

# Coulsdon Cross

News & Views from St. Andrew's Church



**March 2026**

## **St Andrew's Vision Statement**

*A joyful, daring, diverse and generous Christian community, setting the world alight with the love of God.*

*Come and join us! All are welcome*

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## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

### **March**

**Lent Course** 'Gravity Defied' based on the movie 'Wicked', **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>** and for the next four Wednesdays – 7.30 pm on Zoom.

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> – World Day of Prayer**, 10.30 am at Old Coulsdon Congregational Church. All welcome

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> – All Age Mothering Sunday Eucharist 9.45 am**

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> – Lent Brunch** after the service in aid of the Bishop's Lent Call.

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup>** 7 pm Stations of the Cross – a short service of prayers and readings following the way of the Cross.

### **April**

#### **Holy Week**

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>** 10 am Holy Communion (Lady Chapel)

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>** - Maundy Thursday 7.30 pm Liturgy of Maundy Thursday followed by Compline (night prayer) at 9pm.

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>** - Good Friday: 11 am Churches Together Walk of Witness (meeting at St Aidan's RC church and walking to Brighton Road Methodist). 2-3 pm at St Andrew's: The Cross of Christ, a service of music and readings for Passiontide with the opportunity to pray at the foot of the cross.

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>** Easter Day 9.45 Festal Eucharist followed by Easter Egg Hunt for children in church.

#### **REGULAR EVENTS**

**Every Sunday 9.45 Parish Communion** – (Junior Church on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month 'Renew' all Age on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday)

**Every Monday** 10 -12 noon Time 2B: Coffee, chat and craft in the church hall.

**Every Tuesday** Tots and Toys playgroup in the church hall. 11-12.30

**Every second Tuesday** Pop in Tea at 2 pm in church hall preceded by service in church at 1.30 pm.

**Every third Tuesday** 3.30 – 5.30 pm Messy Church – craft activities, Bible story and hot meal for children and their parents / carers.

**Every fourth Tuesday 7.30 pm** – Mothers' Union, Committee Room.

**Every first and third Wednesday** 10 am Holy Communion (Lady Chapel)



Dear Friends,  
Would a 'Tête-à-Tête',  
with 'Rip Van Winkle'  
leave you feeling 'Paper  
White'? That's a  
question only the  
gardeners among us can  
answer - for as they will  
know, each of these is a  
type of daffodil. This  
month begins with St

David's day, although he has been bumped out of the Church of England's lectionary this year! Apparently this is because the 1st of March falls on a Sunday, and Sundays take precedence over saints.

I am sure that many churches, particularly in Wales, will celebrate David regardless. Whether he particularly liked daffodils we cannot say – it's likely these flowers became a national symbol because the Welsh word for a leek is similar to that for a daffodil. Daffs also smell much better than leeks when worn on clothing!

Wild daffs are known as 'Lent lilies'. Gardener Michael Fuller points out the connection between Lent as a period of frugality and humility and the simplicity of this favourite spring flower. These hopeful yellow heralds can help us to encounter the truth of William Wordsworth's observation: *"With an eye made quiet by the power of harmony and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things."*

Seeing into the life of things is a wonderful intention for us as we begin this Lenten season. But as Wordsworth notes, we must be quiet if we are to truly receive this remarkable gift. How are you with silence? Many of us find it strange and even uncomfortable. Gordon Hempton, a campaigner for the preservation of quiet places notes; "Ever since the Industrial Revolution, noise has been synonymous with productivity and progress. In all the clamour, we have forgotten the value of quiet." However, silence is proven to have significant health benefits – including

creating new brain cells! Silence can also lower levels of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, as well as promoting good sleep.

The Bible knows very well the value of silence. Psalm 46:10 encourages us to 'Be still and know that I am God.' When the prophet Elijah met God at Mount Horeb he found him not in the wind, earthquake or fire but 'a sound of sheer silence' (1 Kings 19:12).

