

## Calendar for APRIL 2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Service</u>
<u>Sunday 4th April</u>	6am	Sonrise Service at Castle Rock
<i>Easter Sunday</i>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Family Communion
	11.45am	PipnJay
	6.30pm	NO EVENING SERVICE
<u>Sunday 12th April</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	6.30pm	Prayer Service on Zoom
<u>Sunday 19th April</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Family Communion
	6pm	Evensong at St Bartholomew's Church
<u>Sunday 26th April</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	6.30pm	NO EVENING SERVICE
<u>Saturday Services</u>	12 noon	11th, 18th, and 25th April
<u>Every Wednesday</u>	11.30am	Holy Communion Service followed by communal lunch at 12.30pm and Voices Together at 1.30pm
		Please see website for details of our future services <a href="http://www.stphilipandstjames.co.uk">www.stphilipandstjames.co.uk</a>

[revrobinpye@gmail.com](mailto:revrobinpye@gmail.com)  
07794 122602

### St Philip & St James Parish Church, Alderley Edge APRIL 2026 NEWS SHEET



*Dear Friends,*

It has been our custom to fly the Union Jack at St Philip & St James church on the occasion of the King's birthday and on Remembrance Sunday. Patriotism and nationalism are good things in so far as they reaffirm our unity as a community and a nation. When we fly our national flag, we do so to foster a spirit of unity, solidarity and togetherness.

The Italian academic and intellectual, Claudio Magris, writing about the German philosopher Martin Heidegger, said that central to Heidegger's thinking was the idea that we have responsibility towards our neighbour. This sounds like a good thing, doesn't it? Jesus told us to love our neighbour, didn't he? Heidegger argued that because we are called to love our neighbour, we are also called to love our country.

On this basis he became a German nationalist and, after Hitler came to power, he joined the Nazi party. Magris argues that it was a failure of imagination which led Heidegger to become a Nazi. Heidegger failed to see that just as he was called to love his neighbours, so his neighbours were also called to love their neighbours and so on and so on, forming a web of mutual responsibility that included the whole of humanity. The injunction to 'love our neighbour' is not confined by national boundaries, passport ownership or ethnic or religious group.

I wonder if all nationalism is a failure of imagination? The bonds we feel towards our fellow countrymen and women are valid. But if we fail to imagine these bonds as being a part of the bonds we have with all fellow human beings, then we are in danger of walking down a dangerous path.

Recently, more Union Jacks have appeared along the A34. Somebody told me that they are the work of two men with a van and a rather rickety looking ladder. Our national flag is supposed to be a symbol of our unity as a nation. But these figures are a symbol of division. We know this because of the online activities of the flag flyers who are not shy about sharing their anti-refugee and anti-immigrant sentiments. For them, expressions of 'national pride' are directed against some of their own neighbours, people who are not like them.

It only took two men to erect all the flags. But now a whole community is failing to take them down. Even though we know that members of our community who are immigrants or are descendants of immigrants perceive these flags as a threat to them and their families. And even though we know from what is happening in other parts of the world and from our own history where this might be leading us. Maybe it is time for us to do something. Before it is too late.

*Yours, Robin*

### **Services on Saturdays**

Same sex marriage has been legal in England since 2014. However, the legislation enacted at that time specifically excluded the Church of England so that it is not legal for us in church to hold a same sex marriage service. Since then, there has been a very lengthy discussion within the Church of England about whether we can start holding same sex marriage services or maybe offer a service of blessing for same sex couples who have just got married in a registry office.

Our church has been waiting for the outcome of these deliberations. We conduct 7-8 weddings every year and we love to have marriage services in our church and do everything we can to support people who love each other to make a lifelong commitment to each other. At the same time, we are an inclusive church. We would also like to encouragement and support same sex couples who want to make a loving commitment to each other.

The Church of England's deliberations have now come to an end and it is an end which is a disappointment for most members of our church. Instead of allowing each church within the Church of England to do what they think is right (as the Church of England does when it comes to marrying couples which include a divorcee, for example), the Church of England has arrived at a position whereby we can offer to say prayers of blessing for recently married same sex couples, but only during one of our normal services. We can't offer these prayers in a special service that might make it look like an actual marriage service.

So, we have therefore decided to start a new regular service. The vicar will lead a short service at 12 noon every Saturday from the first Saturday after Easter until mid-October. This service will be cancelled if there is a wedding service that Saturday (most weddings are on a Saturday). We may occasionally have to change the time of the service, in which case we will give plenty of notice. If you would like to have a same sex marriage blessed at any of our regular services, including the new service we are starting on Saturdays, please get in touch with the vicar.

## **EASTER SERVICES**

### **Maundy Thursday—2nd April**

Holy Communion with foot washing and stripping the altar at 7.30pm.

### **Good Friday—3rd April**

The Walk of Witness starts at the Methodist Church at 10.30am. We walk through the village to finish our service at St Philip & St James. Join us at the Methodist Church or just show support as we walk down the High Street.

Stations of the Cross is at 2pm.

### **Holy Saturday—4th April**

Easter Vigil service at 6.30pm.

### **Easter Day—5th April**

Sonrise service at Castle Rock at 6.30am St Philip & St James has services at 8am and 10am on Easter Day.

### **Young People Volunteering**

We have recently established a small group of teenage volunteers who are helping us to look after our church grounds. We are cutting back bushes and trees, weeding flower beds, sowing wildflowers, raking up leaves and having bonfires. We meet once week on Wednesdays at 4.20pm. These sessions can count towards a Duke of Edinburgh award. It's good to be outside, have some gentle exercise, learn new skills and have a bit of chat about how the day has gone. If anybody would like to join the group, please get in touch.

### **Mothers' Union**

Our Lent Project to support vulnerable mums and their babies has been generously supported and we extend a big "thank you" to everyone who has made a donation. We understand 74 Moses Baskets were provided in February and 888 in the last 12 months. At our April meeting on Tuesday 21st April at 2pm in the West End of Church we are welcoming Rev'd Kate Pwaisio as our Speaker. If any of our readers remember Kate and would like to come along to say Hello you would be most welcome.

### **ST PHILIP & ST JAMES MINISTRATIONS MARCH**

*FUNERALS: 13th Cathy Sands*

*BAPTISMS: 15th Rose Elisabeth Parr*