

DECEMBER 2025–JANUARY 2026

The Benefice Magazine  
for the Parishes of  
St Peter & St Paul,  
St Peter and St Luke



*St Peter and St Paul's,  
Wem*



*St Peter's,  
Lee Brockhurst*



*St Luke's,  
Weston-under-Redcastle*

**THE BENEFICE OF  
ST PETER & ST PAUL, WEM  
ST PETER, LEE BROCKHURST  
ST LUKE, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE**

**Rector**

The Reverend John Christopher Jukes BTh (Hons) MA  
The Rectory Ellesmere Road, Wem SY4 5TU  
01939 235343  
revjohnjukes@gmail.com

**Retired Clergy**

Canon Dr William Price  
The Reverend Edith Quirey  
Reverend Mike Cotterell  
Prebendary Rob Haarhoff

Further details are available on our website:

[www.wemcofe.co.uk](http://www.wemcofe.co.uk)

and on

[Facebook@Wemparishchurch](https://www.facebook.com/Wemparishchurch)

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**ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WEM**

**Churchwardens**

Sybil Farmer 01939 232568 and David Murray 01939 236134

**Parish Reader**

Katharine Murray

**PCC Lay Chair**

Sybil Farmer 01939 232568

**PCC Treasurer**

Caroline Sinclair 01939 232626

**Organist**

Glyn Williams 01939 234954

**Sacristan**

*vacant*

**Church Flowers**

Sybil Farmer 01939 232568

**Church Hall Bookings – Via website/Facebook**

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**ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST**

**Churchwardens**

Val Lusby 01939 235610

Roger Ashton 01939 232425

**Treasurer**

Roger Ashton 01939 232425

**PCC Secretary**

Phoebe Ashton 07858 123669

**PCC Lay Chairman**

Tim Wilton-Morgan 07802 735769

**Church Warden Emeritus**

Robert Marsh 01939 200641

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**ST LUKE'S, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE**

**Churchwardens**

Frank Hosie-Kingham 01939 200618

Helen O'Neill 01939 200663

**Treasurer**

Colin Holloway 01939 200682

**Church Warden Emeritus**

Arthur Fox 01630 685180



LEE



WEM



WESTON

<b>SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE IN DECEMBER</b>					
DAY	DATE	SEASON	WEM	WESTON	LEE
THURSDAY	4th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	7th	ADVENT 2	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 MP	11:15 HE
THURSDAY	11th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	14th	ADVENT 3	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 HE	11:15 HE
WEDNESDAY	17th	School Service	10:00		
THURSDAY	18th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	21st	ADVENT 4	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 HE	18:00 Carols
TUESDAY	23rd		19:30 Carols		
WEDNESDAY	23rd	CHRISTMAS EVE	15:00 CrS 23:30 MM	17:00 Carols	
THURSDAY	25th	CHRISTMAS DAY	09:45 HE	No Service	11:15 HE
SUNDAY	28th	CHRISTMAS 1	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	11:00 HE	11:15 MP
HE—Holy Eucharist    MP—Morning Prayer    P&P—Praise & Prayer CrS—Crib Service    Carol Services—as shown					

*The Services for JANUARY 2026 will be posted on the Website shortly— <https://wemcofe.co.uk>*





## Notes from the Editor DECEMBER/JANUARY

Dear Readers,

### *Editorial for December 2025 and January 2026*

This edition will cover two months. However, almost all the content is about events in December connected with Christmas. Although most of us have busy lives these become busier during the month leading up to Christmas Day. Fundraising events, carol services, concerts of Christmas music, all crammed into the last few weeks of the year. So much so that by the time Christmas Day arrives we are exhausted and risk missing the whole point of what we are celebrating if we are not careful.

January, however, arrives and we find ourselves with time on our hands, all the celebrating and family gatherings are over and life returns to what we call normality, I am not sure if I ever have “normality”; life always seems to find activities to interfere with the even pattern of living such as hospital visits, repairs to cars which stop us from getting to places easily, or sudden illnesses of friends, relations or ourselves. ☹ ☹ ☹

However, there are lots of interesting articles and adverts for events during the month of December so I do hope you will enjoy the bumper issue and the Editorial Team wish you all:

**A Happy Christmas—CHRIST IS BORN,  
and a Healthy and Happy New Year**

*Phoebe*



## *Rectors Ramblings*

### Good News or Bad

The Church Year is coming to a close as we move into Advent. And as is traditional at the calendar New Year we look back to the time that was and forward to the time to come.

In the readings for Christ the King at the end of the Church Year and the first Sunday of Advent readings, often the talk is of "Judgement". That time when we face our God.

Unfortunately, as St Paul says in Romans 2:23, "All have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God". This is bad news because if "all have sinned" one cannot hope for eternal life.

But fear not as Paul goes on to say in verse 24 "they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus". Thus, we have hope. The "grace" we hope for is the gift of God that we cannot earn. There is nothing we can do to earn grace. It doesn't matter how much charity work we do or how much good we do we cannot earn grace. It doesn't matter how our love our neighbours translates into good works we cannot earn grace. None of these things on their own will justify us. This is bad news. However, we have hope.

Our hope is expressed through the words of St Paul further on in the letter to the Romans 10:9-10 "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses



with the mouth, leading to salvation”.

This passage tells us that we can be saved if our motivation for good works comes from our belief in Jesus Christ and God.

It is our belief that determines our motivations and our motivations that dictate our actions. Eventually a person's belief and motivations become apparent through what they say and do. A person motivated by desire for power will seek it out, perhaps ruthlessly. A person whose motivation is wealth, who believes it will make them happy, will do all they can to gather more wealth. A person whose motivation is love will act out of love.

So as the New Church Year, and then the New Calendar Year, begins, let us look to see how our past motivations played out in the deeds we did. Then look inwards, to our hearts and minds and determine that our future actions and speech will be motivated by our belief.

This next year let us confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead. Then we can have the hope that by the grace of God, we will be saved.

Wishing you all every blessing as we look forward to celebrating the birth of our Saviour.

Yours in Christ,

*Reverend John.*



## THE CHURCHES OF WEM AND WHITCHURCH RURAL DEANERY

This is the ninth instalment of my account of the churches  
in this Rural Deanery in alphabetical order.



