

A close-up photograph of a snowdrop flower. The flower is white with a yellow center and is hanging from a green stem. A small red ladybug with black spots is perched on the stem of the flower. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PARISH OF CALNE & BLACKLAND

*... keeping you in touch
with your church family.
February 2025*

Parish contact details

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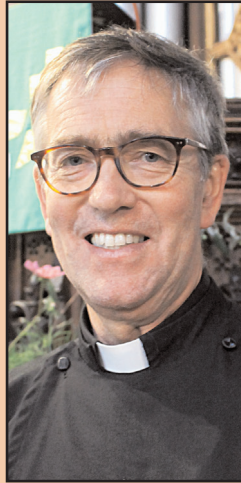
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SN11 0HU

Email: enquiries@mardenvale.org.uk

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*Church House is open from 10.00am to 12noon
on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.*

Prayer for February

*Lord, may I be wakeful at sunrise to begin a new day
for you, cheerful at sunset for having done my work
for you; thankful at moonrise and under starshine for
the beauty of the universe. And may I add what
little may be in me to your great world.*

Amen.

The Abbot of Greve

Church addresses

Holy Trinity Church, Quemerford, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR

St Mary's Church, Church Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0HU

St Peter's Church, Blackland, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 8UQ

Website: <https://www.mardenvale.org.uk>

Find us on facebook @stmaryschurchcalne

Thought for February

Just like any other month, February contains a mixture of annual secular and religious landmarks. Usually, February brings Shrove Tuesday, with its ancient tradition of eating pancakes, and the more recent association of the French phrase 'Mardi Gras' with Gay Pride events. However, this year Shrove Tuesday is delayed until 4 March (the day before Ash Wednesday, see below). Maybe your focus will be on St Valentine's Day and its celebration of romantic love. Other annual commemorations which fall in February include: Groundhog Day in the USA; Waitangi Day in New Zealand; Chinese New Year; the Hindu Festival Vasant Panchami, which highlights the coming of spring; and Presidents' Day in the USA.

For Christian believers, February begins with the festival of Candlemas on 2 February, 40 days after Christmas Day. Luke recounts the story of Joseph and Mary taking the 40-day-old baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem: they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") (Luke 2:22-23). It is this event which we remember and celebrate on 2 February, and it concludes our Advent / Christmas / Epiphany celebrations. Lots of churches keep their Crib on display until 2nd February for this reason. According to the Church of England Calendar, the festival is called 'The Presentation of Christ in the Temple', which is a bit of a mouth-

ful! Its shorter name is 'Candlemas', because traditionally all the candles which would be used in Church over the following year were blessed on this day.

So, in February, our attention turns away from God's glory as revealed in Jesus' birth and early ministry. Instead, our attention turns to God's glory as revealed in Jesus' temptations, suffering and resurrection. I remember on one occasion attending a



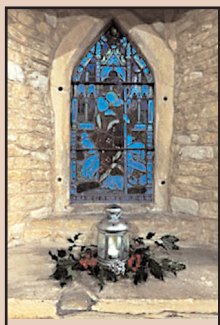
Candlemas service where there was a manger placed at one end of the Church, and a cross at the other. During the service, there was a moment when we physically turned our focus away from the manger and towards the cross, as a physical reminder of this pivotal point in the Church's year. This year, Easter is quite late, so Lent doesn't begin during February as it usually does. (Ash Wednesday is on 5 March). Even so, we begin to look ahead to Lent and Easter from the beginning of February. As we do that, may each one of us perceive more of God's glory, and so become better equipped to reflect his glory in the world.

*With prayers and best wishes,
Sarah Errington, Team Vicar
(email address see page two)*

Celebrating Christmas

Now that Christmas is over it seems like a good time to take time to review what seems to have been a very positive festive season. Advent started with over 1,000 people visiting the Christmas Tree Festival in St Mary's. This was organised in conjunction with Calne Town Council. There were also many school carol services and a service for the Guides.

Top of the list of achievements is the amount raised for Water Aid, which was our Christmas charity in the Parish of Calne and Blackland. This appeal raised £1,073 plus Gift Aid, estimated at around £200. It is particularly encouraging to note that the young people who attend the Wednesday Club raised £140 of this by organising a fundraising stall after a morning service.



