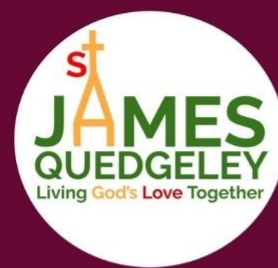


AROUND THE SPIRE



December 2025 & January 2026

Saint James' Church Quedgeley & Kingsway

FREE MAGAZINE

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
ISSUE 116

JOY

Events and worship during December at Saint James' Church School Lane Quedgeley

21st November, 10am-4pm, Pre-Advent bible study at St James Church, lunch provided, contact Revd Mark to reserve your place: drmarksid@gmail.com

30th November, 7th, 14th, 21st December

Mark Advent in Church as we wait for Christmas together.

10am Holy Communion

11.30am StJs Worship for Everyone - Bible Stories, Activities and Great Music

21st December, 5pm, Lessons and Carols

22nd December, 1-3pm, Messy Christmas - Crafts, Activities and Stories

Christmas Eve

2pm, Crib Service - a beautiful time as we decorate the crib and tell the story of the first Christmas together

4pm and 6pm - Carol Service with the Gloucester Charter Band

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10am, Christmas Holy Communion for Everyone

28th December

10am Holy Communion reflecting on 2025

11.30am StJs Worship for Everyone - Bible Stories, Activities and Great Music

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

 JOY



Out and about with Revd. Mark

It has been a while since I used this column to write about a local business and this is a great opportunity to mention a long time favourite.

My prayer for this month:

May that kindred spirit of the Christ Child, ready to become one of us, ready to die for us, reign in our hearts this Christmas and New Year. AMEN

The Roastery at the Orchard retail park is one of the first places I got to know in Quedgeley four years ago when I visited, to meet the Ministry Team. As well as great coffee and tea they have a range of savoury light bites and patisseries. They are very dog friendly and so Emily and I headed over there during half term after a walk along the canal with Biddy.

I enjoyed a flat white and we both loved our English breakfast, which was competitively priced for a freshly cooked breakfast using bacon and sausages from local butchers.

The atmosphere is warm and inviting. It can be quite loud, which is something to consider if you are hard of hearing, but it really feels very lively and sociable.

When we are looking for something quieter we eat outside. There are dog biscuits and water and I always leave with a large bag of coffee grounds, which are great for compost. If you are looking for somewhere to go over the next weeks or somewhere to take guests, Emily and I can recommend the Roastery.



Revd. Mark handing out our winter newsletters at the Quedgeley surgery held most months in the Tesco store.

It's an opportunity for you to pop along meet members of the Quedgeley Town Council local City and County Councillors, Police and our own Revd. Mark .

The next surgery date is 15th January.



We are aiming to deliver newsletters to your door on a seasonal basis. However, this depends on whether we can recruit enough deliverers. Apart from helping to spread the word, just think of the health benefits from all those extra steps! If you can help deliver in your area give us a ring on 07853217954 or email us at aroundthespire@gmail.com.



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Times and Seasons The Christian Year

Fr. Ian Robb

A look at the various seasons of the Church Calendar: in the months of December & January we journey through Advent to Christmas, and Epiphany



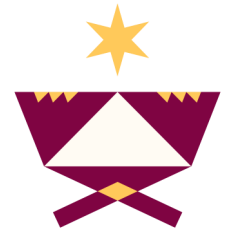
Advent is the season of expectation and preparation as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (Adventus) of the Christ – God-made-man – the Incarnation - and also looks ahead to his final advent as Judge at the end of time. The readings which we shall hear and the words we shall share in our worship will direct us towards Christ's birth and also challenge us to confront the theme of divine judgement.

The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven, Hell – have throughout Church history been themes for Advent meditation, giving us twin themes of expectation and penitence. The material world tempts us to rush on to Christmas, making it hard to maintain the sense of watching and waiting, but the basic Advent prayer remains “Maranatha – Come, Lord Jesus”.

Church decorations are basic – no flowers, and purple is the colour of the season. For us, Advent falls at the darkest time of the year and the symbols of darkness and light have a powerful part in our observation, underlined by the lighting of the candles of the Advent ring. The third Sunday of Advent provides a brief splash of colour as we celebrate the work of John the Baptist on “Gaudete” (Rejoice!) Sunday. The last days of Advent are marked at Evening Prayer by a series of Antiphons, the “Great O's” of Advent which inspired, for example, the hymn “O come, O come, Emmanuel”.



