



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

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GLOUCESTER

£1.80

Tidenham Parish
Link Magazine
Winter 2025/2026

Inside this month...

**...Parish up-date from Churchwarden
Robin Riordan**

... Parish News of all sorts!

**St Mary & St Peter
Tidenham**

Sunday: 9:00am

**St Michael & All Angels
Tidenham Chase**

Sunday: 4.00pm/6.00pm

**St Luke's
Tutshill**

Sunday: 11.00am

www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk

Vicar	Vacancy	
Associate Priest & Wellbeing Chaplain	Revd Nicki Bullivant	07936 787409
PTO	Revd Canon Tudor Griffiths	07718 906066
PTO	Revd Anna Griffiths	07504 662539
PTO	Revd Miri Keen	07933 172552
PTO	Revd Canon Ed Pruen	07752 569794
Reader	James Parsons	07970 489362
Children & Families Minister	Aimee Lowe	07369 226546
Church Warden	Robin Riordan rrtpcc@aol.com	07711 173240
Church Warden	Brian Duerden bduerden70@gmail.com	01291 623310
Deputy Warden Tidenham	Cate Phillips	07596 185918
Deputy Warden Tutshill	James Parsons	07970 489362
Deputy Warden Chase	Susanna Jacks	07411 188627
PCC Secretary	Iain Gardiner	07738 095839
PCC Treasurer	Paul Coombs 814yug@gmail.com	07831 469951
Bell Ringers	Cate Phillips	07596 185918
Tidenham Choir	Roger Martin	01291 627800
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Robin Riordan tidenhamsafeguarding@gmail.com	07394 693940
Parish Administrator/Notices	Robin Riordan	07553 779632
Pastoral Visit Co-ordinator	Julia Parsons	01291 446300
The Link Editor & Link Distribution	Tanya White	01291 623169 07802 874036

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The Link Advertising

Roger Martin

01291 627800



Tanya White

WINTER

Letter from the Editor
Welcome to our Link magazine
Seasons Greetings & Happy Christmas to everyone,

I hope that everyone is well.

Inside this month:

- Churchwarden Robin Riordan gives us a Parish up-date (pages 4-5)
 - News from Sedbury Space (pages 12-13)
 - PCC Highlights from our PCC secretary (page 32)
- Remember that our Link magazine Annual Subscription is now £7.00

Parish Contact Website Address

Parish Website: This has information, documents and links to other sites. <https://www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk>

Parish Facebook Page: for communicating news & info to the wider community. Please 'follow' or 'like'.

<https://facebook.com/tidenhamparishchurch>

Parish Facebook Group: all welcome to join this private group and post comments.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/114300818701466/>

YouTube channel: 'Tidenham Parish Online Church' with videos to assist your devotions.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UckRjOlvDBT9M9usfhp2722w>

St Briavels & Hewelsfield web-site:

www.stbandhchurches.org.uk

See what you can discover and enjoy our magazine, prize for mistake spotting!

Love from Tanya



PLEASE NOTE

All copy for the Spring Link (March, April & May 2026)

must be with Tanya by Friday, 30th January 2026

Email: tanya.rockymead@gmail.com

or posted to: Tanya White, Rockymead, Coleford Road,

Tutshill, Chepstow, NP16 7BU (01291 623169 or 07802 874036)



Winter Greetings to all our parishioners



Revd Nicki
Bullivant
Associate Priest &
Wellbeing Chaplain



Prof Brian Duerden
CBE
Churchwarden



Robin Riordan
Churchwarden

At the time of writing, we are transitioning from autumn to winter. It is easy to feel down as the nights draw in, the cold starts to bite and the rain seems to last longer. However, there is much to feel bright about!

We have just announced that we have an interview for our vacancy position after the third round of advertising and I am sure we are all praying for success for our parish and the candidate this time. Whichever way the interview goes, though, I have been thinking (and others agree), that despite being in vacancy, we are doing well as a parish.

Work on improving our facilities at Tidenham Parish Church continues with work to the North Aisle heating, Lychgate steps and the new parish meeting facilities coming to a successful conclusion. An initial surveyor's report on improvements required to ensure Chase Church is made watertight and ready for other work has also been received, marking the beginning of this vital work. (Chase Church saw attendees of over 70 at the recent All Souls service.)

We continue to be blessed by a group of Clergy, Readers, Ministers, Licensed Pastoral Assistants and Bereavement Visitors, Service Leaders as well as many volunteers ensuring our worship and other work moves forward. Church attendance has remained healthy, our group of young people has grown recently and we have welcomed our new Children, Families and Youth Minister, Aimee Lowe to the Parish.



The Spirit has been palpable at several special services such as Harvest, The Feast of St Luke, All Saints Day and Remembrance Sunday. Four full immersion baptisms have taken place amid much joy and praise. (See pictures on the cover).

You will see an article on stewardship (giving time, effort or money) in this edition of the Link and that got me thinking about stewardship in context of the vacancy. In this context, the Oxford English Dictionary defines stewardship as “the job of supervising or taking care of something, such as an organization or property”. In our case, I think “the joy of taking care of the Body of Christ in Tidenham Parish” is a perfect definition of stewardship.

We all continue to be stewards of our parish and its people, with links beyond the parish. A large team who work well together, worshipping, giving, growing and nurturing. Thank you all and long may it continue!

Here are some spiritual and theological themes I found on reflecting the passing of Autumn and what it can mean.

- > Change and letting go: Just as trees shed their leaves, autumn in a spiritual sense can represent the need to let go of the past to embrace the future, while remembering lessons learned.
- > Harvest and gratitude: Many services focus on themes of harvest, prompting congregations to reflect on God's blessings and express gratitude for the fruits of human work and creation.
- > Life and death: Autumn can be a time to explore the theological concepts of life, death, and renewal, with the "dying to self" concept being central to Christian discipleship and following Christ.
- > Hidden wholeness: The season's beauty can be a reminder that even in seasons of diminishment, seeds of new life are being planted and prepared for the future.

This gives me a huge lift in looking forwards as we head into Advent and the new season of Winter.

Blessings
Robin Riordan
Churchwarden





Stewardship Matters

Christian stewardship is more than money – it’s a way of life. It’s about recognising that everything we have is a gift from God, entrusted to us to use wisely, generously, and faithfully. Our time, talents, resources, relationships, and even the earth itself are not ours to

possess, but ours to steward.

In 1 Chronicles 29:10–14, King David prays before the people as they present offerings for the temple:

“Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour... Everything in heaven and earth is yours... Wealth and honour come from you... But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.” (vv. 11–14).”

In church life, stewardship often refers to financial giving. But it’s not just about meeting budgets - it’s about participating in God’s mission. When we give regularly and prayerfully, we help sustain worship, pastoral care, outreach, and the presence of the church in our community. Giving becomes an act of worship, a sign of trust, and a way of saying “thank you” to God.

Why does stewardship matter? Because it shapes our hearts. It reminds us that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. It helps us live with open hands rather than clenched fists. And it enables the church to flourish, not just survive.

In our own Parish, stewardship means supporting the life and witness of our churches in Tidenham, Tutshill and Tidenham Chase. It means enabling pastoral care, worship, children’s and youth work, outreach, and the faithful presence of the church in everyday life throughout the whole community in which we live. Your giving makes this possible.

Over the coming months, the PCC will be inviting us all to reflect on our own giving – why we give, how we give, and what our giving enables (we will explain the parish budget and why we are undertaking this stewardship campaign).

Let’s each start by asking: What has God entrusted to me?



How might I respond with gratitude and generosity? Stewardship isn't a duty – it's part of our discipleship journey. And every step matters.

Regular Giving to the General Fund allows the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to direct and plan the spending to meet the aims of ministry in Tidenham Parish. Please use your 'Surname' + 'General' as the reference to your regular giving.

If your gift is eligible for Gift Aid, then please make sure that the Treasurer has received a Gift Aid Declaration from you. (Gift Aid is a government scheme that allows us to reclaim the basic rate tax you pay as a UK taxpayer. It means that we can claim 25p of tax for every £1 you donate at no extra cost to you. This is a very important way of adding to your donation and increasing the value of your donation.)

For more information on stewardship, contact James Parsons, - jamesdparsons727@gmail.com - Andrew Palmer, - andrewpalmer5@me.com – or Churchwarden Robin, - rtpcc@aol.com

If you need any help in donating, please contact the Treasurer, Paul Coombs, - 814yug@gmail.com

Parish Life Group Meetings

- **Monday** 2-3.30pm Bible Study at Sedbury Space
Nicki nicki1002@hotmail.co.uk
- **Tuesday** 1.00pm Life Group - Julia Parsons, venue varies -
juliaparsons727@gmail.com
- **Wednesday** 10.15am Food for Thought Life Group
@ Café on the Hill
- **Wednesday** 7.30pm Life Group - Fiona and/or Wendy
fiona.m.gardiner@btinternet.com
- **Thursday** 1.30pm Life Group - Tanya White at Rockymead
tanya.rockymead@gmail.com

Please do speak to someone in church if you are unsure about any of the above groups.



