

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

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

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025



Vacancy Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the blessings of our Benefice life together, and pray
that we may continue to be a blessing to one another during this
time of vacancy.

We pray for the person you are calling to serve among us.

Grant them vision, courage and love.

Grant us open hearts to welcome and work alongside them.

That together we may serve your kingdom faithfully,

In this place and in this time.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Rector: We are now in a Vacancy and awaiting the appointment of our new Vicar.

Rev'd Sue Pestell (Associate Priest): Email: susan.pestell@gmail.com

07514 542934

Jean Bird (Reader Emeritus) - 01451 850337

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

Ros Hartnell 07967 127581

Safeguarding Officer: Sheila Woods

Upper Slaughter (GL54 2JF)

(Vacant)

Safeguarding Officer: (Vacant)

Guiting Power (GL54 5TX)

Simon Wallis 01451 851806

Safeguarding Officer: Tracy Formby

Farmcote (GL54 5AU)

Peter Loveday 01242 602887

Safeguarding Officer: Tracy Formby

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

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**DEADLINE for the next issue
20 NOVEMBER 2025.**

*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

DEAR FRIENDS

Welcome to this edition of our 70 x 7 magazine, which takes us through October and November.

We are already seeing the signs of Autumn in our beautiful countryside; time to clear away leaves and tidy the garden ready for winter. An opportunity perhaps to create winter habitats for the animals too.

Our October Services begin on Sunday 5th October with our Benefice Harvest Festival, taking place in St Peter's, Upper Slaughter at 11am. All gifts will be given to The North Cotswold Food Bank, and will be most gratefully received. There will be refreshments after the service in the Village Hall.

Remembering is important and November brings a season of Remembrance.

All Souls Day is a time to remember our loved ones who have died. We will be having a special Benefice service to remember them on Sunday 2nd November at 4pm in St Michael and All Angels Guiting Power. In the next month or so, there will be lists in all our churches where you can place the names of your loved ones who you would like to be remembered by name in the service.

We will also honour those who have fallen in conflict on Sunday 9th November at our Remembrance Day Services. See further on in our list of services for more details. Armistice Day itself will be honoured on Tuesday 11th November at the War Memorial in the Square, Guiting Power.

You are all most welcome to join us at our services of Harvest and Remembrance.

We hope you will enjoy the rest of the magazine. There are a lot of other events and activities going on, and news from around the Benefice and beyond.

With love and prayers

Sue

MORNING PRAYER AROUND THE BENEFICE

OCTOBER

1st - in St Andrew's, Naunton
8th - in St Mary's, Temple Guiting
15th - in St Peter's, Upper Slaughter
22nd - in St James, Cutsdean
29th - in St Faith's, Farmcote

NOVEMBER

5th – in St Mary's, Lower Slaughter
12th – in St Michael and All Angels, Guiting Power
19th – **No Morning Prayers – Sue on holiday**
26th – in St Andrew's, Naunton

Please note that Morning Prayers in St Michael and All Angels, Guiting Power at 9.15am on Tuesdays will continue.

COMMUNITY MINISTRY - we have shared in these services

Baptisms

"May God guide and protect them"

Louis Charles EDEN on 10 August 2025 at Lower Slaughter
Caspar Harrison MOLSON on 13 September 2025 at Guiting Power
Rafferty William John WHEELER- NURDIN on 14 September 2025
at Lower Slaughter

Weddings

"May God bless them"

Charlotte Thomas and Daniel Sablik on 26 July 2025 at Lower Slaughter
(Blessing)

Samantha Clausen and William Harvey on 29 July 2025 at Guiting Power
Olivia Morrissey and Matthew Fraser on 30 August 2025 at Guiting Power
Elizabeth Bennett and Simon Welch on 12 September 2025 at Lower
Slaughter

Funerals

"May God grant them light and peace"

Funeral of Raymund Tucker on Tuesday 19 August 2025; Committal at Cheltenham Crematorium and Memorial Service at Lower Slaughter

Funeral of Sheila Smith on Wednesday 20 August at Guiting Power.