A priest observed a woman sitting in the empty church with her head in her hands. An hour passed, then two, then three. Judging her to be a soul in distress, and eager to be of assistance, the priest approached her and asked if there was anything he could do to help. "No thank you, Father" she replied. "I've been getting all the help I need."

There is a wonderful poem by Edwina Gateley, 'Let Your God Love You' that illustrates the transformative power of silence in prayer. You may like to use it as a way of entering into this sacred space over Lent.

*Be silent, be still.  
Alone, empty  
Before your God.  
Say nothing.  
Ask nothing.  
Be silent, be still.  
Let your God look upon you.  
That is all.  
God knows.  
And understands.  
God loves you with an enormous love,  
Wanting only to look upon you with love  
Quiet. Still. Be.  
Let your God love you.*

Wishing you the blessings of God's peace this month,  
Esther and Jessie the Vicarage Dog x

## **LENT GROUP AT ST ANDREW'S**

We hope you will be able to join us for our Lent Group which meets online from **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> of March**. Sessions begin at 7.30 and end at 9 pm and run up until (and including) the Wednesday in Holy Week (1<sup>st</sup> April). The course written by Rachel Mann, Archdeacon of Salford and Bolton, 'Gravity Defied' is based on the movie 'Wicked'. Sessions will look at:

- How do we judge goodness?
- What is a life well lived?
- The attractions of popularity
- The joy and cost of living life authentically.

The course will be led by Esther, Gerry and Lauren and everyone is very welcome. Each session will include film clips, discussion questions and scripture passages for us to reflect upon. The group is a great way for us to grow in faith, fellowship and share the Lenten journey with one another.

Here are the details to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89312455608?pwd=S3dja1FjWk1HU001WD BKbEc4QzBZdz09>

Meeting ID: 893 1245 5608

Passcode: 138559

We look forward to seeing you!

***“Lent is the time to plant the seeds of faith for what is yet to come.”***



## DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES

This year Deanery Synod representatives are elected for the new triennium (Deanery Synods are elected every three years).

Deaneries are small geographical divisions of the Diocese, within which parishes are grouped under the care of an Area Dean. Each deanery is governed by a Deanery Synod.



Any lay person over 16 who is on the Electoral Roll of a Parish church can stand for election to the Deanery Synod. Could this be a role you could take on? St Andrew's have three elected representatives.

Why stand for election to Deanery Synod? Being on the synod provides an opportunity to represent the parish, share its voice more widely, and play a part in shaping the life and mission of the Church across the deanery and the Diocese.

As a lay representative, your primary role is to:

- speak from the perspective of your parish
- listen carefully to what is happening across the deanery
- help your PCC stay connected to diocesan conversations

People stand for a variety of reasons: some want to contribute their experience, some are curious about how the wider church works, and others feel called to support collaboration beyond their own parish. You do not need to be an expert — just willing to listen, reflect and engage. Do chat to Esther or any of the current synod reps (Audra, Jenny and Jo) if you'd like more information.

It is very important that everyone's views are shared within the deanery – so please do consider taking this role on.

## **EXTRA PROTECTION AGAINST CHICKENPOX**

*Our friend Lizzie Mills works in the Communications team at King's College Hospital.*

Families with young children will now be offered protection against chickenpox as part of their routine childhood vaccinations.

The NHS's vaccination programme is being expanded to include chickenpox (also known as varicella) for the first time, to help shield young children from getting seriously ill. From now on, GP practices will start to offer children a combined MMRV vaccine at 12 months and 18 months of age, to add chickenpox to the protections against measles, mumps and rubella.



The number of doses children are given depends on when they were born. Some older children will have already had one or two doses of the MMR vaccine, which also protects against measles, mumps and rubella, but not chickenpox. The vaccination programme will offer one or two doses of the vaccine, depending on the child's date of birth.