Folk Club

St Luke's

Church

Saturday

6th December

2025

Christmas

Bring & Share

Special : 6- 8.30pm

(doors open 5.30pm)

Coffee & Tea
will be provided.

But please
bring along any further
Refreshments to share...

Next Folk Club:

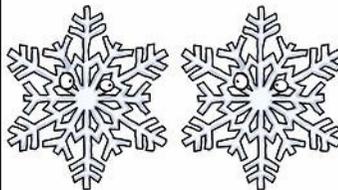
14th February 2026

Contact Bill & Tanya White
(01291 623169)

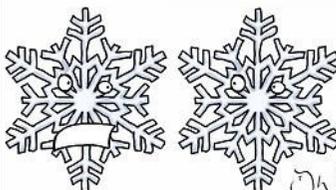


Cartoon by
Dom White

I am unique! There is no other
snowflake like me!



Well, this is awkward





Come along to a relaxed performance of interactive live music, with singalongs, refreshments and a chance to chat and reminisce. These informal, friendly sessions are particularly for anyone in the local area worried about memory loss or living with a diagnosis of dementia or other brain disorder, along with their family, friends and carers. But they are also a great chance to get out and to meet new people.

If you'd like to find out more: call Mel on 07966 627840;
email us at wvmim@wvm.org.uk;
or visit our website www.wyevalleymusic.org.uk
or Facebook page @WyeValleyMusic.

So, turn up and take a seat at the Music Memory Café.

Every third Wednesday of the month,
from 10.30am – 12.00pm.
St Briavels Assembly Rooms,
st Street, St Briavels, GL15 6TG.
Entrance free. Parking nearby.

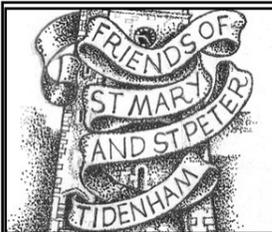


Next dates: Wednesday 17th December;
Wednesday 21st January; Wednesday 18th February.

Music is the best medicine!



Rules for Editing: . Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat.)



Friends News

The Parish Office is proceeding well.

The building will be called the Tony James Memorial Building as his legacy has paid for the conversion.

**Charity no.
1159658**

This week we are plastering and here are some pictures giving an idea of progress and what the office and its window will look like.



The passage on the side will be paved and the stone has now arrived.

We have also remade the steps at the Lych Gate which are now wider and even and the handrails have been replaced.



Rules for Editing: Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."



St Luke's Wellbeing Coffee Morning

This will be held 10.00-12.00

We meet on the last Monday of each month except Bank Holiday Mondays.

Meetings on:

Monday, 26 January 2026

Monday, 23 February 2026

Welcome FREE good coffee/tea, cake and biscuits

If you have any concerns or are worried about anything our hosts are on hand to support and can put you in touch with those who can offer further help.



Please come along and visit us...

Contact

Polly paulinemorgan23@gmail.com or Revd Nicki nicki1002@hotmail.co.uk for more information.



As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, let's not forget communities affected by conflict.

While many of us share a joyful and peaceful Christmas in our homes and churches, Christian Aid invite us to consider families facing unimaginable hardship after fleeing violence.

A mother's resilience. At the camp, Chance found safety, but life is still hard. With no running water in her shelter,



Chance walks long distances to collect water — carrying heavy jerrycans under the blazing sun. Her days are filled with worry about how to feed her children, keep them healthy and hold onto hope for their future.



11, King Alfred's Road,
Sedbury
NP16 7AG,
e-mail:
info@sedburyspace.org.uk

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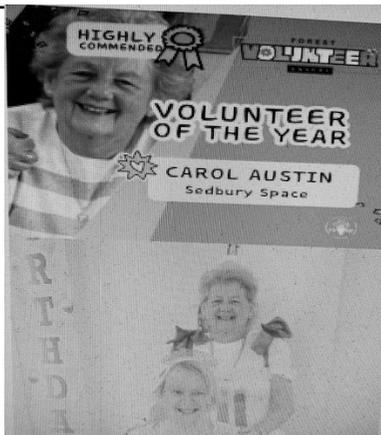
SEDBURY SPACE MANAGER'S NEWS

Our regular sessions/café's continue to steadily grow and be well attended, Our **TUESDAY WEEKLY DROP-IN CAFÉ** remains extremely popular and we have enjoyed much more than just chat and cuppa's.

We have celebrated some BIG birthday's with the trusted cake dress and Carol deservedly went and won a "highly commended" award for all her hard work!!

Coming up, we have the local school children coming to sing carols with us on 2nd December and the festive 1 stop raffle will be drawn 16th December

Hopefully our friend Sue Skinner will sing with us too.



Our monthly **COMMUNITY LUNCH** continues to provide a home cooked meal and companionship, an example of the latest menu we have enjoyed....beef casserole and brownie with ice-cream.... every dish cooked and served with passion and love by our amazing volunteers!



Our **CANCER SUPPORT CAFÉ** continues to be of great help on both the lunchtime and evening monthly meetup.

Our **WELLBEING CHAPLAIN** has not found another set of legs yet (maybe Santa will surprise us) and she remains busy, from bible studies, prayer group, chatroom, foodbank, and much, much more we are so very grateful to have a "Nicki" on our team!



Our **QUARTERLY QUIZ NIGHT** with a fish & chip supper, was pre-Christmas themed and great fun as always. Our manager led the evening in true Sedbury space style wearing a Christmas tree not yet decorated - we can't wait to see the decorated version!

We have started selling our **2026 CALENDER**. All funds raised from sales will go towards our new flooring fundraiser. If anybody would like to buy one please contact us and we can arrange to deliver locally: £10 each including a pocket diary. (If any business would like to offer any materials or labour with the new flooring needed, we would love you to get in touch with us

Our CHRISTMAS DAY FREE COMMUNITY LUNCH

will be opening for bookings this week, where we hope to again, share the special day with the local community, so that everyone who is alone can come together and share a tasty home cooked Christmas lunch and pull a cracker. We already have some great local business's offering donations of food and drink. If you would like to donate anything please contact us and we can let you know what is needed. We look forward to sharing our December events and thanking all contributor's in our next newsletter.

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! Sedbury Space Community Hub is a **SAFE PLACE** for whatever help you need with a listening **CONFIDENTIAL** ear



Sedbury Space Snippet from Lee Durbin

Autumn is the season that makes me think in terms of seasonalness.

“Is it mild for the season.”

“Don’t the trees look amazing and autumnal.”

“I need to find my brown chord jacket so I look seasonal.”

It’s a time punctuated by seasonal rituals, Halloween, Bon Fire Night, Remembrance and now Celebrity Traitors.

It is a mixture of things that must always be kept with those that are temporary, for a season only.

Sedbury Space is a mixture too, of activities, ideas and people who come and go. But its desire to serve the community is steadfast and ongoing.

As my season at the Space starts to draw to a close I would like to say, “I am and have always been, to Sedbury Space, a faithful!”

Found in other churches’ notices:



“Please join us as we show our support for Amy and Alan in preparing for the girth of their first child.”



Chepstow Choral Society
MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL
Accompanist: Richard Kubiak

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

A Joyous start to the Christmas season!

ST MARY'S PRIORY CHURCH, CHEPSTOW

SUNDAY DECEMBER 14th 3.00pm

ALISON WRAY - Soprano

ST JOHNS-on-the-HILL SCHOOL

A mix of sacred and secular items –much-loved carols, seasonal readings, and popular Christmas choral music

Tickets £10 (u/18s, students free)

are available from Chepstow Bookshop, choir members

- visit our website for further information.

www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk

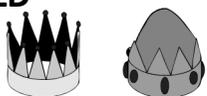
***CCS is affiliated to Ty Cerdd & Making Music, and is a Registered Charity
(no. 112798)***

Please contact Marjorie Duerden for further information – 01291 623310
(bduerden@doctors.co.uk) or access the CCS website (details above).



*Tanya's Link
Winter Prize Challenge
Seasons Greetings to everyone.*

This Wordsearch puzzle has words from "The First Nowell", letters not used and taken in order give the answer. Please send this to me: Tanya White, at Rockymead, Coleford Road, Tutshill, NP16 7BU, mail: tanya.rockymead@gmail.com to be in with a chance winning the prize!