During the Vacancy, if you are looking to enquire about different parts of our life together, please contact:

Baptisms – Moira Anderson at moira@andersonpage.com

Weddings – Rev'd Sue Pestell at susan.pestell@gmail.com

Funerals – Ruth Waller at ruth1waller@outlook.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 the first Sunday 2 November. Please see service 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

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,7250161799#,,,,*971618# US

+13092053325,,7250161799#,,,,*971618# US

Bible Study on Zoom Wednesday 1st October

After a period of irregular meetings, we will resume our monthly Bible Study on Zoom. Do join us as we explore the Bible Readings from the Sunday before our meeting and help us to learn together.

BENEFICE HARVEST FESTIVAL - Sunday 5th October

This year there will be one Harvest Festival Service for the Benefice at 11am on Sunday 5th October in St Peter's Church, Upper Slaughter. After the service there will be refreshments in Upper Slaughter Village Hall, across the square from the church, to which all are welcome.

As in previous years, we will be donating the service collection monies to the North Cotswold Foodbank together with any donations of non-perishable food and toiletries people wish to make.

You may bring donations to the service itself, or if you prefer to leave them in your local churches where collecting points will be in place for the week ahead of the service. These items will then be added to those donated in St Peter's, before delivery to the Foodbank.

Thank you in advance for anything you are able to give.

PEOPLE NEWS

Ruth Waller and Alasdair Anderson

Earlier in the year Ruth from Temple Guiting and Alasdair from Naunton attended an intense 6-week course to train as Worship Leaders in our Benefice. They were duly commissioned as Worship Leaders on Saturday 20 September at Holy Trinity Church, Watermoor, Cirencester. Well done Ruth and Alasdair and welcome to the Worship Team! It would be lovely if you could come along and support them if you're able.

Jon Barwood

Most of us have met Jon Barwood, and his wife Michelle, as he has supported us taking Sunday Services, weddings and funerals around the Benefice. He has asked us to share this news:

"Bishop Rachel, in consultation with Archdeacon Katrina, parish clergy and reps, has agreed to appoint Rev'd Jon Barwood as Interim Team Vicar working in the Vale and Cotswold Edge Team Ministry from 1st October for a 12-month period. Jon has served a curacy on the Isle of Man and has recently re-located to Bourton on the Water and has been serving in

ministry in parts of the North Cotswold Deanery. Jon will be working in the Team (mainly in the northern group of parishes) four and a half days a week – and is looking forward to joining you all. Please do pray for Jon, Michelle and Henry at this exciting time.”

Jon and Michelle would like to thank everyone in our Benefice for the friendly welcome and support they have received over recent months. They will take with them very fond memories of their time here and hope to still see you around as they will continue to live nearby.

Vacancy Update

By the time you read this, we will have completed our second round of advertising for our new Priest-in-Charge and will hopefully be looking to interview during October. Please continue in your prayers with us for the process and for the person God is calling to be with us.

If you would like to see the **Parish Profile** which the churchwarden team put together to tempt prospective candidates, please follow the link below:

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Benefice-brochure-spreads.pdf>

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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

Community Space at Lords of the Manor – On the second Tuesdays of these months, we will be hosting a space at Lords of the Manor Hotel in Upper Slaughter from 11am-12noon. Come along for coffee, tea, biscuits, a warm, lovely space and time together, on Tuesdays 14 October and 11 November.

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 -

Come and join friends and neighbours for real coffee and homemade cake.

From **10.00am** on **Fridays 10th** and **24th October** and **7th** and **21st November** (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.

WIDER CHURCH NEWS



Northleach Benefice

Revd Charlie Styles has recently been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the Northleach Benefice.

We wish him well in his new post and hope he and his family enjoy living in this beautiful part of the country.

The Cotswold School Chaplaincy Project

The Seven Benefices on this side of the Deanery are supporting the appointment of a Chaplain at the Cotswold School, where many of our children go onto at the age of 11. The presence of a Chaplain will support the spiritual and pastoral care of the students.

Your prayers are appreciated for this important role, for the right person to apply and for the resources to finance this exciting opportunity.

For more information, speak to Sue Pestell.

Archdeacon Hilary

In a letter from Bishop Rachel we were informed that Archdeacon Hilary, the Archdeacon of Gloucester, will be leaving in November. Archdeacon Hilary has been a source of support and wisdom to us in this Benefice since we have been in Vacancy, as she has advised, and cared for us, through the process.

