

S I G N P O S



T January 2026

The Churches of the Ridgeway Benefice

**Childrey & West Challow
Kingston Lisle & Sparsholt
Letcombe Regis
Letcombe Bassett**



Faith & Friendship along the Ridgeway

Message from Sue Worth, Childrey

Well, that's it then. Christmas is over for another year and time to put the Christ child, and his Nativity Scene back in his box, in the attic till next December. Out of sight? We will all be busy wishing each other 'Happy New Year' but the Church works to a different calendar. Advent Sunday marks the start of the New Church Year and the Nativity set stays up beyond Twelfth Night, when The Wise Men arrive at the stable, and is not taken down until Candlemas when Jesus was presented in the Temple.

This year there are changes in the Church where, for the first time, we greet a female Archbishop of Canterbury, and all wish Dame Sarah Mullally well, whilst across the Ridgeway Churches we begin the search for a new Rector. You might well ask what happens in the meantime? Good question. In the coming months you will see a number of visiting Priests plus some familiar faces taking services across the Benefice. If you have queries then speak to your churchwardens and we will help as best we can. Change is inevitable and always has been, ever since the adult Jesus and his societal misfits changed the world around him.

He welcomed and loved the outsiders, the marginalised, and He scandalised those in authority telling his followers to "Love one another as I have loved you." Mahatma Gandhi told his followers to be the change you wish to see in the world. So this New Year, maybe your resolution should be just that, love one another.

Wishing you a happy and peaceful New Year.

Interregnum report from Paul Thompson

The parishes have agreed that we will aim to provide one service of Holy Communion in each church in every four week period, with the fifth Sunday services rotating around the Benefice as before. A wide range of local and diocesan clergy have offered to help us do this, with Mary Harwood in particular taking many of our services. The existing programme of lay led services will also be maintained.

So far almost all the services up to the end of May next year are covered, including Easter, so that on this festival all our churches can have services.

The Bishop of Dorchester is available to interview candidates to be the Rector of the Ridgeway Benefice on May 22nd next year, so we are busy working back from that date to time the various legally specified meetings which are required to complete the process, approve advertisements and get our benefice profile ready. PCCs have already been providing material to prepare that vital prospectus to candidates.

Although that seems a long way away, if a good candidate presents themselves we could be appointing a new Rector in May and perhaps have them in post by September. A lot of things have to go right for that result so I am including here some words that we can use to frame our prayer to God for our interregnum.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the churches of this benefice, and thank you for ministry of those who are taking our services and delivering your word in our villages.

We pray that you will guide us as we look for a new Rector, that we may work together to portray the essence of our churches and the opportunity that they represent.

Almighty God, enlighten with your holy wisdom those who are to choose a faithful pastor for this benefice; that we may receive one who will speak your word and serve your people according to your will.

We ask this in Jesus' name

Amen

Baby Group

After five years there are few babies now attending the Baby Group run at Childrey Methodist Hall and so we have made the hard decision that the group will not continue in the New Year.

Since its inception in 2020 we have welcomed many mothers, carers and babies and some of our 'original' group are now pupils at Ridgeway School!

It has been a wonderful time that we will all look back on with great joy.

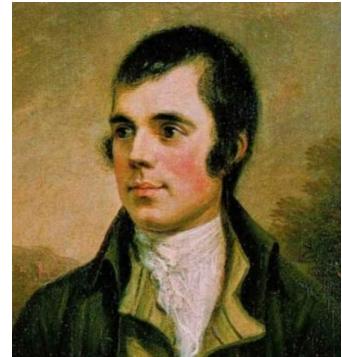
Thank you all for your support.

The Baby Group Team



Burns Night Supper

Friday 23rd January 7pm for 7:30pm
Childrey Village Hall
Tickets £30pp for 3 course meal
Our own resident piper and Scottish folk songs
3 course meal, licensed bar, all for £30 pp.
email stmaryschildrey@gmail.com
or jshkworth@gmail.com



Childrey Chillbusters welcomes you in **Childrey Village Hall**
for a simple bread and soup lunch with cake and a hot drink

Thursday lunchtimes 12 noon - 2pm

No charge but donations are invited to support Village Charities and Groups

St Michael's Lunch Bowl *All welcome*

You are invited to a free bread and soup lunch followed by a hot drink & cake.
12 noon – 2pm once a month on Thursdays
in Letcombe Bassett Village Hall
15th January 19th February 19th March



Thank you to everyone who was part of Childrey's Christmas Festival Weekend - the Parish Council for organising the tree, Ridgeway School and Little Ducks for the decorations, the WI for refreshments, and all the groups who created the beautiful display of Christmas lights in the church.
The weekend raised £150 for St Mary's, £176 for the Wantage Silver Band and £80 for The Children's Society.



Thank you to everyone who supported the wonderful St Laurence Christmas Fair on 13 December. It raised approximately £1,000 for the church repair project.

Sunday Services

	4th Jan	11th Jan	18th Jan	25th Jan	1st Feb
	Epiphany	Baptism of Christ	Epiphany 2	Epiphany 3	Epiphany 4
West Challow		4pm Holy Communion			
Childrey	see below		10:15am Holy Communion		<i>to be confirmed</i>
Kingston Lisle	10:15am Holy Communion				10:15am Holy Communion
Sparsholt				10:15am Holy Communion	
Letcombe Regis		10:15am Holy Communion			
Letcombe Bassett	10:15am Worship & Prayer		8:30am Holy Communion		10:15am Worship & Prayer

Please note: there is no 8:30am service on the first Sunday of January but there will be a lay led service on first Sundays from February onwards. More details next month.

**Daily Prayer using the C of E Daily Prayer App on our phones or tablets.
Please do join us**

Kingston Lisle 9:15am on Tuesdays 6th January and 20th January

Every Monday
3:00pm Said Evensong in St Andrew's Letcombe Regis

Taizé Services in St Laurence's West Challow will resume in February

Please send any items for Signpost by the 15th of each month to the Benefice Administrator at benefice.ridgeway@outlook.com
Items in Signpost do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor