

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PARISH OF CALNE & BLACKLAND



Jesus is presented to Simeon and Anna in the Temple

***... keeping you in touch
with your church family.
February 2026***

Parish contact details

Team Rector:

The Reverend Caspar Bush

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Tel: 01249 914364 (day off Monday)

Team Vicar:

The Reverend Sarah Errington

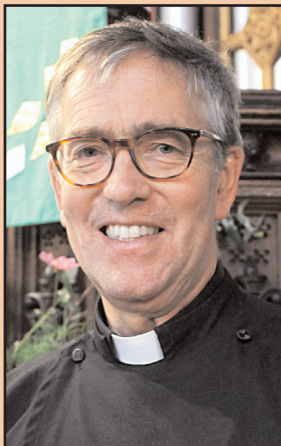
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Training Curate:

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Parish Administration:

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*Church House is open from 10.00am to 12noon
on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.*

Prayer for February

(Prayer for Candlemas – 2nd February)

Jesus, thank you that Simeon and Anna

recognised you as a special baby,

and knew you would grow up to do God's special work.

Help us to discover who you are,

and how you are special.

Help us to discover how special we are to God,

and give us courage to tell others about you.

Amen.

Church addresses

Holy Trinity Church, Quemerford, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR

St Mary's Church, Church Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0HU

St Peter's Church, Blackland, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 8UQ

Website: <https://www.mardenvale.org.uk>

Find us on facebook @stmaryschurchcalne

Thought for February

Not since the days of the Cold War decades ago has the world seemed such an uncertain and troubling place. The degree of polarity, within Western nations at least, seems to be at worrying new levels.

I don't think there has ever been a greater need for people to decide to live according to different agenda – namely where principles of justice and peace, kindness, mercy, tolerance and love are valued more highly than individualism and personal gain.

Various homegroups in the parish are happening this Lent, looking at Difference – a course that explores what Christian faith has to say about living in a complex and divided world. How do we live well alongside people with whom we strongly disagree about various matters?

The course will run over five sessions, once per week, each one lasting 90 minutes and run in people's homes, at Church House and online. At the time of writing we haven't quite finalised the exact details, but look out for more information on the weekly notice sheet. The first sessions will be in the week beginning 23rd February. Each session includes a video clip of people from nations around the world who have faced conflict, division or a difficult relationship.

Subjects include:

- How can faith transform relationships in a conflicted world

- Confronting our own differences and prejudices
- Navigating disagreements, and how they can become an opportunity for stronger relationships
- Practising forgiveness: recognising the mess and complexity of putting this into practice in our relationships
- Risking hope: doing relationships God's way can be risky and resisted, but the hope it brings is transformative

The logo features the word "difference" in a stylized, lowercase font. The letters are colored in a gradient: "d" is blue, "i" is yellow, "f" is red, "f" is dark red, "e" is blue, "n" is yellow, "c" is red, and "e" is dark red. Below the word is the tagline "The power of faith in a conflicted world" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. The entire logo is enclosed in a blue rectangular border.

I've long been an advocate for talking about matters of faith in a smaller group being one of the most effective ways to strengthen our faith. Sunday services, we hope, can be uplifting, but we don't really invite heckling in sermons, so they aren't really places for faith conversations. Conversely a small group is exactly the place to ask honest questions, and listen to other people's wisdom and experience. Why not give it a go this Lent?

With my prayers, and very best wishes

*Caspar Bush, Team Rector
(email address see page two)*

Mary Makers

A new adult craft group

Starting every Monday from the
26th January 2026 at Church House, Calne.
10.00 – 12.00 noon.

Bring your own project and enjoy refreshments in
the company of fellow crafters.

Contact Tamara on **07528604719**

or Tonia on **07719788266**.

Please spread the word.



'Do your family a favour' – thinking about your own funeral

On Thursday 26th February we are holding another of these sessions at St Mary's Church, Calne from 2.00 – 4.00pm which we previously called Grave Talk. This is an opportunity to talk about death and plan for your funeral while enjoying good company and a slice of cake. Those who have attended previous sessions have

found it thought-provoking, useful and – perhaps more surprisingly – fun! We hope you can join us. Keep an eye on the weekly pew-sheet for more information or have a chat with Caspar or Carly.

To book a place please email
admin@mardenvale.org.uk

Calne Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union meeting in December began with singing of carols and mulled wine followed by a fun quiz with nibbles, tea and coffee and mince pies. Our January meeting was our AGM which was preceded by an enjoyable soup and bread and cheese lunch, with cake and tea and coffee. Our February meeting is at 2pm on Tuesday 10th which will start with the Wave of Prayer Service fol-

lowed by a workshop on 'Pocket Patchwork'. All are invited. This year marks the 150th Anniversary of Mothers' Union, which is being marked by a service at St Paul's Cathedral in July. There will also be a celebration service in Salisbury Cathedral on Saturday 13th June which members of Calne Branch hope to attend. *More details to follow.*

Jenny Colby, Branch Leader

Introducing Gareth

In our benefice churches we're about to have a very welcome new thing in the form of a new ordinand, pictured here, named Gareth Lovell. Gareth lives in Royal Wootton Bassett with his wife and three young children. An ordinand is someone in training for ordination; Gareth is doing a two-year, full-time course based at Sarum College in Salisbury, and in June 2027 (all being well) he will be



Gareth is a lovely example of someone God is calling into a new form of ministry. That's how God mainly seems to work on earth, using people of all ages and experiences and situations... in God's service. Ordination is one pretty full-on way of serving God, but every way in which we serve God whether in a role in church, or chiefly based in the community is significant, and good to celebrate.

