

DIARY FOR THE WEEK (Starting on Mon 18th December)

Mon	10am	GroW Toddler Group, St John's Church Hall
	12.45pm	GroW Babies Group, St John's Church Hall
	5.30pm	Carols at the Christmas Tree, Wellington Gate, Lancaster Crescent
	7pm	Carols on the Green, Challow
Tue	9.30am	Grove CE School Christmas Service in St John's Church
	10am	Mid-week Eucharist at St James, West Hanney
	10am	Tuesday Simply Singing Group, Lower St John's Room
	11.30am	Funeral for Rosemary Hedderley, St James Church, W. Hanney
	6.30pm	Wantage Chess Club, St John's Rooms
Wed	11.30am	Funeral for Catriona Karney, St James Church, W. Hanney
	2pm	Ancients' Badminton Group, St John's Church Hall
	6.30pm	Open Table Meeting, Cornerstone, Grove
	7.30pm	Benefice Advent Course at the Penfold's house, Challow
	8pm	Vale Elim Church meeting, Lower St John's Room
Thu	10am	Mid-week Eucharist at St Nicholas, East Challow
	7pm	Grove Parish Council Service at the Christmas Tree (opposite Millbrook square).
	8pm	St John's Badminton Group, St John's Church Hall

Church services for the Benefice are written on the front of this news sheet.

DIARY FOR THE WEEK (Starting on Mon 1st January 2024)

Tue	6.30pm	Wantage Chess Club, St John's Rooms
Wed	8pm	Vale Elim Church meeting, Lower St John's Room
Thu	9.30am	Extend Your Fitness Group, St John's Church Hall
	2pm	Bible Group, Lower St John's Room, Grove
	8pm	St John's Badminton Group, St John's Church Hall
Fri	2pm	Friends on Friday, St John's Church Hall
Sun	12noon – 2pm	“Warm Spaces”, St John's Church Hall
	3pm	Women's Social Group, Lower St John's Rooms

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CONTACT DETAILS

Vicar: Revd. John Durant: Tel. 01235 766484. Email: vicar@valebenefice.org.uk

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Licensed Lay Minister: Sue Powditch: Tel. 01235 768141 Email: llm@valebenefice.org.uk

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Benefice Office: Grove Parish Church, Main Street, Grove, OX12 7LQ.

Open: Mon–Fri. 10–12 noon. Tel. 01235 771479. Email: office@valebenefice.org.uk



We pray you may have in these dark times the light of Christ Jesus, His peace in the disturbances of life and His love in all circumstances.



BENEFICE NEWSLETTER

December 2023 – January 2024



Advent 3 to Christmas 1

The shepherds travelled from the hills. The magi came from the east. For Mary and Joseph it was the end of a long journey. For ourselves we are nearly at the year's end. For our parishes we're finishing an era of John and Sally's ministry here. But for all of us it's also a new beginning. In T S Eliot's poem, a wise man asks, "were we led all that way for Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly, we had... no doubt." We don't know what next year will bring, but we know who holds the future, the Prince of peace, the King of love, who lay in a feeding trough.

Sunday 17th December - Third Sunday of Advent

Psalm 126, Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11, Luke 1:46b-55,

John 1:6-8, 19-28, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

8am	Holy Communion, St Johns, Grove – Rev Alec Gill
9.30am	Parish Eucharist, St James, Hanney – Rev Geoff Maughan
10am	Holy Communion, St John's, Grove – Rev Alec Gill
10am	Holy Communion, St James, Denchworth – Rev John Durant
11am	Carol Service, St Nicholas, East Challow – Rev John Durant
4pm	Hanney Village Carol Service, St James, Hanney – Rev Alec Gill
6pm	Grove Carol Service, St John's, Grove – Rev John Durant

Sunday 24th December – Fourth Sunday in Advent (Christmas Eve)

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26, 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38, 46b-55

