

The Parish of Freshford with Limpley Stoke and Hinton Charterhouse – Newsletter – December 2025

A message from the Rector

Greetings to everyone – and welcome to December. Another action-packed month has passed, and we are anticipating the great celebration of Christmas – the fact of history that “heaven touches earth”, and the Son of God is born.

On the 9th of November, members of the 15th Bath (Freshford) Scout Group helped us remember. They marched from the village hall along the Tynning to St Peter's.



Captain Peter King led the Act of Remembrance, helped by a University of Bath trumpeter Emma Mowat. Then on Tuesday 11th at 11.00am we were joined at the Freshford War Memorial by members of the British Legion and the 6th form from Freshford Primary School, led by Ruth Poole, Head Teacher, and colleagues. David Sibley led the event at Limpley Stoke and Nick Paige at Hinton Charterhouse.

This last week in the church's year is the week of Christ the King. The theme this year is **Christ the King – the one Truth in a world of uncertainties...** At St Peter's, recalling past events that have shaped our thinking and experience, including times of deep and contrasting emotions, we reflected how such times show us that only God can help us handle all that life throws at us. *"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way..."* (Psalm 46: 1-2a); and *"Jesus is before all things, and in him all things hold together"* (Colossians 1: 17) are two verses to hang onto.

Next Sunday, 30th November, at a Benefice café church in St Peter's we will share further thoughts on this.

And so, we begin another Advent. With all the upcoming celebrations, carols, tinsel and crackers, let us remember another amazing fact – Jesus our saviour began life as tiny baby, totally dependent on Mary, his mother. And as we think of those for whom Christmas is difficult or lonely, remember that this Jesus would rescue humankind. As Paul writes *"For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Jesus], and through him to reconcile all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross."* (Colossians 1: 19-20). *Revd Nigel Rawlinson - Rector*

Benefice of Freshford with Limpley Stoke and Hinton Charterhouse – our new logo, telling of Christian Unity, Compassion and prayer, gathering all people together, and taking God outside...



Christmas services

Sunday 30th November - Advent Sunday

- 10.30am Benefice Café Church, St Peter's church, Freshford
4.00pm Evening Prayer – St Mary's church Limpley Stoke

Sunday 7th December - Advent 2

- 12.30pm BCP Holy Communion – St Mary's Limpley Stoke
4.00pm Advent Carol Service – St John's Hinton Charterhouse
A family service including a Christmas tree... "Away in a manger..."

Sunday 14th December – Advent 3

- 10.30am CW Holy Communion – St Peter's, Freshford

Sunday 21st December – Advent 4

- 10.30am Traditional Carol Service – St Mary's, Limpley Stoke
6.30pm Bath Abbey La Nativite, Messiaen
Contemporary organ music to reflect on the **wonder** of the nativity
Organist – Huw Williams, Bath Abbey; Narrator – Nigel Rawlinson

Monday 22nd

- 5.30pm Community Carols at the Galleries, Freshford a Family event – mince pies, mulled wine

Tuesday 23rd

- 4.00pm Christingle Service at St Peter's Freshford (bring your own Christingle – instructions below)

Wednesday 24th – Christmas Eve

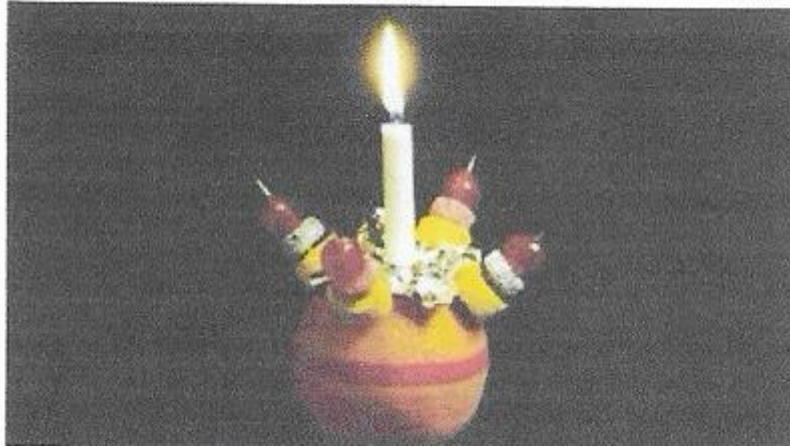
- 9.00pm Holy Communion - St John's Hinton Charterhouse

Thursday 25th - Christmas Day

- 9.00am Holy Communion - St Mary's, Limpley Stoke
10.30am Family Service – Christmas Day – St Peter's Freshford
12.00pm a short service of Holy Communion

- Sunday 28th** Holy Communion St Peter's Freshford

Make you own Christingle



Christingles are made with various household items, making them incredibly simple. All you need is:

An orange

A taper candle

A small piece of silver foil to catch the melting wax

Ribbon or red tape to go around the orange

4 cocktail sticks

Sweets and dried fruit (12 pieces per Christingle)

How to put it together:

1. Take an orange and wrap a piece of red ribbon or red sticky tape around the middle of it.
2. On the top of your orange, cut a small cross.
3. Place a small square piece of silver foil over the cross (around 6cm by 6cm). This will catch the dripping wax.
4. Get a candle and wedge it into the cross of the orange.
5. Add soft sweets and/or dried fruit such as raisins, cherries etc on to four cocktail sticks.
6. Insert the four cocktail sticks evenly into the orange around the base of the candle.

