PARISH NEWS

OF

ST WEONARDS, GARWAY, ORCOP,
PENCOYD, TRETIRE, MICHAELCHURCH,
HENTLAND AND HOARWITHY

JANUARY 2026



THE DOORWAY TO THE NEW YEAR BY PAT MACRAE

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Samaritans

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101 talk How to get in touch: to to vour local SNT or report a crime. herefordsouthside.snt@westmercia.police.uk www.westmercia.police.uk

Only call 999 in an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger. Otherwise call 101.

PARISH NEWS

THE ARCHENFIELD BENEFICE

For enquiries on baptisms, funerals and wedding please contact the Vicar: Rev. Angie Kateley revangiekateley@gmail.com 01981 345044 ** *Rest day: *Tuesday*.

As Angie is so busy at this time, we have given her a break from letter writing and look forward to the February contribution. She sent this message:

I give my sincere thanks to everyone who has volunteered time and resources to the work of our benefice churches over the past year, in particular those who work regularly, creatively and generously behind the scenes and/or get involved in our services and events. Our churches are nothing without you, and our communities are greatly blessed by you.

With love and blessing,

Angie x

Bishop's Letter

January 12th is designated as Blue Monday, the most miserable of the year. The festivities of Christmas are a distant memory, and winter still holds us in its grip. A few valiant daffodils and snowdrops poking through the mud do little to elevate the mood. At least that is the contemporary narrative.

However, we Christians, especially in the Diocese of Hereford are entering into a year of celebration. We have had three years to explore our central values of Christlikeness, prayerfulness and engagement and now we want to celebrate, not least because the diocese is 1350 years old this year.

As Bishop of Hereford, it is an extraordinary thing to walk into the cathedral for a service passing a board that shows you have 105 predecessors in an unbroken line back to 676! Our diocese predates England and was carved out of a corner of the ancient kingdom of Mercia and the Romano-British kingdom of Archenfield. It is hard to see any connection between the wild, rural subsistence society of that time and the modern world. And yet our year will celebrate an unbroken thread of Christian faith, about the only thing that does link the ancient past to today.

From the first Celtic saints like St. Dubricious who brought Christianity to this part of the world in the sixth century, to Putta our first Bishop, expelled from Rochester and finding a home here, to people like St. Aedfrith and St. Milburgha who linked this then obscure part of the world to wider Christendom. But not just our founders. Christians are described by the Apostle Paul as Saints. The witness of some remains through the centuries. For some there might be a stone memorial. However, I doubt anyone will remember much about me as a Bishop in 50 years' time when they walk past my name on the board.

Over the last 1350 years the Gospel has been advanced as much by ordinary people living it out in their homes, workplaces and communities, as it has by the few remembered in history. That remains the case today. We would not have the healthcare system, education, good working conditions in factories, the abolition of slavery and countless other benefits but for such Christian witness and activity.

We may feel we are struggling as a church today, but whether acknowledged or not, much that is good in the modern world owes its origin to the Gospel. That is well worth celebrating.

+Richard

SERVICE ROTA

For any changes please check the benefice website https://archenfieldbenefice.org.uk/

Sunday 4 th	10.00 am	Hentland, Benefice Holy Communion
Sunday 11 th	9.30 am 11.30 am	St Weonards, All Age Communion Garway Village Hall, Plough Sunday
Sunday 18 th	10.00 am 6.00 pm	Hoarwithy, Holy Communion Pencoyd, Evening Worship
Sunday 25 th	9.15 am 9.30 am 11.15 am	Hentland, Holy Communion St Weonards, All Age Service Orcop, Holy Communion
Sunday 1 st February	10.00 am	Pencoyd, Benefice Communion

For enquiries about baptisms, weddings or funeral services, please contact the Vicar: Rev. Angie Kateley revangiekateley@gmail.com 01981 345044 *Rest Day Tuesday*

Sunday January 4th
Hentland Church
Benefice Communion
10.00am
All are welcome

PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION



30th December Lawrence 01981 580548

27th January Chris Davies 01981 580129



COPY DATE January 10TH PLEASE 6.00PM

Do you read this online? Please consider a donation for costs. Acc: 70786276 20-00-85

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Would you like to work at home online for a day or two once a year? We need an efficient person to contact our advertisers in July.

For more information about the task and remuneration, contact fionamynors@btinternet.com

Applications for small grants from the magazine funds

Please send your application for a small grant to garratt peter@hotmail.com.

