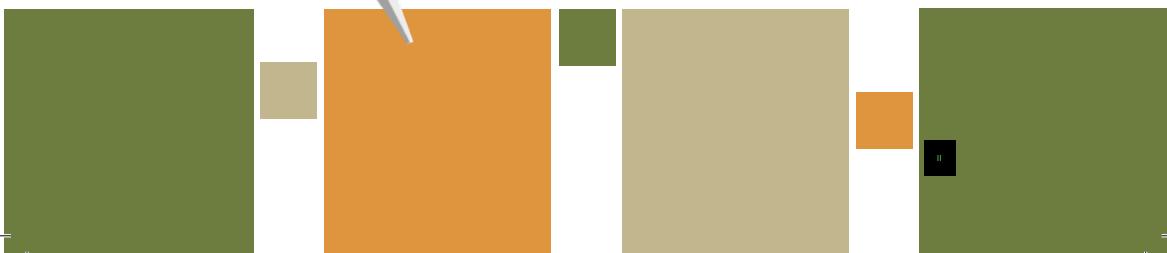




February 2026

Compass



A letter from Viv



I thought I would share with you a new profile photo - me as Wonder Woman! I played the part in our children's Christmas Extravaganza at Weston and thoroughly enjoyed myself! However, the role is actually a terrible Christian role model!



At the pre-Christmas children's event in December, Viv revealed her secret identity. It was just what many of us have long suspected!

At the start of this new year, as usually happens, we were once again bombarded by advice about how to be healthier; how to avoid bad things like chocolate, alcohol and too much screen time; and how to generally improve ourselves.

Now I would heartily endorse all of these “*Good Things*” but there is a danger. All this good advice could make the rest of us ordinary mortals feel like *failures*. Maybe by the time we reach February we have failed to “lose that stone”; gone back to the alcohol after *Dry January*, and are slumped in front of our screen or on our phones feeling inadequate, weak and a complete failure!

Jesus never saw people as failures

Jesus never saw people as failures. Just the opposite. He sought out the weak, those marginalised by society because of their physical weakness; or their professions like prostitutes and tax collectors. He was ready to meet with lepers and all those who were shunned by “respectable” society! He loved them and by showing them that love, he healed them.

I know I am not Wonder Woman. I have so many faults, I make so many mistakes and time and time again I fail to do what I know I should do. But I know that does not stop Jesus loving me. He will forgive me and He will give me the strength to go on doing His work in this community. I have to rely utterly on his power and strength, not my own.

(continued on next page)





A letter from Viv continued

I know God has loved me (and all of you!) *unconditionally* from when we were in the womb. One of my favourite psalms, *Ps 139* says this:

“For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

a

So, if we who are “fearfully and wonderfully made” can learn to rely on God’s strength and not our own, then ~~perhaps~~ we can all be *Wonder Women and Supermen!!*



This Lent, journey with us through the Book of Acts and reflect on the ~~attitudes~~ and **acts** of the disciples that can encourage us to be bringers of ~~hope~~ through Holy Spirit-led attitudes and actions in our own age.

Each **Wednesday 7.30pm** at 3 Old School Close Weston ST18 0HF
February 25th to 25th March

The course book costs £6.99 and is available from the link below
<https://shop.embraceme.org/all-lent-easter/lent-study-guide-2026-edition>
If you have difficulty ordering this, or are not on the internet, please contact
Rev Vivienne 01889 271046 who will order it for you.



ACTS OF HOPE

A STUDY GUIDE



A Mid Trent Team Group for LENT
A series of 5 meetings starting on
Wednesday FEBRUARY 15 2026
7.30th at 3 Old School Close,
Weston. ST18 0HF
Just come along!



FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Please note, after our lovely season of services over Christmas and New Year there are no services planned at St. James' Church this month owing to roof repairs.



Just one of many memorable moments at Fradswell this Christmas

What's going on in Fradswell?

Is it a riot? Is it a protest? - no its a WASSAIL !

Find out more on the next page.





Wassail Friday

6th February.

Fradswell Village Hall Bar opens at 6.00^{pm}

The Wassail starts at 7.00^{pm}.

Join us in this traditional event to
wake up our apple trees
and ensure a good harvest.

Please bring something to rattle or bang
and wear warm clothing and stout footwear!

Hot Stuff Catering

will be joining us to serve their delicious freshly cooked food.

Other events at Fradswell village hall this month

Milwich & Fradswell Toddlers Tuesday mornings 10.00^{am}-12^{noon}

Contact Jane Brookes **07944 060138** for details.

Whist Tuesday 3rd February 2.00^{pm}- 4.00^{pm}

Please ring Christina Rushton on 07989 057467 for details.

Dementia-friendly coffee morning Wednesday 4th February 10.00^{am}-12^{noon} All welcome. Please ring Laura on 07834 388140 for more information.

Coffee Morning Saturday 14th February 10.00^{am}-12^{noon}.

Hot drinks, bacon baps and local craft stalls to browse.

Come along for a chat and a shop. Ring Irene 07770 780078 for further information.

Get Waisted - every Thursday morning 10.00^{am}-11.00^{am}.

Gentle exercise for mind and body. Lots of giggles too!

Contact: Jan Griffin on 07891 140166

Lunch Club 25th February 12^{noon} -2.00^{pm} £6 for a

2-course home-cooked lunch with tea or coffee.

Booking essential. Please ring Irene 07770 780078

Date for the diary Friday 6th March- Quiz Night!

Bar open from 6.00^{pm} Quiz starts at 7.00^{pm}.

£5 for a team of up to 6 people



*This 17th century
Wassail Cup is housed in
the V&A museum.*

*It is made from pear wood
with a silver rim.*



FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday 22nd 9.30^{am} Holy Communion

It's almost February and the new year is ahead of us at St Peters. With December and Christmas seeming a lifetime away I just want to say **A Big Thank You** to *Naomi* and her daughter *Thailiya* for the lovely floral and festive greenery displays that decorated the church for the Christmas carol service and our Christmas Day team celebration. We were surprised and touched by their offer to decorate, giving freely of their time and materials, it was very much appreciated. We received many complimentary comments from visitors to the church over the Christmas period.



