



# The ARCH Messenger

*To show our love for God and You  
December 2023/January 2024*



Abbots Morton, Rous Lench, Church Lench & Harvington  
[www.archbenefice.org.uk](http://www.archbenefice.org.uk)

ARCH Benefice: parishes of Abbots Morton, Rous Lench, Church Lench and Harvington

Rector: The Reverend Canon Richard Thorniley  
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Office hours: 9.30am to 9.30pm Monday-Friday;  
day off: Saturday; Sunday afternoons: quiet space  
*Urgent pastoral matters – any time*

## Readings

3<sup>rd</sup> December  
Advent Sunday Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

10<sup>th</sup> December Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

17<sup>th</sup> December Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Magnificat; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24;  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

24<sup>th</sup> December Isaiah 62:6-12; Psalm 97; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:8-20; John 1:1-16

Christmas Day Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4; John 1:1-16

31<sup>st</sup> December Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:15-21

7<sup>th</sup> January  
Epiphany Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:10-15; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

14<sup>th</sup> January 1 Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-9; Revelation 5:1-10; John 1:43-51

21<sup>st</sup> January Genesis 14:17-20; Psalm 128; Revelation 19:6-10; John 2:1-11

28<sup>th</sup> January  
Candlemas Malachi 3:1-5; Psalm 24; Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 2:22-40

Please use the 'Contact Us' page on our website  
[www.archbenefice.org.uk](http://www.archbenefice.org.uk)  
to submit editorial or enquire about advertising.

## Thought for the month

### *A season of lament*

A service of lament was held last month in St James Church even though **'lament' is something that is not an everyday concept.** Grief, stress and feeling low might be more everyday ways of expressing lament. The sorrow of loss or not having a person in the room or on the phone because they have died or become estranged might capture lament. And we see a lot of lament on our news with the many wars that are now in progress.

The bible has a lot of lament, even a whole book called Lamentations, and **laments are often mentioned in the psalms.** As Colin Smith says, **'a lament is a prayer expressing sorrow, pain, or confusion. Lament should be the chief way Christians process grief in God's presence. Because many Christians have grown up in churches which *always look on the bright side*, lament can be jarring. And for believers whose lives are relatively free from tragedy, lament may seem unnecessary.'** The dark winter months may seem a season where it is easier to feel sorrowful, especially for those with some kind of clinical depression or sorrow.

**Back to the psalms: if you're feeling low and angry at God there are some great verses of lament and sorrow.** In Psalm 17, verse 13 is a plea to God about those **who annoy us or worse,** *'Rise up, Lord, confront them, bring them down; with your sword rescue me from the wicked.'* **Others are** *'Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!' (Psalm 130:1) and 'My soul, too, is utterly terrified; but you, O Lord, how long? (Psalm 6:4).*

So where do we turn for relief from lament? Sometimes just being in the place of lamenting is its own comfort. Then we can turn to Christ through the Spirit God and bring all our lament to him. Amen.

*Chris Sheehan*

*Stop date for next issue: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January*

## Rector's Corner

Daily prayers: via Zoom – contact me for details  
*8.30am and 6pm* (e-mail [rector@archbenefice.org.uk](mailto:rector@archbenefice.org.uk))  
This replaces Tuesday prayers and Benefice prayers

Home Communion: I will contact the house-bound, and am open to  
(*contact me on* requests. *Please feel free to ask even if you are only*  
*01386 870527* temporarily out of commission

Men's Night *8.30pm* Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December at the Coach and Horses,  
Harvington  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January at The Lenches Club, Church  
Lench  
*Come and enjoy a pint. £12 in the kitty will cover drinks  
and get us a savoury snack. Reserve your place:  
rector@archbenefice.org.uk or 01386 870527*

### Pastoral calls and contacts

If you know of anyone who could do with a call or help for any reason please let me know.

Please do not think I am too busy to make a visit or a phone call *if the need arises*. **And don't assume that I have heard** – I would much rather hear three times that someone is in need of support than not at all. And if you want to get in touch please do – **it's good to hear from you and I enjoy a chat.**

*Richard Thorniley*

*A Blessed Christmas and a  
Happy New Year to everyone*

## Notices

### Advent Praise Service

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 5pm in Rous Lench Village Hall

A Celtic-inspired reflective and informal service to mark the season of Advent and the beginning of a new church year.