ANGEL	HEAVENLY	ONE
BETHLEHEM	JESUS	PRAISES
BLOOD	KEEPING	PRESENCE
BOUGHT	KNEE	REST
COUNTRY	LAY	SHEPHERDS
DEEP	LIGHT	SHINING
EARTH	LORD	SING
EAST	MANKIND	STAR
FIELDS	MEN	STAY
FRANKINCENSE	MYRRH	STOP
GOLD	NORTHWEST	THREE
	NOWELL	WINTERS
16 	OFFERED	WISE



N P O T S T Y L N E V A E H
O O S H E A S T E B N A Y M
R W W R E C E E E G R O A E
T I P E E D N T R T N N T S
H N K E L W H E H F K A S N
W T H G I L S E S I A R P E
E E S S E T O D N E D H K C
S R E H A E R D G R R T E N
T S E R I E E N O R O P E I
J M H E H N I N Y O L K P K
E E Y P I S I M K N L G I N
S N E A C O U N T R Y B N A
U H G O L D T H G U O B G R
S O F F E R E D S D L E I F



Early in my career, I was a librarian, so remembering this time I set our Autumn Wordsearch with 29 words to locate before the remaining letters gave the answer:
“PUBLIC LIBRARY”

Lots of people entered the completion this time and I received 14 correct entries! So thanks to everyone for all your work on this!

I was so impressed that I awarded 2 prizes. The winners this time are **Jean Cramp and Emma Phillips.**



News from our Parish Schools



Music

Music plays a central role at St John's, developing

memory and reasoning, improving coordination, enhancing creativity and teamwork, and fostering discipline. During the last week of the summer term, 18 children took their ABRSM music exams at the school — and we are pleased to report that all passed! 15% achieved a pass, 50% a merit, 35% a distinction, and six earned automatic Prep Test passes. Congratulations to all, we are very proud of your achievements!

Dean Close St John's School
01291 622045



Sport & Community

In September, we were delighted to welcome Tutshill School, Offa's Mead Academy, and Severnbanks Primary School to St John's for our U8 and U9 Rugby Day. The sun was shining, the rugby was energetic, and it was wonderful to see so many happy faces enjoying the games.

We look forward to welcoming these schools again at our next community sports event, planned for next term.

**EYFS
OPEN DAY**

**TUESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER
15:30-17:00**

**Offa's Mead
Academy**
To make our best better

Offa's Mead - 01291 622932

Please still contact to register
for a child's place at the school...



Wyedean

School and Sixth Form Centre

Aspire together, achieve together
adfecere pariter, perfecere pariter

Wyedean School – 01291 636180

‘Words that Burn’ poetry:

On Sunday the 19th October a group of year 8 students from Wyedean took to the stage in the ‘Voicebox’ tent at Cheltenham Literature Festival and performed alongside the Coventry Poet Laureate, John Bernard. The students worked in their free time and attended club slots with Mrs. Ortner Deuchar to write and perform poetry that gives a voice to current issues and human rights that are being infringed around the world.

The ‘Words That Burn’ project is an initiative launched by Amnesty International to give our younger generation a voice, and we couldn’t be prouder of the students who have so thoughtfully and maturely engaged with such a serious topic.



Well done to our brave poets: Isabella Luciana-Smith, Nate Norman, Isabella Caruana, Zara Rees-Banaras, Shannon Wood, Heidi Gilmour, Billy Latham, Aimee Guest, Aneira Hughes, Emrys White and Emily Naylor.



Tutshill School
01291 622593

We were lucky enough to receive a visit from Bishop Robert, Bishop of Tewkesbury. Bishop Robert took time to meet our children, look around our school and help deliver our Collective Worship. We were very proud of the way our children (particularly members of the School Council) represented us; Bishop Robert was clearly very impressed with our school and our children





BELL RINGING



I heard the bells on Christmas Day
 Their old, familiar carols play,
 And wild and sweet
 The words repeat
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
 And thought how, as the day had come,
 That belfries of all Christendom
 Had rolled along
 The unbroken song,
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way
 The world revolved from night to day,
 A voice, a chime,
 A chant sublime
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Just as much as carols, bells are a part of the traditional Christmas soundscape. Last year we had to do without because of the work taking place at St Mary & St Peter's and it will be great to have them ringing out this year. However, there is still a shortage of resident ringers.

Our numbers on practice nights are augmented by ringers from Alvington, Lydney, Mathern and elsewhere (a sociable lot are bell ringers!), and also on Sunday mornings. Once again, we would urge anyone casting about for a community-centred New Year resolution to consider taking up bellringing. It's an enjoyable and satisfying hobby that exercises 'the little grey cells' as well as being fun. It's for young people (10+) and adults of all ages, for those of all faiths and none. And, contrary to popular misconception, you don't need to be musical, mathematical or strong (it's much more about technique than strength).

Basic information can be found on bellringing.org and ccbr.org.uk, or you could come along to a practice session and see what you think. Our regular practice night is Tuesday, 7.30–9.00pm, at St Mary & St Peter's, Tidenham – all ages and abilities welcome.

Please check with Cate Phillips (07596 185918) if you are planning to come along, as it may be cancelled if there are too few ringers available.



The Parish Lunch ...

Thursday, 4th December 2025

Thursday, 1st January 2026

Thursday, 6th February 2026

Parish Lunch, 12.15pm

Woodcroft Centre

For info and lifts
phone
George or Beryl
on 01291 625551

Parish Lunch December and beyond.

Christmas Lunch will be held for the 16th consecutive year on Thursday, 4th December but if you like Christmas Pudding you will need to attend the November Parish Lunch.

This tradition started some years ago when it was realized we were unable to eat a fulsome pudding after the main course at the Christmas spread.

**Christmas Carols, led by Roger,
will round off another successful year.**

For 2026 we can confirm January, February and March will fall on the first Thursday of each month.



Sadly space limits the number of Guests who can attend the Christmas Parish Lunch, regular Guests are assured of their place. Please contact Beryl or George for further information (01291 625551)

Fact
Gatherings...



"Silent Night" is the most recorded song in history.
It's had more than 733 different versions copyrighted since 1978.



Children, Youth and Families Minister - Aimee Lowe

Firstly I wanted to say how warmly welcome my family and I feel from joining your parish. Smiles and hugs have made the first few months so enjoyable and I'm so excited to be working among such a caring community. There is such a sense of togetherness that has brought my own family closer.

As we look to winter and the days grow shorter and colder, we anticipate many cherished traditions of the season. What are your family or community traditions? Among the season we find joyful gatherings of pantomimes, nativities, carolling, fires and parties. These joyful gatherings bring people together, lift spirits and nurture a sense of unity that is so vital during the colder months.

From studying performing arts at university and growing up surrounded by plays and dance, I know how plays, pantomimes, music and storytelling create shared experiences that bring generations and families together. Families and friends gather to laugh, cheer, sing, boo the villain, or even pray, dance and sing along. Grandparents, parents, children find a warmth and it creates space to reflect, rejoice, cry and hold loved ones close.

These gatherings offer comfort, connection and a sense of belonging within what could be a cold harsh winter. They remind us of hope and joy. Winter can be harsh for some, short days and cold nights. It brings isolation and can deepen the feelings of loneliness, especially to those who have lost someone close, or the elderly, those living alone or facing hardship or sickness.

That is why these gatherings – the pantomimes, the nativities, the carols are so important. These traditions weave hope, joy and compassion that strengthens a community. It strengthens the bonds of family. So this winter let us welcome the laughter, cherish the music and reach out with kindness, whether going to a pantomime, singing carols, visiting a church or sitting around a cosy fire at home watching a film together.

Let us reach out and unite those we notice who may be alone, or struggling and let us celebrate unity and the beautiful truth that we are better and warmer together.



Mistletoe

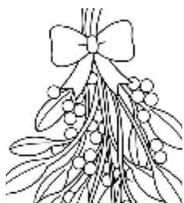
In Britain most mistletoe is found in the south and west Midlands, with particularly good populations in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Gwent and Somerset. There is mistletoe elsewhere, but it is only regionally abundant in that core area of the south-west midlands.

Change may be happening though – new evidence from the last 20 years suggests that mistletoe is spreading faster than it used to. This is particularly noticeable in eastern areas, where established but seemingly static mistletoe populations are now spreading. Is this change due to climate or to birds? It



could be subtle hints of climate change – computer modelling does suggest that mistletoe will head east with climate change. Or it could be something else. One possibility is better spread of the seeds by Blackcaps, a bird that is particularly efficient at spreading mistletoe. British Blackcaps migrate for the winter so they do not usually affect mistletoe here, but recently continental Blackcaps have started overwintering in Britain, with many thousands now spending their winters here and feeding on mistletoe and then spreading it.

