

Autumn Leaves at Westonbirt. *(photo courtesy of Doug)*

St Mary's Church
FAIRFORD

South Cotswold Team Ministry
Sunday 1st November 2026

Clergy

Vicar: Rev'd Caroline Symcox – 01285 712467 carolinesymcox@googlemail.com
Curate: Rev'd Vicky Falvey – 07356 234248 revvickyfalvey@gmail.com
Priest – Pastoral: Rev'd Canon Denise Hyde denisehyde15@gmail.com
01285 713285

SERVICES

Sunday 1st November – All Saint's Day
8.00am BCP Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Eucharist
Sidespeople: Eleanor Toby and Jenny Hewes
Offertory: Jane Easton Prayer: Ann Nicholls and Michelle Harris
Readings: Peter Howlett Intercessions: Alison Godsal
Coffee: Linda and Peter Howlett
3.00pm Remembering Service
6.00pm Prayer and Praise Service

Thursday 5th November
10.30am BCP Holy Communion

Sunday 8th November – 3rd before Advent – Remembrance Sunday
8.00am BCP Holy Communion
10.50am Remembrance Sunday Service (parade leaves from outside Hyperion House at 10.30am)
Sidespeople: Andy Wilkinson, Jill Connell and Michelle Harris
Offertory: Heather Gorton Prayer: Val Trafford and Lucy Hodson
Readings: Stewart Benzie
No coffee

From Rev'd Caroline – 01285 712467 – carolinesymcox@googlemail.com
Readings for Sunday: Revelation 7.9-end; 1 John 3.1-3; Matthew 5.1-12

This Sunday we enter into our November season of remembering, through the special services of All Saints' (1st November) and All Souls' (2nd November). The distinction between the two is a fine one, made sharper for us because we're celebrating them both on the same day; All Saints' at the 10am, and All Souls' at our annual Remembering Service at 3pm. At All Saints' we are celebrating the faithful following of Jesus, and bringing to the forefront of our minds that promise that Jesus gives us – that through that faith we will have a place in the Kingdom of Heaven, and the gift of eternal life. All Souls' is a more personal, thoughtful service – we allow ourselves to slow down and remember those closer to us. Our celebration of faithful lives is coloured by our own close-held grief. Sorrow and celebration mix at All Souls'.

But in both these ways of remembering we hold before us the promise and call of our Lord Jesus. The promise is a great one, the greatest one, indeed. We are promised that through our faithful following of Jesus, death is no longer something to fear. His resurrection will be ours, and we will have a place at his side in his eternal kingdom. That vision in Revelation is of all the saints gathered into glory, robes washed through the blood of the Lamb, and every tear wiped from their eyes.

If that is the promise, then the call is sharper, because it is here and now, a reminder and a challenge. That future glory is underpinned by a living out of Jesus' mission in an incomplete and broken world. John describes it in words of wisdom and encouragement: "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed." God's love for us isn't conditional, based on how whether we earn it or not. His love comes first, his adoption offered freely to all.

We are God's children now, loved, blessed, called to future glory, and that means we stand in the brokenness and mess of the world unconquered, and ready to face the darkness. In Jesus' words in the Beatitudes, those who truly follow Jesus: the meek, the merciful, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the peacemakers and pure of heart – these will face trials and tribulations here and now, but they will do so undaunted – 'happy', in fact! These are not future blessings or promises being offered by Jesus, but a candid reflection of how it feels to walk the path of righteousness even when threatened and mocked by a world that rejects it. We are blessed, happy now, because our feet are planted on solid rock – the knowledge of Christ's salvation, and God's plan for us. That reassurance is supreme. Nothing can shake it. We stand and do what is good even when that is difficult and uncomfortable, because we know what good looks like and how priceless it truly is.

So this week, let us renew our resolve with all the saints – looking to that great cloud of witnesses who have walked this hard and rewarding road – to be ambassadors of Christ in the hard times and the good, with his hope and promise leading us onward.