The service will open with tea and cake (please bring cake!) and will include prayer, readings and worship in similar style to those we enjoyed in previous years. PLEASE BRING A TEA TOWEL!

Mike Genders, Ian and Ali Craigan will be leading our worship.

At the end of the service we will light candles to symbolise the bringing of new light and hope into the world.

*Richard Thorniley*



### Spring Half Term Holiday Club

**Theme: *The Big Picture***

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February**  
**10am - 2.30pm each day at \*\*\*\*\***

Activities will include games, crafts, chill time and outdoor fun!

**Cost: £9 per child per day or £26 for 3 days**

**Ages catered for: 5-12 (school age)**

Please supply children with lunch (drinks provided)

***We also need adult and teenage helpers***

To reserve a place or offer help, please get in touch with Revd Richard Thorniley on **01386 870527** or **holidayclub@archbenefice.org.uk**

***Numbers are limited so book early!***

## Notices

### Caring Hands food bank: essential generosity

Demand is *OUTSTRIPPING SUPPLY* at the moment! At a recent visit we discovered that the shelves had been bare the previous week, so we need to keep up the generosity throughout the year.

The following items are always in demand:

- ◆ Toiletries
- ◆ Loo rolls (don't go mad and start a panic but perhaps donate on a regular basis by getting an extra pack when you're shopping?)
- ◆ Tins and dried goods
- ◆ Items that can be cooked via a kettle, single-ring hob or microwave

Thank you for your past and on-going generosity.

*Richard Thorniley*

### Let us be 'Neighbour Aware' this winter

Our villages have a fantastic reputation for looking out for our vulnerable residents during hard times, and we would like this to continue during the challenges that winter presents.

Just in case you do not know your neighbour, as you or they may have recently arrived in the village, now might be a good time to introduce yourself as one never knows when you or they might need help. If your neighbour is known to be frail – an initial offer to take their bins out or return them is a great way to offer help and check on how they are, especially when it is cold and icy.

Just an idea – and I think we will feel better for it.

*Blessings to all,  
Richard Thorniley*



## The heart of Christmas

We're at that time of year again! But is Christmas just about the shopping, tree or presents? At its heart, Christmas is all about a God who has showed up on earth. The Creator of the universe, whose hands flung stars into space, cared enough to come to earth as a tiny baby. *'The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us' (John 1:14).*

Every year we sing carols and retell the same story of the donkey, innkeeper, stable, angels, shepherds, star, wise men, gifts and Mary and Joseph with baby! **Why do we do all this? It's to remind us that God deals with the mess of our world by sending His Son to die in our place.** This makes it possible for us to have a relationship with Him.

**When the time came, He 'did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!' (Philippians 2:6-8).**

Reflecting on Jesus in the manger is a great place to start understanding the **heart of the Christmas message.** However, it's so much more than simply a cute baby lying in the bed of straw:

*If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator;  
If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist;  
If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist;  
If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer;  
But our greatest need was forgiveness so God sent us a Saviour.*

*Canon Paul Hardingham*

### Christmas stars

Any astronomer can predict with absolute accuracy just where every star in the universe will be as the clocks chime midnight on Christmas Eve. He can make no such prediction about his teenage children.

## No room? On the contrary...

This year one carol will be sung with particular poignancy. *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* retells the message of angels, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests' and continues:

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife,  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel strain have rolled,  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love song which they bring:  
O hush the noise, you men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.*

The angels' goodwill message will persist despite our clamour for it proclaims God's all-embracing and eternal welcome. Heaven's doors are always open; it is home for everyone. The final biblical vision is of an all-encompassing city, '*on no day will its gates ever be shut... the glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it*' (Revelation 21:25-26)

Jesus, for whom there had been no room at the inn, taught that God's kingdom is home for every race. '*I say to you that many will come from the East and the West, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven*' (Matthew 8:11). He reassured those anxious about the future, '*do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms...*' (John 14:1-2).

No room? Don't you believe it!

*The Venerable John Barton*

### Christmas shopping

The judge was in a benign mood as he asked the defendant what he was charged with. 'Doing my Christmas shopping early,' came the reply.

'Why, that's no offence,' said the judge. 'How early were you doing it?'

'Before the store opened,' replied the defendant.



## Plans and preparations

Christmas is a time for making plans. Presents to buy, cards to send, decorations to put up, food to order, travel arrangements to make... the list goes on and on. But whether our plans are ambitious or simple this Christmas, we still dread anything going wrong.

