

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

*The Benefice of the Guitings, Cutsdean, Farmcote, Upper and Lower Slaughter
with Eyford and Naunton*

APRIL - MAY 2026



Revd Anne Curtis at her Licensing Service on Sunday 1 March 2026

Our Benefice Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the many blessings of our Benefice life together,
and pray that we may always be a blessing to one another.

We pray for all whom you call to worship and serve amongst us.

Grant us vision, courage and love.

Grant us open hearts to welcome, include and work alongside one
another

That together we may serve your kingdom faithfully,
to share your steadfast love with all.

In this place and in this time.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Priest-in-Charge: Revd Anne Curtis

Email: revannecurtis@gmail.com

Tel: 01451 821777 or 07928 275932

Day off: Friday

Revd Sue Pestell (Associate Priest)

Email: susan.pestell@gmail.com

Tel: 07514 542934

View online at www.achurchnearyou.com

Churches and School working together to share God's love in our communities

CHURCHWARDENS

Lower Slaughter (GL54 2HR)

(Vacant)

*Safeguarding Officer: Marion
Marshall*

Naunton (GL54 3AX)

(Vacant)

Safeguarding Officer: Jane Pickup

Temple Guiting (GL54 5RW) and Cutsdean (GL54 5RX)

Ruth Waller 01451 850611

Sheila Woods 01451 850328

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SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

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**DEADLINE for the next issue
20 MAY 2026.**

This magazine is free to parish residents. Otherwise, the charge is 50p per copy.

Temple Guiting Church of England Primary School

Head Teacher: Mrs Ann Barry

Tel: 01451 850304

www.templeguiting.gloucs.sch.uk

REVD ANNE WRITES ...



The old song says, 'If I Knew You Were Comin' I'd've Baked a Cake'. Well, you all knew I was coming, and for my Licensing Service on March 1st, you worked together and did much, much more than simply bake a cake! A huge 'Thank You!' to everyone involved in the service, the setup and local arrangements, the schoolchildren, Village Voices, organist and musicians, the car parking stewards, the bellringers and those involved in the refreshments. Especially

the flower arrangers for making the church looks so beautiful – it was the Flower Festival when I first came here to look around and that is the moment when I first felt that sense of God calling me here. I especially want to thank Revd Sue and Simon Wallis and their team here, for all the work they have done in the vacancy. My thanks also to Bishop Robert for allowing us to have flowers in the church in Lent. Thank you to all of you for your tremendous welcome. I feel very much loved and cared for as we have moved house and begun to settle in. You are an amazing group of villages with strong community spirit and I feel very blessed to have been called to serve you here.

As your new Priest in Charge, I will be starting with a season of listening, getting to know you all and learning from you about how things work around here. There are a lot of community groups and lots for me to find out about, so if you would like to have a chat with me about something church or community related, do drop me a line.

I look forward to getting to know you.

In Christ

Anne

CELEBRATION OF SUE'S MINISTRY

As Revd Sue reaches the age of retirement, the Church of England allows for a 6-month sabbatical to rest and to discern the next steps in her priestly journey.



I have not been here very long, but Revd Sue was one of the first people that I met as I explored this role. Her unstinting support and welcome have been invaluable to me as I have begun this new post. As I have started to settle into ministry here, Revd Sue's local knowledge and wisdom have been readily available to guide me, and I am amazed at how much she has done in vacancy and continues to do. She has a cheery word and a smile for everyone. I will miss her.

Join us at Naunton on Sunday 26 April at 3pm to celebrate Revd Sue's hard work over many years of Self-Supporting Ministry and to raise a glass with her.

If you would like to contribute to her leaving gift from your church, please speak to your church team.

Revd Anne

BEING WITH COURSE

If you are interested in exploring Christianity for the first time, or you are considering returning to church after some time away, or perhaps you feel your faith has got stuck somehow along the way, I invite you to sign up for our Being With course, which begins on Thursday 16 April, 7-8.30pm at the Rectory, Lower Slaughter, for ten sessions (with a week off at half term).

Contact Revd Anne - revannecurtis@gmail.com.