Another Big Thank You to all those who attended our Christmas Carol Service on 14th December, with a congregation of 50 joining us for the Nativity story, readings and a delve into the history and meaning of some of our best-known Carols. It was a truly joyous occasion, followed by scrumptious festive treats, courtesy of *Sue* and *Sophie*, so **A big thank you** to them, as always, for supporting the church's endeavours.

A Christmas day service at Gayton, our first for many years, for all the Mid Trent team of Churches was also well attended. **We decided to use the offering gifts -almost £200- as a donation to the charity Water Aid** to help provide people in many places over our world with clean water, our most basic of human needs.

... and **one more Big Thank You** to all who bought tickets and those who donated prizes for our Christmas Raffle in aid of the Church. We also had donations which took our total to an amazing **£576.61**. Your Support is really appreciated. As I wrote in Compass last year, St Peters Church, like many in the Mid Trent team, continues to struggle to manage financially. Our Parochial Church Council-just three of us at present-maintain the Church and the running of its affairs. We will be looking at Fundraising during the year and will be taking advice on how best to maintain the presence of our historic church building in the life of the Village.

Jane Rock Churchwarden



Join us for a 'love'-ly evening at Gayton
on Valentine's Day (Saturday 14th) from 6.00^{pm}.

Come along to the Village Hall for a Valentine's themed drink (or your usual tipple) and a light bite to eat, with a choice of scrumptious savoury tarts and delicious desserts to tickle your taste buds.

Can't get a babysitter? We'll have a craft table with Valentine's card making for the kids (or adults... if you've forgotten!) along with pizza and ice cream. Booking is not essential but PLEASE register your interest with Sue (01889 270273) or Christine (01889 624867) or email gaytonvillagehall@gmail.co.uk

All proceeds in aid of Gayton Village Hall.

(Registered Charity No. 1090896)

Love you see you there!



THE MID TRENT TEAM



BURSTON ST RUFIN

PCC Rep. Robert Selby 01889 508454
janetselby3@gmail.com

FRADSWELL ST JAMES THE LESS

Wardens Sarah Emery 07773 220428
Rachel Donegan 07581 336422

PCC Sec. Leila Patton leila_patton@icloud.com
Compass Irene Philips irene280564@gmail.com

GAYTON ST PETER

Warden/Compass Jane Rock 01785251180& 07410441224 janerock@phonecoop.coop

HIXON ST PETER

Warden & Tim Moss 01889271007 & 07813531146 mosstimo90@gmail.com
Compass

HOPTON ST PETER

Deputy Warden Pat Preece 07342 638669 preecepatricia4@gmail.com

MILWICH ALL SAINTS

Warden Gordon Broomfield 01889 505493 gordon@hoodandbroomfield.co.uk
PCC Sec. Shirley Hayes hazydays66@hotmail.co.uk
Compass Alison Rose 01889 505507 alisonmrose@btinternet.com

SALT ST JAMES

Warden Janet Stubbs 01785 213868 saltandhoptonchurches@gmail.com
Deputy Chris Crookes 01889 508364 willcrookes@btinternet.com
PCC Sec & Compass Margaret Walls 01889 508412 margaretevwalls@gmail.com

SANDON ALL SAINTS

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Elizabeth Jarrett 01785 816851 & 07534915068 elizabethjarrett@gmail.com
Deputy Ken Pemberton 01782 641248 kenneth.pemberton43@gmail.com
PCC Sec. Jeannette Butt 01785618248 & 07963252869 jeannettebutt@live.co.uk
& Compass

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Warden Jenny Brown 01889 270596 mandjb79@gmail.com
PCC Sec & Compass Susanna Munro 01889 270114 munro.susanna@gmail.com

WESTON ST ANDREW

Wardens Gill Titley 01889 270594 gilltitley10@gmail.com
Kate Tague 07896 087266 katetague1969@gmail.com
PCC Sec. Pat Hopkin 07419 128 317 alanhopkin47@gmail.com
Compass Alan Hopkin 07419 128 317 alanhopkin47@gmail.com

Associate Minister

Rev Vivienne Starkie

3 Old School Close

Weston, ST18 0HF

01889 271046

cvtarkie@aol.com

COMPASS EDITOR Rev Duncan Leake 0794 1091 666



The December meeting was addressed by *Brian Morris* who gave a talk on **Magic Lantern Shows**.

The lamp is an early type of image projector that uses pictures, paintings or photographs on transparent plates (usually made of glass), one or more lenses, and a light source. Because a single lens inverts an image

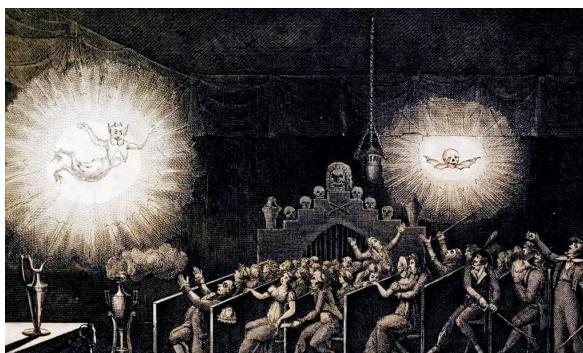
projected through it which inverts the image, slides are inserted upside down. It was mostly developed in the 17th century and commonly used for entertainment purposes by showmen who travelled the country. It was increasingly used for education during the 19th century.

Apart from sunlight, the only light sources available at the time were candles and oil lamps, which were very inefficient and produced very dim projected images. The invention of The Argand Lamp (*a much more efficient Oil lamp*) in the 1790s helped to make the images brighter, and the invention of the electric arc lamp in the 1860s eliminated the need for combustible gases or hazardous chemicals.