For many of us, chickenpox is considered to be a common and mild illness, with itching and spots a rite of passage for young children. But sadly for some babies, young children and even adults, chickenpox can be very serious, leading to hospital admission and tragically, while rare, it can be fatal.

Local GP surgeries will be contacting families to let them know when they are due their vaccinations, and can book their child for their appointment, usually by letter, text message, phone call or email.

**ECO CHURCH:**  
**TAKE THE**  
**CARBON FAST**  
**FOR LENT**

*Our eco church  
co-ordinator Ann  
Witham writes...*



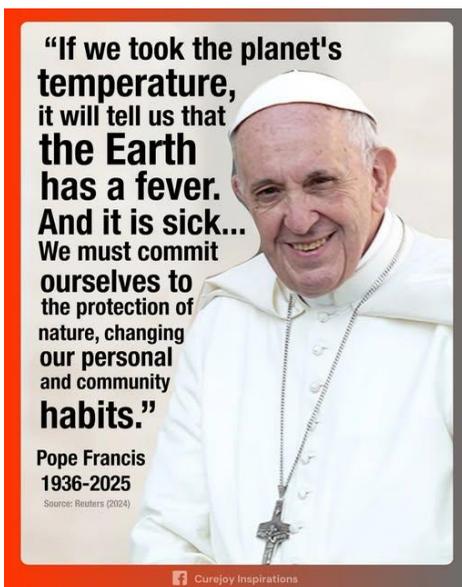
It has been impossible not to notice how much rain we have been experiencing at the start of this year. It has been depressing enough in our own area but in other parts of the country the change in weather has caused considerable economic distress and damage to properties. Floods have resulted in property owners being refused insurance in future years and cliff collapse caused by sea erosion has resulted in properties falling into the sea or left on cliff edges. In 2025 the UK experienced an unprecedented series of wild fires driven by prolonged dry conditions and record breaking heat. Estimates published in mid 2025 suggested wildfires had already cost the UK upwards of £350 million and the scale and frequency of the fires have prompted warnings that the UK remains dangerously under prepared for wildfire threats exacerbated by climate change.

The impacts of climate change throughout the world are impossible to ignore from deadly heatwaves and wildfires to floods, cyclones and droughts that overwhelm communities and cause great financial loss. Scientific data shows that climate change is increasingly causing widespread destruction and loss of life with the greatest impact falling on communities that have done least to cause the crisis.

Christian Aid's report "Counting the Cost 2025 – A Year of Climate Breakdown" concentrates on the economic damage caused by climate disasters but also considers the tragedies suffered by people. The most expensive event was the fire in Los Angeles County which killed 31 people and destroyed 6,837 structures with assessments recording total

economic losses exceeding 60 billion US dollars. Someone may have lit a fire earlier but it was the extreme dryness, heat and high winds that enabled the fire to be so devastating. India and Pakistan experienced an exceptionally heavy monsoon season triggering deadly floods and landslides. In India thousands of towns were submerged, farmlands were inundated and entire communities were displaced. At least 1,860 people were reported dead. Hurricane Melissa was the most powerful storm ever to hit Jamaica with 45 deaths and hundreds of people died because of typhoons hitting the Philippines displacing more than 1.4 million people.

In these examples it has been possible to estimate with some certainty the economic costs based on insurance claims or insurance based estimates but for many countries particularly in the global south this is more difficult. Often these changes in weather receive little news coverage but are equally devastating for the people experiencing them. During 2025 both Bolivia and Peru declared national states of emergency because of heavy rainfall resulting in dozens of fatalities and the displacement of thousands of people.



Reading about these and other disasters can make us anxious and worried that there is nothing we can do, but by focusing on actionable steps such as adopting a plant based diet, reducing energy consumption, using public transport or buying second hand clothes we can foster resilience and hope. Climate Stewards has created a Carbon Fast for Lent. Over 7 weeks we are challenged to rethink our relationship with creation and live more lightly with all God has entrusted to us. Each

week will address a different area of life. Info@climatestewards.org will send you all the materials. See the posters in the church hall. Together, we can make a difference.

