

DIARY FOR THE WEEK *Starting on Monday 8th December*

Mon	10am 10am 12.45pm 7pm	GroW Toddler Group, St John's Church Hall U3A Genealogy Group, LOWER St John's Room GroW Babies Group, St John's Church Hall 1st Grove Guides, St John's Church Hall
Tue	10am 12 noon 6.30pm 7pm	Simply Singing Group, St John's Lower Room U3A Christmas Social, St John's Church Hall Wantage Chess Club, ALL St John's Rooms 2nd Grove Guides, St John's Church Hall
Wed	9.15am 2pm 2.30pm 2.30pm Evening 8pm	St John's Toddler Group, St John's Church Hall Badminton on Wednesday's, St John's Church Hall Millbrook Reception School Carol Service in Grove Church Trefoil Guild Meeting, LOWER St John's Room Benefice Advent Course at the Penfold's house, Challow Grove Church Standing Committee, LOWER St John's Room
Thu	10am Then... 1pm 8pm	Mid-week Holy Communion at St Nicholas Church, Challow Benefice Advent course in Challow Church after HC Funeral Service; T/I Heather Cousins, St James, Denchworth St John's Badminton Group, St John's Church Hall
Fri	11.30am 2pm	Thanksgiving Service; T/I Philip Pepler, St Nicholas, Challow U3A Yarn Group, LOWER St John's Room
Sat	8.30am 8am-4pm 9am	Cornerstone Prayer Breakfast, Cornerstone, Grove Toddlersense Private Booking, St John's Church Hall FOODBANK BOOKING (Christmas Parcels)
Sun	6.30pm	Senior Youth Group, St John's Church Hall

CONTACT DETAILS

Vicar: Rev Alec Gill: 07739563894 vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk

Associate Vicar: Rev Miriam Jones: 07474095190 vicarmiriam@valebenefice.org.uk

Licensed Lay Minister: Sarah Shackleton: 07587776609
SarahLLM@valebenefice.org.uk

Benefice Office: Grove Parish Church, Main Street, Grove, OX12 7L
Open: Mon–Fri. 10–12 noon. 01235 771479. office@valebenefice.org.uk

VALE BENEFICE NEWSLETTER

7th December 2025

2nd Sunday of Advent

Readings selected from:

Isaiah 11.1-10; Psalm 72.1-7; Romans 15.4-13; Matthew 3.1-12

Peace! The candle lit on the second Sunday of Advent represents peace. How much this world needs it! Given how hectic and noise-filled December can be, church traditions which treat Advent as a time of contemplation and renewal can help. Peace may be a case of saying sorry, letting go, or simply quietly resting in the Lord's presence, longing for His coming.

Our Shared Worship

Sunday 7th December - 2nd of Advent

St Nicholas' Patronal Festival at East Challow

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove – Rev Alec Gill

9.30am **No service**, St James', Hanney

10am **No service**, St James', Denchworth

10.15am **No service**, St John's, Grove

11am Patronal Festival Eucharist, St Nicholas', East Challow

(with Rev Miriam Jones, Rev Alec Gill, Jeff Penfold)

Upcoming Services

14th December - 3rd Sunday of Advent

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove

9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney

10am Holy Communion, St James', Denchworth

10.15am Morning Worship, St John's, Grove

11am Parish Eucharist, St Nicholas', East Challow

4pm Christingle Service for uniformed groups, St John's, Grove

Send newsletter content to news@valebenefice.org.uk. Items for newsletter inclusion will be for 2 weeks. Please re-send your content by **noon** on Tuesdays if you wish for your notice to go into the newsletter again. If anyone has specific prayer requests, please email confidentially to prayer@valebenefice.org.uk

BENEFICE NEWS

ST JAMES' CHURCH SERVICES, HANNEY Due to ongoing building work, all information on St James' Church Services, Hanney, is provisional. Services may be changed/cancelled at short notice. See local notices.

ADVENT COURSE "Journey with the Magi". All welcome to join us for three sessions of reflection and discussion on the three gifts of the Magi and how they foreshadow aspects of Jesus' life and ministry, and connect with themes of value, prayer and healing in our own lives. All materials will be provided.

Daytime option: St Nicholas Church immediately following the midweek communion on Thursday 4, 11 and 18 December.

Evening option: The Penfolds' home on Wednesday 3, 10 and 17 December.

