



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



The Parish Magazine

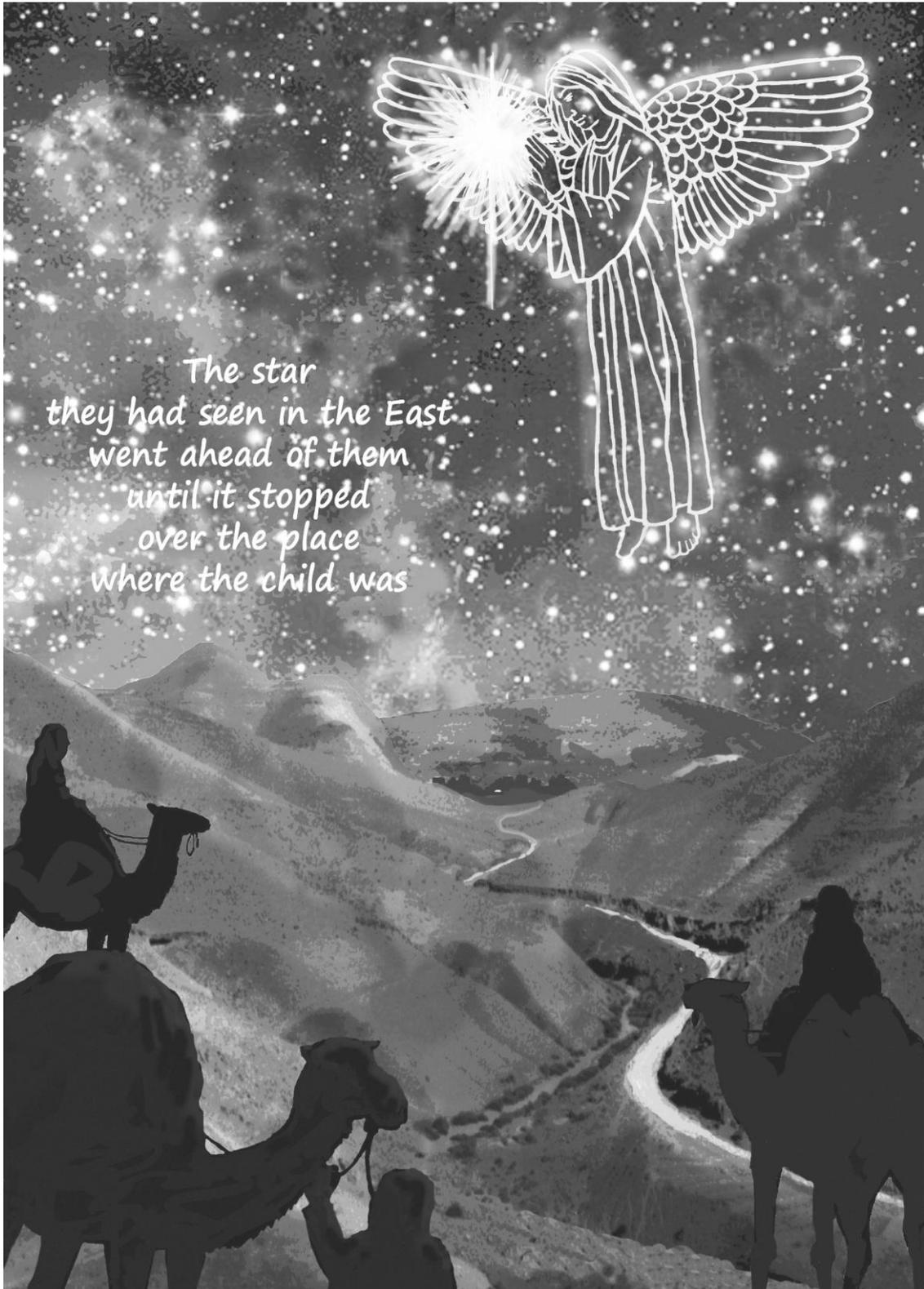
St John-in-Bedwardine

St Michael's



January 2026

50p



Information

WORCESTER CITY WEST TEAM CLERGY (clergy@wcw.church)

Phil Bradford (Team Rector) (01905 423794)

Day off: Friday

Sarah Cottrill (Team Vicar) (01905 426257)

Saturday

Gilly Maxim (Assistant Curate) (gilly.maxim@wcw.church)

Monday

TEAM OFFICE

The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-12noon.	
1a Bromyard Road St John's, WR2 5BS	Tel: (01905) 420490 e-mail: office@wcw.church

ON THE WEB

St John's	Parish Website: www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk A church near you: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18634 Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohninbedwardine
St Michael's	Parish Website and A church near you: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19689 Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmichaelsdinesgreen

SERVICES

Please check our websites and Facebook pages, or the notices published on the church noticeboards and printed in the magazine and weekly pew sheets.

SAFEGUARDING

If you have any concerns about possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, contact one of the Safeguarding Officers, Fiona Templeton, Elizabeth Forman in person or via safeguarding@wcw.church, or any member of the clergy.

Churchwardens: stjohns.churchwardens@wcw.church Gordon Templeton (749025), Joy Job (423051).	St John's
Pastoral care: The church's Pastoral Care Group offers support if you are lonely, bereaved, or unable to attend church. Please contact one of the clergy (as above or email clergy@wcw.church).	
Churchwardens: Mike Dowling (dowlingm28@sky.com / 424539) Val Mason (val.mason@yahoo.com /428948).	St Michael's
On Site Safeguarding Officer: Mike Dowling (details above).	

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.

A word from the editors

Welcome to our January 2026 edition and we wish all our readers a “Happy New Year.”

We enter the new year aware of the many tensions and problems in our country and our world, but with hope and encouragement from our faith and the example of the Magi. Mark Badger explores this more in his letter.

As Mark says “we are called to shine with hope for those around us”. This is part of our pilgrimage on earth and some of the ways that our churches do it now and may do it in future are covered in this magazine. When you’ve read from cover to cover you will see what we mean 😊

We leave you with this part of an Epiphany blessing. There are some other Epiphany prayers on page 25.

*May God the Father,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you in your pilgrimage to find the Lord*

Graham and Sue Evans

Important information

Email address: parishmagazine@wcw.church

Next edition (February): Deadline is Sunday 11th January.

Distribution – towards the end of January

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Pictures in this magazine: Thanks to those who have provided pictures for this magazine, including Beth Broadway, Sarah Cottrill, Graham Evans, Sue Fairman, Rob Little and Colin Nash.

The magazine

We publish a Parish Magazine each month, except August.

Articles on all aspects of Christian and parish life, letters, jokes and anecdotes are welcome - do contribute if you can. If you have a story to tell, please make contact. Do include your name as anonymous contributions will not be considered. If you can, please use e-mail (address below left). The editors will always acknowledge items sent by email; please try again if you do not receive a response. Please send all written correspondence for the magazine to the Parish Office.

The magazine costs 50p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £5 per year; by subscribing you make things easier for our printing team as we know more closely how many copies to print.

You can subscribe by filling in the form near the back of the magazine or by taking a subscription form from the rack (where the magazines are) at the back of the church. Please return the form and your payment to the parish office.

Opinions!

Opinions expressed in this magazine are personal opinions of the authors concerned and may not represent the views of the editors, our Joint Council or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

To advertise

Please see page 12.

From Archdeacon Mark Badger

January brings us into the season of Epiphany, a time when we reflect on the journey of the Magi and the light that guided them.

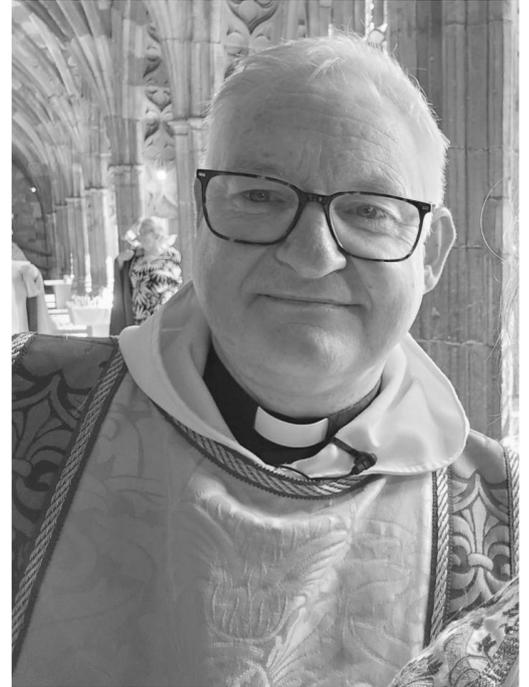
Their story speaks profoundly to us as we begin a new year. The Magi travelled with hope rather than certainty, following a sign they only partly understood, yet trusting that the light would lead them to something – or someone – worth seeking.

In their long and patient journey we find encouragement for our own discipleship. The start of a new year often brings a mixture of anticipation and uncertainty, and few of us feel entirely prepared for whatever lies ahead. Yet Epiphany invites us to be people who are willing to look for Christ's presence in unexpected places, confident that God is already out ahead of us.