The MagicLantern was in wide use from the 18th century until the mid-20th century when it was superseded by a compact version that could hold many 35mm photographic slides: the slide projector.

At the 3rd February meeting we will hear
The story of Beaudesert hall and park as told by *Bob Marsh.*

The topic for our meeting on 3rd March will be
A new home in Stone for GPO/BT by *Shaun Farrelly*.
All meetings start at 8.00^{pm}. John Egginton



An 18th Century engraving of a “phantasmogoria” The magic lantern was so called by the early audiences who saw devils and angels mysteriously appear on the wall, as if by magic!



Hixon 'Great British' Spring Clean 2026



Once again Hixon Green & Clean will be joining in with Keep Britain Tidy's annual national campaign, *The Great British Spring Clean*, which runs from 13th to 29th March. We've set aside **Sunday, 29th March** as our Hixon Spring Clean this year. However, we don't just do one litter pick a year, but do so as a group once a month, weather permitting, the **first Sunday of every month** as well as loaning equipment out to individuals.



This was our effort in January which, despite the snow, Streetscene collected very quickly, as well as the fly tipping we had reported in Trent Lane.

A recent survey by Keep Britain Tidy found that 85% of people who took part in litter picks reported they made them feel pride in their area and 74% said it helped with their well-being. It certainly is great exercise. Litter picking gets you out and about and is a good way to meet like-minded people. So why not JOIN US?

Interested? email **hixongreenandclean@outlook.com** , contact us on Facebook, or call *Nigel* on **07910945019**

These are our planned litter picks for the next few months:
Sundays, 1st February, 1st March, Sunday, 29th March - Keep Britain Tidy, Great British Spring Clean (*NB after our efforts in March we are not planning a group litter pick in April.*) Sunday, 3rd May

All our litter picks are 10.00^{am} starts, we meet up in the Hixon Parish Council car park. Help us make a difference, help Hixon become greener and cleaner. Get Involved with Hixon Green & Clean and PICK IT UP!

**The Amenity Vehicle
will visit Hixon again on
Saturday 7th March.
at the Hixon Village Hall Car Park
from 10.00^{am}-11.00am**



Join the Great British Spring Clean

March 13th-29th
2026



FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday 22nd 9.30^{am} Holy Communion



All are welcome for tea/coffee & biscuits at Hopton Village Hall on **Tuesday February 24th** from 10.30am-12noon. Please join us for coffee/tea biscuits, also a bookstall and lots of chatter! For more information contact Jan Bennett: 01785 242446

Hopton Village Hall can be booked through the Hopton & Coton Parish Council website. The cost is just £10 per hour.

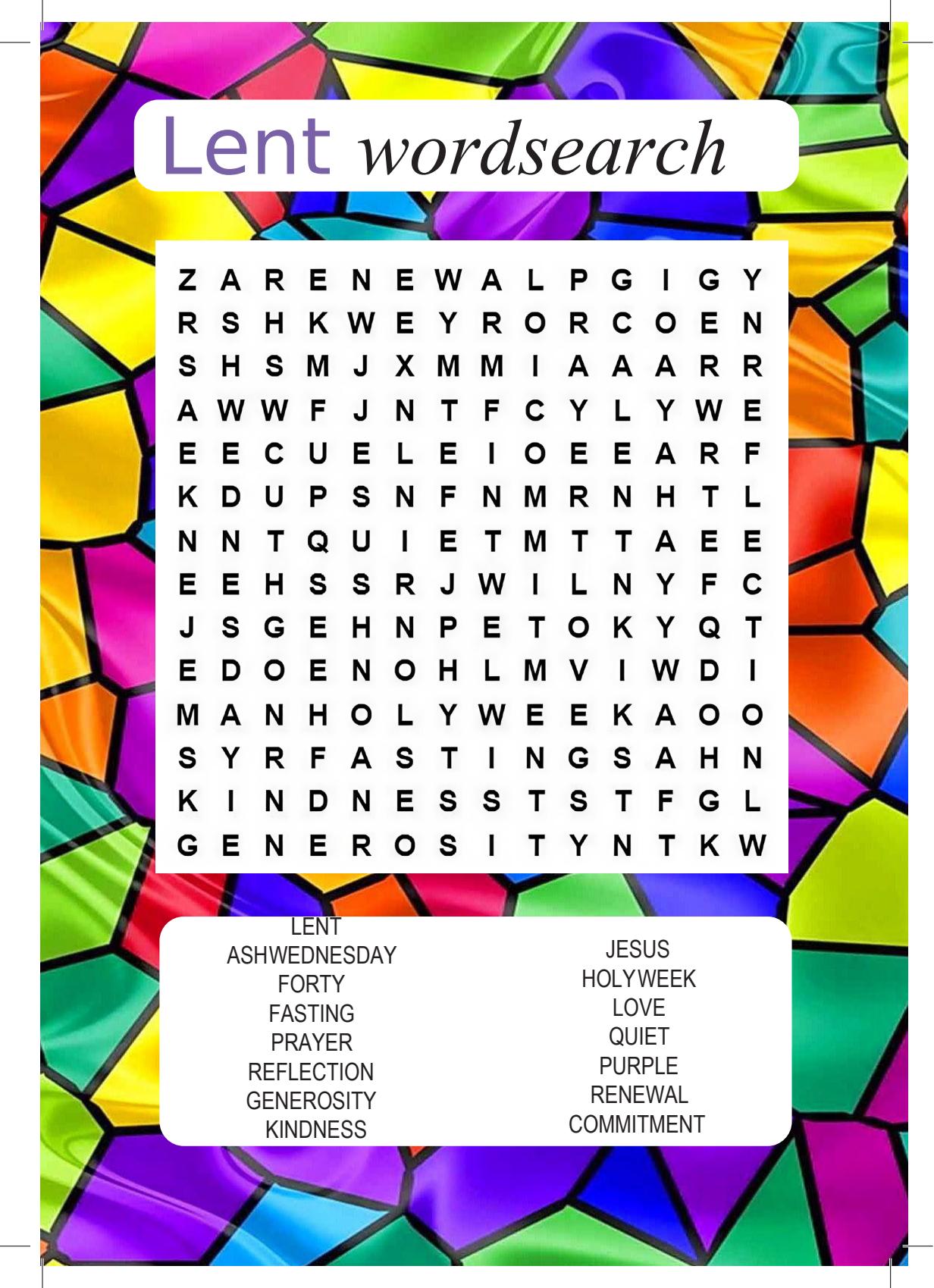
Wood Turners Want to improve or share your skills? Come along on the second Monday of the month in Hopton Village Hall: 7.30^{pm}-10.00^{pm}

