

HOLY TRINITY TAUNTON

Including news from The Good Shepherd, Furnham

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Christmas/January 2026

Holy Trinity Service Times

Services are as follows:

Sunday

8.00am, 10.00am & 4.00pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10.00am

Friday 12.30pm

Saturday 6.00pm

All services are streamed on Facebook except
Saturday 6pm & Sunday 8am.

Service times may occasionally vary – please see
weekly notice sheet for details.

To access streamed services:



@ Holy Trinity Taunton



Holy Trinity Taunton

Fr Julian can be emailed directly: frjulianssc@gmail.com



Please use this QR code if you would like to make a
donation to Holy Trinity

PARISH DIRECTORY

VICAR	Fr Julian Laurence	01823 337890
HON. ASST. CLERGY	Bishop Michael Langrish Fr James Finnemore	
LAY PASTORAL ASSISTANTS	Mrs Jane Laurence } Mrs Jenni Llewellyn }	01823 354800 (Church Office)
CHURCHWARDENS	Mr John Godley } Mrs Jenni Llewellyn }	01823 354800 (Church Office)
DEPUTY CHURCHWARDEN	Mrs Liz Hathway }	
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	Mrs Jo Bailey / Mrs Charis Cavaghan-Pack	
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PARISH OFFICE	Administrator: Mrs Pauline Holt	354800
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PCC Treasurer	Mrs Pauline Holt	(Church Office) 354800
PCC Secretary	Mr Keith Penny	(Church Office) 354800
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'Outlook' advertising	Parish Administrator	01823 354800
Sacristan	Mrs Jenni Llewellyn	01823 354800
Head of Servers	Mr David Lovelock	01823 354800
Captain of Bellringers	Mrs Margaret Jordan	07972 524557
Church Flowers	Mrs Sylvie Paul	01823 279436

Website: www.holytrinitytaunton.org

Email: holytrinity01@outlook.com Facebook: Holy Trinity Taunton

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL

is available for hire for a special function or regular meetings

To book please contact the Church Administrator

Tel: 01823 354800

Email: holytrinity01@outlook.com

Taunton Funeral Service

A helping hand at a time of need



Independently and Family Run - 24hr service
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Taunton, TAI 1TP

01984 624149

Broad Meadow View, West Road,
Wiveliscombe, TA4 2TB



E: info@tauntonfuneralservice.com

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THURLOXTON MANOR HOUSE

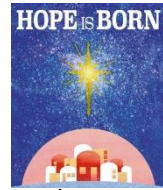


Small, non-institutional residential care home for up to 5 elderly people to live comfortably in their own space alongside our family.
Home cooked meals shared together in the farmhouse kitchen.

Contact Emily: 07915 175358
emily@thurloxtonmanor.co.uk



FR JULIAN WRITES...



Christmas/January 2026

‘The Light has come into the world and the darkness has not overcome it.’ So writes St John in the prologue to his Gospel used at the Midnight Mass. It is an incredible image, and one that resonates with us all. The knowledge, borne out by experience, that just one little light can be seen shining in the dark. In good conditions, the human eye on its own can see a naked flame in the dark more than a mile away. The tiny bulbs in Holy Trinity’s sanctuary lights glow in the darkness of the building at night.

It is perhaps easier to be more aware of the dark than the light. After all, you cannot see the dark; it just is, enveloping everything. It is sensed and experienced instead. The same can be said of light, but light also brings into view things now hidden in darkness. As dawn deepens, blurred shapes emerge to become sharper, brighter, more real, and the world becomes less intimidating and more safe.

As I write this, the repercussions of the mass killings in Bondi beach of Jewish people celebrating Hannukah, the festival of light, are still being realised and addressed. Without doubt, this was a dark act. We cannot comprehend what warped thinking could justify the deliberate killing of other human beings, and cause suffering both physical and emotional. Yet there was light in the unfolding tragedy. An unarmed Muslim grappled with one of the gunmen and disarmed him, and was injured in the process.

It is no accident that the birth of Christ, when recorded in the gospels, is at night. The angels appeared against the night sky with their news of peace on earth and goodwill to all to those frightened shepherds trying to look after their sheep in the darkness enveloping everything. And we can imagine that the light spilling from the manger scene was their guide as to where Christ was.