### **NEWS FROM THE CONTACT GROUP**

*Contact Group co-ordinator Monica Jefford writes...*

All living things are born into a dynamic universe where evolution and change are inherent components. Although the majority of humankind show an interest in their surroundings, many just exist with no real awareness of its wonders. Some may choose to bypass the creation concept and take evolution to extremes. Others, seek to rationalise what they experience by analysing the scientific minutiae. When all is said and done, it cannot be denied that evolution and change happen, facts that are all too evident in our day to day lives. Not only are there the natural driving forces, the evidence is also accentuated by human interference and misuse.

Water is essential for life, or not if you're the hyacinth bulbs I had put in cool dark place to germinate and forgot. They did their own thing but were fortunately found in time. Liquid resuscitation and a bit of photosynthesis is allowing me to enjoy the main event!



Our technology shows us we are now having too much water and not always where it is wanted, causing challenges with ongoing implications. It seems our wetter winters are here to stay. This, combined with the seasonal drop in temperature is causing the treacherous underfoot conditions seen earlier this year.

Although some winter ailments played a part, adverse weather effects saw the Pop In guests eating a Christmas dinner in February. Thanks to Stella Corney and her team it was worth waiting for and enjoyed by all.

Party games of pass the parcel with forfeits and the chopstick challenge were accompanied by our usual rendition of the Twelve Days of Christmas, complete with actions.

There were surprised memories prompted by comparison of quiz answers reflecting life in the 1970s with 21st century ones. This also reinforced the extent of change, for many of our guests a life spanning several decades and for at least three, almost ten. Yes, we appreciate values are different now but did we really only pay 9p for a loaf of bread or 30p for a Ready Meal ?



We also gave St Valentine a thought but were not impressed to learn (thanks to Google) that on average we each part with £52 on the day making a whopping £1.3/5bn in the UK overall.

Later in the year Pop In guests will reconsider environmental change - 5th June being World Environment Day - reflecting on ways to contribute positively. As well as our usual sessions, our friend Rev Hilary Fife will be back with another supply of amusing anecdotes in July and later in the year Bob Atkinson hopes to take us on another London walk.

Our March Pop In will be a sedentary trip to observe the flora and fauna of another country under the expert guidance of our dear friend Bob Charman. We look forward to seeing you there. Everyone is very welcome.

*Monica and the Contact Group volunteers x*

## GOLDILOCKS AND FRIENDS PANTO SUCCESS!



Grateful thanks go to our super talented Ann Heavens who wrote, directed, choreographed and starred in this year's parish panto 'Goldilocks and friends'. It was a fantastic production showcasing the talents of so many of our church family, both on the stage and behind the scenes. A special thank you must go to Bob Witham who worked so hard sorting out the set- and taking it all down!

Seeing some new faces on stage was fantastic – well done to all our younger friends who did such a great job singing and dancing as well as taking so many bear parts! You were wonderful 😊 As well as having a lot of laughs we raised much needed funds for our West Window project. At the time of writing we wait to hear how much but every little helps! Thanks everyone for your support. Here's looking forward to next year's performance.



## **A RECIPE FOR LOVE**

(Seen in a local hairdressers)

### Ingredients

1 cup of Romance  
1 lb of kind words  
A pinch of humour  
2 cups kindness  
1 spoonful of smiles  
3 cups of tenderness  
3 tablespoons of trust  
1 cup of respect  
A good dash of patience  
3 cups of forgiveness.

### Method

Stir daily and serve fresh with warmth and compassion.

## **JESSIE'S JOKES!**

Why is Lent the best time of year to run a marathon? Because that is when you fast. 😊

A particular family in the UK has been abstaining from using one letter of the alphabet for Lent each year, since 2001.

It started as a joke, giving up "A" in 2002 and "B" in 2003, but developed into a strong family tradition.

This year, one of the members has a tough choice to make.