Kissing beneath the mistletoe is a very old tradition indeed and although part of Christmas revels, mistletoe is rarely allowed inside a church because of its strong pagan associations. It is well known as the most sacred plant of the Druids, the priestly clan of the Celts.



If you have a young fruit tree in your churchyard, garden or elsewhere, how about encouraging mistletoe by smearing some berries onto the bark after Christmas is over. The thin bark of a young trees is easier for the mistletoe to penetrate and establish.



GO 2 and **WHIRLIGIG**
THEATRE

are appropriately excited to present



CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

5 Gold Rings!

2016, 2017, 2018, 2024, 2025

7.30pm



FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER 2025

ST. MARY AND ST. PETER'S CHURCH, TIDENHAM

raising funds for
St. Mary and St. Peter's
Church, Tidenham

Refreshments
available

Tickets
£10.00

07718 906332 (Fiona)
07702 487582 (Cathy)
01291 627966 (Sarah-Jane)





Greg Maw - the Daddy who had all the answers and the husband who was strong and loving.

On 1st November we said goodbye to an amazing man Greg Maw. We were able to celebrate the brave, strong, incredible man that he was.

Greg was born in Sheffield to Ian and Linda, later becoming a big bother to Amy. Greg left Sheffield when he was 11 but he remained loyal to the team Sheffield Utd. After a brief time in

Crew the family moved to Bromsgrove where Greg met many friends he remained in contact with, many whom shared stories of Greg getting up to child hood mischief and also looking for a good deal. He best friend Matt said 'Greg was calm. I think one of his greatest attributes was that he was calm. He resolved situations with careful thought and with a clear process in mind.'

Greg was a supportive and loving big brother to Amy, he also knew how to 'push her buttons' and once stuck 'Amy got 0/10' on her bedroom door when she failed a spelling test. He was always there for Amy and took time to talk through any issues with her.

Greg led us all through his cancer diagnosis with courage and dignity. He faced every chemotherapy, radiotherapy and operation with hope and determination. He took each knock back in his very capable stride. He once said to me 'I am sorry, we have had some amazing times.' He did not dwell on his diagnosis but was gracious and in control.

Greg did not let his illness stop him from enjoying life; over the years he enjoyed holidays to Westward Ho! And West Wales, body boarding with family and building sandcastles with Bryn and his niece and nephew.

Greg was passionate about working as Head of Finance and Resources at Gloucester City Council. He wanted to provide the best for the city during challenging times. Many of Greg's colleagues have expressed how loved and valued he was, stating that he was supportive, kind and positive. Greg had no awareness of these talents which makes them even more special.

Bryn and I will miss Greg every single day, he was the best Daddy and Husband. We loved him dearly and treasure the memories he has left us. We feel very grateful and supported by our local community and our church family. Many of you have been by our sides since the beginning, some of you in more recent years. The love and support we have received is helping us through this difficult time.

Greg's legacy has to be to make the most of everyday and enjoy yourself. Whether this is snowboarding in the alps, digging in the garden, enjoying a good pint, chilling with your family and friends or indeed working. Do what you can to the best of your ability and enjoy life.



Mo (Jakob)

Testimony from Mo (Jakob)

There are three chapters in my life, prior to my acceptance of Christ. Though much of my testimony may sound foreign to many of you.

Whilst I grew up in Germany, I was actually born in Mogadishu, Somalia into a relatively small but influential tribe full of saints, shamans and holy-men. Our religious practices were a strange mix of Sunni and Sufi Islam, with some more bizarre and cult like saint worship and practice of magic...

As the only son of my father, I was destined to follow in his footsteps and to lead the cult. And so, from a young age I had gone through initiation and affirmation rituals, and had people coming to seek blessings from me. As I grew older, however, I began to turn against it all. I knew, that I did not have any secret knowledge or special powers, and I began to doubt that the rest of the leadership had any either. Additionally, I could no longer reconcile the cult practices with the Islamic scriptures. And so I left, at great personal cost and risk to my safety.

I fully embraced orthodox Islam and thus began my second chapter. I continued my studies of Islam, unshackled from the constraints of my cult. And whilst I remained on the run from my cult, I slowly built new friendships, got married and found a new community. At some point, though, doubts emerged in my mind about some technical aspects of the Islamic scriptures... As my faith began to falter, I revisited the Islamic scriptures without the assumption of their divinity. What I found shook me and I could no longer follow the faith...

And so began my third chapter. After a brief phase with deism, I fully embraced atheism. At this point my marriage had ended and I lost many friends. I was yet again without a community, without a place to call home. Gradually, I met a group of like-minded individuals, formed new friendships and deepened my ties with the family of my long-time friend, who embraced me as their own.

And so I carried on as an atheist for another 12 years; making my own purpose in life and determining my own morals. The early anger towards religion and God gradually subsided and God hardly crossed my mind anymore. It was during these times when I met my dear friend Alan who, himself became a Christian and I was blessed by his presence at my baptism ... I still recall the many debates we had on his conversion. How can one go from an enlightened and intelligent secular atheistic position to an archaic religious one, particularly Christianity? But he remained steadfast and calmly poked many holes in my reasoning. And whilst I was way too hard-headed to accept his position, several cracks emerged in mine and he had planted the seeds to my future faith. I am immensely grateful for his perseverance and nudging me towards Christ.



Gradually, the road of atheism became a lonely and hollow one, and no amount of existential reasoning could fill it anymore. I started to get curious about other religions, in particular about their philosophical and social aspects. I became interested in Christianity from this aspect and was interested in its contribution to Western civilisation. But it remained at the margins of my interest and I did not seriously pursue it.

Late last year, I developed a sudden and completely unexpected moral crisis and a crisis of faith. I began searching for faith, exploring various world religions. Despite my proximity to it, and despite living in its shadows almost all my life, Christianity still remained far from me. I was too biased against it by my Islamic upbringing and by my previous secular-atheism. I did from time to time have the desire to go to church but did not feel confident enough to simply attend a service. One day Esther and John had me for lunch with their family. Grace was said before beginning to eat. This was a completely foreign to me and yet wonderfully moving. Inevitably, our conversation turned towards religion and Christianity and I admitted that I had previously attempted to visit a Church but never found a way in. Consequently, I was accompanied to a service at St Luke's and my friends helped me follow the service, I was blessed to have them at my baptism.

From then on, I started attending church more regularly, got myself a copy of the bible and started reading. I started reading the gospels with curiosity as a book to be studied. I read Matthew and found much that I liked, much that I did not understand.... Around this time, Anna and Tudor came into my life and became dear friends to me. Tudor became my teacher, de-mystifying the scripture for me and introducing me to Paul. And so I went through Mark and found my understanding and faith a little strengthened. By the time I finished Luke I was incredibly moved and felt myself drawn into faith. By the time I started reading John with Tudor, that feeling became overwhelming and there was no turning back, I wanted to get baptised. I was incredibly blessed and honoured to be baptised by Tudor, my cherished and wise teacher...

My new faith has given me inner peace, the like of which I have never experienced before in my life. But the ultimate driver of my faith I cannot explain. There is a movement in me that I cannot put into words, a longing that I cannot make sense of and a calling that I cannot ignore. As I became a Christian, I have but scratched the surface of knowing Christ. As I embark on the long road of faith and learning, I thank God to have delivered me into such wonderful fellowship with whom to share the journey. I thank you all for the warm welcome you have given me from the first day, and all the love you have shown me since. Through you all I have gotten to know Christ and with you all I get closer to him ever day. I thank my Lord, to whom be all dominion, glory and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.



From the Registers

Funerals & Burials

Helen Mary MOLYNEUX (82)

Tuesday, 29th July 2025

Burial of Ashes at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

William Peter JOHNSON (87)

Thursday, 7th August 2025

Service and Burial at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Rosina Lilian SPIBY (75)

Tuesday, 26th August 2025

Burial of Ashes at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Raymond George SEYS (88)

Wednesday, 27th August 2025

Burial of Ashes at St Luke's, Tutshill

Paul Simon SHEPHERD (58)

Monday, 15th September 2025

Burial of Ashes at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Elizabeth Ann EVANS (89)

Wednesday, 15th October 2025

Service at Forest of Dean Crematorium

Robert John SMITH (79)

Saturday, 25th October 2025

Service at Langstone Vale Crematorium

Greg Andrew MAW (45)

Saturday, 1st November 2025

Service at Forest of Dean Crematorium

Followed by Celebration of his Like at St Luke's, Tutshill

Peter Oliver MCKENNA (84)

Thursday, 6th November 2025

28 Graveside Service at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase



“Heavenly Father, during this vacancy, guard and grow the Parishes of Tidenham, St Briavels and Hewelsfield, as we serve you together in this period without a Priest in Charge.

