

Seek

September 2026

Community Centre Timetable Included



The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge

www.stmarksnewnham.org

50p

Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham in September

Holy Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am every Sunday

Sunday Services

6th September at **9.30 am** Parish Eucharist

13th September at **9.30 am** Morning Worship

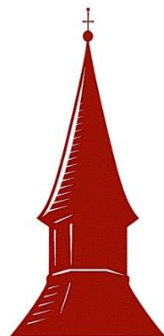
20th September at **9.30 am** Parish Eucharist

27th September at **9.30 am** Parish Eucharist

Regular Weekday Services

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday at **9.00 am** Morning Prayer

Tuesdays Weekly Holy Communion (BCP) at **11.00 am** followed by refreshments



Faith working

St Mark's
Newnham

through love

Galatians 5.6

The Vicar's Letter



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I heard recently somebody say on a podcast I was listening to that for them Jesus was just too perfect; that it was impossible to follow him because one could not feel a closeness or connection with such a faultless

individual.

But Jesus as some cold, distant divine spirit doing a bad impression of a real human being is not how I encounter him in the Scriptures.

I was reflecting on this when preparing to preach recently on the feeding of the 5000. Most people know this story: it is the only one of Jesus' miracles to appear in all four Gospel accounts. But what is often missed is the context. The reason why Jesus was in such an inhospitable place in the first place was that he was grieving the death of his cousin and collaborator, John the Baptist. And so Matthew's account begins: "When Jesus heard that Herod had beheaded John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself."

We can detect in Jesus the disorientating numbness of grief, signalled and indeed symbolised by his wandering into the wilderness. The wilderness has another meaning as well, of course. It was the place where John - the man whom Jesus is mourning - made his home: where he donned camel skins, ate locusts and wild honey and called people to repentance. Jesus has done that thing which we all are prone to do when struck by grief: he seeks out a place where the presence of the dead man can still be felt.

John was 'the voice crying out in the wilderness', foretold by the prophet Isaiah. Jesus returns to the wilderness to try to hear just the faintest echo of that voice.

Of course, when he gets there, he finds that a crowd of hot, hungry humanity has followed him there.

What happens next, we know well. The gathering in of the meagre harvest of five loaves and two fish, and the miraculous feeding of 5000 folks out of it.

But we should also note how low Christ's own reserves would have been. He is depleted by the death of a loved one, his energy sapped and his spirit heavy. The real miracle of the feeding is not the abundance of food in a wilderness, but the abundance of love in a wounded heart.

All of which is to say that, far from being presented with a Christ so distant from, and serenely above, our poor, rattled humanity, we in fact are being given an insight into that most inescapable, bewildering and painful aspects of it - grief.

When I was in training the classic framework for understanding and working through grief was that associated with the Swiss born psychiatrist Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. In her 1969 book *Death and Dying* she introduced the notion of the five stages of grief: denial, anger, depression, bargaining, and then acceptance.

Kubler-Ross was a seriously impressive person, and this theory of five stages has been incredibly influential, and no doubt for many people helpful. But contemporary grief counselling has begun to push back against it. It's too neat. And it seems to encourage the idea that grief will pass. That it ends. That we pass through the five stages and then snap back to how we were before. We recover and we 'move on'.

Except many of us don't, and the idea that we should can be quite damaging.

So today, you are more likely to be encouraged to acknowledge the cocktail of emotions that grief presents, its unpredictability, the way it can trip us up years after it first emerged. How it *changes* us, but that despite - or even because - of it, we can still grow and flourish and live, without trying to bury it.

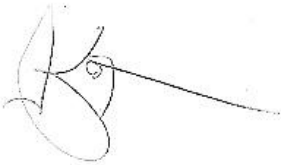
There is Gospel theology behind this approach. Grief is love's echo. It is part of what it is to love, and live. What it is to live a cross-shaped life.

