



February 2026

The Newsletter

Why are the grass verges of our lanes so badly eroded this winter? And why so many new makeshift passing places? Who is doing it? It can't just be blamed on heavy plant for the cabling to new substations - or tractors and farm vehicles. So what's the cause? Delivery vans? 4x4s? Or just too many cars in too much of a hurry?

It's a shame - for a country lane is not just an historic part of the landscape but a thing of ordinary beauty. Verges are full of life and colour - long ribbons of uncultivated grassland punctuated with shrubs and trees and wildflowers. Why reduce them to a quagmire of angry-looking tyre marks? The Highway Code needs another rule: 'Leave no trace'.

Country lanes are not designed for speed. How much time is saved by refusing to slow down and use a passing place? If I trespass on the verge I cause damage, contribute to erosion and leave an ugly scar.

Perhaps I think no one will notice - or no one will know it was me. Is that how I am in the rest of my life? Am I in such a hurry that I don't care whether I transgress boundaries or cut corners or leave ugliness in my wake? What am I doing that is so important that I can't go at a pace where I navigate my way more carefully with thought for how my conduct impacts the world around me?

Lent is an annual invitation to pause and ask myself some direct questions - to try to see myself as others might. Or (to put it more plainly) to see myself as God sees me, where nothing is hidden and there's no pretending. And, given my erosion of boundaries, to seek forgiveness, go deep, take time to pray, go to church. Lent begins on 18th February.

There's no motoring in the spiritual life. No short cuts. No rushing. Pilgrimage means walking. Jesus doesn't hurry: I'm meant to follow, not overtake. 'Narrow is the way that leads to life'. So, as signs in Norfolk byways have it: 'Slow you down.'

Paul

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

The Lectio Course

Join us for our Lectio Course - our Lent Course for this year. (Free course.)
The Lectio Course is a five session video series from Prayer 24/7 International presented by Pete Greig exploring the ancient practice of Lectio Divina.
Lectio Divina a way of reading the scriptures devotionally which opens up the life of prayer.

Each session includes discussion, video input and practical group exercise.

Join us in Swardeston Church's Cavell Room at 10am on Wednesdays

25th February	1. Introducing Lectio Divina
4th March	2. Read: Hearing God in the Bible
11th March	3. Meditate: Hearing God in our thoughts
18th March	4. Pray: Responding to God in prayer and prophecy
25th March	5. Contemplate: Hearing God in the whole world

Contact the Vicar for more details: 01508 570550 or pburr100@gmail.com

Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and falls on 18th February this year. Do join us at 10am in Swardeston Church that day for a service of Holy Communion with Ashing - the ancient custom of receiving the mark of the cross on the forehead in ash as a sign of intention to keep a holy Lent.

Swardeston Day Centre

The big news this month is the appointment of a new manager for the Day Centre - and farewell to Lesley and 'happy travelling'. We welcome Sinead Auker, and wish her every success in her new post. We have a few spaces for clients on Mondays and Wednesdays, so do come along for a free trial day with us. We offer companionship, socialising, and a full programme of gentle exercising, games, quizzes, talks, art and entertainment. Refreshments, morning and afternoon and a delicious home cooked lunch in a warm and caring atmosphere. Drivers needed to transport clients - mileage paid.

For enquiries contact Sinead (from 5th February) on 01508 578826 Monday or Wednesday 10am - 3pm or email Info@swardestondaycentre.org or visit our website at www.swardestondaycentre.org

Ketteringham & East Carleton History Group

The next meeting of Ketteringham & East Carleton History Group will be held at 10.30am on Saturday 14th February at Hall Farm House, Church Rd, Ketteringham. All welcome.

Ketteringham Crib Service

The collection of £232 was gratefully received by 'Embrace the Middle East', a charity which supports families affected by the conflict in the Middle East.

Stamp collecting for the Guide Dogs Association

Many thanks to those who have kindly left used stamps at the back of Swardesdon Church for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. A huge parcel is being sent off but please keep stamps coming! Sylvia Barber.

Norwich Foodbank

The box for Norwich Foodbank is in the church porch at Intwood for donations, or if someone needs food. Many thanks for your generosity.

Ladybelt Country Park

Help needed

Ladybelt Country Park is looking for regular visitors of the Park to help open and close the compost toilet.

Nature Figurine donation

If you're having a clear out, wildlife figurines are wanted for a Park project.

Diary date and volunteer callout

A Viking and Community Summer Fayre is being planned for Sunday 7th June at the Park. This will link local history with a re-enactment of the life of a Viking farmer. Other activities are planned and volunteers are wanted to help out.

Please contact 01603 504400 ladybeltcountryparkevents@gmail.com

Book swap coffee mornings

Book swap coffee mornings in the Cavell Room at Swardesdon Church on 3rd and 17th February 10.30 - 12 noon. All welcome.

Church Services: February 2026

Sunday 1st February	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Swardeston Church
<i>Presentation of Christ</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
<i>Candlemas</i>	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	East Carleton Church
Sunday 8th February	9.30am	Holy Communion	Swardeston Church
<i>2nd Sunday before Lent</i>	11am	Holy Communion	Intwood Church
	3.30pm	Evening Prayer	Ketteringham Church
Sunday 15th February	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Swardeston Church
<i>Sunday next before Lent</i>	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Keswick Church
	11am	Holy Communion	East Carleton Church
Wednesday 18th Feb. <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	10am	Holy Communion (with Ashing)	Swardeston Church
Sunday 22nd February	8am	Holy Communion	Keswick
<i>1st Sunday of Lent</i>	9.30am	Holy Communion	Swardeston Church
	11am	Morning Prayer	Ketteringham Church

New War Memorial and Service of Dedication

A new memorial tablet to commemorate the men from Swardeston who died during World War 2 has been installed by the existing WW1 memorial by the lych gate to Swardeston Church. A Service of Dedication at the war memorials is arranged for Sunday March 29th at 11.30am (after the 10.30am Morning Service in church). A group of army veterans is expected with standards and bugler, together with members of the men's remaining families, and everyone is most welcome. Refreshments will be available in the Cavell Room after the service.

*'Enter by the narrow gate;
for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction,
and those who enter by it are many.
For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life,
and those who find it are few.'*

Matthew 7.13,14

To receive Newsletter direct into your in-box, email request to the editor at pburr100@gmail.com
Please email material for the March 2026 issue of the Newsletter to the editor by
Tuesday 24th February 2026 also at pburr100@gmail.com