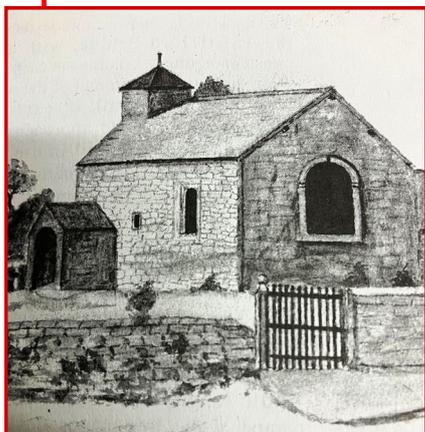
### **ST PETER'S CHURCH** **LEE BROCKHURST**

The church of St Peter is in the middle of the village, up the lane from the A49 main road, and known to some as Lee Bridge Church. The parish is the smallest in area in the rural deanery.



The nave is Norman, probably mid 1100s, with a splendid south doorway and small windows in the north and south walls. The door is later, but still medieval. In the west wall there is a three-light square-headed window of the late medieval period and in the south wall is a large rectangular window of possibly

Elizabethan date. This was one of the smallest churches in Shropshire, measuring 42 feet by 15 feet. The drawing is of the church in 1789.



In 1884 a considerable restoration took place. The chancel was built, with a vestry on the north side and the porch on the south side of the nave. The bell-gable for two bells was

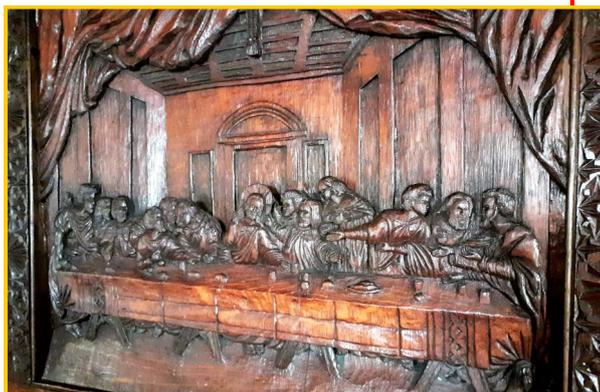


put up, replacing the previous wooden turret. The older bell was made, possibly cast on site, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the younger, with the inscription 'Come Along Make No Delay', in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

At the west end of the church is a wall plaque to John and Jane Henshaw by Carline and Linell, who also created a memorial in Pontesbury church. John Henshaw (died 1 February 1801) was an attorney living in High Street, Wem. He was a very religious man, a friend of all denominations, and

he paid for the building of the Congregational chapel (now Baptist) in Chapel Street, Wem.

The wooden reredos behind the altar is a reproduction of the Leonardo da Vinci's 'Last Supper' by Kathleen Bessie who later married Vicar Henry Postlethwaite.



There have been many improvements in Lee Brockhurst church in recent years. The vestry has been renovated and refurbished to a high standard; pews have been removed from the west end of the church to make a space for meetings and events like the monthly Coffee and Chat gatherings; a new organ has been bought; and the bells have been rehung.

The parish of Lee Brockhurst has been grouped with the parish of Wem since 1947. A fascinating history of Lee is to be found in 'Along the Lanes of Lee in Pursuit of the Past' by A P Roberts,

published in 1995. I have happy memories of regularly leading Matins in this church in the late 1960s when Prebendary Basil Morson was Vicar. He and Mrs Grace Morson are buried in Lee Brockhurst churchyard.

The church is locked outside service times, but contact details of key-holders are available on the notice board by the gate and in the porch.



A facsimile of the wording  
on the Henshaw memorial tablet

In a Vault beneath  
lie the Remains  
of JOHN HENSHAW of Wem  
in this County Esq<sup>r</sup> who having practiced (sic)  
as an Attorney there for near 40 years  
with the greatest reputation an success  
departed this life Feb<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1801 aged 67.  
Also of JANE his Wife who was the eldest  
Daughter of the late STEPHEN TIPPET  
Of Truro in Cornwall Esq<sup>r</sup>  
and departed this life Sep<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> 1800 aged 72.  
They were lovely and pleasant in their lives and  
in death they were not long divided. During  
the greater part of their lives they discovered  
a decided attachment to the genuine  
P  
principles of the Christian religion,  
which divine grace enabled them  
to adorn by an exemplary  
piety.

They were lovers of good men of every denomination  
and kind friends to the poor.

As they lived so they died in the true faith of a crucified Redeemer  
and the stroke which transmitted their bodies to the grave  
there is reason to believe dismissed their separate (sic) spirits to  
the regions  
of glory.

## William Price



## *Notes from The Diocese for December 2025*



### **HOLY INTERRUPTION**



Craig Newton, new director of Shallowford House, our diocesan retreat centre, mulls the season of mistletoe and wine.

There's a certain stillness in the air as the year begins to draw to a close. It's a quiet that sits beneath the busyness of December, beneath the shopping lists and Christmas parties, beneath the deadlines and the expectations. It's the solemn quiet of winter. Of early nights and frosted mornings. Of candles lit against the dark.

If we allow ourselves to listen, Advent has a different rhythm to the world around it. Where the world demands we speed up, Advent invites us to slow down. Where the world grows loud, Advent gently whispers. Where the world requires more, Advent offers rest. Advent, in its truest sense, is a season of holy waiting. A time not to strive, but to receive.

In the Gospel stories, before the multitudes of the heavenly host praised God, there was silence. Before the light of a star broke into the night sky, there was anticipation. Before God came close in the vulnerability of a child, there were

ordinary people going about their ordinary lives. It was in that stillness, unnoticed by most, that Heaven touched earth. This is the fulfilment of Advent: God interrupting the ordinary. The Incarnation is the great holy interruption; the Creator entering creation, the Eternal One stepping into time, Heaven colliding with earth. It didn't arrive with prestige or power, but in the stillness of the night, in a place where most weren't looking.