Yet plans seemed to fall apart on that first Christmas. Mary and Joseph had planned to marry and set up home together in Galilee. Then Mary had become unexpectedly pregnant, and they were summoned to Bethlehem for the census. So instead of a comfortable Galilean home amongst family, they were suddenly parents, all alone in a place fit for animals!

The shepherds had expected another routine night on the hills of Bethlehem. **But the angel's message and a heavenly choir changed everything, and they** went to search for the Christ-child instead. Their change of plan brought them great joy!

**The Eastern men had expected to find the 'King of the Jews' in a royal palace.** But the star bypassed Jerusalem and took them to Bethlehem. Then their plans changed again when they were warned in a dream to avoid Herod and slip home another way.

The Holy Couple then had another upset of plans: Joseph was warned in a dream NOT to go home to Galilee, but to flee for safety in Egypt instead.

At first sight, all these changes display a chaotic mix of circumstances. But behind it all, God was working out His divine purposes. When Jesus was born, all the Old Testament prophecies of His coming were fulfilled. Nothing happened by chance. Into a messy world God brought to us His Son, to be our Saviour.

We worship a great and loving God who not only planned that first Christmas but is also preparing for our stay in His eternal home.

The plans God makes are wise, and they always succeed!

*Lester Amann*



## How to make the most of carol singing...

*Happily, the Church of England still retains some singular parish clergy. Take the parish of St James-the-Least, whose elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar, Eustace, continues his correspondence to his nephew Darren, a recently-ordained low-church curate...*

My dear Nephew Darren,

Carol singing is not what it used to be. My fond memories of a group of choristers, muffled in scarves and overcoats, carrying lanterns, and walking **from door to door in the snow, as they sang 'While shepherds watched...'** had to be suddenly revised when I saw your own music group, in T-shirts inscribed with **'Jesus loves You', singing 'Little donkey', in your shopping centre. I suspect any money you raised would just about have paid for the electricity used to power your banks of electronic equipment.**

Here at St James the Least of All, carol singing is regarded as a staff perk for **the choir. The year when the Boys' Brigade tried to break their monopoly was suppressed with a ruthlessness that would have impressed Genghis Kahn.**

Our annual carol-singing route involves months of meticulous planning. We find that a transparent collection box is vital, so donors can see what earlier patrons have given. This means those who are bound to put in notes must be visited first – *'pour encourager les autres'*. **It also needs a detachable base, so that if coppers are given, they can be removed from sight before the next call.**

Homes that contain several children are visited just after bedtime – parents will give generously simply to get the choir to go somewhere else. Veiled threats to stay and sing more carols (unless they give generously) are usually very effective. Getting whoever looks the most innocent and photogenic to ring the bell and ask for money is a far more subtle way of ensuring a donation than planting any number of mafia look-alikes (such as our church treasurer) on the doorstep.

The choir always finishes its evening at the local pub – but again, the timing must be carefully managed. Too early and there will only be the landlord, his wife and their Labrador to listen; too late and people will be so full of Christmas cheer that any carols will be hijacked and become the equivalent of back-of-the-bus rugby songs.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

# Harvington St James' Church

## CHRISTMAS AT ST JAMES' CHURCH

*Come and celebrate Christmas at St James' Church – we'd love to see you!*

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm: Carols in the Churchyard

This was such a success last year that we are repeating it! There will be hot chocolate, mulled wine and mince pies along with carol singing. If the weather permits, we will be in the churchyard, if not we will move inside.

Christmas Eve, 6pm: Carols and Crib Service

Lots of family participation as we re-tell the Christmas story and dress the crib.

Christmas Eve, 11.30pm: Midnight Christmas Communion

The first taste of Christmas – in a church lit by candles.

Christmas Day, 9.30am: Christmas Communion Service

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January, 4pm: Christingle Service

Candles, oranges, jelly tots at the ready – **supporting the Children's Society.**

## CAMEO TEAS

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, 11am: Christmas Carol Service

Come and join us at our Carol Service! This will be followed by our Christmas lunch at the Kings Court Hotel in Alcester – please get in touch with Sophie (\*\*\*\*\*) by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November to reserve your place at the lunch.

*NB: this is the first Wednesday of December, a week earlier than usual*

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, 3pm at \*\*\*\*\*

**In January we will hold our CAMEO tea at Sophie's house**, which is warmer than the church! Come along for a cosy afternoon with tea, cake and a friendly chat.