VILLAGE PAGES

ST WEONARDS

Last month I mentioned that the rain seemed to have returned, but that was nothing compared to the monsoon that fell so suddenly in late November and is falling again as I write in early December!) causing desperate flooding in Monmouth and beyond. I think that the speed with which the water rose was so shocking. It was heartening to read about the many ways in which people supported each other and the community action which has followed.

Although the local streams rose rapidly, on this occasion there was limited local flooding. It still surprises me how quickly our local stream, the Garren rises, becoming a raging torrent with water from Orcop, subsiding as fast as it came, returning to its muddy, fairly sluggish self!

Fay's Bingo was another amazing success, raising £1336.26 towards the upkeep of the churchyard. Pam Craig thought that the prizes were even better than usual, and they are always amazing. Many thanks to all for

their generosity in donating prizes, attending, making sandwiches, cakes and the washing up team beavering away in the kitchen.

We attended a wonderful performance of the *Nativity* in the cathedral like the *Easter Play* we saw earlier this year. The cast is made up of local people, not professional actors, who bring such a fresh, realistic approach to the familiar bible stories which come alive, giving us a new insight into the challenging context of the times.

In the *Nativity* we saw the anguish of Mary's family as she is accused of breaking her betrothal vows. She is threatened with death by stoning, the traditional punishment for adultery. Joseph accepts her explanation and they escape but are homeless as Jesus is born. Herod, the terrifying Roman ruler, was a frightening devious character and the shepherds and kings were convincing in their roles.

The cathedral benefits from the production skills of James Pacey the chancellor. Before ordination James was involved professionally in the theatre and that certainly shows. The lighting and sound were superb.

Don't miss out on the next performances *The Hereford Passion* in March and *the Hereford Mysteries* in October. We will give out more details nearer the time.

As I write in early December so much seems to be happening across our parishes.

This year it was decided to have a special Christmas card, with information about our Christmas Services, printed as well as a paper leaflet. These have been delivered to most houses in the parish. We are extremely grateful to Richard Mynors, for driving round with his OS map which shows the parish boundaries, for undertaking this task again this year.

Christmas Services in St Weonards:

Christmas Eve Wednesday 24th December: 3.30pm The Crib Service Families are particularly welcome to this short service as the nativity story is acted out.

11.00pm. Midnight Communion.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year on behalf of the PCC, Fiona Mynors.

Thursday 8th January.

Coffee Morning.

St Weonards Village Hall.10am- 12 noon.

Enjoy your coffee, homemade cake, and a raffle.

Meet up with old friends and make new ones.

Just turn up, a warm welcome to everyone.



Garway Church

Don't forget the Blue Christmas Tuesday 23rd December @ 4pm

This service will offer a space around all the busy-ness and festivities during the Christmas season, for a quiet time of reflection. This will be particularly important for those who find Christmas a difficult time. It allows us to pause together in the comfort and light of God's love.

Everyone is welcome. Bring a blanket for extra warmth and comfort and to help warm is through, hot drinks will be served at the beginning of the service.

Services

January 11th 11.30 at the Village Hall

We are kicking off the new church year with something special. We have been invited to join with The Big Breakfast event in the hall, that will be fundraising for the Estrella del sauce, a school in Peru, (please see further information of this elsewhere in the magazine).

The date of this community event coincides with Plough Sunday, a day when we traditionally celebrate the plough with a blessing, and the work of the farmers, it would not be much of a Big Breakfast without our farmers...... Historically the plough would be blessed ready for the start of the farming year, traditionally on Plough Monday, the next day.

A short service will take place at 11.30.

How better to celebrate the hard work of our farmers by having a hearty breakfast, whilst at the same time raising money for a worthy cause!

February 8th, and March 8th 11.15am

By kind permission of Ash and Andresa, for February and March we will not be having a service in the church but will be retiring to the Snug at the Moon, where we will be made welcome and kept cosy by our hosts. We won't be having our usual celtic service, but instead will gather together informally to share a wisdom story.

You are welcome to join us for a time to ponder together with storytelling and conversation.

Our thanks go to Ash and Andresa for welcoming us to the Moon.

Our regular Celtic service will resume in the church in April, when the weather will hopefully be a lot warmer. A very Happy New Year to you all.

Tracy Somerville, churchwarden.

Garway Coffee Morning

MONDAY January 5th 2026, from 10 am

Join us at Garway Village Hall for our January coffee morning

As always there will be beverages, homemade cake and good company.

Cecibel will be with us to talk about the *Estrella del Sauce School in Peru* for whom the Spice Girls will be raising money at our Big Breakfast on Sunday January 11th.