Hopton & District Garden Guild Our speaker for the last meeting of 2025 in December was *Kevin Reynolds* with a talk entitled '**A wild Christmas**' describing how and why we associate certain animals and birds with Christmas. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 3rd February when we have *Melanie Latham* who will be demonstrating the making of chutney, and have some for sale, while telling the story of her work for Holly Cottage Preserves. Looking further forward to March, *Jane Allison* will be our speaker with a talk about wild flowers entitled '**Take a walk on the wild side**', and will bring plants for sale from her own nursery.

Membership of the guild is £15 per year. We encourage visitors (£2.50) to our monthly meetings, where you will be made welcome and be entertained by speakers covering a wide variety of interests. We have a light hearted competition each meeting for flowers or craft. Tea/coffee & biscuits are included, followed by a raffle to round off the evening. We meet on the **first Tuesday each month** at 7:30^{pm} in Hopton village hall. For information please contact *Jill Buss* on **01785 259808** or look out for our yellow monthly newsletter on local village noticeboards.

Hopton Knit and Natter meet every Monday (except Bank Holidays) between 2.00^{pm} & 4.00^{pm} at Hopton Village Hall. The cost of a session is £3 and include tea & cake and lots of conversation! For more information please contact Jan on 01785 255313 or just pop along and join us.

Lent wordsearch



Z A R E N E W A L P G I G Y
R S H K K W E Y R O R C O E N
S H S M J X M M I A A A R R
A W W F J N T F C Y L Y W E
E E C U E L E I O E E A R F
K D U P S N F N M R N H T L
N N T Q U I E T M T T A E E
E E H S S R J W I L N Y F C
J S G E H N P E T O K Y Q T
E D O E N O H L M V I W D I
M A N H O L Y W E E K A O O
S Y R F A S T I N G S A H N
K I N D N E S S S T S T F G L
G E N E R O S I T Y N T K W

LENT
ASHWEDNESDAY
FORTY
FASTING
PRAYER
REFLECTION
GENEROSITY
KINDNESS

JESUS
HOLY WEEK
LOVE
QUIET
PURPLE
RENEWAL
COMMITMENT

FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday	1st	10.00^{am}
	15th	11.15^{am}
	22nd	11.15^{am}

Morning Praise
Holy Communion
Holy Communion

Warm Welcome Group

The next meeting is on Wednesday **11th February** from 10.00^{am} – 1.00^{pm}.

For more details, please contact

Elaine 07702 865011. A participant has written in to acknowledge the group's success and congratulate Elaine and her band of helpers now that Warm Welcome has celebrated a year of meeting. It is great to see the village hall being used in this way and everyone who attends finds a very 'warm welcome' indeed.

Milwich Produce Guild

You do not have to be a member to show your bulbs or house plants – it's open to all. At this time of the year the flowers and scent are especially welcome, so if you're reading this, just come along anyway to enjoy and lift your spirits.

Quiz Night at the Green Man

Tuesday 17th February The Quiz starts at 8pm prompt - it's a fun night with refreshments, £3pp, 4 in a team. All proceeds to Marie Curie. New teams welcomed.

Yin Yoga Every Monday at the village hall. 7.00^{pm}-8.00^{pm}. Contact Anita 07948 351789

36th Open Bulb Show
 Hyacinths, Irises, Tete a Tete
 Narcissus, Succulents
 & House Plants

Saturday 21st February 2026
 Staging at 12 noon
 50p per entry
 Judging 12:30^{pm} prompt
 General Admission 1.30^{pm}
Refreshments Available
including Coffee & Tea

For more information please contact :
Celia Vaughan Chairman
 "The Beehive", Garshall Green
 Milwich, Stafford, ST18 0EP
 Tel: 01889 505783
 celiav@btinternet.com

Show Secretary
Chris Bulman
 Tel: 01889 505053
 chriscbulman@btinternet.com



FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday	1 st	9.30 ^{am}	Holy Communion <i>Candlemas</i>
	8 th	10.00 ^{am}	Holy Communion <i>Praise Together</i>
	15 th	11.15 ^{am}	Holy Communion



O What a Year!

It's good to look back and reflect on what we have achieved in the last 12 months in Salt & Hopton. The church is a focal point of the village and the heart of where key events of our lives are recorded.

We celebrated the baptism of *Donald, Grace and Olivia*, and two weddings between *Stella & Alex* and *James & Amy*.

Both were happy occasions, but we also said our goodbyes to members of the community we loved; *Pat Scott, John & Beryl Rock* and *Frank Stubbs*. We tend to take the church for granted, but when we need it and need its support our faith brings us together.

Overall attendance has been maintained and at key dates through the year, such as Easter and Christmas the community came to celebrate the events with the regular church goers. Do remember, you are always welcome to attend our Sunday service or have quiet time during the week when the church is open.

Our major events have all been supported by the communities of Salt and Hopton. *The Rock Choir*, our *Murder Mystery* evening, cake sales and our summer fete all contributed to funding the running of the church. All these efforts enabled us to commence the renovation work on the roof and the chancel area. The hiccup of finding brown long eared bats in residence, the roof slates crumbling whilst being removed and the investigation of the leaning bellcote to ensure stability, all resulted in the two bells being taken down and not rehung. They are now in storage at Taylor Bells Foundry. Hopefully, they will be reinstated in the future.

