



BISHAM TOGETHER

The Monthly Newsletter
from All Saints Bisham
January 2026

As we look ahead to the New Year, I'm reflecting on how well we came together over the Christmas season! And as you read this newsletter, I hope you think so too! It was wonderful to see so many people in church — familiar faces, occasional visitors, and those joining us for the first time — and sharing together in worship, celebration, and conversation.

As the decorations come down and we return to the rhythm of ordinary weeks, my hope is that we continue to build on those new connections, welcome one another warmly, and grow together as a community of worshippers as we journey through the year ahead.

Carol

Interim Team Vicar



Church Life

Worship & Events:

- Every Sunday: 9.30am Holy Communion at All Saints Bisham
- First Sunday of every month: 8am Book of Common Prayer Service
 - next service: 1st February 2026



Remembering a Member of Our Community

It is with much sadness that we remember our dear friend, Derek Oliver, who sadly passed away on December 17th. Funeral details will be shared in due course, but please pray for Heather, Henrietta and Antoinette, their families and friends, at this sad time.



Looking Ahead: Choosing Our Next Bishop

Following Bishop Steven's announcement that he will be retiring, the Diocese will begin listening to people's views from **7 January** as we start the journey towards appointing a new Bishop.

To help with this, the Diocese is putting together a *Statement of Needs*. This will describe life across the Diocese — our joys and challenges — and what really matters to people as we look for our next Bishop.

The main way to share your thoughts is through a short, anonymous online survey. It has just four questions and should take less than ten minutes to complete.

If you would like to take part, you can find the survey here:

<https://oxford.anglican.org/consultation>

The survey closes at **5pm on 4 February**, and everyone is very welcome to have their say.

Sundays at All Saints...

In our next sermon series, we'll be spending time with some memorable moments from the Bible where individuals come face to face with Jesus. From a chance conversation with a woman at a well, to a thoughtful nighttime meeting with Nicodemus, to Jesus standing at the tomb of his friend Lazarus, these are deeply human encounters—full of questions, hope, confusion, courage, and longing. Each episode gives us a glimpse of who Jesus is and how he meets people exactly where they are, whatever their background, doubts, or expectations.

Whether you've been part of church life for years, are exploring faith for the first time, or are simply curious, these stories invite us to pause and look again at the character and nature of Jesus: his compassion, honesty, authority, and love.

You are warmly invited to join us for this series, to listen, reflect, and be part of the conversation. As we "come and see" these encounters afresh, what might they reveal about who Jesus is—and what he might be saying to you today?

...And in other news this month:



On 8th December we welcomed our new Team Rector, Sam Follett, his wife Rhiannon and children Toby, Freddie and Tilly, as we celebrated Sam's Licensing in a service at All Saints Marlow.

Sam joins us from HTB Queen's Gate in London, an Anglican church within the HTB network, rooted in regular eucharistic worship, the life of the wider Church, and known for its warm welcome, clear Bible teaching, and strong emphasis on prayer and community.

His Licensing service was presided over by Bishop Stephen and shared with clergy from across the area, alongside a wonderfully full and supportive congregation.

It was a lovely occasion, marked by great worship, prayer, and a real sense of God's presence among us. We are grateful for such a hopeful and encouraging beginning to this new chapter in the life of our church.

We look forward to welcoming Sam to a service at All Saints Bisham in February!



Sharing Christmas with Our Parish Community

In December, during one of my regular visits to White Lodge Care Home in Bisham, I had the pleasure of sharing a short Christmas service with some of the residents. White Lodge, which is part of our parish community, provides residential care in a warm and supportive setting for older people, and these visits are a valued part of our parish life.

On this occasion, I was joined by Emma Brookman, the Head of Bisham Primary School, which made the visit especially meaningful as we shared worship, prayers, and the Christmas story together.

It was a lovely reminder that our parish family spans generations, and that the welcome of our church truly extends to everyone.



🌟 A Joyful December at All Saints Bisham

December was a wonderful month at All Saints Bisham, full of music, celebration, and the joy of community as we marked the Christmas season with a variety of services for all ages.

On 10th December, we started the celebrations with our first **Daytime Carols Service** 🎵 which offered a shorter, traditional service specifically for those who prefer not to go out in the dark, but don't want to miss out on singing Carols and marking the festive season! About 25 people gathered together, and the service had a cosy, welcoming atmosphere with refreshments served beforehand, and featured classic carols and readings that helped set the scene for the festive season.



On 14th December, around 60 people joined us for the **Traditional 9 Lessons and Carols** 🙏, which followed the familiar pattern of readings and carols telling the story of Christmas from prophecy to the nativity. We were joined by a wonderful team of singers who swelled the ranks of the choir and helped lead us in singing the much-loved traditional Carols. Festive refreshments before and after the service added to the warm and joyful atmosphere.

The **Community Carols** 🎉 on 21st December were a highlight, drawing around 260 people from across the parish and beyond. Led by Jo Carter and the JAM choir, the service included a couple of children taking the roles of Mary and Gabriel. Full of festive energy, singing, and celebration, it was a wonderful way for the whole community to come together, even if we did almost run out of mulled wine and mince pies!



On 24th December, our **Traditional Crib Service** 😊 brought the nativity story to life for children and families. Rev John Smith, returning from retirement, led the service, with Mark Garrad, our churchwarden, narrating the bible story, as children brought forward various nativity figures—including two baby Jesuses and around five kings! It was a joyful and memorable start to Christmas Eve.

It was a month full of joyful worship, shared celebration, and community spirit, and we are so grateful to everyone who joined in, and grateful too

for all those who served, either with refreshments, setting up, clearing away, welcoming, singing, playing and reading lessons for us, we could not have done it without you, and your help was a real blessing to all who came along.

These services are a reminder that All Saints is a place where everyone can come together to celebrate, reflect, and experience the heart of Christmas.

👉 Bisham Church Friends

🚴‍♂️ Pedals, Cakes, and Parish Fun



On 13th December, we were delighted to welcome the Marlow Riders 🚴‍♂️ to All Saints Bisham! This regular cycling group stopped off on their route to enjoy our famous coffee and cakes, raising an impressive £521 in donations for church funds.

A huge thank you to our wonderful team of bakers, whose delicious creations make these visits so special, and to Sean for organising the event so smoothly.

It's always a joy to see the Marlow Riders bring energy, laughter, and community spirit to our church, and we look forward to welcoming them back again soon!





Bisham CofE Academy

🕯 Lighting Up Christmas with Christingle

On 19th December, All Saints Bisham was filled with the excitement and joy of Christmas as Years 1 and 2 from Bisham Primary School led their annual Christingle service.

Around 40 parents joined in to celebrate with the children, singing carols, listening to readings, and helping to light the Christingles. A big thank you to Miss Littleford for putting the service together and guiding the children so beautifully—it was a delightful reminder of the Christmas story and the light that Jesus brings into the world.



Community Notices

Upcoming Dates:

- **26th March** - BBO Big Band at the Rugby Club

Contact us:

Parish Office (Marlow)	01628 481806	<u>parish.office@4u-team.org</u>
Rev Carol Cooper	07774 061944	<u>carol.cooper@4u-team.org</u>
Mark Garrad (Churchwarden)	07738 029086	<u>garrad.mark@gmail.com</u>
Daphne Dru (Safeguarding)	07717 441437	<u>Daphne.dru@4u-team.org</u>

📸 Community Gallery

A few moments from the life of our church and community this month.....

