

What's on

Coming Up

New Year Coffee Morning, Saturday 3rd January 10.00 am—12 noon, St Mary's Church, Elmley Castle - Everyone welcome for coffee, cake and a chat.

Singers needed

A smaller churches choir is going to be formed in the new year to sing at the Cathedral one weekend in April (Friday to Sunday). If you're interested, follow the link:

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/news/diocesan-small-churches-choir.php>

Confirmation Preparation 2026

Confirmation preparation for 2026 will be done in the Deanery (Rev'd Katryn will be involved). Confirmation courses are a wonderful opportunity to explore Christian faith over ten weekly sessions, together with others.

The course may be in preparation for your Confirmation, or, the course may be a refresher about the Christian Faith for you or. A Confirmation Service is a service where the promises made at your baptism are now affirmed by you as an adult and you receive the laying on of hands and anointing with oil by a bishop confirming you in the Christian faith. (If you have not been baptised, this may happen during the confirmation service at in your parish before the Confirmation Service.)

The course will ten one hour sessions from 7-8pm. The venue will be at Church House next to All Saints Church in Evesham.

Dates: 20, 27 April, 11, 18 May (missing bank holidays), 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 June, 6 July

If you are thinking of being Confirmed or you wish to do the course as a refresher, do speak to Rev'd Katryn.

Please email content for the next Link News to rectoryoffice@btinternet.com by **Tuesday 23rd December 2025.**

Contributions from all villages welcomed. Thank you.

Please note that the rectory office is manned on Wednesday mornings 9.00 am - 1.00 pm but will be open on 23rd December and not be open on 24th December

Weddings, funerals and baptisms

Enquiries should be made to Alison Khan, Administrative Co-ordinator, Bredon Hill Group (tel. 07984 748 059)

Link News is sent to all Church members whose email addresses we have. If you would like to forward it to a friend, please feel free to do so. If you know of someone who would like to be included in the mailing list, please ask them

Sunday 14th December, 3rd Sunday of Advent and Sunday 21st December, 4th Sunday of Advent



Advent 3

The question Advent forces upon us was pointedly asked by John the Baptist while languishing in prison: 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another? How, in other words, do we convince ourselves that 'the hopes and fears of all the years are met in' the child in Bethlehem?

Some 400 years before the birth of Jesus, trust in God was drastically eroded with the fall of Jerusalem and exile of the cream of the population to Babylon. The nation was ended, the monarchy ceased and all hope for God's own people was shaken. All that was left of God's people was reduced to a mere 'stump'. But then a lone preacher, Isaiah, declared 'A shoot will come out from the stump of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots'.

A stump is no basis for hope, more a sign of death and decay. There was huge grief that the Sycamore Gap tree had been wilfully reduced to a stump and was unlikely to recover. Yet recently we hear that it has produced saplings that have become 49 'trees of hope' - an Advent parable that brings to mind Hopkins' rich words 'there's a dearest freshness deep down things'.

But God set himself a much harder task in rescuing his people. Through Isaiah he gave a person specification of what God's people could expect from the shoot of Jesse, whose birth we will soon celebrate. Did the arrival of Jesus match that 400-year-old promise? Not by ticking off little details but by exceeding all expectations. God seems to delight in getting himself out of tight corners, specialising in bringing life out of death, hope in the midst of suffering and decay, light in places of interminable darkness.

And what of John's question and our questions in times of doubt and spiritual drought? Jesus answered 'Tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear...' the self-same actions that Isaiah had foretold of the future messiah. God's timescale is vast and yet we can see in Christ's first coming the fulfilment of those ancient promises that give us hope and confidence that God's kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven. Meanwhile let's ask ourselves at the end of the day where new, green shoots are appearing in what we have heard, read or in the people we have met.