Bishop Rachel writes:-

Archdeacon Hilary has loved well and is much loved, and it will be hard to say farewell to her, yet I hope we will all enable her to end this chapter well as we send her on her way with our love and prayers.

*On that note, I hope you will come and be part of a diocesan farewell service in the Cathedral on **Sunday 23 November at 3pm**. Details to follow in due course.*

Please do continue to hold Archdeacon Hilary in your prayers.

SERVICES IN OCTOBER 2025

Sunday 5 October

11am Benefice Harvest Festival Service at Upper Slaughter
6pm Holy Communion at Temple Guiting

Sunday 12 October

9.30am Holy Communion at Farmcote
11am Holy Communion at Lower Slaughter
11am Morning Praise for Prisons Week at Naunton

Sunday 19 October

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

Sunday 26 October

9.30am Holy Communion at Naunton
10am Family Holy Communion at Temple Guiting
11am Morning Praise at Lower Slaughter
6pm Evening Service at Guiting Power

**Our apologies if services have to be cancelled or altered at short notice. **

SERVICES IN NOVEMBER 2025

Sunday 2 November

9am Zoom Morning Prayer

11am Holy Communion at Upper Slaughter
4pm Remembering Loved Ones at Guiting Power

Sunday 9 November – Remembrance Sunday

9.30am Holy Communion at Farmcote
10.45am Remembrance Service at Upper Slaughter
10.45am Remembrance Service at Naunton
10.45am Remembrance Service at Temple Guiting

Tuesday 11 November - Armistice Day

10.50am Act of Remembrance at Guiting Power War Memorial

Sunday 16 November

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

Sunday 23 November

9.30am Holy Communion at Naunton
10am Family Holy Communion at Temple Guiting
11am Morning Praise at Lower Slaughter
6pm Evening Service at Guiting Power

Sunday 30 November – Advent Sunday

11am Benefice Advent Carol Service at Temple Guiting
6pm Holy Communion at Naunton

NEWS FROM THE PEWS AND VILLAGE EVENTS

TEMPLE GUITING SCHOOL - Back to school update

It has been a joy to welcome everyone back to school this term, and we are delighted to share how well the children have settled into the rhythm of school life once again. Our newest Reception children have made a fabulous start to their school journey, bringing enthusiasm, smiles, and a sense of wonder into our classrooms.

We are already delving deeper into our first Christian value of the year - *Respect*. Through our worship times and reflections, we are learning how respect for God, one another, and ourselves shapes the way we live together as a school family. Our 'Spread the Word' Worship team has also been helping us explore the meaning of *The Lord's Prayer*, giving us all a chance to reflect on the words that Jesus taught us.

This term we have enjoyed exploring stories such as *The Prodigal Son* and *The Party*. These have led to some wonderful discussions - including when Rob asked the children what they thought heaven might be like! The children's responses were heartfelt and imaginative: some thought heaven would mean you could have whatever you like (especially gadgets!), others pictured heaven as being in the sky, while some suggested it might look different to everyone.

We are also in the exciting process of choosing our new worship leaders for the year. It has been wonderful to see so many willing and enthusiastic candidates ready to serve and lead our school community in worship. We will soon be starting our preparations for our harvest festival where we will, once again, be making donations to The North Cotswold Foodbank.

As we look ahead, we do so with hope and joy - ready for another year of living and learning together in God's love, growing in faith, and thriving in all that we do.

Emily Chester, Class Teacher

FARMCOTE

It hardly seems any time since I sat down to write our last contribution. However, those sunny, hot days are just a memory and autumn is well and truly with us. We were in desperate need of meaningful amounts of rain, although farmers and gardeners were grateful to be able to gather in the harvest well ahead of time, albeit with a reduced yield in many cases. Now it's time to prepare for next year. It's never-ending. We look forward to celebrating our bountiful harvests in the traditional way.

The hedges and field margins are laden with fruit and nuts. Let us hope that's not an indicator of a hard winter ahead.