Christmas - it's much more than the birth of Jesus. The task of all the worship during this season is to recall us, amid all the joyful customs and celebrations, to the central truth of the Christian faith that God became Man in the person of Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, who was born of the Virgin Mary. St John describes this wonderful event: “The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory.” This miracle of God intervening in our humanity is called The Incarnation – a mysterious and dramatic event which was first centred on the birth of Jesus in the 3rd century.



Francis of Assisi devised the tableau which we now know as the Christmas Crib, and which was the inspiration for the original Nativity Play, Christmas carols are a medieval tradition, which was developed and expanded in the 19th century, and which blossomed into the service of Nine Lessons and Carols in the early 20th century.

Strictly speaking, the Christmas season lasts for forty days, ending with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple on 2nd February. This is traditionally the time for celebration a time which has now been moved, by the secular world, to the weeks before Christmas. The Church, in her wisdom, keeps our attention focussed with the feasts of St Stephen the first Martyr (26th Dec), St John the Evangelist (27th Dec), the Holy Innocents (28th Dec), and the Naming of Jesus (1st Jan), thus leading us to the Feast of:



The Epiphany – or “Manifestation”, or “Showing Forth”, of the Christ.

Each of the four Gospel-writers has his own version of “Epiphany”, with Matthew's account being closest to the infancy of Jesus, and is the one which is included in our carol-singing and nativity plays – despite the fact that much time had probably elapsed between the birth of Jesus and the arrival of the Magi – the “Wise Men from the east”. These scholars represent the Gentile world, which the Christ has come to rescue from sin.

As the weeks of Epiphany unfold, we shall hear St Mark describing the Baptism of Jesus, when the voice of God the Father declares him to be the Son in whom He is well-pleased. St John will take us to a wedding-fast at Cana, where Jesus performed his first miracle, thus revealing his true self to his first disciples. The season ends as we remember Jesus, at forty days old, being presented to God in the temple in Jerusalem, and we hear the aged Simeon declare him to be “a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of God's people Israel”. But the Redemption he will bring must be won through suffering – so the Incarnation is directed to the Passion; and Simeon's final words move our attention from the celebration of Christmas towards the events of Holy Week and Easter.

From the Editor's desk



TIME FOR ENDEAVOUR?

It is many long years since I was a Boy Scout, but I still remember being asked — whenever we were given a task — “Did you make a sufficient endeavour to succeed?”

So, as a subject for my Editorial this month, I invite you to join me in asking this same question of ourselves: whatever we seek to succeed in, do we make sufficient effort, or do we allow things to slip by as “unfinished business”?

If we truly want to find success in any project or area of our lives, we know full well that, if it is something worth achieving, it depends largely on how much effort we are prepared to put in to make it succeed.

Take, for example, this very publication. Back in 2015, a small group of us recognised a need — a need for people of like mind and faith to respond to our community's challenges in the best way possible within our own walks of life.

So that's it for now — but I do hope this reflection has made you think a little! The subject of **Endeavour** is really important for us as our lives as Christians develop.

So here's a question for you, dear Reader —

Do you make the endeavour in your life to be a disciple of Jesus?

This will be the subject we'll explore further in next month's Editorial!



*Our **Next Steps** project is moving ahead quickly. There's a lot of preparation underway, and plenty of paperwork to complete before restoration can officially begin. In this final update of the year, **Andrew Wakely** explains where we've reached so far and what comes next!*

This is the last update of the year and progress is still being made. Sadly you don't get to see much of it as for the main part is involves paperwork, planning, meetings, grant applications and important documentation. This will continue in the new year.

On the progress front we now have the important Statements of Need and of Significance completed and have been fortunate to be able to compare ours with those of another Church who made a successful application on a similar project. Ours are now being proof read and will then be submitted to the DAC for an informal first submission to ensure we are on the right lines.

The project is generating much interest and we have now been visited by separate groups of historian enthusiasts with another in the pipeline.

Encouraging news on the grant funding has been the successful application of yet another Church who have been successful in gaining funding for their re-ordering from by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the very organisation with whom we are having opening discussions.

Finally, as an interim measure, you will have noticed that much of the carpet has been removed to expose the lovely Victorian tiles below. The good news is that although their condition looked dire in places, it is nowhere near as poor as we thought. They are in fair condition for their age and it looks like they can be lifted without too much damage. It is still work in progress, they have been cleaned by the first level of specialist chemical cleaners, and the next soon we hope.

Patience is the name of the game. They have been hidden for many years so it is worth doing the job carefully and properly. The tiles are part of the precious heritage of which we are temporary custodians, and which we want to retain as we build for the future as God plans.



What I am praying about....

Expectant, sometimes impatient, waiting, characterises this time of year in the lead up to Christmas. Afterwards many experience something of a post Christmas, New Year low. But what are we waiting for and is there something in what we are waiting for that will bring salvation from a post Christmas low so that we can begin 2026 in hope?

