

The Buzz



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



March 2026

Monthly information for the Parish of
Ifield

Thought for the Month

March: Light at the End of the Tunnel



As March unfolds, we find ourselves in the quiet, contemplative embrace of Lent - a season set aside for reflection, for turning inward, and for walking more closely with Christ. Lent asks us to slow down, to notice the stillness, and to bring our hearts honestly before God. It is a season that whispers to our souls: *“Even in the darkness, there is light.”*

The image of a tunnel can feel all too familiar. We have walked through moments when life seemed uncertain, when grief or fear shadowed our days, when hope felt just out of reach. In these dark passages, our steps are tentative, our hearts heavy, and the way forward hidden. And yet, even in such darkness, faith reminds us that it is not the end. As the psalmist writes, *“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning”* (Psalm 30:5). Even in the blackest night, a glimmer of light waits.

The first followers of Jesus walked a tunnel of their own. They watched in fear and sorrow as their teacher, their friend, their Saviour, was arrested, mocked, and crucified. Their hearts were heavy, their hope hanging by a thread. Yet even in that apparent defeat, God’s work was unfolding. The cross, the tomb, and the silence that followed were not the end - they were the hidden soil from which resurrection would bloom. Lent calls us to follow that journey, trusting that the pain and darkness are not the last word. As John writes, *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it”* (John 1:5).

Lent is also a mirror. It asks us to confront the shadows within our own hearts: our doubts, regrets, anxieties, and fears. It is not a season of self-criticism, but of honesty. To enter the tunnel fully is to bring our lives, in all their messiness, into the presence of God. Jesus promises, *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life”* (John 8:12).

This season reminds us that we do not walk alone. As a community of faith, we carry one another’s burdens, pray for one another, and share in one another’s struggles. Small acts of love - a listening ear, a helping hand, a moment of kindness - become beacons of God’s light shining into dark places. In our shared journey, even the smallest glimmers of hope can grow into radiant beams that guide the way.

So, if you find yourself in a tunnel this Lent, remember light is always ahead. It may be faint, flickering, or slow to appear, but it is never absent. God’s presence surrounds you, even when it feels distant. The journey through shadows is not the end of the story. Christ, who was crucified and buried, rose triumphant - transforming darkness into light, despair into joy, death into life. And He walks with us still, whispering the eternal promise: *“I am with you always, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20).

May this season be one where God’s light gently pierces your darkness, where hope blooms quietly in the corners of your heart, and where every shadowed step becomes a preparation for the radiant morning of Easter. Let us walk together, trusting that the tunnel will end, that the night will pass, and that the light of Christ will always guide us home.

Every blessing,

Revd Christine
Rector

PARISH HOUSE GROUP



Mondays 10.30 am -12 noon. From January - mid-April, this group will be meeting at 21 Ellis Walk, RH11 0GF

Please contact Mary Pedlow on 01293 305107 for details.
New members are always welcome.

Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross services will be on **Saturday 21st February, Saturday 7th March, and Saturday 21st March**. Each service commencing at 11am. Weather permitting, we hope to hold these services in the churchyard.

Lent Group: Journeying with *The Shack*

This Lent, I am proposing to offer a six-week Lent group based on *The Shack* (2017, dir. Stuart Hazeldine; novel by William P. Young). Dates and times will be published in the Pew Sheet. Using selected film clips, Scripture, prayer, and gentle conversation, we will walk alongside the story of Mack Phillips as he wrestles with profound loss and encounters God in unexpected ways.

The Shack speaks honestly about suffering without offering easy answers. It creates space for lament, questions, and the deep emotions many of us carry - particularly those shaped by grief, injustice, or disappointment. In a pastoral and prayerful setting, you will be invited to reflect on where God might be present in pain, and how trust can slowly be rebuilt when life has been shattered.

Over the six weeks, the group will explore key themes of the Christian journey: forgiveness that feels impossible, mercy that heals, and hope that is born not by avoiding suffering, but by passing through it. The course also offers a fresh way of reflecting on the Trinity - not as an abstract idea, but as a living relationship of love that welcomes, listens, and restores.

Each session will include time to watch a short clip, reflect on Scripture, and share (as much or as little as you feel able) in a respectful and confidential group. No prior knowledge of the film or book is needed.