NB PLEASE NOTE THIS COFFEE MORNING IS ON A MONDAY FOR ONE MONTH ONLY AS THE HALL DRAINAGE SYSTEM WITH BE UNDERGOING REPAIRS AND THERE WILL BE NO WATER FOR THE COFFEE!!!



Monday 29th and Tuesday 30th December, Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd January at 10am

Get into the right frame of mind for the new year with these pop up QiGong sessions with Caroline Penn

Many events are happening in the village hall during January. Do come along and join in! See the notices in the rest of the magazine.

BIG BREAKFAST/BRUNCH

Sunday 11th January, 10am - 2pm

Garway Village Hall

Full fry-up, or just muesli ... the choice is yours!
£10 adult, child under 16 £5 ... under 5s free or whatever you feel ...
cash and card payments accepted

Good food and light entertainment And of course, a raffle! Donations welcome!
Please message if you would like to come:
christinedavies@hotmail.co.uk

And let us know what time 10/11, 11/12, 12/1pm, 1pm/2pm
All proceeds will go to Estrella del Sauce School in Peru

Green Garway Book Group

On The Black Hill by Bruce Chatwin

This was a big winner for us all. It's a book so evocative of time and place and being able to see the Black Hill from where we live made it all the more poignant.

The main characters. Benjamin and Lewis are twins stuck in time living on a farm on the Welsh/Herefordshire borders. They pull in opposite directions, with Lewis wanting to break free and travel further afield, keen to adopt new farming methods and eager to meet the ladies. However, Benjamin is happy keeping house, keeping himself to himself and keeping up traditional farming.

With a rich supporting cast including Wainright the Coffin (funeral director) and Nancy the Castle (landowner) this book covers a lot of themes including class, bigotry, sexism and neighbourly relationships that made us laugh, ponder and occasionally reel.

A couple of lines that stuck out for us:

"The road to hell led to Hereford" [a place where people traditionally] "preferred the Old Testament to the New, because in the Old Testament there were many more stories about sheep farming"

Rating 4.5 / 5

Next group will be *Monday 12 January at 7.30pm* in the snug at the Garway Moon to talk about *Hagstone*

by Sinead Gleeson - "Beautifully written, prescient and eerily haunting, Sinéad Gleeson's fiction debut takes in the darker side of human nature and the mysteries of faith and the natural world"

Julie Hudson



TUESDAY JANUARY 13TH 7.30pm GARWAY HALL £5.00 FLOW (u)

Captivating, thrilling, a piece of cinematic poetry; the Oscar winning *FLOW* left many critics lost for superlatives. This Latvian animation outdoes Disney, Pixar and Dreamworks as it pushes the boundaries of what the genre can do and what the genre can make you feel. It combines technical ingenuity, formal beauty and, above all, a deep reverence for life in this story of a cat, a capybara, a lemur, a bird and a dog afloat on an old sailboat after an apocalyptic flood has resulted in no human presence remaining on this newly aquatic planet.

There's no mushiness here, no human actors voicing the characters. Instead, the film uses animal sounds combined with a musical score to produce a profound meditation on the fragility of the environment and the spirit of friendship. It's a story which contains high drama as the animals face the dangers amid the ruined beauties of a destroyed civilization. *Time Out's* critics said of it: "It's been ages since anything articulated the spirituality of the natural world as breathtakingly as this". You will forget they are animated animals; you will forget there's no written dialogue.

It's a film for everyone and we would bet that there is no-one it will leave untouched. Join us to witness this visually stunning masterpiece. As ever there'll be beautiful bakes on offer from the Flicks team before the film and during the interval. Not to mention wines, teas, coffees and local apple juice, which all should ensure it being an uplifting and memorable evening.

Corinne Westacott



Here we go, the start of another year where the Garway Live Team are striving to bring you the best in live entertainment. We're starting off on Saturday January 24th with a fantastic night of music by guitar virtuoso Remi Harris entitled "Man of the World".

Remi will be recreating the work of Peter Green from his days with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and moving on to his founding of Fleetwood Mac. Remi usually has sold out performances, and we advise booking tickets on line at www.ticketsource.co.uk/atgarway to be sure of a ticket. Of course you can always pay on the door if there are any spaces left.

Tickets for this event are £18 which is the price set by Remi.

Doors open at 7.00, performance at 8.00p.m. with Hot Food and Full Bar

Future events already booked are National Theatre Live's performance of "The Fifth Step" with Martin Freeman and Tom Hiddleston.

Doors open at 7.00 performance at 7.30pm. Admission £10 with a full bar available.