## PANCAKES ARE GO!

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2-4pm: Pancake party

Once again we're invited to a wonderful pancake party with all proceeds being donated to the disaster relief charity ShelterBox. More details in the next issue.

# Harvington

## FAITH TODAY

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January, 10am at \*\*\*\*\*

Faith Today is taking a break in December but will resume in January when we will be looking at *Baptism* with Graham Pearson leading the discussion. If you want to know a little bit more about Baptism, why not come and join us – we look forward to seeing you.

For more information, please get in touch with Sophie on \*\*\*\*\* or e-mail \*\*\*\*\*@\*\*\*\*\*.

## HARVINGTON COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK

(\*\*\*\*\*)

The Community Support group are a small team of volunteers who are available to support residents needing a hand at any time. All our volunteers are DBS checked. So if you, or anyone you know needs help, we are often able to assist with:

- ◆ Transport or escort for appointments or shopping
- ◆ Small DIY jobs or occasional help with garden tidying
- ◆ Dealing with admin such as form filling
- ◆ A friendly visit or chat , or sit in whilst a carer takes a short break

There may be bigger concerns where we may be able to give advice or point you in the right direction. So do please contact us on \*\*\*\*\* (*leave a message if we don't answer and we will get back to you*).

*Wendy and Konrad Monks (Coordinators)*



## CHRISTMAS AT HBC

Christmas dates for your diary for Harvington Baptist Church:

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 10am: Tots@HBC Christmas party  
(all welcome!)

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm: Family service

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 10am: Carol service

*Please join us – we'd love to see you!*

## Harvington

HARVINGTON SINGERS PRESENT

### *A Fanfare for Christmas*

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 7.30pm & Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2.30pm

**St James' Church, Harvington**

Guest artiste ❄️ Festive drinks ❄️ Mince pies

*Tickets: £9 adults, £5 juniors.*

*Book online at [www.harvingtonsingers.org.uk](http://www.harvingtonsingers.org.uk),*

*e-mail [tickets@harvingtonsingers.org.uk](mailto:tickets@harvingtonsingers.org.uk) or phone \*\*\*\*\**



# HARVINGTON CHRISTMAS FAIR

**AN EVENT FOR ALL FAMILY TO ENJOY**

**MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS,  
PLAY GAMES, BUY GOODIES & WIN PRIZES!**

**SATURDAY 9TH DECEMBER**

**10AM - 1PM**

**HARVINGTON VILLAGE HALL**



*Financial emergency? Extra help needed? Live in Harvington?*

St James' Church manages an emergency fund on behalf of the community. If you need a little financial assistance, please call

\*\*\*\*\* and we will offer what support we can.

## Harvington First School News

The children returned to school after the half term break ready for another exciting half term of learning.

**We started with our 'theme week' and the children enjoyed learning about incarnation and the start of the Christmas story: making posters, acting out the story through drama, and sequencing the story correctly.** As always, the children will be also working towards Christmas events and this year we will be **enjoying a traditional nativity story as well as leading a carol service in St James' Church.** There will be a Christmas dinner, with all the trimmings, and hopefully a visit from a special someone afterwards! Our community are very welcome to join us to enjoy the nativity play on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30pm in the school hall – it will be lovely to see you.

As part of our history day, we learned about the remembrance service and why we celebrate this with poppies. The children learned about the history of the wars and why it is important to remember. We held our traditional service at the eleventh hour; this is always a very special day in our calendar and one we always honour. The whole school fell silent and the children were respectful. To raise more funds for the poppy appeal the children came into school in their home clothes but wearing something red. Even at such a young age the children were able to share why they were learning about Remembrance Day.

In our Collective Worship we are focusing on the important value of friendship, learning how we can be a good friend and how we can give generously to others. We have been giving to the poppy appeal and to Children in Need, but we have also been giving our smiles, manners, friendship and time. Friendship is a very important Christian value and one that children can relate to throughout their everyday experiences.

During theme week, the older children started their business enterprise activities in preparation for raising money for Children in Need day. Within their business groups, they took on the roles of managers, marketing experts, financial control and advertising – they really are the next entrepreneurs!

