

# Open Space

Open Space

MARCH 2024

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

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**THERE'S** a story about Jesus. He's teaching in the synagogue when a guy, called Jairus, rushes in and falls at his feet, begging him to come and heal his daughter who is literally **'at the point of death'** (MARK 5:23).

ON THE WAY to Jairus' house, Jesus is stopped by a woman with a chronic health condition. Jesus' response to her is beautiful, taking all the time to not only heal her body but show value for her soul.

*But imagine Jairus!*

Screaming inside for Jesus to 'Come on!' *Filled with anxiety.*

Jesus did heal Jairus' daughter in the end.

Author John Mark Comer (in his book *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*) writes, 'Every time I read that story, I am struck by how fiercely present Jesus was, how he just would not let anything or anyone, even a medical emergency or a hurting father, rush him into the next moment.'

**And this is no one-off.**

Half the stories in the gospels tell of Jesus being interrupted, it happened constantly.

Yet he never comes off as annoyed, anxious, or rushed. His schedule was full but he was never hurried.

Comer writes... 'This rootedness in the moment and connectedness to God, other people, and himself weren't by-products of a laid-back personality type or pre-WiFi world; they were the outgrowths of a way of life.'

**A whole new way to be human that Jesus put on display in story after story.'**

If we read the Gospels asking ourselves: How did Jesus live, how did he spend his time, we notice several things:

- He regularly got up early to get time with his Father in quiet
- He would go away for a day or even a few weeks to get away from the crowd and gather himself to God.
- More than once we read of Jesus sleeping in and his disciples having to wake him up.
- Every chance he gets Jesus enjoys a meal with friends and finds opportunities to have deep conversations about life.
- And every week he gives a whole day to rest and worship. He practices Sabbath.

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**'Jesus's weekly schedule was a prophetic act against the hurried rhythms of our world.'** (John Mark Comer).

*And then he turns around and says:*

**'FOLLOW ME!'**

To follow Jesus is to take his life as our pattern, to learn to live the way he lived.

Central to this is the question:

**How would Jesus live if he were me?**

Now, Jesus was a first century single Jewish man. None of us are. But we shouldn't allow the differences to stop us continually asking the question: what can we learn from how Jesus lived, the things he taught, and the way he guides us now by the Holy Spirit, to ask how Jesus would live if he were me?

What we're really talking about here is a rule of life. *Continued overleaf>*

Mission Partners with St Stephens:

Beloved  
Bristol City Centre Soup Run  
Bristol Schools Connection  
Bristol/Uganda Link  
Christian Aid  
Community of the Sisters of the Church  
Emmaus  
Harvest for The Hungry  
One25 Project

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@SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER  
1131503



St Stephens  
SOUNDWELL

# Readings & Collects

## SUNDAY 03 MARCH

### 3rd Sunday of Lent

Exodus 20:1–17; Psalm 19  
1 Corinthians 1:18–25; John 2:13–22

ETERNAL GOD, give us insight to discern your will for us, to give up that harms us, and to seek the perfection we are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## SUNDAY 10 MARCH

### Mothering Sunday

1 Samuel 1:20–end; Psalm 127:1–4  
Colossians 3:12–17; John 19:25b–27

GOD OF LOVE, passionate and strong, tender and careful: watch over us and hold us all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SUNDAY 17 MARCH

### 5th Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31:31–34; Psalm 51:1–13  
Hebrews 5:5–10; John 12:20–33

GRACIOUS FATHER, you gave up your Son out of love for the world: lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion, that we may know eternal peace through the shedding of our Saviour's blood, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SUNDAY 24 MARCH

### Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:1–2; Mark 11:1–11

TRUE AND HUMBLE KING, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. Amen.

## SUNDAY 31 MARCH

### Easter Sunday

Isaiah 25:6–9; Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24  
Acts 10:34–43; Mark 16:1–8

GOD OF GLORY, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

# Connecting with AND following Jesus

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IT HAS become popular in the world of self-help to talk about the need to shape our schedules around our values. This practice began in the monastery not the marketplace.