Of course, the shepherds weren't the first visitors. 12 days later, Magi – wise men – came upon the Holy Family, having seen in the night sky in the stars indications of Jesus' birth, and then led to his manger-throne by a star, to see the true Light shining in the darkness. 40 days later, at Candlemass, Simeon declares that he can now depart in peace as 'mine eyes have seen thy salvation... to be a light to enlighten the Gentiles'. Those churches and congregations who do not make use of candles regularly in worship, to my mind, ignore one of the most basic and powerful symbols of Scripture which still speaks to us today.

We sing 'the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight' in that little town of Bethlehem. Hope and fear are dependent upon light. When we are hope-less, light brings hope and destroys fear. As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us reflect on the significance of light in the process of salvation. How it is used in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and how in the New Testament, light is only used in the context of Christ himself.

The Christmas story isn't a spurious religious aspect of 'Winterval', a secular, even perhaps pagan, celebration of the winter solstice, which offends no one except Christians. Instead, the birth of Christ is the beginning of our salvation, a gracious gift of God to his creation in all places and in all times. There can be no Easter without Incarnation, and there is no purpose to the Incarnation without Easter. It is why Christ was born, a gracious, loving, and self-sacrificing gift of God; a divine condescension in the truest sense of the word.

Light and darkness. Opposites. Yet without darkness, we cannot fully appreciate the light, and without the presence of light we cannot fully appreciate the presence of darkness. Light is a powerful image, speaking at the emergence of human beings, a gift of God at creation, and a symbol of a reality, not the reality itself. Christ is our Light. As we celebrate his birth, may our lives be enlightened, now and always.

With my prayers and good wishes for very Happy Christmas and New Year

Fr Julian

WHY AND WHAT...?

It was in the 1920s that Holy Trinity determined not to have a Christmas Crib for the apparent reason that St John's had one... Not a decision based on any form of principle or doctrine, but merely fear that HT might be associated with those OTT people down the road!

I don't know when the first Crib appeared here. I know that there were two sets; the former one being of plaster and smaller than our present one. Although Joseph was missing, another parish was delighted to receive them as a gift, and I believe one of the shepherds was upgraded to Joseph. HT was only founded in 1842, but the Crib originated in Greccio, in Italy, in 1233. It is St Francis who is credited with creating the first one, and it was a 'living' nativity, using real people from the local community to portray the Holy Family, the shepherds, the Magi, and no doubt real animals surrounding the tableau.

200 years later, as the living nativity was so powerful an image and spread so quickly thanks to the Franciscans, it became the custom to have carved images rather than living people, used in churches and religious communities. In the parish where I was a curate, there was an owl on the crib's roof, but I think that was local custom rather than scriptural description! The Crib became rather an idealised bucolic scene, where even the animals seem not only clean but smiling! The reality, was of course, very much harsher, emphasising the true depth of God's love.



It's important to remember that a Crib in the church is not a Christmas decoration, like candles in the windows, holly and trees. St Francis' intention was that it would become an

aid to prayer and devotion, which is why candles stand either side, and prayers are available for people to use before the Crib. And it's formally blessed at the Midnight Mass when the 'bambino' – the child – is placed in the crib and an act of penitence takes place by it.

We're lucky to have such a wonderful set of figures, and a Crib (thanks to John Godley) in which they can be displayed. Make use of it!

Fr Julian



YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!

With Fr Julian and I moving to Kings Lynn in June people are needed to take on two of the things that I do for Holy Trinity. Namely, the magazine and the church website.

Magazine – I have been putting together and preparing Holy Trinity's magazine 'Outlook' for printing for almost 30 years, including being formally the editor for the last 3 years. It is now time for someone else to take this on and I have informed the PCC that the last issue that I can do will be the April one (am happy to give up earlier though!). Please consider if this is something you could do. It does not have to be done in the same style that I have done, also the role could be split with one person as editor and another setting up the magazine for printing. *If no one is prepared to come forward then there will be no magazine.* As 'Outlook' has been published monthly since the 1880s (including through two world wars and covid) it would be a great shame to lose it now.

