



December 2025 & January 2026

The Newsletter

What's the point of Christmas? The usual things send us all into a whirl and make money for the shops. But what about something deeper?

Christmas is an invitation to pause, to stop 'business as usual' and wonder at the big questions: Who am I? Where am I going? What am I doing? What's the point? The answers are in the story - and why I need to listen, to attend, to reflect. All the answers I need are to be found in it.

The story tells me I am not the chief act - that role belongs to the one whose story it is, the child from whose birth we measure our years. There I can find identity and meaning - and if I will follow I can find direction and purpose.

The story is full of people trying to make sense of things - people working and travelling, watching and waiting, hoping and dreaming - people like us. And there are messengers. Seeing angels (or hearing them) is a reminder that everyday stuff isn't all that there is - there's also the invisible. And the words of the prophets are there to help make sense of things. And the gospel writers make the message as clear as they know how.

The message is this: a child is born king, saviour of the world, God with us - and for us. 'Jesus' means 'God saves'. St Matthew spells it out: 'You shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins.' Sin names our wrongdoing, failure, corruption - and all the consequences of it: guilt and shame, hurt and blame. Jesus comes to heal and restore, to mend and reconcile, to insist on a costly justice that's transformative, and so to make real peace and forgiveness possible - and to teach us how to do the same. Nothing in this world is needed more urgently.

Most may agree - but many still struggle to believe. It's easy to misunderstand. Faith is not a feeling - it's a way of seeing, and that's a choice. You can see the world the way the story has it if you want to: millions do. You can also live the way Jesus calls you to if you want to: or is there something much better you are doing with your life? Why not join those who come to hear the story again and turn it into song?

Paul

For all enquiries or pastoral matters, please contact the Rector:
Rev'd Paul Burr, The Vicarage, The Common, Swardston, Norwich NR14 8EB
Tel: 01508 570550 Email: pburr100@gmail.com

Churchwardens

Intwood & Keswick: Richard Dannatt 01603 259537
Swardeston: Lynn Hewitt: 01508 578767
Ketteringham: Mary Parker 01603 811330
East Carleton: No wardens — enquiries to Peter Riches 01508 571449 or to Vicar

Carol Services

Come to church to celebrate Christmas this year. Carol Services are on 21st December, the Sunday before Christmas. Or join us on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. All most welcome.

Christingle

Children love a Christingle Service: Swardeston Church has a Christingle on Sunday 7th December at 9.30am. For all the family.

Clarinet Cascade Christmas Concert

Welcome in the festive season with a Clarinet Cascade Christmas Concert - on Sunday 7th December at 3.00pm in Swardeston Church. £10 adults, children free. Cash if possible please. Proceeds to Church Funds.

Book swap coffee mornings

Book swap coffee mornings on 2nd December and 6th January 10.30am - 12 noon in the Cavell Room, Swardeston Church. All welcome to call in for cake and company.

Foodbank

The foodbank box will be in the porch of Intwood church, either for contributions, or for anyone in difficulty to help themselves.

Ketteringham & East Carleton History Group

The next meeting of Ketteringham & East Carleton History Group will be held at 10.30am on Saturday, 13th December at Hall Farm House, Church Road, K'ham; and also on 14th February (venue to be announced). All welcome.

Poppy Appeal

The collection of £60 from Remembrance Sunday at Ketteringham Church was sent to the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal which supports the Armed Forces community.

Knitters and Stitchers

The Knitting group meets on alternate Tuesdays in the Cavell Room 2-4pm - a friendly group always looking to welcome new members. The group is under the umbrella of the Norfolk Knitters and Stitchers, an amazing charity with groups throughout Norfolk and Suffolk. Come and join for a chat and a cup of tea and knit, crochet or sew. Patterns, needles and yarn can be provided to get you started. The group is now entering its tenth year. For further information contact Sue Oxbury at Sueoxbury@aol.com

Christmas Fayre

On Saturday 22nd November the annual Christmas Fayre took place in Swardeston Village Hall. Grateful thanks to all who attended and supported the event, especially the Church stall and raffle for the hamper. Over £180 was raised, and a further £117 on the Hamper raffle, for St Mary's Church Swardeston - a record amount! Many thanks also to all those who contributed to the stall and hamper to make this possible.

East Carleton Carol Service

East Carleton Church Carol Service is at 3pm on Sunday 21st December. All welcome, especially children and families. Seasonal Refreshments in church after the Carol Service.

Ladybelt Country Park

A big 'thank you' from Ladybelt Country Park to all who have supported it and its events this year and especially to the volunteers who made it all possible and helped with fundraising and conservation work. We wish you well for the festive season and Happy New Year. The events team are putting a programme together for 2026 and look forward to seeing you. If you are interested in volunteering please contact ladybeltcountryparkevents@gmail.com or call 01603 504400 - or see Facebook page [Facebook/Ladybeltpark](https://www.facebook.com/Ladybeltpark)

A Christmas Prayer

Lord, we pray for peace on earth this Christmas. May the message of peace that the angels proclaimed resonate in every heart and home. Bring healing to a world filled with conflict and division, and may we be instruments of your peace in our communities. Amen

Church Services: December 2025

Sunday 7th Dec.	9.30am	Family Christingle Service	Swardeston Church
<i>Advent 2</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	East Carleton Church
Sunday 14th Dec.	9.30am	Holy Communion	Swardeston Church
<i>Advent 3</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	Ketteringham Church
Sunday 21st Dec.	11am	Carol Service	Intwood Church
<i>Advent 4</i>	3pm	Carol Service	East Carleton Church
	5pm	Carol Service	Swardeston Church
<i>Christmas Eve</i>	4pm	Crib Service	Ketteringham Church
	11.30pm	Midnight Communion	Swardeston Church
<i>Christmas Day</i>	9am	Christmas Family Service	Keswick Church
	10.30am	Christmas Communion	East Carleton Church
Sunday 28th Dec.	10.30am	Christmas Communion	Swardeston Church
<i>Christmas 1</i>		(Group Service for the Benefice)	

Church Services: January 2026

Sunday 4th Jan.	9.30am	Family Service	Swardeston Church
<i>Christmas 2</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	East Carleton Church
Sunday 11th Jan.	9.30am	Holy Communion	Swardeston Church
<i>Epiphany 1</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
<i>Baptism of Christ</i>	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	Ketteringham Church
Sunday 18th Jan.	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Swardeston Church
<i>Epiphany 2</i>	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Keswick Church
	11am	Holy Communion	East Carleton Church
Sunday 25th Jan.	8am	Holy Communion	Keswick Church
<i>Epiphany 3</i>	9.30am	Holy Communion	Swardeston Church
	11am	Morning Prayer	Ketteringham Church
Sunday 1st Feb.	9.30am	Family Service	Swardeston Church
<i>Epiphany 4</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	East Carleton Church

To receive Newsletter direct into your in-box, email request to the editor at **pburr100@gmail.com**
Please email material for the February 2026 issue of the Newsletter to the editor by
Tuesday 20th January 2026 also at **pburr100@gmail.com**