

# **Easter Newsletter**

## **February - March 2026**



**St Mary's, Rushden &  
St Peter's, Newton Bromswold**

# Who's Who

**Rector:** Rev Tom King

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**Assistant Priest:**

**Rev Dr Glyn Ackerley**

3 Catlin Way, Rushden, NN10 9FN

07595 171748

**Children's Worker:**

Helen Smedley

07495 304974

**St Mary's Churchwarden:**

Dan Smedley, 11 Park Place, Rushden, NN10 0RR

07904 465019

**Readers:** Tony Smith and James Mellor

**Hall Bookings:** Pam & Paul Bailey

7 Kenilworth Close, Rushden, NN10 0QH

01933 313195

**St Mary's Church Office**

Tues--Thurs: 10.30am-12.30pm:

Samantha Nagel, Pam Bailey, Kathy MacKenzie

01933 412235

**email:** stmaryschurchoffice@btinternet.com

**website:** www.stmaryschurchrushden.org

**facebook:** stmaryschurchrushden

**instagram:** rushdenstmarys



**Newton Bromswold Churchwardens**

Bob Lines, 25 Church Lane, Newton Bromswold, NN10 0SR:

01933 315864

Jenny Burt, 23 Church Lane, Newton Bromswold

01933 353076

**Newton Bromswold website:** [www.newtonchurch.co.uk](http://www.newtonchurch.co.uk)

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**April/May Newsletter**  
should be sent by  
**Sunday 15 March**  
to  
**St Mary's Church Office**

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# Helen Smedley writes ...

Hello and Happy New Year!

January can often feel like the breath of relief after a busy Christmas period, followed by a long dark wait until spring arrives. However, it is also time of new beginnings and new outlooks in life.

This Christmas time was one of the busiest for the children and families mission work this year. Starting at the end of November we invited all the Rushden schools back for our second Christmas Experience. We kicked things off at the Rushden Light Switch on, hosting a stall inviting families to explore the church, discover the story, and join with some crafts, as well as getting out of the freezing rain! Over the following 3 weeks, St Mary's welcomed over 800 children from local schools, pre-schools and childminders to come and explore an interactive telling of the Christmas story, or a Christingle service, as well as visiting an additional 250 children in their classes to deliver a nativity escape room.

One thing that became apparent to the team over this month was how few children and families knew about the birth of Jesus. Twenty or so years ago, if you asked a room full of children about Mary, the three wise men or Bethlehem, you would quite likely have had a somewhat correct answer, but children of 2026 don't readily come by this information as they used to. Researchers have been exploring why this is, and one reason that has been observed in the last 50 years, is a culture shift that has taken place, where fewer families prioritise Sunday worship as part of family life, combined with a rise in sports and group commitments as well as other normal busy family life to-dos that spill into the weekend. This has resulted in a gap of two or even three generations where church life has become a mystery to a great number of the families we encounter. This might seem like a gloomy prospect, but we feel in St Mary's family's ministry team that it also presents an amazing plethora of opportunities. Not only did we share the nativity story with several families at the lights switch on, but we have shared it with over 1000 school children and their teachers, one of which is now regularly attending bumps and babes with their little one.

