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February 2026



Inside

Quizzes, Competition winners and all your parish news

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TemeTalk

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A community going forward with God

February 2026

Published by the churches of the
Teme Valley South Group
and delivered free to every household

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Items for inclusion should be
sent to Sandra Griffiths
by the 18th of the preceding month
and will be included subject to space

Dear Readers

February can feel like a quiet month. The excitement of Christmas has faded, the days are still short, and although clumps of snowdrops bring the promise of things to come, spring seems a long way off. Yet it is often in these quieter times that we notice gifts most clearly — not the sort wrapped in paper, but the gifts that arrive through one another.

In our rural communities, generosity rarely makes headlines. It shows itself in smaller, steadier ways: a neighbour keeping an eye on an empty house, someone giving a lift to the shops, a warm word exchanged at the gate on a cold morning. These acts may seem ordinary, but they are gifts all the same, and they sustain us more than we realise.

The Christian faith speaks often of gift. Life itself is understood as something received rather than earned. None of us chooses the land we are born into, the people who shape us, or the many kindnesses that quietly support us along the way. When we recognise this, generosity stops being a duty and becomes a response — a way of passing on what we ourselves have been given.

In February, the church marks Candlemas, a festival about light given and received. It is a reminder that even a small flame can make a difference when the days are dark. The same is true of generosity. It does not need to be dramatic or costly. A little time, a listening ear, a shared skill — these are often the most valuable gifts of all.

Rural life teaches us this well. We know how much we depend on one another, especially when weather turns harsh or times are difficult. Generosity here is practical, grounded, and often unspoken. It is woven into the rhythm of village life, from shared harvests to shared worries.

As we move through this month, perhaps we might pause to notice both the gifts we receive and the gifts we are able to offer. Both giving and re-

Continued on page 3

Our front cover picture is by Floss, one of the winners of our Christmas colouring competition (see page 19)

If you have a photograph that you think would look good on the cover of *TemeTalk* please send it to ronsmum@icloud.com

Harriett Baldwin MP

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07494 104781

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Parish news

Dear Readers

(Continued from page 1)

ceiving can evoke the emotion of gratitude, which has a way of opening our eyes to abundance, even when resources feel stretched. Generosity is an outworking of this and generosity, once started, has a habit of spreading.

My prayer for February is that we continue to look out for one another, valuing the small acts of kindness that make our communities strong. In doing so, we reflect something deeply human — and deeply hopeful — about the way we are meant to live together.

With every blessing,

Rev'd Julia

From the Registers

Funerals

The funeral of Eila Tucker took place on Thursday 4th December at St Peter & St Paul, Eastham.

The funeral of David Spilsbury took place at Wyre Forest Crematorium on Tuesday 16th December, followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at St Peter & St Paul, Eastham.

We send our condolences to their loved ones. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

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Teme Valley Tots

We meet on Fridays from 10.30am to 12 noon at Rochford village hall. We will have a break for half term so there will be no meeting on 20th February. For more information about our tots group do contact Tina via email on tinaslord@gmail.com.

Ordinand on placement

During February and March we are looking forward to welcoming Robyn Rooney who will be doing a placement with us.

Robyn is training for ordination and looking forward to finding out about life and ministry in rural communities, so do say hello if you see her around.

Rev'd Julia

Soul Space

We are continuing to explore and develop a time of fellowship after the Stoke Bliss & Kyre neighbourhood lunch each month

Those attending share ten minutes in fellowship as we sing a hymn, listen to a short passage of scripture and share a prayer.

All are welcome

For further information please contact
Rev'd Jen Jones at tvscurate@gmail.com

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Rochford 49 Club

*Congratulations to this month's
£25 winners!*

Wednesday winners

| | | |
|---------------|-------|------------------|
| 19th November | No 10 | Caroline Nichols |
| 26th November | No 40 | Chris Cox |
| 3rd December | No 1 | Brian Woodhouse |
| 10th December | No 38 | Rod Ricketts |
| 17th December | No 36 | Not sold |
| 24th December | No 49 | Jean Harrison |
| 31st December | No 14 | Dan Taylor |
| 7th January | No 12 | Sheila Palmer |
| 14th January | No 23 | Not sold |

Saturday winners

| | | |
|---------------|-------|-----------|
| 22nd November | No 35 | Not sold |
| 29th November | No 46 | Not sold |
| 6th December | No 40 | Not sold |
| 13th December | No 59 | Not sold |
| 20th December | No 47 | Tina Lord |
| 27th December | No 21 | Not sold |
| 3rd January | No 4 | Not sold |
| 10th January | No 9 | Not sold |
| 17th January | No 4 | Not sold |

Remember, you must be in it to win it!

Ring Norma Goodall on
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Teme Valley Tote

December's prize draw, the ninth in this series, was decided when Rev'd Jen Jones rolled the dice on 1st December to select the set of random numbers and the starting point. Prizewinners are:

£50 – **Mrs A Stanley** of Knighton (No 637)
£30 – **Alexandra Winnington** of Stanford (No 554)
£20 – **Ms J Haylor** of Stoke Bliss (No 826)

Happy New Year to all our Toters!

January's prize draw, the tenth in this series, was decided when Rev'd Julia Curtis threw the dice on 6th January to select the set of random numbers and the starting point. Prizewinners are:

£50 – **Mrs R Collings** of Knighton (No 658)
£30 – **Mrs L Lear** of Knighton (No 666)
£20 – **Ms Cecilia Dean** of Stanford (No 516)

If you have any queries about the Tote, please contact Robin Dean on 01886 853295 or robin.c.dean@gmail.com – he is still looking for someone to take over its running!