Diary dates: March 7th Nuadha for an evening of relaxing jazz with a South American slant. April 24th "The Pantaloons" theatre group.

We will have lots more to follow, so in the meantime we wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Graham Bevan

GARWAY HERITAGE GROUP

Tuesday 20th January Garway Village Hall, 7.30pm

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS Exploring the Changing Shape of Our Social Life

This is an exploration, led by Lesley Whistance, of our - the emphasis is on "OUR" - own lifetimes, and those of our parents and grandparents. Join us as we look back at the ways everyday life has changed through the decades.

Featuring Displays on:

Food & Drink, Comfort & Home Life, Money & Everyday Living, Farming, Transport

We will have a selection of objects and artefacts to spark memories of bygone times. If you have any interesting items tucked away at home, please bring them along! Come along, reminisce, share stories, and learn something new about our shared past.

Plus...Updates on the *Garway Heritage Project*...Progress on the *Graveyard Records of Garway Church*...The developing *Garway Heritage Resource Collection*, currently housed in the Church.

All are welcome - it's a great opportunity to learn about our local area and a chance for a friendly chat; we will, of course, be serving delicious cakes, tea, coffee and wine.

Entry free to Garway Heritage Group members (£15 annual subscription) or £8 for guests. www.garwayheritagegroup.co.uk

Diary dates:

17 Feb - Welcome to the Orchard of England/Film made in Leominster

17 Mar - Coleford POW camp/Owen McLaughlin

21 Apr - The Buckholt Iron Age Hill Fort/Churchill Archaeology

Clare Adamson

! Garway Youth Group Needs You!

Volunteers to help with maintenance of the Club House, administration and to share in supporting the young people's activities.

Contact Fiona Mynors for more information fionamynors@btinternet.com

Garway Hill Methodist Chapel

Another year has gone by again. We are thankful to still be open and worshipping twice a month in our little chapel on Garway Hill. Unfortunately, 2026 looks to be the year that we have to close our doors unless we can bring in a bit more revenue. Houses of worship, whatever the denomination, whether large or small, rural or suburban are all facing increasing challenges in this day and age. Garway Hill's 'challenge' is mainly financial. Every chapel or church has to contribute funds - to the Methodist Circuit in our case. These funds support shared costs, including minister salaries, training, housing and administration costs. These contributions do not cover the general day to day running of the building, utility bills, insurance and repair work, and whatever comes our way. Garway Hill's contributions are presently £3,600 a year which is proving insurmountable for our small congregation.

Although the location of the chapel is beautiful, it is very remote and does not have the support of a village or larger community to fall back on. Twenty-five years ago we had eleven chapels in our small Circuit (Cwn and Kingstone) with Ewyas Harold as our central chapel. The chapels were situated in Newton, Walterstone, Lower Maescoed, LLanrosser, Garway Hill, Ewyas Harold, Greig, Upper Maescoed, Madley, Ploughfield and Dorstone. Our minister lived in Ewyas Harold and looked after all eleven of the chapels. Sadly, over the years most of these chapels have closed, been sold off as residences and only two remain - Madley and Garway Hill.

We are now in the Shropshire and Marches Circuit and our minister lives in Leominster looking after ten far flung chapels in rural areas similar to Garway Hill and travelling many miles. Without the support of local chapels, we are floundering and it sadly looks as if we will join the number of many old chapels closing in 2026. We have had a number of meetings this year to discuss a way forward and have had to defer on two quarterly contribution payments – another is not possible. However, we intend fight to stay open and will hopefully have some fund-raising events planned for next year. We would be very grateful for any support from people in our communities.

We usually have a few celebratory services throughout the year - Easter Sunday, Harvest Festival and a Carol Service. As I write this, we are preparing for the Carol Service which is always a wonderful celebration in the build up to Christmas. The congregation at this year's Harvest Festival sang traditional hymns and joined together afterwards in the fellowship of refreshments and chat - Methodists do like to sing, eat and chat! We are a friendly bunch and at our celebratory services there is always tea, coffee and plenty to eat! Of course, everyone is welcome to attend any service, whatever denomination, faith or no faith.

Everybody is welcome. The chapel is always warm and has soft comfortable seating. Our service times are presently 3pm every other Sunday and can be found in the Parish News centre pages and on the chapel notice board. The chapel is kept locked during the week, but we would love people to visit. If anyone would like to have a look around give me a call on the number below and I will give you the key safe number or, if I am able, I will come and open up.

The graveyard is also an interesting and peaceful place to visit and for the weary walker, visitor or 'passerby' there is a bench just inside the gate to while away a moment or two and enjoy the beautiful view. Please feel free to use it.