Beyond our immediate waiting for Christmas 2025, this year I am waiting for the coming of a new kindness. Salvation from the many things today that feel like they are going wrong. For all of the alienation of our politics and attitudes, I believe that the story of Jesus shows us that kindness - becoming 'kin' to others and treating others as 'kin' - is the outlook that will bring hope and keep us going well beyond Christmas and into the New Year.

At Christmas, the Creator becomes 'kin'. The Creator becomes created, fully human, so that we might know His powerful life-renewing love for us. That really is something that can give us hope in 2026 and forevermore.



May that kindred spirit of the Christ Child, ready to become one of us, ready to die for us, reign in our hearts this Christmas and New Year. AMEN

Cold Words Warm Words

Although I was still some distance away, the lady recognised me as I exited the store and her face brightened into a smile. Maybe I'd been the first friendly face she'd seen so far that day? Whatever, she held that smile as I walked her way.

Between us though was someone else, also heading in her direction. As that person passed, something cutting and unkind must have been spoken, for that smile quickly faded. Instead, was the sad and painful look of someone resigned to all but inevitable hurtful comments that would be slung her way; that day, every day. After all, standing alone as she was, people like her were such an easy target for people's prejudice and malice.

Do I believe that we possess a soul? Yes, I do, and I saw in this lady's face a soul crushed by a throwaway word. The spark of hope though was not quite extinguished; her smile slowly returned as I came to meet her. All I could really offer that day were a few pleasant words and a few moments of my time. I did hope though that she still might find comfort that at least someone that day had stopped to give her a little time and attention.

Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 25; "I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me..."

These days He might also say,

"I was stood alone in the cold, trying to sell a copy or two of 'The Big Issue', and you did not despise me."

Steve Morris



Diocese of Gloucester

From the 1st December the Diocese of Gloucester will be moving offices from College Green to Church House 5 Denmark Road Gloucester GL1 3HW (near St. Catharine's Church and the junction of London Road)



Creation Care - connecting body, spirit and planet

Revd. Mark



When I write this article each month I often take the angle of encouragement to care better for our planet.

One reason why this matters is that our planet is our home and a home is also a place that we sense care for ourselves. The care of a loving Creator.

I cannot be the only one who over indulges at this time of year and end up feeling a little worse for wear in body, mind and spirit.

Looking back over photos from previous Christmases the photos in which we are happiest are the photos where we are out and about in green space and fresh air.

Nature at its best. Without leaves on the trees the beautiful forms of the trees are revealed and light hits the floor of the nature reserve. The air is crisp and cool and an antidote to stuffiness inside.

Whereas we can overindulge and feel sluggish, our planet often offers things in just the right proportions for us to feel alive once more.

This Christmas, perhaps we must take the opportunity to allow the Creator to care for us in the midst of Creation, outside, just as our bodies are really made for.

Mark



Autumn by Jean Macarty

The clocks have gone back
and the signs are quite clear.

The changing scene shows
that Autumn is here.

The leaves on the trees turn
from green to gold and red,
and it's time to be putting
the garden to bed.

The roses have had their final prune
hoping for an abundance of flowers in June.

The lawn is cut, the mower put away,
cleaned and ready for a later day.

The fruit from the Chestnut trees
fall to the ground
soon by children to be found.

A fight with the conkers
threaded on string.

The last one left whole is the King.

Bonfires, fireworks and apples covered in toffee,

Adults chatting and drinking hot coffee,

The carpet of leaves will soon disappear,

Which tells us that winter is now very near.



Quedgeley WI

November means it's our AGM when we heard the Financial Report followed by the Secretary's report that reminded us of the meetings and visits we had enjoyed throughout the year. Talks had ranged from major UK crime gangs, Fraud Awareness and Volunteering at an Elephant Sanctuary. The highlight of the year was the Birthday Supper which celebrated one hundred years of Quedgeley WI when several of our members dressed in costumes of the 1920s.

On to the President's address, the introduction of the committee and the popular decision that Pat Watts was willing to take on the role of President for another year. There then followed drinks, nibbles and a quiz. The last meeting of the year is a Social Evening with an American Supper, a Christmas themed raffle and the competition is for a home made Christmas decoration

In 2026 we will hear talks that include the Gloucester Mens Shed, another visit from Paul Murphy with the second part of his talk on Charlie Chaplin and The Life and Times of an Adult Tutor. If anyone would like to come along to any of our meetings, either as a visitor or new member they will be made very welcome.