MORNING PRAYER AROUND THE BENEFICE

Monday: St Mary's, Lower Slaughter at 9.15am

Tuesday: St Michael and All Angels, Guiting Power at 9.15am

Wednesday: St Andrew's, Naunton at 9.15am

Thursday: St Mary's, Temple Guiting at **9.30am**

Second Tuesdays of the Month: St Peter's, Upper Slaughter at **10.30am**

COMMUNITY MINISTRY - we have shared in these services

Baptisms

"May God guide and protect them"

-

Weddings

"May God bless them"

-

Funerals

"May God grant them light and peace"

-

WHO TO CONTACT

With grateful thanks for all those who have been involved in vacancy cover, please contact:

Weddings with dates to end April –

Revd Sue Pestell at susan.pestell@gmail.com

Weddings with dates from May onwards –

Revd Anne at revannecurtis@gmail.com

Funerals, Ashes and Memorials –

Revd Anne at revannecurtis@gmail.com

Baptisms – Moira Anderson at moira@andersonpage.com

Home Communion - Revd Anne at revannecurtis@gmail.com

Benefice Magazine (70x7) –

Karen Randles at k.e.randles@btinternet.com

Weekly Newsletter Email – for latest service and events information -

Revd Anne Curtis at revannecurtis@gmail.com

ZOOM ACTIVITIES AND LINK

We continue to offer worship on Zoom for all who would like to join us. The Sunday services continue with a 9.00am Morning Prayer on Sunday 3 May; please see full schedules for details.

Our regular Zoom services and events will be hosted through this link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7250161799?pwd=xjPTuC2ljbPDnWRZiKZiihGcwmvJgY.1>

Meeting ID: 725 016 1799

Passcode: kG7BFy

SPREAD THE WORD ASSEMBLIES

Most of you will know that a team of us, a mixture of clergy and lay people, lead an assembly each week in Temple Guiting School. You will also know that we have great fun and that the children are an immense inspiration to us.

If you would like to join in with the team, we would love to have you. No special giftings or acting skills are required – just a sense of wanting to share the Bible with children. We will provide you with necessary safeguarding training. You are most welcome to join us. Please contact Moira Anderson at moira@andersonpage.com

WIDER CHURCH NEWS

A School Chaplain for The Cotswold School

You may have heard that something new is about to begin at The Cotswold School: a School Chaplaincy, supported by local churches, the Diocese of Gloucester, and the school itself. Put simply, the Christian Chaplain will be someone who is there for the young people, strengthening the existing Wellbeing team. It is so important that the initial request for this position has come from the school itself.

This is a full-time job, and the successful applicant will be around the school during the week, getting to know students and staff, and being available for a chat when it's needed about worries, friendships, family life, or just the general ups and downs of growing up. Sometimes what makes the biggest difference is having a trusted adult with time to listen.

The Chaplain will also play a part in the wider life of the school — helping with assemblies, supporting Wellbeing work, and creating space for

young people to think about the bigger questions of life: Who am I? What matters? What do I believe? Those conversations will always be open and optional, and respectful of everyone, whether they have a faith or not. Part of their time will be spent supporting the existing Christian Union. Although the position is rooted in the Christian faith, it isn't about telling anyone what to believe. It's about being present, being approachable, and offering something of the hope and care that sit at the heart of Christian beliefs.

The Chaplain won't only be in school. Part of their time will be spent out in the community, building links with local churches and youth activities. Examples might be helping our primary school children to be prepared and comfortable about the transition to secondary education, or building links with youth clubs. Over time, we hope this will help young people feel more at home in the wider community, and perhaps discover places where they belong.

For us as churches, this is a chance to connect with young people in a natural and unforced way — meeting them where they already are, rather than expecting them to come to us first. It's also a reminder that caring for young people is something we share as a whole community, not just within our own church walls.

The role has been funded for an initial three years, thanks to the generosity and vision of a number of partners, including our own benefice. It feels like a hopeful step, and one that we pray will bear fruit in ways we may not yet see.

