

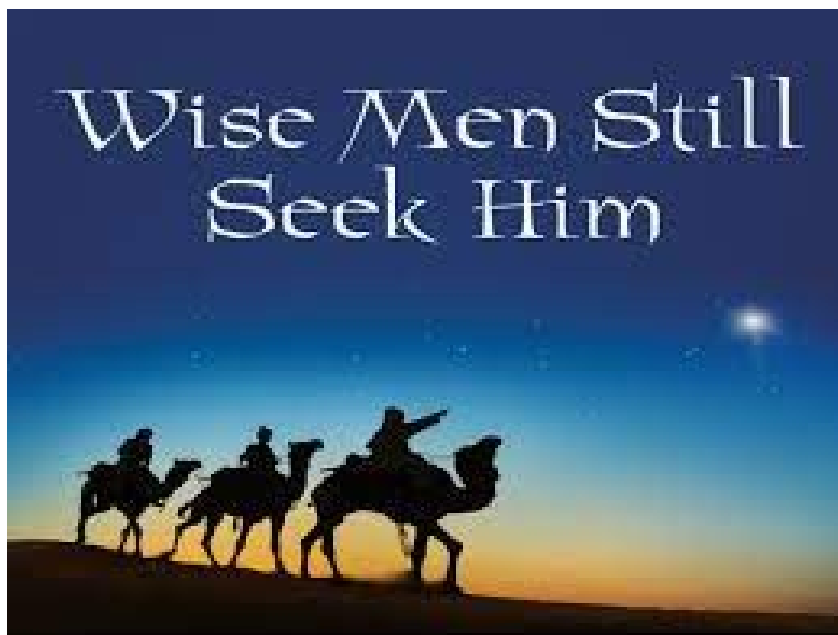


*The Parish of
S. Philip & S. James
Up Hatherley*



Parish Magazine

January 2026



Epiphany

*S. Philip and S. James Parish Church,
Cold Pool Lane, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham, GL51 6HX.*

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Father's Mark...



Follow the Star

Jesus' welcoming committee included Eastern scholars who learned about his birth through their study of astrology. I can't help thinking that the arrival of these people at Bethlehem is a link between a very early form of science (albeit mixed in with their own form of religion) and Christian faith. What better way to discover God than to explore the world and follow the evidence wherever it leads? But what exactly was the star of Bethlehem? Scientists have investigated this question over the centuries, coming up with a variety of answers.

First, there is the idea of a supernova: the

massively bright explosion caused by a dying star. On rare occasions a supernova can be seen from Earth with the naked eye, remaining visible for several months. We now know that Herod the Great died around 4BC, so the actual date of Jesus' birth must be a little earlier. The supernovae that might match this timing were one in the Andromeda galaxy between March 8BC and September 7BC, and another in the constellation of Capricorn in the Spring of 5BC.

Next, comes a planetary conjunction. The alignment most commonly associated with the star of Bethlehem was between Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation of Pisces in 7BC, but not everyone is sure whether this would be extraordinary enough to be the 'star' mentioned in the Bible.

Finally, the bright astronomical object that drew the Magi could have been a comet. This idea came from Sir Colin Humphreys, Professor of Materials Science at Cambridge University, and Oxford astronomer WG Waddington, who found that a comet was recorded by Chinese astronomers between March and May, 5BC. Humphreys then speculated that the 'no room at the inn' scenario came about because Jesus

was born during Passover, and the Magi visited Jesus in May or June. People interpret the biblical account of Jesus' birth in all sorts of ways, but there's very little argument from serious historians that Jesus of Nazareth actually existed. Of course, it is possible that the star of Bethlehem may have been a purely supernatural phenomenon, incapable of any astronomical explanation.

Whatever the true explanation for the 'star of Bethlehem' may be, there's plenty of evidence that an astronomical event could have happened at the time of his birth. I think it makes perfect sense that if God was going to enter his own creation and take human form, it should be marked by a very significant physical event!