Romans 10: 13-14 tells us that if someone, does not believe, because they haven't heard because no one has told them, how then can they be saved! We are not the ones that can save, but we are the ones that can tell, in fact we are called to, as we can read in Mark 16:15 to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." So, why is this important to think about right now? The Christmas Experience, and the Easter experience we are hosting later in March will be part of the process of tending the ground for the Rushden Life, Mission Week coming this summer, and I encourage you all in this time to think about what this would look like for you. As a new Christian I found the prospect of sharing my faith a terrifying one, and the prospect of "go and tell" seemed like something for the elite evangelistic individuals. As time went by I found that there was another passage that helped me to shape how I did ministry and mission and it was found in John 1:46, where Philip, one of the disciples, reaches out to his friend Nathaniel, in the midst of his scepticism and doubt, Philip doesn't just tell Nathaniel about Jesus. He came alongside his friend, to the place that he was in, and invited him to come with him, "to come and see", and it is this relational, invitational ministry which I have found to be the most exciting and fruitful, and also the most realistic. We all could think of someone we have a relationship with; a friend, a college, a family member, that one person we keep bumping into as we do life! And that is where it begins, with a relationship! We believe in a God with the power to create the universe, part seas, and raise the dead to life, He is the one with the power to save, all He asks of us, is that we tell them about Jesus, whether you are a 'go and tell' person or a 'come and see', He will do amazing things, we just need to speak His name and He will do the rest. So I encourage you over the next few weeks and months, to bring to mind, two or three people in your lives, actively pray for them and how you can share the gospel with them, and to keep an eye for updates regarding the Rushden Life mission week, where there will be an event that you could invite them to 'come and see.'

# Belfry Gossip

We've had our regular Friday practice nights, ringing for Sunday service and of course for Christmas Day - which brings to mind a few Carols... *I heard the bells on Christmas day; Ding dong merrily on high; Ring out the old, ring in the new...* A few examples of how church bells have long been announcing Christ's birth.

On 13th December a team of Rushden ringers attended the Branch quiz and, whilst the competition was close, in the end our team won by 2 points. There were 8 teams, and it was an enjoyable evening for all. Brenda prepared much of the food so great thanks go to her.

You may have spotted the Christmas tree lights shining through the window up to the ringing room, which was adorned with some new bell ornaments this year.

The Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers have just launched a new logo, shown above.

Every practice night has time for socialising alongside ringing practice and theory - conversation is sometimes of places we've visited and critiques of different rings of bells; sometimes discussing articles from *The Ringing World* (the bellringers weekly magazine); this month a discussion arose of how long we have each been ringing and our collective experience: The answer? There are 7 ringing members of the tower, with ringing experience ranging from 16 to 70 years and a collective accumulation of 323 years!!!

If you or someone you know is interested in learning to ring, and starting your journey to gaining any number of years of ringing experience, please get in touch with Brenda or Pam – we'd love to hear from you!



# St Mary's News

## Summary of PCC meeting held on Monday 12 January 2026 in the Church Hall.

Attendees: Rev Tom K, Dan S, Martin Co, Bob B, Marion B, Peter Co and Dr Glyn A

The collection taken at the Nativity, Carols by Candlelight and Christmas services raised £834.77 and has been donated to CMS for the work of Lea and Petra Williams in Brno.

R Bates reported average attendance for St. Mary's was 63 and 11 from St Peter's Newton Bromswold.

**Fabric:** Upper Church Hall door, DS has applied for the faculty to replace the wooden door with an aluminium door. DAC meeting taking place on 27 January 2026. Disabled Access. The revised plans have been submitted and are due to be discussed at the DAC meeting. Quinquennial Electrical work, a quote of £13,800 to carry out this work.

Church Clock Automatic Winders (AW), DS had applied to the DAC for a faculty to replace the AWs. The notice of replacing the AW's has been put on display until 20 January 2026.

Solar Panels. DS has contacted another company to provide a

quote for fitting solar panel to the Hall roof. Replacement of Guttering on transept roof. The faculty has been applied for and awaiting DAC approval.

Hall roof leak. The builders sent a drone to look at the hall roof and concluded that the guttering is causing the leak. The builders to provide the recommended repair work and a quote.

ECO Church, we need to contact the Rangers at Rushden Lakes on how to make the grounds of the church to be more ECO friendly.

Church Hall cleaning. Oliver S has agreed to clean the church.

Church Hall deep cleaning day will be taking place on 31 January 2026 between 10am to 3pm.

The Gas Cooker has had the annual service.

**Safeguarding:** No major updates.

Vikki is training Emily on safe-guarding. Amy from the Diocese will be providing Co safeguarding training for the PCC members.

