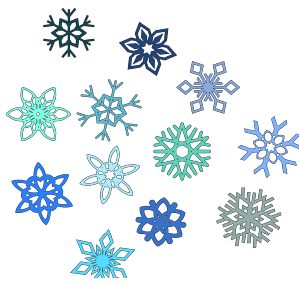


January 2026



Twynning Parish Church Newsletter

HAPPY★NEW★YEAR

“UK’s largest Christian monument is an answer to prayer”



Work on the UK’s largest Christian monument has begun after a £40m fundraising target was reached. **The Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer** will be 51 metres tall – more than twice the size of the Angel of the North. It will be built in the shape of a Möbius strip – a twisted band with one continuous side – in Coleshill near Birmingham, between the M6 and M42. The landmark will be constructed using a million bricks, each representing a prayer from a member of the public. Richard Gamble, the project’s chief executive and a former chaplain for Leicester City Football Club, said its aim ‘will encourage people going through the storms of life’. He said the monument will leave a ‘testimony to prayer, preserving the Christian heritage in our nation’. The monument is due to be completed in 2028.

According to the Bible, it was when God had had enough of human wickedness and violence that he sent a message to Noah, telling him to build an ark. For Richard Gamble, his message from the Lord Almighty came as he lumbered through the village of Burbage – carrying a wooden cross – on a 77-mile tour of Leicestershire to spread the word of Jesus. “I felt a flash through my mind from God of an idea to build a wall of a million bricks by a motorway,” Mr Gamble, said. “Every brick [was to] represent an answered prayer, a testimony, a miracle. It was the beginning.”

After a decade of praying about it, he decided to quit his job to make the vision a reality, kickstarted by another message from God, that there was some “heavenly land prepared”. “You go deeper and it gets weirder,” the former Leicester City Football Club chaplain said, as he revealed he was sent a map with a circle showing the monument’s destined location from a woman who received it from God, while brushing her teeth.

Now, after a challenging decade spent overcoming crowdfunding targets, planning obstacles and spiralling costs, work has finally started on the 167ft-high loop-shaped monument, to be made out of glistening white concrete. Cast in 188 segments in Portugal and measuring two and a half times the height of the *Angel of the North*, the sculpture, to be called *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer*, will be unveiled in 2028, at a cost of £40m.

Each of the one million bricks will hold an answered prayer, which will be viewed via augmented reality on mobile phones by visitors, said Michelle Heritage, whose job it is to collect and vet prayers. With 125,000 collected so far, she [appeals] for help to find more.

While assessing the magnitude of the work so far, Mr Gamble said, “Today it’s a reality. This is going to be built, a national landmark about Jesus, in the heart of the nation.”

Conservative peer Robert Edmiston’s company, IM Group, has weighed in with more than £30m of the cost. The company donated the parcel of land, which is also next to the London-Birmingham HS2 line and Birmingham International airport. It means the monument will be seen by more than half a million people each day.

Lord Edmiston, who set up evangelical charity Christian Vision in 1988, bemoaned the country’s Christian heritage “sometimes getting lost” and called for a return to the religion’s values. According to the last census, the proportion of people in England and Wales who described themselves as Christian fell from 59.3 per cent in 2011 to 46.2 per cent in 2021.

More money still needs to be found. There are plans for a visitor centre, car park and landscaped gardens, costing just shy of £6m. An online crowdfunder sits at more than £40,000 with rewards offered for donations, including T-shirts, flasks and construction hats.

Now work has started, newly appointed project chief executive Ian Bullock said he sensed there would be momentum in donations coming in. “People will be able to see it’s actually being built now,” he said. With 30% of Birmingham residents describing themselves as Muslim, would other faiths be included? “It’s a Christian faith monument,” said Mr Bullock. “We respect other faiths, but this is about declaring Jesus and his place in the Christian faith tradition of this country. “So whilst we don’t want it to be divisive, it is uniquely about that.”

The monument will be built in North Warwickshire, but sits as close to the county’s market town of Coleshill as the Kingshurst & Chelmsley Wood wards of Solihull, which both have high levels of deprivation. ... Most locals were unaware of plans for the Christian monument on their doorstep. One said: “I’m a bit shocked over how much it is costing, but I think it is a good thing to be upholding the Christian faith and hopefully inspiring more people to join.” Another said: “Forty million pounds could be spent somewhere else on something more important right now, like helping homeless off the streets or giving more to the NHS.”

Taken from *The Independent* 08 November 2025

A Prayer for Hope

God, when I feel lost or uncertain, fill my heart with hope.

Remind me that you are with me, even in the waiting.

Help me trust your plan and believe that better days are ahead.

Amen.

From the Parish Records

Funeral and Burial

16.12.2025

Hazel Mary Neal

RIP

Baptism anniversary

This month we celebrate the anniversary of the Baptism of

Henry Scott

on 16th January 2022

Please remember him and his family in your prayers.