Father Mark

Church Calendar

January 2026

Thurs 1 st	MARY MOTHER OF GOD	Mothers
Fri 2 nd	Ss. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen	Monks & Poets
Sat 3 rd	Feria	Christian Unity
SUN 4th	EPIPHANY	The Magi
Mon 5 th	Feria	Forgiveness & Renewal
Tues 6 th	Feria	Rural Communities
Wed 7 th	Feria	Media & the Arts
Thurs 8 th	Feria	Medical Practitioners
Fri 9 th	Feria	The unemployed
Sat 10 th	Feria	Farming & Fishing
SUN 11th	BAPTISM OF THE LORD	The Parish
Mon 12 th	Feria	Catechists
Tues 13 th	S. Hilary B & Dr.	Orthodoxy
Wed 14 th	Feria	AA
Thurs 15 th	Feria	Sick Children
Fri 16 th	Feria	Victims of Crime
Sat 17 th	S. Anthony Ab	The Order of Hospitallers
SUN 18th	2nd SUNDAY of the YEAR	The Parish
Mon 19 th	S. Wulfstan B	Interfaith Relations
Tues 20 th	S. Fabian Pp & M	Places of Education
Wed 21 st	S. Agnes V & M	Sheep Farmers
Thurs 22 nd	S. Vincent Dcn & M	The Permanent Diaconate
Fri 23 rd	Feria	Prisoners & Captives
Sat 24 th	S. Francis de Sale B & Dr.	Patron of Writers
SUN 25th	3rd SUNDAY of the YEAR	The Parish
Mon 26 th	Ss Timothy & Titus Bs	The Rites of the Church
Tues 27 th	Feria	The Archbishops
Wed 28 th	S. Thomas Aquinas Pr & Dr.	Christian Doctrine
Thurs 29 th	Feria	Respect for the earth
Fri 30 th	Bl Charles Stuart, M.	The Monarchy
Sat 31 st	S. John Bosco	Salesian Preventative System

SUNDAYS: **10:00 Parish Mass**

WEEKDAYS: **Said Mass on Thursdays at 10:00.**

For times of other services please see the church notice board or visit our parish website.

The church is open daily for Private Prayer.

The Years Mind

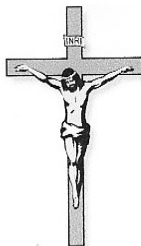


Every day the Church remembers and prays for the souls of those whose anniversary of death falls during the month. Below are those who we remember this month.

- 1st Albert Cecil Lang, Harry Leonard Trickett, John Stuart Richards.*
- 3rd Barbara Miller, George Joseph Pidgeon, Phylis May Harris.*
- 4th Hilda Catherine Horswell, Hilda Major, Margaret Eileen Sammuell.*
- 5th Gilbert Reginald Parratt, Eileen Dowling, Laura Mable Simons, Douglas Charles Ruck, Janet Grace Tunnicliff.*
- 6th Cecil A. Warneford, Rosa Pegler.*
- 7th John Hamilton, Ian McAdam.*
- 8th Arthur W.J. Barron.*
- 9th Emily Dorrance, Beryl Elizabeth Herbert, Gwendoline Mary Hawkes, Kathleen Ashby.*
- 10th James K. Allen, Frank Leslie Douglas, Joan Couldwell, Joyce A Perry.*
- 11th Terence Harrod.*
- 12th Olive Louisa Sollors, Clara Barker.*
- 13th Robert McFarlane, Dorothy Heaton, Freda Lilian Mickley*
- 14th Albert Ransome, John Ingram, Mary Barber, Edgar Charles Ralph.*
- 15th Sophia Rawlinson.*
- 17th Frederick Brown.*
- 18th Margaret Annie Savery.*
- 19th Mary Elizabeth Williams.*

The Years Mind continued

- 20th *Miriam Searle, Albert William Raven,
Ian Frederick Dodd, Reginald Cyril Wise.*
- 21st *Arthur Hunt.*
- 22nd *Evelyn Victoria Clarke,
Charles William Peach (Pr),
Michael Francis Porter.*
- 23rd *Alfred James Winfield, Thomas Idwal Owen,
Joyce Gwendoline Roberts,
Rosemary Brenda Dyer.*
- 24th *Ken Thompson, James William Roberts,
Coraston Jack Gaskins.*
- 25th *Doris Robinson, Mary Wilman,
Yvonne Pamela Williams.*
- 27th *Florence Hunt.*
- 28th *Roger Marshall.*
- 29th *Kenneth Davies.*
- 30th *Christine Mary Horsgood, Margaret Village,
Doris Ada Mary Herbert.*
- 31st *Cecil William Smith (Pr),
Tony (Albert James) Griffiths.*





Parish Supper Night & Bingo.