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Rochford Newsford

Christmas in Rochford

Christmas was well celebrated in Rochford. Thanks to everyone who helped with and supported all the Christmas events. The village Christmas lunch was a sell out and we had a full church for the carol service. Including the neighbourhood lunch over 90 people enjoyed Ann's Christmas lunches and mince pies, we are so lucky to have her. We had another full church at the midnight service on Christmas Eve with the choir, mince pies and mulled wine. Many thanks to Jon Adams for the lovely Christmas tree in the church.

Rochford village hall

We have a grant from the MHDC Legacy Grant Scheme to improve the insulation and décor of the village hall and to refurbish the kitchen. Work is scheduled to start in mid-February so the hall will be out of use for around a month. Any help would be appreciated to carry out some of the preparatory work. Please look out for information on the WhatsApp group and help if you can.

Photo competition

When the refurbishment is complete, I thought it would be good to have some pictures of Rochford on the walls. So get your camera out and get snapping! The best pictures will be chosen to decorate the hall.

Neighbourhood lunches

There will be no neighbourhood lunches in February or March as work is carried out on the hall. If all goes to plan, we hope to restart lunches on 28th April.

The **Pancake Evening** on 17th February has been rescheduled to celebrate the reopening of the hall when the work is complete.

Snowdrop Songs of Praise

To celebrate these harbingers of spring, come and sing your favourite hymns at Rochford church on Sunday 8th February at 3 o'clock.

Lambing Café Church

Come along to Parsonage Farm, Rochford on Sunday 8th March at 3pm to join in with lambing based activities. Please note that pregnant women should not attend.

Happy birthday to Dan

Dan Taylor celebrates his 90th birthday in February and we would like to wish him many congratulations and a very happy birthday.

Dan now lives in Tenbury, but Rochford has been a big part of his life and he has done so much for this village over many years. He was on the PCC and a churchwarden and ran the tombola at the fête for many years. He quietly did jobs that just need doing at the church and helped to decorate it for festivals. Dan even sheared the ram whose wool was woven into the curtain across the church door to keep the draft out. He still attends Rochford church whenever he can.

Dan was born in Walsall and his family moved to a little sweet shop (long since demolished) in Teme Street in 1945. He left school at 15, jumped on his bike and cycled to the other side of Ludlow where there was a farm job. They didn't give him the time of day so he cycled back. On his return he found that Fred Yapp had called to offer him a job at Church House farm so he jumped straight back on his bike and cycled to Rochford to see him and started work at 7 o'clock the next morning. Fred and Freda welcomed him onto the farm with a cup of tea and the biggest slice of cake he'd ever seen! They treated him like part of the family and he had many happy years there until Fred and Freda retired. It was Fred who gave him his first hive of bees which started his lifelong love of beekeeping.

He married Ruby Lanman in 1958 and they moved into Redhill (now Mole End) and later to Hope Cottage in Church Lane.

Happy birthday Dan, we do appreciate everything you have done and continue to contribute to life in Rochford and your stories of your life have been enjoyed by many.

Contacts

Ann on 01584 781317

Andrew on 07809 658484 or through the parish WhatsApp group

If you would like to be added to the parish WhatsApp group to keep you up-to-date with all village happenings, please send me your mobile number.

Andrew Barbé

News from Stoke Bliss & Kyre

Christmas in Stoke Bliss and Kyre

Our special Christmas services, the annual carol service and the Christmas day family service, proved popular and it was great to welcome new faces as well as our regulars. Our thanks to the Relishing Rural Choir for singing at our carol service and for their popular Christmas medley sung before the mulled wine came out! The choir also joined us for the darkness-into-light service at Kyre church, which was completely filled with their voices. Rev'd Jen Jones delighted us on Christmas morning with a retelling of the Christmas story via the medium of chocolate, which was especially popular for those with a sweet tooth!

We hope to host another wildlife event in St Peter's churchyard in late spring following our popular bat watch last autumn. We will be investigating the wonderful world of moths and other nocturnal insects. The Stoke Bliss & Kyre plant and produce sale will be on Saturday 25th April and as always, we will be looking for donations of plants, so keen gardeners please put the date in your diaries! Lastly, we are pleased to see the Stoke Bliss & Kyre Open Gardens returning this summer in June.

Church roof restoration update

We are currently applying for permission from church authorities, known as a faculty, for the repairs. This is similar to a planning application and requires similar levels of information and documentation. No contracts can be placed before permission is granted.

Churchyard tidy sessions

Our working parties are suspended for the winter but will resume in late March with some planned pruning and tree works before the grass starts growing vigorously. The provisional date is Saturday 21st March from 10am to 12 noon. All welcome.

Keeping you informed

Stay up to date with village news and events for Stoke Bliss and Kyre via the community group on Facebook – search “Stoke Bliss & Kyre Community” to join. If you are not already on the SBK email list, contact Julia Berry at sbkvillagehall@gmail.com to join.

Jeremy Wyatt

Village Hall Committee

The village hall committee has organised another full programme of events for 2026. As well as our regular Friday social nights, there will be the ever-popular plant and produce sale on Saturday 25th April, a train day, a spring walk, Open Gardens on Saturday 20th June and a summer barbecue to look forward to. It will even be a case of “eyes down” later in the year for another fun evening of bingo. Our March social night will also be a quiz night – look out for further details on how to enter.