Website - I created Holy Trinity's current website nearly 3 years ago and ensure that it is as up to date as possible by updating it weekly. The website is Holy Trinity's public face and as such is very important, it is the way we communicate to people what we are about and what we are doing. If you have some computer skills it is not particularly difficult to do and generally speaking the weekly update does not take too much time. Again it would be good if someone could take this on by April (or before!) so that I am still here to offer advice and help if necessary.

Please give some serious thought about what you could do to help. Why not consider taking on something new for 2026 to help your church.

Jane Laurence

lendwithcare

Great News! Our Stars 1102 entrepreneurs have repaid their loan in full. I am sure that we are all pleased for them to have been so successful in their business venture and wish them continuing success. We will soon have their loan repayment to reinvest in others. Thank you for your support.

Trudi Watkins

CALENDAR FOR CHRISTMAS/JANUARY

The Sundays, readings and themes, and Saints days for Christmas and January are listed below.

24 MIDNIGHT MASS Readings: Isaiah 52.7-10; Heb. 1.1-4; John 1.1-14

25 CHRISTMAS DAY Readings: Isaiah 62.6-12; Titus 3.4-7; Luke 2.8-20

26 Fri S. Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr

27 Sat S. JOHN, APOSTLE & EVANGELIST

28 CHRISTMAS 1 Readings: Isaiah 63.7-9; Heb. 2.10-18; Matt. 2.13-23

29 Mon S. Thomas Beckett, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr (1170)

31 Wed S. Sylvester, Pope (335)

1 Thu The Naming of Jesus

2 Fri SS. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops (379 & 389)

4 CHRISTMAS 2 *Theme: In the Beginning*

Readings: Ecclesiasticus 24.1-12; Ephesians 1.3-14; John 1.10-18

6 THE EPIPHANY *Theme: Revelation*

Readings: Isaiah 60.1-6; Eph. 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

11 THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD *Theme: This is my Son*

Readings: Isaiah 42.1-9; Acts 10.34-43; Matthew 3.13-37



12 Mon S. Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx (1165)

13 Tue S. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, Teacher (367)

17 Sat S. Anthony of Egypt, Hermit. Abbot, (356)

18 EPIPHANY 2 *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Theme: The Lamb of God*

Readings: Isaiah 49.1-7; 1 Corinthians 1.1-9; John 1.29-42

19 Mon S. Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester (1095)

20 Tue S. Sebastian, Roman Martyr (3rd C)

21 Wed S. Agnes, Child Martyr at Rome (304)

22 Thu S. Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon, Martyr (c.304)

24 Sat S. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, Teacher (1622)

25 EPIPHANY 3 *Theme: The First Disciples*

Readings: Isaiah 9.1-4; 1 Corinthians 1.10-18; Matthew 4.12-23

27 Tue S. Angela Merici, Founder of Ursuline Nuns (1540)

28 Wed S. Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Philosopher, Teacher (1274)

30 Fri Charles I, King & Martyr (1649)

31 Sat S. John Bosco, Priest, Founder of Silesian Order (1888)

RICHARD TOMLINSON RIP

We were shocked and greatly saddened to hear on Sunday 7th December of Richard's sudden death at his home. He would have been 84 on January 11th and had recently returned from a usual winter break in Spain, where he had spent a day in hospital. His funeral service will take place at Holy Trinity on Wednesday 7th January, at 1.30pm followed by cremation. Further details will be confirmed later. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.



SERVICES

Christmas Eve	4.00pm	Crib Service
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	10.00am	Family Mass with Carols
Boxing Day	10.00am	Mass (S. Stephen)
Saturday 27th	10.00am	Mass (S. John the Apostle)
Sunday 28th	10.00am	Parish Mass (The Holy Family)
Tuesday 6th	7.00pm	Mass for the Epiphany

REMINDER - Tub2Pub - Empty tubs wanted!

From 1st Jan to 15th Feb, Greene King's pubs, restaurants and hotels will take in clean and empty plastic Confectionery, Biscuits and Cracker tubs. All money raised will be given to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Please give your empty tubs to Wendy Burge.

