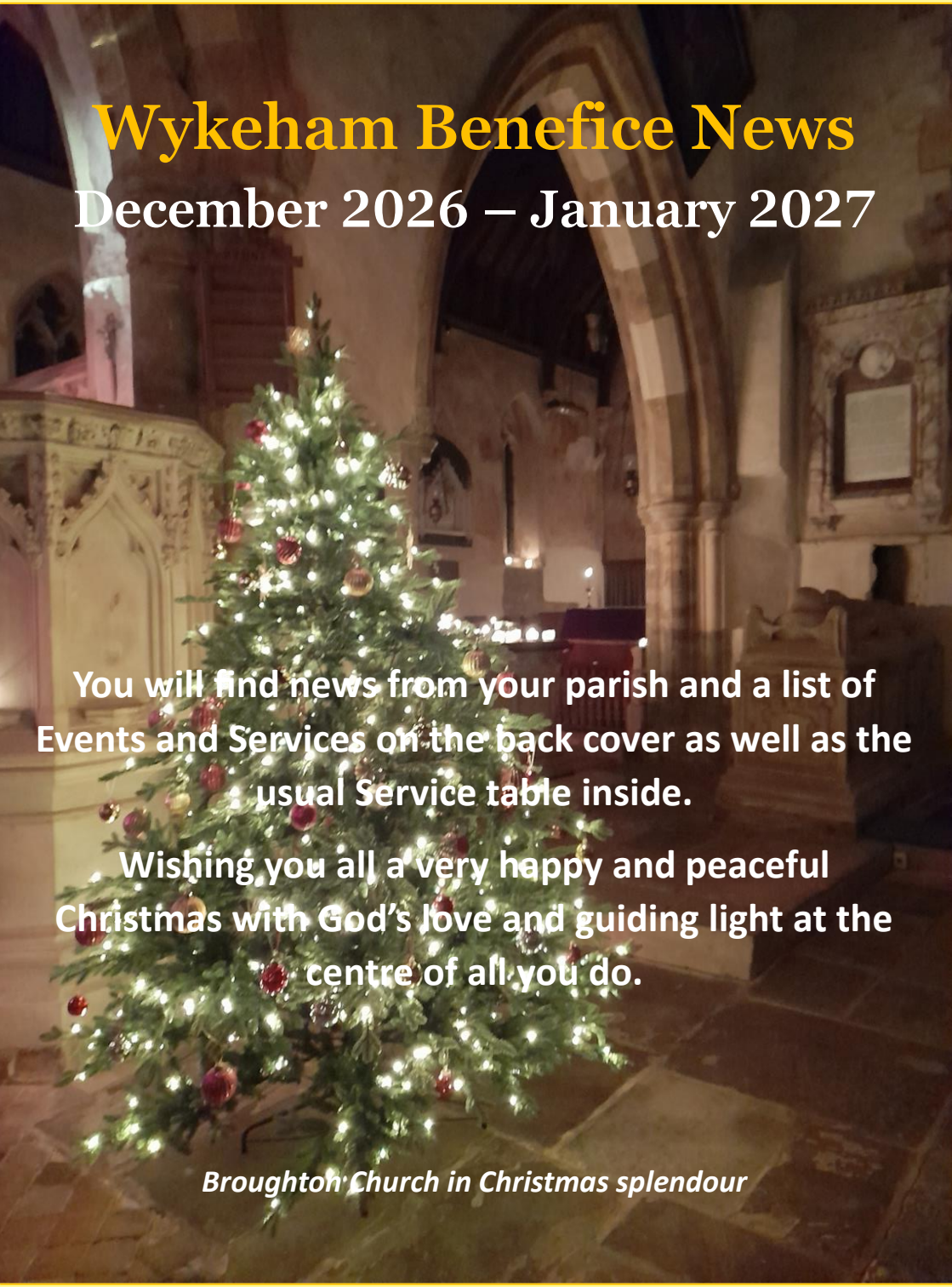
Wykeham Benefice News

December 2026 – January 2027



You will find news from your parish and a list of Events and Services on the back cover as well as the usual Service table inside.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas with God's love and guiding light at the centre of all you do.