Rev'd Caroline

Join us for Morning Prayer via Zoom on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 9am every week. Click below for the week starting 2nd November.
Join Zoom Meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89157099539?pwd=XiULFcX8FGzuaihMzAt8PPnzgLU2TD.1
Meeting ID: 891 5709 9539 Passcode: 542260

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Please remember the following in your prayers:

Those who are ill: Sheila Hughes, Grace Slack, Hannah, Tabi Berry, Elles de Grau

Those who have died: Shirley Lewis; Pamela Frances Young (funeral at 2.30pm on Friday 30th October at St. Mary's); Susan Hunt (funeral at 11am Tuesday 17th November at St. Mary's)

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. 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 the notice above for clarification).*
For further details please contact Rev'd Denise on 01285 713285 or denisehyde15@gmail.com.

Prayer Requests
Would you like us to pray for you? If you have a particular need or concern, please complete a prayer request slip and place it in our prayer request box it will then be included in our Community Prayers every Monday for a month.
Both the prayer request box and prayer request slips can be found on our new prayer table by the pulpit in the Nave or contact Rev'd Denise.

From Ann Nicholls
Are you content?

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they simply make the most of everything that comes their way.

Lord God, thank you that you are my rock and that I can always be confident in your love however tough life may be.

Thank you that you are at work in so many people's lives and that your arms are forever open to everyone.

Thank you for the gift of your spirit to the church today, help me to listen with care to everything that he has to say to me.

I pray in Jesus' name. AMEN

Remembering Service, Sunday 1st November, 3pm
This is a simple quiet and reflective service, remembering our loved ones who have died.

During the service the names of those who have died during the past year from this parish will be read out before God.

If you would like to add other names of your loved ones who have died, please contact Rev'd Denise, denisehyde15@gmail.com or 01285 713285.

Remembrance Sunday Poppies – Volunteers Needed!
Time marches on, and we will soon be at Remembrance Sunday once again, which this year is on 8th November. We would love to decorate the porch and church in the preceding week with our lovely, crocheted poppies, but we'll need help from some willing able-bodied folks to do so! Please let Rev'd Caroline know if you can help put up the decorations this year, and we'll get a suitable date and time in the diary.

Safeguarding
Parish Safeguarding Officer - Val Trafford - val.trafford@me.com

Thanks to everyone who came to the safeguarding session led by Val last Monday 26th October. Despite some initial audio-visual hiccups, the session went very well, with several participants saying that they felt inspired to learn even more! Do speak to Val if you'd like to sign up for a future session, or would like directions to online learning.

NOTICES

Music at St Mary's: Looking Ahead
We are already planning next year's concert programme and would love to hear your ideas. We are considering more outstanding classical performances, something non-classical and maybe the return of one or two favourite acts. If there is something you would particularly like to hear at St Mary's, please let us know.
Thank you for your continued support.
Jane-Emma Peerless (on behalf of the PCC)

Coffee Rota: Volunteers Needed
We are currently a bit short of volunteers to serve coffee and biscuits after the 10 am service every week and would welcome a few new people on the list.

Currently our turn comes around about every two months. It's a good way to meet new people and is much appreciated. The coffee and tea are provided, so only milk and biscuits need to be brought on the day.

If you are interested in knowing more, please talk to Sarah Bottomley.

Save the Date!
Saturday 31st October at Fairford Community Centre – 12.00noon – 2pm soup lunch and crafts in aid of Help for Madina charity - **volunteers wanted** to make soup and fruit crumble for the event:

- Carrot and coriander
- Leek and Potato
- Broccoli and Stilton
- Fruit Crumble

A bottle for the raffle would be gratefully received instead of soup or crumble.

Thank you.
Please contact Helen, 01285 713431

Lechlade with Fairford Mothers' Union Project for HMP Eastwood Park
The prison in Gloucestershire at Wotton-under-Edge is for women aged 18 and over. When the ladies are coming out of prison they have nothing. Giving them new bits and pieces can help them rehabilitate and give them dignity.

Apparently, the ladies really value the thought that someone cares enough to donate new things to help their re-entry back into society.

As a branch we are collecting for the next few months **sanitary products, face moisturiser, cleanser, cotton wool pads, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, small hairbrushes, combs, scrunchies, pants, bras, socks and coffee vouchers along with small holdalls or rucksacks.**

We would also appreciate your support as a congregation with this worthy cause. If you are able to donate any of the mentioned items above, please leave them in the box provided at the back of the church, in the south aisle.