Whether you are a long-term resident or new to the village, come along and see old friends and neighbours or make new friends and get to know your neighbours.

Trevor Matthews

Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall Committee

**See page 12 for more news
from Stoke Bliss & Kyre**



**Thursday 12th February
Thursday 12th March
at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall
12.30pm welcome, lunch served at 1pm
Two courses plus refreshments
To book call 07396 813137
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We look forward to seeing you**

Social Night

**Friday 27th February
Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall
Bar opens at 7, food served at 8pm
Please book food at sbkvillagehall@gmail.com
Next Social Night is 27th March with quiz**

Eastham Jottings

David Spilsbury

The family would like to thank everyone who attended and helped at David's funeral in December. Many thanks from the family and Eastham church for the generous donations in memory of David.

Church flowers and cleaning

February – Stuart and Josie Ward

March – Celia Adams

There are vacancies on the rota. If you can help please contact Celia Adams on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com.

Thank you

A huge thank you to Mary Holloway for playing our Casson Positive organ month in, month out. We love to hear Mary playing and she is never phased by the requests that test her repertoire!

Eastham Coffee Morning

Please join us at the coffee morning on Thursday 5th February at 10.30am at Eastham Memorial Hall for coffee, the monthly raffle and a catch up.

We welcomed a great bunch of people to the January coffee morning. Diane Thomson of Air Ambulance was delighted receive £120 donated from the Christmas fair.

The rota for 2026 is:

5th February – Nicky Webb

5th March – Alison Neary

2nd April – Josie Ward

Christmas Eve crib service

Thanks to everyone involved in the crib service on Christmas Eve. Over 60 adults and children attended with events choreographed by Mel Williams, who had been to after school club at Lindridge school during November to prepare angel wings, fleecy sheep and other props. The singing was led briskly by Michael Webb at the organ – thanks to the Webb family from Stockton-on-Teme for joining in.

We invested in a large banner displayed on the A443 at Eastham Bridge – thanks to Ricki of EPS Ltd of Craven Arms for the amazing turnaround of the banner on the Friday afternoon before Christmas.

The service was followed by mulled wine, mince pies and chocolates and £175 was collected for Acorns. It was a fitting start to Eastham's Christmas festivities.

Pub Night

Well done to Diane Clarke, the winner of the grand skittles match at the Christmas pub night on 19th December. A great turnout competed for the honours. Many thanks to everyone who came along.

The next pub night is on Friday 20th February. Look out for the usual banner.

In the spring there will be a pub night quiz, watch this space! Skittles could be back by popular demand later in the year so that Diane can defend her title.

Church and churchyard spring clean

Please come and help with tidying up the churchyard on Saturday 18th April from 10am to 12.30pm followed by a barbecue. We will be tidying up the inside of the church at the same time. Please bring garden utensils, dusters and mops. Everyone welcome, creche available!

Teme Valley Tote

Payment is due on 1st April for the next 12 draws for prizes of £50, £30 or £20 per month.

100 signed up last year – households can have more than one go. Please pay in cash as in previous years or for bank details ring Celia on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com.

Don't miss out – you've got to be in it to win it. Thanks to Robin Dean for arranging the tote every year. Eastham paid over £700 into church funds last year.

Lamberts Family Grocers

The mobile shop calls at Eastham Memorial Hall every Wednesday at around 10.30am. Mike carries Ashley's Bakery, Wyre Pie etc.

The Filling Station

The next meeting is on 19th February, everyone is welcome. For more information please contact Kate on kate.harley6@gmail.com. Thanks to The Filling Station for using Eastham Memorial Hall for your meetings – we are delighted to have you with us each month.

Eastham freestyle litter pick

This will be on Saturday 14th March. Look out for more details next month.

Celia Adams

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Hanley Happenings

Christmas bingo

The Christmas bingo was a great success. Lots of people attended and we raised just over £450! It will be back by popular demand next year!

Willow obelisk class

There are two places left across the two willow obelisk classes on 7th and 14th March at Hanley village hall from 2 to 5pm. Everything provided, instruction and tea and cake for just £45. Book with Lex on 07471 192649.

Congratulations



Welcome to the newest addition to the village and future beater William Steven Goldsmith, son of Lex Moore and Zeb Goldsmith of the Old Parsonage. Born on 12th January 2026 weighing 8lb 2oz.

A top tip!

Matt Treherne was fitting a new front door for me and my brass furnishings were a bit tarnished. He told me to clean them with HP Sauce. It was amazing, they have never been so clean!

Carole Gardner

To book Hanley village hall for a private event please email hanleyvillagehall@outlook.com or call Diane on 07879 888336.

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Free lunches at Hanley village hall

Wednesday 4th February, 12 noon – a free lunch and a chance to catch up with friends and neighbours in a warm and welcoming environment.

Wednesday 18th February, 12 noon – a free lunch plus a guest speaker, crime writer Paul Durston. Paul was a police officer with the Metropolitan Police for 30 years. Since his retirement he has written a trilogy of crime novels.

“Paul Durston’s fantastic debut crime thriller *If I Were Me* is a brilliant read. Not a police procedural ... not a psychological thriller. It really is a crime thriller like no other.” (Roger Corke, *The Crime Fiction Club*, November 2024)

For your free lunch please call or message Diane on 07879 888336 or email hanleyvillagehall@outlook.com.

Wednesdays 4th and 18th March and 1st April – a free lunch, keep the date and see March’s TemeTalk for more details.

