

DIARY FOR THE WEEK Starting on **Monday 9th February 2026**
(All events held in St John's Church Hall unless stated otherwise)

Mon	10am	GroW Toddler Group
	12.45pm	GroW Babies Group
	7pm	1 st Grove Guides
	8pm	Data Protection Team meeting, Lower St John's Room
Tues	Prayer space in St John's church all day	
	7pm	2 nd Grove Guides
	7.30pm	St James Church, Denchworth, PCC meeting
Weds	Prayer space in St John's church all day	
	9.15am	St John's Toddler Group
	2pm	Badminton on Wednesdays
Thurs	Prayer space in St John's church all day	
	10am	Mid-week Communion, St Nicholas, Challow
	5.30pm	1 st Grove Brownies
	8pm	St John's Badminton Group
Fri	Prayer space in St John's church all day	
Sat	8.30am	Cornerstone prayer breakfast – all welcome
Sun	2pm	Board Games afternoon

*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.*

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

8th February 2026
2nd Sunday before Lent

Readings selected from:

Genesis 1.1-2.3; Psalm 136; Romans 8.18-25; Matthew 6.25-34

Our Sunday readings point towards our Lent course, “A Christian Look at the Environment”. The Old Testament readings are poems about our great Creator and Redeemer whose “steadfast love endures for ever”. Paul tells us that something better lies ahead, meanwhile Jesus tells us that we need not be anxious since God cares for **all** his creation - including us. Caring for all of creation must concern all of us today,

Our Shared Worship

8th February - 2nd Sunday before Lent

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Miriam Jones
9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney - Rev Alec Gill
10am Parish Communion, St James', Denchworth - Rev Peter Rich
10.15am Morning Worship, St John's, Grove - Rev Miriam Jones
11am Parish Eucharist, St Nicholas', East Challow - Rev Alec Gill

Forthcoming Services

15th February – Sunday next before Lent

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

18th February – Ash Wednesday

7.30pm – Holy Communion – St Nicholas Church, East Challow – Rev Miriam Jones

BENEFICE NEWS

WARM SPACES – TODAY Sunday 8th February

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. The lunches are part of the Warm Spaces initiative so please do recommend to friends who might like to come along. At least two volunteers are needed to help with refreshments and hosting. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer or contact Nicky at nicky.gibbard@valebenefice.org.uk

LENT COURSE on Wednesday evenings, 7.30-9.00pm: "A Christian Look at the Environment". Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about caring for the natural world? How does this fit with our understanding of the Gospel? Martin and Margot Hodson will lead this course for five evenings during Lent (25th Feb to 25th March) at their home in Grove. Contact: [martinhodson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:martinjhodson@yahoo.co.uk), tel: 07799 226759 (or contact the Parish Office)

Benefice Online Lent Course: Starting on Friday 20th February until 27th March (inclusive) (7.30pm – 8.30pm) with Rev Alec Gill and Anne Cheeseman. We will be studying Jesus' final week. No course books needed. The link to join online will be sent out next week to the Benefice distribution list. If you are not receiving newsletters, please contact Alec for the link separately.

Benefice Thursday Bible Study Lent Group: at St John's Lower Room from 2pm, Grove. We will be studying the "LentWise" Lent course by Paula Gooder. Please contact Angela & Peter Rich for more details

CORNERSTONE NEWS Email: office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk Tel: 772280
Open from 9.30 to 4.00 on weekdays and 10.00 to 3.00 on Saturdays.

Please do continue to support the coffee shop and browse for cards and books. **Make and Bake** runs for under 5s every Tuesday morning during term time. Cost £2 per child. No need to book. The current leader will be stepping down in July, so we are looking for someone to take this on from September. Themes and templates are already in place so please speak to Sarah Shewring (details above) if you are interested.

SUNDAY 22nd FEBRUARY – Craft and Fellowship afternoon 2.30-4.30pm

We plan to continue holding Craft & Fellowship afternoons on the 4th Sunday of the month in the Church Hall. The next session is on the **22nd February** and we'll be doing a little crochet. Anyone over 18 is welcome to join us. It's helpful, for catering purposes, if you let Sue Powditch know if you'd like to come - either by email at suepowditch@gmail.com or text on 07833 503674. If anyone has any surplus double-knitting yarn or crochet hooks, they can donate to our event it would be much appreciated. Also, if anyone is happy to make cakes for our tea at these afternoons then please let me know

ST JOHN'S is looking for a new CHURCHWARDEN to be appointed at the APCM on 16th May

The role of the churchwarden is to be:

- The Bishops Officer
- A support for the Vicar and Associate Vicar
- Foremost in representing the Laity
- Responsible for services and buildings
- A 'caretaker' during Vacancy

Please pray someone will step forward for this important role - is God calling you? For more information, please speak to Alec, Miriam, Nick or Colin.

THELMA LOCKWOOD -Thelma died on 1st February. Thelma and Colin were regular members at St John's for many years before moving to Bourton on the Water in 1995. Please remember Colin and the family in your prayers.

ST JAMES CHURCH, HANNEY – Due to ongoing building work, all information regarding St James' church services is provisional. Services may be changed/cancelled at short notice. See local notices.

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, Linda Sandels, Thomas Palmer and Thelma Lockwood

Those living in: Boston Close, Stanley Hall Road, Arnold Way, Maguire Close (Grove); Home Farm Mews (Denchworth); The Causeway, Crown Meadow, Whitfield Gardens (East Hanney)

The people of Iran including Christians meeting in secret

The members of the Church of England's General Synod meeting in London this week, that members may be guided by God's Holy Spirit, not by party spirit. For our new Archbishop Sarah Mullally.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

Mon	Psalms 1,2,3	Genesis 18.1-15	Matthew 27.11-26
Tue	Psalms 5,6,8	Genesis 18.16-end	Matthew 27.27-44
Wed	Psalms 119.1-32	Genesis 19.1-3,12-29	Matthew 27.45-56
Thu	Psalms 14,15,16	Genesis 21.1-21	Matthew 27.57-end
Fri	Psalms 17,19	Genesis 22.1-19	Matthew 28.1-15
Sat	Psalms 20,21,23	Genesis 23	Matthew 28.16-end