

# WHEATLAND NEWS

February 2025



News from the Diocese of Hereford and the 17 parishes  
around Ditton Priors, Stottesdon and Highley

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# Editorial

This month Storm Eowyn has been in full swing across various parts of the UK. We have been fortunate in the Wheatland area to have avoided (missed) some of the treacherous weather but must still be aware of the dangers of the stronger winds.

In this edition of this Wheatland News there are many memories of the Christmas period celebrations accompanied by photographs showing the communities across the region coming together at various events.

2024 was a year of no little turbulence and change for the Church of England. Let us hope and pray that its leaders and the synod will find wisdom and a good way forward for the future.

Changes to the Deaneries – Bridgnorth Deanery has now been combined with Telford to form the Severn Borders Deanery.

Revd Jeanetta Stokes will be its Rural Dean.

The Rt Revd Dr David Thomson, formerly Bishop of Huntingdon, pictured here at his retirement celebration (Ely Standard) and now living in retirement in Hereford with his wife Jean and with family nearby, will be serving as “Acting Bishop” of the Diocese between Epiphany and Holy Week this year while Bishop Richard is on sabbatical.



At the end of 2024 Mike Teague, who has been a member of Bishop’s Synod and the Director of Music for the Brown Clee Benefice, has retired from both of these roles and with his wife Sue will be exploring pastures new during 2025. Both will be greatly missed and we thank them for their help, support and dedication not only during the Brown Clee Interregnum, but at all other times, too many to be mentioned during their years in this area. To Mike and Sue – enjoy your new-found freedom and thank you.

Finally, this quote was sent to the Editor and gives food for thought.....,

**“Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do that, because what the world needs is more people who have come alive.”**

(Howard Thurman – American author, philosopher, theologian, Christian mystic, educator, and civil rights leader.)

## Wheatland News Local Coordinators

Please continue to send reports to your contact for your parishes listed below.

The deadline for getting your contributions for the **March 2025** edition of WN to the **EDITOR** will be **noon on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025**. Please, please help us to help our printer and our distributors so that we get WN to you in good time each month.

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Highley	Canev Clayton -
Glazeley & Deuxhill	Marion Corfield - <a href="mailto:marion.corfield@talktalk.net">marion.corfield@talktalk.net</a> Revd David Poyner - <a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a>
Billingsley	Revd David Poyner - <a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a>
Farlow, Sidbury, Middleton Scriven, Cleeton St Mary, and Silvington	Chris Tibbits - <a href="mailto:Chris@stottystores.co.uk">Chris@stottystores.co.uk</a>



# Diocese of Hereford

## February letter from Bishop David



The New Year is underway, and I am standing in for Bishop Richard while he is on sabbatical. He has given us themes for recent years: Prayer, Faith, and now it's Engagement – with Celebration to come! There's a lovely sense of flow between them, I think. Let me say what I mean...

Our church is rooted in Christ, and our relationship with him in prayer is where it all begins. Without the roots, nothing else will grow. St John loves to use the word "Abiding" for this relationship – one of peace and permanence, of being where we belong. "Abide in me as I abide in you." (John 15.4) When we find our place, we find our peace and become people of peace. We are seeing a global increase in anxiety, and "We are Farming Minds" has shown how that is true locally, too. If we can be people of peace and offer places of peace, we can make a difference in real, local lives.

Out of the roots of prayer come shoots of faith: "I am the vine; you are the branches." (John 15.5) As we abide in Christ, so we come to trust him more as the well-spring of our life. We seek security in all sorts of things, some good, some less so; but also realise that what they offer is limited and sometimes deceptive. I sensed this Christmas afresh how fundamental the Christmas presence of Christ was compared with any of the presents life can bring, right here, in a broken world of lost homes and lives. I have friends on my heart for whom Christmas brought bad news not good, and my longing for them is that they will know Christ's presence in their predicaments.

Then, the shoots of faith lead to the fruits of engagement, as lives are touched and changed for the better. "Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit." (John 15.5) It may well be that the need to find peace and solace in a disastrous world first draws us to the church. But as Christ grows in us and we in him, we realise that the church is not an escape craft from the world but a landing craft into it. God's great desire is that the whole world should be saved. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3,16) And that is worth a Year of Engagement in God's mission with the world around us now, and a Year of Celebration when it comes!

+Bishop David

## 2025 – The Church's Year of Engagement

The New Year sees the launch of the diocesan Year of Engagement which follows on from the Year of Prayer and Year of Faith, completing the trilogy of 'Prayerful, Christlike and Engaged', which form part of the diocese logo.

In our first video for the Year of Engagement, Bishop Richard talks with Revd Stephen Hollinghurst, Mission Enabler for the Environment and the Year of Engagement, and former Chaplain to the Bishop, and with Revd Nicol Kinrade, about the Five Marks of Mission and how they form a scaffolding for thinking about engagement. The Year of Engagement will be marked by many events all around the diocese, including Bishop's Study Days and Bishop's Teaching Events.



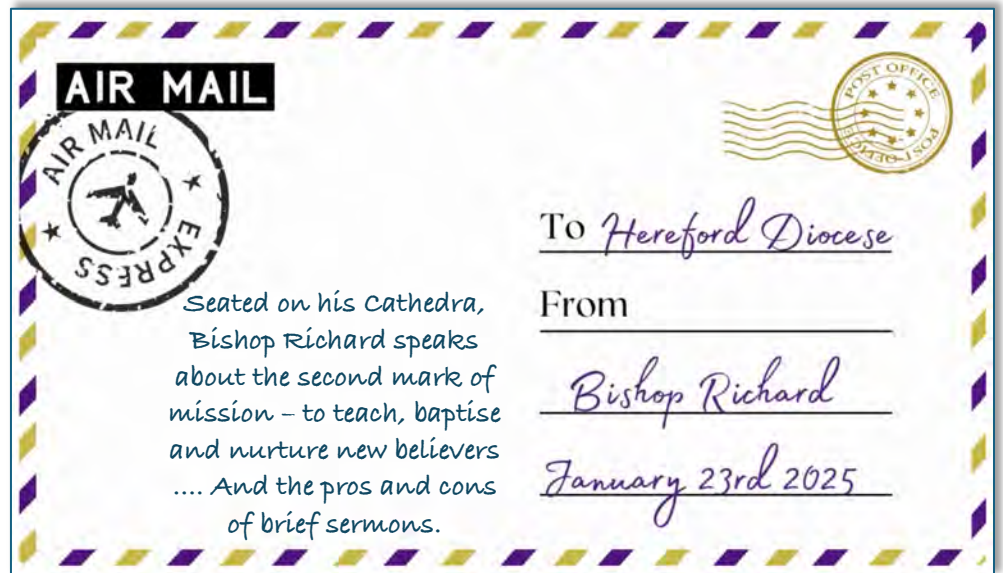
The Church of England's Lent Theme for 2025 is Living Hope.



## Bishop Richard's Postcard

### Bishop Richard's weekly postcard

Bishop Richard is currently on sabbatical in the Southern Hemisphere. However, he recorded his weekly messages before leaving and is sending them as 'postcards'!



You can read the transcript, and watch the video, on the Diocese website at

<https://www.hereford.anglican.org/news/bishop-of-herefords-message/-bishop-richards-weekly-video-message--transcript-24102024.php>

## Study Course for Lent 2025

Dear All,

Lent will start on Ash Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> March, and as is traditional, we will all be following a new study course over the following 6 weeks until Easter.

Last year we looked at Mark's Gospel. This year marks the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, the great poem that we recite every communion service which explores what we and virtually all Christians have believed over those centuries.

The Apostles' Creed is a shorter version of this which we use at Morning Prayer.

To celebrate this anniversary and also to understand more about the basis of our faith, this Lent our existing Severn Valley benefice study groups (Tuesday Bible Study, Wednesday Ladies Group, Wednesday Zoom Group) will be looking at the creeds. We will follow a course developed some years ago; [Pilgrim: The Creeds Book 5 \(Grow Stage\) by Jane Williams, Paula Gooder, Stephen Cottrell, Steven Croft, Robert Atwell, Graham Tomlin, Martyn Snow, Mary Gregory - Paperback - 9780715144442](#) The cost is £4 if anyone wishes to buy a copy of the book, although this is not necessary to follow the course.