Lucy Hemmings

Indicated that we definitely have some positives to report for our St Peter's Christmas services! We had a lovely carol service on Sunday 22nd December at 3.00pm, Caspar took the service, we had our occasional choir of four who are a great addition, this was followed by mulled wine and mince pies, there were 48 people. The Christmas morning service was BCP Holy Communion at 9.30am taken by Jeremy Cresswell, there were 41



people. Dominic played beautifully for both services, lots of well-known and loved carols, the church was almost filled to its capacity of 50 for both services! Jenny Colby says that there was also a very enjoyable carol service at Holy Trinity.



Caspar's thoughts

I particularly enjoyed sitting in St Mary's on the Saturday afternoon of the Christmas Tree Festival talking to all manner of people, seven of whom then turned up in church the next day! Also it was great to hear some lovely comments after the carol service on 22nd Dec about the choir sounding particularly good.

A lovely unexpected thing was the request from Jacob and Alex, young men who are both regulars at the 10am service, asking to become acolytes carrying the candles at midnight mass. Joanna Childs was in charge of the thurible for the incense for the first time, along with fairly-new church member Carolyn Burleson-Webb carrying the gospel, it was a rejuvenated serving team, alongside Richard Aldhous, crucifer of many years standing!

Letter from Bishop Karen – Fresh Starts

At the end of 1992 we all remember the late Queen describing the year as an Annus Horribilis. Well, in a way 2024 has been an Annus Horribilis for the Church of England. The publication of the Makin Report into the horrific abuse of boys by a trusted lay leader which went unchecked for years and the subsequent resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury has caused a mirror to be held up to the church. The use and abuse of power, the nature of deference, the lack of transparency of processes, the need for truth and the ability or inability of the church to govern itself have all been called into question.

There is an urgent need for us to look honestly at ourselves afresh, to right the wrongs where we can, and when I say ‘we’ I mean all of us affiliated to the Church of England. To listen and learn from the victims and survivors of abuse and to support them in whatever way possible; to create greater transparency within our structures local, diocesan and national, and to consider where our own behaviour falls short as we follow the way of Christ. A New Year creates the



opportunity to resolve to change things. To be a church that is honest about its failings and determined to bring to the light things which have been hidden. To talk about hard topics honestly and safely where every voice counts, including safeguarding, human sexuality, our financial obligations, racial justice, and how we include or exclude. Too often as we look back, we can see it is fear that entraps us, and causes us to act in certain ways, to remain silent. So in response as we look ahead let's declare 2025 as the year we begin to banish fear, and pay heed to the Psalmist 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?' Psalm 27:1.

Bishop Karen

Christmas Crossword Answers

Down:

1. Yuletide.
2. Nicholas.
4. Frankincense.
5. Donner.
6. Rudolf.
8. Manger.
14. Dancer.
16. Gold.
18. Christmas.
20. Joy.
21. Light.
22. Ass.

Across:

3. Blitzen.
5. Dasher.
7. Vixen.
9. Comet.
10. Will.
11. Star.
12. Bethlehem.
13. Good.
15. Magi.
17. Prancer.
18. Cupid.
19. Myrrh.
20. Jovial.
23. Merry.
24. Tidings.

Wall Tablet: Eleanora Stokes, St Mary's

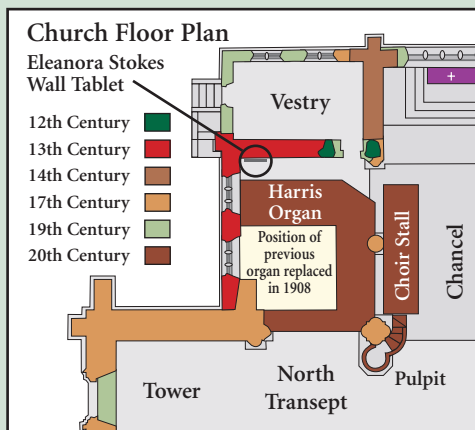
St Mary's Church has many wall tablets dedicated to the lives of past constituents. On the west facing wall on the east side of the organ (see Church Floor Plan below) is one dedicated to Eleanora Stokes d.1705.