*Helen Fishbourne, Headteacher*



Abbots Morton  
**St Peter's Church**

([www.abbotsmorton.info/st-peters-church](http://www.abbotsmorton.info/st-peters-church))

CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 11am: Advent Sunday Morning Service

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 4pm: Carol and Gift Service

Please bring gifts (unwrapped) for needy children in Worcestershire. We'll hear a few words from representatives of Action for Children who will take away our gifts. If you can't get to the service, please leave your gifts in advance in the porch or in the church around the altar.

We'll be making Christingles during the service.

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm: Carols on the Green

Come and sing traditional carols on the village green. We'll provide the song sheets but please bring your own torch. There'll be hot dogs, mulled wine and mince pies. Please bring some cash for a bucket collection for the church's Flower Fund which provides flowers/plants for those who have been hospitalised during the year.

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Communion

Our Christmas Eve service to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

ALL SOULS SERVICE

A moving service was held to remember those loved ones who've died during the year. People came from across the Benefice to place lighted candles on the altar in remembrance.

DOGS AND THEIR OWNERS

There has been some concern about dog faeces on graves. The PCC has put up signs asking dog walkers to keep their dogs on a lead in the churchyard. If you are a dog-walker, please tidy up after your canine companion(s).

# Abbots Morton

## PARISH COUNCIL

All parishioners are welcome to attend our Parish Council meetings, with the next being held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January at 8pm in Abbots Morton Village Hall. Residents are invited to put forward any ideas, concerns or queries during public question time. If you cannot attend in person then please raise issues with the Clerk at [abbotsmortonpc@gmail.com](mailto:abbotsmortonpc@gmail.com).

There is currently one vacancy on the Parish Council. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor please contact the Clerk for more information.

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December, 6.30pm: Big Christmas Tree Switch On!

Join us on the Green when Peggy Clark will have the honour of switching on the Christmas tree lights. Hot dogs, mulled wine and other refreshments will be available. Donations towards the cost of the tree will be gratefully received.

## VILLAGE HALL

([www.abbotsmorton.info/abbots-morton-village-hall](http://www.abbotsmorton.info/abbots-morton-village-hall))

### Community coffee mornings

The community coffee morning is now a permanent fixture in the Village Hall on the first Tuesday of each month between 10am and 12 noon, with the next two being held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December and Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January. Building yourself up for Christmas? Recovering from New Year? Come and have a coffee; meet new people and old friends. There is no charge for entry or refreshments.

### Quiz night?

Would you like a quiz night in the village hall? Previous quiz nights have been a success but we need someone to organise it. Let our Chair, Lynne (\*\*\*\*\*), or any committee member know if you're up for it.

### easyfundraising

If you are doing your Christmas shopping online, please consider becoming an *easyfundraiser* to raise money for your village hall at no cost to yourself. Every donation you raise makes a difference to us. Since we started in 2017, our 26 *easyfundraisers* have raised £1,213.59 for village hall funds. You can join them by visiting [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/abbotsmortonvillagehall](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/abbotsmortonvillagehall).



## Rous Lench **St Peter's Church**

### CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December, 6.30pm: Carols on the Green  
Get into the festive spirit by singing some of your favourite carols in a picturesque setting. Come and join us – the more the merrier!  
Soup, mulled cider and mince pies will be served.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 11am: Carol Service  
**By popular demand, this year's Carol Service will be held in the church.**  
Wrap up warm and bring a hot water bottle!

### HARVEST SUPPER

A huge 'thank you' to everyone who helped make the evening a success and to everyone who came along. Thanks to your support, we raised nearly £1,000 towards the church refurbishment project. A great night was had by all with good food, wine and company.

### ROUS LENCH PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETINGS: All parishioners are welcome to attend our meetings. The next will be held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm in Rous Lench Village Hall. Residents are invited to put forward any ideas, concerns or queries during public question time. If you cannot attend in person then please raise issues with the Clerk, Kerry Williamson (rouslenchpc@gmail.com).

COUNCILLOR VACANCIES: We currently have two vacancies on the council and would love to hear from community-minded people who want to give something back to their local area. It is a voluntary position with an induction and training. Meetings are every other month and are a couple of hours long on a Monday evening. In the interim, about an hour per week is needed to keep up to date with council matters. Are you interested? Would you like more information? Please contact the Clerk (details above) who will be happy to help.

# Rous Lench

## VILLAGE HALL

### Pub nights

Pub nights are well and truly under way at Rous Lench Village Hall. Please pop in for a chat – you will receive a warm welcome.