Thursday 29th January at 1900

in S. Philip & S. James

Church Centre, Hatherley Road.

Meal: £5. Steak Pie & Mash.

25p per Bingo card.

£1 per strip of Raffle tickets.

For catering purposes please reserve a meal

by **24th January** by contacting:

cw2811sjl@gmail.com

or telephoning **01242 704837**.

From the Diocese.

Grandparents and grandchildren exploring faith together: Faithful Generations returns.

Faithful Generations will return in February at Saint John Baptist Church, Cirencester, following the success of last year's gathering at Gloucester Cathedral.

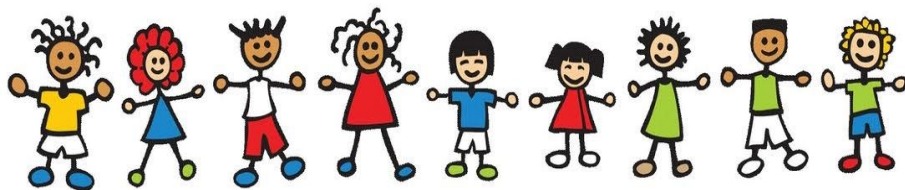
Jo Wetherall, Senior Children and Families Connector, said: "It will be similar to the Cathedral event, but it's going to be contextual to Saint John Baptist Church – it's being shaped by the team and the clergy there."

The theme for the day will be 'pass it on', focusing on how God's unconditional love is shared between generations and lived out through everyday acts of faithfulness and presence.

Families can enjoy creative activities, including a silent disco and a scavenger hunt exploring the church building and discovering what its features reveal about God's character. The day begins with an intergenerational communion service and ends with gathered worship.

"We want talking about God to feel normal... God is in everyday life, and we want people to feel comfortable noticing Him and sharing that across generations," Jo said.

Read the full article and find full event details at www.gloucester.anglican.org/2025/grandparents-and-grandchildren-exploring-faith-together/



'STARTERS'

Our Sunday morning children's group

meets on the 2nd & 4th Sundays

at 10:00 in the Church Centre.

Worship & activities before joining
the adults in Church
for the rest of the Mass.

Go to our website:

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14268

for weekly children's activity sheets.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO
WELCOMING YOU.

Puzzle Time

World Coffee Producing Countries

S	A	A	C	A	S	O	N	G	C	E	z	H	G	N
D	O	M	E	O	O	L	U	P	A	T	P	N	E	O
U	T	H	A	I	L	A	N	D	A	H	M	E	A	L
V	A	L	N	N	T	O	I	H	R	I	N	M	R	A
I	I	D	G	E	A	I	M	D	A	O	T	E	L	U
E	R	E	M	O	N	P	R	B	N	P	A	Y	L	E
T	S	A	O	C	Y	R	O	V	I	I	N	I	E	I
N	L	I	C	A	E	N	D	A	C	A	Z	I	O	R
A	M	S	O	S	U	R	A	G	A	A	A	A	E	A
M	K	E	N	Y	A	A	V	N	R	E	N	A	R	N
A	D	N	A	G	U	G	L	B	A	N	I	H	C	R
A	H	O	N	D	U	R	A	S	G	I	A	S	M	I
S	S	D	O	R	H	I	S	D	U	U	A	A	D	N
V	E	N	E	Z	U	E	L	A	A	G	A	C	A	R
O	C	I	X	E	M	A	E	T	L	M	I	A	R	C

Brazil	Guinea	Laos	Tanzania
China	Honduras	Madagascar	Thailand
Colombia	India	Mexico	Uganda
El Salvador	Indonesia	Nicaragua	Venezuela
Ethiopia	Ivory Coast	Panama	Vietnam
Guatemala	Kenya	Peru	Yemen

Up Hatherley Parish Council

In December, the second phase of consultation began on the blueprint for where development should take place in Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Gloucester – under something called the Strategic and Local Plan. You may recall that over a decade ago, there was a similar process to produce a plan, and at that time we were successful in our arguments against development in the “Chargrove Triangle”.



Here we go again, with the plan looking to find a way to build 43,000 new homes in the decades to come and developers looking to make a profit on the development of the South side of Up Hatherley Way. The document and map is difficult to read but looks to suggest 1500 homes in this location as one of the options.