Again, many thanks to a number of people who continue to support us. Many thanks to David Sayce and his family who have cut the grass throughout the year and trimmed the hedges. Not only has it kept the chapel looking tidy and loved ,but it has also alleviated some of our financial strain. Thanks go to Peter Garratt who willingly year after year checks the finished chapel accounts — we are so grateful for your support, Peter. Also, to all of you that are unable to attend the chapel services but support us with donations — we are very thankful. Finally, thanks to everyone who have joined us in worship this past year - our visitors from the church, our friends from the Methodist and Baptist chapels in the Monmouth Circuit and people just passing by.

All the best for 2026 from me and the members of Garway Hill Methodist Chapel.

Ruth Maskell 07908 122478

ORCOP

Many braved driving rain on Sunday 9th November for the annual act of remembrance at the cross-roads war memorial. It was a moving ceremony, as always, and wreaths were laid on behalf of the Parish Council and the Orcop PCC. "We will remember them", as we should, but how sad that we do not learn the lessons delivered through their sacrifice.

We were very sorry to learn of the recent death of Faith Harrison, the wife of Mike, until recently residents near Saddlebow. Mike has moved to Much Markle since it became clear that Faith would not be coming home. Faith had an amazing life as a champion skier and equestrian, amongst other talents, and it is perhaps not surprising that she chose to marry a successful racing driver. She will be fondly remembered by her Orcopian friends and we extend sincere condolences to Mike and the family.

John and Margaret Oubridge are regular visitors to Orcop for the monthly communion services and Margaret often plays the organ for us. Although they live in Tretire, they are counted as "Honorary Orcopians". Both have made regular and very professional contributions to our Thespian endeavours. You may be wondering why I mention this. Well, on Friday 5th December, John excelled in the part of a one metre diameter orange at the Garway Christmas Christingle. Not so long ago, he and Meg performed as the "Uptares", an Irish trapeze artist duo in a Garway production of "Trouble at the Top". I suspect that few artists can claim this extraordinary versatility.

Wishing all Orcopians a happy and healthy 2026 and that this New Year will bring lasting peace to the Middle East and Ukraine.

Margaret Fletcher, Churchwarden

Flowers and cleaning rota: Mrs. L. Wilkinson

Orcop Parish Hall

Orcop Parish Hall Committee are excited to announce that we've secured a live band for our Valentine's Party! The band, *It Girl*—featuring our very own neighbour Rick—will be performing. They're a five-piece group known for bringing the best of the '90s back to life.

To make this possible, we need to move the party date from *Saturday, 14th February to Saturday, 21st February.*

Thank you for your understanding, and we look forward to celebrating with you to some fantastic live music!

Peta Long

ORCOP VILLAGE HALL

Warm Winter Coffee Mornings

Our last monthly coffee morning of this year will be Wednesday 17th December

10.30 - 12-30

In January, February and March 2026 we will resume our weekly Wednesday coffee mornings - except for the first Wednesdays of these months when OWLs host a Community Lunch.

As always, everyone is welcome to come and share our friendly warm space with coffee, cake, companionship and much laughter.

Gill & Tim Bannerman 01981 580685

TRETIRE AND PENCOYD

Welcome to 2026!

May I start with an enormous THANK YOU to all the people in our parish who keep everything 'ticking along'. You clean, polish, decorate, mow, strim, cut, manage, distribute, some directly and some through subscription and it means your churches are loved and reflect this love to visitors.

Even more importantly, you turn up! To fundraisers and services and we have fun, as well as quiet reflection.

Every time I check in to St Denys Pencoyd I am delighted by the smart refurbished wall – made possible by the sheer determination and pestering of one of our parish. We (I) need more like this.

There is quite a lot of admin to be given attention in 2026. The Arch Deacon's office has reminded me that our 'Quinquennial inspections' (building inspection to the rest of us) is due this year for both churches. The Electoral Roll must be updated – this means I will be in touch soon to seek your support for the parish (not to be confused with voting for your next Local Councillor!) Our church inventories must be updated, and the parish returns must be completed for national CofE statistics. We must be constantly vigilant of our Safeguarding obligations, and I am enormously grateful to Mark Evans for heading this up. Our treasurer is seeking to relocate, so a new controller of money will be needed.

If you have time to help support, then please do get in contact. <u>Every</u> little helps, and without you, our Parish Community will be swallowed up by a larger regional administration.