Spotlight on...



Esther Langrish

Esther came to see me and we had a fun couple of hours – she has led an interesting life and all of it in the service of others.



Esther, thank you for coming to see me today tell me, how long have you lived in Taunton, do you have any family and what brought you to where you are today?

My older sister was born in Chengdu in China, where my father, a priest, was working. It was during the war and a time of turmoil. The Japanese were getting dangerously close, so the family was flown out to India from a nearby American Air base. My father then became army chaplain in Darjeeling, where I was born on St Andrew's day, and baptised in St Andrews Church. Darjeeling was a beautiful place but Independence and Partition made our future in India uncertain and my parents decided it was time to come home. Taking a troop ship back to the UK was the only option. I was only a toddler. Conditions on the crowded boat were extremely unsanitary and I caught dysentery. I owe my life to Great Ormond Street Hospital, along with my mother's determination to 'keep me alive'. I think this is what gave me my motto 'I am a survivor'.

My father became a vicar in Nottingham, where my brother was born. 1949 saw a bad polio epidemic. Sadly, my father contracted it and quickly died, leaving my mother with three small children under the age of 6. We lived with friends from church until my mother was able to get a house in another area of Nottingham.

I attended Nottingham Girls High School and loved learning. I wanted to be useful and help people so had thoughts of becoming a nurse. But I also wanted to go to university. Nursing then was not a degree course so I went to Birmingham University to read Social Sciences, majoring in Sociology. It was there that I met Michael.

Having graduated I moved to Canning Town in the East End of London working as a trainee Medical Social Worker in Poplar Hospital – when the area was very much as in the TV series ‘Call the Midwife’! I was living and volunteering with young people at the Mayflower Family Centre in Canning Town, led by David Sheppard (later to be Bishop of Woolwich and Liverpool). I had and still have a huge admiration for his work and approach. Michael joined me after completing his PGCE.

By now Michael felt a calling to serve the Lord in Nigeria so we married and off we set. Michael threw himself into his work in a new college of education immediately. I have always been good with languages and spoke fluent French. Nigeria being surrounded by French speaking countries, there was a huge demand for French teachers, so I took up teaching French in a local school. Classes could have a huge age range because parents could not always afford to educate children from 4 or 5, and often they came to us much older. After a year, when the College of Education where Michael was teaching started offering French, I moved there and taught French to adults.

Our son was born in Nottingham during our 3 months ‘furlough’ back in the UK and returned with us to Nigeria for our final year. It was a time of great hope. The civil (Biafran) war was ending. Unfortunately, this coincided with a rapid increase in oil exploration which in its turn fed exploitation, degradation and corruption.

We returned to the UK and Cambridge, where Michael trained for ordination. Having completed a PGCE I taught with the Workers Education Association, later moving on to teach GCE, GCSE and A Level Sociology in Further Education colleges. Our first daughter was born just before we moved to Warwickshire; our second daughter (with mild Down’s syndrome) came along six years later.

I spent the second half of our 20 years in Warwickshire working in Coventry at a specialist college of further education for students with physical disabilities. Some students at the college spent a great deal of time in hospital and then sadly died. I felt keenly that I had not talked of Christ. In response I started a lunchtime Christian Group in the college and also set up a bereavement course for both staff and students. In due course I was instrumental in setting up a more formal chaplaincy.

At this point I myself felt a huge and clear pull towards ordination. This sadly did not come to pass but I was trained and licensed as a Church of England Reader, a role I continued in actively until we moved to Taunton in November 2022.

In 1991 the Further Education Act severed the link between local authorities and further Education Colleges. Feeling unsatisfied, and in need of a new challenge, I took voluntary redundancy and trained as a counsellor. I went to the University of Coventry but halfway through Michael was called to be Bishop of Birkenhead; so, I commuted back 3 days a week until I finished my course. As a volunteer counsellor for COMPASS (Council on Merseyside Pastoral and Supporting Service) I grew in my knowledge and experience, in due course being asked to apply for the post of Director. I thoroughly enjoyed and found this role fulfilling and satisfying. I also volunteered with the Acorn Christian Healing Foundation teaching basic active listening skills. This was to come in very useful later.