We came in on budget partly because of the generosity of our congregation, our community and the local businesses who responded so positively to our roof appeal. *(Continued on next page...)*



We thank you for your support. We couldn't have done it without YOU. Part of the £50,000 we needed came from grants and we thank Salt Parish Council, The Benefactor Trust, Stafford Historic Churches, Edward Cadbury Trust, William Lasslett Trust, Congregational and General, and Garfield Weston for their contributions. The work on the church has resulted in the chancel area being made watertight and it will prevent the interior from deteriorating further.

We have more to do this year.

We rounded off the year with the Carol Service and our beautiful Christmas tree and nativity scenes both inside and outside the church, installed by the Scott family. It was attended by people from both Salt and Hopton, who enjoyed the carols and readings and generously donated £160 to Stafford Baby Bank. This gift was greatly appreciated.

We look forward to the year ahead and hope that our faith, with the support from the community, will enable our church to prosper and serve you all in the months ahead.

Thanks must go to Janet Stubbs, our Church Warden, who has worked tirelessly over the last few years to enable the major repair work on Salt Church to take place, by applying for grants, completing Faculties and organising events.





Salt & Hopton Churches: Easyfundraising

In order to maintain our lovely buildings, we need extra income and every little helps! Please support us if you can and sign up at:
www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/salthoptonchurches/

House of Bread Non-perishable groceries/cleaning products are collected from Salt Church porch every Wednesday morning. All contributions are very welcome & can be placed in the HOB box any day of the week.

Salt & Enson Parish Council The next Council meeting will take place on Wednesday 4th March 2026 in Salt Village Hall. Members of the public welcome. www.saltandensonparishcouncil.co.uk

Parish Clerk: David Croxford clerk@saltandensonparishcouncil.co.uk

Salt & District Friendship Club meet on Wednesday February 4th & 18th from 2.30^{pm}-4.00^{pm} in Salt Village Hall for bingo, a cup of tea and a chat. New members always welcome.

Community Cafe at Salt Village Hall Wednesday February 11th and 25th from 2.30^{pm} - 3.30^{pm}. Everyone is welcome to come along and join us for tea or coffee, cake and a chat, in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Winter Quiz Night at Salt Village Hall Friday February 13th at 7.30^{pm}
Come and join in our fun quiz. Teams of 4; £3.50 per head.
Bring your own drinks & nibbles.

Salt Christian Fellowship Interdenominational group

Tuesdays 7.30-9.30pm for worship songs, bible study & prayers

All are welcome. Contact: Paul Stubbs on 07899916092 or email:

pauljstubbs@aol.com or Jane Mitchell on 01889 508284

Salt Village Hall is available for hire.
For bookings please contact Jane Mitchell (01889 508284)

**The Amenity Vehicle
will visit Salt again on
Saturday 21st March.
at the Village Hall Car Park**

*Times will be published in the
March Compass*



SANDON & BURSTON

FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday 1st 11.15^{am}

15th 9.30^{am}

22nd 11.15^{am}

Holy Communion *Candlemas*

at BURSTON - Holy Communion

BCP Matins

CHRISTMAS AT SANDON

Our *Carol Service* on Sunday 19 December was ably planned and led by Steve Butt with 9 lessons and a mixture of well-loved carols and music. The congregation also enjoyed mulled wine & mince pies.



Mumbles Christmas Service Some of the children from the nursery and their parents visited All Saints' Church on November 19th for their short carol service. The theme was gifts. The children did some action songs as well joining with parents to sing carols. The Wise Men and their gifts featured in the content and Eve, a staff member, read a poem about giving. Mrs Butt showed them that the best wrapped gift doesn't always contain the best present - it's what is on the inside that counts!

Rev Viv let them help her unwrap the best Christmas gift of all, Baby Jesus of course. It is always a pleasure to welcome the children, parents and staff from Mumbles to All Saints' Church.

Our annual *Christingle Service*, led this year by Rev Duncan Leake on Christmas Eve, was well-attended. Due to our Heritage works we had no access to the Chancel, but the large inflatable and illuminated nativity supplied by Duncan more than made up for that. Children were invited by Duncan to stand in front of the scene holding battery tea lights to sing *Away in a Manger*. Some children had photos taken after the service.

Midnight Communion Duncan returned to lead the Team's Midnight worship. We had traditional carols, readings and prayers. Duncan presented his Christmas message to the mixed congregation in a truly engaging way as he played gentle background music on his keyboard. It was a wonderful start to Christmas Day.





Heritage Project Update



The last 3 months has seen the cleaning of the Erdeswicke monument, the tombs and wall paintings, revealing brighter colours. Conservation will continue for the next three months. See photo

A new soakaway has been installed at the east end of the churchyard to improve drainage.

Scaffolding has been erected both inside and outside to enable the removal of the stained-glass windows for restoration off-site.

Thanks to the students at Christ Church Academy in Stone and The King's C of E

Academy in Kidsgrove, we have beautiful artwork to appreciate whilst the windows are out. Large internal scaffolding will now remain for some time at the West end whilst the wall is replastered and repainted.

Forthcoming Heritage Event

Please see the back page of this edition of Compass for information about our Down Memory Lane event on February 21st. If you cannot attend but would be willing to share your memories, oral history, objects or photos then please contact keystoneheritage.info@gmail.com or ring Elizabeth Jarrett on 07534 915068

A Message from the Parish Council

A road closure notice has been put on Burston railway bridge for 19 January. Contact with the contractor suggests that this is for a new telegraph pole for a fibre optic cable to be brought into the village. The road will not be fully closed. For details of connecting to the fibre optic line contact should be made with Open Reach/BT. Sadly, the temporary River Trent bridge was not put in place before Christmas as we had been led to believe it would be. The latest estimate is that, subject to weather, this will happen in the spring. Hugo Wildblood



I can't thank you enough! writes Margaret.