Quiz and Curry

On Saturday 28th February at 6.30pm at Hanley village hall. Teams of up to six people, £7.50 per person includes quiz, curry, naan and rice. The bar will be open and stocked! To book, call or message Diane on 07879 888336 or email hanleyvillagehall@outlook.com.



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Services in Stanford

Sunday 1st February

Holy Communion at 10am
Evensong with choir at 4pm

Sunday 1st March

Holy Communion at 10am

Church flowers

Many thanks to Sarah Burgoyn and Helen Nicol who decorated the church for Christmas, helped by Alexandra Winnington. Thanks to Sue Softly for January's flowers.

Thanks to Mary Holloway for playing the organ so well at most of our church services. It is much appreciated.

Christmas Tree Festival

The church was sparkling this year with 23 larger trees entering the competition. The public vote for the best tree was won by the Rochford Christmas tree with beautifully made paper decorations (*pictured right*). The children's vote was awarded to Abberley Pre-School Nursery whose tree featured sparkly decorations made from a variety of materials and pipe cleaner candy canes. Well done to both groups. There were lovely hand-made decorations and some beautifully themed trees which all added to the splendid display. Thank you to all who entered trees and supported the Festival this year. We raised a total of £1,200, split between the church and our chosen charity, Maggs in Worcester. Nearly all of the sum for Maggs was match-funded so we were very pleased with the result

We are grateful to John Curtis who organised and co-ordinated the event with the inimitable Sue Softly, who also took charge of the catering. Thanks to Andy, Clem and the construction crew, to JW Lane for lights and fittings, to everyone who made mince pies and huge thanks to Louise Mawditt at Angel Gardens for the beautiful Christmas trees.

Carol service at St Mary's

On Christmas Eve we had a splendid carol service with 54 adults and six children attending. It was lovely to see some previous members at St Mary's and we welcomed the Atherton family and Pat Hunstone, whose late husband was the ACC chairman. Emily Atherton did the first reading and everything went according to plan after that. Thanks to Pete Thorpe for making it all run smoothly and to Helen and Andy Nicol for serving the mulled wine and delicious mince pies made by Catherine and Ann.

Daffodil Day

Daffodil Day will be on Saturday 21st March from 2.30 to 5pm at Stanford village hall.

Artist Mel Williams and lay minister and creative artist Jill Smith will lead an afternoon of arts activities including painting, making paper daffodils and glass painting. Adults and children are welcome. There will be tea, scones and cakes.

Please message or call Alexandra on 07891 346783 for more information. Full details next month.

Tenbury Food Bank

The box will be in the church for the service on 1st February. Please donate any non-combustible items and we will take them to the food bank.

Stanford news on Facebook

If you would like to see what's happening in Stanford or connect with local businesses, do follow the Stanford with Orleton News page at facebook.com/stanfordwithorleton.

David Spilsbury

We send our condolences to the family of David Spilsbury who died in December.

Alexandra Winnington



The Filling Station

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 19th February at Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.15 for a 7.30pm start. Our speaker for this evening will be David Harper from Top Barn. Top Barn Farm has been farmed by the Harper family for many years and in 2007 they formed Top Barn Trust. Around 40 acres of the land has been dedicated to community enterprise programmes which have assisted people of all ages and abilities, encouraging learning and personal growth through practical skills, farming and nature-based activities. The ministry at Top Barn Trust runs alongside the community enterprise programmes and helps people to discover more about God's love and to draw people into becoming disciples of Christ.

We look forward to your joining us for these evenings of fellowship, worship, teaching and refreshments. If you are not on our mailing list and would like further information please contact me on kate.harley6@gmail.com.

TemeTalk

Deadline 18th February

Please note this is the *last* day for contributions – the sooner you send your items to the editor, the more chance there is that they will be included



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Activities at Eastham Memorial Hall

• Pilates – on Tuesdays at 1.10 and 2.20pm. For details or a taster session please contact Sue on 07974 343609, sue579@icloud.com. No class on 17th February, half term.

• Yoga – every Wednesday at 10am. Ring Zoe on 07962 981456 or see www.zedyoga.co.uk. Taster sessions available.

• Fitball – on Thursdays from 1.30 to 2.30pm. An exercise class using yoga balls to help improve posture and balance, build strength, flexibility and co-ordination. Please contact Michelle on 07837 359403 to book your place. The first session is a taster.

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Kyre Park, Tenbury Wells WR15 8RW

Sabbatical update

In the Dear Readers section I reflected on gift and generosity, and I am deeply grateful for the gift of three months' sabbatical in the autumn of last year. It was lovely to come back and see how well things have worked during this season.

Many of you have asked me, "how was your sabbatical?" and I can truthfully say it was all I hoped for and more. Through the weeks I enjoyed



A statue of St Francis in the grounds of San Damiano, Assisi. The sense it evoked of stillness, simplicity, contemplation and peace was wonderful.

being back in Norfolk seeing friends and family, and it was especially good to spend a bit more time with my Mum who is now in a nursing home. John and I enjoyed a trip on retreat to Devon and spent a number of happy hours rediscovering our garden, with some serious pruning and decluttering happening.

During sabbatical I was able to complete some useful fieldwork for my doctoral studies and to present a work in progress session at the University of Birmingham. My studies continue part-time for the next 18 months as I begin to crystallise my ideas and write my thesis.

One of the highlights was a trip with two of my friends to Assisi in Italy, but more about that in another magazine issue!