This is how God so often moves. Not through the sensational and spectacular, but through quiet, unassuming moments. A whispered prayer. A small act of kindness. A pause in the rush of the day.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, "We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God." Perhaps this Advent, we might learn again how to make room for those interruptions. To pause, long enough to notice where the light breaks in. To listen, for the whisper beneath the noise. To create for ourselves and for others, spaces of stillness in which the God who came at Bethlehem might meet us again.



***SHALLOWFORD HOUSE near Stone, Staffordshire***

*Craig Newton joined the diocese in August as director of Shallowford House, our diocesan retreat and conference centre and is looking forward to welcoming people through his first winter of retreat days, workshops and hosting church weeks/weekends and other groups stays. The ever-evolving calendar of up-coming retreats et al can be found at:*

<https://shallowfordhouse.org/events1/>



*The Tracery of Winter*



## The December Moth and the Winter Moth

It seems a strange time of year to look for moths but there are a couple of tough cookies who brave

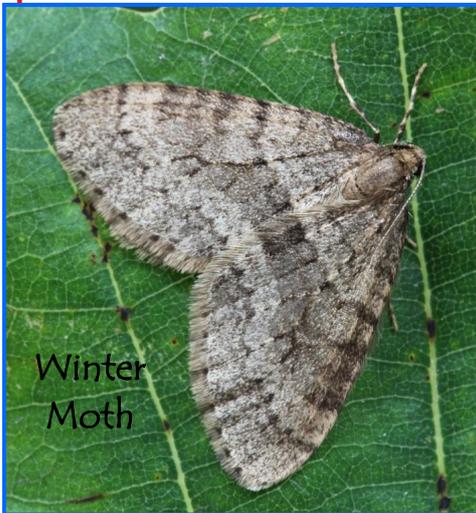
the

winter weather! The December Moth and the Winter Moth have different ways to cope.

The December moth wraps up warm, it has a coat of hairlike scales, giving a fluffy appearance, which helps it hold heat well enough to be active and to fly. The Winter moth by contrast can fly when



December Moth



Winter Moth

at a lower body temperature. It has large delicate wings and a small body, its big wings able to beat less frequently to stay airborne.

Neither moth will feed when on the wing, they rely on food reserves built up as a caterpillar. The moth 'stage' is devoted solely to searching for a mate and, in the case of the females,

laying eggs. December moth males and females both fly,

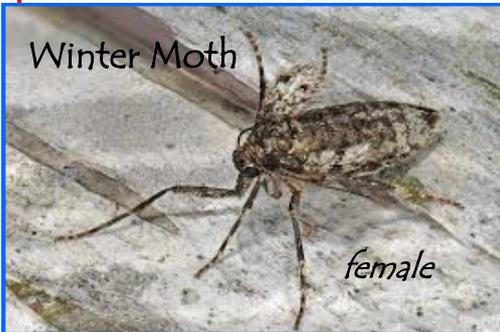
with the female larger in size than the male, whilst Winter Moth females are flightless, they emerge from a chrysalis in the soil and crawl up a nearby tree. Once there they emit pheromones to attract males then wait for them to arrive. Both moth species lay

December Moths



their eggs

Winter Moth



on the winter twigs of broadleaved trees including oaks, birches, hawthorns and willows. The eggs hatch when the trees are coming into leaf, giving the caterpillars lots of

young, soft leaves to eat.

Most people are more familiar with the caterpillars of both December and Winter moths than with the adult.

December moth caterpillars are mottled brown, well camouflaged when on twigs and bark whilst Winter moth caterpillars are bright green, the colour of new leaves. You may have seen the holes in leaves caused by their voracious appetites



December Moth Caterpillar



Winter Moth Caterpillar

or spotted a caterpillar dangling from the mouth of a parent bird, being taken to feed chicks in the nest. Whilst the adult moths may emerge at a time of year when there are few predators about, with bats in winter roosts, the caterpillars are an important early source of protein in the spring, particularly for breeding birds.

Moths are drawn to lights which may kill them or distract them from seeking mates and laying eggs. Please think about outdoor lighting, keeping it to the minimum need to give safe access and have a look for moths when out and about during the long winter nights.

***Harriet Carty,***

*Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor,*

[harriet@cfga.org.uk](mailto:harriet@cfga.org.uk), [www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk)

individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22



# COUNTRYSIDE MATTERS

— December/January from ROGER ASHTON

## *Daylight Hours*

At our northerly latitude our daylight hours vary greatly; midsummer is light for 18 hours, midwinter only 8 hours. This has a significant effect on the farming year. As daylight increases and temperatures rise the season of Spring springs forth bringing new growth; the plants, the livestock and farming people are boosted by this wonderful natural phenomenon created by Planet Earth's orbiting of our Sun.

We take it all

for granted

but how lucky

can you get

when you

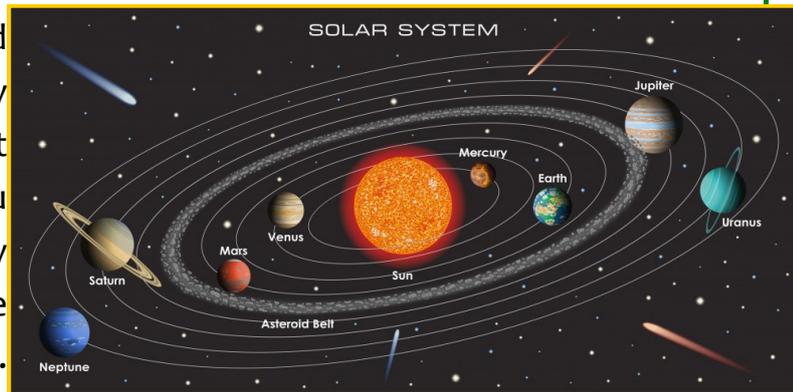
think how

intricate the

Universe is.