We meet at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of every month in Quedgeley Village Hall and further information can be found on our website www.quedgeleywi.co.uk or on facebook.com/quedgeleywi.



Jesus' Jester

**The Venerable
David Sutch TD**



A more light hearted version than the original... well it soon will be Christmas!

On the first day of Christmas

*My true love said to me
I've bought a great big turkey
And a proper Christmas Tree.*

On the second day of Christmas

*Much laughter could be heard
As we tucked into our Turkey
A most delicious bird.*

On the third day we entertained

*The people from next door
And the Turkey tasted just as good
As it had the day before.*

Day Four, relations came to stay.

*Poor Gran was getting old!
We finished off the Christmas pud
And had the Turkey cold.*

On the fifth day of Christmas

*Outside the snowflakes flurried
But we were nice and warm inside;
We had the Turkey curried.*

On the sixth day, I must admit

*The Christmas spirit died.
The Children fought and bickered
And we had the Turkey fried.*

On the seventh day of Christmas

*My true love he did wince
When he sat down to dinner
And was offered Turkey mince.*

Day eight, and nerves were frayed.

*The dog ran for shelter.
She'd seen the Turkey pancakes
And the jar of Alka-Seltzer.*

On the ninth day the cat left home. By lunch time Dad was blotto, He said he had to have a drink To face Turkey risotto.

On the tenth day the booze had gone Except our home-made brew As if that wasn't bad enough We lunched on Turkey stew.

On the eleventh day of Christmas The Christmas tree was moulting The mince pies were hard as rocks, And the Turkey was revolting.

On the twelfth day of Christmas A smile came to our lips The guests had gone, the Turkey too. We dined on fish and chips



Autumn Fair 2025

Our Autumn Fair – What a Day!

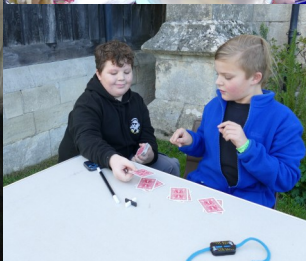
We were all set to hold our Autumn Fair in the Quedgeley Community Centre... until disaster struck! A section of the ceiling collapsed, and we had to change our plans at the very last minute.

Thankfully, the church and its grounds came to the rescue! We took a bit of a gamble with the weather, but it turned out beautifully and the fair went ahead without a hitch.

There was a wonderful variety of stalls — from delicious cakes and cosy knitwear to second-hand books — and even a magician to keep us all entertained! We're thrilled to say we raised an amazing **£2,965** to help with the upkeep of the church.

A huge thank you to everyone who came along, supported us, and bought raffle tickets — we couldn't have done it without you!

Thank You!



*Mrs Bridges festive Christmas Cake



There's nothing quite like a slice of **Christmas cake**, packed with delicious fruits, currants, cherries, and sultanas, to put a smile on your face during these cold winter evenings.

So why wait until Christmas? Indulge yourself with this **easy, go-to recipe** kindly shared by **Ann Bridges**.

Ann bakes nearly every week for our **Tea@2** crowd, who simply adore her **Courgette and Walnut Cake** and never miss a slice of her **Chocolate Cake** with their cuppa.

ANN'S EASY CHRISTMAS CAKE

- 1 ½ lb. Mixed dried Fruit*
- ¾ lb. Brown Sugar*
- 9 oz. Butter*
- ¼ lb. Ground Almonds
- 1 tsp Mixed Spice
- 1 ½ cups Water
- 4 Eggs
- 12 oz. Plain Flour
- ¾ tsp Bicarbonate of soda* Rum etc.

Ingredients marked* boil in pan for 15 minutes. Cool. Stir in Flour,

Almonds, Spice, eggs and rum. Place in an 8 inch round cake tin that has been lined.

Bake for approximately 3 hours at 120/140 electric.



Festive Cheese Scone recipe

Our Tea@2 crowd love these scones. Great with a morning or afternoon cuppa with lashings of butter.

- 250g Self raising flour
- Pinch of salt
- 60g butter
- 125g cheddar cheese (mature)
- 1 large egg
- 150ml milk

1. Line a baking tray with parchment and turn oven to 200c degrees (FAN) or Gas mark 7
2. Place flour and butter in a bowl. Rub in butter until mixture resembles bread crumbs
3. Add mustard and salt
4. Add cheese and mix in egg and milk
5. Turn out on floured board and using a pastry cutter cut into shapes.
6. Place scones in oven for around 15 minutes until light brown and firm to touch.



* Please note: Mrs Bridges is our own Ann Bridges of Quedgeley and is NOT associated in anyway with the retail trademark of food products known as 'Mrs Bridges', that can be bought on line or in retail stores.

