



Pontesbury & Stiperstones Family of Churches

Newsletter

30th January 2026

Dear Friends,

Following Fran's announcement last week that she is retiring at the end of August, and receiving written confirmation this week that Richard has completed his curacy (with flying colours) and already knowing that Ian Williams will be joining the team in the summer, we are evidently approaching a time of change. This is therefore a good time to say three things. First, I personally have no intention of going anywhere anytime soon. Second, we are going to do everything in our power to recruit a new House for Duty priest (to replace Fran) as soon as we possibly can. The only obstacle to finding someone to take up post in the Autumn is the dearth of people out there who are likely to be looking for such a post. We must pray hard that we will find someone of the quality of Fran who will love South Shropshire as much as we all do.

Third, and most importantly, are the words of Psalm 46: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. We will not fear though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, and the mountains quake with their surging."

Rev Greg

Baby Emmanuelle

We are pleased to announce that baby Emmanuelle after many weeks in hospital following his birth is at last at home. Thanks to all those who have been praying.

Revd. Fergus Butler-Gallie

Rev Butler-Gallie will be at St George's Church, Pontesbury on Thursday 5th February at 7pm to provide a talk about his book, *Twelve Churches: an unlikely history of the buildings that made Christianity*, and the thoughts behind it.

With his trademark reverence and revelry, The Revd. Fergus Butler-Gallie travels through time and place to get to the heart of the religion he is so passionate about.

In this book, *Twelve Churches*, he takes us from Bethlehem and the birth of Christ some 2000-odd years ago, to the immediate present and future of Christianity. He brings together a Baptist Church in the segregationist American South with a medieval monastery in the heart of the Greek countryside; the Vatican - beautiful,

imposing, vainglorious, the seat of Catholicism - with a sparse, tiny private church above the rocky coastline of Southern Japan.

It is a quest for a new people's history of Christianity, told through the stories of twelve churches scattered across the globe. Through a patchwork of interlinking and varied human stories, Butler-Gallie takes us on a physical and historical journey, exploring the role of hope, faith and beauty in Christianity, but also its fraught relationships with sex, violence and power.

The story of Christianity is, he shows, the story of our modern world: it's a story of who we should be, as well who we sometimes are.

PCC Officers

From next Spring's APCMs, we are still looking for new church officers. St George's is seeking a PCC Secretary and Holy Trinity Minsterley a new churchwarden. If you would like to know more about either role, please speak to Greg about this.

Monday Night Bible Study

The Monday night Bible Study will continue on Feb 2nd at 7 p.m. at 3 Earls Court. All welcome. We will be starting a new series on the Book of Kings. This is a good time to come along for the first time.

The Bishop of Taunton

Fiona Gibson, until recently Archdeacon of Ludlow, will be consecrated as Bishop of Taunton next Friday. Do remember her in your prayers.

Lent Lunches

St George's will be hosting Lent Lunches in Pontesbury throughout Lent, commencing on February 18th from 12-1 p.m. in the West End Room. All welcome.

Messy Church

The monthly Messy Church service that happens at St George's on the first Thursday of the month at 3.30 p.m. will be exploring Love in readiness for Valentine's Day. All welcome.

Bingo

There will be a Bingo Night at St George's 7pm this Saturday January 31st, £5 entry to include light supper (BYOB), Bingo cards £1 each. Booking essential via Marianne 07944 333830 or Marion 07833 325755

Service of Meditation

The monthly service of meditation will take place at Longden at 7 p.m. on Sunday 8th February. All welcome to this reflective, quiet service.

Coffee Morning HTM

The first HTM social event of 2026 is a coffee morning, to be held at Holy Trinity Minsterley on 7th February from 10am - noon. Everyone is welcome so come along and bring a friend! We also need cakes to sell, raffle prizes and helpers so please speak to Sarah if you can help. Look forward to seeing you on the 7th!

Youth Café

Both Youth Cafes (in Minsterley on Mondays and Pontesbury on Wednesdays) would benefit from additional volunteers. It is not necessary to commit to every week. If you would like to know more about the role, please contact Joe Barnes at joe@s-yfc.org

Ash Wednesday

There will be a service of Ashing with Holy Communion on Wednesday February 18th at 7 p.m. at St George's Pontesbury. If you have palm crosses from last year, please return these by Sunday 15th Feb.

Coventry Cathedral

The benefice visit to Coventry Cathedral is booked for Tuesday 28th April. We have booked a coach, but places are at a premium. To reserve your place, please pay £20 to Sadie Preece as soon as possible (there is an additional £10 charge if you would like to join the guided tour). If you are not able to make payment at a service, you can post/deliver to Sadie at 1, Jubilee Cottages, Main Road, Pontesbury (next to the pharmacy).

Readings for Sunday Feb 1st

2 Samuel.15. 13-14,30;16.5-13

Psalm 3

Mark 5. 1-20

Calendar for the Week

Fri 30 th	Coffee Stop at St George's
Sat 31 st	Bingo at St George's at 7 p.m.
Sun 1 st Feb	Holy Communion at Shelve at 9 a.m. Holy Communion at Pontesbury at 10.30 a.m. Tea-time Service at Minsterley at 4 p.m.
Mon 2 nd	Youth Café at HTM at 3.30 p.m. Bible Study at 3 Earls Court at 7 p.m.
Tues 3 rd	Foodbank at Minsterley from 10-12 Little Dragons at St George's 10-11.30 a.m. Tea Service at Pontesbury at 2.30 p.m. Pontesbury Safeguarding Ctte at 3.30 p.m.
Weds 4 th	Coffee Hub at HTM 10-12 Tea Break at St George's 2-4pm Transport Review at 1.145 at The Deanery
Thurs 5 th	Foodbank at Pontesbury 10-12 Trinity Tots at HTM 10-11.30 a.m.

Messy Church at St George's at 3.30 p.m.

Fergus B-G at St George's at 7 p.m.

Sat 7th Coffee Morning at HTM 10-12

Sun 8th Holy Communion at Hope at 9 a.m.

Holy Communion at Minsterley at 10.30 a.m.

Morning Worship at Pontesbury at 10.30 a.m.

Evensong at Habberley at 5 p.m.

Service of Meditation at Longden at 7 p.m.