That process

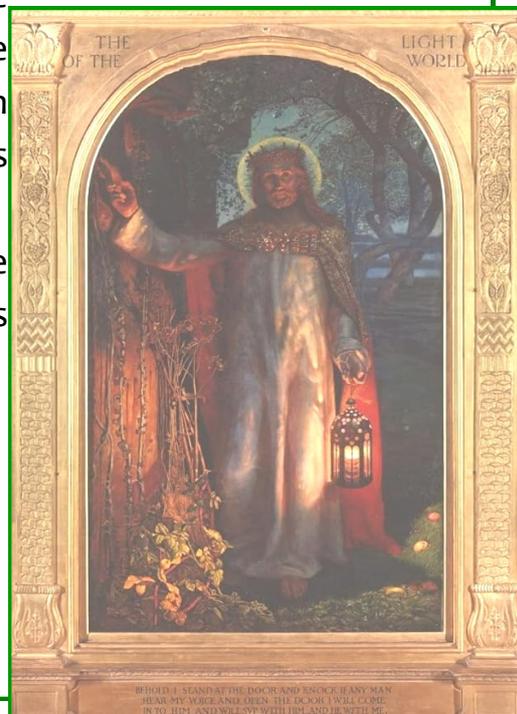
of warming soils and photosynthesis sets the limitations of farming in the UK, and over the centuries farming has exploited very efficiently those limitations. In recent decades technology has seen tremendous progress, you could almost say pushing nature too far! Climate change and more frequent extremes of very wet or very dry weather are with us now in our relatively benign temperate and



maritime climate. Do daylight hours relate to this? Droughts do come in the summer season generally speaking. As daylight falls away, and soil temperatures lower, growth is greatly reduced. Nature is shutting down and building new reserves in plant roots and the soil. Livestock seem to cope well at this time as long as plenty of conserved food is available. Now that mains grid electricity has been available this past 75 years, artificial light brings its benefits, laying hens increase production as does horticultural cropping. The compensation for natural light is a bonus for we human beings, darkness can affect our mood, energy seem to be compromised and can even lead to depression. But there is hope out there, light at the end of the tunnel is a positive goal. Autumn brings its own wonderful light and the low angle sun shows up the glorious colours of the countryside. Our Christian faith tells us in no uncertain terms about the power of light.

Jesus says he is the Light of the World, depicted in the famous William Holman Hunt picture.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.” *(Revelation 3:20)*



Abbé Michel Quoist would like to see with God's own eyes:

**BEFORE YOU, LORD**

Words, Ideas, Mental Images are needed to nourish the beginner's prayers; but, little by little, one finds that all these props are obstacles in reaching God. Christ, when he takes hold of his disciples, makes them understand that it is useless for them to say or imagine or think anything at all. They must let God work in them. To expose oneself to Him without intermediary is the surest way to meeting Him when He calls. Nevertheless, receptivity does not mean forgetfulness of others. On the contrary, disciples, laden with the weight of those they have taken into their keeping, must bring them silently to God—to make possible a meeting, with them, in His presence.



***Matthew 6:6-7***

*But when you are praying, go into your inner room and shut the door upon yourself, and so pray to your Father in secret; and then your Father, who see what is done in secret, will reward you.*

*Moreover, when you are at prayer, do not use many phrases.*

***1 Thessalonians 2:7-8***

*But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.*

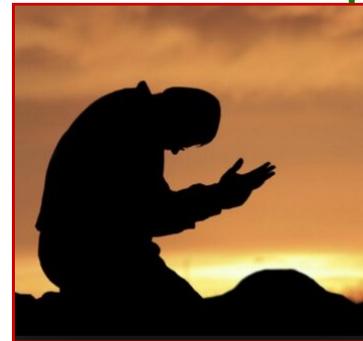


To be there before you, Lord, that's all.  
To shut the eyes of my body,  
To shut the eyes of my soul.  
And be still and silent,  
To expose myself to you who are there, exposed to me.  
To be before you , the Eternal Presence.

I am willing to feel nothing, Lord,  
to see nothing,  
to hear nothing.

Empty of all ideas,  
of all images,  
In the darkness.  
Here I am, simply,  
To meet you without obstacles,  
In the silence of faith,  
Before you, Lord.

But, Lord, I am not alone  
I can no longer be alone.  
I am a crowd, Lord,  
For others live within me.  
I have met them.  
They have come in,  
They have settled down,  
They have worried me, they have tormented me,  
They have devoured me.  
And I have allowed it, Lord, that they might be nourished  
and refreshed.  
I bring them to you, too, as I come before you.  
I expose them to you in exposing myself to you.  
Here I am,  
Here they are,  
Before you, Lord.



*from 'Prayers of Life' by Michel Quoist*

ISBN 0-7171-0158-4



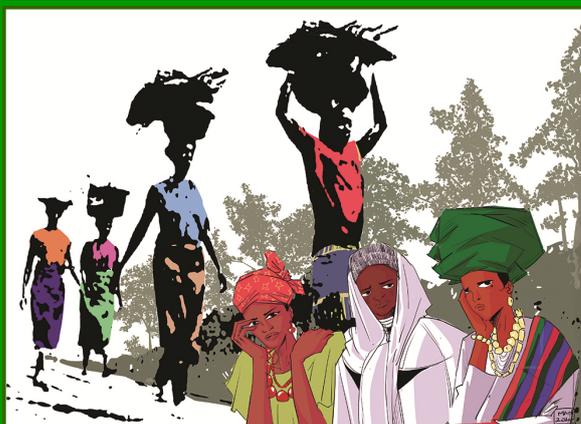
# World Day of Prayer

*'I will give you rest, come.'*

**FRIDAY 6<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

The service in Wem will be held in St Peter and St Paul's Church on Friday 6th March 2026 (time to be advised) and will be led by Katharine Murray.

The service has been prepared by Christian women in Nigeria.



## **The World Day of Prayer (WDP)**

movement in Nigeria stands as a powerful testament to the unity and strength of Nigerian women.

Introduced in 1961, the movement has grown to encompass women from various Christian denominations across the country, fostering ecumenical cooperation and spiritual solidarity. Since its inception, WDP has provided a platform for addressing social, political, religious and economic issues affecting families and communities

**Gift Amarachi Ottah,**  
A final-year Mass Communication student at Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike in Ebonyi State, draws inspiration from her home state of Abia in Nigeria. She was motivated to design this artwork for the 2026 World Day of Prayer programme because of the burdens that Nigerian women are facing. She hopes that her art will help to amplify their

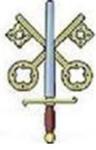


Nigeria's population of over 200 million makes it the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most populous in the world. This demographic tapestry is woven from over 250 ethnic groups, each contributing unique cultural threads to the nation's identity. The three largest ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. Beyond these major ethnic groups, Nigeria is a mosaic of other ethnic communities spread across different regions. These include the Ijaw, Tiv, Kanuri, Nupe, Itsekiri, Efik and many more, each with its own distinct cultural practices, languages and social structures. This diversity is reflected in Nigeria's linguistic landscape, which boasts over 500 indigenous languages, while English serves as the official language, bridging communication across the nation.