If you would like to support this work, the simplest and most important thing is prayer: for the person who takes on the role, for the life of the school, and for the young people themselves. There may also be opportunities, in time, to get involved more practically.

Our benefice has agreed to raise our share of the funding for this position by running a series of "Tea and Cake" events at Chastleton House - the first on Palm Sunday with two more to follow. Please look out for these, and come along with friends, family and neighbours! The job vacancy has been published and recruitment will follow.

For now, it is enough to say: something good is beginning. And we look forward to seeing where it leads.

Alasdair Anderson Benefice Representative, Chaplaincy Advisory Group
alasdair@andersonpage.com

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

All of these activities are for everyone, and with no charge:

Coffee Morning at Lords of the Manor Hotel – On the second Tuesday of each month in Upper Slaughter from 11am-12noon. Come along for free coffee, tea and biscuits and spend time together in a warm, lovely space (**Tuesdays 14 April and 12 May**).

St Andrew's Coffee Shop – Every Thursday from 10.30am-12.30pm, come along to share drinks and biscuits and chat in the church in Naunton.

Coffee and Cake in the West End, St Mary's Church, Temple Guiting

“Thank you to all of you who have attended the fortnightly coffee mornings; due to low numbers we have decided to hold the mornings **monthly** from now on. I look forward to seeing you on Friday 3 April. Sheila X.”

Come and join friends and neighbours for real coffee and homemade cake at **10.00am** on the **first Friday of the month – 3 April and 1 May**. No charge, but donations welcome.

'VILLAGE VOICES'

A very informal group of singers from local villages who meet on alternate Mondays, mainly in St Mary's Temple Guiting. We're in search of altos, tenors and basses. Call Ali Clifton Barnard on 07583 415065 if you'd like to join us.

SERVICES IN APRIL 2026

Sunday 5 April – Easter Sunday

- 6am Dawn Holy Communion at Guiting Power
- 9.30am Easter Holy Communion at Naunton
- 10am Easter Family Holy Communion at Temple Guiting
- 11am Easter Holy Communion at Upper Slaughter

Sunday 12 April

- 9.30am Holy Communion at Farmcote
- 11am Holy Communion at Lower Slaughter
- 11am Matins BCP at Naunton

Sunday 19 April

- 9.30am Holy Communion at Cutsdean
- 11am Holy Communion BCP at Upper Slaughter

Sunday 26 April

- 10am Family Holy Communion at Temple Guiting
- 3pm Benefice Holy Communion to Celebrate Sue's Ministry at Naunton

SERVICES IN MAY 2026

Sunday 3 May

- 9am Zoom Morning Prayer
- 10am Holy Communion at Guiting Power
- 11am Matins BCP at Upper Slaughter
- 3pm Wild Worship at Temple Guiting Churchyard
- 6pm Evening Service at Temple Guiting

Sunday 10 May - Rogation

- 11am Holy Communion at Lower Slaughter
- 2pm Rogation Walks to Guiting Power
- 6pm Barn Service at Guiting Manor Farm

Thursday 14 May – Ascension Day

7pm Holy Communion 'Praise, Puddings and Prosecco' at Farmcote

Sunday 17 May

9.30am Holy Communion at Cutsdean

11am Holy Communion BCP at Upper Slaughter

Sunday 24 May – Pentecost

9.30am Holy Communion BCP at Naunton

10am Family Holy Communion at Temple Guiting

11am Morning Praise at Lower Slaughter

6pm Evening Service at Guiting Power

Sunday 31 May – Trinity Sunday

11am Benefice Holy Communion at Temple Guiting

** Do sign up to receive our Weekly Newsletter email for the latest details and information about our services and events across our Benefice**

Contact Revd Anne Curtis at revannecurtis@gmail.com

NEWS FROM THE PEWS AND VILLAGE EVENTS

LOWER SLAUGHTER

Spring is well and truly with us with lighter evenings, sunnier days and that sense of renewal in the air. Mother Nature has been very busy once more; the new-born lambs (one of my favourite spring-time sights of them skipping in the fields), the abundance of colour in hedges, trees and on verges, and allotments and gardens all springing back to life.