In his book, *Finding My Way Home*, Roman Catholic writer Henri Nouwen wrote, "Your whole life is filled with losses, endless losses....The question is not how to avoid loss and make it not happen, but how to choose it as a passage, as an exodus to a greater life of freedom."

In the story of the feeding of the multitude, Jesus does not get over the loss of his friend and crack on with healing people. His grief and his love are one and the same, and it is because he hurts and sorrows that he feels and cares. We read that his 'compassion', his love and sympathy, is what prompts his desire to not leave them hungry. And the dead man John the Baptist, who in his earthly life lived off locusts, in death helps his friend feed over 5000 people with the finest bread and fish. Just as we, with all the losses we carry, are fed at the altar rail as a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, 'where tears shall be no more'.

In friendship and in faith,

Jim

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Jim', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

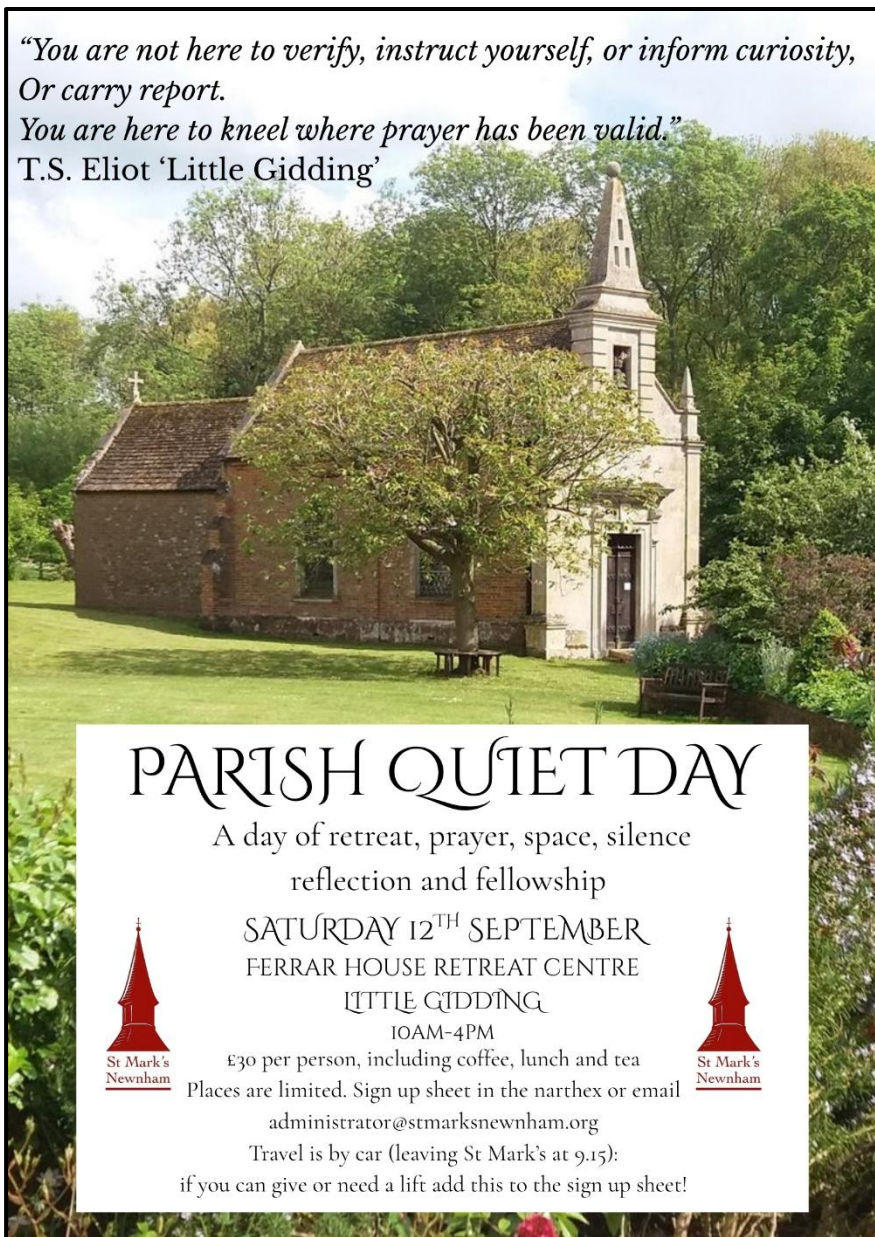
The October Edition of Seek

Contributions are always very welcome. The October issue goes to every house in the parish and so has a wide audience. Please send your items to Jane Plows at janemp@virginmedia.com (01223 350120) by Wednesday 16th September.

*"You are not here to verify, instruct yourself, or inform curiosity,
Or carry report.*

You are here to kneel where prayer has been valid."

T.S. Eliot 'Little Gidding'



PARISH QUIET DAY

A day of retreat, prayer, space, silence
reflection and fellowship

SATURDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER
FERRAR HOUSE RETREAT CENTRE
LITTLE GIDDING
10AM-4PM

£30 per person, including coffee, lunch and tea
Places are limited. Sign up sheet in the narthex or email
administrator@stmarksnewnham.org
Travel is by car (leaving St Mark's at 9.15):
if you can give or need a lift add this to the sign up sheet!



St Mark's
Newnham



St Mark's
Newnham

Maggie's : Charity of the Month



A different type of cancer care

Our founder, Maggie Keswick Jencks used her own experience of having cancer to create a new type of cancer care. The first Maggie's opened in Edinburgh in 1996, and over the past 30 years we have been able to support more than 4 million people across our centres in the UK.

"Above all what matters is not to lose the joy of living in the fear of dying."

– Maggie Keswick Jencks