**Finance:** R. Bates reported we paid £2500 to the Diocese as an additional contribution of Parish share for 2025. The Parish share for 2026 will be £72836 for St. Mary's and £6410 for St. Peter's Newton Bromswold.

# Flower Rotas

## Behind the Communion Table

### February

- 1 Marion Bates
- 8 Barbara Coxon
- 15 Kathy & Chris
- 18 Lent begins
- 22 Lent

### March

- 1 Lent
- 8 Lent
- 15 Lent - Mothering Sunday
- 22 Lent
- 29 Lent

### Memorial Chapel

If you would like to give flowers in memory of loved ones please contact Brenda Dixon: 01933 358982

The PCC agreed that the parish share direct debit will remain unchanged for 2026. We will not be meeting our full parish share. The account reports for November and December 2025 have not been delivered to us from the Diocese Finance dept.

We agreed that the gift day will be taking place on Sunday 22 February 2026. We will need envelopes title Gift Day to separate the monies from normal giving.

Mission Tithes. We are looking to allocate £5000 to Mission. This will be raised at certain services during

# THE REGISTERS

## Funerals

### Tuesday 6 January

Glenis Burton [76]

### Friday 16 January

Miriam Handshaw [88]

### Monday 16 February

Derick Tansley [98]

## Thanksgiving

### Tuesday 13 January

David George Robinson [76]

the year and the shortfall will come from the church funds.

**Children's work:** DS reported the following, The Christmas experience was attended by over 900 children from schools in Rushden. The experience was good and we had support from the other Rushden Churches. We are now looking to provide the Easter experience over a 3 week period. T&C has assistance serving the teas/ coffee from the pupils from Rushden Academy, this has been very successful.

**AOB:** There have been issues with key not working on the lock of the interior north porch door.

## News

It appears that cutting of the keys differs between each key. All key holders should ensure that they have the correct door key.

We are looking to hold the APCM March 2026, but this will be subject to us receiving the Annual report and Accounts from the Diocese Finance team. The Ash Wednesday service will be taking place at St. Mary's on 18 February 2026 at 7.00pm.

### **Date and time of next meeting:**

Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 7pm in the Church Hall.

### **Congratulations are due to ...**

Sheila Wills who celebrated her Ninetieth birthday on 18 January. To David Crisp who celebrated his Sixtieth birthday on 29 January. To Germaine Crisp who celebrates her Sixtieth birthday on 31 March. Love and best wishes from all of us at St Mary's.

### **Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers Annual Quiz**

In aid of the Guild Bell Fund are now available. 5 Sections not Bellringing related so suitable for all. £1 from Pam in the Church Office or 01933 313195 or 07967 585098.

Closing date 28 February 2026.



Monthly event for dads, stepdads, granddads or male carers and their younger children [0-6 yrs] with a range of toys including bouncy castle, sit-on cars and ball pool.

**Saturdays**  
**21 February & 21 March**

9.30am - 12noon  
St Mary's Church Hall  
Adults £5: children free  
**Just turn up!**

### **Do you love to SING?**

Why don't you join St Mary's choir. You do not need to read music, a good ear is helpful. Come along to choir practice on Wednesday evenings at 7pm for an hour.

Try us out without obligation.  
Meet the friendly bunch of choristers.

**All ages from 8yrs are welcome!**



# Newton News

**Barn Dance** - Saturday 11 July starting at 7pm. Tickets Adult £12.50 and Children £5

## Neville Leo Stowell

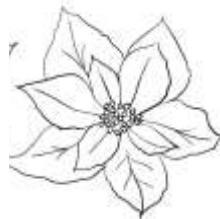
Neville a former member of our congregation died on the 27 October 2025 aged 86. Neville's funeral service was taken by Rev Tom King on Thursday 20 November at Wellingborough Crematorium. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Christine and his children at this time.

## FLOWERS

### February

#### Altar Flowers

8 February - Joyce Dangerfield



## Interested in flower arranging?



Have you noticed the displays regularly produced by our team of volunteers behind the Communion Table?