Thousands of years ago monastic orders and entire communities began to schedule their lives around simple practices that enabled them to give time to what was really important.

**This was called a rule of life.**

For some, 'rule' sounds too restrictive. But think less about 'law' and more about 'ruler' (*it comes from the Latin regulae, meaning 'straight piece of wood'*)—something that helps our lives line up.

Better still, think of a trellis.

Jesus described himself as the vine and us as the branches (JOHN 15).

Anyone who abides in him bears fruit just as a branch receives fruit-producing life from the vine... yet anyone separated from the vine can do nothing. Remember, that under every succulent vine there is a trellis that holds it together.

A rule of life can also be described as our spiritual disciplines, or in yet a less harsh phrase, connecting with God and following Jesus every day.

During Lent is the ideal time to either start connecting with God and following Jesus on a daily basis, or reviewing the routines you already have. Just because we are part way through Lent, it's still ok to make a start!!

### WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a time of preparation, lasting 40 days—for the events of Holy Week and Easter.

Easter was traditionally the time when baptisms were celebrated, and those who had become separated from the communion of the Church, because of their serious sins, were restored to the Church's fellowship. This means that Lent has a solemn character.

It is the season of the year where the disciplines of penitence, self-examination, self-denial and study are practised. Almsgiving has also traditionally been associated with Lent.

Originally Lenten disciplines were adopted by baptism candidates and penitents preparing themselves to be readmitted to communion, but it became the custom for the whole Christian community to join in the process of study, preparation and repentance.

The Lenten disciplines happened over forty days to remind Christians of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, where he was tested by Satan.

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**ASHES** are an ancient sign of penitence, and from the Middle Ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross.

It is for that reason that the first day of Lent—Ash Wednesday—is so called.

Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration during Lent.

The Hymn of Glory is not sung. The joyful word alleluia is not used.

However, the Fourth Sunday of Lent (*known variously as Laetare or Refreshment Sunday*) was provided as a day of relief from the rigours of fasting—it is the day on which in more recent times the Church has kept Mothering Sunday.

But, Lent can also be a time when you begin or review your spiritual disciplines:

- Praying (speaking to Jesus) each morning and evening.
- Setting aside time, each day, to read your Bible or connect with Scripture in other ways (Bible reading notes, an app, structured daily prayer) – this works best when you choose a time you can stick to.

*Continued on page 3 >*



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- Thinking of three things you are thankful and grateful for – then actually thanking God for them
- Sing God's praises – hymns or worship songs, or read The Psalms.

*THE above are just a few thoughts, to ponder with the Lord how you and He connect best – and then do it!!*

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AS Holy Week approaches, the atmosphere of the season darkens; the readings begin to anticipate the story of Christ's suffering and death.

The events of **Maundy Thursday** are dramatic.

During Communion we commemorate how Christ on the first Maundy Thursday instituted the Holy Communion at his Last Supper.

We also commemorate how he washed the feet of The Twelve Disciples as an example of his servant hood, and how our Lord then went in obedience to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and to await his betrayal.

The Church is stripped as part of the ending of this service to prepare for the desolation of Good Friday.

Then on **Good Friday** we watch and witness Christ's death, then we wait...

## Lent Course

'TALKING JESUS' will take place on the Saturday's throughout Lent, concluding on 23rd March.

It doesn't matter if you've missed the first one or two, you can still join in – the dates are 2nd, 9th, 16th & 23rd March.

Either let me know you'd like to come along or just turn up – we start at 10am and conclude at 11.30am.

## HOLY WEEK

AN EASTER TRAIL will be in the church grounds from Palm Sunday (24th March) onwards for you to explore the Easter Story at a time that suits you and your families.

### • Palm Sunday: 24th March

We will be having a four-legged visitor to church that day, to recall Jesus' last journey into Jerusalem.

### • Maundy Thursday: 28th March

7.30pm - Holy Communion with Feet Washing (optional).