8am	Holy Communion, St Johns, Grove – Rev John Durant
10am	Carol Service, St James; Denchworth – Rev John Durant
4pm	Crib Service, St John's, Grove – Rev John Durant
4pm	Carols round the crib, St Nicholas, East Challow – Rev Alec Gill
5.30pm	Carols round the crib, St James, Hanney, – Rev Alec Gill
11.15pm	Midnight Mass, St Nicholas, East Challow – Rev John Durant
11.30pm	Midnight Mass, St James Hanney – Rev Alec Gill

Sunday 25th December - Christmas Day

Psalm 96, Psalm 97, Psalm 98, Isaiah 9:2-7, Isaiah 62:6-12, Isaiah 52:7-10, Titus 2:11-14, Titus 3:4-7, Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12), Luke 2:1-14, (15-20), Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20, John 1:1-14

9am	Holy Communion, St James, Denchworth - Rev John Durant
9.30am	Parish Eucharist, St James, Hanney - Rev Alec Gill
10am	Christmas Communion, St Johns, Grove - Rev John Durant & Sue Powditch (LLM)
11am	Holy Communion, St Nicholas, East Challow - Rev Alec Gill

Sunday 31st December - Christmas 1

Psalm 148, Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:22-40

10am Family Communion (with Baptism), St John's, Grove - Rev John Durant

Sunday 7th January – Baptism of Christ

Psalm 29, Genesis 1:1-5, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

8am Holy Communion, St Johns, Grove – Rev Alec Gill

9am Holy Communion, St James, Denchworth – Rev Peter Rich

9.30am Parish Eucharist (with Baptism), St James, Hanney – Rev Alec Gill

10.15am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove – Rev Robin Lapwood

11am Parish Eucharist, St Nicholas, East Challow – Rev Velma Oxley

REMINDERS: THIS WEEK

TREFOIL GUILD (with Stanford in the vale handbell ringers) 13th Dec. (7.30pm), St John's Lower Room, Grove. All Welcome.

ASC SUPPORT COFFEE AFTERNOON 14th Dec. 2023 (2pm) at Grove CE School

FRIENDS on FRIDAY 15th December (2pm) Church Hall. With children's choir from Grove School singing Christmas songs, followed by a shortened Communion & refreshments. Do come and join us. Peter and Angela.

ST. JOHN'S CHRISTMAS CRAFTERNOON 16th Dec. (2-5pm) Church Hall.

WHAT ABOUT JOSEPH? 16th December (7.30pm) at Wantage Methodist Church.

BENEFACTIVE NEWS

2024 SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES From January 2024 the Grove 10am service will be at 10.15am and the Denchworth 10am service will be at 9am weekly.

NO BENEFACTIVE MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICES from Tuesday 26th Dec - Wed 10th Jan. 2024. After this, the Hanney Church midweek communions

ST JAMES, W. HANNEY MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICES will now be monthly on the 3rd Tuesdays starting from 16th January 2024.

THE ST JOHN'S CHURCH GATES will be locked from 5pm on Boxing Day (26th Dec) to 5pm on 27th December. No cars can enter or leave the car park during these times.

BENEFACTIVE OFFICE: will be closed from 12 noon on 22nd December - 2nd January 2024.

BENEFACTIVE ADVENT COURSE Wednesday 20th December (7.30pm) Penfold's house.

BENEFACTIVE SAYING GOODBYE We are very sad to say goodbye to John & Sally. We thank God for them & all they have brought to us in the Vale Benefice. They will be truly missed. John's last 10am service is at St John's on 31st December. To send them on their way into semi-retirement with our love & prayers, there will be a whole **Benefice** leaving celebration on 27th January (6pm) in St. John's Church Hall, with refreshments (more details coming). Save the date. We are collecting for a leaving gift. If you would like to contribute, please label your envelope with your donation & leave in the Benefice Office post box/give to Nicky Gibbard. There will be a card available to sign in the Grove Church foyer from Sun 17th December. Many thanks. Grove Churchwardens.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH FAMILY CHRISTMAS CARDS Please do put your card up.

