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Contributions for the January magazine by 20th December to:

Richard & Barbara Bradley, 3 All Saints Road, Thurcaston, Leics LE7 7JD Tel: 0116 236 6469 or Email: thurcastonallsaints@gmail.com

Never miss an issue of your monthly Parish Magazine (in-print and online) - 12 issues £10!

Church details, events and services can be found at www.stmarysandallsaints.co.uk

All Saints Church exists for the benefit of the whole community, not simply those people who come to church on a Sunday!

We are always delighted to arrange baptisms and weddings, or to bring Holy Communion to anyone who is unable to come to church. If we can help in this, or any other way, please contact the Rector or Church Wardens.







Inside this month's magazine...

ompiling the pages for this month's magazines illustrates what an active and energetic community we live in.

The village of Thurcaston sees a number of events taking place during the month while Anstey kicks off the Christmas period with their 'Gateway to Christmas' day on Saturday December 6th. It promises to be a fantastic occasion. Find out more on Page 11

Our local foodbank is continuing to support families across the Soar Valley area and as Christmas approaches needs our donations more than ever. Turn to page 10 to see the items that are most needed.

We would like to thank all our readers and



advertisers for their continued support and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Richard, Barbara & Adam

Ride+Stride: raising funds for All Saints Church

Sisters Karen and Lorraine Turner put on their walking boots and took part in the Ride+Stride day in September.

Starting from their home in Cropston they walked through Bradgate Park to All Saints Church in Newtown Linford and then on to St Mary's in Anstey. From there they headed to visit our own Thurcaston Church before going to Rothley, Mountsorrel and finishing in Quorn – visiting a grand total of 9 churches on the day.

With the sponsorship they had gathered they managed to raise £94 which will be split between Historic Churches Leicestershire and All Saints, Thurcaston.

Many congratulations to Karen and Lorraine for this great achievement. And to everyone else who helped supported this year's Ride+Stride for Churches event by



welcoming the visitors throughout the day at All Saints. You can find out more about Ride+Stride at: www.lhct.org.uk/ride-and-stride/

Just a thought...

Making Room



there any room left? For you? Room for your upset when the world already is too full of woe, as David Essex's 1983 Christmas hit 'Winter's Tale' puts itwhy should the world take notice Of one more love that's failed? Though it meant a lot to you and me. On a world-wide scale we're just another winter's tale...

The news can be overwhelming, Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan... poverty, social, political and economic brokenness at home..our hearts risk being calloused to cope on a daily basis... easier to invest in efforts to exclude compassion, promote division and breed hatred.

We know each Christmas nativity tale speaks of the holy family struggling to find room at the Bethlehem inn. God had to find space in the smallest of ways, breaking into our world through a pregnant Mary. Mary, mother of Jesus', 'yes' changes everything..the tiny Christ embryo finding

room within her womb. God's messenger invited Mary to participate in the great reversal and make room. The Kingdom of God declared in Judea and Samaria 2000 years ago as the good news..yet to be fully realised...our daily Yes, our daily 'making room' helps reverse every hatred - to put the least first, proclaim liberty for the captives and sight, hope and light for those in darkness.

God was not just making room for us to participate in his Kingdom but also to be with us, 'Emmanuel'... such hope and love, that God wants to dwell with us - or as the Greek early writing puts it-to tabernacle with us - to pitch his tent amongst us..in our pain, in our struggles and in life-God is with us and for us. Not just another winter tale - but THE greatest love story told and is still unfolding with and for us.

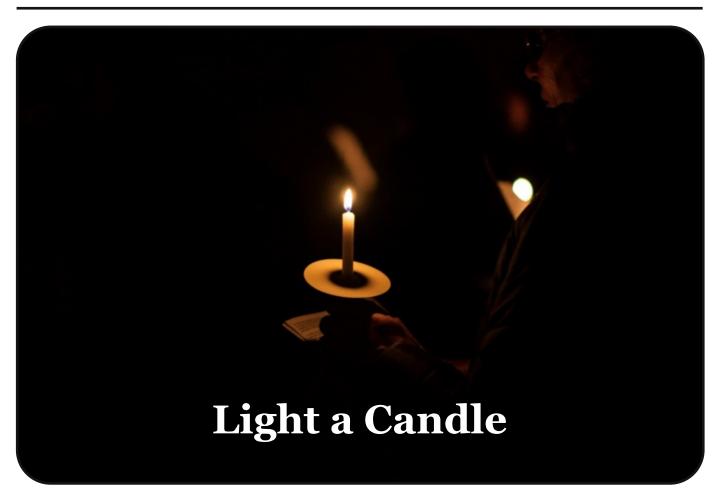
Rev Matthew

Candles for Ukraine – Thank you and Update

he candles have been collected from Leicester churches and from St Mary's Arnold, near Nottingham. In May an amazing delivery of another 53kg of wax was made to the Ukrainian Centre in Nottingham, making a grand total of about 400kg – enough for over 4,000 Trench Candles!

The Centre still has enough of the wax left to cover their needs for now, and with the increased use of drones by both sides, the benefit of using candle lighting is becoming very limited. Very many thanks to all those who have been collecting their unburnt candle bits for this cause. We all pray that this most unusual way to spread the Light of Christ to those in need of His love and care has been helpful to so many, but collections of wax is now paused unless we are asked again by the Centre. Your previous gifts of candles have been very welcomed and so very much appreciated by the Ukrainians.