Each time there is a delivery of Compass Magazines for the Mid Trent churches from the printers, I receive a phone call to come and collect the 190 magazines to be delivered in the Sandon and Burston area. My husband Nigel and I go to Weston church and pick them up, then break them down for delivery to the Compass distributors. First of all, to Janet and Robert Selby for passing on to the Burston team. Simon Shelley is next for delivery to the people living in the heart of Sandon Village. Then on to Maureen Shone for giving out to people on the Sandon Estate, not forgetting to leave some with Leanne at the village shop. We deliver to Maureen Finlay who does the distribution to people in the Stone area. Eventually we set off on our own small round starting at the Dog and Doublet via the outlying farms as far as Oaktree Farm before leaving the remainder at the church for the congregation and visitors. It would not be possible to deliver all these magazines without the goodwill and willingness of the team of Compass Distributors. As we start 2026, I would like to express my appreciation for their help without which it would not be possible to achieve. **Thank you so much!** Margaret Wilson

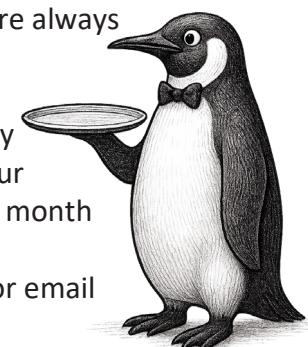


Sandon WI

We have already got to the second meeting of 2026! We are lucky at Sandon WI because we have a wide range of topics brought to us by a talented band of speakers. On February 18th we are all going to be "**Passionate About Penguins**". I always think they look like a bunch of well-turned-out waiters!! Paul Rodney will be telling us more about these fascinating birds. Their habitat is under threat both from global warming and man. If you do decide to take the plunge and come to a meeting the competition is a favourite Penguin Book and there are always delicious refreshments to enjoy.

So, if you are new to the area or would just like to meet new people in an inclusive, relaxed and friendly atmosphere, please do come and visit us at any of our meetings. We meet on the third Wednesday of the month in Sandon Parish Rooms, Lichfield Road at 7.30^{pm}.

Contact Judy Goodson, President on **01785 613966** or email sandonwisecretary@gmail.com to find out more.





There's no chance of developing eye strain by looking on the bright side of things.

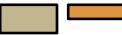
Barbara's Words of Wisdom

The Newly Opened Dog & Doublet 1906

Building commenced in 1905 and was licenced to open six days by order of the 5th Earl of Harrowby. The six-day licence was due to his Lordship calling in from a Sunday church service to see how the building works were progressing only to find the builders drinking alcohol in the adjacent Dog & Doublet (old Pack Horse Inn) which was still trading while the new pub was being built. His Lordship vowed never to open the pub on Sundays and it remained a six-day licence until 1990. The rent for the new pub was £50 per annum with a function room and stables. The signage, originally on the roadside, was moved back and attached to the building in the 1920's. The present date stone above the arch (1906) was added

in 1970 by request of the 6th Earl of Harrowby.

S J Shelley collection



Personality from the Pews

Donald Victor John (*born on V.J. day!*) MITCHELL
15 August 1945. After moving from my hometown of Winchester to Leek at 19 years old, I met and married Kathy. Following several years working with an engineering company, daughters Sarah and Kate were born in Penrith, and we settled in Sandon House in 1977 where son James was born,



I joined All Saints Church and soon became a member of the PCC and enjoyed working on the maintenance and care of the building, (now called the Tuesday Graveyard Workers Group!) I now mostly mow and maintain the lower current graveyard area (where my dear Kathy is buried). During many trips abroad with my export business Kathy and I helped a charity in Zimbabwe caring for and educating street children and now help to raise funds for Katharine House Hospice.

I treasure my daughters, son, grandchildren and soon to be great granddaughter!) My hobby is classic car restoration. My motto is to try to make a difference every day and *Carpe Diem!*

My favourite bible passage is 1 Corinthians 13:13

*... while Hope Faith and Love remain,
the greatest of these is LOVE.*

STOWE-BY-CHARTLEY

FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday 1st 11.15^{am} Morning Praise *Candlemas*
22nd 11.15^{am} Holy Communion

Giving to charity The *Carol service* collection of £100 has been sent to The Oak Tree Project. The *Carol Singing and Hamper at The Cock* raised £410.49p this has been sent to the Alzheimer's Society.

Those people who leave groceries in The House of Bread box in Church please be assured that your generous donations are transported to and are greatly appreciated by The House of Bread organisation.

Village Produce Guild - Garden Guild

Jeff Bates gave us a very interesting resume of **Windsor Great Park** and its environs in December. He has a great love of the place having worked there when a late teenager. Showing beautiful photographs he guided us along the avenues, one where limes and chestnuts now replace elms and the Canadian avenue which displays a huge totem pole erected in 1960. He then took us into the Valley Garden initially planted and designed by *Eric Saville* in 1780. The shrubs and colour are amazing and the best time to visit is the last weekend in April – though climate change may affect this suggestion. Our Annual Social held on Saturday 17th January offered the usual good food and excellent company and fun for all.

Next meeting 7.30pm Wednesday February 18th the AGM and bulb show/competition - also a guaranteed interesting surprise talk!

50's Club Vacancies There are a very few vacant numbers, if you are interested please contact chris.welch@btinternet.com



Coffee Morning at Stowe Village Hall

February 26th 10.00^{am}-12^{noon} All Welcome.

Altar Flowers February 8th & 15th *Tessa Bramall (No flowers in Lent.)*

Brass Cleaning *Jenny Upton*

50's CLUB December: **53** Pat Dewick
Christmas: **20** Geoff Hawkins
January: **27** John Reed

Congratulations





Stowe-by-Chartley WI

On Tuesday 9th December the ladies of Stowe WI enjoyed an evening of Christmas themed activities after the formal meeting and also a discussion on the resolutions which the WI nationally are looking at this year, this discussion was coordinated by Jane N. After this discussion the ladies made a Christmas Pudding decoration which they all took home with them to put on their Christmas Trees, after festive cakes and tea the evening was concluded with some singing of Christmas songs and carols, which had been put together by Jane J.