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 7.30pm: Wear your Christmas jumper  
The Christmas tree will be up and the festive season will be in full swing!

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 5.30pm: Family Home for Christmas  
The doors open early (5.30pm) so the kids can join in the fun and maybe receive a surprise! Please bring a plate of food to share with your neighbours.

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> January, 7.30pm  
A chance to recover after Christmas – come and join us for a friendly chat.

### Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January: **Liz's Quiz Night**

**Yes, the moment you've all been waiting for** – Liz returns to Rous Lench Village Hall with another of her fiendishly fun quizzes. Pit your little grey cells against her challenging questions and see if you can take 1<sup>st</sup> place. Teams of 4 but if **you can't make a team up please come along and we will find you one.**

£5 per person. Light refreshments included. Bar open

Raffle in aid of Marie Curie

Tickets available from Fran (\*\*\*\*\*, \*\*\*\*\*@\*\*\*\*\*)

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March: Jeremy Johnson in concert

For one night only! Come to Rous Lench Village Hall for a fabulous evening of music and good food. Jeremy is an Evesham-born singer/songwriter who has **performed all over the country and now he's coming to Rous Lench. Check him out on his website [www.jeremyjohnson.co.uk](http://www.jeremyjohnson.co.uk) or on YouTube.** He is a really brilliant entertainer.

This will be a fantastic evening so please book early. Tickets £15, to include a light supper, are available from Fran (\*\*\*\*\*, \*\*\*\*\*@\*\*\*\*\*)



## Church Lench **All Saints' Church**

### FLOWER ROTA

December	<i>Advent – no flowers</i>
Christmas	<i>combined effort</i>
13 <sup>th</sup> January	Jenny Dainty
27 <sup>th</sup> January	Jane Powell
10 <sup>th</sup> February	Maggie Stroud

### HARVEST LUNCH

The PCC Social Committee wish to thank everyone who supported this year's lunch in October and made it such an enjoyable and successful occasion. We raised the fantastic sum of just over £1,000 for the church and its associated charities. Our sincere thanks go to all those who attended or assisted in any way.

### LENCHES WI

Our December meeting will be our Christmas lunch at The March Hare Inn on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December. In January, we will meet on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January at 2pm in The Lenches Club when Jenny Hope from Severn Waste will give a talk on how to recycle your household waste.

If you haven't been to a WI meeting before or perhaps are new to the area, you would be most welcome to join us – please contact Jean Houlton (\*\*\*\*\*) for further information.

*Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year from the Lenches WI*



### CAROLS IN THE CLUB

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 12 noon to 1pm  
Come and join us in the Club to sing carols and enjoy hot mince pies. *Hope you see you there!*



## Church Lench First School News

Harvest Service: The children delivered a super harvest service in church on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October with the important message of giving thanks to God for our world. The singing, speaking and acting was fabulous and the art work displayed around the church looked very attractive. Many items of food and toiletries were donated – these were taken to Caring Hands in Evesham.

Busy half term: We have a very busy half term with many exciting opportunities **for the children. Our Year 4/5 pupils will be visiting Bishop's Wood at the** beginning of December to enhance their knowledge of the Viking period. They will take a journey across the northern seas in a full-size Viking long ship and learn skills such as spinning wool and making brooches, hurdles and clay pots, getting a sense of what life was like at this time. The children will also discover the importance of fire and make overnight shelters using natural materials. A great fun filled day of life as a Viking!

Special visitor: In November, we welcomed one of our parents, Mr Andrews, who talked about his service in the Royal Navy, including its core values, the impact of science and technology, the ships he has navigated and the unique relationship the UK has with the sea. He answered many questions and stayed for our one-minute silence at break time as one of our teachers played *The Last Post* on the trumpet.

Community litter pick: Our Year 2 and 3 pupils asked to do a local litter pick during November. Equipped with buckets, litter-picking devices and bags, they helped to clean the surrounding environment – well done!

Christian value – generosity: **God's generosity is best described as 'grace';** love given freely without limit or conditions. This generosity, once experienced and acknowledged, can in turn release a generous spirit towards others.