I know you have only just put away the last Christmas decoration, but in December the Rev Angie and the Church Wardens were discussing Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter – only a month away, when you read this. Each Parish will be running a Lent Lunch and at the time of writing, we have a slot on Wednesday 11 March. Please pencil into your diary and we will confirm details soon.

Many of you came along to the Good Friday service last year and expressed enjoyment of our simple, prayerful service which took the Stations of the Cross as its structure and sought to match everyday considerations. Rev Angie has kindly agreed to run this with us again and I hope you will make time to join us for a deeply moving service.

Have a very happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you very soon

Love,

Elizabeth Malcolm, churchwarden

HENTLAND AND HOARWITHY

Editor: Sincere apologies to Hentland and Hoarwithy that their name was missed off the cover last month. It seemed to disappear into the Christmas Santa! So sorry!

As usual December is very busy. Starting with Ross Folk Choir Concert on 9th December Bright Morning Star a Midwinter concert which was very enjoyable!

Then on the Sunday before Christmas we had our Family Carol Service. It's a joy to see so many children in the village and in church.

Our Bethlehem Midnight Communion at 9.00pm, well it would have been midnight in Bethlehem, was as usual well attended and a blessed start to Christmas.

Jeff and I wish you a very happy, blessed and peaceful New Year.

Peter Pember Churchwarden

Book Review Spectacles and East of Croydon, both by Sue Perkins

In these books comedian and TV presenter Sue Perkins both chronicles her life, and takes us on her travels for a BBC series on the Mekong River

Her books are full of humour and humanity, of flippant off-the cuff observations and emotional diatribes about the world's inequalities and the shallow nature of many of the preoccupations of western life. In addition, she shares insights into her profound relationship with music.

In 2008 she took part in a BBC series where eight celebrities were planted in front of an orchestra, clutching a baton, and left to do their worst. During the series, they attempted (until eliminated) to learn to conduct orchestral, choral and operatic music. Perkins conducted three pieces, two of them with soprano soloist Lesley Garrett and went on to win the series, unsurprisingly as she has a background and instinct for music to fall back on:

"I did my grades; I even got as far as an A-level, where I was lucky to be taught by someone who moved me beyond the arpeggios and key changes and mind-boggling mathematics of it all. She made me see how music connects seamlessly to philosophy, politics, history, life. I loved it: it's the only study I've done that I found utterly and compellingly immersive. Then I went and spoiled it all by doing an English degree and never played the piano again."

She also learned the flute and played in a youth orchestra, so the language of music was not new to her.

As members of choirs and instrumental groups, we are not only there for the beauty of the music but also to share in the profound joy of creating together ... of each part working as one to find something that cannot exist as individuals, to listen to others and weave their threads and ours into a satisfying whole. There is nothing to beat it.

Perkins expresses this feeling very well. As she conducted "I wasn't leading. I wasn't following either. I was inside it, inside the guts of it, and I couldn't get out. My chest vibrated with the sound. My head flooded with a million sudden thoughts and feelings – snapshots, sounds, smells. My past. My family. Love and the loss that walks so closely behind it. My hand was so heavy I could barely drag it across my body. The music was either too big for me, or I was too small for it. Either way, I will never forget being so utterly overwhelmed. In that moment I understood something profound – that words would only distort should I

choose them to describe it. I learned about performance, connection, intimacy, sadness. I learned about me. Every part of myself I tried to hide it, it came looking for – ripping me open like a tin can"

"Music asks questions that your head will attempt to answer, but only your heart can truly understand. If you try to hide your heart, then you are not a musician."

Hilary Smallwood

Garden Notes

It's seed catalogue time. Drooling over the lovely photographs is my favourite gardening 'task' in winter months when I really have no desire to spend any time in my garden. This summer I enjoyed growing zinnias, which were far more successful than when I tried them one dismal summer a few years ago. I won't be growing Zinnia 'Envy' again - this had unusual green flowers, which were nowhere near as interesting as I was hoping. I was pleased with 'Purple Prince' and with 'Giant Double Mixed' (both Johnsons seeds). One of the best things about them was the phenomenal germination – the seedlings appeared in a couple of days and were one of the easiest flowers that I have ever grown. Plants of Distinction offer 36 different varieties, and I am tempted by 'Forecast', which has single blooms in purple, pink, yellow and orange.

Even though we had plenty of delicious tomatoes this year, my husband announced that he is taking over the tomato growing next year on the grounds that my watering is erratic and I don't feed them enough! Suits me, as I can spend more time in the large greenhouse faffing about with the begonias and pelargoniums. These have given me huge pleasure this year and the greenhouse has been a picture of pink, red and orange. It also means that it won't be my job to cart the watering cans between the small greenhouse and the garden tap. As I now need two new hips, I am keen to find ways to make the garden easier to maintain.