Unlike the rest of the Astley's, Rick made a solemn vow... 😊

Have you heard of 'Frisbeetarianism'?

It's the belief that, when you die, your soul goes up on the roof and gets stuck there. 😊

George W. Bush, in an airport lobby, noticed a man in a long flowing white robe with a long flowing white beard and flowing white hair. The man had a staff in one hand and some stone tablets under the other

arm. George W. approached the man and inquired, "Aren't you Moses?" The man ignored George W. and stared at the ceiling. George W. positioned himself more directly in the man's view and asked again, "Aren't you Moses?"

The man continued to peruse the ceiling. George W. tugged at the man's sleeve and asked once again, "Aren't you Moses?" The man finally responded in an irritated voice, "Yes I am."

George W. asked him why he was so unfriendly and Moses replied, "The last time I spoke to a Bush I had to spend forty years in the desert." 😊

Did you hear about the Buddhist monk who refused pain relief at the dentist? He wanted to transcendental medication! 😊

Dear Lord:

So far today, I am doing all right. I have not gossiped, lied or said anything bad about anyone. I have not been too grumpy, nasty, selfish, self-indulgent or greedy. I haven't been impatient, complained or cursed. I haven't even charged anything on my credit card, and I haven't eaten any chocolate or drunk any gin.

However, in a few minutes I'm going to get out of bed, and I will need a lot more help after that. Amen 😊

How many "high-church" Anglicans does it take to change a lightbulb?  
58:

1 Crucifer

Two acolytes

1 Thurifer

1 Server to carry new bulb on pillow

1 Subdeacon

1 Deacon

1 Celebrant

50 member choir of men and boys to sing the Service for the Changing of a Lightbulb (1928 BCP, Rite IV) 😊

## Some Old Fashioned Wisdom

**Common sense  
is not so  
COMMON.**

- Voltaire



- If you don't take the time to do it right, you'll find the time to do it twice.
- Every path has a few puddles.
- When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- Borrowing trouble from the future doesn't deplete the supply.
- Don't judge folks by their relatives.
- Silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.
- The biggest troublemaker you'll ever have to deal with watches you from the mirror every morning.
- Always drink upstream from the herd.
- Good judgment comes from experience, and most of that comes from bad judgment.
- If you get to thinking you're a person of some influence, try ordering somebody else's dog around.
- Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.



## CONTACTS AT ST ANDREWS

Woodmansterne Road CR5 2DD [www.standrewscoulsdon.co.uk](http://www.standrewscoulsdon.co.uk)

**Vicar:** Rev'd Canon Esther Foss – 020 3620 1885  
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**Reader:** Gerry Daley – 07717 233858  
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**Churchwardens:** Sheila Linney 07815 091206  
Toni Best 07767 308375

**CPLM & Messy Church Co-ordinator** Jenny Atkinson

**Treasurer:** [finance@standrewscoulsdon.co.uk](mailto:finance@standrewscoulsdon.co.uk)

**Baptisms/Weddings:** [standrewsoffice@yahoo.com](mailto:standrewsoffice@yahoo.com)

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Sara Jane Davidson [sara-jane.17@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sara-jane.17@hotmail.co.uk)

**Junior Church:** Beth Ten Cate

**Parish Canine Rep:** Canine Jessie Foss (Days off Monday – Sunday.  
Don't contact unless you have treats.)

### PARISH MAGAZINE:

**Editor:** Rev'd Canon Esther Foss (details as above)

**Parish Administrator: Danielle Stobart, Parish Office 020 86762966  
(open Monday and Wednesday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.)**

[standrewsoffice@yahoo.com](mailto:standrewsoffice@yahoo.com)

**USUAL SERVICES** Sunday 9.45 am Parish Eucharist (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Junior Church, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Renew All Age Eucharist) Wednesday (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) 1<sup>st</sup> 10.00 am Book of Common Prayer, 3<sup>rd</sup> Holy Communion with prayers for healing.