For two years, Maggie Keswick Jencks lived with advanced cancer. During that time, she pioneered the belief that people shouldn't "lose the joy of living in the fear of dying" – and this is the foundation of what we do.

Maggie felt that her diagnosis and treatment was as hard on her family as it was on her, so she created a new type of support, a centre that could make the experience of cancer more manageable for everyone.

Maggie's Cambridge

Maggie's Cambridge is a cancer support centre, situated on the grounds of Addenbrooke's Hospital, providing emotional, practical and psychological support to people living with cancer, along with their family and friends.

Our centre is a warm and welcoming space where people can access expert advice and connect with others facing similar experiences.

At Maggie's, we understand that people need far more than medical treatment alone. We help people take back control when cancer turns life upside down. Our cancer support specialists, psychologist and benefits advisors have expert knowledge about cancer, treatment, coping with difficult emotions and managing your finances. We also have a team of qualified professionals who run our exercise and art therapy sessions.

All of our support is free, with no appointment or referral needed, and we're here for as long as you may need us. We're open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm and we invite you to 'just come in' to visit us.

The need for our support

The number of people living with cancer is rising – and so is the need for our support.

Maggie's relies solely on the kindness of donations and gifts in wills and the support of the St Mark's Church community helps to ensure that everyone impacted by cancer has expert care and community when they need it most.

To access our support

Call us on 01223 249220 or email cambridge@maggies.org

You can find us onsite at Addenbrooke's Hospital, our address is 21 Milton House, Puddicombe Way, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, CB2 0AD.

You can find out more about Maggie's online at www.maggies.org

Thank you for knowing how important Maggie's is to so many.

Hayley Webb

Centre Fundraising Manager at Maggie's Cambridge

Foodbank Dates

Please bring donations for the foodbank to church on Sunday 6th September.

Or leave them on the following Thursday, the 10th September, at 19 Kings Road (Eleanor Scott) 9.00 am - 3.00 pm, or at 1 Millington Road (Rosey Gardiner) 8.00 am - 6.00 pm.

An open boot collection takes place on **the first Tuesday morning of every month** from 11 am to 12 noon at the Gough Way island with the post box (not weekly as in the past).