Would you like to join this special group?  
Commitment only once every two months

Don't feel confident about your skills? Then come and work alongside Jude every third Saturday of the month from around 10am and see how you get on.

Interested in either or both?  
Contact Kathy on 07990 836217 in the first instance.



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# A Springtime for the soul

**F**ebruary can be a tough month. Christmas is long gone and meanwhile the winter drags on; the weather's miserable and the news relentlessly depressing. There's not much to celebrate it seems.

But there are some signs of things changing. In the woods, a scattering of brilliant yellow aconites hint at the sunshine that is to come and a bank of snowdrops defies the last frosts of the year. Nature is on the move.

And so too is God. As we enter the season of Lent, we tentatively begin our preparations for Easter. Ash Wednesday's ceremonies may seem sober; reflecting on our mortality and need for forgiveness ("remember you are dust and to dust you shall return; turn away from sin"), but also pointing us to the One in whom all our hopes are founded ("be faithful to Christ").

Traditionally a season of fasting, perhaps it might be better to think of Lent rather as a time to make space for God. Fast by all means but maybe it's head space we really



need, so why not, for example, turn our smart phones off for a few hours so we can think and feel and 'be' ourselves in the presence of God rather than at the beck and call of others?

Perhaps that way we might truly make Lent, what Brother Roger of Taize called it: "a springtime for the soul" and arrive at Easter with a renewed clarity about God's love and care for us all.

Have a spacious Lent.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Chris Dalliston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a distinct 'C' at the beginning.

The Very Revd Chris Dalliston

# Mission Matters

## “After the Earthquakes”

Can you imagine how terrifying it must be to experience not one, but three major earthquakes within six days? Last September, many people in Afghanistan were caught up in that horrific disaster, which caused unimaginable suffering and loss. More than 2,200 people were killed, over 3,600 were injured and whole villages and herds of livestock were destroyed. Many of the communities affected were already facing extreme hardship after years of conflict, the aftermath of Covid 19 and the effects of climate change. No wonder that many are still traumatised and fearful!

Tearfund has a local partner working in Afghanistan who quickly assessed what was needed most urgently and deployed relief teams to search out people in the most devastated areas. At present, 1,000 families are being supported. They are receiving cash assistance, health support, food, water and emergency shelter.

It's wonderful that, through prayerful donations to Tearfund's Emergency Aid appeal, the basic physical and material needs of many of those who have lost so much can be met. Do give thanks and pray for the Tearfund team who are managing the response to such overwhelming need. Also, do please keep praying for those affected, that the Lord will comfort and heal them in their grief, meet their needs, mentally and spiritually as well as physically, and protect them from further harm.

Sue Eagles

If you feel led to donate to Tearfund contact [info@tearfund.org](mailto:info@tearfund.org) or write to Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE



## Other News and Events

The **relaunched Rushden Street Pastors** have now carried out patrols in Rushden town centres on several evenings, with the most recent being on Saturday 24 January. The team was also present during the daytime for the turning on of the Christmas lights.



Some people are coming forward as **volunteers** to be trained as Street Pastors, meaning that we are close to completing the second of the four teams that we need to provide a patrol evening Saturday night of the month, but **more volunteers are still needed**. Please contact David McGrath (Co-ordinator) at [rushden@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:rushden@streetpastors.org.uk). Anyone who is interested is welcome to join a patrol as an observer, to find out more about what is involved.

A couple of people have volunteered following recent **media coverage** – on BBC Radio Northampton and in the Northants Telegraph online and on paper - of our formal launch event in November at Park Road Baptist Church.

We are looking for **a new Chair of Trustees**, because the current one, Matt, needs to focus on other responsibilities. Please contact David McGrath, email as above, if you are interested, know someone who might be, or have any queries.

**Social media:** there is a 'Rushden Street Pastors' Facebook page, currently with about 240 members. Please feel free to join if you haven't already done so, and to share it with others.