Stepping away for a while often helps in gaining perspective and balance. So I returned in December with fresh energy and a better understanding of rhythms of rest and healthy patterns of ministry.

Safe to say I missed familiar faces, but not my emails, and am pleased to be back, with no major revelations about God calling me over the border to Wales or the Highlands of Scotland. I'm looking forward to 2026 and working together with gratitude and joy at all we are blessed with here in our part of Worcestershire.

Rev'd Julia

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More News from Stoke Bliss & Kyre

News from Hollow Meadow

Another year has flown by and 2026 is well on its journey. Thanks to everyone who has taken an interest in Hollow Meadow and supported it in many ways.

The footpath from the lane above the Retreat that leads down to cross the stream and up to join the other path, from the corner of Broadmeadow drive over to Bannalls Lane, has been restored to comply with the definitive map. When the footpath officer from Worcestershire County Council called, he pointed out that the path was actually in the wrong position! So we took the opportunity whilst doing other work to realign it. The bridge over the stream will be realigned by WCC later.

The final touches to the shelter and shed with the ecoloo will shortly be completed, so we can offer short courses at the meadow in nature crafts and wellbeing. These will be for small groups and run by experienced course leaders. There will be

one a month from April to September. For more information go to Hollowmeadow23@gmail.com.

Contact us if you want to have a guided tour. You are welcome to use the public footpaths but please keep to them and keep dogs on leads because of the sheep. As the meadow is managed primarily for biodiversity and wildlife, we try to keep disturbance to a minimum.

Maggie Kingston



Courses at the Meadow

April (date to be advised)

Weaving a small rush mat
phi.forestry@btinternet.com

Saturday 2nd May, 11am to 4pm

Beltaine Spring Celebration
www.gaiasweave.com

Sunday 20th June (time tba)

TVWG Bioblitz

hollowmeadow23@gmail.com

TemeTalk deadline 18th February

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What's Lent about?

Lent may originally have followed Epiphany, just as Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness followed immediately on from his baptism, but it soon became firmly attached to Easter. It became the principal occasion for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from the Church's fellowship for whatever reason. This history explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study and preparation for Easter.

Muddy Boots Mission Area Lent Reflections

As usual there will be Lent reflections across the Muddy Boots Mission Area (Wyre Forest West, Four Rivers and Teme Valley). We'll be following part of the Pilgrim Course of the Church of England and we will be looking at the Lord's Prayer. The sessions are as follows:

Week 1 – Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name

Week 2 – Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven

Week 3 – Give us today our daily bread

Week 4 – Forgive us our sins as we forgive those

who sin against us

Week 5 – Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

Locations and times

Great Witley – there will be face to face sessions for the Four Rivers Group at 2.30 to 4pm on Wednesdays at the Rectory (that's David's house), 1 Chiltern Close, Great Witley: 25th February, 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th March.

Online – via Zoom on the Wednesdays in Lent at 7 to 8.30pm. Contact Sallie for more details.

Around the Teme Valley – these will be held on Fridays in Lent from 10.30am to 12 noon in various people's homes, and on Tuesdays at 2pm at The Hatt, Lower Sapey. Contact Julia or Jen for details.

Feel free to mix and match to suit you.

Contact details:

Rev'd Sallie Butcher, 01299 896837
email sallie@wyreforestwest.org.uk

Rev'd Julia Quinn
email revjulia@wyreforestwest.org.uk

Rev'd Julia Curtis, 01886 853286
email revjuliacurtis@gmail.com

Jill Smith, LLM Reader, 01886 853311

Rev'd Jen Jones, email tvscurate@gmail.com

Rev'd David Morris, 01299 896783
email revdmd777@gmail.com

Rev'd Tobias Thornes, 07487 885234
email revtobiast@outlook.com



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QUIZ!

Friday 6th February at 7.30pm at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall

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Please bring your own drink and glasses

Teams of four or book as an individual and make up a team

A raffle will be held on the night

Booking essential, please email Helen Read
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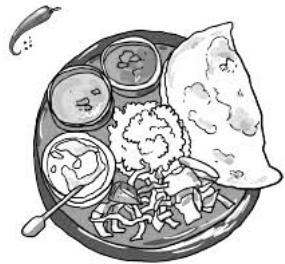
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What's on at The Regal in February

Film

| | | |
|----------|---------|---|
| Mon 2nd | 1.00pm | Hamnet (12A) |
| | 7.00pm | Hamnet (12A) |
| Fri 6th | 7.00pm | Song Sung Blue (12A) |
| Tue 17th | 2.00pm | Projectionist's Pick « Bullitt (15) |
| Sat 21st | 11.00am | The SpongeBob Movie: Search for SquarePants (U) |
| Sat 21st | 7.00pm | Rental Family (12A) |
| Sat 28th | 12 noon | Children's Saturday Cinema Club screening: Kangaroo (Age TBC) |

Live Theatre

| | | |
|----------|--------|---|
| Sat 7th | 4.00pm | The Addams Family@Part presented by the Regal School of Creative Arts |
| Sun 8th | 2.00pm | |
| Sat 14th | 7.30pm | Parody of the Rings |

Arts Screening

| | | |
|----------|--------|---|
| Mon 9th | 7.15pm | The Royal Ballet: Woolf Works |
| Tue 10th | 7.00pm | National Theatre Live: The Fifth Step |
| Thu 26th | 7.00pm | National Theatre Live: The Audience Age (Age TBC) (Subtitled) |