Even if you do not normally follow one of our study groups, please consider joining us for our Lent journey this year. We are also working with our friends in the neighbouring Brown Clee Benefice on the same course.

**Rev'd David Poyner**

# Brown Clee Benefice

**Priest-in-Charge - Revd Joe Simons**

The Vicarage, Ditton Priors, Shropshire, WV16 6SQ

01746-599217      07872-464276



***St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and Holy Trinity, Wheathill and Loughton***

CHURCHWARDENS:

Carole Smith

Mark Smith: 01746-712394

***St Michael & All Angels, Aston Botterell***

CHURCHWARDENS:

Anne Preece: 01746-787237

Ben Upton: 07870-160039

***St Giles', Chetton***

CHURCHWARDEN

Sheila Millington: 01746-789443

***SS Peter & Paul, Cleobury North***

CHURCHWARDENS:

Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676

Jane Bufton: 07716-877421

***All Saints', Neenton***

CHURCHWARDEN:

Bobbie Jarvis: 01746-787093

## February reflection

One of the inevitabilities in life is that we are all getting older.

With the passage of time, we maybe spend time looking back on where we have come from and to a certain extent where we are heading.

We celebrate in February the presentation of Christ at the temple - often called Candlemas. In the reading from Luke's gospel, we read about Simeon and Anna both waiting patiently for the arrival of the Messiah at the temple. This story is one of hope as Mary and Joseph bring Jesus, the long-awaited Saviour of Israel, for his presentation at the temple.

This is a touching story of fulfillment, but not quite the experience of all of us as we enter into later life. I suspect that there are many questions, what will happen, will I be a burden, will my memory fail? This was not the case for Simeon and Anna: they knew that there were promises to be fulfilled by God and this was their focus.

Old age can not only bring its own concerns but can also provide a sense of reprioritising, the mists clear and we can see what matters and what does not. We can spend more time 'being' rather than 'doing', ambition to 'get on' becomes less important. Loving, acceptance and healing of relationship become our priority.

In our journey as disciples of Christ we should also be mindful that the work of the Holy Spirit in us is not finished, and like Simeon and Anna we too wait for fulfillment of God's promises of restoration and renewal. In the meantime, we still have lots to do and many things to achieve.

In my work as a Mission Enabler with responsibility for church and society I see around much that is done by people who are more advanced in years, their work with the voluntary sector, foodbanks and pastoral care within our communities to name just a few.

**Jesus enables us to be his Kingdom bringers here in our world -  
and whilst we are this side of eternity, there is work for us to do.**

*Revd Joe Simons*

## Brown Clee Christmas



Over Christmas we were thrilled to have the churches filled with families and our two School Services.

We held a lovely Christingle in aid of the Children's Society.....

All of the children from Brown Clee School gave us a rousing carol service.....

And the Little Explorers put on a wonderful nativity play with songs for us to enjoy.



At Aston Botterell we were treated to a Winter Wonderland and Father Christmas accompanied by Cleobury Mortimer Brass Band for a night to remember (see separate report) and lastly we had our Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

**It was so rewarding to see our churches come alive and we look forward to seeing you all again over this New Year.**



We were thrilled to host the **Young Farmers** again this year for their **Carols on the Street** - and of course refreshments in the Church! This is such a happy Community Event and raises money for the BCYF chosen charities. This year they raised over **£400** and I am sure that everyone enjoyed the evening - We will be supporting them with more joint events so do watch out for their 2025 programme.



## Readings for February

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – the Presentation of Christ in the Temple – Candlemas - Gold or White**

Psalm 24. (1 – 6), 7 – end;

Malachi 3. 1 – 5; Hebrews 2. 14 – end; Luke 2. 22 – 40

### **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February – Fourth Sunday before Lent - Green**

Psalm 138

Isaiah 6. 1 – 8 (9 – end); 1 1 Corinthians 15. 1 – 11; Luke 5. 1 - 11

### **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February – Third Sunday before Lent – Septuagesima – Green**

Psalm 1

Jeremiah 17. 5 – 10; 1 Corinthians 15. 12 – 20; Luke 6. 17 - 26

### **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – Second Sunday before Lent – Sexagesima - Green**

Psalm 65

Genesis 2. 4b – 9, 15 – end; Revelation 4; Luke 8. 22 - 25

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – Sunday next before Lent – Quinquagesima - Green**

Psalm 99

Exodus 34. 29 – end; 2 Corinthians 3. 12 – 4.2; Luke 9. 28 – 36 (37 – 43a)



## Services in Brown Clee Churches during February

### **Sunday 2nd February**

9:30 am

Holy Communion

Ditton Priors

11:00 am

Coffee & Prayers

Middle House Farm, Aston Botterell

### **Sunday 9th February**

9.30 am

Holy Communion

Ditton Priors

11:30 am

Holy Communion

Chetton

### **Sunday 16th February**

9:30 am

Holy Communion

Ditton Priors

11:30 am

Holy Communion

Neenton

### **Sunday 23rd February**

9:45 am

Holy Communion

Chetton

11:30 am

Holy Communion

Cleobury North

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

9:30 am

Holy Communion

Ditton Priors

11:30 am

Holy Communion

Aston Botterell



# Ditton Priors News

*Marjorie Jones writes*

We are now well into the New Year, but it has been a slow start for many who have been suffering from nasty virus infections over the Christmas and New Year period. I wish everyone good health and renewed vitality as the evenings get lighter and the gloom of winter passes. We all crave the sunlight just as we crave God's love and acceptance and that of those around us. Our community is very special.

The Christmas Services were well received, and it was so good to see the schoolchildren and Little Explorers in Church for their Christmas Services.

## Insurance

Did you know that it costs over £2000 per year to insure our Church (whether we use it or not)?? Yes, we're always asking for help.

## Churchyards

We had to have two dead trees felled in the Autumn which cost £2495. Unfortunately we had trees damaged in the end of year high winds and an emergency removal of branches cost another £690, with further work to complete. These costs, of course, are in addition to the annual mowing and trimming upkeep. Yes, we're always asking for help, but we do need support from our community to maintain these community assets. Donations welcome to Revd Joe or to Marjorie.

## Ash Wednesday 5th March.

**Lent Lunch - Thursday 20th March at 12.30pm** prompt at Ditton Village Hall. Home-made Soups will be served with bread rolls, followed by Cheese & Biscuits. No charge but donations welcomed. There will be a Raffle. Last year we donated £50 to the 'Smile' Charity.

**First Saturday Coffee Mornings.** - 10am - 12 noon in Church.

There is no charge for this popular community event, and everyone is very welcome. Next dates: Saturdays 1st February, 1st March, 5th April and 3rd May.

## Fund Raising

We have arranged a meeting for Wednesday 29th January 1.45pm at the home of Jutta Langham to plan for this year's events. If anyone has any bright ideas as to how we can raise money for Church funds and would like to join our small group, please get in touch with Carole Smith or Marjorie (712423).

## Church Altar Flowers

Once again it is the time of year when we are asking for help with the Altar flowers! If you have an anniversary or birthday that you would like to remember or celebrate by putting flowers in church, or perhaps you just like to see lovely flowers in church – PLEASE HELP! Water and vases are supplied. If you need to know more just contact Pat on 01746-787457

## Church cleaning – February

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – Mr & Mrs Graham Russell

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February – Mrs Shirley Wall & Mrs Anita Casswell

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February – Mrs Jennifer Lowe & Mrs Debbie Jones

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – Mr & Mrs Dennis Griffiths

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – Mr & Mrs John Ballard

## St John the Baptist 100 Club results

### December 2024

- £100 – Veronica Moore
- £20 - Dot Cartwright
- £10 - George Parker
- £5 each to: Dennis Griffiths, Pam Gennard, and Cecil & Jen Thomas

### January 2025

- £20 - Doreen Bradley
- £10 - Emily Mitchell
- £5 each to Pam Dicer, Clive Mason, and Pat Warren

## Ditton Priors Halls committee – 2025 Events

We have another busy and fun year ahead for the Hall and Pavilion -here are a few for your diaries:

- Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February: at 6.30 -Teachers Pet Rock Show at Ditton Priors Village Hall
- Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April: Music Bingo at Ditton Priors Pavilion
- Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July: BEEEFEST at Ditton Priors recreation ground

We look forward to seeing you there!