Lord Jesus, we know you have plans for us and that these plans are good. We ask you now that You will help us to share responsibility, grow in faith, love one another, care for those in need, reach out to others, and welcome newcomers.

Holy Spirit, please guide those who are seeking the right person for us, and those who are seeking the right place for their ministry, that together we may discover

*Your way for the future and see Your Kingdom grow.
All this we ask in the strength of the Holy Trinity. Amen.”*



From the Registers

Holy Baptism

Rose Martha Hadland SEWARD

Miriam Anne Hadland SEWARD

Ruth Imogen Hadland SEWARD

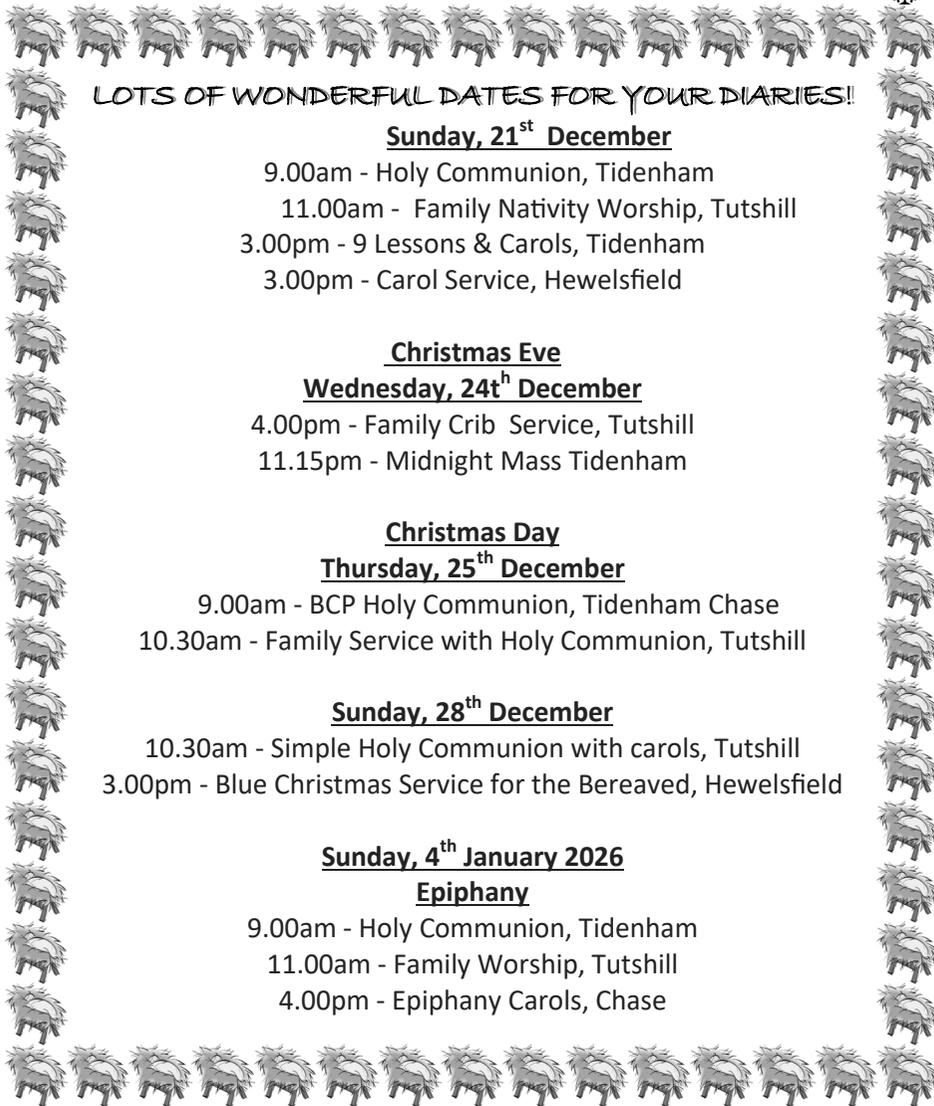
Sunday, 7th September 2025
St Luke’s Church, Tutshill

Mohamed Jakob ABDIRAHMAN

Sunday, 12th October 2025
St Luke’s Church, Tutshill



Further register entries will appear in Spring 2026 edition of the Link



LOTS OF WONDERFUL DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES!!

Sunday, 21st December

- 9.00am - Holy Communion, Tidenham
- 11.00am - Family Nativity Worship, Tutshill
- 3.00pm - 9 Lessons & Carols, Tidenham
- 3.00pm - Carol Service, Hewelsfield

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, 24th December

- 4.00pm - Family Crib Service, Tutshill
- 11.15pm - Midnight Mass Tidenham

Christmas Day

Thursday, 25th December

- 9.00am - BCP Holy Communion, Tidenham Chase
- 10.30am - Family Service with Holy Communion, Tutshill

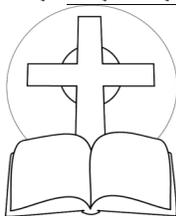
Sunday, 28th December

- 10.30am - Simple Holy Communion with carols, Tutshill
- 3.00pm - Blue Christmas Service for the Bereaved, Hewelsfield

Sunday, 4th January 2026

Epiphany

- 9.00am - Holy Communion, Tidenham
- 11.00am - Family Worship, Tutshill
- 4.00pm - Epiphany Carols, Chase



Luke 2: 113-14

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'



Merry Christmas

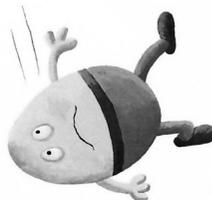


Friends of St Mary and St Peter's Tidenham

Christmas Tree Festival

Come and see the Nursery Rhyme trees

St Mary & St Peter's Church Tidenham NP16 7JQ



DECEMBER

Saturday 20th

Monday 22nd

Tuesday 23rd

Saturday 27th

Monday 29th

Tuesday 30th

2 - 4pm

FREE ENTRY

Donations will help pay for the new heaters in the North Aisle of the church

Registered charity Number: 115958

Merry Christmas



Highlights from PCC meetings in September & October 2025

PCC members:

- welcomed Aimee Lowe as Tidenham Parish's new Children, Youth and Families Minister on 1 September
- heard presentations from our Wellbeing Chaplain Revd Nicki Bullivant about her current work and from Lorna Theophilus who is undertaking her curacy training in our parish
- thanked Tidenham Friends for funding the installation of new overhead chandelier heaters in Tidenham Church north aisle in September
- welcomed the use of Tidenham church for defibrillator training for the whole community on 21 November
- reviewed our financial situation and agreed the need to make our whole church family aware of the ongoing cost of running our parish even during the current vacancy
- agreed to apply for a List B faculty (i.e. planning permission] for repairs to Chase church)
- reissued the list of "Who does what" in our parish
- agreed to co-opt Angela Fryer onto the PCC from November until the 2026 Annual Church Meeting
- renewed our existing insurance contract with Ecclesiastical for a further 3 years.
- agreed new contracts for fire safety equipment (fire blankets and extinguishers) at our three churches from 01 October
- thanked John-Ross Henderson for offering to hold a fire training course in Tutshill church on 8 November
- approved new utility contracts from 1 January 2026 for our 3 churches
- reviewed their preparations for winter



Rules for Editing: "If you've heard it once,
you've heard it a thousand times:
Resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can
use it correctly.."



Angels



St Michael's and All Angels at Tidenham Chase is filled with angels. They are messengers and intermediaries - bridging the gap between God and humanity. A comfort for many of us who visit and worship at a church, close to loved ones who are no longer with us.

To the Victorian, largely farming community, the large west windows suggested that angels constantly are with us. They watch the Sower of Seeds and in the second window they reap the corn. Opposite in the striking east window angels are at the gates of heaven singing and playing their harps - filling the chancel with heavenly music, while below, at the altar, angels are wafting incense through the same space.

The late Victorians excelled at making stain glass. They also used some more experimental processes, half way between tile painting and stained glass. Powell and Son, who were prominent glass makers from London, used this process to produce the vivid colours and sharp design in the angelic reredos at St Michael's. They placed similar designs in the roof of St Paul's cathedral.

Perhaps we are too much influenced by the Victorian images of angels which fill all the churches in our parish. The bible doesn't describe what angels look like. They are said to be spiritual beings. Since the 3rd-4th century AD angels have been represented in art as figures with wings. It was then suggested that their wings are simply a reminder that angels have "left the heights and most elevated dwelling to approach human nature" ?