In the garden with Victoria



Our second article, written by **Victoria Miller**, takes a look at **garden jobs for December and January**. Victoria explores the **controversial question of whether you should rake the leaves off your lawn or leave them where they fall!** Do you have a strong opinion or some useful advice to share? We'd love to hear from you — get in touch at aroundthespire@gmail.com.

I think I will start this month's 'To Do' list with something that can be a little controversial – to rake or not to rake? A couple of weeks ago in a Sunday paper I read an article stating that we should NOT rake up leaves. It went on to state that by leaving fallen leaves we are providing nutrients to the soil, creating habitats for wildlife, providing food for birds and helping animal hibernation. Not to mention saving time and reducing waste. I was surprised as the raking of leaves is one of the big jobs in my garden at this time of the year and I can hear my Father's voice saying that 'leaving leaves on the lawn will lead to moss!' A warning to all in search of the dream of a 'perfect' lawn! To explore further I did a bit of research.

The Gardeners World and RHS websites agree with my Father – one states the reason is a healthy lawn, the other the getting rid of possible hiding places for slugs. So, I guess it all depends on how environmentally friendly you want to be as to whether the raking of lawns will be on your 'To Do List'.

December is a good time to hard prune overgrown shrubs and hedges while they are dormant and also fruit tree – though not those growing against a wall which are primarily summer pruned to restrict vigour and encourage fruit bud formation.

The mulching of shrubs that started in November can continue into December if not already done. It is also a good time to think about protecting any pots that you have.

It is not just the pots themselves that need protecting from cracking but the plants inside those pots are more exposed to the cold winter frosts than if they were in the earth. If possible it would be good if you can move the pots under cover or nearer the house so they get some protection from frost. Sometimes due to size this is just not possible. If you like me have such large/ heavy containers then the best way to protect them and the plants inside is to wrap them up - bubble wrap or garden fleece can be used. Remember to put a layer of mulch on top too.

December and January are good times to do general maintenance around the garden. Jobs like clearing out the garden shed, organising your tools, and sharpening any that need it as well as cleaning the green house and sorting out all your plastic pots! Making sure that your outside taps are insulated is another important job to do as well as cleaning your bird feeders – if you have them. It is still important to ensure that the birds have access to water over winter so on very cold mornings it is a good idea to make sure their water has not frozen over. Keeping any pond you might have from freezing over is also a job that needs an eye kept on it. A solid ice barrier stops vital oxygen from entering the water and prevents toxic gases from escaping. These gases would harm any pondlife that you may have.

If you want to bring a bit of colour to your garden you can pot up a container or two. There are lots of plants that can survive the cold months for example Pansies, Violas, hardy Cyclamen, Hellebores and Ivy to name a few.

Christmas at the Movies concert

Gloucester Cathedral

Thursday 18th December 7.30pm –9.30pm



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/christmas-at-the-movies-thu-18th-december-gloucester-cathedral-tickets-1396967380039?aff=ebdigigoogleliveevents>

Gloucester Youth Unite

Tuesday December 16, 10:00 am to 11:00 am

Once a month at St Catharine's Church. For anyone involved in youth work in the city of Gloucester, of any denomination. Coming together to support one another, to plan for future events, to share the joys and challenges of youth work and to pray together.

It's exciting to see God moving in many ways amongst our young people across Gloucester city.



Helen Champion is the Youth Connector for Gloucester city, working in the Deanery and wider Diocese to enable young people to experience 'life in all its fullness.'



Christmas - a poem by Lovell Cornwall

Snowflakes are falling from the leaden skies,
Mum is preparing to make mince pies.
Upstairs, the children await a surprise,
For tonight, is the night before Christmas.

Presents are wrapped and put under the tree.
There's love and best wishes from you and
from me.
The children are still awake, hoping to see
A white bearded man, Father Christmas.

Then in the morning, before it is light,
The children are downstairs, with shrieks of
delight,
Father is hoping and preying, he might
Get back off to sleep 'cause it's Christmas.

But that's not to be, for the children rush in
With armfuls of presents and shout 'Mum he's
been'
Father can just about manage to grin.
Mum says 'Come on Dad, it's Christmas'

So presents are opened and greetings are passed.
The children are shouting! How long will that last?
Now they are fighting ; and Mum looks aghast
But then after all, it's their Christmas.

There's sherry and whisky and bottles of wine
And after a little while, Mum and Dad's fine.
Now one of the children has started to whine.
'Hey; come on you kids, this is Christmas.'

During the day, there are good things to eat,
Turkey and mince pies and chocolates so sweet,
There's friends and relations and neighbours to meet.
Oh yes, What a good time is Christmas.