Thank you.



Il Saints' Church will be open on Tuesday 9th December 2025 3pm to 7pm to come and light a candle, have some quiet time in Church to

remember those we have loved and lost recently or in the more distant past. There will also be the opportunity to talk to someone if you wish and have a hot drink.

From the registers...

Funerals

Friday 7th November 2025

Maureen Farr

Committal All Saints' Churchyard (our apologies to Derek and family Maureen's All Saints' funeral and Loughborough crematorium service of 30th September were omitted from October's magazine)



Correction also for the 9th September funeral

Lisa Laycock of Thurcaston

Loughborough Crematorium and All Saints Church was not correctly dated in the October magazine. Our apologies to Steve and family.

Monday 17th November

Graveside Burial for Peter Wood of Thurcaston,

Cropston & Thurcaston Parish Cemetery.

Readings for December

Sunday 7th Isaiah 11, 1-10;

Advent 2 Matt 3, 1-12

Sunday 14th Isaiah 35;

Advent 3 Matthew 11, 2-11

Sunday 21st Isaiah 7, 10-16; **Advent 4**

Advent 4 Matthew 1, 18-end

Sunday 28th Isaiah 63, 7-9; Christmas 1 Matthew 2, 13

Matthew 2, 13-end

Executive Officer position of Treasurer.

All Saints PCC has a vital vacancy from May 2026

Are you interested and competent with figures and budgetary finance? Want to support the work of All Saints Church in its Christian ministry and practical operations and church building?

There is a book-keeping and accountancy side as well as banking. The role can be done by one person or split up.

Please get in touch catbenefice@gmail.com if you are at all interested

Merry Christmas

Tuesday 9th 3-7pm Light A Candle for a Loved One Sunday 14th 6.30pm Carols by Candleligh 'Lessons & Carols Weds 24th Christmas Eve 3pm Family Christingle & Crib Service 1.30pm Midnight Mass Thursday 25th Christmas Day 10am Christmas Day Communion

All Saints'
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Our ringers find new challenges on their trip to Warwickshire



n 29th September 2025 a combined group of ringers from All Saints', Thurcaston and St Leonard's. Swithland visited 5 churches in Warwickshire for their annual outing. The trip started in Bedworth where we rang the 8 bells to Plain Bob Doubles, Queens and Tittums before finishing with our best performance, a course of Plain Hunt on 7. Following this, the bells at Shilton sounded lovely both inside and outside the church and, despite having only 6 bells, they were very pleasantly weighty, making for some fun call changes before our more adept ringers rang courses of Cambridge Surprise Minor and Grandsire Doubles.

After a brief break for a refreshing lunch at The Bull's Head at Brinklow, we rang the 8 bells at Brinklow. We rang a variety of courses and call changes and then proceeded to Botolph, which had been highly anticipated due to its impressive collection of 10 bells. This was also one of the finest looking churches we visited. The bells themselves were challenging, but fun, to ring well, a number of us taking a while to

get used to the number of bells. For some of us, it was our first experience of ringing Plain Hunt on 9, which was an exciting change of pace compared to our regular towers.

Finally, we had the opportunity to ring at both towers in Rugby, the first having 5 bells and the second having 8. The first tower was a far more relaxed experience (a 9cwt tenor) compared to the intensity of 10 bells at Botolph. The second tower's 8 bells sounded incredible and were very enjoyable to ring. The tower itself was much larger than we are used to, with bells much heavier (a 24cwt tenor) and ropes higher off the ground. This all contributed to the lovely sounds we were able to make with a few simple call changes on the 8, including Queens, Kings and Tittums.

Our Outing concluded with a delicious and delightfully social meal at The Griffin Inn at Swithland, where Morgan Williams was thanked for his excellent organisation - a fantastic end to the day.

George Davis

Food Bank update for December 2025

*	(-* -)	· Adr	Advent FOOD PROJECT			00D
V	1 COFFEE	2 STUFFING MIX	3 CHRISTMAS CRACKERS	4 TINNED FISH	5 CHRISTMAS CAKE OR CHOC LOG	6 јам
	7 TINNED TOMATOES	8 BREAKFAST CEREAL	9 SELECTION BOX	10 TEA BAGS	11 MINCE PIES	12 LONG LIFE FRUIT JUICE
	13 BAKED BEANS	14 CHRISTMAS PUDDING NON ALCOHOLIC	15 TINNED CUSTARD	16 TOILETRY GIFT SET	17 CHUTNEY	18 CRACKERS FOR CHEESE
	19 TINNED CARROTS	20 GRAVY GRANUALS	21 TINNED MEAT	22 TINNED FRUIT	23 CHRISTMAS TREAT	24 UHT MILK

The Soar Valley Food Project would like to give grateful thanks for all the generous donation of food and money given by schools, churches and other organistions at harvest time. The foodbank is continuing to support families across the Soar Valley area and currently gives out approximately 50 food parcels per week. If you would like to make a donation to the Christmas food parcels please could you collect some (or all) of the items on the

Reverse Advent calendar shown above. As usual donations can be dropped off in the food project box outside my house (27 Rectory Lane, Thurcaston) or in the box at the back of church. We'll need donations by Sunday 14 December please, so that the food parcels can be prepared and distributed before Christmas.

Many thanks for your help & support Eleanor Lloyd Jones

That well known pilot

At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures to illustrate a biblical story. The teacher was startled to see one little boy was drawing an airplane. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy explained. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the figure in the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."