There is a collection point at the Co-op too.

Fridge Free Vaccines

Some of our long term readers may remember that in 2004 Shev Roser wrote in Seek about Cambridge Biostability, the company that her husband Bruce and she set up in 1998. One of its aims was produce fridge free vaccines. Here, all these years later, is her update.

Some of you will have heard about my husband Bruce's latest company Stablepharma on Radio 4 and BBC news a few days ago, and their success in developing fridge free vaccines. Bruce first made his invention, thermostability of fragile bio molecules, in 1998. Stablepharma is at the end of a long list of companies he has been involved in, trying to bring this research to fruition. It certainly has been a long and arduous journey of a lifetime for Bruce to finally reach the stage of successful clinical trials with a thermostable vaccine.

Many external issues have impacted on us, including the 2008 economic downturn, revised thinking on global warming and our initial use of perfluorocarbons. Also, funding cutbacks in the US biodefence area at the time we were depending on their grants crippled our company. Many changes have taken place over the years on the formulation front and on the commercial side.



Stablepharma is now in the hands of a very professional commercial/business team who are determined to see a thermostable vaccine on the market.

Bruce was Chairman and Scientific Director until a year ago and is still a Director and very involved.

My active involvement in this research ended around 17 years ago when I took early retirement and moved to a completely new career in helping people get out of unmanageable debt!

It's a very exciting time for us to see Stablepharma actually bring a product to market in the very near future. It will not be a single product but a demonstration of a new powerful technology for fridge free vaccines and other labile pharmaceuticals.

Shev Roser

ST MARK'S CHURCH, NEWNHAM, CAMBRIDGE

Music and spirituality

Four leading scholar-musicians
explore faith in word and sound



6th September 2026
Jonathan Kimber (cello)
Tuning in: Music, Attentiveness
and Spirituality

27th September 2026
Tim Boniface (saxophone)
Swing and the Spirit - Jazz
Improvisation, Freedom and Mystery

1st November 2026
Malcolm Guite (guitar)
The Poetry of Music and
the Music of Poetry

6th December 2026
Jeremy Begbie (piano)
What made JS Bach the most
influential Christian composer
of all time?



Sunday afternoons at 3pm, St Mark's Church,
Barton Road, Cambridge CB3 9JZ. Tea and biscuits



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St Mark's Community Centre, Newnham : WEEKLYTIMETABLE**Monday**

11:30–12:30 pm	Clinical Mat Pilates	Alice or Oliver 01223 914140 enquiries@vineyroadstudios.co.uk www.pilatesfitcambridge.co.uk
12:30–1:30 pm	Italian Beginners	Vittoria Sugden 07881 304278 mv.diamanti@gmail.com
1:30–3:30 pm	Rubber Bridge Club	U3AC 01223 321587 office@u3a.org.uk
6:15–7:15 pm	Yoga	Bex Gillam 07799207845 bex@aunatch.co.uk
8:00–9:30 pm	Cantus Choir	

Tuesday

9:30–12:00	Painting and Drawing	Robert Good 01223 812126 robertgood@aol.com
1:15–4:00 pm	Duplicate Bridge Club	U3AC 01223 321587 office@u3a.org.uk
7:45–10:00 pm	Theatre Group	BAWDS

Wednesday

9:30–11:30	Patchwork & Quilting	Judy Challis 01223 323201 judychallis@gmail.com
10:00–12:00	Literature Course	Ulrike Horstmann-Guthrie uh204@cam.ac.uk
12:00–1:15 pm	Clinical Mat Pilates	Alice or Oliver 01223 914140 enquiries@vineyroadstudios.co.uk www.pilatesfitcambridge.co.uk

Wednesday continued

3:50 pm	Pre-Primary Ballet	Oonagh Phelan 07966 141213 oonagh@bourntodance.co.uk www.bourntodance.co.uk
4:30 pm	Ballet Grade 1	
5:20 pm	Ballet Grade 2 (girls)	