With nativity plays on the horizon, another generation of angels will be filling our churches praising God and delivering important messages to Mary and shepherds.

At St Michael's all his Angels will continue to inspire and comfort us.

The above photo is from St Michael's and All Angels altar reredos.

We will print some cards with this image for Christmas.

***If you are interested please email -
susanna.jacks@btinternet.com***



About CAP

At CAP, we know it's simply not right that poverty is draining people's hope and destroying lives. We're a UK-wide charity that equips churches to put their faith into action with the tools and expertise to support people facing debt and other financial challenges in their communities.

We do this through a free,

- > face-to-face
- > debt help service,
- > job clubs,
- > life skills groups and
- > money coaching.

The services provided offer both practical and emotional support and are completely free and open to all, regardless of background, faith, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.

We will always speak up for a fairer, more compassionate society, and to this end we campaign to see meaningful change for all, especially those on the lowest incomes. We won't stop fighting until UK poverty has been completely stamped out.

Information and statistics from CAP's annual report and accounts (December 2024)

A moment in time: from our survey how our clients today have experienced poverty

- > 59% borrowed money to pay for their regular food shop
- > 63% struggled to afford a bed or a mattress due to being in debt
- > 72% went without healthy food due to its cost
- > 85% felt isolated because they were in debt

> 638 households received emergency aid

- > 12 new debt centres started to be delivered by local churches
- > 123 new coaches were trained to provide money coaching

> 2,436 people became debt free in 2024

> 118,736 uses of benefits calculator helped people access extra income

In 2024, we saw increases in the number of new clients who owed energy arrears (50%, compared to 45% in the previous year). Council Tax, water and energy arrears remain the top three most common priority debts among new CAP clients.





The Salvation Army is a worldwide Christian church and registered charity changing lives in 131 countries around the world, which has been fighting against social inequality and transforming lives for more than 150 years.

Their mission is based on their faith in Jesus Christ who wants everyone to experience life in all its fullness.

“Our Christian mission - and therefore our work - is based on a passionate belief that our faith demands expression in action as well as words.

That is why we provide practical help for people in need, defend those who are vulnerable and abused, and fight against injustice. The services we provide are diverse, reflecting the needs of the communities we serve.

We work nationally and in local communities through our 650 churches and community centres throughout the UK and Ireland, to serve those who most need our help. We work with decision makers to ensure the views of vulnerable people are heard. We also support international development projects. Read about our varied work.”

The Salvation Army family is made up of church members, volunteers, employees, supporters and people involved in community and social work.

“We put our Christian faith into action and offer practical support and services to all who need them, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.”

“This Christmas, we want to reach out to the people who are suffering the most by bringing joy and hope into their lives.

We know times are tough for many people, and families will struggle to feed and clothe their children. There will be some people struggling to keep a roof over their heads and others who will find themselves on cold and dangerous streets. In 600 communities across the country, The Salvation Army will be doing all we can for people in desperate need, whatever their circumstances.”



DIOCESE OF
GLOUCESTER



Grace Network launches ethical Christmas hamper

The Grace Network, based in The Old Department Store in Cirencester, is offering a thoughtful way to give back this Christmas with a hamper that supports communities both locally and internationally.

Created in collaboration with Different Kind, also based in The Old Department Store, each hamper purchase helps fund social enterprises, fair trade producers, and community initiatives – from pay-it-forward meals at The Long Table, to fair-wage work for women in Bangladesh. All proceeds go to Different Kind, which supports the makers behind each product.

The hamper includes products like Dalit candles, handmade by the Dalit people of India which help fund education for children in underrepresented communities, and Wiggly Kitchen's Social Sauce, made with mulberries picked from Bishop Rachel's garden, which helps marginalised groups learn to cook, garden and connect.

Annie Campbell, Communications and Community Lead for The Grace Network, said: "Each item in the hamper has its own story. Everything has been thoughtfully chosen because it gives back in some way, celebrating community, generosity, faith, and the joy of Christmas."

There are two options available, one priced at £75 and another at £115.

To view the full list of hamper products and costs, visit

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/2025/grace-network-launches-ethical-christmas-hamper/>

Orders can be placed by emailing melissa@thedifferentkind.com.

Clips, cribs, and community: Advent at Sodbury Vale

This year, Sodbury Vale Benefice is spreading seasonal cheer online with their digital Advent calendar – inviting everyone to share in the hopes, memories, and joy of Christmas as seen through the eyes of their community.

Running from 1 to 26 December, the calendar features 26 virtual 'doors', each one revealing a 45-second to one-minute short video clip of a different person or group from the benefice's four churches.



Events and training
More details for all these events at gloucester.anglican.org/events

Advent course: scripture and art, Chapter House, 12 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LX,

7 and 14 December

Explore the nativity story through scripture, art, prayer, and reflection, guided step by step in community over hot drinks and cake. Online courses on 2, 9 and 16 December are also available.

<https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/advent-course-scripture-and-art-2>

Beer and carols,

St Philip and St James
Leckhampton, 60 Grafton Rd,
Cheltenham, GL50 2DD,
20 December

A selection of beer and carols and a singalong of the best carols and Christmas tunes. **<https://pipandjims.org.uk/christmas>**

Have your say

Visit Facebook
[f/Diocese.of.Gloucester](https://www.facebook.com/Diocese.of.Gloucester)
Email Katherine
kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk
Visit website **gloucester.anglican.org**

Christmas – the candlelight concert, Tewkesbury Abbey, Church Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5RZ,

8 December

A festive musical event featuring live performances of classic Christmas songs by singers and a band, performed in a candlelit setting. **<https://www.skiddle.com/whats-on/Gloucester/Tewkesbury-Abbey/Christmas---The-Candlelight-Concert/41054554/>**

Gloucester Morris Men and Mummers dance

Gloucester Cathedral Green, 12 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LX, 26 December

The Gloucester Mummers Play, a traditional and entertaining Boxing Day performance revived in 1969 by local folklore enthusiasts is a free, family-friendly event on Cathedral Green featuring dance, music, and festive fun.

<https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/gloucester-mummers-dance-at-upper-green-25>





News from Jane Penny & Yianna

(Designer and editor of Jane's Newsletter)

Letting Go

As the trees let go of their leaves and we enjoy watching them flutter to the ground, the Autumn season serves as a great reminder to reflect on some of the things we might need

to let go of too.

Grudges?

Expectations?

Problems?

Thoughts?

Feuds?

Behaviours?

Addictions?

All throughout the year they put so much energy into something that they will ultimately let go of, but why?

Well, they were never meant to hold on to them.

As part of their plan they let go. They rest through the bitter winter, holding on to a hope for a future in which they will - and do - flourish again.

Occasionally, you may have heard Christians saying 'Let go and Let God' meaning that we give up control of our lives and the things that weigh us down and we give them to God, trusting that He will guide us.

Sometimes 'letting go and letting God' is not always easy, and the winter that follows is bitter and difficult. But just like in nature, there is a plan for you and the sun is promised to shine again.

What are some things you need to let go and be free of? What is your hope for the future?



Letting Go



News from Heather Johnstone
Church Mission Society

Location: Tanzania

What I do: Helping to empower the most disadvantaged women and children in Mara through the Rehema Project

My Story: I am South African by birth and British by naturalisation. In 2011, after almost 30 years of working in banking, account management and HR management, I was made redundant from my senior role in a business risk consultancy in London. I felt called to do something completely different, something that made a difference, and after praying about it I went to Tanzania on a short-term mission trip. I was introduced to Rehema and couldn't help but become involved.

The Rehema Project benefits women and children in crisis – who don't have food, clothing or shelter and who are susceptible to all sorts of illnesses because of malnutrition. Many of them struggle with the effects of HIV or AIDS and sometimes have suffered from abuse, rape, theft and mistreatment; they are trapped in poverty, with little hope. As Christians we are compelled, through Christ's love, to show love, compassion and mercy. It is my privilege to manage the different elements of Rehema and to share life with the amazing staff.

Some of you will remember that in 2019 Bishop George asked me to take over the running of the Anglican hostel (next door to Rehema), which incorporates a restaurant, accommodation and a hall for rent. In March 2025, the tenants ended their lease with only a few days' notice. Without a plan or budget for this expansion, and with no clear understanding of potential income or costs, at the behest of the bishop we took on this responsibility and unexpectedly became tenants of the Anglican hostel. Though it might seem reckless, it has created additional work and longer shifts for the Rehema women.