At last in the evening, the children soon tire.
On the T.V. Mum and Dad hear a choir.
So settle down quietly, in front of the fire,
Enjoying the peace, that is Christmas.



Sing & Play



Sing and Play has been running for several months now, and from what parents and carers tell us, it's proving to be a real hit! Youngsters love coming along to enjoy the delights of listening to stories and music, and joining in with all the actions.

One of the organisers, **Andrew Wakely**, knows exactly what captures children's imaginations. As a grandfather to a lively five-year-old, it wasn't long ago that he was finding fun ways to amuse his then-toddler grandson. Inspired by those experiences, Andrew decided to design and produce a book called **Carboatplane trainbus**.

The book is A3 in size—perfect for little ones to see easily—and is full of bright colours, simple words, and plenty of opportunities for children to make the sounds of the various vehicles featured. It's received enthusiastic praise from parents and carers, and the babies and toddlers love it too!

Well done, Andrew!

Remembrance Sunday 2025



Una Steer a member of our congregation tells us about the highlight of her day when she met H.R.H The Princess of Wales at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

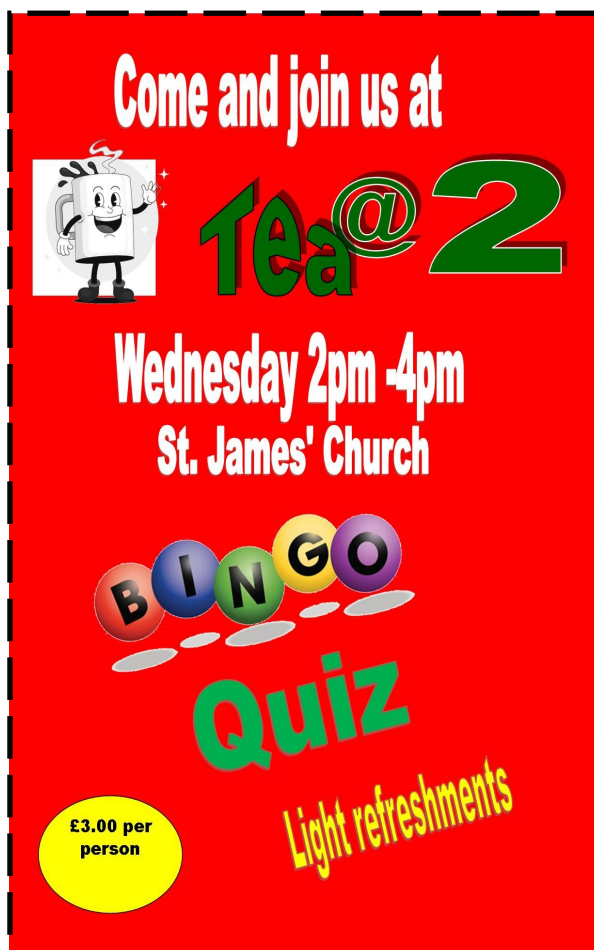
"I attended the Remembrance Service at the National Memorial Arboretum on Tuesday 11th November. The service was very moving. A sergeant read a poem in memory of two comrades killed in Afghanistan. Not a dry eye.

After the service H.R.H The Princess of Wales went on walkabout. She recognised my cap badge and asked me about it. I told her that I had served in Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps. She then asked about Michael's medals. She was so lovely and down to earth. A day I will never forget." - Una Steer



Weekly Events

Tea@2 — You're Missing a Treat!



Come and join us at



Tea@2

Wednesday 2pm -4pm
St. James' Church

BINGO

Quiz

Light refreshments

£3.00 per person

If you haven't already joined us at **Tea@2**, you're missing out on a real treat! Every **Wednesday from 2pm**, we meet in **St. James' Church** for a fun-packed afternoon.

There's a lively **quiz** to keep the old *grey matter* active, along with **copious cups of tea or coffee**. Our wonderful team of volunteers also bake **sumptuous cakes** each week — we've enjoyed Coffee and Walnut, Carrot Cake, Courgette and Beetroot, and Chocolate, as well as the traditional favourites like Victoria Sponge and Fruit Cake.

Each afternoon finishes with a cheerful game of **Bingo**, where there's always the chance to **win a prize!**

The entire event is organised and supported by volunteers, and the **cost is just £3.00 per person**.

Christmas Party – Wednesday 3rd December

If you haven't already put your name down for the Christmas Party, I'm afraid the list is now full — but don't worry, there's always next year!

After the party, we'll take a short break and return on **Wednesday 7th January 2026**. Looking forward to seeing you all then.