## Burwarton & District Wives' Group

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February at the Pavilion, Ditton Priors Playing Field at 7.30pm when we shall have a talk entitled 'My Life in the RAF' by Al Metcalfe. There will also be a raffle during the evening. A warm welcome awaits you with a chance to meet new and old friends. If you would like any further information please feel free to contact Debbie Jones (01746 712421), Gill Severn (01746 712231) or Margaret Bill (01746 712030).

## Wheathill & Loughton News

*Marjorie Jones writes:*

It was good to see both the Churches decorated so brightly and cheerfully for the Christmas Services.

Next Services:

- ✝ March 30<sup>th</sup> - 10am Group Service at Wheathill - Mothering Sunday
- ✝ April 13<sup>th</sup> - 6pm Evening Prayer at Loughton

## Aston Botterell News

*Anne Preece writes:*

- ✝ **Services are held at Aston Botterell Church on the First Sunday every month at 11.30 am.**

Please check in Wheatland News and on Pew Sheets for monthly changes during the cold winter months when an informal prayer and coffee/tea morning will take place.

**Flowers and cleaning** – Anyone who would like to help with flowers, and clean the church for one service in the year would be very welcome. Please contact Anne.

**Bell Ringing** – We are holding a bell ringing learning session: is anyone available to teach please? if anyone is willing to give us a few lessons, please contact Anne.

**Future Events** – Quiz and meal....car treasure hunt .... music event. **Watch this space.**



## The Night before Christmas .....

**Thank you to everyone who took part in our service** on 22<sup>nd</sup> December, who gave donations, who prepared food and who helped in any way to make this possible. It was one of the coldest evenings of the year which resulted in periods of overload to the power supply, hopefully to be sorted for next year! - it added to the effects of the evening!

Enjoy the photos and the story of the '**Night Before Christmas**' community celebration on the back page of this WN.

## St Michael & All Angels – December & January 50 Club Results

- £20 each to Debbie Jones - No 10 and Andrew Preece - No 200
- £10 each to Audrey Colebatch - No 36, David Roberts - No 234, £10 - Dorothy Williams - No 70 and to Jane Watkins - No 175

## Cleobury North & District Village Hall

*CNVH Management Committee writes:*

Following the survey circulated in 2024 there were several suggestions of events people would like to attend. In view of this and to meet requests for a Black Country evening we are fortunate to have booked The Rotundas, a local group and Winners of the Battle of the Bands competition at Ludlow Assembly Rooms in 2024.

### **Come and join us on 22nd February 2025 –**

The Rotundas, an English folk band who play the traditional industrial and social songs of Birmingham and the Black Country.

Tickets £18 to include stew and crusty bread supplied by The Willows. Reserve the date in your diaries, book your place for an interesting evening of entertainment from this talented foursome.

Contact Julia on 07790 169358 or Bobbie on 01746 787093 for further details and with dietary requirements.

### **CNVH remains open and available for hire.**

For enquiries about booking and using the hall, please call 01746-787093 and leave a message or send a TEXT MESSAGE to 07483-879763 (or both!).

### **Regular coffee mornings are being held in**

**the Hall**, in aid of CNVH funds – please contact Julia in Cleobury North shop for information on dates and times.

## **CLEOBURY NORTH & DISTRICT VILLAGE HALL**

**Fundraising evening**

# **THE ROTUNDAS**



**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025**

**An evening of entertainment with songs and folklore  
from around the Black Country and Birmingham**

**7.15pm**

**Tickets £18 to include beef stew and crusty bread,  
supplied by The Willows**

**BAR – RAFFLE**

**Contact : Julia, 07790 169358**

Winners of the Battle of the Bands competition at Ludlow Assembly Rooms in 2024.

## Cleobury North & Burwarton News

*Jane Bufton writes:*

**Thank you to all** who have supported our church during 2024 and for attending the special Christmas services.

We look forward to moving onwards during 2025 with further activities which will be circulated in the Wheatland News and other areas as they are arranged.

### **Lottery winners December 2024**

1st - Mrs Baugh, 2nd - David Green, 3rd - Janet Chanoler

Thank you to all who have supported the Church restoration project. We continue to work towards keeping our lovely church open. Please contact Jane Bufton if you can help in any way.

## Burwarton & District WI

*Helen Groves writes:*

We have an interesting programme for 2025 with speakers, social afternoons and outings and would welcome everyone to come and have an enjoyable time with us.

We have monthly meetings at **Cleobury North Village Hall** on **Tuesdays**, from October to March at 2.30pm and from April to September at 7.30pm.

Visitors pay £3.

For more information please ring Helen Groves on 01746 712466 or e mail me on [groves.helen5@gmail.com](mailto:groves.helen5@gmail.com).



## Chetton News

### Church services in February

- ✝ Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February – 11:30 am – Holy Communion
- ✝ Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – 9:45 am – Holy Communion

### Flowers and Cleaning - Paul and Mo Verney

*Pam Downing writes:*

We are well into the New Year and looking forward to services and events in our Benefice. Looking back, we had a wonderful Carol service and a packed Church for Holy Communion on Christmas Day. Our Christmas supper was also a full house, thank you Charles and Lisa for your hospitality.

Our choir master and musical director Mike Teague is standing down after 17 years. We are incredibly grateful for all the hard work that he has done in Chetton and the whole Benefice. He and Sue have been dedicated in bringing us wonderful music over the years and keeping our excellent choir in good voice. It's quite a commitment to keep up weekly practices and perform in our Churches in all weathers. **Thank you so much Mike.**

Thank you also to **Andy Johnson** for playing the organ for our services, and playing Carols after our Christmas meal.

On to social matters, we have a **Breakfast at the Down** for Chetton Church on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March, 9am. Let Sheila know if you would like to join us.

### Burwarton & District WI - 2025 Programme

11<sup>th</sup> February - Kitchen Pharmacy Hannah Charman

11<sup>th</sup> March - Blood Bikes

8<sup>th</sup> April - Priscilla Masters Author

13<sup>th</sup> May - Visit to Wassell Groves Fishery

10<sup>th</sup> June - Concordia Ladies Choir

8<sup>th</sup> July - Garden Party

12<sup>th</sup> August - Summer Outing

9<sup>th</sup> September - Talk about Shrewsbury Maggie Love

14<sup>th</sup> October - outing to Arley Arboretum

11<sup>th</sup> November - AGM - Footcare Julia Lucas

9<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Lunch

### St Giles' 100 Club

**Our Hundred Club subscription is now due for 2025.** If you would like to join it's £10.00 per ticket and there are two prizes each month. Contact Lisa.

December 2024

£15.00 Hugo & Flossie Durston no 8.

£10.00 June Preece no 84.

January 2025

£15.00 Jill Tofiluk no 4.

£10.00 James Pugh no 10.

February 2025

£15.00 Peter Gill no 25.

£10.00 Jonty Bayliss no 43.



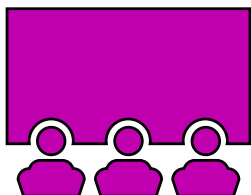
## Chetton Village Hall

### Chetton Active Friends – exercise and recreational sessions

#### Village Hall Diary for 2025

- Pam's Pilates on Mondays and Tuesdays 9:30am, and also on Tuesdays 11:00am.
- Chetton Active Friends, Monday afternoons from 2pm.
- Chetton and Glazeley WI meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm.
- Bridgnorth Dog Club - Thursday evening, 6:00pm.
- Zumba with Lisa Beards – Tuesdays - 2:30 pm
- Ballroom and Sequence Dancing, Tuesday evenings, 7:00pm.

Village Hall enquiries – for activities or hire, please contact Sue Bayliss on 789239.



**Flicks in the Sticks** – The new season opens with **'The Great Escaper'** starring Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson, on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February. Doors open at 7pm for refreshments and film commences at 7.30. Please note new price of £5.00 for the film.

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March we are showing **'The Critic'** starring Ian McKellen, Gemma Arterton and Lesley Manville.