As the Magi followed the light, so we look for God's guiding light as we step into a new year. This year, that light shines particularly through the arrival of Bishop Hugh, whose ministry we look forward to welcoming and supporting. A new bishop brings with them not only leadership but fresh perspective, renewed energy, and a reminder that God continues to call and equip people for service in the life of the Church. As Bishop Hugh begins his ministry among us, may we hold him and his family in our prayers, and remain open to the ways his presence will help us discern God's purposes for our diocese in the months and years ahead.

Epiphany also reminds us that the light of Christ is not for us alone. Like the star that guided the Magi, we are called to shine with hope for those around us. In a season when many feel weary or isolated after the intensity of Christmas, even small acts of kindness, hospitality, and prayer can illuminate someone's path. As we step into the year before us, may our congregations be attentive to the quiet signs of God at work, eager to reflect Christ's light, and ready to walk alongside Bishop Hugh as we continue our shared mission.

*With prayers and blessings,
Archdeacon Mark*



Installation of Bishop Hugh

Hugh's installation as the new bishop of Worcester will be at 2pm on Saturday 17th January 2026 in the cathedral. This is open to all.

In Memoriam

Alfred Victor Bishop	5 January 1979
Vera Rolph	5 January 1995
Gladys Eileen Price	8 January 2010
Ada Halls	11 January 2011
Margaret Tolley	12 January 1995
Mary Bishop	12 January 2010
Rose Ashton	13 January 2019
Mildred Christina Waterson	13 January 2007
Edith Mayall	15 January 1999
Kenneth Plumpton	15 January 2012
Frances Lillian Griffiths	19 January 1995
Jack Shearer	24 January 1986
Beatrice Louisa Lerigo	26 January 1988
Vera Mabel Glover	28 January 1990
Rose Margaret Haynes	28 January 2020
Charles Hodges	29 January 1998

Additions to In Memoriam are not automatic but must be specifically requested via the clergy.

Inclusion only needs to be requested once; entries are then included until the fortieth anniversary.

An extension may be requested by family or friends of those named.

From the Registers, November 2025

St John's

FUNERALS/MEMORIAL SERVICES: *Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord*

d. 14th October 2025 Doreen James

SERVICES: Communicants 247. Total attendance at all services 1685 including 19 at a funeral; 350 at the Remembrance service and 550 at the Act of Commemoration at the War Memorial on 9th November; and 213 at the Act of Commemoration at the War Memorial on 11th November.

St Michael's

SERVICES: Communicants 62. Total attendance at all services 77.

Sundays and Principal Feasts in January

Thursday 1st January: The naming and circumcision of Jesus

Sunday 4th January: The second Sunday of Christmas

Tuesday 6th January: The Epiphany (celebrated on 4th January)

Sunday 11th January: The baptism of Christ (The first Sunday of Epiphany)

Sunday 18th January: The second Sunday of Epiphany

Sunday 25th January: The conversion of Paul (The third Sunday of Epiphany)

Dates for your diary

Location key	(J) St John's Church	(M) St Michael's Church
	(V) The Vicarage, 7 Manor Road	

(J) Mondays in term time, 10am: Little Lambs, see pages 7 and 22. First date this term will be 12th January.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 3rd January 4pm: Messy Church, see pages 8 and 28.
Doors open and drinks available from 3:30pm.

--- 000 ---

(J) Thursday 8th January, 1pm: The Good Old Days present
Discover History, "Famous Men of Worcester", see page 7.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 10th January, 9am: Women's Breakfast, see page 7.

--- 000 ---

(M) Thursday 15th January, 2pm - 4pm: West Worcester Friendship Group.

--- 000 ---

(M) Monday 19th January, 2.30pm: Mothers' Union Annual Meeting.
Anyone interested is most welcome to attend.

--- 000 ---

(J) Wednesday 21st January, 2.45pm: Tea/Coffee & Cake, see page 7.

--- 000 ---

(V) Thursday 22nd January, 7.30pm: Mothers' Union.

--- 000 ---

(V) Friday 23rd January: Fourth Friday Friendship Group. Look out for sign-up sheets in church or contact Sarah Cottrill for details.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 24th January, 10.45am: Cafe@10.45, see pages 8 and 11.

Saturday 24th January, 6.30pm: Burn's Night Ceilidh, St Clement's Primary School, see pages 9 and 23.

Evening Prayer with Bible Study

The theme for Sunday Evening Prayer with Bible Study on 11th January will be Priscilla and Aquila - Practising Hospitality, Acts 18 and Romans 16:3-5.

These services are held on the second Sunday of each month at 5.30pm at St John's Church with hot drinks and sweet treats (cakes or cookies) available.

During the cooler months the sessions will be held in the Blakefield Room, otherwise they will continue in the font chapel. Wherever it is being held, please gather in the church beforehand.

Philip Evans

Events at St John's

Little Lambs



**Mondays in Term Time at
St John's Church
10:00am to 11.30am**

FREE!

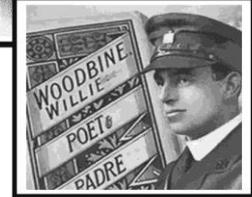
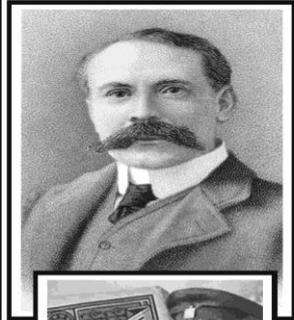
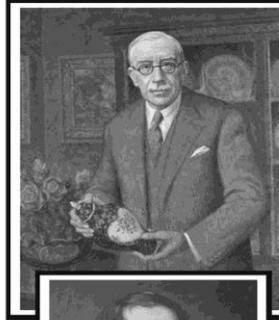
Toys and Games, Art & Craft, Messy Play,
Snacks and Stories, Singing

Birth to 4 years old and carers

More volunteers needed! For more
details contact the Team Office - details
on the inside front cover.

First date this term is
12th January 2026.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS
PRESENTS
DISCOVER HISTORY



FAMOUS MEN OF
WORCESTER

THURSDAY 8TH JANUARY

1.00PM

ADMISSION £4

INCLUDES REFRESHMENTS



Women's Breakfast Meetings
for Friendship and
Christian Fellowship

Why not join us?
Everyone is welcome!

Our next meeting is on

**Saturday 10th January
9.00am until 11.00am**

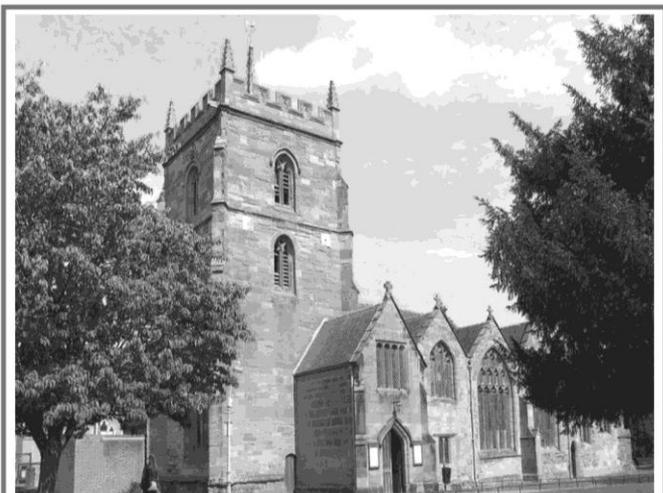
St John-in-Bedwardine
in The Blakefield Room

Contact Margaret Rutter (425396)



ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE

Join us for Tea,
Coffee & Cake



Wednesday 21st January

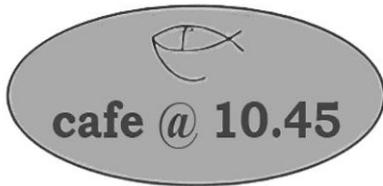
2.45pm

Everyone Welcome!

Suggested donation £2.00

Events at St John's

St John in Bedwardine



**Join us for Fresh Coffee and
Danish
'Friendship and Thoughts'
At 10.45am on
Saturday 24th
January 2026
ALL WELCOME**



Saturday 3rd January, 4pm.
(doors open 3.30pm with
drinks and biscuits).
January's theme will be
"Who Is Jesus?"
Join us the first Saturday of each
month!
Please do come along,
you'll be sure of a warm welcome!

Weekday services

The following mid-week Eucharists and Daily Offices are scheduled in January from Monday 5th January:

Tuesday St John's 10am (Holy Communion - Book of Common Prayer)
Thursday St Michael's 10.30am (Eucharist - Common Worship) **

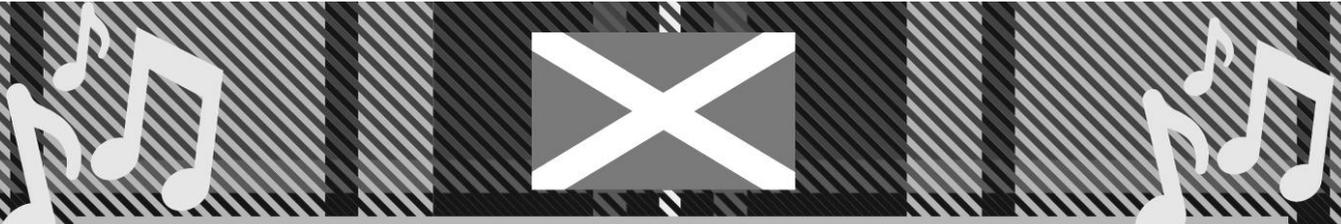
** On the second Thursday of each month (8th January) this is a Eucharist for Wholeness and Healing.