**Overcoming Adversity** — Nigeria has grappled with political instability, including periods of military rule. The Biafran War (1967-1970) left deep scars on the national psyche. Economic challenges emerged with fluctuating oil prices and the need for diversification. Social issues like ethnic tensions, corruption and inequality came to the forefront. However, this period also saw the rise of civil society movements and a growing call for democratic governance. The country returned to democratic rule in 1999, facing the challenge of rebuilding institutions and fostering national unity.

Despite obstacles such as the Boko Haram insurgency and economic recessions, Nigeria showed remarkable resilience. This period saw significant strides in areas like shipping, telecommunications, technology start-ups and entertainment with the rise of the Nollywood film industry.





*The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul,  
Wem*



**St Peter & St Paul's Parish Church**  
**SUNDAY & OTHER SERVICES IN DECEMBER**

**SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER—2nd Sunday in Advent**  
08:00 & 09:45—Holy Eucharist

**SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER—3rd Sunday in Advent**  
08:00 & 09:15—Holy Eucharist

**WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER—SCHOOL SERVICE**  
10:00—Service in Church

**SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER—4th Sunday in Advent**  
08:00 & 09:45—Holy Eucharist

**TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER—9 Lessons & Carols**  
19:30—Service in Church  
17:00—Prayer & Praise

**WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER—Christmas Eve**  
15:00—The Crib Service  
23:30—Midnight Mass

**THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER—Christmas Day**  
09:45—Holy Eucharist

**SUNDAY 28<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER—1st Sunday of Christmas**  
08:00 & 09:45—Holy Eucharist

**THURSDAYS 4th, 11th, 18th DECEMBER**  
09:30—Holy Eucharist



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*The Services for JANUARY 2026 will be posted  
on the Website shortly— <https://wemcofe.co.uk>*

***“Growing in Faith, Hope and Love”***



**SATURDAY 13th  
DECEMBER**

**10:00-12:00**

**CHRISTMAS  
FAYRE**

SS Peter &  
Paul's  
Church,  
Wem  
  
Growing  
in  
Faith,  
Hope  
and  
Love

**Children's Colouring Station**

**Tombola**

**Bric a Brac**

**Raffle**

**Crafts**

**JIGSAWS**

**Jams, Marmalades, Chutneys  
Christmas Cakes and Puddings**

## WHAT'S ON IN THE PARISH

### Christmas Fayre

For our Christmas Fayre crafters are busy making hats, aprons, holders for tissues, napkins and bottles

Our bakers are making fruit & Christmas cakes and puddings and a selection of shortbread, biscuits & tray bakes.

My preserves stall will have:



#### JAMS

Strawberry Jam  
Raspberry Jam  
Blackcurrant Jam  
Blackberry Jam  
Tutti Frutti Jam (Strawberry, Raspberry,  
Blackcurrant & Redcurrant)  
Spiced Port & Plum Jam  
Blackcurrant and Rhubarb Jam  
Plum and Redcurrant Jam  
Blackcurrant & Orange Jelly  
Redcurrant Jelly

#### MARMALADES

Autumn Marmalade (Lemon, Lime & Apple)  
Lemon, Courgette and Thyme Marmalade  
Rum and Raisin Marmalade  
Orange and Apricot Marmalade  
Lime Marmalade



#### CHUTNEYS

Redcurrant and Apricot Chutney  
Red Tomato and Celery Chutney  
Yellow Courgette and Tomato Relish  
Pear Chutney



Plum and Apple Chutney  
Tangy Courgette Relish  
Green Tomato Chutney  
Old Dowerhouse Chutney

Plum and Cranberry Relish

There will be tombola, raffle stalls and the bric a brac stall and a selection of Christmas themed jigsaws.

We hope the children will enjoy our colouring station and that you will bring friends to enjoy coffee, a mince pie and a chat.

Sybil

Saturday 13th December  
10:00—12:00



**THE ALL SOULS  
SERVICE**

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

The service took place at St Peter and St Paul's on Sunday afternoon of the Celebration of All Saints, and together with All Saints heralded nine days of remembering—Saints, loved ones and service men and women who gave their lives during the Great War , World War II and in subsequent conflicts.

The Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day services brought this time to a close.

The service was a mixture of sadness but also of celebration. Readings, poems, and prayers helped to lift those present as names of loved ones were read out. At the close of the service an invitation to light a candle in memory of those loved and lost was wonderfully fulfilled as the picture shows.

The Light of Christ our Saviour was greatly celebrated.



## **Our Sacristan June Powell**

Many of you will be aware that over the last 18 months our sacristan June Powell has been suffering from ill health that has made a previously very active person housebound. She passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on 21<sup>st</sup> November—we feel a great sense of loss and relief.

By the time Mike & I moved into our cottage in Horton June was already well established in her role as sacristan. I was to learn that she was the eldest child of a large family, that she grew up in Shrewsbury and attended the Priory School (then a Grammar School). On leaving school she trained as a primary school teacher and became the headteacher of a Primary School in Wolverhampton, no doubt bringing her faith and values to this challenging role.

Here at St Peter and St Paul's she used her considerable organization skills to ensure that everything needed for services was available; laundering altar clothes, replenishing oil candle sticks, ordering wafers & wine and much more. She organized the ministrants' rota and ably read lessons and lead our intercessions. In everything June paid great attention to detail, so that even when she and her friend made their annual trip to Scotland each of us knew exactly what we were required to do to ensure that things went smoothly.

June was involved in many activities, a Mothers Union member, she served on the PCC and was a key member of the worship group. With her friend Bette, she often led our Thursday Morning Prayer Group. They started our Saturday coffee mornings and June looked after the tombola stall always bringing an interesting collection of items as prizes.