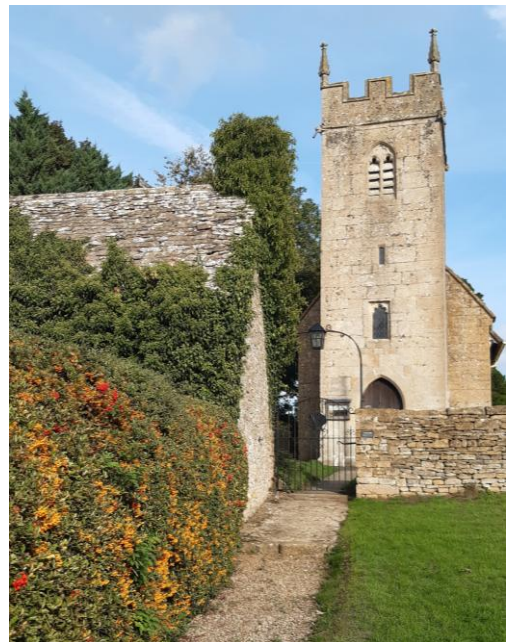
Looking ahead, our hard-team dealing with the current vacancy have recently re-advertised the post and let's hope there is good news before long.

Peter and Sarah Loveday hope to be moving to be nearer their family very soon. Peter has served as chapel warden and PCC member for a number of years, as well as assisting in the Open the Book team at Temple Guiting school. When the time comes, we wish them well in their move and new home - they will be missed - and we look forward to welcoming a new family to Farmcote.

Lorna Eayrs

CUTSDEAN

The weather has dominated our lives this summer with continued heat and lack of rain. For the gardeners amongst us, the hosepipe ban has caused extra work with watering cans making sure the pots were watered adequately to enjoy the summer flowers and the vegetables that were keenly planted in the ground during the spring didn't wither and die. For the farmers, especially those cultivating on the high Cotswolds, the continued dry weather has been particularly concerning as yields are down. However, due to the dry conditions, we are experiencing a 'Mast Year' with an abundant crop of nuts. I have discovered a walnut tree in Cutsdean which I never knew existed (in the 36 years that I have lived here) and it has shed its crop onto the road where the nuts have been crushed by the cars and the pheasants are now enjoying a feast. We are also enjoying an abundance of fruit and look forward to the apple juice produced from the apples gathered from the Cutsdean Community Orchard.



This year we are having a Benefice Harvest Festival service at Upper Slaughter Church on Sunday 5th October at 11am. As in previous years, there will be a collection for the North Cotswold Food Bank whose stock

levels, I understand, are very low. So we ask for gifts of tins, packets, snacks etc or financial donations to help build the stocks up especially running into winter and up to Christmas.

This August was the first anniversary since Nina Gatward, formally of Cutsdean, passed away and we were delighted to welcome her family to the August service. Nina was a stalwart of the village and Church and her ashes are buried in the church yard.

We were very sad to hear that Kevin Bell passed away very suddenly. Kevin and Michael had a home in Cutsdean until 1999. He had become a regular attendee at our monthly service at St James', often bringing a house guest or two to swell the congregation. He will be very much missed by everyone who knew him and we send Michael our love, thoughts and prayers.



On the 24th July Arthur Remus Nightingale was born to Luke and Lauren, their first baby. He joins a family with 4 labradors and is getting used to going on long dog walks. It is wonderful to have a baby in the village and we wish Luke and Lauren well.

If you look in the Church, beyond the font, you will see an oak sideboard. This piece of handsome furniture has been donated by Daisy Evans. It is an apprentice piece made by her Grandfather, James Gabriel. It now holds the mugs, kettle etc, etc used for coffee after the service and will prove to be useful for storage in the future. Thank you, Daisy!

We are continuing to cope during the vacancy. The second advertisement, the Parish Profile, for the position has attracted new applicants and interviews will take place in October. We pray for a positive outcome and very much look forward to welcoming our new priest to the Benefice.

Ros Hartnell

TEMPLE GUITING

As we firmly move into Autumn, I think we can honestly say (for once) that we had a decent summer!