Live Music

| | | |
|----------|--------|----------------------------|
| Fri 13th | 7.30pm | Ludlow Jazz Collective |
| Fri 20th | 7.30pm | The Fleetwood Mac Songbook |
| Sat 28th | 7.30pm | Grace Beverley |

Live Show

| | | |
|----------|--------|--|
| Thu 19th | 2.30pm | Mark Thompson's Award Winning Spectacular Science Show |
|----------|--------|--|

Workshop

| | | |
|----------|--------|-------------------------------|
| Mon 16th | 9.30am | Train your Dragon - Half-Term |
| Tue 17th | 9.30am | Holiday Club |
| Wed 18th | 9.30am | Train your Dragon |

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Regal Folk Festival returns to Tenbury Wells in March

The Regal is delighted to announce the return of the Regal Folk Festival, running from **Friday 6th March** to **Thursday 19th March**. Across four headline evenings the festival will showcase some of the most compelling voices in contemporary and traditional folk, in the intimate surroundings of Tenbury's much-loved community theatre.

Scottish singer-songwriter and author **James Yorkston** opens the festival on **Friday 6th March**. A cornerstone of the Domino Records roster for over two decades, his work is known for its lyrical depth, warmth and quietly powerful storytelling.

On **Thursday 12th March** **Maddie Morris**, winner of the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award, brings a set of socially conscious, story-driven songs that explore themes including identity, equality and lived experience, marking them out as one of the leading new voices in British folk.

Rising North Yorkshire songwriter **George Boomsma** (pictured right) takes to the stage on **Friday 13th March**. With a pure, resonant vocal style and intricate guitar work, he has appeared at major festivals including Cambridge Folk Festival and Port Fairy Folk Festival, earning a reputation for intimate live performances.

The festival closes on **Thursday 19th March** with Dublin-born traditional singer and bouzouki player **Daoirí Farrell**. Twice recognised at the BBC Folk Awards and widely praised as one of the

most important Irish folk singers of recent years, his performances combine remarkable vocal power with deep roots in the Irish singing tradition.

"We are thrilled to bring the Regal Folk Festival back for 2026 with such an outstanding line-up," said Kim Grenfell, Theatre Director at the Regal. "James Yorkston, Maddie Morris, George Boomsma and Daoirí Farrell each bring something very special, and we cannot wait to welcome audiences for four unforgettable nights of folk music in Tenbury."

Tickets are available from:

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Ludlow Jazz Collective
Fri 13 Feb, 7.30pm · Live on Stage



Parody of the Rings
Sat 14 Feb, 7.30pm · Live on Stage



Mark Thompson's Spectacular Science Show
Thu 19 Feb, 2.30pm · Live on Stage



The Fleetwood Mac Songbook
Fri 20 Feb, 7.30pm · Live on Stage



GRACIE BEVERLEY
Sat 28 Feb, 7.30pm · Live on Stage



Regal Folk Festival - James Yorkston
Fri 6 Mar, 7.30pm · Live on Stage



Regal Folk Festival - Maddie Morris
Thu 12 Mar, 8pm · Live on Stage



Regal Folk Festival - George Boomsma
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Ludlow Rotary seeks young leaders of tomorrow

Ludlow Rotary Club wants to hear from young people aged 16 or 17 who would like to be considered for this year's Rotary Youth Leadership Award scheme - RYLA for short.

Each year the club aims to sponsor one or two youngsters who might benefit from what is regarded as one of the most successful youth schemes run by Rotary. It offers a fun yet intensive training programme for young people, both boys and girls, aimed at nurturing and encouraging leadership and communication skills and giving participants a head start as they prepare their CVs in support of their future education or career choices. The five-day residential course takes place at Boreton Park, Baschurch in north Shropshire under

*... a fun yet intensive
training programme for
... boys and girls*

the supervision of trained and qualified instructors. Working in teams and in line with the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, outdoor activities are a crucial part of the experience.

Ludlow Rotary Club meets all fees and transports the candidates to and from the venue.

Potential applicants or their parents are invited to contact Ludlow Rotary's Kim Olyett at youthservices@ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk, preferably by the end of February, for more information and an application form. The only stipulation is that applicants must be over 16 and under 18 when the scheme takes place from 2nd to 7th August 2026.

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Christmas colouring competition – the results!



Louie Williams



Louie working hard on his picture



Nell Rankin

Thank you to everyone who entered our fun Christmas colouring competition. You all worked really hard to produce lovely pictures in a great variety of colours and styles, including Louie's striking black and white cottage and Nancy's fondness for red!

The winners are

Tabitha Lester of Bromyard, aged 10

Louie Williams of Newnham Bridge, aged 8

Nell Rankin of Worcester, aged 6

Ophelia Lester of Bromyard, aged 6

Floss of The Oaks, Stoke Bliss, aged 5½

Nancy Williams of Newnham Bridge, aged 4

Grace Rankin of Worcester, aged 4 (joint entry with her mum)



Tabitha

Well done! Look out for your prizes!



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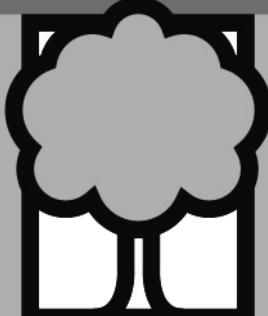
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David Spilsbury

A wonderful friend, relative and neighbour

On 16th December Eastham church saw its largest congregation for many years when the community gathered to give thanks for the long and well lived life of David Spilsbury, aged 94. Despite not having known David until his later years, Rev'd Julia Curtis delivered a very meaningful service which included references to his long service as church warden and his reading of the lesson in church in 2019. Daughter Jane presented a very interesting, informative and carefully prepared eulogy, son John's daughter Hanna read her own poem and there were readings by other family members.