Wishing you all a **very Happy Christmas** and a **happy, healthy New Year 2026!**

For more information ring: **07853217954** or email **aroundthespire@gmail.com**



FREE

**SAINT JAMES' CHURCH
QUEDGELEY & KINGSWAY**

SING & PLAY



Wednesday 11.00am -12noon
Saint James' Church
School Lane
Quedgeley GL2 4PN

FREE REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

Sing and Play

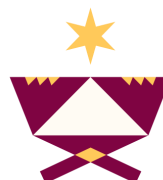
Sing and Play takes a short break over the Christmas holidays, and my goodness we shall miss the little ones; they grow SO quickly.

It is always a **great delight** to chat with their carers as well, be they Mums, Dads, Grandparents or Looker-afters.

We shall be meeting new ones this next year for sure. Everyone enjoys the **songs, actions, and stories**, and it is a real pleasure to see the little smiles break out on little faces as they engage in familiar activities.

We finish on **December 17th** and start again in the new year on **January 7th** every Wednesday at **11oclock**.

Happy Christmas and God's blessings to all of you from the Team.



Christmas Fun Pages

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Solve the crossword puzzle by filling in the blanks with the correct Christmas-related terms. Use the clues provided on the following page.



CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

CLUES

- 1 Sweet holiday treat, usually with red, green, and white stripes.
- 2 Vehicle used by children to play on the snow.
- 3 Animal associated with pulling Santa's vehicle.
- 4 A present given during the holiday season.
- 5 A festive plant often associated with kissing.
- 6 Traditional hanging decoration for small presents.
- 7 Iconic winter figure made of snow.
- 8 Decoration often lit for a warm and festive glow.
- 9 Jolly figure in a red suit who delivers gifts.
- 10 Circular decoration hung on doors during the holidays.
- 11 A sweet, spiced cookie typically shaped like a person and decorated with icing.
- 12 Santa's little helper with pointy ears.
- 13 The sound of bells during the festive season.



Answers on page 18



Advent Word Search

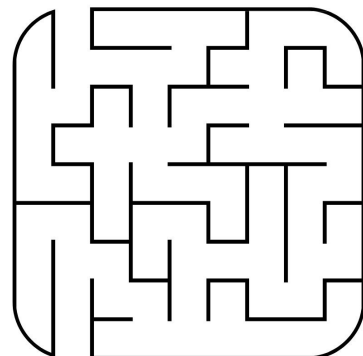
Find the hidden Advent words.

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

SUNDAY FOUR CHURCH CROWN
CHOCOLATE NATIVITY DECEMBER WREATH
COUNTDOWN CALENDAR CHRISTMAS CANDLES

CHRISTMAS MAZE

Help the Wise men follow the Star to baby Jesus



Christmas Quiz

1. The Twelve Days of Christmas finishes on which date traditionally?
2. Which of Santa's reindeer comes first alphabetically?
3. The Trafalgar Square Christmas Tree is a gift from which city to London, a longstanding tradition since 1947?
4. If you're born on Christmas day, what's your star sign?
5. The original name for mistletoe was mistaltan. With 'Tan' coming from the Anglo Saxon word for stick, mistletoe literally translates to what on a stick?
6. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Spanish?
7. Which country is Europe's largest exporter of natural Christmas trees?
8. What do elves typically have on their shoes?
9. What colour suit did Santa Claus originally wear before the iconic red suit?
10. What type of bird usually appears on Christmas cards?
11. What gifts did the three wise men give Jesus?
12. What are small, inexpensive gifts usually called?
13. Which reindeer's name means 'thunder'?
14. In which modern-day country was Saint Nicholas born?
15. What's the main colour of the berries of the mistletoe plant?
16. Which country is credited with the creation of the Christmas beverage, eggnog?
17. What is the last day of Advent?
18. In Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", how many ghosts visit Scrooge?
19. In "A Christmas Carol", what does Scrooge have for his Christmas dinner?
20. Which saint's day is celebrated on 26th December?

For the answers see page 18



At Clearwater Primary Academy Revd Mark dressed up as Bananaman; an ordinary boy who becomes a superhero when he eats a banana. Revd Mark talked about how, for Christians, Jesus is a superhero because he becomes an ordinary boy to show us how much he loves us.



In the nursery at Field Court Infants the children have been busy supporting BBC Children in Need—Pudsey. They supported Children in Need by wearing Pudsey themed or spotty clothes. They created spotty pictures using paint dabbers and Pom poms. The play dough was yellow for Pudsey Bear and the children had Pom poms to make his spots.