Broughton Church in Christmas splendour

Rector's Letter December 2026

It is the time of year when the days are shorter, the nights darker and longer and the weather chillier. As I write this letter, in mid-November, I have found myself already planning the day when I will embark upon getting the Christmas decorations down from the attic, get the Christmas tree and ready the Rectory for Christmas. If there is one thing I feel sure of this year, it is that, no matter how well I rolled up the fairy lights last year, I will still likely encounter a tangle or two as I unravel them this year! I have yet to put to good use my mother's fabulous trick of rolling the lights around a bit of cardboard. In fact, this has prompted me to make sure I put some aside now ready!

I wonder how many of you also encounter the annual challenge of untangling (or gracefully unravelling!) your festive lights? I think this little pre-Christmas ritual has something to teach us about Advent, which began on the last Sunday of November and leads us up to Christmas Day. Advent is our time to get ourselves ready – not just our homes – but ourselves.

Over the course of the year, or as the rush of December gets going, we may find our minds and our hearts tangled: anxieties, busy-ness, stress, time constraints, fraught emotions, grief can all start looping and bunching together until we find ourselves as tangled as the lights we try to unwind. Untangling anything takes time and patience. It requires us to stop and to focus. Sometimes we may ask for help, sometimes we may work methodically loop by loop until, as in the case of Christmas lights, they eventually untangle.

Then comes the wonderful moment when the lights are plugged in. The lovely glow of twinkling lights that have the power to change the feel of a room or the dark of a December street. We hang our Christmas lights at the time when nights are the longest and they stand as little signs of hope. On Christmas Day we will hear the Bible verse:

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light; *Isaiah 9.2*

Our light this Christmas is the gift of God, made incarnate in the form of a baby, laid in a manger. The greatest gift of all does not need to be wrapped, we just need to make space in our hearts and our homes to receive Jesus, God's son. And so, as we move through Advent and toward Christmas and the New Year, where are the knots in your own heart and how would it feel to untangle them and let light of hope shine in your life this Christmas?

I wish you all a blessed Advent, a joyful Christmas and a hope-filled New Year. Emily

Parish News

Swalcliffe St Peter's and St Paul's Church

Harvest Supper Swalcliffe village's harvest supper, held in the village hall, was a great community success. Huge thanks are due to all who made the evening possible. Diners enjoyed delicious pies and vegetables, crumble, and cheese, along with excellent wines and other drinks. Swalcliffe church received a significant proportion of the evening's proceeds, for which the PCC is most appreciative.

Wedding In October Swalcliffe church hosted the wedding of Clare Tattersall and Robert Merrylees. Our ever on-the-move Associate Priest, John, hit yet new levels of dynamism. After welcoming the congregation from the front of the nave John moved swiftly to meet his daughter at the church door, then lead her up the aisle, before donning vestments to perform the marriage service, which included his address from the pulpit! It was a most memorable and happy occasion for the gathered family and friends. The church was beautifully decorated, as illustrated in the photograph here. We congratulate John on his multi-tasking and wish the newly married couple every happiness.



Christmas Market 5th December The church's largest annual event takes place on Saturday 5th December. At the time of writing preparations are well underway for one of the area's best rated Christmas markets, featuring high quality and varied local artisan stalls, the village's wreath stall, a luxury hamper raffle, Christmas café, German barbeque and more. The market is sure to ignite the Christmas spirit.

Christmas Celebration in Swalcliffe Church 21st December Save the date for Monday 21st December at 6pm. Hearty carol singing, entertaining readings, and festive refreshments are guaranteed in this hour of social enjoyment for all the family.