The orange represents the world and the lighted candle represents Jesus as the light of the world. The sticks represent the four compass points, as well as the four seasons. To keep it upright, take a thin slice off the bottom of the orange to create a flat base.

News from St Peter's

Open Day November 8th

Thank you to all of you who helped with the open day. We had good conversations with the people who came, and we enjoyed our coffee and cake which was lovely in itself! Thanks to Randolph, Roland and Fiona who did sterling work planting bulbs. Thanks also to Margaret Dodge who was our historian for the day.

We are still collecting Christian books for our bookcase. If you have any books that are in good condition that you would like to donate, or a favourite book you would like to buy for the bookcase, we would be very grateful. We hope to create a lending library of Christian books.

The services at St Peter's for December are listed above. Please join us for any of our services - you would be most welcome. *Debbie*

News from St Mary's

Our congregation enjoyed a said BCP Communion Service on the first Sunday in November and this is set to continue. Note the new slightly later time of 12.30 in December and beyond. There was a fitting Act of Remembrance on the 11th November at the War Memorial in Middle Stoke, and it was aided by a very respectful delivery van whose driver stopped a short distance away and effectively blocked the road. We are looking forward to finishing the month with a further BCP Evening Service for Advent before the build up to Christmas. If you are a budding pianist, the piano has been tuned and you are welcome to play it. *David*

News from St John's

Thanks to Mary, Meg and Nick for coordinating a church clean-up in preparation for Christmas. This will be on Saturday 6th December at 10.00

On Sunday 7th at 4pm there will be a family **Advent Carol Service**. The church will be candle-lit, and we hope the tree will be up – ready for Away in a Manger. Huge thanks to Alfie Parkin who will playing the organ for this service.

Then on Christmas Eve there will be service of Holy Communion **starting at 9pm**

Happy Christmas

News from the school and pre-school

It's a very busy time for our local school and pre-school as we go into December with nativity concerts and carol singing, and much more besides! We are looking forward to welcoming the school children to St Peter's Church for their end of term service, and the pre-school children to St Mary's for their Christmas sing-song.

We also hope that our young families will join us for some of our family orientated services over the Christmas period, and notices are going out via the school, pre-school and beyond to tell everyone all about them.

Merry Christmas everyone! *Penny*

Thursdays – Old Bakery – Midday – Advent bible study – going deeper into an event we know so well

November 27th, December 4th

11.45 – 1pm

This is an opportunity to study the Bible together. *Nigel*

Ladies Wednesday walking group

The next walk will be on the 10th December and the 14th of January 2026. Please contact Debbie Ashcroft on 07889 780984 or debbieashcroft@live.co.uk if you would like to join the walking group. All welcome! *Debbie*

Wednesday afternoons - Tea, cake & chat

Please do come and join us in the Old Bakery on Wednesday afternoons from 2.30 – 4.00 for tea, coffee, cake and chat. Everyone is very welcome.

Zoom sessions

If you don't get out much and feel like a chat, a small group of us zoom together for 45 minutes on a Monday morning. To give it a try, please contact Penny Jones on jonespennyg@gmail.com. Penny

Need a lift? Think LINK

A reminder that the Limpley Stoke and Freshford LINK service is available to residents in both villages who lack the means to get from A to B. Volunteer drivers will transport you to a doctor's appointment or local hospital, as well as to shopping or social visits. The service includes the delivery of prescriptions from the Galleries for those unable to collect them. If you have a car and some free time, why not consider becoming a LINK driver. Details at freshford.org.uk or you can contact the LINK co-ordinator on 07714 169216.

List of contacts

Rector

Nigel Rawlinson rector@flshc.co.uk

Churchwardens St Peter's, Freshford

Roland Birchby birchbyr@gmail.com or Tel: 01225 723432

Debbie Ashcroft debbieashcroft@live.co.uk

Steve Ashcroft steveashcroft@hotmail.co.uk

Churchwarden St John's, Hinton Charterhouse

Liz Wordsworth hintonwords@icloud.com

Churchwardens St Mary's, Limpley Stoke

Trevor Quartermaine redadmiral7965@gmail.com

David Sibley dssibley38@gmail.com

Parish Administrator

Debs Jones contact.parishoffice@gmail.com 01225 720347