'See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.' (1 John 3:1)



Twyning School Carols

The older kids' carol service was held in church on Monday 8 December. The concert was packed full and brimming with joyful singing with over 199 children and 200 adults attending. It was reported that it was "a thrilling event and we just love coming here". Thank you to Ven. Ron for welcoming the children, staff and parents and to all the others who went along to support the occasion

Carol Service & Christingle on Christmas Eve



Thank you to all those who helped to make both occasions memorable. Grateful thanks are due to those who sang at the Carol Service and to all who agreed to read the lessons, especially those who've not read in church recently, or at all. The meditations for Christmas and the New Year were taken from the booklet '*Twelve Joys of Christmas*' which were available in the pews.

The turn out for Christingle was fantastic – yet again.

Many thanks to Lorna and David Herold and family for providing the Christingles and for arranging for youngsters to read lesson and prayers.

We began by batting huge Christingles (actually orange balloons) from the back to the front of the church; youngsters then popped these to find the letters to spell the name of the baby born in Bethlehem at this time.

Agin, many thanks to all who made this special service possible.



Twyning Carol Singing Events 2025

All the carol singing in the festive period was to raise money for two charities: the Gloucester Dementia Choir and the Midlands Air Ambulance.

There were carols outside the village shop on the 20th when people came and joined for a sing-along or just to listen as we sang some favourite carols. Then we went onto the patients and staff at Tewkesbury Hospital. "Carols for you at home" visited Paxhill Lane, The Mayalls & Orchard Drive on the 22nd and then Lynworth Lane, Hillend Road and Freemans Close the next evening. Thank you to those who invited us into their homes and to private functions.



In total we raised over **£1026**

Many, many thanks to all who gave so generously and to Gemma for leading us.

SERVICES AND EVENTS

January

Jan 2nd Friday 3-6pm approx Peal by Worcester Cathedral ringers

Jan 4th Epiphany Sunday 9.30am **PARISH COMMUNION**



Jan 11th Sunday 9.30am **PARISH COMMUNION** + Refreshments



Wednesday 14th Jan 10am -12noon **PARISH COFFEE MORNING**
with Junie & Robert at Gosling Cottage, High Street

Jan 18th Sunday 9.30am **MORNING PRAISE**

Jan 18th-25th Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



Jan 19th Monday 1pm **Open the Book** Twynning School

Jan 25th Sunday 9.30am **PARISH COMMUNION** + Refreshments

February

Feb 1st Candlemas Sunday 9.30am **PARISH COMMUNION**

Feb 8th Sunday 9.30am **PARISH COMMUNION** + Refreshments

Feb 9th Monday 1pm **Open the Book** Twynning School

10th February Wed 10-12 noon **PARISH COFFEE MORNING**
with Nicola Marples, Aquarius, Fleet Road

Feb 15th Sunday 9.30am **MORNING PRAISE**

Feb 18th Ash Wednesday 7.30pm **HOLY COMMUNION**
the first day of Lent

Feb 22nd Sunday 9.30am **PARISH COMMUNION** + Refreshments

Vicar:	Revd Canon Nick Davies	01684 850 959
Reader & Parish Lay Minister:	Angela Cole	1684 294 325
Churchwarden:	Chris Cole	01684 294 325
Hon. Treasurer:	Richard Bailey	01684 298 268

Services, Readers & Hymns for Jan and Feb 2026

9.30am unless time given	readings [small lectionary]	1st & 2nd readings	hymns NEH unless otherwise given
4 th January 2026 <i>Christmas 2 / Epiphany</i> Parish Communion	Isaiah 60.1-6 p33 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12	Jac Taylor	<i>Bethlehem Carol Sheet</i> 4 As with gladness 5 The First Nowell 23 What child is this 21 We three kings
11 th January <i>Baptism of Christ</i> Parish Communion	Isaiah 42.1-9 p37 James 5.7-10 Matthew 11.2-11	Arthur Storey	48 Bethlehem of noblest cities 49 Brightest and best 52 O worship the Lord 484 The Church's one found'n
18 th January Epiphany 2 Morning Praise	<i>contemporary</i> Isaiah 49.1-7 1 Corinthians 1.1-9 John 1.29-42	Olivia	<i>Junior Praise</i> 22 Be still for the presence 6 God is working his purpose 275 When I needed a neighb'r
25 th January Epiphany 3 Parish Communion	Isaiah 9.1-4 p44 1 Corinthians 1.10-18 Matthew 4.12-23	Mac McKeever	12 On Jordan's bank 50 From the eastern mount'ns 238 New every morning 55 Hail to the Lord's anointed
1 st February <i>Candlemas</i> Parish Communion	Malachi 3.1-5 p54 Hebrews 2.14-18 Luke 2.22-40	Richard Bailey	tbc
8 th February 2 nd before Lent Parish Communion	Genesis 1.1-2.3 p73 Romans 8.18-25 Matthew 6.25-34	Muriel Russell	tbc
15 th February Sunday before Lent Morning Praise	<i>contemporary</i> Exodus 24.12-18 Matthew 17.1-9	Gemma Munro	<i>RED</i> 221 You are the Kind of Glory 126 Majesty, worship his majesty x2 123 Lord, the light of your love
18 th February 7.30pm <i>Ash Wednesday</i> Holy Communion	Isaiah 58.1-12 p88 2 Corinthians 5.20b-6.10 John 8.1-11	tbc	
22 nd February 1st Sunday of Lent Parish Communion	p94 Genesis 2.15-17;3.1-7 Romans 5.12-19 Matthew 4.1-11	Robert Cockrell	tbc