For more information, contact Miriam Jones (vicarmiriam@valebenefice.org.uk)

WANTAGE AND GROVE FOODBANK We are currently collecting for Christmas hampers until December 10th. Suggested items crackers for cheese, chocolate logs /Christmas cakes, crisps /savoury snacks, biscuit selection boxes. Expiry date needs to be January 26. Items can be left in the Church foyer at Grove, Sainsburys, Waitrose, Co op or The Cornerstone. Many thanks Jeanette.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Share Bible Stories with Children Love storytelling and working with children? Join our Open the Book team at St Nicholas' School, Challow, bringing Bible stories to life through simple drama and props. Thursdays, 8:30–9:30am (term-time). No acting skills needed — training provided! It's fun, rewarding, and a great way to share God's love. Interested? Please contact one of the OTB team. Linda Hopkins 07925218850

VALE BENEFICE NEWSLETTER There will be NO newsletter on Sunday 28th December 2025 or 4th January 2026.

LIVE STREAM LINK St John's Church, Grove (10.15am only) The 10.15am Sunday service at St John's Church, Grove, is live streamed weekly on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjvzip6GG1TzWUBwTu5KJtNQFKCfrAu0j> (This link stays the same each week.) Sit at the rear left to avoid being on camera. Contact the church office if you have any questions.

St John's Church CHRISTMAS TREE: has been very kindly donated again this year by "Chilton Garden Centre" (part of the "British Garden Centres"), Newbury Road, Chilton, OX11 0QN. www.britishgardencentres.com We thank them for the lovely tree and to Brian and Edith Hipwell who transported and set it up again this year.

PETER'S MUSICAL AFTERNOON: Thank you for all who helped in any way and supported this event last Sunday. It was a great occasion, and amazingly £1250 has been donated for Hope Gardens in India, which we expect to be doubled through the Big Give scheme. Peter.

St John's Church CHRISTMAS CARD CHARITY Fundraising: If you wish to join this, please attach your card to the board in the church foyer & make your donation either to the "Donations box" in the foyer or in an envelope (clearly labelled) and posted through the Benefice Office letterbox. This year all proceeds will go to the "Crisis Skylight Oxford" homeless charity. Thank you for your generosity.

St John's Church CAR PARK GATES will be locked from 3pm on Sunday 28th December to 3pm on Monday 29th December. Please ensure your vehicles are not left in the car park during this time. Many thanks.

CORNERSTONE PRAYER BREAKFAST: Saturday 13th December (8.30am)
Not this Saturday 6th December as advertised in our newsletter. Apologies for the confusion. Best Wishes. Sarah Shewring..

WANTAGE & GROVE SCOUT POST: Boxes will be available till 5pm on Friday 19th December and will be delivering to Challow, Hanney and other local villages!
Post boxes available at: Smiths DIY and Co-op in Grove and in Wantage at; Barnards Way Post office, Campbell's Opticians, Charlton Garden Centre, Co-op Kingsgrove, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Wantage Health Centre. Postage costs 40p per card and can be deposited in the post boxes along with the cards. All proceeds go to the local Scout Groups. For more details call: 01235 760889.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

Mon	Psalms 44	Isaiah 30.1-18	Matthew 14.1-12
Tue	Psalms 56,57	Isaiah 30.19-end	Matthew 14.13-end
Wed	Psalms 62,63	Isaiah 31	Matthew 15.1-20
Thu	Psalms 53,54,60	Isaiah 32	Matthew 15.21-28
Fri	Psalms 85,86	Isaiah 33.1-22	Matthew 15.29-end
Sat	Psalms 145	Isaiah 35	Matthew 16.1-12

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Health and healing: Rev Dick French, Norah L, Rob S, Peter Ch, Pat B, Emmeline (Pat B's granddaughter), Susanne C, Wendy R, Katherine S, Laura C, Ursula G & Richard H

Friends & families mourning: Heather Cousins, Philip Pepler, Eileen Phillips, Robert Hodgson, John Terry, Shiela Goddard and Fr. Robert Teare.

All living in: The Green, West Brook, Wick Green, Steptoe Close, The Maples, Farmstead Close (Grove); Star Terrace (Denchworth); Stevenson Close (E. Hanney)

Genuine and lasting peace in Ukraine, Palestine, Gaza, Sudan and Nigeria; in the Church and in our hearts and minds