Church fabric projects The major project to repair roof beams moved from the professional design stage to contractor tendering. The PCC is in the process of

assessing tenders and seeking Diocesan permissions. The funds generated for the church through village events over the last 18 months have been critical to reaching this point and from here applications can be made to trusts and foundations for grants towards the work. Separately, preparation is underway for the conservation of stained glass windows, a number of which are badly damaged and frail. Members of the PCC have spent time with one of the country's leading stained glass conservation firms to shape what is required. It is expected that this will enable a compelling application to be made to the National Lottery Heritage fund for financial support.

Broughton – St Mary's Church

Articles for Broughton with North Newington

We were delighted to host the benefice service at St Mary's on Sunday 1st November. In the evening, we also hosted a special *In Memoriam* service remembering those we have lost.



Unfortunately, we needed to postpone the Winter Fayre which was due to take place on Saturday 7th November. It will be rearranged for the Spring with the date to be confirmed.

Thank you for joining us on Remembrance Sunday for this very moving service giving thanks to all who have lost their lives as they serve our country and to those who currently serve in the armed forces.



Coming up in December:

We have our Traditional Candlelight Carol Service on **Sunday 20th December** at 6pm followed by delicious refreshments.

On **Christmas Eve**, the Crib Service, a service for all the family, will take place at 4pm. This service is always well attended and a wonderful time will be had by all as the children help create the nativity scene during the service.

Then on **Christmas Day**, we invite you all to celebrate at the 11am Family Communion service.

We look forward to welcoming you to our services and celebrations in December.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and peace and blessings for the New Year.
Paula Bennett

Epwell – St Anne's Church

Remembrance Sunday

Our Remembrance commemorations went well on a typically misty and colder November morning than we have been recently used to. We were delighted to include some younger blood to the village which included our flagbearer, Jim Amoore and Conway and Jane Freeman's grandsons, Jaxon and Jason who kindly laid the Freeman wreath. They did a splendid job.





Christmas Fair Thursday 3rd December 5.00 - 7.30pm.

This is an important fundraiser for Epwell Church. We hope that it will be well attended. Please come and support the Christmas Fair in St Anne's.

Mulled wine and hot sausages, craft stalls, tombola, home produce, games and gifts to name but a few.

Any donations of items such as bottles, chocolate or gifts would be very welcome and can be dropped off in the Church or with Julie at the Ford House, or Carolyn at Yarn Hill House. Thank you.

Travelling Nativity

The Travelling Nativity will hopefully make its way around the village again during Advent. The small wooden scene complete with stable and figures, will move from house to house throughout the village for everyone to enjoy and remember the story of the Nativity. If anyone would like to display the scene in their window or porch, then please contact Alasdair Lowe.

Christmas services for Epwell
Sunday 20th December at 4.30p.m. please come and join us for a **Carols and Crib** service when villagers help to place the Nativity figures in the crib scene accompanied by all the traditional carols.

Weather permitting it is hoped to organise **Carols in the Village Square on Christmas Eve at 6.00pm** and there will be a service in St Anne's on Christmas Day at 10.00am.

Benefice Service – Sunday 27th December at 10.30a.m. We look forward to seeing you all after Christmas for this reunion of the benefice at the end of 2026.

St Anne's PCC would like to thank everyone for supporting the church throughout the year and wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

Tadmarton - St Nicolas Church

Our harvest service and supper was a great success and we raised over £600 split between Polly and the Banbury Foodbank. Thanks to all those who cooked, washed up, cleared up, decorated the church and of course bid at the auction