This was not all. She was skilled needlewomen, not only looking after the vestments, but also creating amazingly detailed embroidered pictures. She was a knitter, even sending jumpers for sale at last year's Christmas Fayre.

When I visited June recently, her sharp mind and ready sense of humour shone out. I feel very privileged to have known her, to have learned from her, shared communion with her and prayed together.

We will miss you June

Sybil Farmer

REQUIESCAT IN PACE



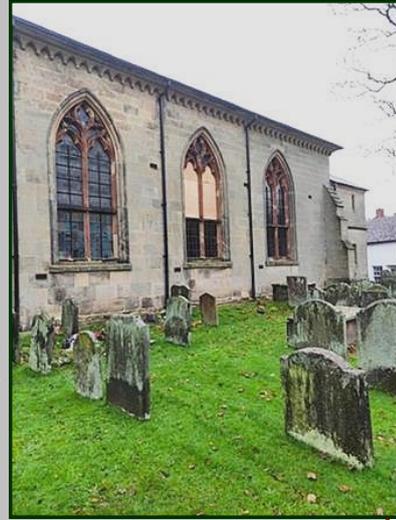
## St Peter & St Paul main side windows' restoration

or

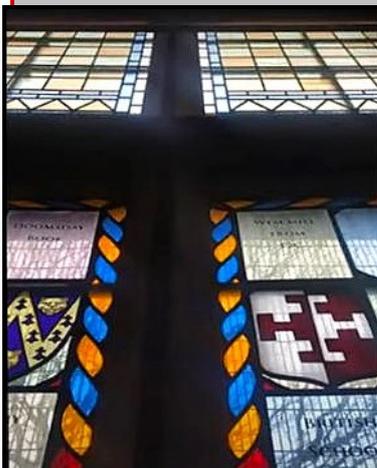
"What the Dickins is happening with our windows"

During Rev Nick Heron's incumbency, the need for window restoration was highlighted in the Quinquennial inspection of St Peter and St Paul's church building. The 5 yearly inspecting architects set this for starting within 5 years.

The process of finding a contractor that would work at our pace and budget took some time because the availability of appropriate scale firms in our area was found to be challenging. However, thanks to Warden Chris Mellings and others, including Rev Nick, we found willing capability in Tim Cleverley Stained Glass Solutions from Staffordshire/North Birmingham way.

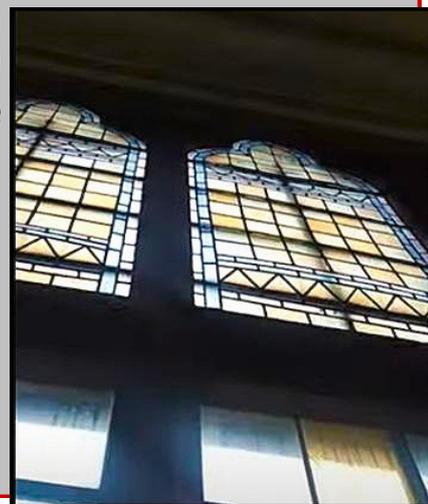


David Murray stepped into Chris's shoes as Warden and took the reins of the project over to oversee its progress through Diocesan regulatory approval, which included further site visits and reports. Of course, Covid's disrupting lag had put its brake on everything during this time. So after taking seeming ages, and using more Diocesan volunteer support, approval was granted,



work commenced over this late summer.

It is ongoing.





## *Church Flowers*

*We hope you have enjoyed our flower arrangements this year. We would like to thank those of you sponsored our flowers this year; so, thank you to:*

*Olive Kenward remembering her wedding anniversary and sponsoring Remembrance Day flowers with the Royal British Legion.*

*Wendy Cook, celebrating Alan's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday.*

*Alison Price remembering her parents.*

*Sarah Philpott remembering her Dad's Birthday.*

*Sarah Culson remembering her mother Elizabeth O'Brien.*

*Helen Hornsby remembering her parents and brother.*

*Sarah Newall remembering Malcolm and Yvonne Rayner.*

*Margaret and Rob Haarhoff remembering Pat Haarhoff and Linda Dutton.*

*Jessie Evans remembering her husband Allen.*

*Peter Faulknall remembering his wife Doris.*

*Rob Ballantyne celebrating his birthday with his twin sister Dorothy.*

*Our flower arrangers, Gill Mellor, Dee Morgan, Penny Carkeet-James, Sarah Atwell & Sybil Farmer have also chosen to gift their arrangements on some occasions.*





*If you would like to sponsor a particular date, look out in the new year for a form that I will be putting at back of church so that you can add your name to a specific date.*

*Sponsorship money should be paid to our treasurer Caroline Sinclair.*

*Christmas will soon be with us and we will be adding a Christmas Tree to the Christmas Tree Festival on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November from 10:30.*

*On Monday 22nd December from 10:30 we will be arranging pedestals, decorating the church and putting candles on the windows sills ready for our Service of 9 Lessons and Carols that evening at 19:30. We would really appreciate help with putting the candles in place, if you would like to do an arrangement your help would be much appreciated so please contact to me.*



*Sybil*

*Email [Syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com](mailto:Syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com) or 01939232568*



## THE JIGSAW EXCHANGE

Don't forget the Jigsaw exchange at our coffee mornings. Jigsaws galore with the plan that you can take away a jigsaw for £2 or if you bring a jigsaw to exchange then you will be asked to donate £1.

I hope this will enable us to share our jigsaws and raise a little extra for church funds. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Sybil



The Church is looking for people to join our choir.  
We practice on a Thursday evening in the Church  
from 7:30 – 8:30pm.

Why not come along and give it a try. You're guaranteed  
a very warm welcome and no obligation!

*For further information please contact Elaine on 07969 511590*

## *Musical Events in Wem Parish Church*



In December Brass Buttons, a brass quartet, have kindly accepted our invitation to join Kim Archer, Elaine Shaw and Glyn Williams in a Christmas themed concert with audience participation. This will be on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December**

at **14:30**, so please keep this date free so that you can join us for this celebratory event.