Daily offices take place in St John's Church from Monday to Thursday. Morning Prayer is at 8.30am. Evening Prayer is at 4pm during GMT and at 5pm during British Summer Time. Occasionally other commitments will prevent a service happening; the schedule for each week will be published in the pew sheet.

Thank you

I would like to thank everyone at church for the love and prayers they have sent me during the past few weeks. Also for the lovely card signed by lots of members of the congregation.

Sylvia Render



Burns Night Ceilidh

Saturday 24th January '26
6.30pm

St Clement's Primary School

Adults £15, Children £5

Includes Haggis/Pulled Pork/Pulled
Jackfruit roll (or Hot Dogs for children)

Bring Your Own Drinks

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Cafe Church

Cafe church starts again in the New Year and Colin Nash is coming to talk about his Landscape Photography.

Everyone is welcome to come and share with us. Come and share coffee, Danish pastries and fellowship.

It's on Saturday, 24th January 2026 at 10.45am.

Margaret Rutter and Jenny English

Report from The Community Breakfast

Our latest Community Breakfast, on Saturday 29th November, was another very successful event. Thank you to everyone who helped to cook, serve, made tea, coffee and toast, and all the Guides who helped with serving.

My thanks go to all those who we were privileged to serve. We served 153/160 full English breakfasts and ate our way through 17 Toastie loaves.

My thanks also go to Mr Narraway and his team for all his help with this event.

Jenny English

Thank you

Many thanks to everybody who helped with our Autumn 'Clean and Tidy Up' day on Saturday 15th November. Everyone worked really hard!



Special thanks to Tom, our Estates Manager, who was able to source a 'Skyvac' from the diocese which enabled him to remove all the cobwebs lurking in the high, previously inaccessible parts of our beautiful church.

Joy Job

Would you like to advertise in this magazine?

An advert can be full-page, half-page or quarter-page in size.

The booking can be from one month to one year.

The Parish Magazine is published A5 in size, in black and white.

There are eleven issues each year,
July and August being a combined issue.

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Children's Church – January 2026

Thank you to everyone who took part in our Community Nativity. The children were very enthusiastic and worked hard to learn their lines and songs. They excitedly retold the Christmas story with cheerful angels, intrepid wise men and some errant sheep roaming the countryside!

On 21st December we had a Christmas party in our usual Sunday morning group featuring a very special visit from Father Christmas who brought along a small present for everyone. We were all very excited to meet him!

As we look to the new year we continue to have two groups running at St John's. Scramblers is for pre-school and Key Stage 1 children and features an active retelling of a Bible story, a simple craft and time to play for the very young.

Explorers is for Key Stage 2 children and allows them to consider Bible stories in a little more detail, followed by a craft or activity. There is always an opportunity for children to share what they've done in the main service if they would like to.

If you're considering attending a session and would like any further information, please speak to either of us at a Sunday service.

Fiona Templeton and Amy Rees

New curate

I am pleased to announce that I have been asked to be the training incumbent for another curate who will be arriving this summer.

We will still have Gilly with us until at least the start of 2027, and hopefully several months longer, but we will be joined by Julie Berrow. Julie is currently a Reader at St Barnabas, across the river, and training for ministry at Ripon College, Cuddesdon (near Oxford). She will become assistant curate here after being ordained deacon in the cathedral at the end of June.

Unlike Gilly, Julie will be a Self-Supporting Minister (SSM, previously known as a Non-Stipendiary Minister, NSM), so she is not paid a stipend and ministers in a voluntary capacity in addition to her work. This does mean that she is not full time and there will need to be different expectations, as she will not be able to attend everything a stipendiary priest can.

I will write more about this nearer to next summer, but Julie comes with considerable experience and I am delighted she will be joining our clergy team.

Phil Bradford

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Food for thought

During the November Joint Council meeting, I introduced two initiatives that I would like to explore our churches joining, as part of a commitment to being a church in the centre of the community that is open, welcoming and inclusive of all people. Both our society and the Church of England have recently shown worrying evidence of seeking to exclude minority groups, and I feel passionately that the love of God is for all and we should model that openness to all in everything we do. It was agreed at that meeting that I would introduce these initiatives to the wider congregation to open a broader discussion about our direction and priorities as a church.

A lot of our work recently has been aimed at making St John's a welcoming and inclusive place for children and young people. That is absolutely vital, and while I am pleased at the progress we have made, I am also aware that we still have work to do. However, I am equally aware that there is a risk of overlooking or unintentionally excluding other groups by a message which focuses too heavily on children and young people; in particular older people and single people, or those not part of 'traditional' family units. These are those frequently overlooked, ignored or even consciously excluded by many churches.



Encouraging churches to welcome and value single people

Single Friendly Church (<https://www.singlefriendlychurch.com>) is a network which encourages churches to think about how they welcome and value single people. This has been discussed in Ministry Team and we will be using their audit process. To me, this seems to be a very useful tool which encourages us to think about our messaging and culture, and I propose to draw together a focus group to complete the audit, with the aim of being officially listed as part of the network. This should complement our work with children and young people, and fit in with the wider consideration of inclusion.



Inclusive Church (<https://www.inclusive-church.org>), meanwhile, is a network of churches committed to the following mission statement:

Continued on page 17

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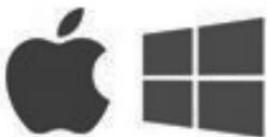
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Continued from page 15

'We believe in inclusive church – a church which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate. We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality. We believe in a Church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.'

I have been considering proposing that we join for some time, but have been spurred to action by two recent events: the appalling rhetoric targeted at the archbishop-elect of Canterbury because she is a woman, and the homophobic pronouncements of the House of Bishops.

Gender and sexuality are obviously the most spoken about issues, and the two where people are most consciously excluded by the Church of England, and I confess to being ashamed of the misogyny and homophobia ingrained within significant parts of the Church of England. It is still the case that my female clergy colleagues can be treated differently and have their ministry rejected simply because they are female, which to me is absolutely unacceptable. However, as the mission statement makes clear, there are many possible ways to exclude, often unintentionally. Becoming an inclusive church involves looking at the ways all people can be included, and recognising where we can take down barriers and be open to everyone.

There is a series of books about the main areas, and the website contains many useful tools to explore some of the issues of inclusion on a local level.

The question may arise why, given St John's in particular already feels inclusive, we need to give ourselves a label. In a society and a church where so many minority groups feel excluded and threatened, I strongly believe that it is important that we make a clear statement that we are a safe place for all people to be themselves, and make clear that the love of God is for all people.

I encourage you to look at the online materials, to ask for the books if you would like to see them, and to ask whatever questions you might like ahead of us discussing this more fully in the new year.

Phil Bradford

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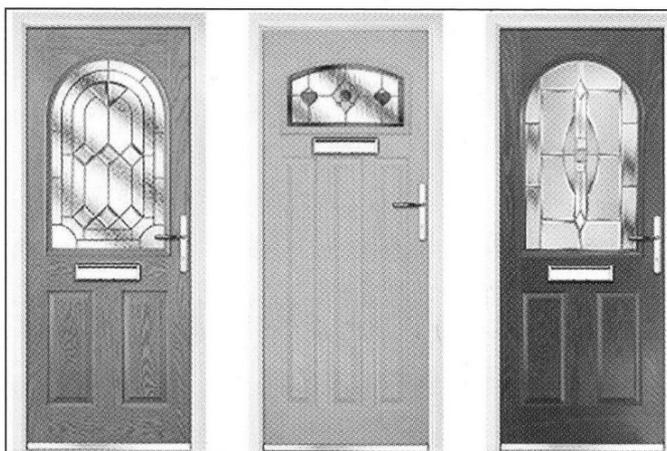
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Prayers for our world - El Salvador

In November, our Evening Prayer for Peace and Justice focussed on El Salvador, Central America's smallest country. Its twentieth-century history was one of much violence and warfare, often negatively influenced in the 1970s and 1980s by the United States supplying arms, money and operatives to government militia gangs as part of its anti-Communist rhetoric. Today, the main problems facing the country are corruption, poverty, and above all gang violence, again (as featured in the news) exacerbated by the United States deporting Salvadoran gang members to the country who turn out to be neither Salvadoran nor gang members. Among our prayers was the following:

*Heavenly Father,
we come before you with heavy hearts, burdened by the violence, fear, and pain
that have gripped the communities of El Salvador.*

