

FAQ's Church Weekend 2024

Why is there a Church Weekend 'at home'?

We wanted to gather the Church family together and it is good to alternate between a Church Weekend 'Away' and one at 'Home' as this gives us opportunities to do things differently and also for different people to come, who may not be able to come when we go away. Following feedback from our last Church Weekend Away, the biggest reason that people attended and would attend again, was to better develop relationships and get to know others from the Church family and from each of the services. A Church Weekend at Home allows us time to really be able to connect with others who perhaps we don't see that often. We can share our lives together.

Who is the Church Weekend at Home for?

It is for anyone who is in our Church community who would like to spend time with others, hearing about how Jesus is moving in our lives and getting to know each other better. You may come to Sunday services, Wednesday services or connect with others ways and feel part of St Mary's. It is for adults and children.

What is happening for Children?

The children's groups on Saturday morning (**9:15am – 1pm**) will be lead by Mark Pettitt (from St Michael's) and Laurence Wilson (from St John's Buckhurst Hill). They will gather others from their teams to come and serve our children. They are already planning so the children and young people can enjoy their groups while the adults are in their Saturday morning sessions.

Who are Friday Night Gatherings for?

We are encouraging Lifegroups to gather on the Friday evening to start the weekend off. This could be for a meal together, or just gathering for a coffee or drinks and snacks. **If you are not in a Lifegroup** and would like to gather with others on the Friday evening, let us know when booking and we will gather you together so that you can also enjoy a time of forming new relationships with others ready for the weekend ahead. The cost for this isn't included in the weekend, so each group can decide how they would like to gather.

What is the format of the Weekend

Saturday morning – arrive for 9:15am for refreshments and to register and drop off children (if this relates to you) to their groups.

Session 1 for adults: 9:45am – 11:15am and Session 2: 11:45am – 1pm

As this is a Church Weekend at Home, we won't be having an outside speaker. Malcolm and Matt will be leading and there will be opportunities to hear from people within the Church family as well as input from people who have been 'sent' from St Mary's and are now serving at other churches around the UK.

Saturday afternoon – there won't be any set sessions or groups during the afternoon but there will be fun games (at St Michael's field) and also a forest walk along with some seminars on different topics at the church. There will also be some games and activities set out in the Church. You may also just like to have some quiet time and the Prayer Room will be available.

Saturday evening – arrive at 5:30pm ready for Saturday Night Takeaway and some fun entertainment for all ages.

Sunday morning – arrive at 10am for a breakfast roll and alternatives, and then we will have a service gathering all 3 services together, adults and children, starting at 11am. This will be approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes (depending on numbers it may be slightly longer as we will be having communion together). The Church weekend will finish at the end of the service.

Food

All coffee/tea breaks throughout Saturday and Sunday are included in the cost. This also includes the meal for the Saturday night takeaway and Sunday breakfast. Saturday lunch isn't included and we encourage you to bring your own lunch with you or there are plenty of places on Loughton High Road where you can purchase lunch (supermarkets and sandwich shops).

When can I order my food for Saturday evening?

Food orders will be taken from 29 September – these will be able to be ordered in person on a Sunday or come to the office. We will also set up the option of ordering on St Mary's website. More details will follow.

Cost of the Weekend

We have budgeted for the cost of the weekend to be covered by those attending and includes, refreshments throughout the weekend, Saturday evening meal, Sunday breakfast, children's work, and other expenses related to the weekend. We have aimed to keep the cost as low as possible. If you do require a small bursary to help with the cost, please contact Amanda Hart 020 8508 3643 or amanda@stmarysloughton.com

What happens for those who are not coming on the whole Church Weekend at Home but want to come to Church on Sunday?

Everyone is welcome to come to the joint service starting at 11am on Sunday morning. It is open for all.