The Safari Lunch held on 17th August provided a wonderful opportunity for friends and neighbours to meet in beautiful gardens. 60 people attended and profits raised were split between St. Mary's Church and the Village Hall - £500 to each. Many thanks to those involved in the organising of this, particularly Ali and Kate - photo of them enjoying a well-deserved beer!

As I write, we are looking forward to the Bochman Trio performing on Friday 26th September in the West End of St. Mary's. This is just an example of one of the events organised for opportunity to socialise and raise funds towards the Church's upkeep. A cash bar is usually available at these events. We are always looking for 'acts' or groups to showcase in the West End. The acoustics are fantastic!

There is a Benefice Harvest Service on 5th October, when all 7 Churches join together to celebrate this time of year in the farming calendar.

We will then be moving into Remembrance on Sunday 9th November - all are welcome to attend at St, Mary's, service commencing 10.45am.

It is with great sadness that we learnt of the sudden death of our dear friend Kevin Bell. He was a great part of the village community and a generous supporter of the Church. He will be deeply missed.

Along with Alasdair Anderson from Naunton, I have recently completed the Lay Worship leaders course. The seven sessions run by Gloucester Diocese, provided an insight into different aspects of leading worship including Music in Worship, Inclusive Worship and Giving a Talk. It was an interesting, if challenging, course. Our Commissioning Service took place on Saturday 20th September in Trinity Church, Cirencester. Please support us as we gain our confidence and become more involved in local services.

Ruth Waller

The Famous Temple Guiting Quiz Saturday 18 October, 6.30pm for 7pm

Tickets £16 (£8 for under 16s) to include a light supper from Ali 07583 415065 or Kate katemather@landgatetg.co.uk

Temple Guiting Village Hall – join us for an exciting and fun-filled evening to raise funds for St Mary's church and the Village Hall

GUITING POWER

With a turn in the weather and dip in the temperature, Autumn is suddenly upon us and brings us into the season of thankfulness and remembrance.

At our Benefice Harvest Festival at St. Peter's, Upper Slaughter, on Sunday 5th October we will give thanks for "all good gifts around us" and those responsible for their stewardship. Please remember to bring along your gifts for the Foodbank. Details of what is most needed can be found at northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk.

Our Parish Council, in their stewardship of our community, are currently organising a new Neighbourhood Watch scheme and residents WhatsApp group. All are warmly invited to be involved. For more details, please contact the Parish Council guitingpowerpc@gmail.com.

On Saturday 11th October we will be hosting our first joint Benefice fundraising event serving teas at Chastleton. Chastleton House (owned by the National Trust and just over the border into Oxfordshire) does not have its own tea room and so teas are served next door in the beautiful St. Mary's Church, with local groups invited to provide and serve tea & cake for a day to raise funds, both for themselves and St. Mary's. We are looking forward to enjoying it and hoping for a successful day. Do come and join us if you can. Chastleton is a beautiful and unique Jacobean house and garden, and we promise good cake! Proceeds will be divided between our seven churches.

Continuing the theme (in more than one sense!) there will be a Soup & Sale in the Village Hall from 12-4pm on Saturday 18th October. Contributions of quality bric-a-brac are welcomed. Please contact Peter & Pat Weale.

“Remember, remember! The 5th of November, Gunpowder, Treason and Plot...” This year the Social Group’s annual Bonfire & Fireworks will take place on Sunday 2nd from 5pm.

November is the month we also pause to reflect in remembrance of a different kind, both of our own loved ones and of those lost in war. Our “Remembering Loved Ones” service on All Souls Day, Sunday 2nd November, will be held at St. Michael’s at 4pm, and the Act of Remembrance for Armistice Day will be held on Tuesday 11th November at the War Memorial beginning at 10.50am - opportunities to give thanks for all that those loved and lost have meant to us and given us in our lives today. Do please join us...

Simon Wallis

NAUNTON

It’s officially autumn!

The days are shorter, cooler; the weather is less predictable. We are trying to catch the last of the warm sun’s rays before we are plunged into the depths of the winter darkness. This is a favourite season for many I’ve spoken with; a ‘looking-back and looking-forwards’ time. It’s the rhythm of our calendar. There’s comfort in the repeating cycle.

Crops are safely gathered in, albeit less bounteous in the fields this year. Offset by bumper fruit yields (apples everywhere it seems) and end of summer garden veg in abundance. The joys of Harvest Time.