Thank you for your support.

Decorating the Red Phone Box – Artists Needed!
Fairford Town Council has adopted the red phone box on the High Street, and are planning on installing shelves inside it for information leaflets etc.

As part of making it more of a feature, they would like to have some "stained glass window" stickers depicting Fairford made and are inviting groups and clubs in Fairford to design their own ‘window’. Could you help produce an offering from St Mary’s? You can use your group logo, or words, or make something totally new - it's up to you. **Designs must be no larger than 376mm x 178mm**. You can use as much colour as you like, but any white space will be clear in the finished window. Please speak to Rev’d Caroline with thoughts and ideas.

Church Cleaning – Help Needed
Since several of our hard-working church cleaning team have had to step back recently, we have a pressing need for two roles in particular:

a) A volunteer to organise the church cleaning rota. The Holy Dusters do a fantastic job, but the teams really need someone to co-ordinate which team is working where and when. Could you help organise?
b) A volunteer to take on the cleaning of the church brass. Our candlesticks and High Altar crucifix are all made of beautiful brass, which looks great, but needs regular love and attention. Might you be able to take on the task of keeping it shining?

South Cotswold Team Ministry News – Interim Minister in the Five Villages
The Bishop, working with the Patrons, Archdeacon and Parish reps of the Five Villages, is delighted to announce the appointment of the Revd Chris Gaul as the new Interim Team Vicar of Kempsford with Whelford, Castle Eaton, Marston Meysey & Meysey Hampton and Deanery Pioneer of Cirencester Deanery for an initial period of two years.

Chris will be licensed on Sunday 6th December at 3pm and will then begin his new ministry in the Team. This appointment is subject to the usual HR procedures, which have already begun.

Please do pray for Chris and his family at this exciting time.

New Housing in Fairford: The Local Plan

You are probably aware that Cotswold District Council as published a local plan which is now at the stage of a Regulation 19 Consultation. This means that there is still an opportunity to comment on the plan before it is submitted for independent examination. There are plans for very considerable expansion of Fairford, with up to 1,400 homes mostly on the Eastern side. The deadline for submitting comments is 11:59 pm, 3rd November 2026.

As Christians, we must recognise that many people need homes and that we should be willing to share our good fortune in living in such a lovely place. At the same time we may wish to contribute to sensible planning which takes current and future needs into account, which is not just a knee-jerk reaction to the requirement from Government that all Districts deliver on national housing requirements. Perhaps we might each individually have something to say about the proposals.

This is obviously something that should be on our list of own prayers, alongside those of the Community Prayer Group as we each seek guidance on what our reaction to the plan should be.

Even if we see the human need, there will be considerable impacts on nature and wildlife - St Mary's Eco Church members will individually be responding to the consultation about its impact on biodiversity in Fairford, already under great strain.

If you feel that it is right for you to you respond, all the details are at this link https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2026-2043/ - this shows you the plan and the way to submit your response.

There is also a local group called Fairford Community Alliance, which has set up a Facebook page with a simple way to top and tail your personal submission. https://fairfordcommunityalliance.uk/get-involved/#respond. You don't have to use their messages, but it is a helpful way to understand how to respond to a public consultation.

LIFE'S FIVE BIG QUESTIONS

Origin? Purpose? Suffering? Afterlife? God?

