St Mary & St Barnabas Thatcham

St Mary & St Barnabas are the Anglican Parish Churches serving the residents of Thatcham and any who visit or pass through.

St Mary's is a traditional grade 2* listed Anglican Church in the centre of Thatcham, and St Barnabas is an informal church community which meets in the hall of Thatcham Park CofE Primary School.

You are very welcome at both churches, whether you are a regular churchgoer, an occasional visitor, or going to church for the very first time.

St Mary's church is open most days during daylight hours and is a beautiful, peaceful sanctuary in the heart of our busy town. Do feel very welcome to come in, light a candle, enjoy the sense of peace and space and to leave a prayer request in the book.

St Mary & St Barnabas - Church at the heart of community.

www.stmarysthatcham.org.uk. www.stbarnabasthatcham@weebly.com

Useful Contacts

Clergy Team

Team Rector	Revd Mark Bennet	markbennet@binternet.com
Team Vicar	Revd Nicola Hulks	nicola.hulks@hotmail.co.uk
Assistant Priest	Revd Brenda Harland	brenda.harland@ntlworld.com
Assistant Curate	Revd Angela Brennan	revangelabrennan@gmail.com

Parish Office *For general enquiries and bookings*

office.stmarysthatcham@gmail.com

Safeguarding *Parish Safeguarding Officer — Ann Dibble*

safeguarding.stmarysthatcham@gmail.com

Churchwardens

Sue Ball	sue@marrison.org
Sarah Goode	sarah.goode@hotmail.co.uk
Mike Watson	mgmwatson@yahoo.com

Service Information

Sundays

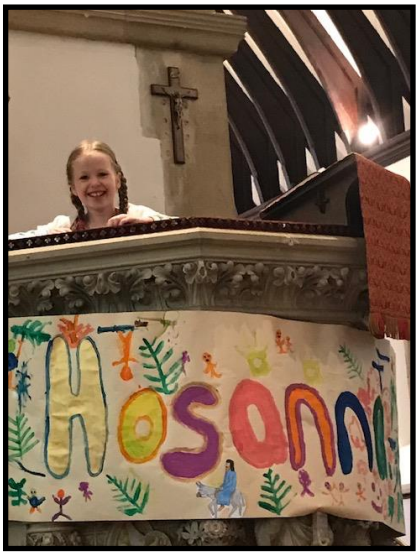
8am Holy Communion

St Mary's Church
A quiet, reflective said service with a short homily.

10am Parish Communion
St Mary's Church
A traditional service with bells, hymns and robed choir. Children's group during the service (not second Sunday) and a toddler area for families to use. Coffee after the service.

10am Family Service at St Barnabas Church
In the school hall at Thatcham Park School, Park Ave, Thatcham.
A service for all ages and stages, with music by the St B's band, a talk and activities suitable for all generations. Holy Communion alternate weeks, coffee is every week!

Children and Families



Sunday Club runs doing the Sunday service each week at St Mary's (except the 2nd Sunday) in the meeting space at the back of church — there are games, crafts and colouring for primary school aged children.

St Barnabas' Church services are intergenerational, they range in style, with something for everyone. There is a toddler play area plus crafts and activities, for older children, relevant to the theme or Bible reading for the day.

We are committed to safeguarding; all our volunteers are trained and have had the appropriate DBS checks. Our safeguarding policy is available on St Mary's church website.

Weekday and Occasional Services

Weekly Midweek Communion 9.45am Mary's Church
A said service with a short reflection, every Wednesday morning.

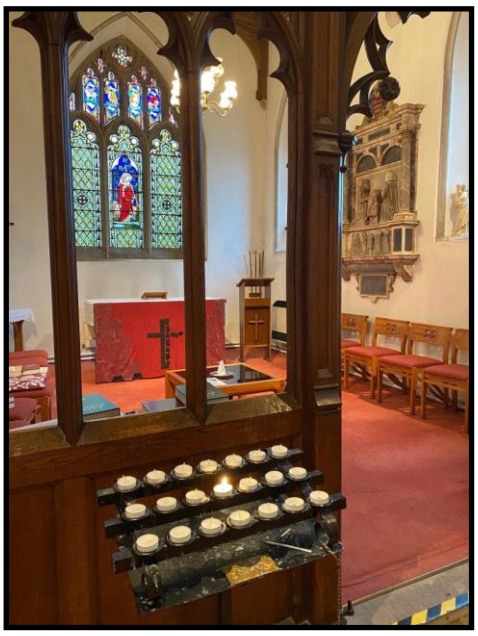
Monthly Muddy Church 2.30pm St Mary's Churchyard
Fun for all ages on the second Sunday of the month.
Explore the wonder of the nature in the cathedral of the great outdoors. With Bible stories, crafts, nature activities and games.

Monthly Healing Service 5pm St Mary's Church
A quiet service in the Chapel with a focus on healing. Usually the third Sunday in the month, but please check the notice sheet to confirm.