I could always try 'chaos gardening', a recent term which simply means scattering a mixture of flower, herb and vegetable seeds and letting the garden get on with its own thing. It's all about relinquishing control and letting the garden decide. It's best to resist the urge to weed too much (that won't be hard) and let the plants jostle for space and see what happens.

This garden contains many shrubs now, but I can try 'chaos gardening' in the spaces in between. I have several left-over packets of seeds that will be ideal — love-in-a-mist, echium, cosmos, corn cockle, scabious, Welsh poppies, foxgloves, even carrots — I can picture it already. I have always allowed plants to self-seed here, as I love the primroses, foxgloves, violas and nicotiana that pop up all over the place — they are always far better plants than any I might grow deliberately. I see chaos gardening as just an extension of my usual style of gardening. I know the result won't be neat and manicured, but the bees and butterflies should have a field day. The resulting jumble of plants will also provide shelter for mice and voles, and the birds should love it too. I doubt very much if this will be as easy as it sounds and I am sure that I will have to remove a few plants that find they enjoy the freedom a little too much — a bit like the forget-me-nots that I allow to self-seed very freely around the garden every year.

Chaos gardening was popular at the Chelsea Flower Show two years ago, but I won't be following the trend of including dandelions and cow parsley - it's not really a good idea to include anything that might take over or become a bit of a thug, despite what they include at Chelsea.

Of course, it is not really that radical an idea. I see it as a more chaotic, hands-off version of a traditional cottage garden where flowers, herbs and vegetables were all grown together. In my mind's eye I am seeing a glorious tapestry of colour and form and perhaps even some vegetables to harvest. Of course, the reality may be very different. Watch this space...

Julie Davies

Seasonal recipe from Isabel's Bakehouse

www.isabelsbakehouse.com

A winter warming casserole

Chicken, Leek and Apple Casserole



Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 30g unsalted butter
- 8 chicken thighs
- 2 Braeburn apples
- 500g leeks
- 1 unwaxed lemon, zest and juice
- 150ml dry vermouth or a white wine
- 1½ tbsp Dijon mustard
- 250ml chicken stock
- 150ml crème fraîche
- 5 sprig/s thyme, leaves picked
- 5 sprig/s tarragon, finely chopped
- ¼ x 25g pack flat leaf parsley, leaves chopped, to serve

<u>Method</u>

- 1. **Preheat the oven** to 180°C/gas mark 4. Line a large baking tray with baking paper
- 2. **Prepare the apples**: peel, core and cut them into wedges
- 3. Prepare the leeks: Trim the ends and wash, then cut them into 3cm pieces

- 4. **Cook the casserole in stages**: Heat ½ the oil and butter in a large casserole dish over a medium-high heat. <u>Add the chicken thighs</u>, skin-side down, and cook, turning occasionally, until golden all over (for about 10 minutes). Transfer to a plate and set aside.
- 5. Heat the remaining oil and butter in the casserole, <u>add the apples</u> and cook until they start beginning to caramelise (5-7 minutes). Remove and set aside with the chicken.
- 6. Add the leeks to the pan; cook over a low heat for 6-8 minutes until softened but not coloured.
- 7. Add the <u>lemon zest</u> and then deglaze the pan with the <u>vermouth/white wine</u>, scraping the base.
- 8. Stir in the <u>mustard</u>, then add the <u>stock</u> and <u>crème fraîche</u>. Bring up to a simmer before returning the chicken thighs, skin-side up, to the pan along with the apples. Scatter in the <u>thyme and tarragon</u>; season.
- 9. Cover, transfer to the oven and braise for 20-25 minutes until the chicken is cooked through with no pink meat remaining. Stir in the lemon juice and scatter over the parsley.

This casserole is delicious with fluffy mashed potato and seasonal greens

EVENTS AT HEREFORD CATHEDRAL JANUARY

The Mappa Mundi and Chained Library Museum will be closed for essential cleaning and conservation work from 1 January to 25 January 2026 and will reopen on Monday 26 January.

Cathedral Seedlings – Toddlers Group Thursdays in term time, 10 – 11.30 am Back from Christmas Break on Thursday 8 January. Calling all toddlers and their grown-ups to play and pray in the College Hall. Listen to a Bible story, take part in a craft activity and have fun in our weekly drop-in. To add to the experience, refreshments, delicious cakes and healthy snacks for children will be provided.