Guide Dog Puppies in our Parish

Many of our local Puppy Raisers have recently said goodbye to one pup and are planning for the next one. There is a great deal of pride at the achievements of our 'big puppies', whatever role they go into, but an inevitable reckoning at the emotional cost of letting them go. The arrival of an eight-week-old fluffy bundle of mischief is great fun, but these very young animals are vulnerable, and Guide Dogs offer Puppy Raisers online training, a starter pack of equipment and a 24-Hour Support Line to make sure that all their potential Life Changers receive the best possible care. As we all know from our own household budgets, inflation has been uncomfortably high for a long time now and so the financial cost of breeding, raising and training a Guide Dog is now an astonishing £77000.

We're so grateful for the support of our community when we're out and about with the pups. But with this increased cost in mind, we would like your help with a new venture. We are holding a coffee morning to raise much needed funds to support pups like ours when they arrive in the parish and again when they move on to training. To give you some idea of the costs £80 could buy a puppy raising kit for a new pup £100 could buy a training kit for a pup moving on to 'big school' £141 could buy a starter kit for a guide dog partnership, containing everything they need to start their new life together.

Everyone is warmly invited to come along to the coffee morning. And what could be better than enjoying a walk on Poor's Allotment, or one of the other local nature reserves, and then catching up with friends, family and neighbours for a cuppa and a bacon bap or some delicious cake! For more information about the coffee morning, or to donate to our bottle stall contact Revd Miri or Cara Moulton

To find out more about Guide Dogs and their amazing work take a look at the website www.guidedogs.org.uk

Coffee Morning

In aid of

Guide Dogs

&

Guide Dogs Cymru

Saturday 24th January 2026

10am – 12.30pm

The Old School Village Hall,

Tidenham Chase,

NP16 7JW



News from our pups

Ronnie completed his initial training but rather than becoming a Guide Dog he has become a Buddy Dog. He is no less a life changer, but has a different role, supporting a visually impaired child, giving them confidence as they explore the world and helping them to be ready to care for and manage a Guide Dog of their own in the future.

Honorary Chepstow pups Diffy and Salsa are both training in Training Centres within the South West Region.

Diesel is training in Cardiff, but its not all work for trainee Guide Dogs so he has been enjoying getting out and about for plenty of free runs in the autumn woods.



New arrival Des is settling into his new home and for now is concentrating on the serious business of eating, playing and sleeping as well as learning the basic good manners and commands that every dog needs in order to be a joy to live with.



Update from Miri Keen



The pastor was out Christmas shopping for his family when he saw a great train set display in the high-end toy store.

After 10 minutes of rapt watching, he told the sales woman, "I'll take it."
"Your son will really like it," she beamed.
The pastor thought a moment and said,
"In that case, I'll take two."



Tea Reflection



Have you ever noticed the light reflecting in the surface of your cup of tea? Does it make you pause and enjoy your cuppa more? Do you like to dunk a biscuit in your tea? Do you ever think about those who grow and pick your cup of tea? Without them there would be no refreshing tea to drink!

In the UK we drink about 100 million cups of tea every day—that’s roughly 36 billion cups a year! Our cups of tea involve thousands of tea pickers and this is what those in Kenya say:

“The price we earn today for the hard work behind your favourite drink is just too low. As this continues to drop, our outgoings are rising, and this simply cannot continue. Many of the people picking tea on estates around the world earn significantly below what is considered a ‘living wage’ and are struggling to support their families”.

“This unbalanced global tea trade drives other challenges for those working in tea around the world, including poor living conditions, a lack of health and safety protections, and unequal power for women.”

“On top of this, the rapidly changing climate is making it harder and harder to grow our delicate tea leaves, with risks of flooding, drought and increasing plant diseases all increasing costs and pressure for us.”

We can change this.

They continue: *“As growers and pickers, we work hard to nurture and care for the tea we grow, so we can earn a decent living for our families. When we earn enough money, we can educate our children, keep them safe with school transport, adapt our farming methods to protect the environment around us, and look after the health of our communities with access to clean water and medicine. We want to see the people in our local communities thrive.”*

“By 2050, climate change is expected to reduce the conditions for growing our tea here in Kenya by a quarter. Established farmers and young people hoping to see a future in tea are increasingly worried about the future for themselves and their families.”

We can enable tea pickers to achieve the above - to care for their families and the environment - by buying Fairtrade Tea, and so ensure the future of our beloved cup of tea. Sadly Tesco have little Fairtrade tea but M&S, Sainsbury’s, Co-op, Waitrose and others have more, or you can order it online.

Please reflect on your cup of tea and those who grew and picked it for you

<https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/why-fairtrade/impact/impact-stories/saritha-kumari.html>



NEWS FLASH!

Bullet Point News

✝ Thinking about Baptism/Christening or a Wedding in church?

It has been lovely to have people getting in touch once again about getting their baby christened or perhaps having a wedding in church. Many congratulations if you're at this stage of life!

Please do get in touch with Revd Nicki Bullivant or one of the team.

For weddings visit <https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/>

For baptisms/christenings visit <https://churchofenglandchristenings.org/>

✝ Is God calling you?

All of us reflect on the purpose of our lives at some point. Part of this reflection can lead us to having a sense of being called to do something particular in or with our lives. May the Holy Spirit lead you to respond to what the Lord may require of you. Please do not hesitate to speak with someone at church about this. It is quite normal and remember, God can use any of us he chooses!

✝ Illness

We would like to remind parishioners (church and non-church folks) that they should not hesitate to contact us in the event of illness and hospitalisation. If nothing else, vital prayers can be offered for those in need.

✝ Churchyards

Our churchyards are very special spaces for remembering departed loved ones. Therefore out of respect for **all** mourners please remember that grave-areas **should conform** to the churchyard regulations. This allows for peaceful use and trouble-free maintenance throughout the churchyard. The Parochial Church Council kindly asks that no extraneous additions (stones, plastic flowers, ornaments and statuary, plants, trees, vases, kerb-edging, etc.) are placed in or around graves. **The planting of trees is a particular issue which may cause damage to other graves and prevent a grave space being reopened in the future.** Thank you.

✝ Legacy

We have been humbled and most grateful to have received legacy donations in the past. Perhaps we could all think about leaving a financial gift when we die which can help towards the costs of mission and ministry for the future, particularly at this challenging time.



Chase WI

Chase WI started our autumn session after a lovely summer where we enjoyed coffee mornings, picnics, and walks.

In September we welcomed our speaker Jean, one of our members mother, who showed us her hobby of wood carving, a hobby she started when she retired from work. It was a skill she thought would be interesting and in fact is now a full-time interest which she loves. Our members were thrilled with the amazing items she had made and could have been sold many times over. She did say she wished she had started earlier rather than at retirement as she has so many things, she wishes to carve a very interesting and gifted speaker.

October, we welcomed Mary Watkins from the Rwanda Co-operative. Mary told us how she has been visiting and working in Rwanda for many years and now helps to sell their home-produced products. She has had many roles working in Rwanda starting rugby teams for your people, encouraging women to make and sell clothing items, she has also raised money for treadle sewing machines that they can make their wares on. She has also helped Rwandans to build and equip classrooms for young people encouraging them to build the furniture, chairs, desks, tables, and bookcases themselves. She brought several items the co-op sells and many of our members purchased these for themselves for gifts.

A group of our members visited Terri Chance in Lydney to enjoy a shopping afternoon, Terri kindly supplied tea and cake and all our members thoroughly enjoyed themselves with many of us purchasing items of clothes and jewelry.

A group of members joined GFWI on a visit to Chavenage (where Poldark and Wolf Hall were filmed) followed by scones and tea. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our skittles team are through to the Gloucestershire County semifinal and to help our team members we have had several practice sessions at St Briavel's pavilion and last night we joined St Briavels WI for a practice match and supper which St Briavels were the victors.

We are planning our Christmas meal; theatre visit next year and our Christmas tree selection at Tidenham church in December. If anyone would like to join us, we meet every second Monday at Chase Hall, Rosemary Lane at 2.15 and new members are very welcome.



CHASE GARDENING CLUB

The initial September meeting saw some changes to Chase Gardening Club. Two of our longstanding members, Bob and Gill Elliot, retired from the committee having given many years of service. Stella Caws took on Bob's role as Chair and Molly Mayo became Secretary. It was appreciated by the new officers that they were following two accomplished members of the team and they were very pleased that Bob and Gill would continue as club members where their guidance and knowledge would undoubtedly be called upon.

Our speaker for the afternoon was Pam Turner with the theme of 'Alpines around the garden'. She explained she did not consider herself an expert but an enthusiastic amateur. Her interest in alpines had been cultivated over many years but when Pam and her late husband had moved to a new home, with a windswept garden herbaceous plants had been quickly abandoned in favour of alpines. She encouraged us all to experiment with our planting and discover how it is possible to retain colour throughout the year.