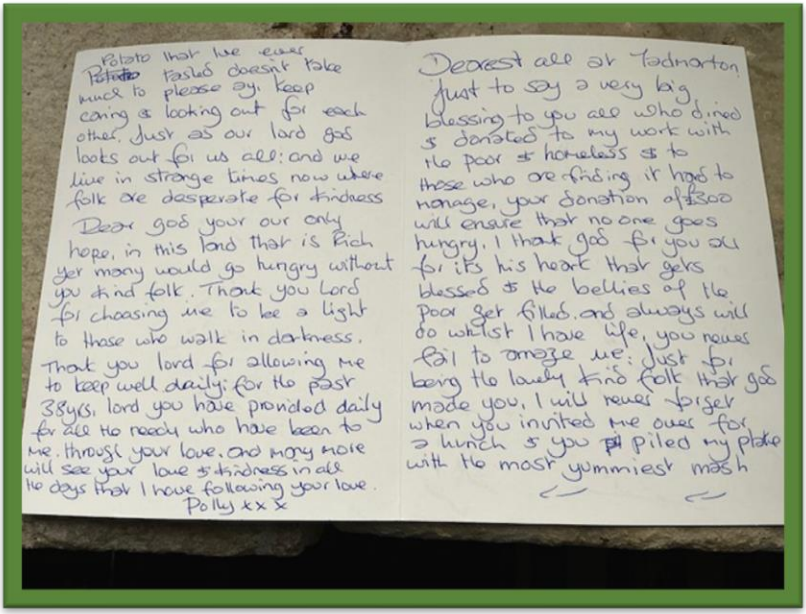


Our Remembrance Sunday Service was extra special this year as Carrie, from The Lampet Arms, made a wonderful Poppy 'rug' which we were able to display on the Altar front for our Remembrance Service.

We are holding our **St Nicholas Service on Sunday 13th December** when we will bring toys which will be donated to those less well-off.



Tuesday, 15th December at 7p.m. – We are holding our **Traditional Carol Service**. Please come along and join us.



A photo of letter from Polly which I think deserves a wider circulation. - Chris Dean

Sibford - Holy Trinity Church

Harvest seems a while ago but the primary school children had their autumn art work in church till the end of October for us all to enjoy.

Our Remembrance Service was taken beautifully by Emily. It was a well-attended service with some of the uniformed members attending as well.



Christmas tree festival from 13th December Trees to be brought & decorated need on 11th/12th. The theme this year is, 'The Twelve Days of Christmas. Barbara Foster can be contacted on 07773404088 for information, if needed.

Polly Boxes These are being done again for the homeless that Polly feeds daily. Anyone who wants to donate boxes please, again, contact Barbara Foster. "Filled boxes can be brought to the Christingle Service on Sunday 13th or to the Carol Service on Friday 18th."

Christingle service on Sunday 13th December at 5pm we would love to see many families & friends, whatever their faith or none, to this service. The Collection that day will be for the Children's Society.

Our Traditional Carol Service is on Friday 18th December at 7pm Again, it would be lovely if many of you could join us for this, as well as all the services.

The Christmas Eve service will be in Sibford at 11.30pm for the whole Benefice.

Wishing everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and best wishes for 2027.

Shutford – St. Martin's Church



Our September Harvest Celebrations raised £520 for Katharine House Hospice: special thanks to everyone who supported us. An Act of Remembrance was held at the village war memorial on 8th November at 11.00am followed by a Service of Remembrance in church in the evening.

Deddington Brass played for the hymns: a retiring collection has been given to The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Many thanks to Revd Emily for organising our Benefice Lunch and the special In-Memoriam Service in Broughton. In Shutford, we illuminate the church tower each Sunday evening to remember those we continue to love but see no more. There is also a memory/prayer tree in church.

As usual we will celebrate the first and greatest Christmas Gift, the birth of Jesus Christ, through our church services, and by illuminating St Martin`s Church tower, during Advent and Christmas.

A collection at our Carol Service and donations from illuminations will be given to The Children`s Society.

From January 2027, our Sunday services will be held at 9.30am including non-communion **Morning Worship** for Everyone on **3rd Sunday**: we hope to have refreshments each week to allow time for fellowship.