Cathedral Seedlings is a group for children from birth upwards, with a range of craft activities aimed at ages 2 plus. Toddler Group is free to attend, and booking required. Escape Room On selected dates. Solve our brand-new Escape Room: an immersive clue-cracking and decoding game, hosted in the Old Chapel in the Cloisters. Tickets cost £70 and can be booked in advance via cathedral website or by calling the ticket desk (01432 Afternoon Music - 'Time' Theme Sat, 10 January, 3.15 pm Everyone is welcome to a short concert of beautiful music on the Father Willis organ, performed by Assistant Director of Music, Peter Dyke. Outdoor Family Epiphany Service Sunday 11 January, 1.30 pm Join the Chancellor as he shares the story of this informal Epiphany in relaxed and outdoor service. Epiphany Carol Service Sunday 11 January, 3.30 pm Sung by Hereford Cathedral Voluntary Choir, celebrating the veneration of the Christ-Child by the Magi. All are welcome to attend - no tickets required Evening Hour Sunday 11 January, 5.30 pm All are welcome to join us for this service of Prayer for Healing Wholeness and

Lego Club Tuesday 13 & 27 January, 3.40 – 5 pm Enjoy this freestyle Lego session in The Rear Nave with thousands of bricks and hundreds of mini-figures. The session will remain a free-play session until 4.45 pm, when we come together to explore a Bible story from the Brick Bible and use our bricks to help tell the story. **This after-school session is free to attend, and booking is not required for this event.**

Novels in dialogue - Friends of Hereford Cathedral Wed 14 January, 11 am Hereford Novelist Paula Brackston reflects in dialogue on her series of novels set in and around Hereford Cathedral. Coffee and biscuits will be served after the lecture courtesy of the Friends' Trustees. This lecture is ticketed, but free. We particularly welcome anyone who may be interested in finding out more about the Friends of Hereford Cathedral. To book your place please email: friends@herefordcathedral.org

Time by Luxmuralis Tuesday 20 - Saturday 24 January 2026 with allocated time slots from 6.40 - 9pm.

The light show will transform the interior of Hereford Cathedral and invite visitors to embark upon an extraordinary exploration of the concept of time as they journey through history, science and imagination.

Tickets cost £9 for adults, £6 for children (4-16) and free tickets for children aged 3 and under and are on sale now! Tickets can be booked in advance via the cathedral website or from the cathedral's Ticket Desk in person or by calling 01432 374 202 (Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm). www.herefordcathedral.org/time

Time is part-funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Time has also been sponsored by Home Instead, C J Bayliss and Gabbs Solicitors as well as receiving support from Eat Sleep Live Herefordshire, Sunshine Radio, Your Herefordshire and Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust.

Christmas Oratorio Saturday 31 January, 7 pm Hereford Cathedral Choir, with Marches Baroque and an international lineup of soloists, perform J S Bach's Christmas Oratorio in its entirety (sung in German). Tickets £25 (Front Nave), £18 (Rear Nave) or £10 for Under 25s in Rear Nave are available to purchase in advance via the cathedral website, from the cathedral ticket desk in person or by calling 01432 374202.

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Dates for the diary:

December

Warm Winter coffee morning

23 Blue Christmas, Garway

24 The Crib Service and Midnight communion at St Weonards

29 & 30 QiGong Garway Village Hall30 Prescription collection

January

2 & 3 QiGong Garway Village Hall

Hentland Church Benefice Communion
 Garway coffee morning (Monday)
 Coffee morning at St Weonards

10 Magazine copy date

11 Garway Service; Big Breakfast/Brunch at Garway Village Hall

12 Green Garway Book Group

13 Flicks in the Sticks

20 Garway Heritage Group

24 Garway Live

27 Prescription collection

February

8 Wisdom story at the Moon17 Garway Heritage Group

March

7 Garway Live

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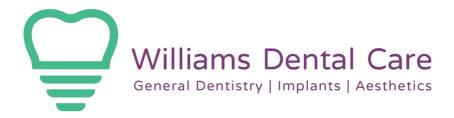
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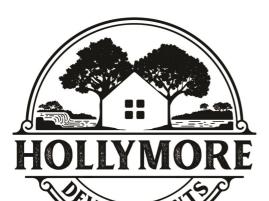
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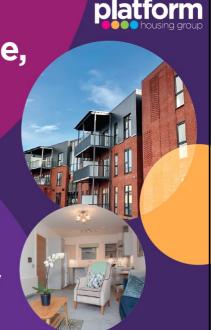
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