, of course, in this newsletter – watch out for details nearer the time.

Guild of St. Mary

The Guild of St. Mary held its Annual General Meeting last Monday attended by 15 of its 19 current members. We were able to report on another very successful year and are looking forward to a variety of ongoing events including speakers and in-house activities which are always greatly enjoyed. We are a very friendly group of ladies and are always happy to welcome new members. If you would like to give us a try why not come along to the Church Hall on the third Monday of the month at 7.30pm? The charge for visitors is £5; members pay a £15 subscription which covers the whole year.



As well as the usual annual reports from the Secretary, Chairperson and Treasurer, the annual meeting was updated on the Link to Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal which we support each year. An official 'Thank You' had been received from the charity for the 22 boxes which we had filled with items donated by Guild members and friends throughout 2025, as well as pile of knitted knee blankets which are always requested. Along with many others from around the country, our boxes and blankets had been transported to impoverished areas of Eastern Europe including some to Ukraine where they had been much appreciated. We will be repeating the exercise again this year and are already amassing a variety of donations as well as collecting suitably sized shoe boxes – unfortunately the larger ones cannot be used.

Many of our members also support the Food Project either by volunteering or donating items for the boxes delivered to those in need. It was reported that local donations have significantly fallen off recently meaning that items regularly have to be purchased in order to fill the boxes with basic requirements. It was decided at the meeting that the proceeds of the Guild charity box should, this year, be donated to the Gamlingay Food Project.

As always, our meeting had begun with a short time of worship after which glasses and plates were filled with a variety of tasty bites to accompany the business. The evening ended with light-hearted fun involving a forfeit version of pass the parcel!

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 22nd March: Lent 5

9.30am Parish Eucharist 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

7.30pm 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