**Sound Bath** – Sarah Haden has two dates for Sound Bath: Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February and Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March. Please contact 2sarahhaden@googlemail.com to book.

**Village Hall Curry and Quiz Night** – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March starting at 7pm for 7.15 pm. Teams of six. To book please email [talletboxer@gmail.com](mailto:talletboxer@gmail.com). Please submit a team name and numbers and if people want to be added let us know, adding any dietary requirements. Tickets £12.00 – bring your own drinks. Organised by Sarah Crawford-Clarke.

**Eileen Reynolds** has retired as Chetton Parish Council Clerk after 34 years' service. She has been a very valued member of the Parish Council and will be very much missed. On behalf of us all, we would like to wish Eileen a very happy retirement.

## Wheatland Diary

Sat	1	Feb	Coffee morning, St John's Church, Ditton Priors, 10:30 – 12:00. All welcome - see page 9
Sun	2	Feb	Candlemas – please ensure that you have removed wreaths from the churchyards! See page 21
Wed	5	Feb	Burwarton & District Wives' Group – Ditton Priors Pavilion, 7:30 pm – see page 10
Fri	7	Feb	Flicks in the Sticks – 'The Great Escaper' - Chetton Village Hall – 7:00pm – see page 13
Sat	8	Feb	Teachers' Pet – Rock Show, Ditton Priors VH, 6:30 pm – see page 10
Sat	8	Feb	Start of "Love Your Yew" week – see page 19
Sat	8	Feb	Coffee morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 am – 12 noon – see page 24
Tue	11	Feb	Burwarton & District WI – Cleobury North VH, 2:30pm – see page 12
Thur	13	Feb	Burwarton etc Garden Club - Gardening with Wildflowers – Stoke St Milboro VH, 2:00 pm see page 19
Sat	22	Feb	Cleobury North Village Hall – The Rotundas – industrial and social folk music – see page 11
Sat	1	Mar	Coffee morning, St John's Church, Ditton Priors, 10:30 – 12:00. All welcome - see page 9
Sat	1	Mar	Breakfast at The Down – for Chetton Church with Glazeley Church – see page 12 & 16
Fri	7	Mar	Flicks in the Sticks – 'The Critic' – Chetton Village Hall, 7:00pm – see page 13
Sat	8	Mar	Coffee morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 am – 12 noon – see page 23
Thur	20	Mar	Lent Lunch – Ditton Priors Village Hall – 12:30 pm – see page 9
Fri	21	Mar	Lunch at Hall Farm, Deuxhill – for details, tickets, prices etc see page 16
Sat	22	Mar	Chetton VH Curry & Quiz Night – 7:00pm – teams of 6 – for booking details and tickets see page 13
Sat	5	Apr	Coffee morning, St John's Church, Ditton Priors, 10:30 – 12:00. All welcome - see page 9
Sat	5	Apr	Music Bingo – Ditton Priors Pavilion – see page 10



## Neenton News

*Bobbie Jarvis writes:*

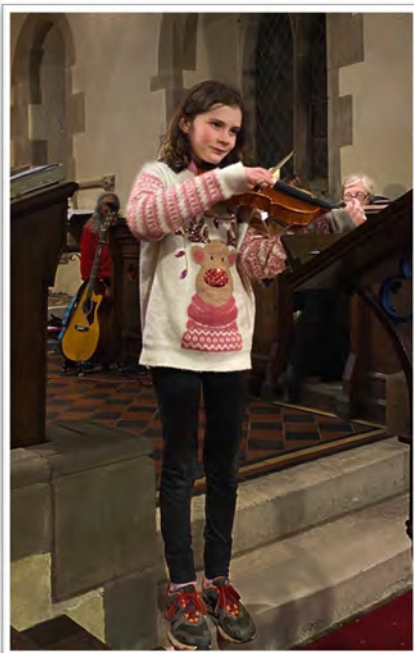
### Service at All Saints' Church during February

✝ Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February – 11:30 am - Holy Communion

**Our Carol Service** – an enthusiastic congregation arrived to join in with our favourite Christmas Carols and enjoy the warm atmosphere of All Saints' Church as we remembered the Christmas Story in readings and song.

**At the end of the service we were entertained by Rosie on violin and George on clarinet with two well-known carols.**

Rosie and George demonstrated confidence and ability to show us how they are progressing and to achieve their next certificate in their scout challenge.



The Pheasant provided mulled wine and mince pies to complete the evening in the warm atmosphere of the pub.  
**Thank you to all who supported this evening.**

**The churchyard** has been tidied throughout the year by volunteers – thank you all! We are an area of Caring for God's Acre so allow various places to remain as 'wild' areas for the primroses and other flora and fauna to survive and flourish, not to mention the wildlife! Each month in WN we report from CfGA so you can read about all the different things which happen in churchyards from nature's perspective! In the meantime, we ask that all wreaths and debris are removed from graves to maintain a "looked-after" appearance.

**Our fund-raising events** to maintain the church and to raise money for the repairs to the stained glass window will continue throughout the year, with our Duck Race and Fete starting the major events. Date to be announced in March edition – watch this space.

**Bobbie Jarvis wishes to thank** all the people who have supported her in so many ways through the last few months during an ongoing period of partial immobility.

### Valentine's Italian Feast! – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February

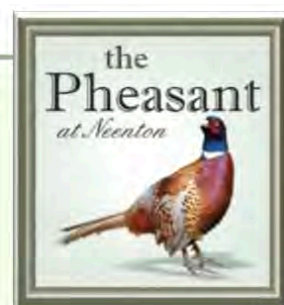
**Music and Food night – March – date tba**

#### Usual opening times

- Wednesday / Thursday – 12 noon – 3 pm, 6 pm – 11 pm
- Friday / Saturday – 12 noon – 11 pm
- Sunday – lunch – 12 noon – 4:30 pm

Please call 01746-787955 or email [info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk](mailto:info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk) to discuss times and your requirements, or alternatively book direct on our website.

<https://pheasantatneenton.co.uk>





# Severn Valley Rescue



Whilst doing my weekly round of Billingsley and Glazeley, I chanced on an open day at the animal rescue sanctuary at the Old Brickyard in Billingsley. By kind permission of Amanda and the volunteers, I was able to go round and take some photos.

It has been some years since I last visited, in the days when it was

primarily for donkeys. The donkeys are still there, but there is much more besides; a host of four and two legged creatures, set in grounds of the former brickyard.

A couple of years ago we had the privilege of a visit by Amanda and two donkeys to our Palm Sunday service when she told us some of the work that the centre does. Of course it cares for animals but it also works with people who benefit from being with these. It has a website, [Donkey Sanctuary & Dog Rescue Shropshire | Severn Valley Rescue](http://www.severnvalleyrescue.org), but perhaps the best way of learning about their work and forthcoming events is via their page on Facebook, [https://www.facebook.com/severnvalleyrescue/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/severnvalleyrescue/?locale=en_GB).



I chatted to Amanda and the volunteers about what an impact it can make on children or vulnerable adults, to be able to stroke or cuddle one of their animals, particularly those who were initially scared. There is a spiritual dimension to being with an animal, regardless of whether you believe in God; it is about communication at a very deep level when love is simply offered and accepted.



**Please do visit the centre on one of their open days – or pre-book a visit as per the Facebook page.** Not only are there the donkeys, the parrots, the ducks, the goats, the alpacas and a host of other animals, there is a new walk around the flooded brick pit, a lovely shady place on hot days. I can also recommend the tea and cakes.



**Severn Valley Rescue is a small charity that relies on support from the public, so please help them if you can.**

**DRP**

<https://www.severnvalleyrescue.org> – [https://www.facebook.com/severnvalleyrescue/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/severnvalleyrescue/?locale=en_GB)



# The Severn Valley Group of Parishes

Rector: Revd Kina Robertshaw - [Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com](mailto:Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com)

~

Revd David Poyner, Associate Minister - email [D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk),  
Tel 01562 68638 (home) or 0121 204 3997 (work);

St Mary, Highley <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Canev Clayton	St Mary, Billingsley <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Vacant	St Peter, Chelmarsh <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Vacant	St Bartholomew, Glazeley <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Laura Jones – 07714-432836, <a href="mailto:laura@laj.me.uk">laura@laj.me.uk</a>
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## Glazeley News

*The Revd David Poyner and Marion Corfield write:*

I am pleased to report that we had a very good turnout for our Christmas service, with around 35 people attending. We are especially grateful for the support from our friends from Chetton, which boosted the congregation. After the service, Laura and Andrew Jones very kindly provided refreshments at their home in the Old Rectory.