In 1996 the Diocese of Chester sent Michael and I out to its linked Anglican Province of Melanesia, in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. Initially I was not keen to go; once there I was wowed by how beautiful the islands and people are, and the depth and beauty of their worship. The Mothers' Union asked for my help in teaching 'counselling'. So here my Acorn training in active listening came into play. I set up courses in basic and advanced listening skills and adapted the material to suit the culture and needs of the Mothers' Union and the (vibrant) religious communities in Melanesia. In 2003 there was armed conflict in Solomon Islands between people of two of the main islands, Guadalcanal and Malaita. The Melanesian Brothers and the other religious communities were able to stand between the warring parties using the Acorn-based listening skills they had been taught.

Domestic violence was also an issue in Melanesia and I was subsequently able to assist in the setting up of a refuge for women subjected to domestic abuse. By now Michael and I had moved to Exeter, but we both remained heavily involved in the work as members of the Melanesian Mission UK. In Devon I continued to work as a professional counsellor, and also an Acorn Listening Skills trainer, to teach listening skills particularly for church members lay and ordained. This continued once Michael had retired and we had moved to the

Chichester area. Another area of training I did in Exeter diocese was for a much more informed awareness amongst people in parishes of the needs of people with disabilities. It isn't just ramps, disabled loos and loop systems!

On retirement we moved to West Sussex to be nearer to both Michael's aged parents and also to our elder daughter. However, at that point our younger daughter decided to stay in the familiar surroundings of Exeter. As for so many people, Covid was a very difficult time for her. Much of her support system and social life in Exeter collapsed, and she lost her confidence to travel between Exeter and Sussex, which she previously did on her own. Following the death of Michael's parents and the ravages of Covid, we decided it was right to move back to be nearer to her, which led us to Taunton at the end of 2022.

What do you do in your spare time, what are your hobbies?

I love to paint, not oils but other mediums. I had a studio in our house in Sussex. I don't have one here in Taunton but I do belong to the Taunton Art Group and attend workshops, which is fun.

For entertainment I love reading and the theatre, ballet and cinema and I go line-dancing with my younger daughter. It is something we enjoy doing together and it keeps our bond strong.

What would you say is important to you and what does your faith and Holy Trinity mean to you?

When we first came to Holy Trinity it was very welcoming and still is. I like the 8am service not just for itself but for the silence. I could possibly have been a Quaker and was heavily influenced by a lovely Quaker couple who supported our family when my father died. When I was old enough I used to go and stay with them (I think this was to give my mother a break!), and it was from them that I learned to value silence. Silence is very important to me.

Also important to me is my faith. It gives me purpose in life and a hope not only for this life but beyond. 'If for this life only we have hope, we are of all people most to be pitied'. It gives me wonderful fellowship now, and a real sense of the communion of saints.

Thank you Esther. I believe you are truly a survivor, adapting to changing circumstances and carving out your own niche in every situation.

A RECIPE FOR JANUARY

BLACK BUN

Indulge in a moist and fruity black bun cake this New Year when it is traditionally enjoyed. Black Bun is a type of fruit cake completely covered with pastry. Black Bun is Scottish in origin and was originally eaten on Twelfth Night. After the Scottish Reformation, festivities were moved to the New Year and the cake was incorporated into Hogmanay festivities.

It is a good idea to make your black bun in advance so the flavours have time to mature. It also goes well with a wee dram of whisky.

Ingredients

For the pastry:

300g Plain flour
75g Lard, cubed
75g Butter, cubed
Pinch of salt
½ tsp Baking powder
4 tbsp Cold water
1 Egg, for glazing



For the filling:

200g Plain flour
300g Raisins
300g Currants
½ tsp of each of the following:
ground ginger, ground allspice
ground cinnamon, mixed spice
¼ tsp ground black pepper
100g Dark muscovado sugar
100g Mixed peel, chopped
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tbsp Whisky
1 Egg
3 tbsp Buttermilk

Method

- For the pastry, sift the flour into a bowl and rub in the lard and butter until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the salt, baking powder and water and mix to a soft dough. Turn out and knead into a ball. Wrap in clingfilm and chill while you make the filling.
- Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.