Annual Fireworks

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for our Annual Fireworks Display on 8th November. We were fortunate with the weather, and as a result, welcomed more visitors than ever before. This is our biggest event of the year, delivered in partnership with Danter's Fun Fair—who we have proudly worked with for many years—and, more recently, Apex Events. Our goal is always to provide a professional, well-planned display that residents can enjoy, knowing that safety is our top priority.



We recognise that the event brings a significant amount of traffic to the area, and we carefully review all feedback to help us plan an even smoother experience for the following year. We also appreciate that fireworks are not for everyone; however, many members of our community continue to enjoy and support this annual tradition. As long as there is a desire for it, we will strive to keep delivering an event that brings people together.

Same time next year? We will be ready, and we look forward to seeing our community come together once more.

Christmas Event



Our next big event is our Christmas Event which is due to take place on Sunday 14th December 2025 at the Kingsway Sports Pavilion from 10.00am. This event is designed especially for toddlers and young children. A chance to meet Father Christmas, enjoy Christmas activities and crafts and eat nice things!! And the best bit about this event is it is all free for our community. The only bit of change you will need is for buying a cupcake or for facepainting. The event itself normally only lasts a couple of hours so if you want to bring your little ones along then please do join us on this date and pre prepared for some fun. Adults are not forgotten either, with free refreshments to hand, such as hot chocolate, marshmallows, coffee, tea and biscuits

A big thank you to Help if we Can for organising our annual Armistice Day event which takes place at our War Memorial at St James' Churchyard. Always a good turnout and a very poignant event and thank you to everyone who came along, including our local schools. The Town Council wreath was laid by Cllr Mike Robinson. A few pictures to show justice to the day.



With all these events, you would think the council have little time to do anything else. Well, your councillors are busier than ever, meeting twice monthly to make sure that the more serious side of work continues. This month we have experienced a problem with Hall 1 at Quedgeley Community Centre which requires immediate attention, legionella compliance takes place and annual Health & Safety housekeeping. Internal Controls have taken place to ensure that the council maintains good governance, councillor and staff training, as well as preparation for the QTC Futures Group Committee where councillors and staff work together with one common interest, how can things improve within our community. The new budget is also underway, as well as preparing the new year planner. So, lots going on behind the

scenes....

CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

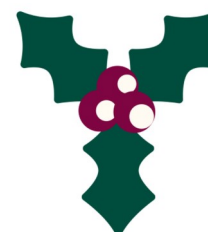
⚠ The Town Council Office will remain open until Christmas Eve at 12 noon
and will reopen on Friday 2nd January 2025 at 9.00am

❄ A MESSAGE TO OUR COMMUNITY ❄

As we come to the close of another year, we offer our warmest
thanks for all your support and kindness over the
past twelve months.

🎁 Wishing everyone a very

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 🎁



Colouring Page



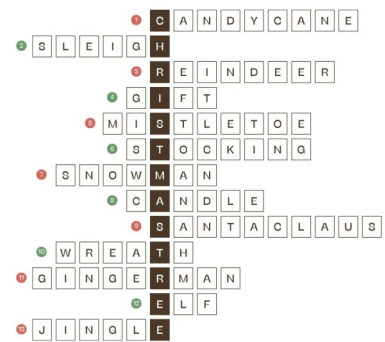
A lovely picture of Jesus, Mary and Joseph for you to colour in!

The answers to the Christmas Crossword and the Christmas Quiz are below.

CHRISTMAS

CROSSWORD

KEY



Answers to Quiz 1. Jan 5th 2. Blitzen 3. Norway 4. Capricorn 5. Dung 6. Feliz Navidad 7. Denmark 8. Bells 9. Tan 10. Robins 11. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh 12. Stocking fillers 13. Donner 14. Turkey 15. White 16. England 17. 24th December 18. 4 19. Gruel 20. St Stephen



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sing-along-a-christmas-carols-tickets-1834155320939?aff=ebdglgoogleliveevents>

Mince Pie Theatre—Jemmy Wood's Christmas Carol Folk of Gloucester Gloucester

Saturday 20th December. 2pm.

A lively funny new 45 minute version of the classic Dickens tale as told by the infamous Gloucester miser Jemmy Wood. Will he change his ways when visited by the ghosts of Gloucester Christmases past, present and future or is this impossible?

Click on the link for more information :<https://www.ticketsource.com/whats-on/gloucester/folk-of-gloucester/mince-pie-theatre-jemmy-woods-christmas-carol/2025-12-20/14:00/t-rpeeaqa>



Who's Who at Saint James'

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Lord, in the spirit of Christmas, teach us to give generously as You gave to us. Help us to forgive as we have been forgiven and to show kindness and compassion to everyone we meet. Let the light of Christ shine through us, so others may see Your love and be drawn to You. We also pray for peace in our world

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