Just before Christmas we had a very welcome present in the form of a 75% grant to the repairs of the floor in the church. This was from the "Buildings for Mission minor repairs and improvements fund", administered by the Diocese. We are very grateful for this support, and we hope to start the repairs as soon as possible. We also have received the latest Quinquennial report, from our architect. As the name suggests, this is a "health check" on the church building, done at five-year intervals and no serious issues were identified. There are quite a few minor repairs we need to do, but fortunately we are in a position to deal with these before they become serious.

Our services continue on the third Sunday of the month at 10.00am plus a monthly **breakfast at The Down**, held jointly with Chetton. We now have a Facebook page where we can publicise these:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61569835391814>

**Anita Morley is happy to organise and cook for a lunch at her home**, Hall Farm, Deuxhill, on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March 12.15 for 12.30 pm. Ticket price £20 to include a glass (or two!), main course, pudding and coffee/tea if required. Raffle extra and if anyone has any special dietary requirements please contact Marion on 01746 764585/ [marion.corfield@talktalk.net](mailto:marion.corfield@talktalk.net). There is maximum of 40. If you do book and have to cancel, please let Anita or Marion know. Last year one or two persons who had booked didn't turn up and they hadn't paid either....

Revd David Poyner – Tel 01562-68638

Email [D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk)

Glazeley & Deuxhill: St Bartholomew -  
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10533/>

Marion Corfield – Tel 01746-764585

[Marion.corfield@talktalk.net](mailto:Marion.corfield@talktalk.net)

## Billingsley News

*The Revd David Poyner writes:*

After a couple of years of declining numbers at the outdoor carol service at Lincoln Fields, this time we moved back indoors in the church and were rewarded with a congregation of around 20 people. On Christmas morning, we had 16 people for communion. We may soon have to think about an extension to the church.... Many thanks to everyone who supported us.



We have done various items of minor maintenance in and around the church. I bravely scaled a ladder to clean the gutters, including the downspout where there was a danger of a small tree becoming established. We continue the hunt for an electrician who can guide us with the installation of wall heaters; these will make a real difference to the building.

This past year church has made small donations to Severn Valley Rescue, the "donkey sanctuary" at the old brickyard and also to the Anglican Church in Jerusalem. Whilst our resources are limited, we try to support a local good cause and one international charity each year. Severn Valley Rescue care not only for animals but also use these to help individuals with learning or other needs; animals are natural therapists! We picked the Church of England in Jerusalem as it works through the Holy Land to minister to all in need; Palestinian and Israeli, Jew, Christian and Gentile. Christ on the cross holds all humanity in his outstretched arms.

Revd David Poyner – Associate Minister - Tel 01562-68638

Email [D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk)

[Billingsley: St Mary - A Church Near You](#)

[\(20+\) St Mary's Billingsley | Bridgnorth | Facebook](#)

During the winter months, we have just one service a month at Billingsley, an 8am communion on the fourth Sunday of the month.

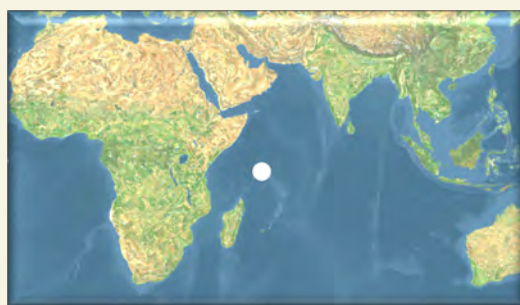
## Billingsley meets the Seychelles!

*Revd David Poyner writes:*

**One of the pleasures of being a vicar is that you sometimes get interesting requests.** A few weeks ago, Kina forwarded an email to me from a Richard Grainger, asking about a friend of his, the late John Mascarenhas, who died in 1997.

Mascarenhas lived an interesting life. He was born in Kenya and for a period served in the British Army. He was closely connected with the Seychelles, working as a journalist and politician. The Seychelles were still technically a British colony in the early 1970s but Mascarenhas was an advocate of independence. In 1971, due to his political activities, he was expelled from Kenya and moved to the Seychelles where he helped produce a pamphlet exposing racism in the islands. This earned the displeasure of the Governor, who declared him a "prohibited immigrant" in 1972 and attempted to expel him. Mascarenhas was however well-connected and his case was taken up in the UK Parliament by Leo Abse, a campaigning MP. He spent time in the UK before the attempted expulsion was reversed. After independence, Mascarenhas was elected Chairman of the People's Assembly of Seychelles and in 1993 became the High Commissioner for the country in the UK. He was also a very active sportsman; an accomplished gymnast in his younger days, he became president of the Seychelles National Olympic Committee.

**And the Billingsley connection?** Whilst in this country in 1972 he spent time at Billingsley Rectory, the guest of the owner, John Kinch. Richard has asked me if anyone knows about this. To the best of my knowledge, John Kinch lived in Billingsley from the mid-1960s; he was active in the church, serving as churchwarden (technically Rector's Warden) to the Rev Dore. I think Mr Kinch left in 1972 but I know nothing else about him; I have no idea what his connection might have been with Mascarenhas and the Seychelles.



**Has anyone got any memories of Mr Kinch? Any information would be greatly appreciated!**

*With thanks to Apple maps – I now know where the Seychelles is... or maybe are..... the most remote place I could ever imagine and a tiny pinhead under the big white dot! Ed.*

# Molecule of the Month

## SICDPK27 and tasteless tomatoes!

*Prof David Poyner writes:*



At the risk of stating the obvious, SICDPK27 does not have a particularly memorable name; in modern biology, nomenclature committees abound and there is a great drive to make names “systematic”. Thus “Old yellow enzyme” is now NADP dehydrogenase. I have to admit that I am not entirely sure what SICDPK27 actually stands for; the “CPDK” bit is “calcium dependant protein kinase”, it is the 27<sup>th</sup> in a series of proteins that have that function (see below) but the SI bit eludes me. However, whatever its name, it has an important role in tomatoes, perhaps one we wish it didn’t have. It makes them tasteless; at least that is what it does in the typical supermarket offering.

The tomatoes that we buy in shops or sometimes grow at home are derived from a plant that grows in the wild. These produce tomatoes that are sweet but also small; about the size of a cherry. Shops and food processors generally want larger tomatoes so as years gone by, producers have tried to grow tomatoes that are as big as possible. They have succeeded, magnificently. However, as size has increased, flavour has decreased.

Tomatoes taste sweet because they contain sugar; technically, the sweetness comes from sucrose, identical with household sugar that we use to sweeten food and drinks. Tomatoes make sugar by a protein called sucrose synthetase; in this case the name perfectly describes its job which is to synthesise sucrose. Modern tomatoes have much less of this enzyme than the small, wild tomatoes. Somehow, in selecting for varieties of tomatoes that grow large, the breeders have inadvertently also selected for fruits that are defective in sucrose synthetase. Now, a group from China have gone back to the wild tomatoes to try and understand why this has happened; enter SICDPK27.

SICDPK27 is a protein kinase; this means that its job is to chemically attach a unit, the phosphate group, to proteins it recognises. This is the equivalent of putting a label on a parcel or letter; the phosphate group effectively tells the cell what to do with the protein. Unfortunately for tomato breeders, in this case, it tells the cell to destroy sucrose synthetase. Without sucrose synthetase, the tomatoes cannot make enough sugar, hence the large, red but tasteless fruits on many supermarket shelves. However, the Chinese group appear to have found a solution. They have been able to engineer the large tomatoes to reduce the activity of SICDPK27 so that it no longer marks the sucrose synthetase for destruction. These tomatoes still are of a suitable size, but they are much larger.

A commentator on this work has noted it was only possible because the scientists were able to go back to the natural tomatoes to work out why they were sweet.