### **Men's breakfast on Saturday 18 April 2026 at 9.00am**

At the Park Road Baptist Hall, Rushden. NN10 0RG. The guest speaker is Steve Martin. Tickets are £6 and includes a full English Breakfast. For further information and tickets contact Mark: 07734 936076.

**Rushden life Mission 2026:** The Mission will be taking place from 27 June to 12 July 2026.

All the events will be advertised and a meeting at the Mission Church will be taking place on 1 February 2026 at 6.30pm to discuss all events.



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## BELLRINGING

Are you interested in learning to ring?

or

Did you ring before and would like to return.

If so please contact  
Brenda Dixon: Tel. 01933 358982

Or come along on Friday evening  
Practice night 7.30-9pm  
To see what its all about

# Neighbourhood Watch - Frauds

Frauds that can happen at any time of the year, so please be vigilant against these common threats:

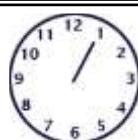
- **Phishing:** Fraudulent emails or texts designed to steal your data.
- **Pet Fraud:** Fake adverts for puppies or kittens that don't exist.
- **Online Shopping Fraud:** Scam websites selling goods that never arrive.
- **Social Media & Email Account Hacking:** Compromising accounts to scam your friends and family.
- **Courier Fraud:** Scammers posing as police or bank staff to collect your cash or cards.
- **Romance Fraud:** Creating fake profiles to build trust and then ask for money.
- **Gift Card Fraud:** Being pressured to pay for goods or services using gift cards.
- **Charity Fraud:** Fake appeals that exploit your seasonal generosity.
- **Investment Fraud:** "Get rich quick" schemes and fake cryptocurrency offers.
- **QR Code Fraud:** Malicious codes used to redirect you to fraudulent payment sites.
- **Holiday Fraud:** Unbelievably cheap travel deals that turn out to be fake.
- **Ticket Fraud:** Selling counterfeit or non-existent tickets for Christmas or through the year events



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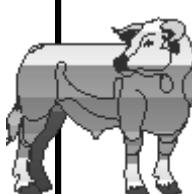
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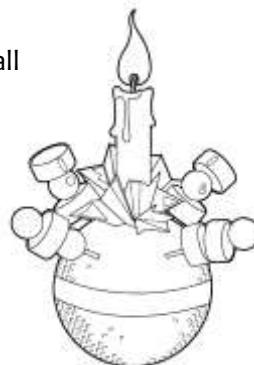
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# Church Diary - February 2026

- 1 Sunday: 10.30am - Christingle Service** Come and join us to share the light at our Christingle Service.
- Sunday: 6.30pm - At the Mission Church in Rushden.** All welcome.
- 2 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes and Beans Club**  
We start in the church hall, where the children and parents can take part in craft activities or play. We then have a short Bible story, and some fun songs. £1.50 per family. We also serve beans on toast afterwards 11.30am-12.30pm.
- 3 Tuesday: 10.00-12noon - Crafts & Coffee/Tea** in the Church Hall - Stone People, Contact for the group is Helen Allan 07814 226614.
- 4 Wednesday: 7-8pm - NO Choir Practice** in Church
- 5 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee** in the Hall
- 6 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**
- 9 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes**
- 11 Wednesday: 2.15pm - Ladies Group** - For ladies of all ages – meet in the Church Hall on the second Wednesday of the month for fun and fellowship. For more information please contact Tracey on 07805 566991.  
**Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice** in Church
- 12 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee** in the Hall
- 13 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**
- 18 Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice** in Church
- 19 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee** in the Hall
- 20 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**
- 21 Saturday: 9.30am-12noon - Who Let The Dads Out?** - Monthly event for dads, stepdads, grandads, male carers and their younger children [0-6yrs]. Adults £5: children free.
- 23 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes**
- 25 Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice** in Church
- 26 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee** in the Hall



# Church Diary - March 2026

## **2 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes and Beans Club**

We start in the church hall, where the children and parents can take part in craft activities or play. We then have a short Bible story, and some fun songs. £1.50 per family. We also serve beans on toast afterwards 11.30am-12.30pm.