School is back in too. The new routines are becoming established, anxiety over new classes and teachers is waning. Smart new uniforms are becoming more ‘lived in’. We notice that there are groups of Duke of Edinburgh candidates wandering around the village with massive backpacks and bedrolls on their backs, carefully studying maps, learning not only about following a plan and finding their way, but also many other valuable life skills along the way.

We have so much to be thankful for - that there are teachers and parents and other volunteers within our communities who are willing to support all our youngsters in their growing up; that we have such a beautiful environment to share and custodians and stewards in the shape of those who maintain our local paths, gates and fences.

The community spirit which Naunton is known for continues to shine through with lots going on. In addition to regular village activities (aikido, pilates, dance for fitness, a craft group, Thursday Nippers toddler group, monthly cinema at St Andrews, Garden club, Boules, Thursday Warm Space coffee at St Andrews - to name a few), we have recently enjoyed a Pop-Up Small Plates restaurant which was very well supported to great acclaim. These in addition to our monthly Saturday morning breakfast ensure folks get chance to enjoy the company of their friends and neighbours.

There have recently been some changes of property ownership around the village; we're always a little sad to see folks move on, and look forward to getting to know our new neighbours!

We continue in a period of (clergy) Vacancy within St Andrews (our Church) and Benefice. The closing date for applications will soon be upon us, and the next part of the process will unfold. We pray for wisdom and guidance for all those involved (not least potential applicants).

We continue to be blessed with a variety of priests to lead worship and administer the sacraments during this vacancy, and are delighted to add Lay Worship Leaders Alasdair Anderson and Ruth Waller (whose 'home Church' is St Mary's Temple Guiting); they were Commissioned on Saturday 20th September in Cirencester at Holy Trinity Church, Watermoor.



The training for this role had taken place on a broadly weekly basis, in evening sessions over the summer with around 25 'trainees' from the Cirencester and neighbouring Deaneries. The Commissioning celebration was attended by over 40 supporters; stories and praise were shared followed by tea and cake. Ruth and Alasdair are now ready to lead Sunday worship around the benefice (but not the sacraments) and in fact with permission, both have already done so to great acclaim at St Andrews. We are thankful to both, for their gifts and willingness to serve

in this way. And to Rev'd Sue for her support and encouragement along this path.



Anyone wandering around the Churchyard may also have heard the sweet sound of the Organ more frequently than usual. We have THREE 'organ scholars' (namely Sally, Richard and Alasdair) who are currently taking Organ Lessons. And they are each putting a lot of time and effort into consolidating what they learn with regular practice. Another need answered, as their skills have already been put to good

use on a Sunday morning.

This year Harvest Festival will be a Benefice wide shared effort, to be held on 5th October at Upper Slaughter (11am). There will be contributions from each Parish. We hope you'll come along and join us!

There will be a special Village talk to benefit St Andrews on Friday 3 October, at the Village Hall. Dr Paul Roberts will once again inform, enlighten and entertain us, this time with a talk about Egyptian Queen Cleopatra, followed by Canapés. A few tickets are still available at the time of writing; please contact stanaunton@yahoo.com or call 07931151744.

The final concert of the season at Naunton Music Society will be held in St. Andrews Church on Friday 26th September. We look forward to welcoming the Gaspard Trio (piano). Thanks to all those who work hard to make these events such fun.

On Saturday October 11, the tea room at local National Trust property Chastleton House will be run by volunteers from our Benefice, as a fundraiser. Served in the little Church next door, delicious home baking will be available between 1 and about 4.30pm. Why not make a day of it? Walk your dog or catch the property before it closes for the Winter. We hope you will pop in and support us- we'd love to see you there!

Moiria Anderson

UPPER SLAUGHTER

The hot, dry days of summer now feel like a memory, as autumn barges in with misty mornings, cold fingers, and what might just have been the first frost. Many of us will also have noticed just how much fruit has been on our trees this year, an abundance of plums, pears, apples, and more.