Christmas in Anstey 6th December 2025





10am - 8pm - Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary's Church



10am - 4pm - Santa at the Library

Musical entertainment



All day - Woofmas at The Old Hare & Hounds

Christmas snacks and a pup cup for your furry friend



11am - 3pm - Art exhibition at the Methodist Church

- Raffle
- · Curry, drinks & mince pies



10am - 1pm - Advent Fair at the Church Rooms

Stalls, games & refreshments



4pm Latimer Choir at St Marys Church



Charnwood Young Farmers Tractor Run

- 4pm start in Markfield
- Collecting for Rainbows Hospice and the Air Ambulance





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All Saints' poppy display honours fallen



moving display of hand knitted and crocheted poppies took pride of place in All Saints' Church during Remembrance weekend.

Many of those who contributed were able to enjoy them on display during the Saturday coffee morning and later that evening before the talk on the Falklands given by Sylvia Cole. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed this year. You have all truly honoured those who gave their today for our tomorrow.

Liz Williams

Monday Club enjoy a Magical History Tour

ur speaker, retired
Bishop Peter Fox, is
a member of the
Magic Circle. He gave us a
thrilling description of the
history of magic. Egyptians
created magic with cups and
balls, then he did tricks with

similar props. He also found a billiard ball behind the ear of a lady in the audience!

There were many street magicians in the Roman Empire. Such people led a precarious life, and were distrusted.

In 1584, Reginald Scot wrote "The Discoverie of Witchcraft". He was a magistrate, tired of people being punished for "witchcraft". He gave reasons why things happened.

Bishop Fox cut a rope, then joined the pieces together. He tied a big knot in it, and made it like new!

The golden age of "stage magic" brought fame to many people in the last century. Showmen like Houdini attracted massive crowds for feats of endurance or stunts in the open air. There is a House of Magic



Cropston Evangelical Free Church

10th November 2025

museum in Blois, France.

Music halls normally had magicians. Chung Ling Soo appeared to great acclaim in Paris, and then took London by storm. His travelling show had colourful costumes, exotic props and

other-worldly music. His signature trick was to catch bullets marked by a spectator. He was fatally wounded when something went wrong.

Bishop Fox finished with Chinese rings, which can be joined together and separated by blowing on them!

After refreshments, the meeting closed around 4 p.m.

Meetings start at 2.15pm. There is a pre-Christmas lunch for members in December. Visitors and new members are welcome at the Church Room. The first meeting of 2026 will be Monday 12th January, when our new programme will be available.

Mrs Maja Tompkins Contact mobile 07709 201881.

Life in the Falklands



Due to popular demand it is hoped to present

Further Life in the Falklands

which will cover the wildlife, the military and ceremonial events together with a question and answer session.

Please register your interest and ring Sylvia on 0116 235 2873 so a suitable venue and date can be arranged.

Anstey Churches Together Special Christmas Services & Events this December

Saturday 6th December

#ChristmasinAnstey including

Christmas Tree Festival (10am-8pm) & Advent Fair (10am-1pm) with Latimer School Singing in the Trees 4pm, St Mary's Arts Exhibition (Woolden Hill School) & Food 11-3pm Methodist Church

Sunday 7th December

10.30am Toy Service Methodist Church

Thursday 11th December

3-7pm Light A Candle for a Loved One St Mary's

Sunday 14th December

10am 'Scratch' Nativity Dress Up All Age St Mary's JOY' - Christmas Production @ 09:00 \parallel 12:00 \parallel 15:00 \parallel 18:00 Onechurch, Frog Island

Saturday 20th December

10am Carol Singing in the Nook for Leicestershire Homeless (SHARP)

Sunday 21st December

6pm Candle lit Carol Service Methodist Church 6.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols by Candlelight St Mary's

Wednesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

5pm Christingle & Crib Children's Service St Mary's 11.00pm Midnight Communion by Candlelight St Mary's



Thursday 25th December (Christmas Day)

10am Christmas Service Methodist Church 10:30 service Onechurch



Junior Corner...

Ruffle's walks - Decorating Airedales!

By Rachel Greaves

Ruffle felt a quiver of excitement as Samantha and Ben were sitting in the carriage of the green train as it stood at the station of the little heritage railway. There were no trains running that day as during the winter the timetable was reduced and fewer trains ran. Ruffle was sitting on the seat alongside Ben. He was bored as there was no sign of bacon or biscuits! He yawned.

'It's no use yawning Ruffle!' cried Samantha. 'We've got to think of an idea for decorations for this year's Christmas Tree Festival in the village. There's no food until we've decided what we're going to do. And that goes for you Ben! Come on - think!'

Ben reached into the box of silver baubles left over from the previous year. Ruffle sat up and watched as Ben held it up by a piece of thread and started to spin it round. They both seemed mesmerised by the sparkling reflections as the winter sun caught the bauble.

'Stop!' shouted Samantha, almost making Ben drop the bauble. 'Do that again, slowly this time.'

Ben made the bauble spin slowly round, looking first at the bauble then at Samantha's face that was changing into a large grin.

'That's it! When you started to spin the bauble round it caught Ruffle' s reflection in it and projected an image of Ruffle onto the bauble! That's what we'll do - everyone who travels on the train between now and the Christmas Tree Festival can decorate a bauble with a Ruffle theme: a small picture of an Airedale, or just a head or even paw prints. Then we can hang them on our 'railway' tree at the festival, but the baubles will have been decorated by all of our



passengers who have enjoyed travelling on the train!'