David was born at Eastham Park in 1931, the fifth of six children. A bright boy, he passed the exam for Kidderminster Grammar School and enjoyed time there including cricket and cross country running, but farming was already becoming his priority – by the time he was 13 or 14 his father told a neighbour "young David could be running the place on his own".

Joyce and David married in 1953 and together they made a huge contribution to just about everything in and around Eastham for the next 67 years. A lifelong farmer and countryman, David ran Eastham Park all his working life except for a couple of enjoyable and informative years that the family spent in Australia while John and Jane were very young. He was a successful farmer, good with both livestock and crops and was particularly interested in fruit growing. In semi-retirement at Oakhill he put much effort and expertise into conservation – the results are there to see!

David served on numerous committees; he became a member of Eastham parish council at the age of 21! Other roles included the parochial church council (of which he remained a member until his death), the village hall committee, the Eastham Working Men's Club, Tenbury Hospital League of Friends, Eastham Welfare Trust, and the wildlife committee.

As a Tenbury Young Farmer, aged 20, David



won the Three Counties Show young shearers competition for Worcestershire. He had a long association with Tenbury Agricultural Society; winning champion lamb at Tenbury Show was always a proud moment. He served on the livestock committee and in 2000 was honoured with the Society's gold medal. In 2010 he was very touched to be made the first male honorary life member in recognition of all he had done.

In the 1970s when Eastham church roof needed renovation and funds were

insufficient David suggested it be done by the parishioners – that's exactly what happened, to good effect. In advance of the millennium, he sought pledges to support the production of the book *Eastham Within Living Memory*; the book was a great success. The pledges were never called on, but without them the book would not have got off the ground.

David was always interested in history, he was a member of Tenbury, Stanford and Eastham history societies and when his mobility deteriorated he concentrated on that interest and kept his mind active and alert. He provided help and information for the recent book *Teme over Time*.

Following the service the family hosted an excellent reception at The Barn at Dinhill.

A wonderful friend, relative and neighbour to many, David will be remembered with respect and affection.

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Teme Valley Wildlife

Numerous small woods bear the name copse or coppice, reflecting their former role in the manufacture of traditional products such as fence posts, hedge stakes, hop poles, sheep hurdles and gates from a renewable wood resource. The practice of coppicing, cutting down a tree and then harvesting its straight regrowth, began in the Neolithic period but came to a halt after the Second World War. The oldest evidence for the use of coppice products in England comes from the 4,000 BC site of the "sweet track", a causeway in the Somerset Levels whose watery domain has preserved its lining of coppiced brushwood to the delight of archaeologists many millennia later.

There are lots of coppices along the Teme valley, many of them of ash, not a surprise given the thousands of hop poles which were once required. A quick look at the map brings up Mill Coppice, Bine Coppice, Brickbarns Coppice, Rock Coppice and Slashes Coppice to the south of the river and Rough Coppice, Hackenchop Coppice, Howney Coppice, Ash Coppice and Pudford Coppice to the north. Their names represent their owners, the type of tree they contained or, in the wonderfully named Hackenchop Coppice, the sort of work that went on in them.

Woods were typically divided into different areas



Coppicing by traditional horse-logging

or "coupes" which were cut in rotation so that usable wood was available every year. For different woods and different uses the trees were cut down in cycles varying from five to 20 years. There was always wood to cut and always some just beginning to grow. The great secret of broad-leaved

Continued on page 24

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Continued from page 23

woodland is that it is endlessly renewable. Coppicing extends the lives of these trees, unlike conifers which cannot recover after felling.

Woodland managed by traditional coppicing is alive with wildlife. The cutting of a coupe lets light onto the woodland floor which is followed by a profusion of primroses, violets, foxgloves and wood anemones and bluebells. Fast-growing tree shoots rapidly turn into leafy bushes and bramble makes thickets which provide cover and nest sites for birds and small mammals. Butterflies thrive. Of birds, warblers in particular are attracted to this habitat and make the most of new food and nesting opportunities. As the trees get bigger and light begins to diminish, bees and insects feed on tree nectar and shadier conditions hide larger mammals and provide roosts for larger birds. Rarer plants such as herb Paris and broad-leaved helleborine prefer a denser tree canopy so they wait until conditions are just right before putting up their shoots.

Woods which offer subtle gradations in light and in tree maturity host the greatest variety of plants and animals. Coppicing creates these conditions whilst also producing usable wood, a fact known to our ancestors, but sadly we no longer rely on wood for brushes, brooms, pea sticks, spade handles, basketry, clogs, wattle and daub, firewood, kindling or charcoal. If woodland is managed in the traditional way, wildlife gets a huge boost – so bean sticks, anyone?



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The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group will be at 7.30pm on Thursday 12th February at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall. We welcome Andrew Fusek Peters whose talk is called "Garden Safari". He is a very popular return speaker and we can expect some stunning photography. Members and friends are welcome, it is just £3 on the door.

Stephanie Mocroft

For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, please visit our Facebook page. Our programme of events, newsletter and bird survey are available on our website at www.teme-valley-wildlife.org. We hold meetings on the second Thursday of the month from January to November. All are welcome.