*Lord, we cry out for your mercy, for your peace, and for your divine intervention.
Father, we lift up every street, every home, every heart in those communities.
We ask you to bring an end to gangsterism, shootings, and all forms of violence.
Break the chains of hatred, revenge, and destruction.
Replace them with love, unity, and hope.*

*Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, walk through the neighbourhoods of El Salvador.
Let Your light shine in the darkest places.
Touch the hearts of those caught in gang life: the lost, the hurting, the angry.
Show them a better way.
Speak to their hearts, and lead them out of destruction into your purpose.*

*Holy Spirit, Comforter and Guide, give wisdom to leaders, courage to law
enforcement, and strength to communities.
Protect children from harm and keep them from paths of violence.
Raise up mentors, churches, and organisations to be beacons of hope and change.
We pray for the families who have lost loved ones.
Give them comfort, healing, and justice. Let not their pain be in vain.
Turn tragedy into testimony, and despair into purpose.
In the mighty name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

At the end of our prayers, we had a brief reflection on peace from Oscar Romero, the archbishop of San Salvador who was murdered in 1980 for his defence of the poor of his country and outspoken defence of human rights:

*Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries.
Peace is not the silent result of violent oppression. Peace is the generous,
tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism.
Peace is generosity. It is right and it is duty.*

Phil Bradford

New housing

One of the big issues in national politics at the moment is housing, especially the lack of affordable housing for younger people in a changing society. With the need for more housing across the country, developments are happening everywhere, with the plan for Worcestershire and Dudley including significant areas of new homes throughout the county and borough. You may have read recently of the decision to name the new town to be built around Worcestershire Parkway ‘Wychavon’. Most developments will be additions to existing settlements rather than new towns, but there will be few parts of the local area unaffected.

With this in mind, in October the diocese organised a day conference for clergy, to hear from some of those involved in the plans and think about how we can respond as a church to these new communities or extensions to existing communities.

Ed Elliman and Joe Lamb from Taylor Wimpey, a development company, explained the need for development in places people actually wanted to live. They were honest that developers are ultimately governed by the need to make a profit, which is why government rules place demands and restrictions on projects, requiring investment in schools, improving green spaces and providing affordable housing.

Duncan Rudge, Director of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review, gave a town planner’s perspective, talking about the importance of developing pride in place. He said: ‘There is often tension between the local community and the Government’s drive to build new homes at pace. People are passionate about protecting their area and ask why we need so many new houses. However, evidence suggests that the number of new homes planned across our area will actually need to double. We need to work together better, and for everyone to understand the importance of building community and place as part of the process.’

Sue Steer is a Baptist Minister and pioneer community worker at the centre of a project to build a healthy community in New Lubbesthorpe, Leicestershire. She spoke about their work and the importance of managing expectations and understanding how long things take. She said the most important thing for churches was to work together ecumenically for everyone, not just those who come to church, to build new communities with their own stories. Without the tradition of historic church buildings, church was expressed differently. In her words: ‘The first stage was to build a missional community. It’s about listening, loving, serving and walking alongside people.’

We then heard from Becky Dyball, who set up ‘Coffee Ark,’ a missional social enterprise in Glatton Village in Cambridgeshire, arising from the needs of a

community with considerable isolation. The idea was to take the church out of the building and be where people were at. They purchased and converted a Land Rover, 'Daisy', to go into communities without good transport links. Volunteers serve coffee and cake from the vehicle and talk to people. She said: 'We've seen lives changed through Coffee Ark. We focus on being open about discussing mental health as well as offering radical hospitality and great coffee. People can be referred to us from GP surgeries and other social prescribers and food banks give out vouchers for people to get free coffee and cake. Bringing people to faith is not the primary focus, but people quickly begin asking questions about some of the big issues in their lives. We've seen church attendance increase since this started.

The archdeacon, Mark Badger, talked about how he hoped to involve clergy in this diocese in a similar project. He had experience of providing coffee and an open space for discussion at the school gates while Vicar of Kempsey, and hopes to be able to reach out to new communities in this way with the help of local clergy. The event concluded with the speakers taking part in a panel discussion chaired by Hugh Richards, Chair of the House of Laity in this diocese and a barrister with experience in housing and planning issues.

The day provided some useful things for us to consider. As we are primarily an urban Team, very little of the new housing will be directly within our boundaries. However, significant development will come in the area between Dines Green, Rushwick and Lower Broadheath. We will have to think about how we work with our neighbours, West Worcester Beacon and the West Worcestershire Rural Team, to best minister there. There are wider questions about the shape ministry will take west of the river, and our mission in these new communities will be a part of those. Together, we will need to be creative about how we play our part there, remembering the advice that what is most crucial is presence and walking alongside people. The familiar patterns are changing, and part of our future mission will be working in collaboration with other churches to bring the church to people in new places in new ways.

Phil Bradford

Moving on

Kalantha Brewis, Area Dean of Worcester and Vicar of West Worcester Beacon (Hallow, Grimley, Holt and Lower Broadheath) has been appointed lead Diocesan Director of Ordinands in the Diocese of Oxford. She will take up her new post in February. Please pray for her as she prepares to move and follow this new calling, for our neighbouring parishes as they will soon enter into vacancy and the process of choosing a new vicar, and for those selecting a new Area Dean.

Phil Bradford

Little Lambs

Thank you so much to all our volunteers who ran Little Lambs while I was away and who are always so dedicated and hardworking. Little Lambs continues to be very popular and an important part of our community. I missed you all but knew that you were having fun too.

I had a wonderful holiday in Singapore and Japan with my family and we saw and experienced so much. We spent two weeks in Japan and visited many beautiful places, travelled on the bullet trains and more, ate lots of delicious food and met many lovely people. Singapore in October and November was as hot as it always is at 32 degrees and although I know that as it is so close to the equator it still felt a bit strange compared to the UK. Japan was more similar to the UK in the north but was hot and sunny further south. You can read more about my trip on page 34. I arrived back to London on November 9th. I was pleased to be able to attend the Remembrance parade and service as usual, as it is important to me.

Our children always enjoy our craft activities, as you can see with this month's photos. We hope you like our stained glass window Christmas baubles which we made to help decorate our church.



By the time this magazine is published Christmas will be with us and we all hope that everyone has a happy and restful time.



We will look forward to seeing everyone on 12th January 2026.

Every blessing from us all at Little Lambs,

Sue Fairman

Events Team News

Thank you to everyone who came along to the November Family Quiz. We hope you had a great time! The quiz, put together by Mike and Kate, included questions about Hey Douggie, the Battle of Worcester; and a ‘General’ Knowledge round where all of the questions or answers were linked to the rank or word ‘general’. Much fun was had on the ‘which team can make a paper aeroplane and fly it furthest?’ and the ‘Name the TV theme tune’ proved popular once again.

We’re now in full planning mode for 2026, with a return of events such as Hymns and Pimms, alongside new events - prepare for a visit to the Church from Santa.

Our first event of 2026 is the Burns Night Ceilidh, back by popular demand. Taking place on Saturday 24th January, 6.30pm, join us at St Clements’ School with ‘The Whole Caboodle’ for a night of dancing and family fun. As last year, bring your own drinks and tuck into a haggis, pulled pork or jackfruit roll (hot dogs and vegan hot dogs available for children).

Last year’s ceilidh sold out, so be sure to get your tickets early. We look forward to seeing you there!

Beth Broadway



It's Christmas!!

Yes, we know that officially it was still Advent, however Messy Church decided that since we'll always miss the actual Christmas period, it was a good opportunity to celebrate the Christmas story.

While all of the congregation arrived, everyone was challenged to find the missing halves of Christmas cards, hidden around the church. The other half had been pinned to the Messy Church board, split between Bible and non-Bible themed.

The crafts covered the Christmas story and its significance to us, from making lollipop stick 2D nativity scenes to beaded letter Js. Drawing around our hands, we made wings for lollipop stick angels, arranging the sticks into the shape of an A



The shepherds were represented through white chocolate rice crispies sheep, with matchmaker legs and fondant icing heads. These proved extremely popular!

The three kings were represented with a board game camel race, with challenges such as Herod and advantages such as stars making the players move spaces backward and forward respectively.

To make us consider how we have faith, even in the seemingly impossible, we were challenged to knock out just the bottom coin of a pile of pennies, using only a knife. Despite how hard it initially sounded, it actually worked! Why not give it a go at home?

Our worship session covered the activities that we'd been doing and took a deeper look at what the overall theme was and its meaning.



While Phil started the worship sitting on the steps, keeping the atmosphere casual, when he stood up with gusto at the point of asking 'what is Christmas?', there was a moment when the adults probably wondered how deep he might take it! Luckily, he kept it nice and straightforward for us.



The Messy Church team was a few short this session, so a massive thank you to those who turned up for the session and ended up helping out in the kitchen and packing up!