And that's what they did! All the passengers who travelled on the little railway for the next couple of weeks until the eve of the Tree Festival enjoyed decorating a selection of baubles with Ruffle-themed decorations. Ruffle even helped, though he seemed to get more glitter on his nose than on the baubles!

The day of the Tree Festival arrived and Eric took Ruffle along with Samantha and Ben to the village hall to see the finished tree. To their surprise and delight the Railway Tree with the Ruffle baubles had won first prize!

Have a lovely Christmas! Woof!

10 Fun Facts about Christmas trees

E ven before the time of Christ, evergreen trees were seen in winter as a symbol of fertility.

It was the 16th century monk, Martin Luther, who is credited with the idea of having lights on Christmas trees. He added candles to his tree, to look like stars in a forest.

Windsor Castle got its first Christmas tree in 1800, brought by Charlotte, wife of George III.

It was in 1835 that the term 'Christmas tree' was first used in English.

It was in the 1840s, when Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, began bringing trees inside, that led to their popularity

throughout the UK.

It was Woolworths who first sold manufactured Christmas tree ornaments – back in 1880.

The tree in London's Trafalgar Square has been a gift from the city of Oslo, Norway since 1947.

The world's tallest Xmas tree, at 221ft high, was erected in a Washington shopping mall in 1950.

In a survey of the nation's favourite smells, real Christmas trees came eighth, just behind the sea, but ahead of perfume.

About five million real Christmas trees are sold in the UK each year.

The Wednesday Hubiversary

he Hub celebrated its 3rd birthday in November. Originally set up as the Warm Hub during the energy price crisis in 2022 by the church and the Good Neighbours Scheme, the weekly meeting in All Saints Harrison Room became a popular community event. As well as providing tea and cake and company we filled a bookcase with donated books and jigsaws to borrow, played games (scrabble being very popular) but mainly chatted and laughed. Ages range from 90 plus to 4 months

We practised various crafts, many poppies were knitted! And recipes were swapped after sampling biscuits, flapjacks etc. Birthday cakes appear as if by magic due to someone's subtle record keeping

(we need your DoB for safety reasons.....). Volunteers collect folk and return them



home if they've been good. We meet in all weathers

So that's why we changed our name.

Christmas bells in aid of Loros



ur handbell ringers (pictured last year in the Beaumont Shopping Centre) have been practising hard for Christmas ready to help raise funds for their chosen charity, Loros.

By the time you have read this they will have already appeared at our Church Fayre, but don't worry, you can still catch them at a number of venues throughout December.

Monday 1st December 10.30am Cedar House Care Home.

Thursday 4th December 11.00am Lonsdale Mews Care Home, Quorn.

Friday 5th December 9.30am Beaumont

Leys Shopping Mall

Tuesday 9th December 11.00am Amberwood Care Home, Wigston.

Thursday 18th December 7.00pm Bradgate Arms, Cropston.

Friday 19th December 7.00pm Wheatsheaf, Thurcaston.

Please support them if you can and help them raise funds for Loros, an organisation that provides free, high-quality, compassionate care and support to terminally ill adult patients, their families and carers across Leicestershire & Rutland.

Santa's sleigh

Father Christmas nervously went for his sleigh-driving test. He came rushing back in a thunder of reindeer hooves and pulled up in front of the toy factory. "At last!" he shouted, "No-el plates!"

Enjoyable family festive movie!

ativity 2 - Danger in the Manger is on 12th December and lasts 105 minutes.

Starring David Tennant and Mark Wootton, our December film introduces Donald, an anxious primary school teacher and his classroom assistant, Mr Poppy, who embark on a hilarious yet heartwarming adventure with a class of pupils. In the wilds of Wales, they face rivers, a mountain and even baby nappies! The aim of the trek is to perform in a Christmas singing competition. This fabulous festive treat will take us perfectly into the mood for Christmas.

Bridget Jones - Mad about the Boy is on 9th January 2026 and lasts 130 mins.

Based on the latest book by Helen Fielding, our New Year film sees Bridget, played by Oscar-nominated Renée Zellweger, as a mother and widow. Marc Darcy died four years previously and her friends encourage Bridget to resume dating. Hugh Grant plays her children's Godfather while the eligible young Roxter, played by Lee Woodall, has a rival who is her son's school science teacher, played by Chiwetel Ejiofor.

January's romantic comedy is summed up



by the famous line,

"When one part of your life starts going okay, another falls spectacularly to pieces".

Thurcaston and Cropston Parish Council will be showing this film in Thurcaston Memorial Hall, starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets will cost the usual £5, which includes a lucky prize draw and refreshments during the interval. You can park free in Richard Hill School. You can pay for your tickets at the door, if there are any left, or buy in advance from Diana 0116 2362 619 or Sylvia 0116 2352 873 or the Parish Office 0116 2367 626.



