



Pontesbury & Stiperstones Family of Churches

Newsletter

9th January 2026

Dear friends,

It's my first day back after holidays and so when Greg mailed me this morning to ask if I'd remembered that I was down to do the weekly thought, my first confused thought was to check what the date was, and then to try and scramble together my confused brain to write something half legible.

It might be a year of this. This time next year I will be *somewhere* - it won't be Minsterley, it might be a couple of miles down the road or it might be the other side of the country! It's going to be a bewildering time regardless and so do keep us in your prayers as we seek after God's will for us as a family.

We are fortunate that we follow a good God who cares for us and wants us to be in the "right place" so as to best serve him, but it can be unsettling while that all works itself out. The beginning of the old poem by Minnie Louise Hoskins provides a helpful steer:

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".
And he replied:
"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way".*

Rev. Richard Lonsdale
Asst Curate at Pontesbury & Stiperstones Churches

Meditation

Please note that there will be no service of Meditation this month. We will be starting again in February at Longden Church on the 8th at 7 p.m.

Revd. Fergus Butler-Gallie

Rev Butler-Gallie will be at St George's Church, Pontesbury on the 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 will be 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 Jan 19th at 7 p.m. at 3 Earls Court. All welcome. We will be looking at Daniel in the Lions' Den.

Wednesday Tea Breaks at St George's

Wednesday Tea Breaks have restarted, 2-4pm in the West End Room

Spiritual Question Time

There is a great opportunity to ask the Bishop of Hereford your most challenging questions about the Christian faith at Marton Village Hall on Tuesday 13th January at 7 p.m. This is also a good opportunity to bring friends and neighbours who have questions that they need answering. Coffee and cake provided. Free entry. Please speak to one of the clergy if you would like a lift.

Rea Valley Foodbank

Rea Valley Foodbank would be pleased to receive any items that you feel able to donate. The foodbank requires:

Tinned tomatoes - whole and chopped

Biscuits

Long life milk

Tin veg

Meat for sandwiches and for meals

Tin fruit

Tin fish

Burns Night – do book!

Holy Trinity Church Hope is aiming to hold a fundraising Burns Supper at Hope Village Hall on the 24th January at 7 p.m. Tickets £12 to include 2 course haggis meal.

At the moment we have few tickets sales and would ask that if you are hoping to come you can let us know by Friday 16th January so that we can plan for catering. If there are insufficient numbers to make the event viable we shall cancel on that date. Please contact welcome@hthope.church or ring 07532685368 (please leave a message).

Bingo

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

Coventry Cathedral

The benefice visit to Coventry Cathedral is going ahead on Tuesday 28th April. We have booked a coach, but places are at a premium. To reserve your place, please pay £20 to Sadie Preece (there is an additional £10 charge if you would like to join the guided tour).

Readings for Sunday Jan 11th

Isaiah 42.1-9

Acts 10.34-43

Matthew 3.13-end

Calendar for the Week

Fri 9 th	Coffee Stop at St George's
Sat 10 th	Repair Café at St George's from 10-12
Sun 11 th	Holy Communion at Hope at 9 a.m. Holy Communion at Minsterley at 10.30 a.m. Morning Worship at Pontesbury with Children's Church at 10.30 a.m. Evening Prayer at Habberley at 5 p.m.
Mon 12 th	Youth Café at HTM at 3.30 p.m.
Tues 13 th	Foodbank at Minsterley from 10-12 Little Dragons at St George's 10-11.30 a.m. Ichthus at 2.30 p.m. at Brookfield, Waterwheel Spiritual Question Time at Marton Village Hall at 7 p.m.
Weds 14 th	Coffee Hub at HTM 10-12 Tea Break at St George's 2-4pm
Thurs 15 th	Foodbank at Pontesbury 10-12 Trinity Tots at HTM 10-11.30 a.m. Minsterley PCC at 7 p.m.
Sun 18 th	Worship Together at Shelve at 9 a.m.

Minsterley Praise at Holy Trinity at 10.30 a.m.

Holy Communion at Pontesbury at 10.30 a.m.