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Road closed?

Jessica Middleton writes from her home in Wales about a problem that affects us here in the Teme Valley too ...

It starts with a yellow sign showing the dates that the work will start and finish but the writing is so small that I doubt anyone stops to read it.

This is followed later by a red ROAD CLOSED sign partly blocking the road. You can navigate around this and continue your journey until you arrive at a sign in the opposite direction saying ROAD CLOSED, proving that it isn't.

Problems arise when there is a man in a hi-vis jacket stationed next to the sign or sitting in a white van eating a sandwich. So you follow diversions which could lead you anywhere and usually disappear, leaving you stranded. The signs never tell you how far ahead the road is closed or even if it will be open overnight.

I had the misfortune to find a ROAD CLOSED sign and decided to be obedient and follow the diversion. Having travelled 15 miles in the wrong direction with no further signs, I resorted to satnav. Initially the road was fine but the next turn was a narrow lane, so I stopped and asked a friendly farmer if it would take me to my destination. He said "yes, you go up the mountain and



down the other side and you STAY ON THE LANE, until at the end by the pub you turn left". Every farm entrance had a better surface than the lane. I went up the mountain avoiding wide deep ditches and ice on either side and then down the other side where the road became a river.

At last I turned left at the pub and there was a sign saying ROAD CLOSED. I was four miles further down the road I had been on. 100 metres past the first sign I passed a ROAD CLOSED sign in the

opposite direction. There was nothing being done, no machinery, no workmen. I had followed a diversion of approximately 20 miles for nothing, other than to make me late.

Why don't the people erecting the signs communicate with the people doing the work? In the week before Christmas our lane sprang a ROAD CLOSED sign so we had no bin collection and no deliveries. No workmen appeared, no work was done and eventually someone removed the signs and a few days later a council lorry arrived to collect them all except for the one that was flat on the grass. Presumably a strimmer will find it in the summer.

Jessica Middleton



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What's on in Teme Valley South

February

| | | |
|------|-----------|--|
| 4th | Wednesday | Free lunch, Hanley Village Hall, 12 noon |
| 5th | Thursday | Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am |
| 6th | Friday | Quiz Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.30pm |
| 8th | Sunday | Snowdrop Songs of Praise, Rochford Church, 3pm |
| 18th | Wednesday | Free lunch with guest speaker Paul Durston, Hanley Village Hall, 12 noon |
| 19th | Thursday | Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm |
| | | The Filling Station, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7.00pm |
| 20th | Friday | Pub Night, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7.00pm |
| 27th | Friday | Social Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.00 for 8.00pm |
| 28th | Saturday | Quiz and Curry, Hanley Village Hall, 6.30pm |

March

| | | |
|------|-----------|---|
| 4th | Wednesday | Free lunch, Hanley Village Hall, 12 noon |
| 5th | Thursday | Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am |
| 8th | Sunday | Lambing Café Church, Parsonage Farm, Rochford, 3.00pm |
| 14th | Saturday | Obelisk Class, Hanley Village Hall, 2.00pm |
| | | Eastham freestyle litter pick |
| 18th | Wednesday | Free lunch, Hanley Village Hall, 12 noon |
| 21st | Saturday | Daffodil Day, Stanford Village Hall, 2.30pm |
| | | Churchyard working party, Stoke Bliss church, 10.00am |
| 27th | Friday | Social and Quiz Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.00 for 8.00pm |

April

| | | |
|------|-----------|--|
| 1st | Wednesday | Free lunch, Hanley Village Hall |
| 2nd | Thursday | Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am |
| 18th | Saturday | Church and churchyard tidy, Eastham church, 10.30am |
| | | Afternoon tea, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 3.30pm |
| 24th | Friday | Social Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.00 for 8.00pm |
| 25th | Saturday | Plant and Produce Sale, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall |
| 28th | Tuesday | Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm |

Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the previous month
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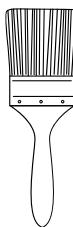
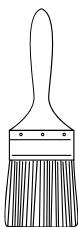
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Services

February/March 2026

Daily prayer continues at 9am and 7pm on Zoom, contact Rev'd Julia if you would like to join us. The blessings group meets regularly and is co-ordinated by Richard Skerrett, who can be contacted on 01886 853099 for more details.

The Church of England has a pre-recorded weekly on-line service which can be found by searching 'Church of England Weekly Services' or accessed on their website www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online/weekly-online-services

Services Schedule

Sunday 1st February

| | | |
|---------|----------|--------------------------|
| 10.00am | Stanford | Holy Communion and Hymns |
| 4.00pm | Stanford | Choral Evensong |

Sunday 8th February

| | | |
|--------|-------------|--------------------------|
| 9.30am | Stoke Bliss | Holy Communion |
| 3.00pm | Rochford | Snowdrop Songs of Praise |

Sunday 15th February

| | | |
|---------|---------|------------------------------------|
| 10.00am | Eastham | All Age Service and Holy Communion |
| 2.00pm | | Walking Church |

Lent begins

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Wednesday 18th February | | Ash Wednesday |
| 6.30pm | Stoke Bliss | Holy Communion |

Sunday 22nd February

| | | |
|---------|----------|------------------------------------|
| 10.00am | Rochford | All Age Service and Holy Communion |
| 4.00pm | Kyre | Celtic Evening Prayer |

Sunday 1st March

| | | |
|---------|----------|--------------------------|
| 10.00am | Stanford | Holy Communion and Hymns |
|---------|----------|--------------------------|



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