

The Buzz



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



January 2026 Monthly information for the Parish of Ifield

Thought for the Month



Happy New Year!

January arrives as a threshold. The celebrations of Christmas are behind us, and a new year stretches out before us—quiet, open, and full of possibility. It is a season that invites reflection: where we have been, and where we are being led.

In the life of faith, January reminds us that God is always offering new beginnings—not only once a year, but each and every day.

As Scripture assures us, *“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning”* (Lamentations 3:22–23).

Prayer is the place where these new beginnings take root. When we pray, we step out of the noise and demands of daily life and place ourselves in God’s presence. We do not need to have everything resolved or planned; we simply come as we are, trusting the promise of Christ: *“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest”* (Matthew 11:28).

Prayer is not about achievement, but about availability—making space for God to meet us.

T.S. Eliot’s poem ‘Little Gidding’ speaks powerfully to this moment of reflection. Written in a time of great darkness, it reminds us that beginnings and endings are often woven together. Eliot writes:

“What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.”

These words resonate deeply in January. A new year is not about erasing the past but about offering it to God—our joys and sorrows, our faithfulness and our failures—and trusting that God can redeem it all. Scripture echoes this hope: “*Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing; now it springs up, do you not perceive it?*” (Isaiah 43:18–19). In prayer, we learn that nothing is wasted. God uses all that we are, and all that we have been, to shape who we are becoming.

Little Gidding also speaks of returning—of coming back to a place we thought we knew, only to see it anew:

“And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.”

Prayer often feels like this kind of return. We come back again and again to familiar words—the Lord’s Prayer, the Psalms, the rhythms of worship—yet each time, God meets us afresh. What once seemed ordinary becomes newly alive when approached with openness and trust. As the psalmist writes, “*Be still, and know that I am God*” (Psalm 46:10).

As a parish community, January invites us to begin again together. Perhaps this is the year to deepen our life of prayer, to support one another more intentionally, or to listen more closely for where God is calling us next.

New beginnings rarely arrive with drama; more often, they unfold quietly through faithful, repeated acts of prayer, service, and love. “*Let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up*” (Galatians 6:9).

As we step into this new year, may we do so with hope rather than haste. May we trust that God is at work in endings and beginnings alike. And may our prayer lead us—slowly, faithfully, and together—into the new life that God continually offers.

Wishing you all a prayerful and peaceful 2026

Christine

Rector



WELCOME TO ST. MARGARET'S SERVICES

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

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.

Making Space to Be with God

In the midst of busy lives and constant noise, two monthly prayer groups are offered that invite us all simply to pause, breathe, and rest in God's presence.

The **Service of Peace and Contemplation**, shaped by the rhythm of Celtic night prayer, creates a calm and prayerful space at the close of the day. Through quiet music, prayer for peace, and for the growth of the church, we are invited to lay down our concerns and hopes before God. A short reflection on one of Jesus' parables offers a moment to listen more deeply, while the lighting of candles allows us to express our prayers in silence and light.

The **Julian Meditation Service** offers an even deeper stillness. The service begins with a gentle, guided meditation, to help us settle our minds and bodies, leaving behind distractions. This leads into a period of silent prayer, where there is nothing to do but be present with God, allowing space for reflection, healing, and quiet attentiveness.

Both prayer groups offer a simple but precious gift: time spent with God. Whether through words, music, candlelight, or silence, they invite us to listen, to rest, and to be renewed in God's presence.

All are welcome to attend. Service dates and times will be published in the news sheet.

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.



One of the families we support has faced exceptionally difficult circumstances over the past two months. A major leak from the water tank in their attic left their home unsafe, with the ceiling at risk of collapsing. To keep everyone safe, Mum and her three children (all under 10) were forced to sleep together in one bedroom, and at times in the living room when the children became too distressed to remain in the same room.

Mum had already been bidding for alternative housing due to overcrowding in their two-bedroom property. Fortunately, a three-bedroom home became available through the local authority, and she was successful in securing it. Although a huge relief, the new property required some decoration, and several pieces of furniture had been damaged by the leak in their previous home.

With Christmas approaching, Mum was struggling to cover the costs of moving, replacing essentials, and still being able to give the children a special Christmas.

Thank you to all at St. Margaret's who so generously donated toys and gifts to FSW.



-SMILE (St. Margaret's Ifield Ladies Events)

This group is all about friendship, fun, and supporting each other. It's a chance to relax, unwind, and enjoy some great company.

SMILE ladies will be visiting the Pelham Buckle Pub, Ifield, on Thursday 22nd January 2026 at 19:30 for a catch up and to consider future plans. Please join us there.

For further details, please contact Clare Wilson email SMILE@ifieldparish.org or 0776 1122 172

200 CLUB

The latest 200 Club Building Fund draw took place on 14th December. The results are set out below:

1st Margaret Shaw
2nd Leslie Miles
3rd Jean Eida

The next draw will be on 11th January. Thank you for your valued and continued support - new members are most welcome!

OUR YOUTH GROUP

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

For more information, please contact the Rector

EASTER TEAM FOOD BANK

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

SAVE THE DATE AND GET READY TO 'BEAT THE WINTER BLUES'

🎬✨ Get ready to sing, shimmy, and hand-jive!

On **Saturday 31st January 2026 at 4pm**, we're cranking up the volume for another **film sing-a-long extravaganza** — and this time, it's **GREASE!**

So, dust off those disco moves, warm up your vocal cords, and get ready to tell us about *summer lovin'* 🎵🕶️

More details and tickets coming in the New Year — stay tuned!



WHO'S WHO IN IFIELD PARISH

Rector	Revd Christine Spencer	561283	rector@ifieldparish.org
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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

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

Please send any updates for the February issue to Jill Bell
reader@ifieldparish.org by 19th January