To conclude the journey, the whole film will be shown on **Low Sunday (12th April)**, to which **everyone in the parish is warmly invited**, whether or not they have taken part in the Lent group. This shared viewing offers a gentle opportunity to reflect together on the themes of Easter-wounds that remain, faith that hesitates, and love that brings new life.

All are welcome to come and journey together from sorrow toward healing, and from brokenness toward hope.



SMILE (St. Margaret's Ifield Ladies Events)

A social group offering fellowship, mutual support and fun! It's a chance to relax, unwind, and enjoy some great company. Events we have planned are:

Saturday 21st March @1pm - Turkish lunch at Efes in Northgate

Tuesday 7th April afternoon - Magic Faraway Tree at Cineworld Crawley

Saturday 23rd May - Lion, Witch and Wardrobe @ Ifield Barn Theatre

All are very welcome. If you'd like to join us, contact Clare Wilson email SMILE@ifieldparish.org or 0776 1122 172

200 CLUB

The latest 200 Club Building Fund draw took place on 8th February 2026. The results are as follows:

1st Rita Strutt
2nd Jean Eida
3rd Clare Wilson

The next draw will be on 8th March 2026. Thank you for your valued and continued support - new members are always most welcome!



Sing Along Grease was held in the church on Saturday 31st January 2026 and a great Sing Along Time was had by all.

We raised an amazing **£306.50** in support of our Church.

Many thanks to everyone involved from the planning committee through to those who were there to help on the day. It certainly did help to beat "Beat the Winter Blues".

OUR YOUTH GROUP

Meets fortnightly on Friday evenings during term-time from 6.30 – 8.00 pm

For more information, please contact the Rector

Save the Date

Dates for your diary for future Church fund raising and social events.

Friday 20th March - Quiz Night joint with St Margarets School

Monday 4th May - May Fayre

Saturday 8th August - Extra Sing Along Children's Movie

Saturday 3rd October - Harvest Lunch at the Barn

Saturday 10th October - Sing Along Movie

Friday 30th October - Community Quiz Night, in Church

Saturday 21st November - Christmas Fayre in Church

EASTER TEAM FOOD BANK

Please leave items in the basket in church. Thank you for your continued support.

Parish Electoral Roll

Have you been worshipping regularly at St Margaret's Church for six months or more? Are you baptised and aged over 15? If so, you are invited to complete a Parish Electoral Roll form. Being on the Roll helps our church show its strength. Representation on the governing bodies of the church depends on the number on our electoral roll and is mandatory if you wish to stand for election to the Parochial Church Council (PCC). Joining the roll gives you the right to attend and vote at the APCM (Annual Parochial Church meeting) which will take place in church on Sunday 19th April 2026 at 12:30 pm.

Electoral roll forms are available via our church website at the following address <https://www.ifieldparish.org/electoralroll> or in church. The deadline for form return prior to the APCM is 29th March 2026, (although you can apply at any time throughout the year). Please return forms by email to Clare Wilson (Parish Electoral Roll Officer) electoralroll@ifieldparish.org, put them in the box in church, or by post / hand to Ifield Parish Office. NOTE: If you joined the Roll at St Margaret's last year, then you don't need to reapply. If you are not sure if you are on the electoral roll, Clare is happy to advise.

APCM – Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This years APCM will be held after the 11am Parish Communion at 12:30 on 19th April. Reports for this must be received by 13th March to allow time for them to be added to the booklet and be printed.



The start of 2026 has been challenging for Family Support Work due to a reduction in funding, which has required us to make difficult changes to how we operate. We have reorganised our practitioner areas so we can continue to cover the same geographical reach with fewer staff. Sadly, this has resulted in two redundancies and one retirement. We have delayed these changes for as long as possible, and while we may now support slightly fewer families, our commitment

remains the same. We are determined that the quality and impact of our work will continue to be as strong as ever. For more information about our new practitioner areas, please visit our website: (<http://www.familysupportwork.org/what-we-do/our-services/>)

One family recently arrived in the UK and were moved from hotel accommodation into emergency housing with no local support network. They are grieving the loss of a child and sibling, navigating a significant language barrier, and struggling with disrupted routines and emotional distress. The practitioner has been providing practical support, emotional reassurance, and advocacy across housing, education, and health.