Across the woodlands, acorns, conkers and other nuts are thick underfoot. I heard on Radio 4 this week that this is a mast year, a phenomenon when trees and shrubs produce far more fruit and nuts than usual. The collective name for this seasonal bounty is mast, from mæst, an Old English word for the nuts and seeds of forest trees, particularly those that were used as food for the fattening of pigs turned out in the woods in the medieval practice of pannage. Oak trees tend to have significant mast years every 5–10

years, and while the precise causes aren't fully understood, the warm spring and summer likely created ideal pollination conditions. Whatever the reason, it's a bumper season and although we don't have pigs feeding on the bounty, I'm sure the squirrels are happy. In a world that often feels uncertain, it's comforting to be reminded of a greater rhythm, one that continues quietly, year after year, beyond our control.

The main event this season is the Benefice Harvest Festival, which will be held at St Peter's, Upper Slaughter on Sunday 5 October. Rather than Upper Slaughter hosting for the rest of the Benefice, we've tried to make this a shared occasion for everyone. Each parish will provide a reader and a floral or produce display, as well as the chance to suggest favourite harvest hymns. After the service, there will be refreshments in the Village Hall.

As in previous years, donations of both produce and money from the collections will go to the North Cotswold Foodbank. Boxes will be available in our local churches in the week leading up to the service, and you're very welcome to bring donations along on the day itself.

A week later, on Saturday 11 October, members of our parish will be taking part in a Benefice-wide tea and cake sale at St Mary's Church, Chastleton, located just next to the lovely National Trust property Chastleton House between Stow and Chipping Norton. The church kindly allows other parishes and charities to use the space to serve refreshments to National Trust visitors and passing walkers. All seven churches in the Benefice will be contributing homemade cakes and volunteers to run the stall, which will be open from 1pm to 5pm. If you're in the area, please do stop by, it's a lovely opportunity to enjoy a slice of cake in a beautiful setting, and all profits will be shared between the churches of the Benefice. If you want to offer to help, then let someone in your PCC know.

As always, thank you to everyone who contributes their time, creativity, and kindness to the running of the Church and village events. Autumn is a season of gathering in, not just crops, but community.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all the visiting priests who are supporting us during the vacancy, their time, presence, and ministry have been greatly appreciated.

Charlotte Van Rooyen

LOWER SLAUGHTER

On Bank Holiday Monday, the village held a very successful village fete. We were blessed with good weather and a joyful day was enjoyed by villagers and visitors alike. This produced a very generous donation boost to church funds which will greatly help us with our church maintenance projects. Many thanks to all who were involved.

Our heating system is being installed and the church will be totally closed from 15 September to 4 October.

A joint benefice Harvest Festival service will be held at Upper Slaughter church at 11am on Sunday 5 October. As is the usual custom, donations of non-perishable food will be collected for the local food bank.

On Saturday 11 October a joint benefice fundraiser will be held at Chastleton House serving refreshments to visitors from 1-5pm. At £5 for adults and £3 for children for tea, coffee, and home-made cake, why not give the dogs a good walk in the grounds and enjoy the autumn colours

and reward yourself with goodies. Donations of large cakes would be very much appreciated - please contact me on 01451 810294 after 6pm.

On 27 October bell ringers will be ringing a full peel of bells lasting 2.75 hours. What a joyful sound - not done at St Mary's for a very long time.

Enjoy the marvellous autumn colours and take great care as the dark nights come upon us again. A season for some "me time" rekindling our indoor hobbies of craft and reading, but most important stay safe and healthy and embrace each changing season.

Marion Marshall

JOIN US AS A **VOLUNTEER**

“ My volunteer has helped me to come out of my shell and become more confident. They have taught me life skills which have helped me to feel calmer and more settled - I feel I'm a better mum ”



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If you would like to make a difference by supporting a local family, we'll be running our FREE 8-week volunteer training course on Thursday mornings, from 22nd January 2026 in Cirencester. As a Home-Start volunteer, you gain access to free, high quality training, learn new skills and enhance your own wellbeing!

Join us to find out more at our 'Information Morning':

Thursday 20th November at 10.30am

Cirencester Baptist Church, Chesterton Lane, Cirencester, GL7 1YE



Further details and an application form can be found at:

www.home-start-cotswolds.org.uk

Or contact us for more information:

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