A lovely evening spent with many laughs and much singing.

Stowe WI meet on the 2nd Tuesday evening of the month at 7.30^{pm} and the first formal meeting on 10th February is titled “**Chocolate**”.
New members and guests are always welcome.

Stowe WI also holds a monthly coffee morning at Stowe Village Hall on the 4th Thursday of the month. Everyone is welcome between 10.00^{am} and midday. The next two dates are 26th February & 26th March 2026.

Stowe by Chartley Village Hall

Ideal for Weddings, Parties, Club Meetings,

Children’s Parties, Keep fit etc

Competitive Rates, Wi-Fi, PA,

Fully equipped commercial style kitchen

Main hall capacity 100 sitting or 150 standing

To check availability and book visit

www.stowebychartley.co.uk

Celebrate!
WITH US



WESTON

FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Sunday 1st	11.15^{am}	Holy Communion <i>Candlemas</i>
th	9.30^{am}	Holy Communion
15 22nd	9.30^{am}	Sunday Breakfast <i>All welcome</i>



Lent Lunches Wow! this time of year has come around very quickly, but believe it or not, Lent Lunches start on Saturday 21st February in St Andrew's church room from 12^{noon} -2.00^{pm}. They continue each Saturday throughout the weeks of Lent. Please come along where you will find a huge selection of home made soup and cakes with tea/coffee and a good old chat. £7.50 per person with all profits to St Andrew's Church.

Sunday Breakfast Service Breakfast will be served at St. Andrew's church from 9.30^{am}, at the service on Sunday 22nd February. Everybody is welcome and it is very relaxed. Breakfast is followed by a short service at 10.00am.

Place of Welcome St Andrew's church is offering a place of welcome on the first Friday of every month. In February it is Friday 6th and we are open in the church room from 10.00^{am} – 12^{noon}. Just come along for tea/coffee and a friendly chat.

Weston Village Post Box

Once again, the ladies from Knit & Natter surpassed themselves with the wonderful Nativity scene that they created for the Post Box on The Green for Christmas. As if that wasn't enough they have recently replaced it with a great Snowman! Thank You ladies keep the imagination going!!





Thank You

The residents of Spencer Close would like to thank The Friends in Weston for their kindness again this Christmas and for the lovely hampers. Also, to the gentleman who's name I don't know, for the selection box. We wish you all a Happy New Year.



The Heart of Weston Coffee Morning and Health Checks

Weston Village Hall Saturday 7th March 10.00^{am} – 1.00^{pm}

Do you know what your blood pressure or blood sugar levels are? Knowing these really can be a life saver.

Call in and have a mini health check, or you can just catch up with friends, have a cuppa, cake and a chat!

- ♥ Blood sugar checks
- ♥ Blood pressure checks
- ♥ ECGs for +35 year olds
- Refreshments and homemade cakes

Please contact Jane Phillips 07824 399524 or jane.phillips26@gmail.com to book in for an ECG – places are limited.

The Heart of Weston 100+ Club results for January

1st Prize £62 Hadewein Mumford (224)

2nd Prize £40 May Yates (28)

3rd Prize £28 Lesley King (203)

Are you in The Heart of Weston 100+ Club?

It's a really easy way to support the charity, only costing £12 per year, with a chance to win prize money each month.

Your support will help with:

- ♥ The defibrillator at Weston Village Hall (*needs replacing, cost £830*)
- ♥ Heart screening for 14-35 year olds.
Since the charity was established in 2015, just over a 1,000 young people have been screened and over 80 have needed further investigation
- ♥ General & emergency first aid training for adults and children
- ♥ ECGs and mini health checks for adults.

To sign up visit

theheartofweston.org

or contact Jane Phillips

jane.phillips26@gmail.com or click on this QR code.





Christmas Lights in Old Road

A huge thank you to all those who donated for the Christmas Lights display in Old Road. Your generous donations amounted to £246.54 with all donations going to BOYSICS BRIDGE, a rehoming charity for dogs in Stafford. *Thanks to Colin too for his fantastic display!*



Thank You for the Cards you made!

Children who came to The REAL Hero event in St. Andrews at the start of December did something really kind - they made Christmas cards to give to people who otherwise might not receive many. Well children, your kindness was appreciated. Here is someone from a local residential care home who just loved getting one of your cards.

This jolly group joined with folk from other churches in Stafford and went Carol Singing around the wards at County Hospital.

There were plenty of times of laughter, lots of smiles and friendly faces - and some very emotional moments too.





Here is an update on developments and changes at your Village Hall.

Thank you to everyone who came along to our Festive Evening on the 28th of November, and to all our supporters and helpers. This successful event was organised jointly by our committee and our Parish Council. The evening raised more than £500 for our hall, which is an amazing outcome.

But more importantly a great time was had by all - including Santa!

Sad News... After more than 50 years caring for our children, Wombats Pre-School Nursery have closed. Their last day was Thursday 1st December. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Tina, Karen and everyone involved with the nursery for their hard work and dedication over the years.

We wish them all the very best for their next adventure.

Opportunity

Wombats used our hall for three mornings, Tuesday to Thursday. This could be an opportunity for another group or groups to have access to our wonderful hall.

If you are interested at all, please contact our booking secretary,

Derek Gair

westonvillagehallbookings@outlook.com

Developments

We will soon be implementing an online system to help with the booking of our hall – watch this space.

We are also exploring the creation of a “Friends of Weston Village Hall” group for anyone who would like to support our hall without making a regular commitment.

Our Coffee Mornings continue every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 10:00am until 12 noon. Come along to enjoy light refreshment and friendship whilst having the opportunity to access our library of novels and puzzles.