Christmas: Among the many experiences taking place this half term are our **school disco, 'Rock Steady' concert, Christmas church service, a visit from Father Christmas, bubble entertainment, Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas lunch!** It is always a fun and exciting time for the children and our busy PTFA are amazing at organising great events! *We wish all of our community a very Happy Christmas and New Year.*

*Mrs S Price, Headteacher*

## South Lenches Parish Council

[www.southlenchesparishcouncil.org](http://www.southlenchesparishcouncil.org)

\*\*\*\*\*, [clerk@southlenchesparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@southlenchesparishcouncil.org)

### Meetings of the Parish Council

Information can be found on the Church Lench notice board in the Croft, the notice board in Atch Lench, the Lenches Community Facebook page and the Parish Council website. Meetings are held every two months: January, March, May, July, September and November. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

### Grant applications

The Parish Council has allocated in its budget a sum for organisations in the South Lenches area to apply for a grant to assist with any projects etc. An application form can be found on the Parish Council website – details above.

### Consultation

Later this month South Lenches Parish Council will be consulting parishioners about whether to apply for a Public Works Loan to be used as a contribution to the completion of the Amphitheatre project. If approved, repayments of the loan will be financed by an increase in the council tax precept and collected via **next year's Council Tax Assessment. We will be delivering a voting form to each household in the parish, and everyone is urged to respond.**

### Report highway matters

To report issues on roads or travel routes: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/tell-us-about-road-highway-or-travel-route-issue](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/tell-us-about-road-highway-or-travel-route-issue).

### Report matters to Wychavon District Council

A number of things can be reported online at [www.wychavon.gov.uk/report-it](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/report-it) eg fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, complaints etc. or call 01386 565000.



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### Thoughts for Christmas and New Year...

Christmas is in my heart twelve months a year. Thanks to credit cards, it's also on my statement twelve months a year.

He ate so much over the holidays that he decided to quit cold turkey.

Which side of the turkey has the most feathers? The outside.

Three phrases that sum up Christmas: 'Peace on earth'; 'Goodwill to men'; and 'Batteries not included'.

When I look at chocolate, I hear two voices in my head. The first says, 'You need to eat the chocolate.' The second says, 'You heard. Eat the chocolate.'

The second day of a New Year's diet is always easier than the first. By the second day you're off it. *Jackie Gleason*

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### *Key to Church Services*

BCP Book of Common Prayer  
Service

*All other communion services use  
the Common Worship liturgy*

## ARCH Benefice January 2024

(key on p29)	Abbots Morton	Rous Lench (in Village Hall)	Church Lench	Harvington	
7 <sup>th</sup> January Epiphany		8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January				11am Holy Communion (BCP)	
14 <sup>th</sup> January	11am Holy Communion	11am Morning Service	11am Morning Service	9.30am Holy Communion	
21 <sup>st</sup> January		11am Morning Service	8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	4pm Christingle Service	
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> January				11am Holy Communion	
28 <sup>th</sup> January Candlemas	11am Morning Service		11am Family Service	9.30am Holy Communion	

## ARCH Benefice December 2023

	Abbots Morton	Rous Lench (in Village Hall)	Church Lench	Harvington
(key on p29)				
3 <sup>rd</sup> December Advent Sunday	11am Morning Service	5pm Advent Praise and Reflection	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Service
10 <sup>th</sup> December	4pm Carol and Gift Service	11am Morning Service	11am Morning Service	9.30am Holy Communion
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December				11am Holy Communion (BCP)
17 <sup>th</sup> December		11am Carol Service <i>in St Peter's Church</i>	8.30am Holy Communion (BCP) 6pm Carol Service	9.30am Holy Communion 6pm Carols in the Churchyard
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December				11am Holy Communion
24 <sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve	9pm Christmas Communion	11am Morning Service	4pm Family Service	6pm Carols and Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Communion
Christmas Day			11am Christmas Communion	9.30am Christmas Communion
31 <sup>st</sup> December				10am Benefice Communion

# ARCH Benefice Christmas Services 2023

	<u>Abbots Morton</u>	<u>Rous Lench</u>
10 <sup>th</sup> December	4pm Family Carol and Gift Service	
17 <sup>th</sup> December		11am Carol Service <b><i>in St Peter's Church</i></b>
Christmas Eve	9pm Christmas Communion	
	<u>Church Lench</u>	<u>Harvington</u>
17 <sup>th</sup> December	6pm Carol Service	6pm Carols in the Churchyard
Christmas Eve	4pm Family Service	6pm Carols and Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Christmas Communion
Christmas Day	11am Christmas Communion	9.30am Christmas Communion