Donations to Oxfordshire Gatehouse homeless charity (St Giles). Thank you.

LITTLE PEOPLE Thank you very much indeed for all donations received.

PRAYER REQUESTS If anyone has specific prayer requests, please email confidentially to; prayer@valebenefice.org.uk

CAROLS ROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE The annual Grove Parish Council carol service at the Christmas Tree (bottom of Vale Avenue) on Thursday 21st December (7pm), followed by hot drinks and mince pies in the Methodist Church.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH FLOWERS Thank you for your beautiful arrangements this year. Donations towards Christmas Flowers in church are welcome in the basket.

GROVE CHURCH: CRIB SERVICE (4pm) 24.12.2023 Volunteers needed to serve refreshments (sign up sheet in church foyer) & mince pie donations welcome. Thanks.

OPEN THE BOOK St John's Academy would love to enjoy Open the Book in their new School on the Wellington Gate estate. Our existing team is very small & often stretched. Would you be interested in finding out more, perhaps joining a new team? Have a word with Peter or Angela or one of the team.

WELLINGTON GATE CAROLS at the Christmas tree. 18th December (5.30-6.20pm) with refreshments. Lancaster Crescent. St John's is supporting this event (organised by the local development officer) instead of our own Carol Singing group. We hope to give out chocolates & details of our Christmas Services. Please come and support us.

VALE BENEFACTIVE NEWSLETTER The next newsletter will be for 7th January. Please send notices to news@valebenefice.org.uk by 9am on Tues 2nd January. Thank you.

ST JOHN'S TEA PARTY (CORNERSTONE) Next meeting: 20th January 2024.

THE GILL FAMILY Gemma has been diagnosed with a thyroid goiter in her chest, which causes constant exhaustion & breathlessness. She is waiting for an operation next summer. This has a big impact on the whole family. If you'd like to know how to practically support, please contact Frances Hobson frhobson@hotmail.com (771466).

TREFOIL GUILD From January our meetings will be held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (2.30pm - 4pm) St John's Rooms. New members welcome. Sue Catterall.

CORNERSTONE NEWS Email: office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk Tel: 772280

Christmas: We have a number of items suitable as gifts plus the ever-popular Hannah Dunnitt calendars. **Christmas specials:** our Christmas specials menu is now running alongside our normal menu & includes items such as our popular mulled punch, turkey baguettes & Christmas pudding. **Christmas and New Year closure:** we close at 2pm on Saturday 23rd December & re-open on Tuesday 2nd January. Thank you for your support over the past year. For more information see our newsletter on the boards.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Health and healing: Barbara Talmage, Bob Bulpitt, John Butter, Sandra Foster, Ari Psaras, Laura Challis, Ursula Geer & Richard Hummerston.

Friends & Family mourning: Catriona Karney, Rosemary Hedderley, Joe Bailey, John Blair, David Fielden, Bruce Jefferies, Christopher Nugent, Angela Handley, Jeffery Lovelock, Kate (Kay) Dandridge and Trevor Herman.

Those living at: Rectory Farm Close (W.Hanney); The Causeway (E.Hanney); Brook Lane (D'worth); Barbury Drive, Woodgate Close, Blenheim Gardens (Grove).

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

Mon	Psalm 125	1 Kings 18: 1-18	Ephesians 6: 10-17
Tue	Psalm 125	2 Kings 2: 9-22	Acts 3: 17-4:4
Wed	Psalm 125	Malachi 3:16-4:6	Mark 9:9-13
Thu	Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	2 Samuel 6:1-11	Hebrews 1:1-4
Fri	Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	2 Samuel 6:12-19	Hebrews 1:5-14
Sat	Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	Judges 13:2-24	John 7:40-52