We will be responding – Up Hatherley Way was built to serve the expansion of Up Hatherley over 30 years ago and is a boundary with the green belt – one of the narrowest green belts in England – and the only one that separates a town and a city. Our concerns are about loss of green spaces and overloading transport networks. We also have doubts that development will meet housing need – so much of what has been added along Shurdington Road has been large executive homes, not smaller or more affordable development.

We can but try.....

Wishing you a Happy New Year

Sarah Bamford (Chair)

Citizens Advice provides an
appointment only advice service on
Thursday morning at the
Up Hatherley Library.

A blue speech bubble containing the text "citizens advice" in white lowercase letters.

**citizens
advice**

**Please call 01452 527202 to arrange an
appointment:**

**Free confidential advice on issues
including:**

A blue speech bubble containing the text "citizens advice" in white lowercase letters.

**citizens
advice**

*Benefits * Employment
*Housing * Debt * Family * Consumer



The winners of the December Draw were

1st Prize = Bob Donnelly
2nd Prize = Annette Nelder
3rd Prize = June Ireland

The next Draw will be held on
11th January 2026

Gardening News



So we turn into another year and it is bound to be as topsy turvy as the last. This year has certainly been a little testing. We started wet, fried through the middle months and then struggled to move onto to autumn planting when the frost didn't turn up to knock out summer. The frost did come eventually, delivering three brutal strokes which saw all tender bedding crushed. The weather was changeable through December and really quite treacherous too.

Now we ready ourselves for new beginnings. The tidying up can continue and providing the weather is not too harsh we can do some pruning. Restoring order to some of our vigorous subjects and our fruit trees. Honeysuckle and Wisterias can all be cut back now. In the case of the Wisteria, knock back last years growth to three or four buds to encourage flowering and by this reduction ensuring that flowers are not swamped by excessive foliage. If you want to get the best from your Christmas Roses, clip out some of the old and damaged foliage to really show the beauty of this group. Hellebores often have black fungal spotted foliage at this time, so just clip it out. January is a great month for planning, checking seed catalogues for the new and interesting and considering crop rotations to isolate pests and diseases from their prey. Garden centres are now offering seed potatoes and whilst there is no rush, its worth shopping early to get the varieties you want. Onion and Shallots are also about and towards the end of the month you can consider planting some out. At the close of 2025, we spoke about planting bare root plants (like hedging) and you are still ok to do this. Ideally bare root plants want to be in the ground by mid March. If you have a bit of warmth available, then the first bedding plants can be sown, with Begonias and Busy Lizzies benefiting from an early start. You can also start a pinch of Summer Cabbage and Cauliflower, but here again they will need early protection. Spring frosts don't take prisoners.

And finally a couple of thoughts, drop a bucket or large pot over rhubarb to force some early stems and keep off the lawn, it will be soggy and tramping across it will cause compaction of the ground, damage to the grass and encourage the moss.

Happy Gardening

Chris Evans

Recipe for the Month

Minced Beef Cobbler

1 onion finely chopped

1oz lard

1 ½ lb minced beef

Large can oxtail soup

2oz mushrooms

6oz self raising flour

2oz margarine

salt and pepper

2 teaspoons of bisto

½ teaspoon mixed herbs

a little milk

Fry onion in the lard until tender and remove from the pan.

Lightly toss minced beef in a little flour and the bisto.

Fry until browned.

Mix together the soup, chopped mushrooms, onions and seasoning, mix well.

Cook in the oven gas 5 (190C / 170C Fan) for 30 minutes.

Sieve flour and salt into a bowl and mix until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.

Add enough milk to form a soft dough.

Roll out and cut into small scones, brush with milk and place on top of the mince.

Return to the oven for a further 25 minutes.

CHURCH CENTRE HIRE



We are pleased to be able to offer the following availability for the regular hire of our Church Centre:

Mondays: from 09:00 – 16:00.

Wednesdays: from 09:00 - 16:00.

Thursdays: from 13:00 – 21:00.

Fridays: from 16:00 – 21:00.

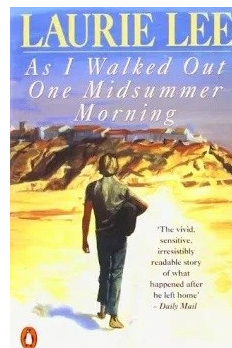
For full details of availability and features please contact Father Mark, Parish Priest, on **01242 704837**.



As I walked out one Midsummer Morning (1969) by Laurie Lee

Reading *Cider with Rosie* (1959) has launched for me a fascination with the life of Laurie Lee and if you would like to share this journey with me, you will not be disappointed.