The next Messy Church is on Saturday 3rd January, where our theme will be 'Who Is Jesus?' Doors open at 3.30pm and Messy Church starts at 4pm. Everyone is welcome, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Beth Broadway

Collects

Alternative Collect for Epiphany:

*Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

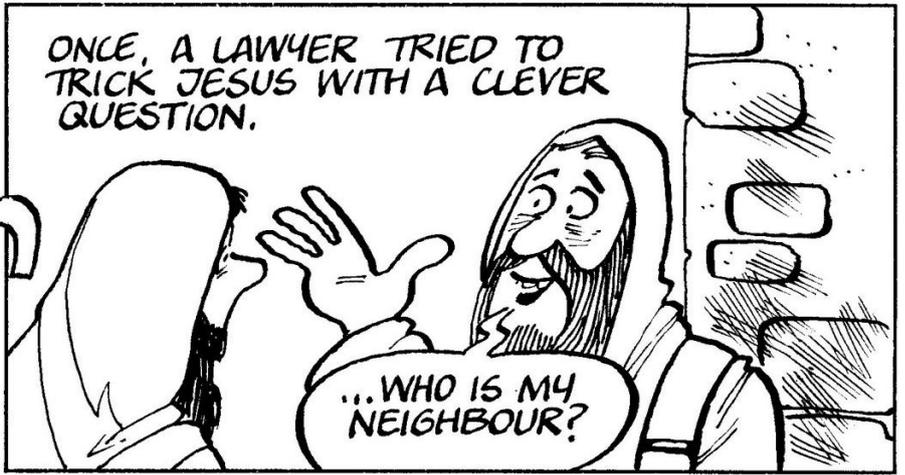
Alternative Collect for the Baptism of Christ:

*Heavenly Father,
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:
may we recognise him as our Lord
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

The Good Samaritan

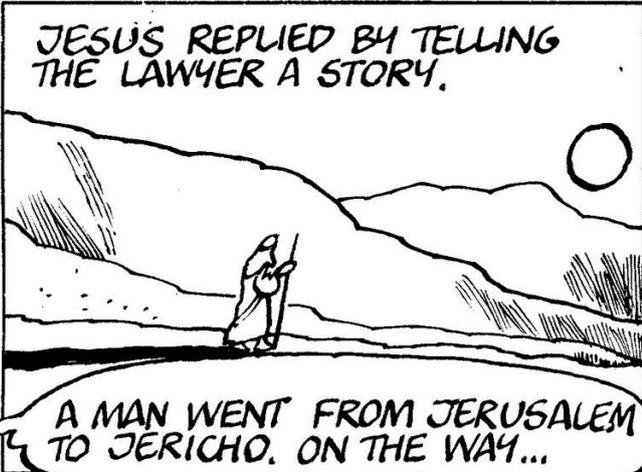
JERICO

ONCE, A LAWYER TRIED TO TRICK JESUS WITH A CLEVER QUESTION.



...WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

JESUS REPLIED BY TELLING THE LAWYER A STORY.



A MAN WENT FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICO. ON THE WAY...

HE WAS ATTACKED BY ROBBERS!!



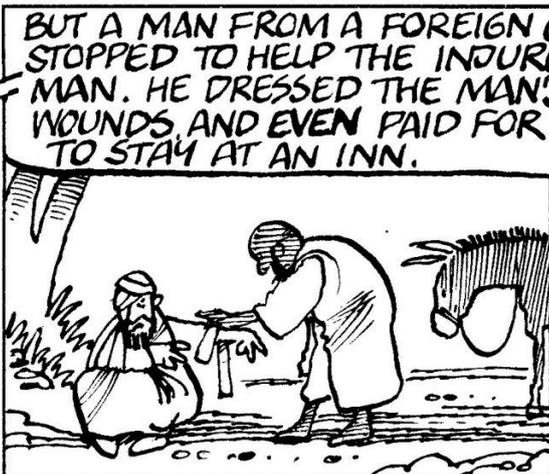
HELP!

THEY TOOK EVERYTHING HE HAD AND LEFT HIM FOR DEAD!



LATER A PRIEST PASSED BY, BUT DID NOTHING TO HELP - NOR DID THE RELIGIOUS MAN FROM A TEMPLE!

BUT A MAN FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY STOPPED TO HELP THE INJURED MAN. HE DRESSED THE MAN'S WOUNDS AND EVEN PAID FOR HIM TO STAY AT AN INN.

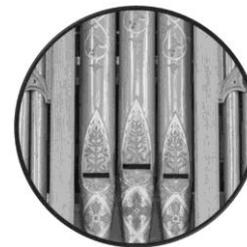


JESUS THEN ASKED "WHO WAS THE NEIGHBOUR?"

- PRIEST
- TEMPLE MAN
- FOREIGN MAN

WHICH DO YOU THINK WAS THE ONE THE LAWYER CHOSE?

Organ Appeal



Update:

As of early December, the amount raised has passed £18,000. If we can get a Listed Places of Worship grant to cover the VAT, we need £26,000 to cover the cost excluding VAT. There's still a gap of around £8,000. Please tell everyone you can about the organ appeal and make a donation if you can.

- *Donate via the card machine at the back of St John's Church.*
 - *Donate online at <https://givealittle.co/c/Organ2025> or by scanning this QR code:*



- You can donate **by cheque** by sending it to the Team Office (1a Bromyard Road, St John's, Worcester, WR2 5BS)
- You can donate by **bank transfer** to:

Account number: 20150628	Sort code: 82-12-08
Account name: WORCESTER ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE AND ST M	
Reference: ORGAN	Bank: Virgin Money/Clydesdale

If are able to make a Gift Aid declaration, please use the subscription form on page 50 and fill it in like this:

		Total
Magazine subscription (as above)	£5 / £23.15	NO
Additional Donation (if applicable)	ORGAN	Amount
GRAND TOTAL		Amount

With your help, we hope to start the work at the beginning of 2026, and have the organ back, in full working order, for Easter 2026.

Tudor Banqueting

On the one sunny day of that week, over 70 people turned up to hear Paul Harding, from Discover History, tell us all about the banquets, or feasts, in the Tudor times. In particular, the era of Queen Elizabeth I, who came to Worcester in her 40s. Her white face was due to white lead that was plastered on to her face to hide the pox marks. She came to Worcester in 1575 where she stayed in the Bishop's Palace, part of the old monastery that her father Henry VIII had closed.



Every night when she was here, she ate very well, but on one night she had a full feast in the Hall of the Bishop's Palace. They cleared the fishponds of most the stock and used dogs to search out rabbits in the warrens. The gentry invited her to go on a hunt for deer in Battenhall Park, where she was given a small crossbow to use on the hunt, where they killed 7 deer for the

feast. In a Tudor feast there had to be loads of waste food to show that it had been a good feast. It was very bad form to run out of food.

A stage was built for the Queen and people like the Aldermen and Sheriff, because they had to be seen to be higher than the rest of the attendees.

All tables had to have tablecloths, and the top table had 3 separate cloths. The bottom one covered the table top and legs. The next one covered the top and was used to deaden the sound of food being put on the table. The top cover of white linen was smaller so it could be seen that you could afford to have three! The top table was across the hall and then there were two legs down the sides. The further down these tables you were, the lower your position in the pecking order.



The tables were lit by candles. The top table had beeswax candles, which burnt cleanly and brightly. All the lower tables used rush lights, which burn with black smoke. To get more light they would put the rush candle in horizontally and light both ends, which is where we get the phrase ‘burning a candle at both ends.’ The upper classes had pewter plates and wine goblets, made of lead and tin. Every time they cut into the plates, they would be adding lead to their food. They had a small

plate beside the main plate, and this was a saucer, the original use of which was to put your sauce on. The lower classes used wooden plates. All the diners were given spoons and knives; forks were not available at that time.



Those on the top table would drink strong wine, from small pewter goblets, and the lower tables would have beakers for beer and cider. The pewter would help to sweeten the wine, but it meant that they were consuming even more lead. The Romans added lead pellets to their wine as they knew that it helped to sweeten the wine.

All weapons had to be handed in before entering the dining area. The lower tables were filled first and then the top table took their seats. After prayers by the bishop there was a fanfare and the doors were thrown open. Silver bowls of water with rose petals were brought in, and people were able to wash their hands after watching the Queen wash hers. We know that the water came from a spring in Henwick. People used very large napkins. The correct way to use one was to fold it and place it over the left shoulder. Once the Queen had finished her food, she would take the napkin off and fold it up, then everyone had to stop eating.



The salt cellars were brought in first, as salt was very precious. Everyone would take a pinch of salt and pass the cellar down the table to the bottom.

The next thing in was the bread, which was cut across and not downwards. This

was because the bread was baked in bread ovens, which were heated by faggots of wood. Once hot the oven was scraped out, and the bread was cooked in the ash left on the bottom of the oven. Hence the top table ate the upper crust, which was clean, and the lower tables would get the ash encrusted bottom crust.

The next fanfare would introduce the food, this included swan and peacock. These were skinned carefully and after the meat was roasted, over a spit, the skin was sewn back over the meat, so it looked like a swan and peacock. Another delicacy was a cockentrice, which was the front of a cockerel sewn to the back end of a very small piglet. This was to represent the baby dragon that the Queen had killed on the hunt, thereby saving her people from a dragon.