Tickets £10 - available from Elaine 07969 511590  
and from Kim 07970 357553

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***SEE NEXT PAGE FOR  
THE FEBRUARY CONCERT***

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*... but who would  
miss Winter?*

*Oh, for Spring!*



# PIANO RECITAL

by

*Graham Scott*

Concert Pianist

Professor and Head of Keyboard Studies  
Royal Northern College of Music

**St Peter & St Paul's Church, Wem**  
**Sunday 1st February 2026, 2.30pm**



*'An exceptional  
talent'*  
Gramophone  
Magazine

**Tickets: £12** (under-18s free) - includes refreshments  
Contact: Elaine: 07969 511590 or Wendy: 07828 282996  
(or pay at door)

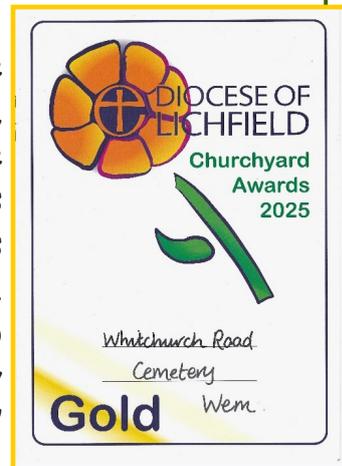


## From the Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery

### The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery Autumn 2025 Update

#### Lichfield Diocese Churchyard Award Scheme - 2025 Gold Award.

In Spring we applied to be considered for the Lichfield Diocese Churchyard Award Scheme, and several times during the Summer we were visited by undercover judges. At the awards event in October each of the participants receive either a bronze, silver or gold award. We were extremely delighted to once again to receive a Gold Award, which is now proudly displayed in the cemetery chapel. The judges' comments are reproduced below:



*"This lovely old cemetery is clearly very well cared for. There is good information provided for visitors and signage around the cemetery directs visitors to significant graves and other features. The grass is well managed and areas are neatly strimmed, other than a delineated meadow area where it is left to grow long to encourage wild flowers. The main entrance path is very good with other secondary grass paths well defined on our second visit, less so early in the summer. There is a good variety of trees around the boundary and these and various shrubs are well managed, and new planting has added to the variety and beauty of the cemetery. Four benches, all in good condition, are well placed inviting visitors to sit a while, to observe the birds and butterflies and to take time to ponder and reflect. [The plan by the entrance identifies points of](#)*

[interest and finger posts are used in the grounds to direct visitors to these features.](#) There are various references to a community of volunteers who work hard maintaining the cemetery, and thanks are due to them for all their hard work and efforts managing and developing this special place.

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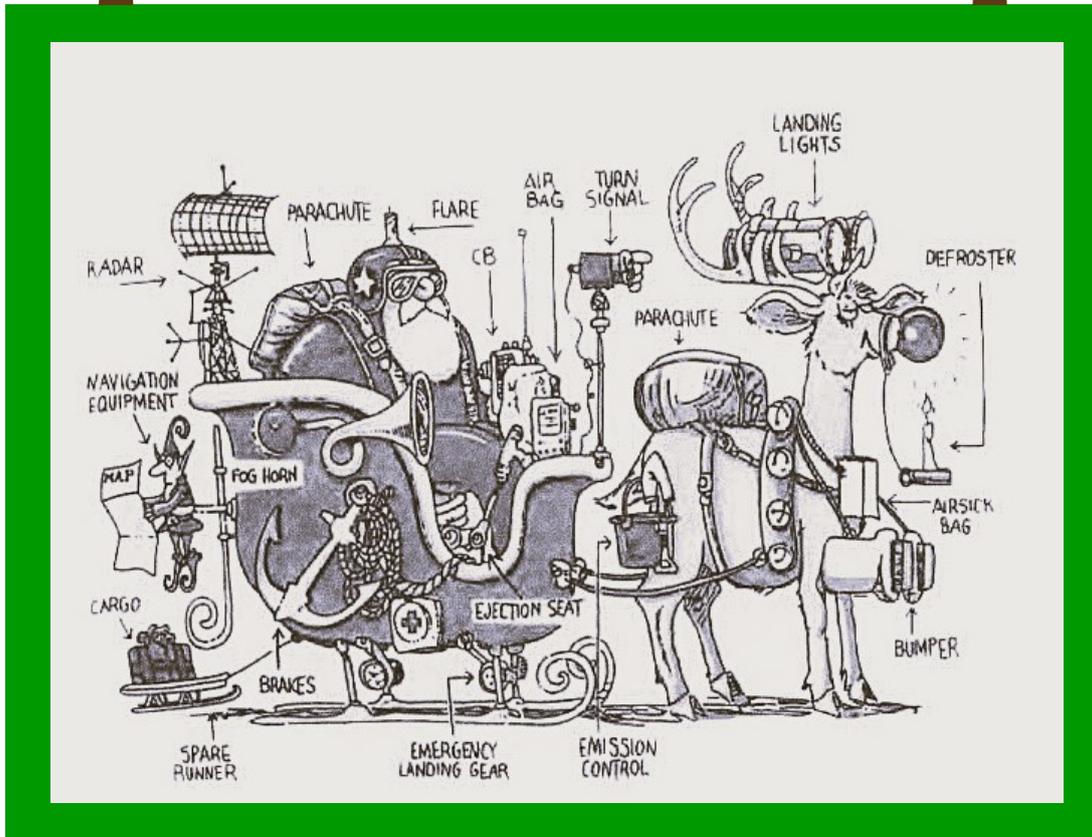
### REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

We tidied and spruced up the cemetery for Remembrance Sunday, making sure that the grass was neatly cut. We put poppies on each of the eleven Commonwealth War Graves. One of our hard-working volunteers placed hand knitted poppies and even several knitted servicemen, on the roadside railings and they looked splendid! Several purple poppies were also added to commemorate the animals who were killed during war service.





# Father Christmas & Rudolph — with all the mod cons



Merry Christmas to you all  
*Ho! Ho! Ho!*



*The Parish Church of St Peter, Lee Brockhurst*

St Peter's Church



Coffee  
&  
Chat



Come and join us here on Wednesday  
10<sup>th</sup> December (note earlier date)  
for "Coffee and Chat"

Any time between 10.30 and 12.00

No charge but donations to the church welcomed

For further information ring 07858123669



ST PETER'S CHURCH  
LEE BROCKHURST  
CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December

Carol Service – 6 p.m.

Followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Everyone Welcome

CHRISTMAS DAY

Holy Communion

11.15 a.m.



## My Time in the Girl's Life Brigade

*Phoebe reminisces about another important part of her life*

### My time in the Girls' Life Brigade (GLB)

The Girls' Life Brigade originates from Ireland where a Miss Margaret Lyttle started a girls' Club in Dublin in 1893 rooted in the gospel. Starting with a regular warm-up PE session for the girls during Sunday School the organisation soon became a formally recognised group with a constitution and uniform and was known as The Girls' Brigade Ireland. Their motto was "The establishment of Christ's Kingdom amongst girls".

In 1900 Scotland established The Girls' Guildry with the motto "Helping Girls to become mature Christian women"

In 1902 England established the Girls' Life Brigade offering time outside Sunday School for girls to discover how God fitted into their lives to help them become responsible, self-reliant Christian women.

On 10<sup>th</sup> June 1965 the three organisations amalgamated into The Girls' Brigade which incidentally is the International Day of Prayer and the GB pray for the ministry of the Girls Brigade. Their motto was "To Save Life".

When I was six years old I joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Leytonstone Girl's Life Brigade Company as a Cadet. We wore a serge uniform with a square collar reminiscent of the white sailor's collar and a round hat. We met every Friday evening at 6.30pm in the hall of the Cann Hall Road Baptist Church. The evening consisted of exercises and craft/knowledge based activities; the latter were rewarded by fabric badges which we sewed, or our mothers

sewed, onto the left sleeve of our uniform. As a Christian organisation we sang a Vesper at the end of the evening.



### **Girls Brigade Vesper**

*Captain Divine, our work is now complete  
And ere we part  
We gather at Thy feet  
To give our labours and ourselves to Thee  
Without reserve Thy cause to serve  
O Captain hear us as we pledge to be  
True to our creed in thoughts and deeds  
Amen*

This is sung to the tune Finlandia.

I still have the badges I earned during my time in the GLB. (see photos)



At Cann Hall Baptist Church we also had a Boys' Brigade Company and they had a band. Once a month we had Church Parade and we would file into church behind the flags of the various parts of the two organisation, I think this would have been 4 in all 2 for the boys and 2 for the girls, similar to what happens on Armistice Sunday at St Peter's and St Paul's Wem, on a smaller scale! Following the service we would line up behind the band and march round the streets, there were no road closures for this activity as the traffic in the 1950's was much lighter than now-a-days.

When I rose from being a Cadet I became a Senior then a Pioneer and finally a Lance Corporal (the uniforms were still made of serge which is a itchy fabric). I have a photo of me in our back garden but the quality of it is so bad that I cannot reproduce it.

As we rose in "the ranks" we did different types of exercise these included skipping, Indian club swinging and country dancing. Every year the Girls' Brigade had a National Display in the Albert Hall and members of all, or most of the Girls' Brigades from all over England would come to London for this event. Our Company had some connection with Devon and on a number of occasions we had girls to stay for the weekend. One year I was in a group from our District which did Indian Club swinging on the floor of the Royal Albert Hall. On another occasion I was in a District choir and we sang the Hallelujah Chorus and a song called The Spider and the Fly I have copies of both of these songs to this day.

Our Company also had displays each year in the Baptist Church hall where we demonstrated what we were learning and also the exercises we could do. One year, when I was quite young, I was asked if I would act as a victim in a small demonstration of

First Aid. I was 'rescued' and attended to after I had fallen into a bonfire on 5th November. I can just remember being dragged carefully away from the fire but not anything else.

In 1960 I started my nurse training and had to leave the Girls' Brigade because I had moved to Bow and then Whitechapel. I did return on one occasion to a Jubilee Display at Leyton Town Hall. I had special permission to wear my Student Nurse uniform as part of the event. demonstrating one of the careers that Girls' Brigade members could take up.

In the photograph I am standing behind, on the right hand side of the lady in the check dress (Miss Sexton) the other lady in mufti is Mrs Beckett both previous Captains of the Company, between them is Mr Ottaway the Minister. Our Captain at that time was Miss Skegg who is at the back on the left hand side.

The Girls' Brigade and the Baptist Church were the only social life I had as a child outside of school and our family who all lived a bus journey away. Whilst I was a member of the Girls' Brigade I was baptised into the church.



*The Parish Church of St Luke,*  
*Weston-under-Redcastle*



**ST LUKE'S, WESTON UNDER REDCASTLE**

**CAROL SERVICE**

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**December 24th at 5pm**



**Mulled  
Wine  
&  
Mince  
Pies  
for afters!**





# WESTON UNDER REDCASTLE CHRISTMAS FAIR

SATURDAY 13TH DECEMBER

IN THE VILLAGE HALL  
DOORS OPEN 12 NOON



**ENTRY £2.50**  
(CASH ONLY PLEASE)



THIS INCLUDES MULLED WINE AND A MINCE PIE

**CHILDREN FREE**

CHRISTMAS CENTRE PIECES

CARDS CAKES RAFFLE

ALL TYPES OF CRAFT

PERFECT FOR CHRISTMAS

GIFTS



Please continue to hold our new Archbishop  
Sarah Mullally in your prayers!



## A PRAYER FOR THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

Almighty and everlasting God,  
the only worker of great marvels,  
send down upon your servant Sarah,  
called to be Archbishop of Canterbury,  
and all who are committed to her care,  
the spirit of your saving grace,  
and that they may truly please you,  
pour upon them the continual dew of your blessing.  
Grant this, O Lord,  
for the honour of our advocate and mediator,  
Jesus Christ.  
Amen.



# ***THE LAST PAGE***

## **The Collect for Christmas Day**

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:  
grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace,  
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

Thank you very much  
to all our contributors.

AS THIS IS A DECEMBER/JANUARY MAGAZINE

THE NEXT ISSUE—FEBRUARY '26

needs your input preferably by **13th January,**  
**but definitely no later than 21st, please.**

All articles e-mailed to Phoebe Ashton

[phoebe42.lee@gmail.com](mailto:phoebe42.lee@gmail.com)

In Word, please, and any Pictures as jpeg's