Thursday

9:30–11:30	Toddles	Revd Jim Robinson 01223 455463 revjerobinson@gmail.com
10:00–11:30	French Conversation	Alliance Française Ann Newton apn1000@cantab.net
12:00–1:00 pm	Viniyoga Yoga	Marianne Irwin 07850 970137 marianne.i@hotmail.co.uk www.vitality-yoga.co.uk
1:30–4:00 pm	Beginners' Bridge	U3AC 01223 321587 office@u3a.org.uk
2:00 pm	Music Together	Joanna Burton 07414 244499 joannaburton@me.com
7:45–10:00 pm	Theatre Group	BAWDS

Friday

10:30–12:30	Life Drawing Group	David Bennison david@bennisonart.com
1:45–4:00 pm	Fledgling Bridge	U3AC 01223 321587 office@u3a.org.uk
6:00–7:15 pm	Church Choir (1st & 3rd Fridays)	

Community Centre enquiries: communitycentre@stmarksnewnham.org



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Ordinations



The first Saturday of July saw the ordinations of Becca Herrick as Deacon and Kennedy Emokpaire as Priest in Ely Cathedral.

On the following day in Grantchester Church Kennedy celebrated Holy Communion for the first time and Becca and her family were able to meet parishioners for the first time.



The Cows are Back on Grantchester Meadows



Many of us who walk on the Meadows regularly have noticed the spectacular Belted Galloway cattle in the field closest to The Blue Ball pub. In this extract from Cambridge Past, Present and Future's website Warden Jess explains

how nine Belted Galloways are helping them care for the grassland and create better conditions for wildflowers and wildlife.

These cattle are helping us manage and improve the grassland. They eat the grass and other vegetation growing across the meadows. This reduces some of the more vigorous growth and gives wildflowers and specialist plants, which tend to prefer lower-nutrient conditions, a better chance to thrive.

Without grazing, plants such as nettles, bindweed, cleavers and brambles can begin to dominate. The Galloways are unfussy grazers and will happily eat this coarser vegetation, helping to prevent it from crowding out other species.

This approach is known as conservation grazing. Rather than relying entirely on machinery to cut, collect and bale the grass, we use cattle to manage it in a more natural and traditional way.

Historically, large herbivores would have moved through grasslands, eating different plants and creating variation in the landscape. Grazing recreates some of those effects. Because the cattle graze gradually and selectively, they help produce areas of vegetation at different heights and densities, creating a wider range of habitats.

Our hope is that this will improve the diversity of the grassland at Grantchester Meadows. More wildflowers can support more insects, which in turn provide food for birds and other wildlife. Each part of the

habitat supports another, so improving the grassland can have much wider benefits.

Belted Galloways are particularly well suited to conservation grazing. They are a hardy breed, with thick coats that allow them to remain outdoors throughout the year, including during colder weather. They also eat a wide variety of plants, including rougher grasses, scrub and the more vigorous species that we need help keeping under control.

The cattle belong to our Countryside Manager, Ed Wombwell, through his conservation grazing business, The Wandering Herd. His cattle graze at several sites around Cambridge, including Wandlebury Country Park, Coton Countryside Reserve and Trumpington Meadows.

Visitors may notice an electric fence close to the river. This is there to stop the cattle from entering the water, not to restrict access for people.

Allowing cattle into the river could damage and erode the bank. It could also affect water quality through disturbed sediment and manure. Keeping them away from the water means the grazing can benefit the grassland without causing harm to the river environment.

If you follow the upper path across the meadows, you should reach their field, although they may be sheltering in the shade or gathering near the water trough at the top. The usual pedestrian access across the meadows remains open. The path leading directly from the cattle's field down to the river is currently closed, but the riverside path can still be reached through the neighbouring fields.

Cattle have long been associated with Cambridge's meadows, so it is good to have them back at Grantchester. They are lovely animals, each with their own character, but they are also here to do an important job.