Her work has been essential in helping the mother manage her MS diagnosis, stabilise day-to-day routines, and secure progress towards school re-engagement for the six-year-old, whose wellbeing has declined since being out of education.

Family Support Work is inviting individuals to support local mums by donating a small financial gift that can be used to support mothers facing challenging circumstances across Sussex. We are also encouraging a simple Lent declutter set aside good-quality clothing to donate to our charity shop, helping raise vital funds for families. Looking ahead to Easter, we will also be grateful for donations of Easter eggs so children we support can enjoy a treat. Every gift makes a real difference to local families.

Forthcoming events: The Mayor of Seaford's Charity Lunch - 28 March, Eastbourne Gala Dinner - 11 April, Family Support Work at Arlington Bluebell Walk - 17 April, Open Gardens, Old Rectory, Warbleton - 23 April. For more info, email admin@familysupportwork.org.uk or see our events calendar: www.familysupportwork.org/eventss/

January's work in numbers

- 223 visits to families
- 570 phone calls/remote support to 266 parents and 155 children
- 51 supported meetings with other agencies
- 59 group sessions, 473 adults and 287 children supported
- 84 food deliveries made

Pray for a practitioner and their area! Choose a practitioner to keep in your prayers or pray for a different one each day. Explore the map of our coverage areas and see all our practitioners: <http://www.familysupportwork.org/what-we-do/our-services/>.



Family Support Work

SHARE THE WARMTH THIS WINTER
By Gifting Your Winter Fuel Payment

An estimated 65,300 households across Sussex are living in fuel poverty this year.

A donation of £200 could keep a family warm for several weeks and provide respite from one of their many worries.

Please consider sharing part or all of your Winter Fuel Payment to help families in Sussex facing impossible choices to stay warm this winter.

Follow this link to give directly:
www.justgiving.com/campaign/share-the-warmth-25
Or send a cheque payable to Family Support Work to Garton House, 22 Stanford Avenue, Brighton, BN1 6AA



SCAN TO DONATE

To find out more about us please visit www.familysupportwork.org

Chichester Diocesan Association for Family Support Work | Charity No 285337 | Company Limited by Guarantee Registered No 16489031
Registered Office: Garton House, 22 Stanford Avenue, Brighton BN1 6AA



WELCOME TO ST. MARGARET'S SERVICES

1st Sunday	9.30 am	Sunday Celebration
	11.00 am	Parish Communion
2nd Sunday	9.30 am	FIISH for Young Families
	11.00 am	Parish Communion
3rd Sunday	11.00 am	Parish Communion
4th Sunday	9.30 am	Family Service
	11.00 am	Parish Communion
5th Sunday	9.30 am	Service Of the Word
	11.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)

www.ifieldparish.org

www.facebook.com/groups/stmargaretsifield



St. Margaret's Church,
Ifield Street, Ifield,
Crawley, RH11 0NN.

Wednesdays

9.30 am

Said Eucharist

WHO'S WHO IN IFIELD PARISH

Rector	Revd Christine Spencer	01293 561283	rector@ifieldparish.org
Curate	Fr Dominic Desouza-Campbell	01444 247388	curate@ifieldparish.org
Reader	Jill Bell	01293 521699	reader@ifieldparish.org
Parish Wardens	Andy Ironside	07758 168411	andy@ifieldparish.org
	Kevin Lawler	07792 809165	kevin@ifieldparish.org
PCC Secretary	VACANCY		
PCC Treasurer	James May	01293 529146	treasurer@ifieldparish.org
Finance Officer	Jack Woolsey	07709 046017	jackwoolsey@hotmail.com
Safeguarding	Heather Woolsey	07584 010576	safeguarding@ifieldparish.org
DBS Lead Recruiter	Andy Ironside	077581 168411	dbsleadrecruiter@ifieldparish.org

REST DAYS

Please note that Friday is our Rector's rest day
Our Curate is only in the parish on Wednesdays and for Sunday services

PLEASE NOTE

St. Margaret's weekly notices can be viewed on the parish website

IFIELD PARISH WEBSITE

www.ifieldparish.org

Please send any information/photos for publication on the website to
Carl Peirce carl@ifieldparish.org

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmargaretsifield>

Please send any updates for the April issue to Kim Davis-Gray
kim@paradiseblue.co.uk by 23rd March 2026