Chargers would be brought round with various meats and pies. With the pies you would lift the lid off and take out the meat with the knife on the charger - never your own knife. You didn't eat the pie casing. These were taken back to the kitchen to be refilled.

No one was allowed to leave the table until the Queen had finished, and this could take hours, so comfort was a problem. There could be up to 30 courses. Therefore, there would be children around the hall with large jugs, or urinals, and they would bring them to the table for people to use.

If the guests were embarrassed, then a musician would also come close and play their instrument to cover the noise from the guest!



At the end of the meal the waste food would be taken into the town centre and distributed to the poorer people.



As usual (and very appropriately for the theme of the talk) the ladies from the church had created a wide variety of cakes for the audience.

In addition, one of the attendees, Bill, had made a wonderful Scottish Raspberry Cheesecake that I can confirm from personal experience was absolutely delicious.

Colin Nash

St Clement's Patronal Festival celebration

What a weekend we had!

The last twelve months have, for various reasons, been difficult for us at St Clement's Church and we could easily have become despondent. That, however, is not our way and we decided to make a “real splash” as we celebrated our Patronal Festival, focusing on all the good things and, in particular, all the talent we have. So our Patronal Festival in November became a weekend of celebration along the following lines:

Friday 21st: An extra coffee “morning” lasted all day, allowing people to drop in for a chat and to display their craft items - knitting, embroidery, sewing, tapestry, flowers, and even Lego models.

Saturday 22nd (St Cecilia's day): Our talent show attracted mostly singers, although there was also some poetry recital - and, of course, the crafts. A team of five judges (all from outside our area) brought a combined wealth of experience and expertise from the worlds of music , drama and textiles- and they needed it!

The standard was high and I was very glad not to be the one deciding on the winner! Special medals, designed and made for us by my brother-in-law, Alastair Benton, were presented to the winner of each category. There were also key rings to the same design for each of the judges.

Sunday 23rd: Our 9.30 Morning Prayer service, celebrating Christ The King was held in the Lady Chapel and we had the lovely “problem” of having to put out extra chairs to accommodate all wanting to attend! This service was followed by a Eucharist in which we prayed for, and gave thanks for, everybody who works so hard on our behalf, fulfilling various roles.

Time for a quick coffee and chat before noon, when the ladies of our choir were joined by those of Opera Worcester and the Phoenix Choirs for the Hymnathon. For the next two and a half hours, the ladies sang hymns chosen and sponsored by members of the congregation.



They really raised the roof with the singing and gave us a wonderful afternoon.

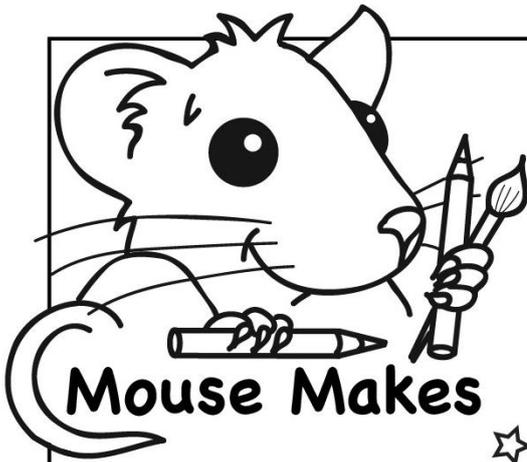


Whilst some then went home for a well-earned rest, others of us made our way to the Cathedral where, in a truly uplifting and moving service, Bishop Martin confirmed candidates who included our members Sally-Ann, Rachel and Gemma.

There couldn't have been a better way to end our very busy, quite tiring, but truly amazing weekend! Thank you to everyone who contributed to any of the events.

Now, what are we going to do next year.....?

Sarah Cottrill



Mouse Makes

DID YOU KNOW ?

Stars shine different colours, the colour we see depends on the temperature of the star. The hottest stars shine blueish-white, then yellowish-white, yellow, orange and the coolest stars shine red.

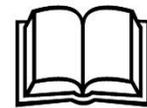
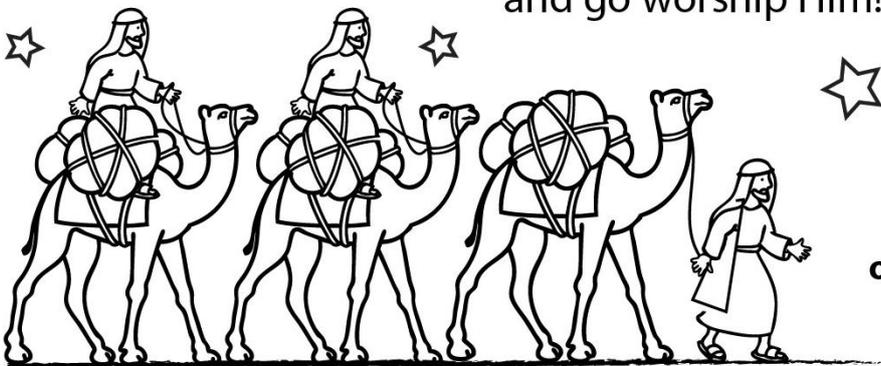
WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

The Wise Men came from a land far away, they had seen a star that shone brighter than day.

The star was a sign of the birth of a king, so they followed that star to pay homage to him.

They found him in Bethlehem as the prophets foretold, they gave him three gifts: myrrh, frankincense and gold.

The star led to Jesus our saviour and king, let us join with the Wise Men and go worship Him!



Read the story of the Wise Men in **Matthew 2:1-12**

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

Can you find these words in the word search?

- WISE MEN • MAGI
- STAR • SIGN
- JOURNEY • BETHLEHEM
- VISIT • JESUS • MESSIAH
- CHRIST • KING
- GIFTS • GOLD • MYRRH
- FRANKINCENSE
- WORSHIP • JOY
- EPIPHANY

Wow Japan!

Shinto Shrines, Buddhist temples and much more

Well, what a fabulous two week holiday we enjoyed in Japan as we visited many beautiful, interesting places and saw so much. My son Peter and his husband Khoi have visited Japan many times and were very keen to show me many of their favourite places and share their love of Japan.

This is what I said to Peter and Khoi after our holiday.

Thank you so much, I have loved every minute from very ancient to the very modern, from the mountains to the sea, the cities and the villages, the lovely hotels and traditional houses, the boats, buses, trains, bullet trains and subways, the tiny restaurants to the bigger and busy ones, the gentle and kind Japanese people, the beautiful shrines and temples and the modern art and buildings, the quiet and the busyness and all the sights, sounds, smells, feel, taste and everything.

Religion is very important in Japan and most of the population follow Shinto or Buddhist beliefs. We visited many beautiful Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples and learnt a lot about their practices and beliefs.

In 2021 around 48% of the population of Japan were Shinto believers. Shinto, meaning the way of the gods, is the oldest religion in Japan dating from about 300 BCE. It focuses on the worship of kami, which are spirits inhabiting natural objects like trees and rivers and it emphasises purity, harmony and respect for nature. A Shinto shrine is a sacred structure designed to house the kami or deities.



One of the shrines we visited was in Kyoto, it was called Fushimi Inari-Taisha and was one of the oldest and most famous in Japan. All Shinto shrines have the red traditional Japanese torii gates which mark the entrance to the shrine and the transition from the mundane to the sacred. Fushimi Inari shrine is famous for having approximately 10,000 torii gates and is dedicated to Inari, the deity of rice and agriculture. The gates create stunning pathways up the sacred Mount Inari and the whole site is a cultural landmark.

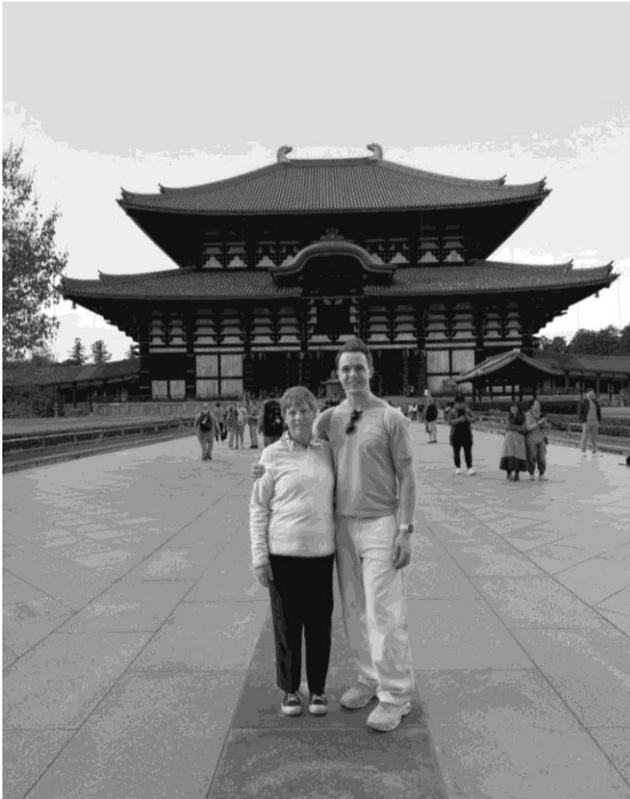
We loved climbing up through all the gates,

seeing the many kami fox statues which are considered to be the messengers of Inari, enjoying the lovely views of Kyoto and the peace and quiet of the shrine although there were many other visitors.