### • Good Friday: 29th March

**11am:** If you'd like company to walk the Easter Trail then other folk will be around to join in with you. There might even be a hot-cross bun or two on offer to sustain you!

**1pm: Quiet Reflection** – personal space in church for you to sit with God. Quiet music will be playing.

**2pm: The Last Hour at the Cross** – a service of scripture, reflection, prayer and song.

### • Easter Day: 31st March

**10am:** a Service of CELEBRATION for All Ages together, with Holy Communion (and chocolate!)

Lisa

# See & Know



THEY would love grown-up help at their parent and toddler group: to continue helping young families in our Parish know and follow Jesus... ... could you spare half an hour or so on Thursday mornings, to help in school term-time only??

It would include setting up the play equipment in the church hall at 9am, if not every week, then perhaps now and again.



**AND/OR** could you be part of the See & Know **Team**? If not every week, then perhaps now and again?

**This would mean:**

- Welcoming children & their carers,
- Chatting with them during the session
- Helping the children do a simple craft.

Sessions run from 10am – 11.45am.

**We don't want this fabulous Mission Outreach Group to close, because it does so much good in our community.**

**SO PLEASE CAN YOU HELP??**

For more details please chat with: Sue Humphrey (07 929 404 272) or Lisa (0117 9574 297).

# Communion

HOLY Communion is a very important part of Sunday worship, so we want to ensure that everyone who wants to, is able to partake, even if unable to walk to the Altar.

It could be that one Sunday you are feeling unwell or have had an injury that affects your mobility, or even too embarrassed to walk to the altar, but for whatever reason, PLEASE let us know as soon as you arrive at Church.

We already take the bread and wine to several people where they sit in church every week, so it can be made available to YOU also in situ. Talk to Gill Mayo (*our Church Warden*) or alternatively phone before Sunday on 0117 956 9796.

## YOUNG PREACHERS

Do you know a young adult aged 16–25 who

- Is living and growing as a Christian?
- Shows leadership or teaching potential?

Could they become a Young Preacher? Young Preachers are discerned, accountable and trained.

They must be supported by their vicar/minister and will receive the Bishop's permission to preach up to 4 times per year in their local church.



For more information, speak to your Vicar, Lisa. [lisa.wigmore66@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.wigmore66@gmail.com) or 0117 9574297



## Easter Eggs

THE Sisters of the Church in St Pauls, will be giving out Easter Eggs with their food parcels to some of the poorest families in our city.

If you are able to help spread a bit of Easter Joy, by donating an Easter Egg or two (or more), then please do bring them along to church before or on Sunday 10th March (Mothering Sunday) so that The Sisters can distribute them in time for Easter Day. Alternatively, you can donate directly via bank transfer: sort code: 08-92-99 to account no: 65075960.

Thank you!

# FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

## 15th MARCH 6.30PM

Exploring what life with faith is all about in an hour of getting to know others, through informal song, prayer, and discussions, followed by refreshments afterwards in the Church Room.

Come if you know Jesus, come if you don't, let's grow in footsteps of faith together!

# Welcome Space

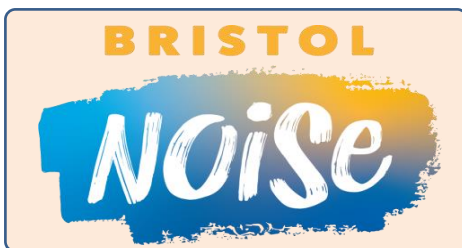
9 to 11am  
TUESDAY 12th MARCH

Conversation,  
free snacks & refreshments  
ALL ARE WELCOME!\*

WE also look forward to seeing you again on 26th March!

Please note that under 17s must be accompanied by an adult).

\* IN OUR CHURCH ROOM



**Bristol Noise** is all about mobilising churches & Christians to show God's love in practical ways within Bristol.

St Stephens Church, is intending to join with the Bristol Noise again this year; Saturday 4th May 9am-5pm.