Celebrating #ChristmasinAnstey with local schools, groups & businesses showing off their best designs



Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday December 6th 10am-8pm St Mary's Anstey Parish Church

Singing in the Trees with Latimer School Choir 4pm

All Welcome Free Admission

Dates for your diary Four pages of Events and Activities this month

1 Jul	pages	of Localis and Actionics this month
Date	Time	Event
Mon Dec 1	11.00am	Bible Study Cropston Evangelical Free Church (CEFC)
Tue Dec 2	10.00am	Food Bank. Anstey St Mary's Church Rooms
	NOON	Leics MS Tuesday Group - ANSTEY JUBILEE HALL (AJH)
Wed Dec 3	2.00pm	Wednesday Hub - All Saints' Church - coffee/tea, cake & chat
Thu Dec 4	11:00am	Handbells at Lonsdale Mews, Quorn in aid of Loros
	6.30pm	Christmas Evening event at The Wheatsheaf Thurcaston. See P 26
Fri Dec 5	9.15 am	Coffee Morning - St Mary's Church Rooms
	9.30am	Handbells at Beaumont Leys Mall in aid of Loros
Sat Dec 6	11:00am	Charity Coffee Morning - (CEFC) The charity for 2025 is "Operatiion Smile"
		Christmas in Anstey - see page 11.
	10am - 1pm	Advent Fair - St Mary's Church Rooms
	10am - 8pm	Christmas Tree Festival St Mary's Anstey
	4.00pm	Latimer School Singing in the Trees St Mary's
	11am - 3pm	Arts Exhibition (Woolden Hill School) & Food Methodist Church
Sun Dec 7	9.15am	Breakfast in the Church - All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston
	10.30am	Sunday Worship (CEFC)
	10.30 am	Toy Service Methodist Church, Anstey
Tue Dec 9	10.00am	Food Bank. Anstey St Mary's Church Rooms
	NOON	Leics MS Tuesday Group (AJH)- coffee/tea, biscuits & chat
	3 -7pm	Light a Candle for a Loved One All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston
Wed Dec 10	2.00pm	Wednesday Hub - All Saints' Church - coffee/tea, cake & chat
Thu Dec 11	3 -7 pm	Light a Candle for a Loved One, St Mary's Anstey
Fri Dec 12	9.15 am	Coffee Morning - St Mary's Church Rooms
	7.30pm	Friday Night Film Memorial Hall Thurcaston Nativity 2 - Danger in the Manger
Sun Dec 14	10:00am	'Scratch' Nativity Dress Up All Age St Mary's
	10.30am	Sunday Worship (CEFC)
	6.30pm	Carols By Candlelight "Lessons & Carols" All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston
		JOY; - Christmas Production @ 09:00 12:00 15:00 18:00 Onechurch, Frog Island - see Page 15
Tue Dec 16	10.00am	Food Bank. Anstey St Mary's Church Rooms
	NOON	Leics MS Tuesday Group (AJH)- coffee/tea, biscuits & chat

Advent & Christmas Services December 2025 All Saints' Church, Thurcaston

Sunday 7th

8.30am Prayer Book Communion (9.15 Breakfast) 10am Advent Praise

Tuesday 9th

3pm to 7pm Light a Candle for a Loved One

Sunday 14th

10am Holy Communion

Sunday 21st

8.30 Prayer Book Communion (no Compline Night Prayer)

Wednesday 24th Christmas Eve

3pm Family Christingle & Crib Service 11.30pm 'Midnight Mass' by Candlelight

Thursday 25th Christmas Day

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 28th

10.00 am St Mary's Anstey Bradgate Group Service

Advent & Christmas Services December 2025 St Mary's, Anstey

Sunday 7th

10am Communion 6.30pm Taize

Thursday 11th

3pm to 7pm Light a Candle for a Loved One

Sunday 14th

10am Dress Up All Age Scratch Nativity

Sunday 21st

10am Communion 6.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols

Wednesday 24th Christmas Eve

5pm Family Christingle & Crib Service 11.00pm Midnight Mass by Candlelight

Thursday 25th Christmas Day

10.30am Anstey Methodist Church (Churches Together)

Sunday 28th

10.00 am Holy Communion Bradgate Group Service

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Dates for your diary Events and Activities this month continued

Date	Time	Event
Wed Dec 17	2.00pm	Wednesday Hub - All Saints' Church - coffee/tea, cake & chat
Thu Dec 18	7.00pm	Handbells at Bradgate Arms, Cropston in aid of Loros
Fri Dec 19	9.15 am	Coffee Morning - St Mary's Church Rooms
	7:00pm	Handbells at The Wheatsheaf, Thurcaston in aid of Loros
Sat Dec 20	10.00am	Carol Singing in the Nook for Leicestershire Homeless (SHARP)
Sun Dec 21	10.30am	Sunday Worship (CEFC)
	6.00pm	Candlelit Carol Service Methodist Church
	6.30pm	Nine Lessons & Carols by Candlelight St Mary's
Mon Dec 22	11:00am	Prayer meeting CEFC)
Tue Dec 23	10.00am	Food Bank. Anstey St Mary's Church Rooms
		NO MEETING Leics MS Tuesday Group (AJH) until 6th January
Wed Dec 24		NO HUB until January 7th
	3:00pm	Family Christingle & Crib Service All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston
	5:00pm	Christingle & Crib Children's Service St Mary's
	11:00pm	Midnight Mass by Candlelight All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston
	11:00pm	Midnight Communion by Candlelight St Mary's
Thu Dec 25	10:00am	Christmas Day Communion All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston
	10:00am	Christmas Service Methodist Church
	10.30am	Service Onechurch
Wed Dec 31		NO HUB until January 7th



To place your event in our Diary next month, email Barbara at TCAdiary7@gmail.com

The times for services at St Mary's and All Saints' can be found on the centre pages.