By managing the vegetation and creating more space for different plants to grow, they are helping us improve the habitat for wildflowers, insects, birds and other wildlife. We hope their grazing will help Grantchester Meadows continue to thrive and remain a special place for both nature and people.

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DESERT ISLAND PICKS

The next in our series of conversations
with members of the St Mark's community
will be on

Friday 9th October at 7.45pm

Rosey Gardiner and James Gorrick
will be choosing a favourite book, piece of
music and reading

Vivienne Lake

The Revd Vivienne Lake, who regularly led the Tuesday morning Communion service at St Mark's, died on Sunday 24th May. She was one of the first female priests. Her funeral was held in Suffolk but a memorial service was held for her at St Botolph's in July.

Charities of the Month

We have now received the totals raised for the charities of the month for the first few months of 2026.

January	ItTakes a City	£413.24
February	Lyn's House	£221.18
March	Arthur Rank	£1,150.74
April	Gombe	£213.53
May	Christian Aid	£333.51

The Cantores Singers

Those of us who enjoyed listening to the Cantores Singers in 'Not the Bleak Midwinter' back in January will be delighted to hear they will be returning next year for another afternoon of songs, readings and lovely music to brighten us all up. Watch this space for details, and keep Sunday 10th January at 3.00 pm free in your diaries.

If you don't want to wait that long however, you can catch Cantores in Barton where they are putting on a fundraising concert at St Peter's Church on Friday 18th September. Admission is free and there will be interval refreshments. It all starts at 7.30pm.



Prayers for September

A prayer for peace

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world:

in your mercy, provide for all those who suffer from hunger and starvation,

that they may be given both physical bread to nourish their bodies and heavenly bread to sustain their souls.

By the power of your Spirit, bring a speedy end to cruel wars, the release of captives,

care for the sick and wounded,

comfort for those who have lost loved ones,

and the opening of a pathway for a just and lasting peace,

here in our world where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ministered during his earthly life;

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. Amen.

Let us give thanks to God, the God of all peoples of the earth.

For the colour and forms of your creation and our place within it, we bring our thanks, good Lord:

For our daily food, and for those whose work and skill provide it for us

For the gifts and graces inspired in human minds and hearts;

For insight and imagination, for the skills of research

which bring healing and fulfilment to the lives of many;

For the light and shades of the changing seasons, and their variety and dependability;

For new hope and strength in our communities,

especially in your Church and among all you call to serve you,

For the life we have been given, and for all those whom you have given us to share it,

we bring our thanks, good Lord.

Your mercy endures for ever. Amen

Chosen by Lizzy Jarvis

Children

Toddles (our stay and play group) runs on Thursday mornings from 9.30am-11.30 am during school termtime.

We have lots of toys, and (thanks to volunteers) can offer warm drinks to the adults. We welcome all parents, grandparents, and carers, with children aged 0-5.

Junior Church usually meets every Sunday of school term-time during the 9.30 am service. All children are welcome to join us, and they can bring their adult(s) with them if they like!

Junior Choir meets every Friday during school term, 5.15 pm-6.00 pm (with snacks from 5pm). All children aged 7-13 are welcome. There is no audition and no need to have prior singing experience.

Regular Groups

Monday Bible Study

10:30am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 07738 698884

Monday Informal Men's Group

10:30am, weekly – contact: Mike Thompson, 07957 735860

Tuesday Home Group

7:30 pm, fortnightly – contact: Mike Thompson, 07957 735860 *Paused for the summer. Next meeting in September.*

Thursday Home Group

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, awcam72@gmail.com

Choir

The choir sings every Sunday morning during term time and one Sunday evensong per month. Contact Marcus Cox at singing@stmarksnewnham.org

Rehearsals every Friday evening during school term time (*Junior Choir: 5:15 pm – 6:00 pm, Adult Choir: 6:00 pm – 6:45 pm*).

From the Church Registers

Baptism

28th June

June Rowan Albutt

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