There will be a **sign up sheet** in church or phone me on 07 769 704 270 or email: [R.meares\\_85@hotmail.com](mailto:R.meares_85@hotmail.com).

There will be a small fee per person yet to be announced, and we would be delighted for anyone who can pay this to do so, but if not, then the fee will be covered by the church so that we can all be involved. **Regan**

# PLANT SALE

## MAY 11th 2PM until 4PM

IF you will be able to contribute, then now is the time to think of planting some seeds or maybe taking cuttings from House Plants, or putting aside anything else that would go in the sale.



**WE ARE** a friendly and welcoming bunch of people at St Stephens Church, Soundwell, but friendships and welcome don't have to stop at the church door.

Would you like to forge a friendship and visit someone in their home? Or would you like to welcome a new friend, someone you might already



know from your church, to spend a bit of time with you in your home?

If either of these ideas spark something in you, take your fancy, or it's for you... whatever it is please be in touch!

*Every blessing!*

**Jenny Bishop** 07801 989490 or [jenannb75@hotmail.com](mailto:jenannb75@hotmail.com)

**Revd Lisa Wigmore** 0117 9574 297 or [lisawigmore66@gmail.com](mailto:lisawigmore66@gmail.com)

· St Stephens Church Soundwell ·

# LENT COURSE 2024



THIS LENT, which began 17th February, a group of us embarked on the Church of England's programme 'Let's talk... Jesus!' It is a mixture of video clips, Bible study and discussion around the theme.

There are 4 sessions remaining in March which we invite you to join in with. There is a minimum of paper-work involved and the emphasis is on our discussions together as part of the family at St Stephens.

We all meet up on Saturday mornings at 10am with the course then starting at 10.20am.

This special 20 minutes provides time for us to catch up with one another, have a drink, and a croissant (or the like) and be ready to start 'Talking Jesus!'

Some of the work will be in the larger group and some will be done in smaller discussion groups.

The purpose is to share our ideas on these important topics for us as a community of Christians at St Stephens and in the wider church.

*Join in with any or all of the remaining sessions which are listed as follows:*

- Session 3: March 2nd **Living Distinctively**  
*What kind of relationships does God call us to?*
- Session 4: March 9th **Our story** *Who WE are.*
- Session 5: March 16th **God's story** *Who GOD is.*
- Session 6: March 23rd **Go on talking Jesus**  
*The importance of personal invitations.*

DO contact Lisa to let her know you would like to attend any of the sessions or if you have any questions, or telephone: 0117 957 4297 or send an email to: [lisawigmore66@gmail.com](mailto:lisawigmore66@gmail.com)



# New Defibrillator!

WE ARE pleased to announce the acquisition of a defibrillator as a significant development in our church community that embodies the spirit of care, preparedness, and service.



Outburst Youth Group recognised the importance of a defibrillator being available in emergencies, especially in a space as communal and bustling as our church.

The Youth Group took the step of applying for a DHSC\* Defib Grant, which, along with previously raised funds, plus a generous donation from a Church member, enabled the purchase, and so the defibrillator has now been installed on the outside wall by the entrance to our Church Hall.

This life-saving device embodies our commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone who enters our doors.

While we hope it never needs to be used, having a defibrillator readily available can mean the difference between life and death in the event of a sudden cardiac emergency.

## Why a Defibrillator?

Sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time, regardless of age or health status. Every minute without treatment decreases the chances of survival by 10%. Thus, having a defibrillator available on-site can significantly increase the likelihood of survival by delivering a shock to the heart to restore its normal rhythm.

## Instructions for Use:

While the thought of using a defibrillator might seem daunting, please rest assured that the device

is designed to be user-friendly, even for those without medical training. Here's a simple guide on how to use our newly installed defibrillator:

### 1. Recognise the Emergency:

If someone collapses and is not breathing normally, or if there's no breathing at all, it could be a cardiac arrest emergency.

**2. Call for Help:** Dial 999 for the emergency services immediately and inform them of the situation. Time is critical in such emergencies.