Monthly Choral Evensong 6.30pm St Mary's Church
Held on the first Sunday of each month; a special service of music and prayer using the traditional language of the Book of Common Prayer.

Foodbank
There is a donation point for the West Berks Foodbank at the back of St Mary's, and other donations for charities are received at different points in the year.

Prayer Ministry



Private Prayer
St Mary's is open during daylight hours for anyone to come in and sit quietly, pray, light a candle or leave a prayer request in the prayer book.

Morning prayer
Daily office is said 9.30am Monday-Thursday in the Chapel at St Mary's, please note that on Wednesday it begins earlier, at 9am.

Prayer Group
A group meets alternative Tuesdays at 6.30pm in St Mary's Chapel to pray. You would be most welcome.

Prayer Ministry
The Prayer Team is available every Sunday morning after the 10am service in the Chapel at St Mary's and open to anyone who would like prayer for themselves or for someone else.

Prayer 4 Thatcham
A monthly service of prayer held jointly by the churches in Thatcham. Styles of prayer varies from service to service but anyone is welcome to come along and pray for our town. For details of the dates and locations of *Prayer For Thatcham*, please check the weekly notice sheet.

Home Communion & Pastoral Visiting
Clergy and licensed communion administrants are available to visit in times of particular need. If you, or someone you know, is housebound and would like to receive communion, prayer or support, please get in touch with the church office.

Life Events

Baptisms (Christenings)
We would love to hear from you if you are interested in having your children baptised, or being baptised yourself. Contact the parish office or the clergy for more information.

Weddings
We are always delighted to hold weddings at St Mary's. It is a beautiful space and the clergy will be happy to talk with you about including traditional and personal elements in your service. Anyone who lives in the parish or who has a qualifying connection (grew up here or have family here) can marry at St Mary's. Contact the parish office or the clergy to discuss.

Renewal of Vows and Marriage Blessing
If you would like a service (large or small) to renew your marriage vows and bless your wedding rings please speak to the clergy or email the parish office.

Funerals
Your parish church is here to support you through times of sadness and bereavement. The clergy can take funerals in St Mary's Church, or at a crematorium, or graveside at the cemetery. Please contact the parish office or a member of the clergy if you need to plan a funeral, burial or interment of ashes.

Baby Loss Memorial Tree

We have a tree in the churchyard dedicated to babies lost in pregnancy and infancy. Anyone is welcome at any time to add a ribbon to remember a baby, but during Baby Loss Awareness Week we provide ribbons and a prayer book. You will find the tree on the right hand side of the path leading to Church Lane.

Groups And Activities

ABC Toddler Group

Every Wednesday morning at 10.30 in St Mary's. Toys galore, crafts, colouring, snacks and a cup of tea for parents and carers. ABC concludes with a Bible story and a song featuring Jason the ABC sheep. No need to book, just turn up. There is no charge, but we are grateful for donations for refreshments.

St B's Baby Cafe

Meets Tuesdays in term time at the Bluecoat School on the A4. A friendly group with tea, coffee and cake for mums, dads and carers with their little ones. Mats, baby toys and changing stations provided! 10.30-12noon, no need to book, and no charge.

The Nest

The Nest is a parent-toddler group for adoptive and foster families or those in kinship care arrangements. Its meets on the last Friday of each month, there is no charge, please email revangelabrennan@gmail.com for details of the venue and location (not advertised in order to protect any children at risk)

Tower Bellringing
We have a long tradition of ringing at St Mary's and a merry band of committed ringers. Our bellringers are always happy to hear from potential newbies! Learners are very welcome — adults and children above the age of 12 can learn to ring bells. Bellringing practice is Tuesday evenings at 7.45pm. Please contact the Tower Captain, via the parish office.

Handbells
If you are interested in joining West Berkshire's finest handbell choir, please contact the Barfield Ringers who meet at St Mary's Meeting room on Monday evenings — www.barfield.org..uk

Church Choir
St Mary's choir sings at Sunday services and at Evensong as well as holding concerts and events throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the choir, please contact the church office. Choir practice is Friday evenings at St Mary's.

CAMEO — Come And Meet Each Other
A group for anyone wanting company of an afternoon. Tea, coffee, biscuits chat available at St Mary's every Monday afternoon 2-4pm.

Vintage Adventure
A wonderful group for the young at heart; crafts, bible readings and a hymn in a friendly informal service, all with tea and biscuits. Vintage Adventure is run between St Barnabas and Thatcham Methodist Church and is dementia friendly — please contact Revd Brenda for information.

Knitting & Nattering
One Thursday morning per month, a friendly knitting/sewing/crochet group with tea and coffee. 10.30-12noon at St Mary's church meeting room, please check the weekly notices for dates. …Its not obligatory to knit teddy bears….

Photo from our recent Teddyfest event, summer 2024

Your parish church is here for you!

We would love to see you at St Mary's or St Barnabas. Please do feel very welcome to get in touch or come along.