We are all enjoying getting to know our new Priest in Charge, Rev Anne Curtis, and looking forward to her leading us on our spiritual journey. Her Licensing Service was a real Benefice effort and much enjoyed by all.

This year we are fundraising as a Benefice team at Chasleton House serving teas to visitors - our first event is Sunday 29 March from 1 to 5pm. Further details elsewhere, but please do come along; a lovely dog-walk, the beauty of the spring colours and good cake and company awaits!

We are all looking forward to Easter Day when our church will be ablaze with colours thanks to our flower ladies. At the end of April, Sue, our Associate Priest, will be retiring from full-time ministry. We thank her very much for all she and husband Rob have done for us over the past 10 years and wish her a long, happy and healthy retirement - hopefully they will both pop back to see us from time to time!

Looking further ahead and on a rather sad note, we will not have our usual August Village Fete this year as no-one is willing to organise.

Wishing you all a joyful and peaceful Easter - enjoy your chocolate eggs, Easter goodies and quality time with family and friends ... and remember Easter hails a new beginning.

Marion Marshall

FARMCOTE

Much will have been written elsewhere about the Licensing and Installation of Rev. Anne Curtis to our Benefice. Suffice it to say it was a joyous occasion and I know she is beginning to find her way around the Cotswolds - it won't be long before she can dispense with satnav!

We must offer huge thanks to Sue Pestell, her team of representatives from our parishes and other clergy who have helped with our services.

Spring really is springing and fields are filling with ewes and lambs, and the air filled with the sound of tractors and farm machinery playing catch-up, to get the crops planted for the next harvest. There is warmth in the sunshine and a feeling of hope and new beginnings. There is a full programme of services and gatherings throughout Lenten building to Easter Day, and I for one look forward to setting my alarm extra early and joining friends in Guiting Power churchyard at the dawn service ... I wonder if we will hear the cuckoo this year?

On Sunday 17 May from 2-5pm we will be holding a "Brew with a View" fundraising event – please pray for good weather and join us if you can.

Lorna Eayrs

UPPER SLAUGHTER

It feels as though something has shifted over the last week. Mornings and evenings are lighter, hedges are showing signs of life again, and the blossom is out. Finally, it seems winter is loosening its grip.

That sense of change was there, too, at Rev Anne's installation service. It was a lovely occasion, shared across the Benefice. We were proud of our contributions from Upper Slaughter woven into it. Liz Gibson presented the flagon of water, speaking about welcoming new Christians and sharing in the "Living Water". Liz Wills spoke on behalf of the farming community, and Hanna Sroka, Manager at the Lords of the Manor, on behalf of our local businesses, together representing some of the different strands that make up village life.

Mothering Sunday was Anne's first service with us in Upper Slaughter. It was a thoughtful and inclusive beginning. Her sermon reflected on the many forms that "mothering" can take, and beautiful posies (thanks to LizG again), were shared in celebration of mothers and in recognition of anyone who has offered care, guidance, or kindness in our lives.

We have also heard that Paul Lockey will be coming home soon, which is very good news. He has been much in people's thoughts after his fall and stint in hospital, and we wish him well as he settles back.

Looking ahead, we will be hosting Easter Sunday Holy Communion this year, and everyone is very welcome. Our Annual PCC Meeting will be on 15 April at 6pm in the Village Hall, and later, on 26 April at 3pm in Naunton, there will be a special service to celebrate Sue Pestell's ministry.

For now, though, it is enough just to notice the season turning.

Charlotte Van Rooyen & Paul Trenaman

NAUNTON

It's a joy to see the spring bulbs finally popping up all over the village and surrounding countryside; always surprising after the abundance of rain, wind and muddy ground that such perfect beauty can emerge. From the subtle variations in the snowdrops and daffodils, each special and unique, to the profusion of blossom and nature's early morning soundtrack of birdsong. What a wonderful spot we live in!

The village too feels like it's waking up; with longer days and warmer sunlight encouraging folks to come out of 'hibernation'. It's lovely to walk round and chat to people about all manner of things. And time feels like it's speeding up too - we're more than halfway through March as I write!