Evensong on a 5th Sunday will be held at 4.00pm

We wish everyone a Happy Christmas and health and happiness in the coming year. We look forward to your presence in our churches soon: people of all faiths or none are always welcome. – Ken Jeffs

Mary Nash wishes all friends a very happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. She will not be sending cards locally so please don't send them to her as she will feel guilty! Thank you so much.



Services for December 2026

Date	Parish	Time	Service	Liturgical colour & Minister
Sunday 6th **Advent 2**	Tadmarton	10.30a.m.	Benefice Eucharist Service	**ES**
Sunday 13th **Advent 3**	Sibford	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP	**ES**
	Shutford	9.30am	Holy Communion BCP	**JT**
	Swalcliffe	9.30am	Holy Communion	**BF**
	Epwell	9.45am	Holy Communion	**ES**
	Broughton	11.00am	Holy Communion	**JT**
	Tadmarton	11.00am	St Nicholas Service	**ES**
	Sibford	5.00pm	Christingle	**ES**
Tuesday 15th	Tadmarton	7.00pm	Traditional Carol Service	**ES**
Friday 18th	Sibford	7.00pm	Traditional Carol Service	**ES**
Sunday 20th **Advent 4**	Sibford	9.30am	Holy Communion	**ES**
	Swalcliffe	9.30am	Holy Communion	**JT**
	Tadmarton	11.00am	Holy Communion	**JT**
	Epwell	4.30pm	Carol service	**JT**
	Shutford	4.00pm	Carol service	**ES**
	Broughton	6.00pm	Traditional Carol Service	**ES**
Thursday 24th **Christmas Eve** **WHITE OR GOLD**	Broughton	4.00pm	Crib Service	**ES**
	Epwell	6.00pm	Carols in The Square	**-**
	Sibford	11.30pm	Midnight Communion	**ES**
Friday 25th **Christmas Day** **WHITE OR GOLD**	Shutford	9.30am	Family Communion	**BF**
	Sibford	9.30am	Family Communion	**ES**
	Swalcliffe	9.30am	Family Communion	**JT**
	Epwell	10.00am	Family Communion	**GA**
	Tadmarton	10.00am	Family Communion	**GE**
	Broughton	11.00am	Family Communion	**ES**
Sunday 27th **St. John Apostle and Evangelist**	Epwell	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist Service	**JT**
Tuesday 29th **St. Thomas Becket**	Tadmarton	10am	Holy Communion BCP	**JT**

Rector: The Rev'd Emily Robottom Scott (ES) Associate

Minister: The Rev'd Canon John Tattersall (JT)

Assisting Priests: The Rev'd Brian Fairbank (BF), The Rev'd Allan Doig (AD), The Rev'd Canon Glyn Evans (GE), The Rev'd Graeme Arthur (GA); The Rev'd Hazel Scarr (HS), The Rev'd John Smith (JS), The Rev'd Prebendary Olwen Smith (OS)



Services for January 2027

Date	Parish	Time	Services	Liturgical colours & Ministers
Sunday 3rd **The Epiphany** White or Gold (JT away)	Shutford	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist	ES
Sunday 10th **The Baptism of Christ** White or Gold	Sibford Sibford Shutford Swalcliffe Epwell Broughton Tadmarton	8.00am 9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 10.00am 11.00am 11.00am	BCP Holy Communion All Age Family service BCP Holy Communion Holy Communion All Age Family service Holy Communion Holy Communion	ES ES JT BF Lay led ES JT
Sunday 17th **Epiphany 2** White	Sibford Shutford Epwell Broughton Tadmarton Swalcliffe	9.30am 9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion Morning Worship for All Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion BCP Evensong	JT ES GE JT ES ES
Sunday 24th **Epiphany 3** White (ES Away)	Shutford Sibford Swalcliffe Epwell Broughton Tadmarton	9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion All Age Family service All Age Family service	GA GE JT HS JT Lay led
Sunday 31st **Candlemas** White or Gold	Sibford Epwell Broughton Tadmarton Shutford	9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion BCP Evensong	JT ES ES JT ES