Everyone is always welcome at all our services and events.

See our website: <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/twyning-st-mary-magdalene>

NB An **induction loop** for those with hearing aids is available at all services in Twyning Church

From the Bellringers – notice of a Peal to be rung

On Friday 2nd January, a band of ringers will be attempting to ring a peal on the Twyning Church Bells. This will begin at 3pm and, if successful, will continue until soon after 6pm. We hope that you will enjoy the ringing which should be of a very good standard, the organiser coming from Worcester Cathedral. However, should you wish to go out for the afternoon, please accept this notice and have time to make arrangements!! pp David Bagley, Twyning Tower captain



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2026 will take place from **January 18 to 25**, with the theme: *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling”* (Ephesians 4:4).

This theme invites believers to reflect on their shared faith and the call to unity amidst diversity. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an opportunity for Christians worldwide to come together in prayer, reflecting on their common faith and commitment to unity.

This event serves as a reminder of the importance of reconciliation and collaboration among various Christian denominations.

Cards for Cobalt

A big thank you to all for the steady supply of greetings cards which I find in my bucket in church every week to take to the Cobalt unit for recycling. Please continue to recycle your greetings cards of all sorts – birthdays, anniversaries, get well wishes, congratulations for any achievement ... during 2026 and beyond.



As has happened in previous years, we are supporting the recycling appeal for Christmas cards and so this year, could I ask you not to mix other greetings cards with Christmas cards, please? In my family in December we had three birthdays and one anniversary (I know! Crazy!) but I'll be holding on to those cards till well into January and ask you to do the same, please.

The deadline for Christmas card collection for Cobalt will be **Sunday 11th January 2026**, so please place your cards in one of the big containers on one of the pews at the back of the church. As always, please put them in a plastic bag to allow the volunteers to handle them easily.

Once again, thank you for your support.

Sheila Hendy

Open the Book

The Open the Book team is very much looking forward to the new term and to taking the Open the Book Bible stories into Twyning School. The Monday dates have been fixed for all of the rest of the school year - once or twice a month right up to the end of June. We practise for an hour on the previous Thursday and are most grateful for the guidance of our leader, Jac Taylor, and for her cups of tea. We are always open to new members for the team – you do not have to be able to act to any high degree and we read the script so you will not have to remember your lines.

Continuing to care for each other – Pastoral Contacts

Thank you. *Angela*

[illegible]

Gloucester's DAC is already supporting churches on their journey to decarbonise, offering practical advice on reducing carbon emissions from church buildings. To strengthen this support, the DAC has published a new guidance note to help churches understand what it means to pay 'due regard' to the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon guidance. This document provides a clear starting point for PCCs planning projects where these requirements apply. Written collaboratively by DAC advisors and Net Zero Carbon officers, the guidance is designed to make expectations easier to understand and implement.

[illegible]

We are moving office

From 1 December our new address will be
Church House, 5 Denmark Road, Gloucester GL1 3HW.

This move marks a new chapter as we seek to further even stronger and more supportive connections between departments and across the wider diocese.

Email and tel. numbers for staff remain the same. We would be deeply grateful for your prayers — for the practicalities of the move, for the wellbeing of our team, and for opportunities this new space will bring to serve our communities more effectively.

8

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CONTACT US on 01684 850 959

Revd Canon Nick Davies

vicar@tewkesburyabbey.org.uk

Revd Hannah Barraclough

associate.vicar@tewkesburyabbey.org.uk

Benefice Administrator Claire Redstone info@tewkesburyabbey.org.uk

[illegible]

January Joys

What do you say on the first of January?

Last year just seems like yesterday!

Who helped Cinderella with her New

Year Resolutions?

Her Janufairy Godmother!

If January held a parade would February march?

No but April may!!

What is the end of January?

- $\gamma!$

**Peace and blessings
to you all,**

Angela Cole

Reader & Parish Lay Minister

happy   
 New Year  

[Your contributions are most welcome for the first 2026 issue: by **20th** Jan please.]

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