What's on...

ST MARY'S, ANSTEY

Advent Fair











Saturday 6th December 10am-1pm Church Rooms Church Lane, Anstey, LE7 7AF



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What's on...



What's on...



Art Classes With Liz Dowding

Starting Thursday January 8th

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A four week course to learn the basics of drawing and watercolour painting

This is for anyone who wants to try art but is nervous about where to start

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Cost - £45 for a four week block

All Saints' Church, Thurcaston with Cropston,
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Please contact Liz with any questions on; 07885 729549

lizdowding@hotmail.co.uk Facebook - Liz Dowding Artist Instagram liz_dowding_artist

A Concert for Peace

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Healing Light: Jenkins
Song of Wanderer: Forrest

Lord is my Shepherd: Will Todd

Lamb of God: Beethoven

For the Beauty: Rutter

Instrumental and Vocal Ensembles
Musical Director: Sue Ford

7.30pm, Saturday, 31st January 2026 Emmanuel Church, Forest Rd, Loughborough LE11 3NW

Tickets:£15 (£7 U/18 & Students) 01530 243822 or ticketsource.co.uk Registered Charity No. 1079843



A Brief History of Pantomime - oh yes it is!



ur speaker in November was Ann Featherstone who, appropriately for the last meeting before Christmas, gave us a Brief History of Pantomime. As a teenager, Ann had once played the principal girl and she brought her enthusiasm for both performing and teaching to this entertaining talk.

Pantomimes were originally short, light-hearted productions presented year-round at the end of longer, more serious plays. They were performed without words (hence "-mime") and featured four standard characters derived from the Italian Commedia dell'Arte: the dashing Harlequin, his sweetheart Columbine, the foolish Clown and the old man Pantaloon. Harlequin carried a "slapstick" – a pair of boards fastened together at one end so that they could be clapped together to highlight a dramatic effect – which might be the origin of the Fairy Godmother's magic wand.

The most celebrated Harlequin of the 18th century was John Rich. The money he earned from staging pantomimes (as well as the Beggar's Opera) enabled him to build the famous theatre at Covent Garden. Rich's great rival was David Garrick, who ran the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. Rich was a brilliant dancer so, in order to compete with him, Garrick introduced speech into pantomimes for the first time and commissioned lavish stage scenery and costumes from professional artists.

In the early 19th century, the most famous player of the Clown was Joseph Grimaldi. Having been introduced to the stage by his tyrannical and violent father, he suffered from bouts of depression but he introduced aspects of Clown's costume and character that have carried through into today's pantomime dames. Pantomimes continued to evolve through the century, with an enormous variety of stories and a growing cast of characters including adult and

children's choruses. The first performance was traditionally on Boxing Day and a successful run could continue until Easter. The Victorian stage was a dangerous place, with naked flames, trip hazards and moving machinery.

As performers from Music Hall began to take roles in pantomimes, they brought with them the catchphrases and audience interaction that are such major features of today's shows. Among these performers were some extraordinary animal impersonators, who played roles such as Dick Whittington's cat. In the 20th century, radio and television celebrities increasingly appeared in pantomimes — with varying degrees of accomplishment! During the Second World War, theatres at home continued to produce pantomimes with the limited cast and resources available, moving

performances from the evenings to the afternoons to avoid the Blackout. Serving soldiers frequently put on their own shows to boost morale.

Pantomime survives as a thoroughly British popular tradition, despite it having Italian origins and mostly telling French and German fairy stories. It appeals to the whole family from children to grandparents but its crude humour and cross-dressing are mystifying to other nationalities. Long may it continue!

We do not meet in December but look forward to welcoming you back for a new season of events in 2026, starting as usual on the third Tuesday in January. Meanwhile, do take a look at the information about local history on our website:

www.thurcastoncropstonhistory.org.uk

New Year's Eve is coming soon...

The bagpipes are the missing link between music and noise. – EK Kruger

The inventor of the bagpipes was inspired when he saw a man carrying an indignant asthmatic pig under his arm. Unfortunately, the man-made sound never equalled the purity of the sound achieved by the pig. – Alfred Hitchcock.

Bring not a bagpipe to a man in trouble. – Jonathan Swift.

Do you have communication and creative skills combined with excellent organizational abilities?

The office of **Magazine Editor** is becoming vacant and the Benefice is now looking for one or two people with these skills to produce our two popular monthly publications.

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To find out more contact Richard Bradley: thurcastonallsaints@gmail.com



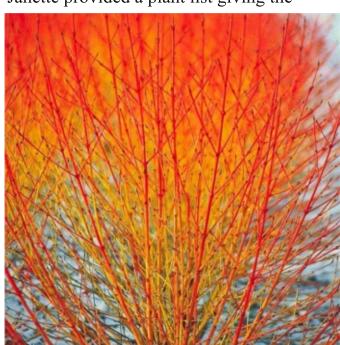
Seasonal folklore and plants entertain the Garden Club

he November meeting of the Thurcaston and Cropston Gardening Club was an interesting talk by Janette Merilion. The title of the talk was 'Christmas Crackers'

Janette had visited the Club before and had always delivered interesting talks on a range of gardening topics. She studied horticulture and garden design at De Montfort University. She is a talented and innovative designer, providing inspiration and practical advice, as well as an experienced speaker.