- In a large bowl, mix together the flour, raisins, currants, ginger, cinnamon, allspice, mixed spice, pepper, sugar, mixed peel, bicarbonate of soda, whisky, egg and buttermilk.
- Line a 900g loaf tin with greaseproof paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out two thirds of the pastry to a rectangle large enough to line the tin. Drape into the tin and press up against the sides. Spoon the filling into the tin, pressing down so it is dense.
- Roll out three quarters of the remaining pastry to a rectangle large enough to cover the tin. Dampen the edges of the pastry with water and press the pastry lid on top to seal. Trim the edges. Crimp the edges using the tines of a fork. Roll out the remaining pastry with any trimmings, and use to make a bow to decorate the top, then attach with a little water.
- Glaze with beaten egg and bake for 2 hours.
- Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin before turning out.



Contributed by Fr Julian

HOLY TRINITY WINNERS

November 2025

1st	Sue Gill	£64.50
2nd	Jean Dalzell	£38.70
3rd	Dianne Newton	£25.80



THE SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

will be visiting the following:

11 January The Cricket Club
8 February Pickeridge Golf Club

All bookings are for 12.15. Please sign the list at the back of Church if you would like to join us. If you need a lift please arrange this before signing up.

Wendy Burge

FORSAKEN WOODS

by Robert Sidney (1st Earl of Leicester 1563 - 1626)

Robert Sidney was born at Penshurst in Kent (where he also died). He was the second son of Sir Henry Sidney. He was educated at Christ Church Cambridge and was a soldier, member of parliament, diplomat, courtier and a man of letters. He saw action in the Netherlands (twice) against the Spanish and in Nassau. He took part in the battle of Turnhout (1598) and became for a while governor of Flushing. He was knighted in 1596 and elevated to Baron Sidney of Penshurst by James 1st (1603), Viscount Lisle in 1605 and Earl of Leicester in 1608 (this title being vacant after his uncle's death).



*Forsaken woods, trees with sharpe storms opprest
whose leaves once hidd, the sun, now strew the grownd
once bred delight, now scorn, late usde to sownd
of sweetest birds, now of hoares crows the nest*

*Gardens which once in thowsand coulers drest
shewed natures pryde: now in dead sticks abownd
in whome prowde summers treasure late was fownd
now but the rags, of winters torn coate rest*

*Medows whose sydes, late fayre brookes kist now slyme
embraced holds: feelds whose youth green and brave
promist long lyfe, now frosts lay in the grave*

*Say all and I with them: what doth not tyme!
But they whoe knew tyme, tyme will finde again
I that fayre tymes lost, on tyme call in vain.*

(My spell checker went into overdrive with the Elizabethan spelling!)

Pat Hitchcock



Thank you to all who took part in whatever way in the Christmas Fair on 6th December, whether you were running a stall, helped set up/pack down, sold raffle tickets, put up bunting, delivered flyers or importantly supported by attending.

The marvellous sum of £2,426.15 was raised, slightly up on last year which is excellent considering the weather and at least 2 other fairs that were happening on the same day.

Winners of the various raffles are below:

Main raffle

1st Prize	Food & Drink Hamper	Simon Gaunt
2nd Prize	Drink Hamper	David Lovelock
3rd Prize	£80 Riverside Butcher meat Voucher	Margaret
4th Prize	£50 National Garden Voucher	Gareth Hathway
5th Prize	£50 Hatchers Voucher	Rose Fisher
6th Prize	Chocolate Hamper	Karen Smart
7th Prize	Snowflake Fleece Blanket	Liz Clarke
8th Prize	4 Christmas mugs	Melanie Robson

Other Prizes

Free Entry	£10.00 M & S voucher	Philip Gregory
Guess the number of sweets in the jar (103)		Cooper
Guess the name of the teddy (Clement)		Jenni Llewellyn
Most number of draw tickets sold (Cava)		Wendy Burge
£1 a square	£50.00	Wendy Burge
	£20.00	Kay Fuller
	£10.00	Rose Fisher
Craft Stall	Crochet Blanket	Fr Julian
	Prosecco	Pauline Holt

Thank you all.