Your Village Hall Committee

Acting Chair: Jon Mayne

Treasurer & Secretary: Alison Elsmore

Bookings Secretary: Derek Gair

Parish Council: Julie Gair

Committee Members: Angela Martin and Gail Wray

Contact: secretarywestonch@gmail.com

Monday Coffee Mornings & Book & Puzzle exchange	February 2nd & 16th 10.00 - 12.00 ^{noon} <i>Just turn up!</i>
Healing Voices Choir The Secretary 07936683904	Monday 19.30 - 21.30 ^{am} thehealingvoiceschoir@gmail.com
FSD Dance Olivia Falsone 07931503901	Tuesday 5.45 – 7.15 ^{pm} Friday 4.30 – 6.00 ^{pm} falsoneschoolofdance@hotmail.com
Ladies Badminton Angela Martin 07968638170	Monday 2.00 – 4.00 ^{pm} ianangmartin@gmail.com
Indoor Bowls Gail Wray 07443 601258	Thursday (Sept. to May) 2.00 - 4.00 ^{pm} gail.stubbswray@tiscali.co.uk
Mixed Badminton June Munden	Thursday 7.30 – 9.00 ^{pm} jamunden@yahoo.co.uk Players with experience welcome - first session free
Pilates Lucy Lainton	Wednesday 6.15 – 7.15 ^{pm} lucy@strengthinmovement.co.uk
Table Tennis practice sessions Stephen Gadsby 01785 248039	Tuesday 7.30 – 9.15 ^{pm}
U3A Table Tennis Carol Burnett	Monday 10.00 – 11.00 ^{am} carolbur99@gmail.com (waiting list)
Yoga Elena Leoncelli 07428504503	Monday & Thursday 6 – 7.15 ^{pm} elenacelli@hotmail.com

FOR HALL BOOKINGS PLEASE CONTACT DEREK
westonvillagehallbookings@outlook.com
or use our website
www.westonvillagehall.com

Weston Methodist Church

FEBRUARY WORSHIP

1st Rev David Bintliff *including Holy Communion*
8th David Tildesley
15th Sue McReady-Shea
22nd Mark Timothy

ALL SERVICES ARE AT 10.30 AM



You can stay
for tea coffee &
chat after
every service

MONDAY MEETINGS at 10.30^{am}

Bible Study 9th February
Prayer Meeting 23rd February

ASH WEDNESDAY at 6.00^{pm}

Silent Communion
led by David Hemmingway



Recycling

The ongoing project of recycling - please keep the postage stamps, leave the stamps stuck to the envelope and cut a 1cm margin around them.

Empty tablet blister packs are being collected to be recycled, as are old spectacles and used batteries.

Please keep them packed separately when donating, and deliver when the Chapel is open.

Tools with a Mission We are continuing to support Tools with a Mission by collecting old sewing machines, hand tools, haberdashery items including knitting wool and fabric. The items are sorted and refurbished and sent to Africa to support people in work.

If you have any items to donate, please contact Rachel on 07974567819.

Church Council Meeting Monday 23rd February at 7.30^{pm}.

Church Council Secretary
Hall Bookings Secretary

Rev David Bintliff
Dr Susan McCready-Shea
Mrs Margie Egginton

01785 229973
01889 271488
01889 207040



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Brunch

Tuesday 17th February 2026

10.00^{am}- 12^{noon}

Drop in to Weston Methodist Church
and enjoy good company & pancakes

"they're flippin' marvellous!"

ESTABLISHED 1992

B.D.T. GARDENING

Lawn Mowing (Large or small)

Hedgecutting

Pressure Washing for Patios& Paths

Gates supplied & erected

Picket Fencing & Trellis work

Gravel Gardens

Outdoor Painting/Creosoting

Post,Rail & Wire Fencing



01889 566439 phone
07970 879977 mobile

ANY JOB CONSIDERED
FREE ESTIMATES



Staffordshire
MOBILE LIBRARY

The Mobile Library
will visit our villages
this month on Monday
February 2nd & 16th

Weston 11.35-12.05 The Woolpack
Salt 12.45-13.15 The Holly Bush
Stowe 14.20-14.40 Stowe Church
Hixon 14.45-15.15 Village Hall
Hopton 16.00-16.15 Battle Ridge

*Unlike a screen,
a book never
needs charging -
and it tells better
bedtime stories!*

Lent is a special time in the Christian year when people get ready for Easter. It lasts for 40 days - not counting Sundays - and begins on Ash Wednesday. This season reminds Christians of the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, praying and preparing for his ministry.

During Lent, many people choose to give up something they enjoy, like sweets or screen time. Perhaps they try to do something kind, such as helping others. Some people read the Bible more, join church activities, or give to charity as a way of showing love and care. This is because Lent is a season of reflection, self-discipline, and learning to be more like Jesus.

Lent is a time to think about how we can grow to be more like the people God made us to be. Just as spring brings new life to the world, Lent helps Christians prepare for the joy of Easter - the celebration of Jesus rising again and bringing forgiveness and new beginnings to us.

Lent can feel serious, but it is full of hope. **Lent reminds us that everyone can make a fresh start, and that acts of kindness and thoughtfulness can make a big difference.** By the time Easter arrives, we can be ready to celebrate the new life and love that Jesus brings.



Please send all stories for the MARCH issue
to compassmtc@gmail.com
no later than **THURSDAY** **February 12** 2026

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ST18 0LA

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MEMORY LANE

All Saints
Sandon

Saturday 21st February 2026

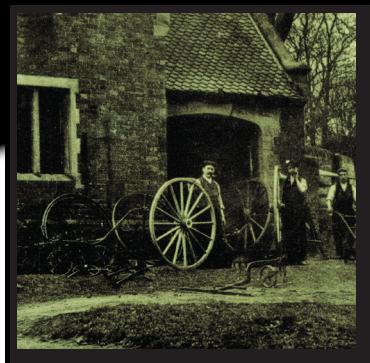
10am-4pm

Sandon Parish Room



Drop in to share your memories of the local area and the church. Please also bring any photographs and/or objects from the past for us to scan or take pictures. We will also be launching our Time Capsule project.

Refreshments available.



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