People have celebrated this time of year, long before it became a Christian religious festival, and Janette's talk included some information about the fascinating folklore associated with the Christmas period and plants.

The talk also included ideas on suitable indoor plants for gifts, and what is looking good in the garden over the Christmas period. This was an illustrated talk and Janette provided a plant list giving the



Cornus 'Midwinter Fire'



Ilex Aquifolium 'Golden Queen – a splendid holly.

names of the plants featured in her talk. This is always appreciated by members as it helps them think about plants they may want to buy for their gardens.



Viburnum Davidii – happy in deep shade.

We may think of Christmas as a dull time in the garden, but the range of plants looking good is extensive – from the dainty flowers of Cyclamen to the majestic bark of Betula Jacquemontii (silver birch). The pictures below give suggestions on some of the plants worth trying.

The Gardening Club's year ends in December with a Festive Evening. We then look forward to a new Programme of Events



Clematis 'Freckles' – this has been flowering in Janette's garden since July

for 2026. The Gardening Club meets in the Thurcaston and Cropston Memorial Hall. Whether an experienced gardener or an enthusiastic beginner we are sure you will find something of interest in this year's programme. New members are made most welcome. What's more, it's excellent value!! The membership fee is only £15 for the year (pro rata) or £3.00 per meeting. So, if you are interested in gardening - come and give the Club a try.

An eye-catching poster will soon be available showing the 2026 Programme of Events. Look out for the programme in local magazines, on local notice boards, and in local garden centres in the New Year. **For your personal copy contact:**

Dave Haddon (0116) 235 9758: david.haddon22@gmail.com or Richard Elks (0116) 236 8313: cropston161@hotmail.co.uk

GRANTS TO ASSIST WITH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES



Richard Hill's Church of England School Charity

The Trustees of the Charity invite those under the age of 25 years who are attending, or have attended the Richard Hill School to apply for a grant to assist with educational activities (including social & physical training) not otherwise provided by the Local Authority.

Successful applicants have received assistance with funding for various activities including - Training course expenses: fees, accommodation, travel, equipment etc.,

- School trip to Gambia Diploma in Legal Practice
- University Expenses Further Education Drama Course
- Masters Degree in Civil Engineering
 Music Lessons
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We look forward to hearing from you!

Applications should be made to the Clerk, Mrs Anne Stringer, Email: rhillcharitytrustees@hotmail.com or Telephone: 0116 234 0625

The Trustees meet twice a year and closing dates for applications are 30th June and 31st December.

Grants ranging from £100 to £1,000

will be awarded to applicants who meet the necessary criteria.

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Cedar House... residential care that keeps the spring in your step.







ovember was another busy month for us at Cedar House. We continue to try old and new things!

We received lots of visitors and had special visits from Lilliput Nursery Group and Sidney Shakers.

The children from Sidney Shakers chose witches, wizards and princesses for their belated Halloween party at Cedar House. Spooktacular!

We had a pop-up sweet shop with Nigel from Sweet Memory Lane in Ashby.

Yumalicious! Sweety treats galore! It brought back lots of memories for the residents and staff.

One of our art sessions this month was inspired by fireworks. A sparkle of colour here, a sparkle of colour there!

On Tuesday 4th

November 2025 we held our own fireworks party and display night. We had lots of colourful fireworks plus food and drink. We

were joined by residents, family, friends and staff.

The church group kindly held a Remembrance Service for the care home. We will remember, we will not forget!

Some of the residents also made Remembrance poppies with the nursery group and watched the Remembrance Service and coverage on TV. They also took part in the two-minute silence.

The residents also enjoyed watching, listening and singing along to guest singer

Rebekah. The theme... Wartime Songs to honour Remembrance Day.

Our new work experience student from Loughborough College, Harvey, has been hard at work. Keep up the good work!

On Monday 10th November 2025 the

residents enjoyed making hedgehogs with the nursery group plus singing nursery rhymes. The children also showed the









residents their storytelling puppets. Margaret enjoyed decorating them... Giving them a bit of sparkle!

The residents also enjoyed doing chair exercises with Adele. The theme this month was musicals.

On Wednesday 12th November 2025 the residents enjoyed making Christmas table decorations with Sweet Petals. They look fantastic! It's that time of year again!

On Thursday 13th November 2025 the residents enjoyed being entertained by the Singing Diva's - Lesley Ann and Katie

Rose. There was lots of dancing and singing. Harvey also showed off his fabulous dance moves!

On Monday 24th November 2025 the residents and staff enjoyed creating glass festive characters with Smartsy Fused Glass ready for Christmas...They look magical! We look forward to seeing the final designs once they have been fused together.

We also got to have a go at archery! Ready, aim, fire!

It's great to have such a varied activity programme! See you all in December!

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Talks on Rainbows and Bradgate Park entertain Ladies Lunch Club

he speaker at September's meeting of the Newtown Linford Ladies Lunch Club was Nicola Richardson who spoke about Rainbows Children's Hospice in Loughborough. The hospice provides respite for children and young adults with life limiting illnesses.

Lunch club members were very touched by the details which Nicola gave and by the slides and video which she shared with them. Her stories

were full of sadness, but also joy as she described the wonderful personalised facilities at the hospice and showed photos of the babies, toddlers, older children and young adults who experienced such joy whilst enjoying respite there. It was obvious that their parents and siblings gained a lot of comfort from being able to join in activities as a family.