Wendy Burge

MAGAZINE DEADLINE: Wednesday 21st January 2026

NEWS FROM THE GOOD SHEPHERD, FURNHAM

PARNHAM VOICES CONCERT IN CHURCH ON 7 DECEMBER

On a dank afternoon on the Second Sunday of Advent, the [sadly] few attendees of the Parnham Voices Concert were treated to a glorious choral cornucopia of music for winter, Advent and Christmas. It is a shame that not more attended but for those who did it was a time to relax, to reflect and to revel in the music that was before us.



We were told at the beginning of the concert that they were five voices down but had that not been announced, no one would have realised. Each piece was a beautiful blend of choral voices, singing a mixture of joyful tunes, from 'Jingle Bells' to 'Deck the Hall', to the more thoughtful offerings of 'Love came down at Christmas' and 'Ave Maria' – the latter arranged by a Latvian musician.

We too, as the congregation, were able to take part in singing of 'Ding dong! Merrily on High'.

It was a treat to be present and we wish to thank them for the effort of preparing a thoughtful repertoire for the occasion. We hope that they will come again and that more will attend to enjoy the occasion'.

EPIPHANY LUNCH

There will be an Epiphany Lunch at The George, Donyatt on 4th January 2026. There is a book at the back of the church for the adding of names for those who wish to attend the lunch.

A precis of the draft Minutes of the PCC meeting held at The Good Shepherd on 26th November 2025 (the Minutes will be approved, as appropriate, at the next meeting of the PCC on 28th January 2026)

1. *Correspondence*

Details of the Benefice Parish Share were received today, please see below.

2. *Finance*

The Benefice Share, to be paid by The Good Shepherd and Holy Trinity, is approximately £88,000. The indicative share for The Good Shepherd for 2026 is £22,953.

The cost of our annual insurance premium has leapt up by 20%.

The church is to receive a legacy from the estate of the late John Dunstan, draft estate accounts have been received, although there is currently no known date when the funds will be received.

3. *Deanery Synod*

The last meeting took place on 9th October when a representative of 'Re Source' attended and spoke to the meeting about assistance and mentoring schemes for clergy. The next meeting will take place on 5th February 2026 when the end of life chaplain from St Margaret's Hospice will attend. Deanery synod meetings are open to all.

4. *Chard Churches Together*

The tea lights ceremony took place on the 31st October at the Baptist Church in Chard. This was well received and quite a number of leaflets were handed out to those who passed by.

It is hoped that a half day of prayer will be held in the near future at Combe St Nicholas church, exact date to be fixed.

CCT are no longer looking into becoming a charity due to the amount of work involved and time it would take.

5. *Reordering/Pew Removal & Statement of Need/Significance*

The insurance claim for the windows has been accepted, it is hoped that the work will start soon. This will require the windows to be taken away for the work to be completed.

The work on the Calvary has also been accepted by the insurance company, so it is hoped that work will start on this very soon, with a celebratory weekend to be planned around Remembrance Sunday 2026.

6. Car Parking

Unfortunately this is still a troublesome issue, with some cars failing to move out of the car parking spaces for church users on a Sunday. An approach is being made to the freehold owner of the block flats adjacent to the car park, to see if he can assist in encouraging those who live in the flats but who flout the parking rules, to comply.

7. Social & Fundraising

(i) Parnham Voices to give a concert on 7th December with a mixture of Advent and Christmas music;

(iii) The 3 C's – 'coffee, cake and carols' will take place on 13th December in church between 10am and 12pm.

8. Mission, Evangelism & Worship

Avishayes School will be coming into church on 4th December to look at 'Belief through Art'. They will also be attending on 16th December for a Christingle Service;

Chard School will be attending for their carol service on 11th December;

Gillingham Grange, the new care home on Furnham Road has held an open day and has arranged for the home to be blessed on a day to be agreed. The manager of the home has expressed a wish for a close connection with the Good Shepherd, with residents being brought to church for services and for social occasions. The home also hopes to hold community events, such as soup lunches.