This, in turn, was possible because of conservation efforts to ensure that the natural tomatoes are still abundant in the wild.



**Caring for God’s creation is not just a duty to be endured; it has benefits for ourselves.**

# Burwarton & District Garden Club

December's meeting of the gardening club takes a very different format from others with no formal speaker, but instead short talks given by members. This year's began with a talk by Helen Sharp who told us how she developed a garden over 29 years in her previous home.



The plot had been a mushroom farm and Helen inherited many old rundown sheds and outbuildings and a huge amount of concrete.



Gradually over the years and with much hard work, the garden was developed into a beautiful country cottage garden. This was clearly a labour of love and was carried out whilst renovating the house and raising two young children. What an amazing achievement and transformation!

Helen's talk was followed by an update on my own garden project. After many delays and problems over the last two years, I was able to show how our once muddy and tricky garden has been transformed into a manageable cottage garden with my much longed-for water feature.

The members' talks were followed by afternoon tea with the usual spread of delicious savoury and sweet treats and a nice cup of tea.

During afternoon tea we were set a tricky but really fun quiz by Jill Perks. Can you recall the fruit that Huckleberry Hound sang about? (You would need to have been around between 1958 and 1961 to answer that one!) I think we all learned something new! There was also a Christmas foliage decoration competition which was won by myself for my door wreath.

The afternoon was, as always, the most enjoyable end to this year's meetings and in January we have our annual dinner at The Down Inn, before meeting again in February.

This year on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February, Nancy Lowe will be talking about 'Gardening with Wildflowers'. Nancy is an RHS qualified organic gardener, ecological garden designer, permaculturalist and writer with a passion for sustainable and eco-friendly gardening. Nancy grows food, makes beautiful wildlife gardens and writes with an infectious joy for all things plant related. This talk promises to be very informative.

**If you would like to join us** our talks start at 2.30pm, but the hall is open from 2.00pm to allow members to get a cuppa and have a chat before we begin. Annual membership is £12, but if you wish to come along to selected events which are advertised each month in this article, we charge £2.50 for a single visit.



If you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Bev Harris, Secretary,  
[bev Harris15@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bev Harris15@yahoo.co.uk) or call 07933 724728 or 01584 841845.



# The Stottesdon Group of Parishes

Rector: <i>post vacant</i> so for the coming months please contact the churchwardens or volunteers as below		
St Mary, Stottesdon CHURCHWARDEN Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007	St Giles, Farlow CHURCHWARDENS - VACANT – please contact the key holder, Pam Phillips	Holy Trinity, Sidbury CHURCHWARDEN Andrew Sierakowski - 07934-714149
St Mary, Cleeton St Mary CHURCHWARDEN Sue Dolphin: - 01584 890583	St John, Middleton Scriven CHURCHWARDEN - vacant – so contact Parish Rep Ann Constable	St Michael, Silvington CHURCHWARDEN - vacant – so contact Parish Rep Katie Hickman
In an emergency, please call the Rural Dean, Revd Jeannetta Stokes, on 01746-716698		

## February message

### Keeping the Show on the Road during the vacancy – part 14

Spare a thought for the six parish reps, who hold responsibility for participation, on behalf of all of us, in the appointment of the new Rector: let us pray that good applicants are forthcoming and that this month's interviews proceed positively.

As we continue to strive for a flourishing Christian presence in the parishes, our two schools and in the wider communities we serve, please:

- cherish and support the volunteers who work so hard to sustain the church here – the Churchwardens, the parish reps, and members of the PCC's; and
- thank the volunteer, visiting clergy who are routinely and willingly facilitating our Sunday worship.

Clare and Chris Tibbits

## From the Stottesdon Benefice Registers

- + Farlow – Funeral Office for Eric Gittens RIP
- + Stottesdon – Funeral Office for Denise Ingram RIP

If you are, or someone you know is, in need of prayer or a visit, or Communion at home or elsewhere during the interregnum, please contact your churchwarden or volunteer (details above), who will endeavour to help you to arrange this.

### Benefice website – A Church Near You: Stottesdon

We are trying to keep this updated during the vacancy, so if you need something added to it, please get in touch by email to [chris@stottystores.co.uk](mailto:chris@stottystores.co.uk) Thanks!

The deadline for the March 2025 edition (Stottesdon Benefice Parishes) is to get copy to Chris by first thing on **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025** – Thanks!



# Stottesdon Benefice Group News

## Services for February in the Stottesdon Churches

February	Celebrant	Stottesdon	Other parishes
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Neil Dunlop	10:30 - Morning Prayer Book of Common Prayer	FARLOW: 09:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	John Daniels	10:30 - Holy Communion	CLEETON: 09:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Justin Bailey	10:30 – Informal Worship	SIDBURY: 11:45 with David Poyner
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Justin Bailey	10:30 – Holy Communion	SILVINGTON: 09:00 Holy Communion
March			
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Neil Dunlop	10:30 - Morning Prayer Book of Common Prayer	FARLOW: 09:00 Holy Communion

During the continuing interregnum there will be some changes to the service pattern. These times are correct at the time of going to print, but it's always worth checking on our website (A church near you: Stottesdon benefice) or your churchwarden.

## Stottesdon News

*Clare Tibbits writes:*

### 100 Club winners for December:

Congratulations to our lucky winners for December's double-money draw - the Overton family, Richard & Karan Whitehouse and Lester Gittens. 2025 Membership details will be with you in time for the February draw.

### Seasonal Churchyard wreaths

Last Christmas's 'traditional wreaths' are tired and forlorn after the stormy weather. Please remember that yours should be removed, for recycling, composting or disposal at home, by Candlemas (Sunday 2 February). Thank you!



### National Gardens Scheme

Over many years the National Gardens Scheme has been **the principal source of fundraising** for nursing and hospice charities around the country. Stottesdon Open Gardens have regularly contributed to this great national effort.



Stottesdon Village Open Gardens for 2025 will be a celebration of Spring on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April 12-4pm.

**Volunteers and helpers will be most welcome** – please register your interest with Clare (01746 718007) or Wade (718753) or pop along to the Open Gardens Gathering 7pm at The Fighting Cocks on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February.

## News from the Tower!

*Derek Overton, Tower Captain, writes:*

On behalf of our bellringing team, I am pleased to announce that the treble bell has been restored by Taylors of Loughborough and is now in situ in the tower.

May I thank the many people who have donated towards the cost of restoration: without your help this project would not have been completed.

If anyone would like to join our bellringing band, or just see how the system works, we would be pleased to see you at any of our Friday practice nights (5-6pm).

*Not many folk may know that this work marks the end of a huge bell restoration programme, started in 2007 by none other than our Tower Captain – to whom we all owe a huge debt of gratitude for 18+ years of dedication and effort. Well done Derek!! [Ed.]*

## Farlow News

*Caroline Bilson writes:*

**Thank you** to everyone who came and supported the Christmas Market on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Monies raised amounted to **£181.00** which was shared between the Crisis Christmas Appeal and St Giles Church Fabric Fund.

**Thanks to everyone** who also travelled in the elements to attend the Christmas Carol Service on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. It was a lovely afternoon, our sincere thanks to Ruth Downes for taking the service and to all the readers who took part. The service was followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

**The Farlow P.C.C. would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy 2025.** Nigel, Vera, Pam, Caroline and Janice wish to thank Clare and Chris for all their help and advice throughout the year, which is very much appreciated; we would be lost without you!

## Farlow & Oretton VH and St Giles's Church 100 Club

December	January
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sarah Hazel (13) - £20</li><li>Anne and Dave Farmer (45) - £10</li><li>Richard Jones (99) - £10</li><li>Nigel Savage Bailey (83) - £5</li><li>Alistair and Ann Blake (31) - £5</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mike and Pam Winters (46) - £20</li><li>Deb and Steve Phillips (30) - £10</li><li>Mark Link (79) - £10</li><li>Jessica and Felicity (66) - £5</li><li>Jennie Wall (56) - £5</li></ul>

## Cleeton St Mary News

*Sue Dolphin writes:*

**Knit and Natter** continues every Wednesday at 10am in church.

November	December
£20 Charalate Bakter No 46 £10 each to Gill Eyre No 50, and Stephen Broome No 120, £5 each to Toby Dolphin No 32, and Keith Bowen No 89	£20 Steve Taylor No 70, £10 each to Carol Howells No 81, and Ann Martin No 66, £5 each to Wendy Dolphin No 144, and Harry Welding No 86

## Middleton Scriven News

*Ann Constable writes:*

### Church services this Spring

- ✝ **Sunday March 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon – Holy Communion with Revd Justin Bailey**
- ✝ **Easter Sunday April 20<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30.**

### Community events:

**Coffee mornings** start up again : 10-12 on Saturdays 8<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> March ... then Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April for our Easter coffee morning and bake sale.