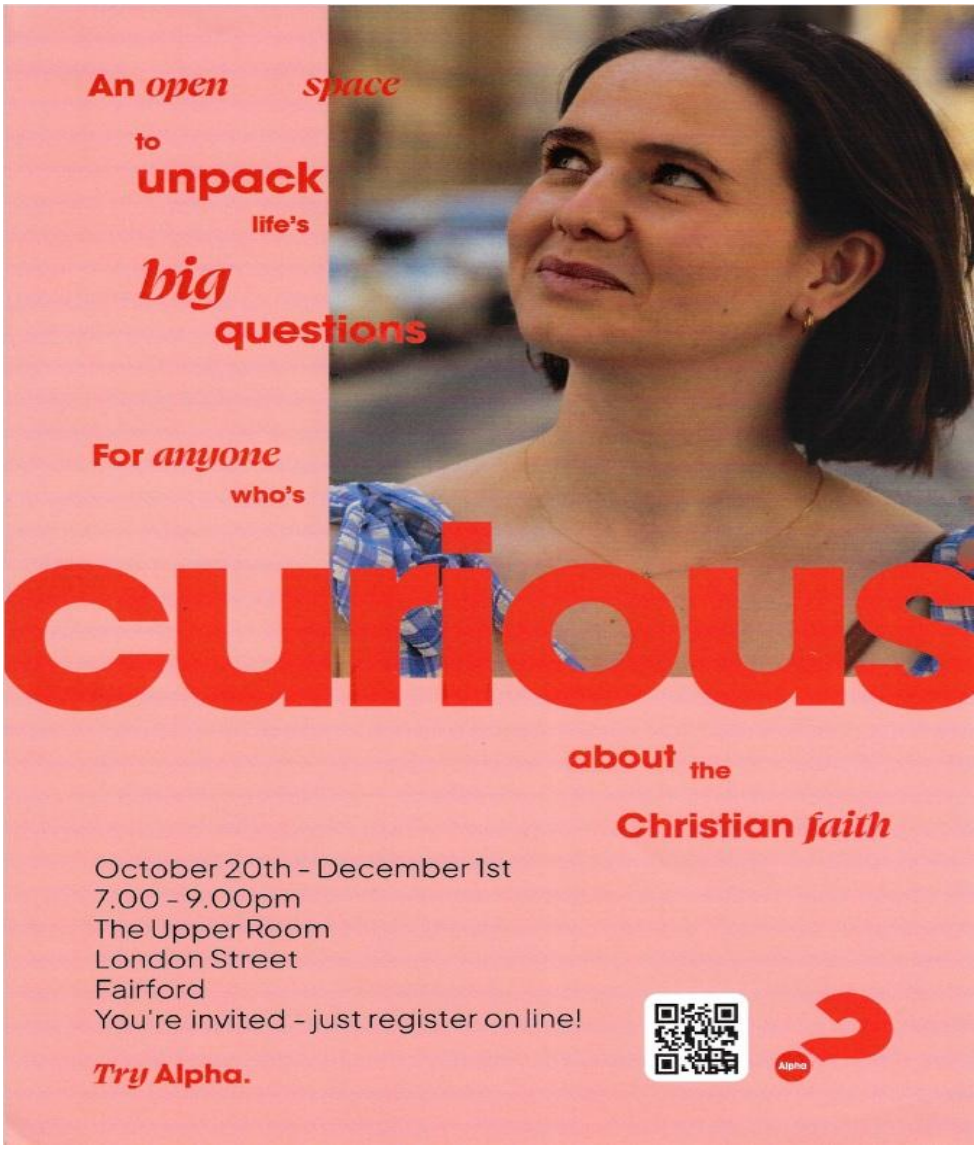
These form the basis of the internationally acclaimed Alpha Course initiated by Rev Nicky Gumbel currently being translated into Chinese and Arabic.

Here in Fairford, we are running an Alpha Course on Tuesday evenings for 7 weeks from October 20th-December 1st.

Please invite and bring family, friends or work colleagues for whom these five big questions of life remain unanswered.

If you have any questions or want to find out more, please let us know.
Jeremy & Katie Blake

FACT (Fairford Area Churches Together)
Email: jrmblk7@gmail.com or ekatie.blake@gmail.com





CRAFT & SOUP

All sales support local charity

HELP MADINA

Saturday, 31st October



12 - 2pm



Fairford Community Centre

Free entry for everyone!

Soup and Bread £5.00

Refreshments £2.50

Charity Raffle Cash sales

Working 4 Wellbeing

Fairford and Lechlade Areas

Sponsored by

COTSWOLD FOOD NETWORK

COMMUNITY MEALS ARE BACK!

WE HAVE DATES!!!! Yayyyyy!

Sunday	Thursday	Thursday
25/10	26/11	10/12
@ 12pm	@ 5pm	@ 6pm

Menu to be confirmed but these book up fast

£7.50 home cooked dinner and dessert



Fairford Community Centre

HOSTED by Mel at Kitchen Club and W4W volunteers.

Come share a meal and laughter with us in the community.

Contact Mary Ann 07555738138 to book your space