Near the top I was very pleased to find a rest stop with a small café, gift shop and seating near a waterfall so I enjoyed a coffee there. The ladies who ran the café impressed me with their hard work and kindness.

In 2021 approximately 46% of the population of Japan were Buddhist. Buddhism was introduced to Japan in the 6th century CE and it has many diverse beliefs and practices. Buddhism emphasises compassion, kindness and ethical living.

Japanese Buddhists believe in the law of karma, where one's actions influence future experiences, and in reincarnation, where individuals are reborn based on their karma. It seemed to me that Buddhism and Shintoism seem to co-exist and complement each other in Japan and that shrines and temples are often located close to each other.



One of the temples we visited was in Nara near Kyoto and was called the Todai-ji temple or Great Eastern temple. It is a UNESCO World heritage site known for its historical significance and the Great Buddha statue which is the world's largest bronze statue of the Buddha. The temple was the head temple of all provincial Buddhist temples in Japan so it was a very important one. We visited the temple in the afternoon and we were pleased to see the enormous and beautifully decorated Buddha. The doors of the Great Buddha Hall were huge too and we watched the staff closing the doors as the moon came out which was very moving.

In Japan I have read that about 1% of the population believe in Christianity. When we visited the art islands of Naoshima and Teshima we saw the plans for a very modern Christian church in Osaka. We did not have the opportunity to visit the church and found out that it was only open for services not to visitors due to a shortage of volunteers.

Thank you for reading my article and sharing my memories too.

Sue Fairman

Peter

Worcester & Wychavon

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*Find
out more*



Bacon sandwiches (always a bonus)

If I hadn't been a regular visitor to Cumbria before we moved, I would have been in for a rude, and very wet awakening, once winter arrived! It rains here...a lot! And with two dogs to walk you can't afford to hide away and wait until spring! But, as the saying goes, "there's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong clothes" and our waterproofs and wellies have been getting plenty of use. But in amongst all the rain there is the occasional gem of a day and a couple of weeks back we had a dusting of snow that made the Pennines across the Eden Valley look just stunning.

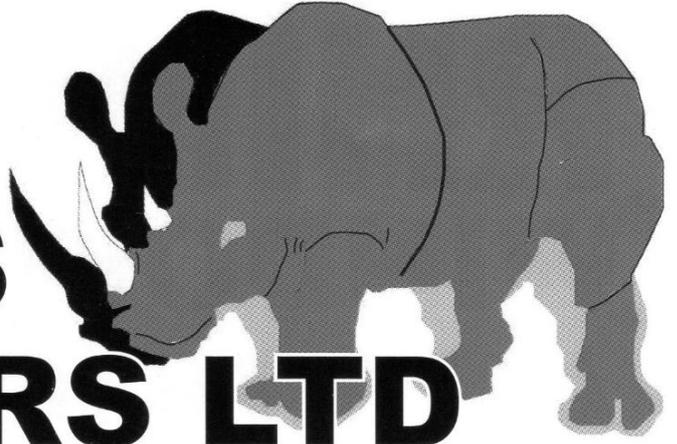
That same weekend, it was the benefice group service, so we went to Crosby Ravensworth for the first time. On a cloudless morning, with the snow on the fells it was just beautiful. Here's a picture but it really doesn't do it justice, especially the beautiful blue sky.



It was a lovely service that looked back on all that the churches in the group had achieved and it was really encouraging. Despite the demographic of the North Westmorland Benefice being very rural and quite a bit older, we have a thriving youth ministry with a dedicated "growing younger" minister.

Continued on page 39

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Continued from page 37

The weekend before, I had been helping out at a residential weekend where twenty five year 5's and 6's spent two nights at Knock Christian Centre thinking about what "Church" meant. On this occasion I was strictly back of house and consigned to the very well-appointed kitchen, where I acted as sous chef and chief pot washer to the growing young minister's parents who had driven 6 hours from Hampshire to run the kitchen.

It was the hardest real work I had done in a long time, working a 13 hour shift on the Saturday, but when I left they were still at it, preparing one final meal for the adult helpers after the young ones had gone to bed. It was glorious, and I felt this overwhelming feeling of God calling me to be in that place. But it wasn't just the pleasure I got from working in a busy kitchen, it was being with people who gave so freely and joyfully of their time...it was like the whole being greater than the sum of the parts. With each new volunteer who arrived, and with each new conversation shared, the sense of purpose and of being a part of something really important grew. I have already put my name down for the next one and I'm thinking of ideas for what to cook!

And on a similar food-based theme, St Peters church in Askham, which is our "home church", hosts a community Christmas lunch in the village hall. Eighty people have signed up and by all accounts it's pretty special! Ellen will be a serving elf for that one, while I am in my rightful place at the sink.

Advent 2 (yesterday as I write) was Cafe Church in Askham which is held in the village hall. I am still buzzing inside as it was the most joy filled morning! We start with bacon sandwiches (always a bonus) and then some liturgy and a discussion on our tables about the gospel. I was on a table with a couple of chaps, the mum of one of them and her friend. Oh my gosh! I don't think anyone has laughed so much when discussing the theme of judgement! It was free and open and honest and curious and fearful and hopeful! The other groups kept asking us to keep the volume down but we were having none of it...they were just jealous that we were having so much fun!

We concluded that judgement without the hope of salvation would indeed be scary but that advent affords us the opportunity to examine ourselves and prepare for the day when Jesus comes again in glory.

Rob Little



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Joint Council (JC) meeting 19th November 2025

Phil Bradford welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were 14 members present, with apologies from 2 members.

The JC had agreed by correspondence the procedure for dealing with safeguarding allegations. A short meeting to agree organ funding took place in October. The Standing Committee agreed the Christmas marketing plans and suggested using the Friends fund towards the organ appeal. This was agreed. This money is for the fabric of the church, which includes the organ.

Under Finance, it was reported that the effective operating deficit so far this year is about £11k. This is not a sustainable position. Phil said when the organ appeal is finished, we will consider a stewardship campaign in the new year. Because of the lack of a treasurer we have not yet been able to agree a budget for next year. Phil will follow up with the diocese to see if they have anything to offer,

The parish (ministry) share for 2026 will be £130,080 for the benefice. This amount is a 1.5% increase on last year. The Joint Council will pay half of this. The net share that we will pay is reduced by the Lowest Income Communities (LInC) grant. For 2026 that is expected to be slightly more than last year. The result will be that our 2026 net share will be about £500 lower than 2025.

We currently have about £18,000 from the organ appeal. This includes a donation from Feoffees of £3,000 and a grant of £5,000 from the Edward Cadbury trust. We need to get to at least £26,000 (the cost excluding VAT), so it is important to share this with the congregation so they know the current status and might feel encouraged to contribute.

Wedding and funeral fees for 2026 were agreed.

From the Accommodation Sub-Committee it was noted that four priorities were identified last time: Sound system; Boiler replacement options; pew heaters in the chancel; and a ramp for access to the chancel.

Work to improve the sound system is ongoing. Two new head set mics are being used. This has resulted in an improvement to the sound quality although there is an element of trial and error about them.

Boiler replacement: There is a need to carry out a feasibility study to see what will work best. Heat pumps may not be suitable for this kind of building.

Tom Amies will visit another church that has pew heaters to gather information.

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To try out a chancel ramp we should be able to borrow some (thanks to Beth Broadway). It was suggested to carry out an accessibility audit, which could highlight how best to access this area. The purpose is to allow smaller services to be held in the chancel, to avoid the need to heat the whole building.

From the Special Services Sub Committee was an update on the promotional materials and other publicity for Advent and Christmas.– A first draft of the plan for Lent and Easter services has been completed. There is a suggestion of having a pancake event on Shrove Tuesday. Messy Church will be on Good Friday morning. Final decisions about Easter will be taken after Christmas.

The Events Sub Committee reported that the Scarecrow Festival went well, with a good number of entries. The quiz had about 40 people and was a mix of those who attend church regularly and people from the wider community. In January the Ceilidh will be held at St Clement's School on Saturday 24th January. The Film Orchestra Choir will perform a concert in the church, probably in May. The Community Summer Fayre is going to take place again on 21st June 2026. Hymns and Pimms will happen again, but in October, hoping to attract more people. It's proposed that the scarecrow festival will alternate each year with a Christmas Tree Festival. Santa will visit the Children's Nativity after the performance. It is proposed to raise the number of coach trips next year from 3 to 4.

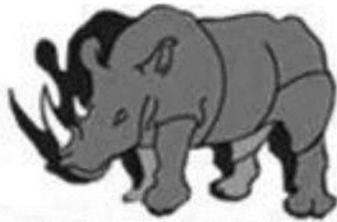
Safeguarding: Phil reported there has been a recent issue which has required contact with the diocesan safeguarding team. The action plan has been circulated. Phil assured the JC that the incumbent and safeguarding officers are aware of their responsibilities.

