

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

Mon	Psalms 145,146	Genesis 6.11-7.10	Matthew 24.1-14
Tue	Psalms 132,147.1-12	Genesis 7.11-end	Matthew 24.15-28
Wed	Psalms 81,147.13-end	Genesis 8.1-14	Matthew 24.29-end
Thu	Psalms 74,148	Genesis 8.15-9.7	Matthew 25.1-13
Fri	Psalms 27,149	Genesis 9.8-19	Matthew 25.14-30
Sat	Psalms 122,128,150	Genesis 11.1-9	Matthew 25.31-end

DIARY FOR THE WEEK *Starting on Monday 19th January 2026*

Mon	10am	GroW Toddler Group, St John's Church Hall
	12.45pm	GroW Babies Group, St John's Church Hall
Wed	9.15am	St John's Toddler Group, St John's Church Hall
	9.30am	APR Women's Group, Lower St John's Room
Thu	10am	Mid-week Holy Communion at St Nicholas Church, Challow
	2pm	Bible Study Group, Lower St John's Room
	8pm	St John's Badminton Group, St John's Church Hall
Sat	8.30am	Morning Prayers at Frances Gillott's House
	10am	Baptism Meeting with Vicar, Upper St John's Room
	2.30pm	Messy Church (Epiphany), St John's Church Hall
Sun	4pm	WGCP Service for Christian Unity, St John's Church
	6.30pm	Senior Youth Group, St John's Church Hall



CONTACT DETAILS

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VALE BENEFICE NEWSLETTER

18th January 2026

2nd Sunday of Epiphany (Week of Prayer for Christian Unity)

Readings selected from:

Isaiah 49.1-7; Psalm 40.1-12; 1 Corinthians 1.1-9; John 1.29-42

The measure of good leadership in Israel was King David who sang, "I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." When John the Baptist sees Jesus, God's ultimate anointed king, he says, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!". Here is the servant king who will sacrifice his life to bring reconciliation, peace and justice between God and all people. This is the example for leaders to follow - and for us all.

Our Shared Worship

18th January – 2nd Sunday of Epiphany

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Miriam Jones
9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney – Rev Geoff Maughan
10am Holy Communion, St James', Denchworth – Rev Alec Gill
10.15am Holy Communion with Baptism, St John's Grove - Rev Miriam Jones
11am Parish Eucharist, St Nicholas', East Challow - Rev Alec Gill

Upcoming Services

25th January – 3rd Sunday of Epiphany

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 Partnership Churches' Joint Service, St John's, Grove

NOTICES for inclusion in the newsletter must be sent to the editor by the preceding **Tuesday midday** at news@valebenefice.org.uk, not to the benefice office. Thank you. It will help both the office and the editor. Items for newsletter inclusion will be for 2 weeks. Please re-send your content 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

WARM SPACES - PLOUGHMANS LUNCH We are delighted to offer a Ploughman's Lunch at St John's to the churches and community on the second Sunday of each month from now until April – next date **8th February**. The lunches are part of the Warm Spaces initiative. So please do recommend to friends who may like to come along. At least two volunteers are needed to help with the refreshments and hosting. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer, or please contact Nicky at nicky.gibbard@valebenefice.org.uk

WANTAGE AND GROVE FOODBANK delivered 1033 parcels last year, which included 3036 individuals, as well as 100 Christmas hampers. A big thank you to all.

LINK TO HOPE SHOE BOX APPEAL 2025 I'm delighted to let you know that Grove Church Benefice sent 17 substantial shoeboxes, plus £40 in donations and a large bag of extras, to the shoe box appeal this year. The boxes were delivered to families living in Bulgaria. There is a link below which gives a lovely report with pictures from some of the volunteers who delivered them. Many thanks to you all for your support. Jane and John <https://www.linktohope.co.uk/shoebox-delivery-diary-2025>

THE TEA PARTY for all our churches will start again at 2pm on Saturday 17th January. Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Everyone welcome, whatever age. Come for a chat and some legendary Cornerstone cake!

GROVE CHURCH VOLUNTEER ROTAS: The new rotas are being created for March – end August 2026. Please let Andrea in the Benefice Office know what dates you will be **UNABLE** to help on the rotas. Please advise **by Friday 23rd January** at the latest. Please also advise the Benefice Office if you are already on a rota and are not able to do any duty during any months of this next period. If you are not on a rota and can join one of our church volunteer rotas, please let us know which role you are able to help with. Thank you all for serving our Lord in our church by being on these rotas and helping our Sunday Services to run smoothly. God bless. Andrea.

UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES

Saturday 24th January 2.30pm - 4.30pm Messy Church (Epiphany) in the St John's Church Hall. All Welcome.

Sunday 25th January 4pm WGCP joint service for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity at St John's Church, Grove. Refreshments at 4pm before the service starts.

Sunday 1st February 11am Service of Memories at St Nicholas Church, E. Challow

RIDE AND STRIDE GROVE Thank you to all those who took part in the sponsored Ride and Stride in September and those who sponsored them. We have received £205 towards church funds.

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.

LIVE STREAM LINK St John's Church, Grove 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.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY Sunday 11th - Sunday 25th January. The Wantage & Grove Church Partnership has prepared a booklet of prayers and reflections, composed by different local churches, to guide us through a week of prayer for Christian Unity. Copies will be available from the back of church and the welcome table in the church foyer at Grove church on Sunday 18th January. If you would like a printed copy and cannot attend the Sunday service at Grove, let the Benefice office or Rev Alec Gill know and arrange a time to collect one from the office. Thank you.

BENEFICE: MESSY CHURCH (Epiphany) Celebrating Life at St John's Church Hall on Saturday 24th January (2.30pm – 4.30pm). With Lego & junk modelling challenges, craft & creativity, Toddler activities, refreshments & cake afterwards. All Welcome. Please do bring friends & family. If you can help on the day, please let Sarah know on Sarah Shackleton - SarahLLM@valebenefice.org.uk

The Benefice Office: In order that we can shorten our “vicar & admin” weekly Wednesday morning meetings (held in the Benefice office), we ask that you limit visiting the Benefice Office on Wednesday mornings to between 11.30am and 12 noon only. This will reduce interruptions and help us to smoothly complete the meetings in a timely manner. If you do need to urgently visit the office on a Wednesday, please can you contact Andrea and book a suitable time with her. If you need to telephone the office on a Wednesday morning, please leave a message on the answer machine and Andrea will get back to you after her main meeting has finished. Many thanks for your help with this.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Health and healing: Mary L, 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: Alan Tranter, Linda Alder, Heather Cousins, Philip Pepler and Eileen Phillips.

All living in: Cherbury Green, Farm End, Woodhill Drive, Station Road, Cotton Close, Old Man's Lane (Grove); Rose Terrace (Denchworth); Elderberry Close (West Hanney)

Every church in this area that we may be united as Jesus prayed; Dame Sarah Mullally when she steps into the role of Archbishop of Canterbury, uniting the diverse communion of worldwide Anglican Churches, on 25th March.