9. Vacancy Arrangements

Following Father Julian's recent announcement of retirement on the grounds of ill health it is likely that his final service at Holy Trinity will be on Trinity Sunday, May 2026. He and Jane will be moving to Kings Lynn. It was mentioned by Father Julian that following his discussions with the Bishop of Bath & Wells and Bishop Paul the Benefice should be well supported through the vacancy period.

ANNUAL ANGEL FESTIVAL

On Saturday 15 November, the Good Shepherd once again opened its doors for the much-loved Angel Festival.

Creative Activities

Children and adults alike took part in crafting beautiful angels — from delicate paper designs to sparkling diamond art creations. The atmosphere was filled with joy and creativity as families worked together to bring their angels to life.



Refreshments

No Good Shepherd event would be complete without tea, coffee, and, of course, cake. Thanks to the generosity and skill of Liz and Hazel, the cake table was a highlight, offering delicious treats that brought people together.

Community Spirit

The festival was a wonderful celebration of artistry, hospitality, and community. It reflected the spirit of The Good Shepherd — welcoming, joyful, and rooted in tradition.

Shirley Flannery



ALL IN THE MONTH OF JANUARY

It was:

- 200 years ago, on 30th Jan 1826 that the Menai Suspension Bridge was first opened. It links the island of Anglesey to mainland Wales, and was the world's first major suspension bridge.
- 175 years ago, on 7th Jan 1851 that French physicist Leon Foucault set up the first Foucault pendulum in the cellar of his home, to demonstrate the rotation of the earth.
- 125 years ago, on 1st Jan 1901 that the Australian Commonwealth was established when six British colonies there were federated.
- 125 years ago, on 27th Jan 1901 that Giuseppe Verdi, Italian composer died. Best known for his operas Aida, Otello & Falstaff
- 100 years ago, on 13th Jan 1926 that Michael Bond, children's writer, was born. He created the characters Paddington Bear and Monsieur Pamplemousse.
- Also 100 years ago, on 26th Jan 1926 that Scottish engineer and inventor John Logie Baird gave the first demonstration of his TV system to members of the Royal Institution.
- 90 years ago, on 18th Jan 1936 that Rudyard Kipling, writer and poet, died. Best known for The Jungle Book, Kim, If.
- 75 years ago, on 9th Jan 1951 that the UN headquarters in New York City was officially opened.
- 70 years ago, on 31st Jan 1956 that AA Milne, writer, poet, and playwright died. Best known for his stories about Winnie the Pooh.
- 65 years ago, on 20th Jan 1961 that John F Kennedy was inaugurated as the 35th President of the USA.
- 60 years ago, on 17th Jan 1966 that the album Sounds of Silence by Simon and Garfunkel, was released.
- 50 years ago, on 12th Jan 1976 that Dame Agatha Christie, crime novelist, short story writer and playwright died.
- 30 years ago, on 22nd Jan 1996 that a mass grave was found near Brcko Bosnia that contained the bodies of nearly 3,000 victims of Serb ethnic cleansing. They had been killed in 1992.
- 20 years ago, on 12th Jan 2006 that at least 346 people were killed in a stampede during the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Mina.
- 10 years ago, on 31st Jan 2016 that Terry Wogan, Irish radio and TV broadcaster, died.

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SAFEGUARDING

At Holy Trinity we take safeguarding very seriously and are committed to the safety of all our members.



If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer by email htsafeguarding@outlook.com, or through a dedicated Safeguarding Line 07771 908514

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EPIPHANY

A poem by Andrew Mayes

Why did the Magi to the Christchild bring
Those gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh?
Their star-led journey made to seek a king,
So gold a kingly status to confer.
But frankincense, an offering of prayer,
Did they a deity expect to find?
And what of myrrh? Could they have been aware
Of how he was to die for humankind?
But they were magi, in their gifts concealed
The symbols of Christ's nature thus expressed;
And Magi too as symbols were revealed
Through which Christ to the world was manifest.
Gold, incense, myrrh, yet gift beyond a price;
Our King, our God, our living sacrifice.





WE

WISH YOU A

*Merry
Christmas*

& A HAPPY NEW YEAR
W