Finally, Nicola explained that Rainbows hospice had recently been recognised as the first children's hospice in England to be awarded the Care Quality Commission's coveted 5* rating in all areas of their provision. Members were touched and impressed by what they heard; so much so that, in addition to the usual Speaker Fee, they contributed very generously at a personal level. As the hospice is desperate for additional funding, this was much appreciated.

The October Meeting began with the Chair, Sylvia Cole, congratulating members on their kindness and generosity as she had just received a Certificate from Rainbows Hospice, thanking Club Members for their



overall donation of £312!!

The speaker at the October meeting was Robb Doyle who is a Community Volunteer with the Bradgate Park Trust. Robb's talk on "The Magic of Bradgate" was excellent. It was a new presentation, aimed at describing many aspects of the park and its history. Details were given concerning the geology of the park, its fossils, the variety of wildlife, and the management of the land and the deer park. The slide presentation was amazing!

At the end of the talk, some local members were heard to admit that, although they had lived near Bradgate Park for most of their lives, they had never fully appreciated how much it had to offer.

The Club's December meeting will include a talk from Jo Golby on a "True Victorian Christmas". New members are welcome and will enjoy a reasonably priced two course lunch, good company and excellent entertainment. Meetings, at Lingdale Golf Club, are held on Wednesdays, once a month. For further information contact Sylvia Cole on 0116 2352873 or Pauline on 01530 243212.

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Your first parish – beware.

The Rectory
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

And so, the old year draws to a close, and you are packing to move to your own first parish in January. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1st January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, shovel snow, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill – preferably the day before.

In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons – in seven minutes flat, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. You will be their new disappointment. Be assured that whatever you do, you will always disappoint someone.

Be prepared for phone calls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go turn and it off? You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer. I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent.

Expect that each Sunday morning, as you prepare for the service, there will be a straggling queue of people who want to tell you an astonishing variety of things: there is a large cobweb 30 feet up over the pulpit, they don't like the second hymn on the board, the flowers look rough this week, there may be a bat in the vestry, some child has left a shoe in the back porch, and the car park has broken glass in it.

You may find this a distraction as you prepare for a worship service. But remember that at least they have bothered to come to church. The church would look empty without them.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

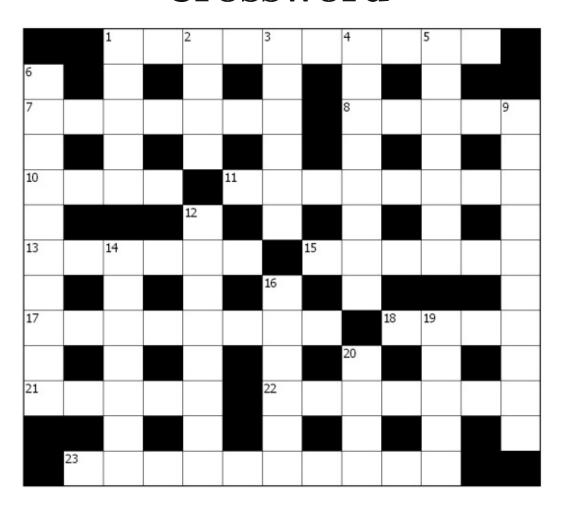
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Sudoku

	5		ii)			3	7	
			2	7	6			
7					1		19	
2		3		1				
		7				6		
				3		4		5
			1					9
			5	9	4			
	6	2	7				1	

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Crossword



Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during
- a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)
- **8** They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- **10** Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- **13** Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- **15** First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith (6)
- **17** Stormy (8)
- **18** A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- **21** Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

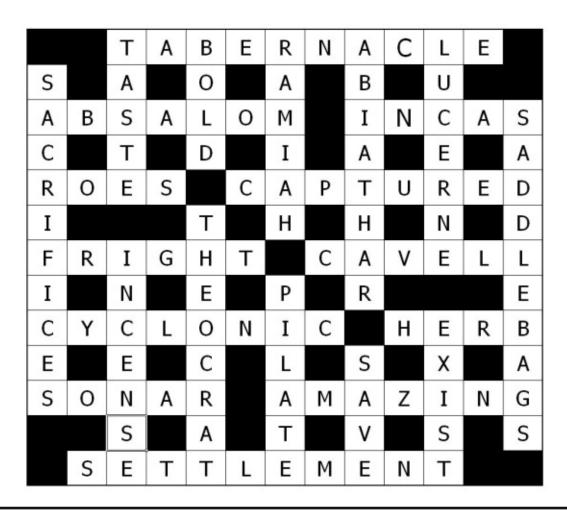
- 1 and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- **4** He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 Offer your bodies as living, holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)
- **9** Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- **14** Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- **20** You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)

Solution on Page 42

Sudoku Solution

1	5	6	9	4	8	3	7	2
3	9	4	2	7	6	1	5	8
7	2	8	3	5	1	9	4	6
2	4	3	6	1	5	8	9	7
5	8	7	4	2	9	6	3	1
6	1	9	8	3	7	4	2	5
4	3	5	1	6	2	7	8	9
8	7	1	5	9	4	2	6	3
9	6	2	7	8	3	5	1	4

Crossword Solution



All Saints 200 Club winners... NOVEMBER 2025 Draw

1st NICK & LORNA CUTTS

2nd MICHAEL ROUSE

3rd JOHN FENNELL

Congratulations to November's winners!



Make next month one to remember and join today. Contact Jane Westby (mowestby@virginmedia.com) for an application.

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