As an architectural memorial, the marble tablet takes the form of a rectangular inscription, flanked by two columns with a base over an apron decorated with palm fronds and a central scrolled blank cartouche. Above the tablet is a stepped corniche with a plinth supporting a closed fluted urn with finial. It is difficult to read as there is so little space between the memorial and the organ. Erected by Richard Stokes husband of Eleanora, the lettering is in Latin. It translates as:

'And here lies buried Eleanora Stokes, the beloved wife of Richard Stokes. Gentleman, of this town, eldest daughter of Thomas Lambert, Esquire of Boyton in the county of Wiltshire. She was a woman of outstanding virtue, remarkable character, singular piety and no mean ability, wonderful steadfastness, equanimity as well as of unbro-

ken friendship, most prompt assistance to the poor and needy, provident of her goods yet a stranger to avarice, lastly she was second to none in both mind and body. After she had completed 38 years, the untamed fury of smallpox carried her off from her family and neighbours to whom she was most dear, on 21st October in the year of man's salvation 1705. To whose dearest memory her grieving husband erected this memorial and pledge of his love and to be as it were for himself.'

Serena and Charles Boase



Mothers' Union

The AGM and lunch took place on Tuesday 14th January. Our speaker for the meeting on Tuesday 11th February is Graham Bennett from Mission Aviation Fellowship.

In February it is the MU Wave of Prayer, our slot is Friday 7th February at 10.30 – 10.50 in Church House.

Everyone is welcome at our meetings.

Jenny Colby, Branch Leader

Lent Groups

Lent study groups are to be held again this year, beginning around Ash Wednesday which this year falls on 5th March. There will be a mixture of venues including people's homes, Church House and online. Some during the day, and some in the evening.

Watch this space for more details next month.

Dates for your diary

- 2nd February – Candlemas or Presentation of Christ in the Temple
 - 7th Mothers' Union Wave of Prayer
 - 11th Mothers' Union meeting 2.00pm
 - 14th St Valentine's Day
 - 24th February – Feast Day of St Matthias
 - 4th March – Shrove Tuesday
 - 5th March – Ash Wednesday
-

Focus for Prayer

Please remember to pray for ...

- People who are feeling cold and especially those who are worried about heating costs.
 - Generosity towards anyone who has less than you.
 - People who long for spring and warmth.
 - All parts of the world where clean water is not readily available.
-

Editorial Team:

Sue Twyman, Jane Ridgwell and Jack Robinson.

Illustration, Graphic Design and Layout:

Alex Grenfell.

And finally ...

If you organise any groups or events in the parish and would like them to be included in this newsletter then get in touch with the editors.

We would also love to have articles about the different groups in the parish to spread the word more widely and encourage people to come along.

Please email or give copies of items to us in plenty of time for the next newsletter, the deadline is 10th of the preceding month.

email: cbp.news.editor@gmail.com



Regular Activities in the Parish

*Please check Website or Parish Notices for Zoom Link.

Day	Time	Place	Activity
Sunday	8.00am	St Mary's	Holy Communion (NOT 4th Sunday of the month).
	9.30am	St Peter's	Holy Communion (BCP) – (4th Sunday of the month).
	10.00am	St Mary's	Parish Eucharist (4th Sunday of the month; Morning Praise).
	10.45am	Holy Trinity	Morning Praise (2nd Sunday of the month). Holy Communion (4th Sunday of the month).
	3.00pm	Holy Trinity	Family Service (3rd and 5th Sunday of the month).
Tuesday	10.00am	Church House	SMUF's parent and toddler group. Only during term times.
Wednesday	10.00am	St Mary's	Holy Communion (Mothers' Union Corporate Service 1st Wednesday of the month).
	3.30-5.30pm	Church House	Wednesday Club for 4-11s. Only during term times.
Friday	8.30 am	Zoom	Morning Prayers – Whole Benefice*
	2.00-4.00pm	Church House (Downstairs)	Cameo – Come And Meet Each Other. 3rd Friday of the month only. You'll be welcomed with a cup of tea... plus board games and time to chat.
	7.00pm	St Mary's	Choir Practice.
	7.30pm	Bell Ringing	Please contact Jane Ridgwell for further information.

If you wish to make a donation to the Parish of Calne and Blackland you can use this QR code