**Burns Night** - what great fun was had by all at our first community event of 2025. A massive thank you to the “Fun Raisers “committee” for a real Scottish evening in our little rural church!

**Welcome to Dave and Nicky** who moved into The Cottage in Middleton Scriven. Having survived the crazy storm and very high winds on their first night here in early December, we wish them every happiness in their new home!

## Sidbury News

*Revd David Poyner and Andrew Sierakowski write:*

### Service at Sidbury during February

- ✝ Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February – 11:45 am

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December was particularly busy at Sidbury. It was when the PCC decided to hold the village carol service, but being the third Sunday in the month, it was also the day for the usual monthly service which on this occasion was also the communion service for the whole benefice. So, for the first time since the reformation (possibly...), we had two services on the same day in the church; communion at 11.45 and carols at 4pm. The communion was admittedly brief, the best bits from the Book of Common Prayer done in 15 minutes, but the office was celebrated by three of us. The carol service saw 25 people sing lustily in the tastefully decorated church, followed by extensive refreshments and merriment afterwards; Sidbury knows how to party. Our services now resume the usual pattern of communion on the third Sunday of the month at 11.45am, to which all are most welcome.

## Silvington News

We have no news to pass on from Silvington this month.

## Community Noticeboard

<b>Winter Farmers' Market</b>	On Saturday 15th February is “under and around the crooked spire” at St Mary’s Church, Cleobury Mortimer, on the THIRD SATURDAY each month from 09.30-12.30.
<b>Our Local Food Banks need your help</b>	Both are always in need of donations of foodstuffs and other goods, and of money to sustain their services. Find them on Facebook or call 07960 285520 for BRIDGNORTH or 07519 885943 for CLEOBURY MORTIMER.



## LOVE YOUR YEW WEEK!!

8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025

THE ANCIENT YEW GROUP (AYG) IS A CONSERVATION BODY WHICH COLLECTS FIELD DATA AND HISTORIC MATERIAL ABOUT OUR OLDEST YEW TREES.

This month, we feature “Love your Yew Week”. This is now an annual event promoted by the Ancient Yew Group (AYG) to encourage us to look after the ancient and majestic yew trees that dot our landscape and are often the stars of our churchyards.

AYG tells us:

**“The theme of the week is ivy growth on yews.** Ivy, while valuable to wildlife, can impede a yew’s ability to thrive, especially on old trees. Love Your Yew Week 2025 will provide guidance for carefully removing ivy from yew trees, ensuring these fantastic trees remain healthy and resilient for generations to come. Join us this February in showing appreciation for these ancient giants and helping to secure their future!

The majority of ancient yews found in England and Wales grow on the consecrated ground around churches. We can be sure that those we have so far recorded owe their survival largely to the protection afforded by their location.

The problem is establishing who is directly responsible for protecting our oldest trees. It is likely that in many instances there is no protection at all, or that responsibility lies solely with the Vicar acting with their Church Warden, Parochial Church Council or District Council. Tree expertise in such decision-making bodies is often lacking, as indeed are the funds necessary to carry out the best remedial work. It is not always an individual church or diocese that is responsible for grounds and tree maintenance, and some burial grounds have been taken over by the local authority. This does not necessarily mean that an old yew will receive sensitive treatment.”





During 2024, AYG attracted sponsorship from other conservation bodies, including Caring for God’s Acre, and now has an excellent website, which features a database of ancient yews across the whole country, their locations, and whether they are accessible for visitors:

<https://www.ancient-yew.org>



# Useful local contacts – updated June 2024

Please let us know if you have any corrections to this list, or you want to suggest additions – thank you

<b>Brown Clee Surgery PPG</b>	Brown Clee Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) - email <a href="mailto:BrownCleePPG@gmail.com">BrownCleePPG@gmail.com</a> , or call Chair Tina Ranson on 01584-878707.
<b>Brown Clee Walkers</b>	Meeting Place for walks - Ditton Priors Church. 01746-712662
<b>Burwarton &amp; District Garden Club</b>	Meets on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month from October to June at 2:15pm at Stoke St Milborough VH. Contact secretary Ms Bev Harris on 01584-841845, <a href="mailto:bev Harris15@yahoo.co.uk">bev Harris15@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Burwarton &amp; District WI</b>	Contact the Secretary, Helen Groves, on 01746-712466
<b>Burwarton &amp; District Wives Group</b>	Meeting 8pm first Wednesday of the month. Contact Debbie Jones 01746-712421 or Gill Severn 01746-712231
<b>Chelmarsh Bowling</b>	Outdoor bowling in summer (Tuesday evening & Wednesday afternoon), indoor during the winter (Tuesday evenings 7:00 – 9:00pm) at Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Further details from Stan Chapman, 01746-862424
<b>Chelmarsh Games Group</b>	Mainly Canasta and Scrabble! Thursdays at 2:00pm in the Parish Hall. Contact Sue Jakeman on 07531-008876.
<b>Chelmarsh Jubilee Club</b>	Meet at Chelmarsh Sports & Social Club – contact Shell Russon on 07903-162408 for more information
<b>Chelmarsh Parent &amp; Toddler Group</b>	Every Tuesday during term time 9.30 – 11.30 Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact Pam Baker 07846-692323
<b>Chelmarsh Parish Hall</b>	Available for hire - <a href="mailto:booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk">booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk</a>
<b>Chelmarsh Walking Group</b>	Contact Jen Everitt on 01746-862858 for more information.
<b>Chetton &amp; Glazeley WI</b>	Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month 7.30pm Sam O’Sullivan 01746-868225
<b>Chetton Folk Dance Club</b>	Meets Chetton Village Hall, last Wednesday of month except August Tel. Janice Burton 01584-823802
<b>Chetton Village Hall</b>	Enquiries - Sue on 01746-789239
<b>Chorley Village Hall</b>	Available for Hire (fully equipped kitchen, digital projection equipment and large screen) contact 07726-763883 – NEW DEDICATED NUMBER DECEMBER 2022
<b>Cleobury North Village Hall</b>	Enquiries to 01746-787093 please
	National Centre for Domestic Violence <a href="https://www.ncdv.org.uk/contact/">https://www.ncdv.org.uk/contact/</a> Call 08448-044999. Website gives advice and other means of getting help.
<b>Daddy's Hat Music &amp; Poetry</b>	Contact on 01746-787419 – leave a message and you <b>will</b> get a call-back!
<b>Ditton Priors Art Group</b>	Village Hall Wednesday morning (except Christmas) 9.30 – 12.30pm all welcome Various visual art forms eg Water Colour, Oils & Acrylics. Contact Gloria Blair on 07794-225532
<b>Ditton Priors History Group</b>	Please contact <a href="mailto:paul.wilson8992@gmail.com">paul.wilson8992@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ditton Priors Village Hall</b>	Bookings - 07766 392 105 - <a href="mailto:dittonpriorsshalls@gmail.com">dittonpriorsshalls@gmail.com</a>
<b>Knowle Sports Club</b>	Second hand sales held every first Saturday of the month, 7.30am – 11am proceeds to Children’s Football Field 01584-890644
<b>Little Explorers Pre-School, Ditton Priors</b>	Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm. Contact Wende Lloyd 01746-712506 / 787549
	Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride Transport Services <a href="https://www.shrewsbury-dialaride.co.uk">https://www.shrewsbury-dialaride.co.uk</a> – 01743-450270 Mon-Fri 09:30 – 15:00, Corvedale Buzzard – 01584-700907
<b>Short Mat Bowling – Ditton Priors</b>	Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2.00 - 4.00pm Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact Clive Jackson on 01746-718046
<b>Stottesdon &amp; District W.I.</b>	Meets in various venues on the third Wednesday in each month details from Helena Hale 01746-718012 or Clare Tibbits 01746-718007
<b>Stottesdon Gateway Nursery</b>	Pre-school, holiday club and wraparound sessions. An integral part of Stottesdon Primary School, Contact 01746-718769
<b>Tae kwon-do</b>	Eardington Village Hall Thursday, 5:15pm. Contact Neil Morris 07969-996055

# A New Year Letter from Uganda

January 2025 From Sarah and Simon Cawdell, at AJLTC Gulu, Uganda

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your support and prayers. January is a long month, and we have very much appreciated your prayers to keep us sustained in Christ.