## **3 Tuesday: 10.00-12noon - Crafts & Coffee/Tea in the Church Hall -**

Contact for the group is Helen Allan 07814 226614

## **4 Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice in Church**

## **5 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee in the Hall**

## **6 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**

**7 Saturday: 7.00pm – St Mary's Church, Higham Ferrers** –The Rotary Club of Rushden are presenting a special performance of 'Handel's Messiah from the Crib to the Cross'. Performed by the Northampton Bach Choir. Tickets £15 available from Sidey Design, Market Square, Higham Ferrers.

## **9 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes and Beans Club**

**11 Wednesday: 2.15pm - Ladies Group** - For ladies of all ages – meet in the Church Hall on the second Wednesday of the month for fun and fellowship. For more information please contact Tracey on 07805 566991.

## **Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice in Church**

## **12 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee in the Hall**

## **13 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**

## **16 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes and Beans Club**

## **18 Wednesday: 11am-2pm - Lent Lunches**

## **Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice in Church**

## **20 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**

**21 Saturday: 9.30am-12noon - Who Let The Dads Out?** - for male carers and their younger children 0-6yrs Adults £5: children free.

## **23 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes and Beans Club**

## **24 Tuesday: 5pm-9pm - Bellringers Peal Attempt**

## **25 Wednesday: 11am-2pm - Lent Lunches**

## **Wednesday: 7-8pm - Choir Practice in Church**

## **26 Thursday: 10-12noon - Tea and Coffee in the Hall**

## **27 Friday: 7.30-9pm - Bellringing Practice**

## **30 Monday: 10am-12.30pm - Bumps and Babes and Beans Club**

# Services for February 2026



**St Peter's**  
Newton Bromswold

## Sunday 1 February - Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

10.30am Christingle Service 9.30am Family Service

## Sunday 8 February - Second Sunday before Lent

10.30am Morning Worship - Pulpit Swap 9.30am Family Service

## Sunday 15 February - Sunday next before Lent

10.30am Holy Communion and Baptisms and Confirmations with the Bishop 9.30am Family Communion

## Wednesday 18 February - Ash Wednesday

7.00 pm Ashes with Holy Communion

## Sunday 22 February - First Sunday of Lent

10.30am Morning Worship 9.30am Family Service

### Midweek Services in St Mary's Church

Thursdays - February 5, 12, 19, and 26  
at 10.30am - Holy Communion [BCP]

For those receiving their copy of the Newsletter by post there will be a small charge of £5 per year: if this applies to you, a note will be included with this edition

**Non-subscription copies of this Newsletter are routinely made available at the back of church. If you would like to contribute towards their printing costs please put whatever seems appropriate into the old Grapevine slot by the Hymn Books in St Mary's Church.**

# Services for March 2026

# St Mary's

## Rushden

# St Peter's Newton Bromswold

## Sunday 1 March - Second Sunday of Lent

## **10.30am Morning Worship**

**9.30am Family Service**

## Sunday 8 March - Third Sunday of Lent

## 11.30am    Holy Communion

**9.30am Family Service**

## Sunday 15 March - Fourth Sunday of Lent

**10.30am Mothering Sunday**

**9.30am    Mothering Sunday**

## Sunday 22 March - Fifth Sunday of Lent

## **10.30am Morning Worship**

**9.30am Family Communion**

## Sunday 29 March - Palm Sunday

**10:30am Palm Sunday service**

**9:30am Palm Sunday**

**Midweek Services in St Mary's Church**  
**Thursdays 10.30am on March 5, 12, 19 and 26**  
- Holy Communion [BCP]

# Live-Streaming

**St Mary's Sunday Services at 10.30am will continue to be live-streamed**  
and can also be found later on YouTube:  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/stmarysrushden>.