The popular village Fish & Fizz event with games was enjoyed on 14 February. It was astonishing that one man in a mobile van can produce so much food in so little time! Well done to all involved.

Another highlight came on 28 Feb, a Garden Club talk by Fergus Garrett from Great Dixter in Sussex - as usual a sell-out, raising over £1400 for St Andrews Church. Our Village Hall is a great venue for such events! Many thanks to all who supported - from those who attended to those who made delicious canapés and everyone in between who set up, served, bar tended, tidied and put away. Our community events do take a village!

Lent started on 18 February with an Ash Wednesday Benefice Service of Holy Communion at St Andrews which included the tradition of 'ashing' (marking a cross on the forehead with ashes) to acknowledge our own frailty and help us to prepare our hearts and minds for remembering the events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Lent is an important season in the Church calendar; it's the 40-day period leading up to Easter Saturday (not counting Sundays), a time of prayer, reflection, and, for some, giving up something to help us focus on and draw nearer to God. We have been enjoying a weekly Wednesday evening Lent Talk held around the Benefice when different speakers have talked and encouraged discussion around the subject of their 'vocation'. It's been thought provoking to hear of a powerful calling to a particular life, the various stages of 'discernment', and 'testing' that calling. Much to ponder.

There was much anticipation over the Licensing and Installation of Rev Anne Curtis at St Mary's Lower Slaughter on 1 March and suffice to say it was a magnificent event! Many thanks to all who supported, provided food, sang, read, welcomed, and ate the cakes! Anne is now Priest in Charge of our Benefice and we welcome her. She is hugely looking forward to getting to know us all and joining in with our community life.

Looking ahead, we shall have a wedding at St Andrews and two baptisms, both poignant reminders of the cycle of life with our village church at the heart of our community. Many visiting tourists write in the 'visitor book'

at St Andrews'. Do read their comments which speak of a sense of peace, love and care; it's affirming to know that this is felt by passers-by too. We also have a prayer request book; all are invited to add to it.

Holy Week culminating in Easter will soon be with us. At this special time, as elsewhere in the Benefice, there are special services at St Andrews. On Good Friday 3 April at 11am there is a family-focussed service with Easter crafts/garden building/buns/coffee culminating in a short act of worship. All VERY welcome from around the Benefice and beyond! Grandparents, godparents, aunts and uncles too – we hope to see YOU all there! And of course a celebration of Holy Communion at 9.30am on Easter Sunday.

With that, and as the sun shines, I wish you a joyful Spring!

Maira Anderson

CUTSDEAN and TEMPLE GUITING

The sunshine of the last few days has brought some welcome relief after the incessant rain and greyness we experienced for the first couple months of 2026. Spring is really 'springing' and as we emerge out of 'the darkness into light', the vibrancy of the spring flowers and the boundless energy of the new-born lambs remind us of the never-ending cycle of life and the Easter season.

On Sunday 1 March, many of us attended the licensing and installation of the Revd Anne Curtis as our new Priest in Charge by Bishop Robert of Tewkesbury. St Mary's Church Lower Slaughter was filled with flowers, each Church within the Benefice contributing an arrangement. The church was packed with well-wishers from near and far and the service was followed by a scrumptious tea for all to enjoy in the village hall.

Revd Anne's first service after her installation was the Mothering Sunday service here at St James' in Cutsdean. The service was well attended and we had the pleasure of Alistair Eden accompanying the hymns. Beautiful posies of spring flowers were handed out to the ladies in the congregation. It is the beginning of a new era in the Benefice and we all wish Revd Anne well for the future here.

Looking ahead, Tom 'Spats' Langham will be performing at Temple Guiting Church on Friday 8 May at 7pm. He is well known locally playing with his band, Hot Fingers, and plays regularly with The Pasadena Roof Orchestra

(who are performing at the Guiting Festival this year). Tom is not only a brilliant banjo and ukulele player and jazz guitarist but also a highly amusing raconteur. The evening promises to be very entertaining so please do come along. All proceeds are for the churches of Cutsdean and Temple Guiting.

