

St Michael All Angels

Southam, Woolstone, Gotherington & Oxenton

Outdoor Worship and Prayer Summer 2026

New Life

An activity

at St Michael's Churchyard

Start at the churchyard's compost area behind the church. Look closely at how leaves, cuttings and dead plants are slowly broken down into new soil.

Now walk over to the flower beds, remembering that every flower there began life as a tiny seed or cutting. You might want to hold a little compost in one hand and a flower or leaf in the other.

Choose one of the paths towards the church and walk it slowly, noticing the trees, herbs, birds, insects, and the gravestones along the way.

Pause beside a gravestone. What does it feel like to stand somewhere that holds both endings and, all around it, so much new life?

1 Corinthians 15:35-38

Some skeptic is sure to ask, "Show me how resurrection works. Give me a diagram; draw me a picture. What does this 'resurrection body' look like?" If you look at this question closely, you realise how absurd it is. There are no diagrams for this kind of thing. We do have a parallel experience in gardening. You plant a "dead" seed; soon there is a flourishing plant. There is no visual likeness between seed and plant. You could never guess what a tomato would look like by looking at a tomato seed. What we plant in the soil and what grows out of it don't look anything alike. The dead body that we bury in the ground and the resurrection body that comes from it will be dramatically different.

A way to pray...

Composting to new life – Still holding your compost and your flower or leaf, thank God that just as a seed must be buried before it can grow, he can bring new life out of what looks like an ending. Ask him to help you trust that in your own life.

Among the gravestones – Read a name if you can find one. Give thanks for someone you have loved who has died, and thank God for the hope, found in this passage, that death is not the end of the story.

Signs of life – As you walk back along the path, name one sign of life you noticed today – a bird, an insect, a new shoot – and ask God to help that same kind of new life grow in you.