All is well here. None of the college bureaucracy is sorted yet – neither registration, nor land boundaries, so please keep praying. The Diocese Coffee cooperative is now certified, so work can begin towards the coffee mother garden. Also Simon has almost achieved permission to arrange for a borehole to be drilled on the Diocesan Land. He has a letter of no objection from National Water! The final stage is a letter of permission from the Ministry.

**I thought that it is high time to introduce you to some of the people among whom we live – about fifty students and twelve staff. I hope in a few sentences to sketch some of the challenges and joys of their lives.**

Let me start with **Stephen** who is a second year student. His business is as a mason (which is how builders are referred to here), so he is always looking for more work which I can give him on the compound to enable him to make a living whilst he also studies. Like many workmen he is enthusiastic for a new project, but not a natural completer finisher. I was amused as I supervised his parish placement last month that his Parish Priest made the same observation. Stephen is now aware, and willing to work with this self-knowledge. Whilst he was in the first year, and his wife was expecting another child, he went on the parish 'poor list' which is the equivalent of using a food bank I suppose – the family received monthly food parcels from the church. It is hard for the family as our students are often also the bread winners.



Then there is **Philda**, also a second year whose family consists of a mother and an older, married sister. Her mother suffers from significant medical issues. Without a father figure there is no one to bring in any support for the family. Fortunately Philda's fees are paid by her Diocese (Nebbi, west of here). She is asking me for work so that she can earn money for soap and exercise books and other necessities of life. I will find her some weeding and light work around the compound for which I can pay, so that she keeps some self respect whilst benefitting from the generosity of a supporter.

**Frederick** is a delightful and hard working first year student, with a keen faith. But a neighbour allowed his cows to feed on Fredrick's maize crop – so he has very little to show for the hard work of growing a couple of acres of maize. (People will often test the patience of Christians, expecting them to freely forgive such wrongs!) He has also come back looking for work, and because he came on time, whilst others were slow to return, he has had some days in the field down by the water source making bricks. This is extraordinarily hard work requiring physical strength – mixing mud, putting the mud into moulds, laying the bricks to dry, turning them, and then stacking the dried bricks into a kiln and burning them for twenty four hours. It is a useful way of making fees money because it can only be done at this time of year, and the college will use the bricks for the construction of its planned new classrooms.

**Charonne** in the third year has come back with Horeb, her son, who is still breastfeeding and now walking well. The students generally are delighted to have a youngster around, and college is more of family with a shared child. He greets me putting his hand in mine with a lovely smile.

**Melki** is an enthusiast for life, and has embraced Farming God's Way/ Forward in Farming (you can find it on You Tube – basically no dig gardening). If someone is going to ask a question and probe further in class it will be Melki!

**Andrew** who is very bright, but having been poisoned sometime back, is often unwell. (Poisoning is a not unusual a problem here. There are plenty of natural poisons available and jealousy and anger are rife in the communities.) He is a natural leader and evangelist. I pray for his healing, but wonder how God uses him more effectively in his weakness.

**Ronald** makes his living as a carpenter, and makes kitchens. He is always generous with his skills to help in the college. He is making new 'ministers chairs' for the new chapel. These are being paid for out of the Sunday collection.

**Samson Lolo** lives on the border of the national park so it is hard to grow food crops because the elephants come out and eat the maize. Elephant are as determined as squirrels only bigger, and more destructive. (In some places they are kept at bay by 'bee fencing' as a swarm of bees is one of the few things that does deter them.)

**Innocent** who is the chapel warden, and loves playing the local harp. He is often to be found in chapel making music and worshipping God.

**And colleagues at the college.**

**David**, the administrator who comes in almost every day, and keeps an eye on the stores, manages the accounts, the exam results, advises me where to buy things and how much I am being cheated for when I am given a price for anything.

**Rev'd Jane**, the Academic Registrar who is the other full time employee of the college; does some teaching, and sorts out the placements for students. Jane also works as the local prison chaplain, and has a regular ministry in the different prisons in town. (It is normal here for full time people to have more than one other job. Three full time jobs is not unusual.)

**CT** our caretaker, who spends much of his day sweeping up leaves, but also weighs out the daily allowance of food, looks after the dog, and generally keeps the place running smoothly. He has been at the college about 25 years, and is that 'heart of the community' character that all good institutions have. If you really want to know what is going on you ask CT, who will smile knowingly, chuckle and tell you at least what he thinks you need to know!

**Jacqueline and Jenny**, our cooks who prepare sweet tea in the morning and beans with posho for lunch and supper. They keep the students fed, and commandeer help if there is extra food such as green vegetable to prepare.

These are just a few of the individuals who bring colour and purpose to our days here. They come back to college full of stories of God at work in their homes and villages, of churches planted and missions run.

This is the dry season, so we don't expect any significant rain before March. Term has started and the students are delighted to see progress in college development. At the weekend we worked together to move the bricks which had dried towards the place where they will be burnt and we hope to dig the foundations for the new classrooms before Easter. But not until after some rain as the ground is extremely hard at the moment.

Simon is continuing with the coffee and cocoa plantation – watering each plant twice a week to help them through their first dry season and mulching with crop residues and pig manure. He has almost got permission to drill a borehole in the place where he hopes to establish a poultry project next January, and is praying for funding to come through from a government agency (long on promise and short on delivery – the same the world over) for an expansion of the coffee plantation via a 'mother garden' (from which cuttings are propagated).

Do continue to pray for the registration of the college. Some students have not come back because we aren't registered yet, which is going to be a problem both for the viability of the college and the on going ministry of the church.

We are also very grateful for a new garage on the college grounds in order to keep the car we have been loaned safe.

Let us know how we can pray for you, and do keep in touch

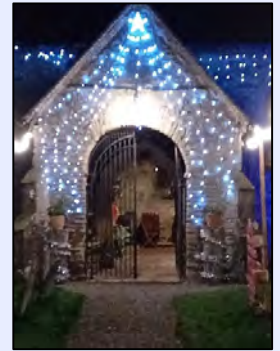
**With love from Sarah and Simon**





## ASTON BOTTERELL COMMUNITY CAROL SERVICE

What a wonderful 'Night before Christmas' - this exceptional evening brought together the village community who worked wonders with producing another village on either side of the pathway to the church entrance. This 'village' was constructed from pallets in the shape of houses and buildings painted and spectacularly lit up by lights erected outside with the theme continued inside the church.



On arriving at the car park the church tower stood out in full with a cross lighting up the silhouette of the building.

Revd Joe led our service with the Christmas story and prayers and Anne told us the story of The Robin.



Members of Cleobury Mortimer Concert Brass band accompanied the singing of traditional carols in addition to the Benefice Group Choir. As the children gathered to sing with the choir the anticipation of what might happen next was palpable.

Father Christmas arrived on a flying visit and

presented presents to each child. Following the Blessing, mulled wine, mince pies and shortbread were enjoyed bringing this magical evening to a close.

The donations given generously by the congregation were divided between Midlands Air Ambulance and St Michael and All Angels Church.

This was an evening to remember with every seat in the church filled and a community in the fullest sense of the word coming together in the benefice.

Special thanks to the village community for entering into the idea and putting lights in gardens and other places and also for allowing overflow parking.

And..... not forgetting the work building the village, painting and erecting the display - special thanks to those involved.

**It is great to see the community in our  
benefice come together for such a  
memorable evening...well worth all the work.  
So many lovely comments...well done  
everyone!**