Phil has emailed the different groups that meet in church to get updated copies of their risk assessments. There is a new addition to the action plan concerning the vulnerable groups in church and considering how they could be better involved and supported. It was acknowledged that this will be linked to the discussion that is taking place about inclusion more generally.

Phil said that there were several incidents over the course of this summer against female clergy (in other places). It is important to consider a proper lone working policy which ensures everyone working in and around the church is safe. It is important the policy is proportionate and considers the different roles people carry out in the church.

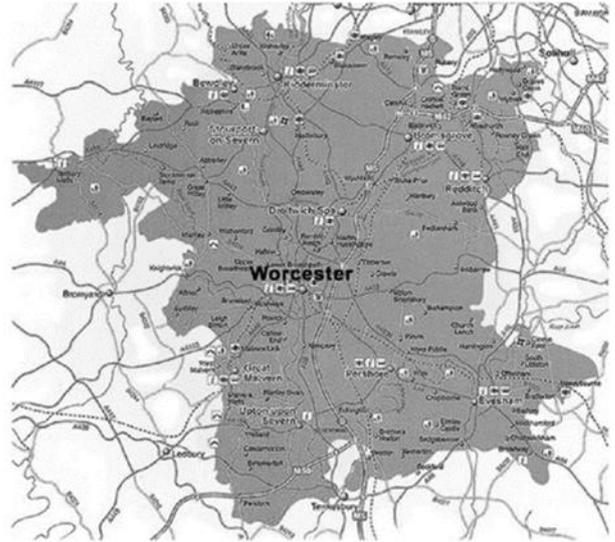
Work with children and young people is going well. The number of children who attend has increased.

Continued on page 45



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Phil explained the need to ensure all groups of people feel welcome within church. He discussed the Single Friendly Church audit which has been sent out to members. He introduced 'Inclusive Church' which is about thinking through all the ways we might exclude and what we can do about this. Phil explained why it is important to try and get a recognition of this; we want people to know that we are a safe place for anyone who wants to come. If we decide to go through the process of gaining Inclusive Church recognition, there will be a need to consult with the congregation and for a JC resolution. The steps and process involved are outlined on the website (<https://www.inclusive-church.org>). All our clergy agree about the principles of this. Some discussion took place, and the JC were in favour of pursuing this.

It was noted that we do not have an access guide to the church. One member will be able to share her example from her workplace.

Phil suggested having an away day in the new year. This could be facilitated by the Mission Accompanier. Philip suggested that this could be an opportunity to look at ways in which we engage more widely in the community.

The JC agreed a proposal to replace the photocopier with similar specification and lower prices. This will come into effect from early February when the current arrangement expires.

The meeting closed with The Grace.

*Minutes by Fiona Templeton (JC Secretary)
Summarised by Graham Evans (JC member)*

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

The Government has still made no announcement on the future of this scheme, which allows listed places of worship to claim a grant to cover the VAT on essential repairs and maintenance. In 2025, the scheme was extended to March 2026 (with less money and a cap of £25,000 per building) but there has been no more news.

This is the scheme which we hope will cover the VAT on our organ repairs, if it doesn't run out of money before we are able to claim.

A Commons select committee, inquiring this year into built heritage, heard evidence from the Church of England. In July, it called for the scheme to be made permanent and the cap on claims to be lifted, but the government not acted. **If you feel inclined, please think about writing to your MP about this!**

Graham Evans

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Wednesday 31 December 2025	Close at 5pm
Thursday 1 January 2026	Closed
Friday 2 January 2026	Normal opening times

Usual opening hours (all subject to the above)

Libraries Unlocked Monday - Saturday: 8am - 8 pm

Core (staffed) opening times:

- Monday: 2pm - 5pm
- Tuesday: 10am - 5pm
- Wednesday: 10am - 1pm
- Thursday: 2pm - 5pm
- Friday: 10am - 5pm
- Saturday: 10am - 1pm

Events at St John's Library

Weekly events:

- Creative Tales, weekly every Monday, 3:30pm to 4:15pm.
- Chess Club and Scrabble Club, weekly every Tuesday, 2:00pm to 4:00pm.
- Crochet and Chat, weekly every Wednesday, 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Storytime and Song, weekly every Friday, 11:00am to 11:30am.
- LEGO Club, weekly every Saturday, 11:00am to 12:00pm. Age 4+. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Other regular events:

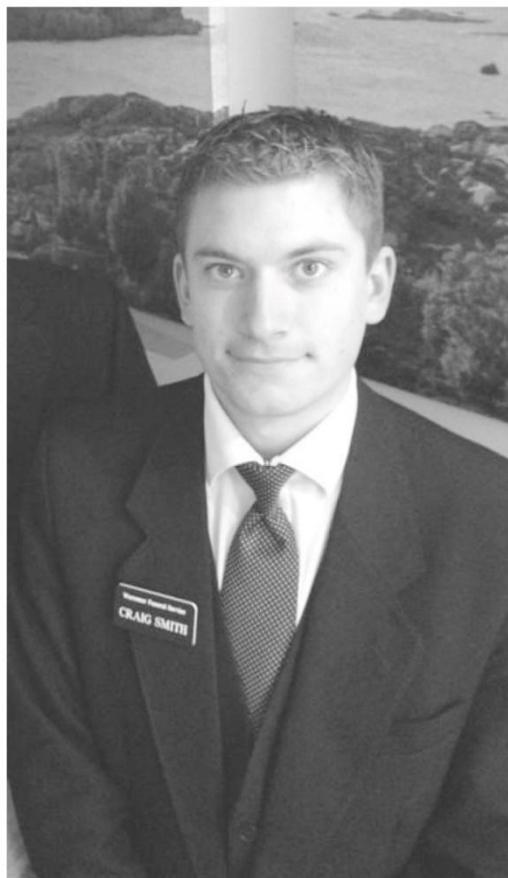
- Classic Film Club, alternate Thursdays, 8 & 22 January, 2:00pm to 3:30pm.
- Crime Readers' Group: First Friday of each month (2 January), 12:00pm to 1:00pm.
- Photography Group: Third Friday of each month (16 January), 2:00pm to 3:00pm.
- Crime Film Group: Fourth Friday of each month (23 January), 12:00pm to 1:30pm.
- Councillors' Surgeries: First Saturday of each month (3 January), 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Meet your local policing team: Tuesday 27 January, 10:30am.



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From the magazine archive, January 1930

Past Events.

(1) The Parochial Missionary Association was addressed by the Rev. F. C. Champion, Vicar of Powick, on Tuesday, November 19th. (2) On Wednesday, November 20th, Mr. W. Page and I were personally conducted to Loughborough to the foundry of Messrs. John Taylor and Co, and there we witnessed the casting of our two new bells; also the tuning of the old six bells was tested. I am no authority on bells, and Mr. Page is. So you must ask him all about the business. (3) We were wonderfully blessed in the matter of weather on the occasion of our Day School Festival on Sunday, November 24th. Everything passed off very well again, I am thankful to say. My best thanks to all our many helpers, specially our Day School Teachers. (4) Mr. Firth kindly gave a lantern lecture on "The League of Nations" to the C.E.M.S. on Tuesday, November 26th. (5) Mr. J. S. Hicks began work as Headmaster of St. John's Boys' School on Monday, December 2nd. (6) I had the pleasure of attending a very pleasant social evening on Tuesday, December 3rd, to meet our Choirmen and Organist. (7) The C.E.M.S. had a splendid Whist Drive on Thursday, December 5th. (8) On Saturday, December 7th, the united Sunday School staffs of St. John's and St. Clement's held a social in our Parish Room. (9) The clergy of the Rural Deanery of Worcester met in chapter on Wednesday, December 11th. (10) At the Confirmation at St. Clement's, yesterday, we presented 22 male and 16 female candidates.

To Girls : Are you going to London ?

Girls who are making arrangements to go to London to take up work are advised by the Central Council for the Social Welfare of Girls and Women in London to consult the Central Information Bureau, 117, Piccadilly, W.1. No fees are charged for advice as to lodgings, etc.

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Puzzle solution

Sorry - the magazine got so full this month that the Sudoku got squeezed out. It will be back next month.

The Editors.

And finally....

A churchwarden went to the police station wishing to see the thief who, during evensong, had slipped into church, raided the plate, and slipped out again.

“You'll get your chance in court,” said the desk sergeant. “I don't want revenge,” said the warden. “I just want to know how he got out of the service early without the vicar noticing. I've been trying to do that for years!”



The vicar's hoping that providing a really strong mobile signal will attract more young folk to the church.

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.

Sunday Services – January 2026

	St John's	St Michael's	St David's
4th January	10.30am Eucharist 4pm Epiphany Songs of Praise	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
11th January	10.30am All Age Eucharist 5.30pm Evening Prayer with Bible study	10.30am Morning Prayer	
18th January	10.30am Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
25th January	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evening Prayer with focus on prisons.	10.30am Morning Prayer	
1st February	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist

In case there are any changes to the above, please watch the weekly church newsletters and websites for the latest information.