

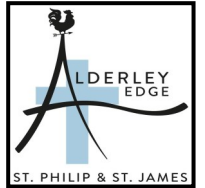
Calendar for MARCH 2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Service</u>
<u>Sunday 1st March</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	11.45am	PipnJay
	6.30pm	Taize Service in Church
<u>Sunday 8th March</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	6.30pm	Prayer Service on Zoom
<u>Sunday 15th March</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Family Eucharist
	6.30pm	Prayer Service on Zoom
<u>Sunday 22nd March</u>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	5pm	Evensong at Goostrey
<u>Sunday 29th March</u> <i>Palm Sunday</i>	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Family Communion
	6.30pm	Prayers for Healing and Wholeness
<u>Every Wednesday</u>	11.30am	<i>Holy Communion Service followed by communal lunch at 12.30pm and Voices Together at 1.30pm</i>

revrobinpye@gmail.com
07794 122602

Please see website for details of our future services
www.stphilipandstjames.co.uk

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



Dear Friends,

Children who come to church will generally ask this question when they are around 4 years old? 'Did Jesus die?' And when you say that he did, they usually ask 'Why did Jesus die?'

It's a good question. We have been telling children all these stories of Jesus and his miraculous powers. So why did he not cheat death?

Some people get very uncomfortable talking to children about the death of Jesus. I once saw a church organise a 'child-friendly' service on Good Friday without mentioning once that Jesus died. And I recently had some negative feedback from a teacher because I had talked about death and the death of Jesus with some children and it was felt to be inappropriate. Is it best if we don't mention death in front of the children? Should we just tell them nice stories where the good people always win?

On Good Friday, the churches of Alderley Edge will march in silence down the High Street carrying a cross. People know that Jesus was crucified on a cross and our silence makes this a sombre act. It is not a joyous celebration.

Why did Jesus die? The Bible offers us any different ways of understanding why Jesus died. Jesus had to die to enter fully into the pain of humanity. Jesus died to atone for the sins of the world. Jesus died to enter into hell to set us free from death and sin. Jesus died to reconcile us all with God.

Because we also believe that Jesus rose from the dead. Most of the time, the empty cross, (ie, a cross without Jesus on it) is a symbol of the resurrection – Christ's victory over death.

But when we carry the cross down the High Street we will not have got to that point in the story yet. The Good Friday cross is a sign of our pain and our despair because Jesus came among us and proclaimed a kingdom of justice and peace and he was killed for it, just as people who stand up for justice and peace are being killed in the world today – we may think of the tens of

thousands of people who have been killed in Iran in recent weeks.

We only get to celebrate the joy and hope of Easter after we have truly entered into the pain of the world. This means that the joy and hope of Easter is not based on a wilful ignoring of what is happening in the world. Rather it is a hope that is fully informed about the pain in the world because the Son of God shared in this pain. In other words, it is a hope that is real. It is a hope that says, 'We still have hope, despite the brokenness of the world.'

Rev'd Robin Pye

Changing the church's heating system

Over the last 18 months we have been working hard on how we can heat the church building for future generations.

The present system relies on a gas boiler which is close to the end of its life and a system of late Victorian pipes and radiators which, though still sound, are not as efficient as a modern installation would be.

We are also looking forward to a time when we will no longer use gas or any other carbon fuel as we seek to become carbon zero. We are advised that the way to do this with existing technology is to install an air source heat pump with underfloor pipes. The trouble is that at the moment our church is so poorly insulated that this would not generate enough to keep us warm.

Most of the heat we lose goes out of our roof. We have an exceptionally beautiful tiled roof which unfortunately is no longer strong enough to bear the necessary insulation that would allow an air source heat pump to be an effective way of heating the church.

We are, therefore, faced with a three phase project to heat the church.

Phase 1 To install a new gas boiler or similar heating system to keep the church warm while we work on phases 2 and 3

Phase 2 To repair the roof, making it strong enough to bear insulation

Phase 3 To install an air source heat pump system or similar as our new carbon heating system

We are currently fundraising for Phase 1, for which we need to raise £90,000. So far, we have around £13,000.

On Saturday 21st March we are organising a 'Gift Day' in church. This is an opportunity for people to drop in and find out about the project. Our choir and our singing group will be singing, there will be a short presentation about the project and we will be able to answer questions.

Our aim is to keep the church warm with minimal impact on the climate. So we are calling the whole project 'warm and green'. We think this is critical to keeping the building working as a vibrant place of worship. It is critical to our future as a church.

If you would like to help us, please send an email to revrobinpye@gmail.com

Lenten Meditation

5th March, 12th March, 19th March, 26th March, 2nd April

Our meditation sessions during Lent run from 9am to 9.30am.

We use candles, incense, short readings and, above all silence, to centre ourselves and draw closer to God.

Lent is a really appropriate season for meditation because it is the season to draw closer to God, and his mercy, ignore the things that distract us and focus on the things that really matter.

If you are interested in giving it a try, just come into church and sit down.

Mothers' Union

Supporting Vulnerable Mums & their Babies

We are supporting a small charity in Wythenshawe who provide early essentials for vulnerable Mums and their babies (0-3 months). If any of our readers would like to help with this initiative a list of requirements can be found on our website or please email churchoffice.spsjae@gmail.com to have a list sent to you. Copies of the list are also at the back of church as well as box for any donations. We plan to invite a speaker from the charity later this year. Thank you if you are able to support this initiative. Finally, it's a pleasure to let you know that our Teddies were gratefully received by an Airport Chaplain at our Pancake Lunch this week. Just two day days later five Teddies had already found new homes with distressed children.