In October we welcomed Marcel Floyd and his Clematis. Marcel has grown Clematis for over 40 years and has had stands at all the major horticultural events including Chelsea and Malvern flower shows. He took us through the various groups of clematis and explained planting and pruning as well as how to take cuttings. He identified that slugs and snails can be a problem with the young plants and his organic method for dealing with this was to use porridge oats scattered around the base of the plants!

The November meeting, on Friday 21st November, will take us far away from Tidenham Chase since Nathalie Mignotte's topic is 'An Illustrated Visit To A Marrakesh Garden.' We will be back, however, for our final meeting of the year in December, when the club will hold its Christmas Social & Quiz.

If you would like to come to any of our meetings you are welcome as a visitor or as a member and we would be pleased to see you. Meetings are held at Chase School on the third Friday of the month at 2:30. For further information please contact Stella Caws on 07941 213777 or Bill Kerr on 01291 621100



TUTSHILL W.I.

We don't usually meet in August, but this year we had decided to (wo)man a stall at the Tutshill Fest on the Rec at the end of the month. The weather forecast (wet and windy) was distinctly discouraging but we persevered and eventually managed to erect a borrowed gazebo – only to have it flipped over and bent by gusting wind just as we were starting to unpack our wares! Undaunted, we cleared it out of the way and set out a display of cakes, jams and various craft items, of which we sold a goodly amount before the fete came to an early end as serious rain set in. It gave us an opportunity to talk to all and sundry about the WI and what we do and, despite the weather, was fun and something to consider repeating.

For our September meeting, we celebrated the WI's 110th birthday with a visit to Wye Valley Flowers at St Briavels, where a walkabout was followed by a corsage-making workshop then bubbly and a splendid cake baked by our Chair – thank you, Cathy! In October, as autumn set in, we retreated back to the Hall for a fun tryout of Nia Dance – Fitness for the Mind, Body & Soul. November brings us round to our AGM, which this year will be in the Hall and combined with a Bring & Share supper and entertainment from the inimitable Dalziel Ellis – a poet somewhat out of the ordinary.



Looking further ahead, December will feature a gift-wrapping demonstration by Eve Cale of 'Gift Wrapped by Eve', in January we will have a talk on the Chepstow Roman river crossing from Simon Maddison of Chepstow Archaeological Society, our February meeting will be a talk/demo on weaving willow, and a juggling workshop is planned for March

We have an associated Craft Group who meet twice a month (usually at Café on the Hill), whose handiwork is often to be seen displayed on the bus shelter – a large Remembrance poppy has gone up for November, to be followed by the perennially popular Advent calendar. There is also a monthly Book Club who meet in Chepstow. You do not have to be a WI member to attend either group.

If any of the above appeals to you, why not come along and see what you think of us? Our meetings are usually, though not always, on the third Monday of the month, 7.30pm in Tutshill Memorial Hall; but may take place elsewhere depending on the speaker/topic of the evening. If you would like to know more about our activities, take a look at our Facebook page, or contact our Secretary, Pat Cannon:



tidenham historical group

Evening meetings from September to April are usually (please check dates) held monthly on the last Tuesday at 7.30 in Sedbury Village Hall, King Alfred’s Road, Sedbury NP16 7AQ.

Visitors are always welcome. For more information contact Liz on 07804 744614, Carol on 01291 623736/07712 574471 or e-mail tidenhamhistorygroup@gmail.com

Spring 2026 Programme



**Tuesday
25th November
7.30pm**

Tim Ryan “The Severn Princess and the Beachley-Aust Ferry Crossing.”

**Tuesday
27th January 2026
7.30pm**

Members’ social gathering and sharing of photos, research and memories.
Come along and enjoy refreshments and conversation whilst looking at new items added to our archive and people’s own contributions.

**Tuesday
24th February 2026
7.30pm**

Tony Conder “Gloucester and its Tall Ships, from home trade to Hollywood”.

**Tuesday
24th March 2026
7.30pm**

Richard Hoyle “H.M. Coastguard; Fifty years of service at Beachley”

**Tuesday
28th April 2026
7.30pm**

Simon Maddison “The Roman Bridge between Tutshill and Chepstow”



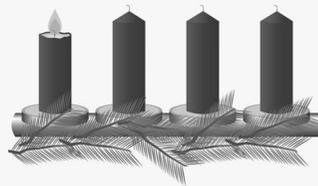
What is Advent about?

Michael Pfunder

Advent has a fourfold message of hope, peace, joy, and love

Advent candle: hope

Advent is about tuning into Christmas. Before long, Christians will be celebrating the twofold arrival of the Saviour: back then, in Bethlehem; and in future, when he returns to establish his eternal reign.



Most church traditions include the advent wreath in their celebrations. The nights leading up to the winter solstice keep getting longer. Meanwhile, the light increases, week by week, candle by candle. A symbol of hope as darkness falls.

Advent is a chance to spend a few minutes a day calming down and refocusing on our hope in Christ, which lies beyond our present circumstances.



Advent candle: peace

The candle lit on the second Sunday of Advent represents peace.

Given how hectic December can be, church traditions which treat Advent as a time of contemplation and renewal can help. Peace may be a case of saying sorry, letting go, or simply resting in the Lord's presence, in anticipation of his coming.

The apostle Paul led a life of suffering and hardship. Yet he found that the 'peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4.7, NRSV). Could this be our own discovery, this Advent, whatever our situation?



Advent candle: joy

Pick a quiet weekday to visit an open, but empty, peaceful church, which has a nativity scene as part of its Advent tradition. Or look up a painting in a book or online.



Take a moment to settle down and look carefully at the characters. The shepherds: social outsiders with a taxing day job. The Magi: facing an evil, scheming ruler. Mary and Joseph, about to run for their lives and seek asylum in a foreign land.

No-one in the nativity scene is happy because of their circumstances. All of them are full of joy because of the child in the manger. Advent invites us to discover a 'joy to the world' that isn't of the world.

Advent candle: Love



By now, all four candles are burning in many churches and homes. The light is shining in the darkness. Jesus is about to arrive. The wait is almost over.

Christians celebrate Advent to receive the message of God's love as if they were hearing it for the first time. God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.

The collective wisdom of Advent celebrations

Liturgical churches have precisely structured and highly symbolic Advent traditions. Anglican, Catholic, and Lutheran churches have 'O antiphons', sung intercessions and expressions of spiritual longing.

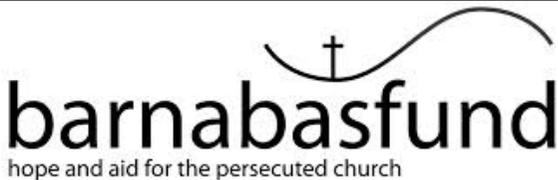
The carol 'O come, o come, Immanuel' reflects this tradition.

Other churches tend to have less structured Advent services. But all Christians share the same message: the Lord is coming. Don't look busy – prepare inwardly. Take time to pray and reflect in silence.

Keep your eyes fixed on the light that shines in the darkness.






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Christian News
Our Faith in Today's World



**A church building
in Cairo**

October 2025: The government of Egypt has approved the licensing of another 160 churches and church-affiliated buildings. This is the 29th batch of approvals made since the government committee overseeing the licensing process began work in 2017. It is nearly a year since the previous set of decisions, in which the committee licensed 293 churches. Several representatives of the

Egyptian government were present, including Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly who presided over the meeting.

The committee has now approved licenses for 3,613 out of the 3,730 churches that applied for registration after a Law for Building and Restoring Churches abolished Ottoman-era restrictions on church buildings in 2016. To secure their licenses, churches must prove ownership of land and fulfil structural and safety obligations, including the availability of fire extinguishers. Before the committee addressed the task of processing licenses it was extremely difficult for churches to obtain a license, and many congregations had no option but to worship illegally in unregistered buildings.

In 2018 the government allowed Christians to worship in unlicensed buildings pending the completion of the registration process. In some areas, however, congregations risk having their churches sealed or demolished by local authorities under the pretext of lacking permits, even when they have applied.

Tens of thousands of churches still await legal recognition.



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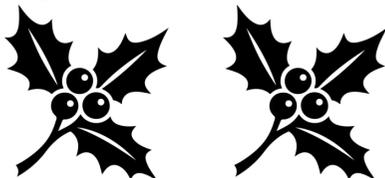
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**Baptisms at St Luke's Church
on 7th September 2025:
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With Esme, Rosalind, Matt,
Mark & Rachel**