Lee has an amazing way with words and this second memoir conjures up a past world in a way that I have seldom seen in fiction.



In 1934, Lee departs from his home in Slad, as his sisters and brothers before him, aged 19, with a few possessions including a violin and walks to London where he busks and works as a labourer, finding lodgings where he can and managing on very little. From London, he makes his way to the South Coast and then takes a boat to Vigo in Spain and the book is mainly about his walk through impoverished Spain in the mid 1930s, just as the Civil War is unfolding. The narrative is vivid and reading the book gave me a sense of time travel.

As you read, you can feel the heat and the journey takes in a cast of characters. The young Lee is strong and resourceful, but at times defeated by the conditions. There are many points along the way, where the kindness of strangers is key to survival – people who have very little – helping with a little food or a straw bed where a stranger can rest. Music is very often the key....

If you would enjoy being transported into a forgotten world, then this is the book for you...

Sarah Bamford

The Church Centre...



*... is the ideal venue for...
your children's party, work's conference,
friends get together & concert performance
or that extra special occasion ...*

*Wedding breakfast &
Anniversary celebration*

*With fully equipped kitchen,
tables & chairs, disabled access
& outside space.*

*Room for Bouncy Castles, DJs
& Children's Entertainers.*

Free car parking

For further details telephone

01242 704837

What's On at our Church Centre

Mondays: 18:00-19:00 Balance of Life Pilates.

Tuesdays: 09:30-11:30 Child Minders
Pre-School Group

13:30-16:00 Strength & Balance

Wednesdays: 16:15-21:00 Slimming World

Thursdays: 09:30-12:30 Jo Jingles Play Group

Fridays: 09:30-10:30 Balance of Life Pilates.

For further details of all these activities please see
the noticeboards in the Centre lobby or contact
Father Mark on 01242 704837.

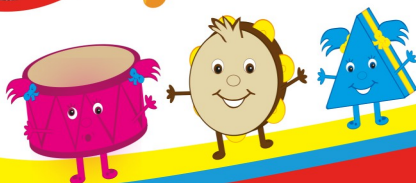


BABY CLASS RE-OPENING!



**Saints Philip and James
Church Centre,
Cold Pool Lane,
Up Hatherley**

**Thursdays
at 11:45am**



Click on the link in the post to book or
contact Gill for more information at
gillb_jojingles@hotmail.com
www.jojingles.com/centralglos



CHRISTMAS IN THE CHURCHYARD

It is always lovely to see people visit the graves of their relatives especially at Christmas here at S. Philip & S. James. To leave Christmas wreaths and other symbols of love for those whom they love but see no longer.

We would like to kindly remind all visitors to please remove Christmas wreaths and other Christmas decoration from the graves by the 31st of January.

Please either dispose of these items in the appropriate green or brown bins provided or take reusable items home.

Please visit our Parish Website for further information on Churchyard rules and regulations

Many thanks & Happy New Year.

MAINTENANCE OF BURIAL & INTERMENT PLOTS

What is permitted:

Permanent stone vases are only those authorized and have permission granted, and only fresh flowers (out of their wrappings), or cuttings from shrubs and bushes, may be placed in them.

Grassed interment plots are enclosed by a band of paving. Vases should be placed on this and not on the grass, both to respect other plots and to facilitate the maintenance of the churchyard.

Small spring bulbs may be planted (from **September to October**), under the grass of a grave with minimal disturbance to the turf.

Poppies (or small wooden remembrance crosses) at the time of Remembrance Sunday. To be removed by **30th November**.

Christmas wreaths of natural foliage are welcome from mid-December. To be removed by **31st January**.

What is not permitted:

No artificial flowers of any kind. The only exception to this is for poppies on Remembrance Sunday.

No trees, shrubs, or roses are allowed to be planted.

No individual gardens are permitted.

Items not allowed because they are dangerous, interfere with grass cutting, will get damaged or are out of keeping with the churchyard, include such items as:

glass or other breakable or sharp items; chippings or gravel; pictures, portraits or photographs; statues or ornaments; lights (candles, solar or battery); plastic bowls, birdbaths; kerbs, railings or chains; windmills, wind-chimes, cards, animal figures, angels, etc.

The PCC retains the right to remove anything from the churchyard which does not comply with these or other regulations.