Roger Spiller

December Services

Readings and Collects

Sunday 14th December

Readings

Isaiah 35: 1 - 10
Psalm 146: 4 - 10
James 5: 7 - 10
Matthew 11: 2 - 11

Collect:

God, for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to pre-
pare the way of your Son. Give us
courage to speak the truth, to hun-
ger for justice and to suffer for the
cause of right

With Jesus Christ our Lord

Sunday 21st December

Readings

Isaiah 7: 10 - 16
Psalm 80: 1 - 8, 18 - 20
Romans 1: 1 - 7
Matthew 1: 18 - end

Collect:

Eternal God
As Mary waited for the birth of
your Son, so we wait for his com-
ing glory. Bring us through the
birth pangs of this present age to
see, with her, our great salvation
In Jesus Christ our Lord

We pray . . .

For all in our community who are sick or in long term care:

- Bob Davies
- Yvonne Seward
- All in residential and care homes
- All who are living with chronic conditions

We remember the loss of loved ones

Those who have died recently and
those whose anniversary of death
falls at this time.

George Mackison
John Sharpe

*May the souls of the faithful de-
parted. Through the mercy of God,
rest in peace.*

Joy at Christmastime

*Lord, thank you for all that our Churches
will be doing to spread your Joy this Advent
season. May we all work together to bring
light into the world and share the Joy of
your Kingdom here on earth.*

Our friends and neighbours in Russell Street and Church Street, G.C.

*Loving Lord, we pray today for our neigh-
bours and those who live in our communi-
ties.*

*We pray a blessing over each person and
every household and we ask that each one
will be filled with your peace and experi-
ence fullness of life.*

*Where there is goodness and abundance,
we pray for a spirit of gratitude and joy;
where there is pain and challenge, we pray
that there would be an awareness of your
presence with them in and through all
things.*

*We pray for ourselves that we may be
neighbours who are Beacons of Hope, em-
bodying and sharing your light, life and love
through the faithful daily witness of our
discipleship.*

*Please Lord, would you would stir up in us a
deeper desire to bless and serve and pray
for our neighbours and fill us with your Holy
Spirit so that we may see with your eyes
and respond with your love and grace.*

40 years of Magg's, Worcester

Please pray for the continued work of
Magg's, for all who are without a home this
winter and for wisdom and compassion to
shape the next 40 years of this vital mission.



Sunday 14th December

9.00 am Overbury - Holy Communion
10.45 am Bredon - Morning Praise
10.45 am Little Comberton - Morning Worship
4.00 pm Eckington - Carol Service

Tuesday 16th December

8.00 pm On-line - Advent Reflection (please contact Alison Khan for details)

Wednesday 17th December

10.00 am Little Comberton - Holy Communion

Saturday 20th December

4.00 pm Teddington - Carol Service

Sunday 21st December

9.00 am Eckington - Holy Communion
10.45 am Defford - Carol Service
4.00 pm Elmley Castle - Carol Service
5.00 pm Bredon - Carol Service
5.00 pm Besford - Crib & Carol Service
6.00 pm Beckford - Carol Service
6.00 pm Great Comberton - Carol Service
6.00 pm Little Comberton - Carol Service

Tuesday 23rd December

6.00 pm Bricklehampton - Carol Service
8.00 pm On-line - Advent Reflection (please contact Alison Khan for details)

Wednesday 24th December - Christmas Eve

3.00 pm Eckington - Crib Service
4.00 pm Elmley Castle - Crib Service
3.30 pm Ashton-under-Hill - Crib Service
4.00 pm Overbury - Crib Service
5.00 pm Bredon - Crib Service
10.00 pm Defford - Christmas Eve Communion
11.00 pm **Beckford - Midnight Communion**

Thursday 25th December - Christmas Day

9.00 am Bredon's Norton - Holy Communion
9.30 am Besford - Holy Communion
10.00 am Little Comberton - Holy Communion
10.00 am Eckington - Holy Communion
10.00 am Bredon - Holy Communion
10.00 am Overbury - Holy Communion

Sunday 28th December

10.45 am Ashton-under-Hill - Group Service