### 3. Retrieve the Defibrillator:

It is kept in the clearly marked cabinet located outside the Church Hall. The emergency services will give you the code to open the door of the cabinet to access the device.

**4. Follow the voice and visual prompts:** The defib comes with clear voice and visual instructions. Simply follow the prompts provided by the device. It will guide you through each step, from placing the pads on the patient's chest to delivering the shock if necessary.

**5. Continue CPR until Help arrives:** Even after using the defibrillator, it is important to continue cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) until emergency help arrives. CPR helps maintain blood flow to vital organs until advanced medical care can be given.

NB: *Further information and training can be found by watching the video found at*

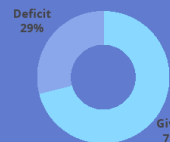
<https://vimeo.com/557677120/e7524918c5>

BY installing this defibrillator, our Outburst Group have not only fulfilled a duty to our congregation but have also extended a lifeline to the wider community.



## OUR CHURCH FINANCE UPDATE

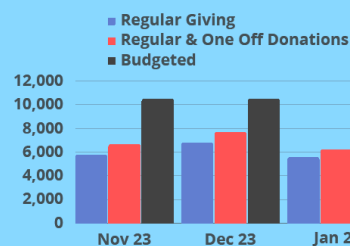
GIVING FOR JANUARY



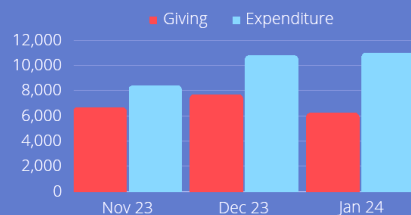
WHAT OUR GIVING NEEDS TO BE £10,500

GIVING RECEIVED £6214

### Giving Last 3 Months



### Giving v Church Expenses Last 3 Months



We hope that its presence brings peace of mind to all who enter our doors, knowing that we are prepared to respond swiftly and effectively in the face of a cardiac emergency.

*\*We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) for their support in making this vital addition possible. Together, we are ensuring a safer, more resilient community for all.*

Please watch this space for further fundraising events from Outburst to raise funds to upkeep the equipment including the need to replace pads when used and to purchase a bleed kit to install alongside to further protect our community from any incidents of major blood loss.

**Nicola & the Outburst team**

## MARCH CYCLE OF PRAYER *BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK*

|    |                             |   |   |
|----|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 03 | Uganda Link                 | Sheila Galsworthy, Pat Garner<br>Julie, Simon & Ruby Goss<br>Brian Grant & Christine, Janice Harland                | Midland Road<br>Morley Close<br>Morley Place      |
| 10 | Bristol Soup Run            | Geoff and Joyce Harris, Ivor Harris<br>Ruby Harrison, Carolyn Hawkins<br>Nicole Hayward, James Head                 | Morley Road<br>Mulberry Gardens<br>Mulberry Grove |
| 17 | St Stephen's Infant School  | Stella Hoare, Mike and Jayne Hudd<br>Cherilyn Hughes, Jean and Barry Hulbert<br>Neil, Carey, Marin & Eliza Humphrey | Narrow Lane<br>Neville Road<br>North View         |
| 24 | St Stephen's Junior School  | Sue and Martyn Humphrey<br>Jan Johns, Lauren Joyce<br>Becca Joyce, Tom & Ivy-Mae Butler                             | Nymphsfield<br>Peartree Lane<br>Pembroke Road     |
| 31 | Kings Forest Primary School | Linda Krause, Anadita Kumar, Anita Leakey<br>Kristine, Ian, Emily & Jack Lockwood<br>Mike Long                      | Penny Lane<br>Phoenix Grove<br>Pinewood           |

**SUNDAYS:** 8am BCP Holy Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.  
10am Community Worship Service

Prayer Ministry is offered after the 10am Service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays or at any other time by request, so do please ask as necessary.