With the world in turmoil, we thank God for our bit of heaven in this part of the Cotswolds.

Ros Hartnell, Chapel Warden

GUITING POWER

There is something particular about my article this time ...

... It could be the wonderful Service of Licensing of Anne as our new Priest-in-Charge and the joy of having Anne & Tom now amongst us. A joy-filled occasion as we welcomed 171 people, plus one Bishop, from near and far to St. Mary's, Lower Slaughter on 1st March. There will no doubt be many details of the event in this issue, and probably a photo or two! For my part, I would like to say huge 'Thank You' to all who were involved in the many and various ways that made the day such a success (you know who you all are and hopefully I haven't forgotten any of you with an individual 'thank you'). My special thanks to the home team at St. Mary's in particular for your calm patience and support in allowing this 'interloper' Churchwarden take charge of the reins!

... It could be that the joy of Easter is almost upon us and our usual Dawn Holy Communion celebration in the churchyard (followed by bacon sandwiches!) when we hope to be blessed with a beautiful sunrise on this most special of days.

... It could be our Celebration of Sue's ministry among us on Sunday 26th April at Naunton. A "Sue-lebration" (to borrow a phrase coined by Moira!) of all that Sue has been to us in her time as our Associate Priest. Sue, I thank you so much personally for the wonderful support that you have been particularly during this last year of Vacancy.

... It could be the change of Season to Spring, the joy of new buds and new birth, Spring Lambs in green fields as we enjoy the renewed beauty of our surroundings. On Sunday 10th May we look forward to our

Rogation Sunday walks across the Benefice, joining together at 6pm for a service in the barn at Guiting Manor Farms, always an enjoyable event.

... It could be any of these special moments, it could be ... Slightly unfairly perhaps, having nothing to do with our Benefice life, it is that I have been writing this during a week's stay at Lindisfarne on Holy Island. A beautiful, peaceful, prayerful, reflective place to spend a restful week during Lent.

Easter Blessings.

Simon Wallis

TEMPLE GUITING SCHOOL

As we approach the Easter season, there is a real sense of anticipation and excitement across the school. We are very much looking forward to celebrating together, and our 'Spread the Word' team will be leading the whole school in a special interactive worship on Thursday for our "Easter Experience," which will conclude with a visit to St Mary's Church.

It has been a wonderfully busy and enriching term. Class 1 thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Sandfield Farm in Sedgeberrow, where they learned more about farm life, animals, and where our food comes from. Class 2 have been getting creative by designing and making a giant spider for their classroom, while Class 3 have been exploring deserts - learning about desert animals and writing imaginative diary extracts. Class 4 took part in an exciting 'mock trial' at the University of Gloucestershire, where pupils stepped into roles such as judge, prosecutor, and witness. We are incredibly proud that Temple Guiting achieved 2nd place out of 16 schools.



There have been many sporting activities including equestrian, cross country and rugby achievements. We have been impressed with how our pupils have shown sportsmanship throughout these events.

With the warmer weather, we have loved making the most of our school field and spending time in our forest school area

under the guidance of our forest school leader, Lucy. We have also continued to focus on our Christian values, and next term we will be exploring perseverance and friendship in greater depth.

It was a pleasure to welcome Rev Anne to our “Spread the Word” worship sessions, and to share with her the joy of our World Book Day



celebrations - complete with a fantastic range of costumes, from Harry Potter to Elphaba, and from Bruce Bogtrotter to Rapunzel.

It has truly been a term filled with joy, growth, and happiness, and we look forward to all that the summer term will bring.

Emily Chester, Class Teacher

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Next copy deadline 20 May 2026

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**Photos: Revd Anne's
Licensing Service on
Sunday 1 March 2026 at
Lower Slaughter.**

Top: Local clergy

Middle: Village Voices
Choir

Bottom: Friends from
Kingston Bagpuize





GUITING GRANGE OPEN GARDENS

SUN 14th JUNE 2026 1 - 5.30pm

**Tickets, teas, maps, toilets & free parking
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