I'm enormously grateful to all those people who serve God in such a great variety of ways in the life of our benefice churches. But there is always room for others to be involved. Perhaps this new year might prompt you to think about a different way you might offer to serve God? Please have a word with me or one of my clergy colleagues if you'd like to know more!

With my prayers and best wishes for a fulfilling 2026!

*Caspar Bush,
Team Rector of the
Marden Vale Benefice*



ordained in Salisbury Cathedral and then go on to serve as a curate somewhere else in the diocese. In fact the pathway of Gareth's training is the same as our curate Carly took, though hers was based at Canterbury.

So for the next 18 months, Gareth will be popping up in our various churches, experiencing church life and ministry with us. He'll be with us most Sundays, and usually one other day per week.

News from the Tower

You may have heard the bells of St Mary's ringing during December and wondered what was going on. The simple answer is that we have been broadcasting the news of celebrations for Christmas and the start of a New Year. The celebrations at St Mary's started with the St Mary's School Carol Service on 7th December, then it really got going on 21st of December with the service of Carols by Candlelight. On 21st we also went to Compton Bassett to ring their bells for their carol service; there are no local bellringers at Compton Bassett so we help out when we can. On Christmas Eve we were very busy – 2.45pm at Yatesbury (again, no local ringers), 3.30pm at St Mary's for the Crib Service, 8.20pm at Bremhill, where some of their local ringers were unavailable and again at St Mary's at 10.30pm for the 'midnight' first communion of Christmas. Back again on Christmas Day morning to celebrate before the Christmas morning eucharist.

Between Christmas and New Year we had some visiting bellringers. On New Year's Eve we met at St Mary's Tower at



11.40pm to ring the old year out, then at midnight the tenor struck 12 blows to mark the hour and we all joined in to celebrate the New Year, surrounded by fireworks outside. The later was accompanied by mulled wine and prosecco!

As January begins we are back to our normal pattern of ringing on Friday evenings for practice and on Sunday mornings for service. If you would like to find out more about bellringing then you are very welcome to visit us. You would also be welcome to visit St Martin's at Bremhil. If you contact me by email on sdgr.org.uk/calne/ I can make arrangements.

Happy New Year from all the Bellringers at Calne and Bremhill!

What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) refers to living traditions, knowledge, skills, and expressions passed down through generations, including oral histories, performing arts, social rituals, traditional crafts, and understanding nature, providing identity, continuity, and fostering respect for diversity, as recognized and safeguarded by UNESCO. It's a dynamic, living heritage that

adapts as communities practice and recreate it, linking past to present.

Why does it matter? One example is traditional evensong. Another is Pancake Day. UNESCO's 2003 Convention provides a framework for nations to protect ICH. The UK Government has signed up to this convention and it will help to protect and maintain our British heritage.

Dates for your diary

2nd Candlemas. The presentation of Christ in the Temple
4th 2.00-3.30pm – Bereavement Café at St Mary's Church
10th 2.00pm – Mothers' Union, Church House
14th St Valentine's Day
17th Shrove Tuesday
18th Ash Wednesday
22nd First Sunday of Lent
27th St Matthias – Apostle

Focus for Prayer

Please remember to pray for ...

- The early signs of spring and the impact of climate change on our natural world
- Our Church Wardens and everyone who supports them in caring for our Churches
 - Anyone who does not have a place to call 'home'
 - An increase in tolerance in our society and between nations
 - Project 2026 and all the changes planned for St Mary's Church

Editorial Team:

Jane Ridgwell and Jack Robinson.

Illustration, Graphic Design and Layout: Alex Grenfell.

And finally ...

If you organise any groups or events in the parish and would like them to be included in this newsletter then get in touch with the editors.

We would also love to have articles about the different groups in the parish to spread the word more widely and encourage people to come along.

Please email or give copies of items to us in plenty of time for the next newsletter, the deadline is 10th of the preceding month.

email: cbp.news.editor@gmail.com



Regular Activities in the Parish

*Please check Website or Parish Notices for Zoom Link.

Day	Time	Place	Activity
Sunday	8.00am	St Mary's	Holy Communion (NOT 4th Sunday of the month).
	9.30am	St Peter's	Holy Communion (BCP) – (4th Sunday of the month).
	10.00am	Church House	Sunday Club for 4–11s. (1st Sunday of the month)
		St Mary's	Parish Eucharist (4th Sunday of the month; Morning Praise).
	10.00am	Holy Trinity	Family Service (3rd Sunday of the month).
	10.45am	Holy Trinity	Holy Communion (4th Sunday of the month).
Tuesday	10.00am	Church House	SMUF's parent and toddler group. Only during term times.
Wednesday	10.00am	St Mary's	Holy Communion (Mothers' Union Corporate Service 1st Wednesday of the month).
Friday	8.30 am	Zoom	Morning Prayers – Whole Benefice*
	7.00pm	St Mary's	Choir Practice.
	7.30pm	Bell Ringing	Please contact Jane Ridgwell for further information.

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to the Parish of Calne and Blackland you can use this QR code***

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