**WEDNESDAYS:** 10am Service of Holy Communion

## MARCH DIARY

|    |             |                       |  |
|----|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| 01 | Friday      | 1.15-3.45pm<br>2.30pm | Pensioner's Group in Church Hall (fortnightly)<br>World Day of Prayer, at Salvation Army<br>Staple Hill, Bristol.  |
|    |             | 7-9pm                 | Outburst Youth Club in Church Hall   |
| 02 | Saturday    | 10am<br>2-4pm         | LENT COURSE: Session 3 in Church<br>Afternoon tea & music in Church Hall<br>Pre-pay ticket booking   |
| 05 | Tuesday(s)  | 1.30-3.30pm           | Knit & Natter weekly in Church Room  |
| 06 | Wednesday   | 12noon                | Coffee/Chat/Company Turnpike Pub   |
| 07 | Thursday(s) | 10-11.45am<br>2-4pm   | See & Know in Church Hall (weekly in term time)<br>Ladies Group in Church Hall (then fortnightly)  |
| 09 | Saturday    | 10am                  | LENT COURSE: Session 4 in Church   |
| 10 | Sunday      | 10am                  | <b>MOTHERING SUNDAY</b> Special all age service  |
| 11 | Monday      | 10.15am               | Retreat Memory Café in Church Hall for<br>Dementia sufferers and their carers  |
| 12 | Tuesday     | 9-11am<br>7.30pm      | WELCOME SPACE in Church Room<br>PCC meeting in Church Room   |
| 14 | Thursday    | 2-4pm                 | Men's Group in Church Room (then fortnightly)  |
| 15 | Friday      | 1.15-3.45pm<br>6.30pm | Pensioner's Group in Church Hall<br>(then fortnightly)<br><b>FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE</b> in Church: informal song,<br>prayer, and discussions followed by refreshments<br>at 7.30pm in the Church Room |
| 16 | Saturday    | 10am                  | LENT COURSE: Session 5 in Church   |
| 19 | Tuesday     | 7.30pm                | SAFEGUARDING COURSE in Church  |
| 21 | Thursday    | 2-4pm                 | Ladies Group in Church Hall (then fortnightly)   |
| 23 | Saturday    | 10am                  | LENT COURSE: Session 6 in Church   |
| 24 | Sunday      | 10am                  | <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> plus Special visitor!   |
| 25 | Monday      | 10.15am               | Retreat Memory Café in Church Hall for<br>Dementia sufferers and their carers  |
| 26 | Tuesday     | 9-11am                | WELCOME SPACE in the Church Room   |
| 28 | Thursday    | 2-4pm<br>7.30pm       | Men's Group in Church Room (then fortnightly)<br>Maundy Thursday Special Service   |
| 29 | Good Friday | 11am<br>1pm<br>2pm    | Easter Trail & Hot Cross Buns! Church Gardens<br>QUIET REFLECTION in Church<br>LAST HOUR at the Cross in Church  |
| 31 | Sunday      | 10am                  | <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b> Special all age service   |

## Welcomers

**WHEN PEOPLE** come into Church, especially if it is their first visit, we feel it is important they are given a really warm welcome.

FOR this reason we have a lovely group of people who are there by the door each Sunday morning to do just that.

We would love more people to help us offer this service, on a rotating basis, the more Greeters we have the less duties each person would be required to do, and by the way, if like me you feel the cold, you don't have to stand outside! At present our team are all women so it would be fantastic to have some men join us as well.

I look forward to hearing from you.  
**Gill Mayo** 0117 956 9796.



### Dial-a-SERMON

Listen to this week's Sermon on your phone:

**0117 456 2090**

(Cost is the same as a local call)

OR

### Click-a-SERMON



Visit our website and use the audio link to listen on-line

<http://saintstephensoundwell.org>

## SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL



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Telephone 0117 967 2621



• **Revd Regan Meares**  
Priest  
Telephone 07769 704270



• **Peter Robbins**  
Lay Minister, 13 Wood Road  
Kingswood, Bristol BS15 8DT  
Telephone 0117 967 9576



• **Gill Mayo**  
Church Warden  
Telephone  
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