Readings for December 2026

Date	First Lesson	2nd Lesson	Gospel	Liturgical colour
Sunday 6th **Second Sunday of Advent**	Isaiah 40: 1 - 11	2 Peter 3: 8 – 15a	Mark 1: 1 – 8	Purple
Sunday 13th **Third Sunday of Advent**	Isaiah 61: 1 – 4, 8 – end	1 Thess. 5: 16 - 24	John 1: 6 – 8, 19 – 28	Purple
Sunday 20th **Fourth Sunday of Advent**	2 Samual 7: 1 – 11, 16	Romans 16: 25 – end	Luke 1: 26 – 38	Purple
Sunday 24th **Christmas Eve (Midnight Mass)**	Isaiah 52: 7 – 10	Hebrew 1: 1 – 4	John 1: 1 – 14	Gold/White
Sunday 25th **Christmas Day**	Isaiah 9: 2 - 7	Titus 2: 11 – 14	Luke 2: 1 – 14	Gold/White
Sunday 27th **St. John, Apostle & Evangelist**	Exodus 33: 7 – 11a	1 John 1	John 21. 19b - end	White

Readings for January 2027

Date	First Lesson	2nd Lesson	Gospel	Liturgical colour
Sunday 3rd **The Epiphany**	Isaiah 60: 1 – 6	Ephesians 3: 1 – 12	Matthew 2: 1 – 12	White
Sunday 10th **Baptism of Christ**	Genesis 1: 1 - 5	Acts 19: 1 – 7	Mark 1: 4 – 11	White
Sunday 17th **The second Sunday of Epiphany**	1 Samuel 3: 1 - 10	Revelations 5: 1 – 10	John 1: 43 – end	White
Sunday 24th **The third Sunday of Epiphany**	Genesis 14: 17 – 20	Revelations 19: 6 – 10	John 2: 1 – 11	White
Sunday 31st **The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)**	Malachi 3: 1 - 5	Hebrews 2: 14 - 18	Luke 2: 22 - 40	White

Thoughts and reflections

Mathew 2 v 11

"On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary and they bowed down and worshipped him. They opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."



Christmas is a time of giving. Jesus is our gift for life, please remember those who have no faith or hope in their lives and those who have nothing to give their children or receive themselves this Christmas. Please pray that the light of our Lord Jesus Christ will fill their lives with love.

EVENTS IN THE BENEFICE IN DECEMBER

3rd December Epwell Christmas Fair 5 – 730p.m.

5th December Swalcliffe Christmas Market Events 12 – 3p.m.

13th Sibford Christmas Village Square 6p.m.

SERVICES FOR CHRISTMAS

Broughton

6th December Benefice Eucharist Service 10.30a.m.

20st December Traditional Candlelight Carol Service 6p.m.

24th December, Christmas Eve, Crib Service 4p.m.

25th December Christmas Day 11a.m. Family Communion

Epwell

20th December Carols and Crib Service 4.30p.m.

25th Christmas Day 10.30a.m.

27th Benefice Eucharist Service 10.30a.m.

Sibford

13th December Christingle service 5p.m.

18th December Traditional Carol Service 7p.m.

24th December Christmas Eve Service 11.30p.m.

Shutford

5th December Evensong 4p.m.

20th December Carol Service 4p.m.

3rd January 2027 Epiphany, Benefice Eucharist Service 10.30a.m.

Swalcliffe

25th December Christmas Day Service 9.30a.m.

Tadmarton

13th December St Nicholas Service 11a.m.

15th December Traditional Carol Service 7p.m.

Candlemas

31st January 2027 Candlemas for all parishes at normal church times.

Articles for February - March 2027 to be sent in by 11th January to carolyn.kdeg@zen.co.uk. Merry Christmas