



Is there room?

In the gospel stories (gospel meaning good news) we read about the birth of the baby Jesus and what happened before and after this momentous time. Now we know this all happened a long time ago, but various writers in the bible are at pains to point out they have investigated the stories and events, partly from a historical perspective. So there is proof that various historical figures existed at the time.

A lady called Elizabeth was married to a priest called Zechariah, but they had no children and were quite old. One day when Zechariah was chosen to burn incense in the Temple, an Angel appeared to him to say he would have a son. Zechariah didn't believe the Angel and was struck dumb, but Elizabeth did become pregnant.

During this time an Angel also appeared to a young girl called Mary to tell her that she too would have a baby. Although Mary was quite young, probably a teenager, and promised in marriage to Joseph, she believed what the Angel told her, even though it must have been quite difficult to cope with.

Mary went to visit Elizabeth who was a relative of hers and Elizabeth's baby jumped with gladness causing Mary to sing her Song of Praise, now known as the Magnificat. This was a wonderful moment for Mary and her heart and soul became full of joy as she recognised God's blessing on her.

When his son was born, Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit. Praise for God overflowed because he recognised the work of God in his life, but more importantly than that, Zechariah knew that God had a plan for the boy who became known as John the Baptist.

The time came for Jesus to be born. Mary and Joseph had to go the "town of David" called Bethlehem in order to register as per the decree of the Roman Emperor Augustus.

When they arrived, as we know, all the accommodation was full so they were offered a place in the stable.

Moving forward to more recent times, the hymn written by Emily Elliott goes "O come to my heart Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for thee", so we need to ask ourselves a question.

Is there room in your heart for Jesus? Is there room in mine?

Are our hearts and minds full up with other things so that there is no room for Jesus?

When you look at some of the people around the world making the news, there is a real shortage of wisdom, humility and compassion. It's me, me, me - I want the power and the glory - let the rest of the population go hang. I want what's best for me and if I have to climb in the trough and push others out of the way, then so be it. Without room in our hearts for Jesus, all of us will fall short of God's standards.

The hymn goes on to say "Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang, proclaiming thy royal decree, but in lowly birth didst thou come to earth and in great humility".

Out in the fields near Bethlehem, an Angel appeared to some shepherds to bring them good news. At the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, the overwhelming joy of heaven could not be contained, but burst out as a great army of Angels sang praises to God.

The hymn ends "let thy voice call me home saying, yet there is room, there is room at my side for thee". Would we not be better off knowing there is room for us at the side of Jesus?

May Jesus be the light of your world in 2025.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Chris Limbach



Silent night! Holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
"Alleluia" to our King:
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!



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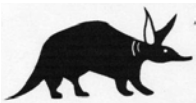
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Thank you

A big **thank you** to everyone from the Thurton Benefice who sponsored me for the 10k Shine Night Walk in Norwich on 5th October.

My sister and I appreciated all the support that we were given and thoroughly enjoyed the experience of being with 1,798 others all lit up in various ways to walk around the streets of Norwich.



We are still waiting for the Gift Aid to be added which will take our total to just over £1400. Every single pound that you've donated will make a difference to Cancer Research UK's groundbreaking work and is much needed to support the 1 in 2 who will get cancer in their lifetime.

Thank you.

Melanie

Café Church

What is Café Church? It's what it says it is . . .

We start with tea and coffee, toast, and always a special themed cake for the day, with crafts and also the Sunday papers/magazines to read.



Later everyone is invited to listen/watch the presentation of a Bible story which reflects the chosen theme of the day.

Children then return to their craft activities, whilst adults, who wish to do so, are invited to join a group for a discussion, to explore our theme for the day through God's Word and our response to it, how we can share and support each other in this, as we continue our journey of faith, wherever we are on that path.

By the time you read this, you'll have started opening the doors of your Advent Calendar leading up to Christmas our thoughts and prayers will be with you when we meet on Advent Sunday.

Our next Café on Sunday February 9th, just before Valentine's Day, will be with the theme "Love Actually" where we will be looking at how much greater God's love for each one of us is, rather than the romantic love of fiction.

We meet in Rockland Parish Room anytime between 10.30 and 12 noon and we look forward to seeing you there, you will be very welcome.

Celtic Daily Prayer

This is the lovely view seen from inside Surlingham Church porch as we sit together to pray and meditate on a Bible reading and a reflection for the day. We meet at 10 am for approx half an hour on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday mornings of the month. Next dates are **January 14th and 28th, 2025.**



Everyone from the Group is very welcome to join us. If you are unable to come but would like to receive the chosen material for the day, please email me and I will send you a copy for your own reflection time.

Rev. Mandy Ansell, 01508 538654

Email: mandy.ansell44@gmail.com

***** Café Church - All Welcome *****

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SUNDAY 1st DECEMBER

Theme: "ADVENT"

Drop in any time between 10.30 am-12 noon

Future date: 9th February, 2025 "Love Actually"

For details, or possible help with transport, please contact Nick Garrard 01508 538014 or Mandy Ansell 01508 538654

***** Café Church - All Welcome *****

Gentlemen, you are cordially invited to a Mid-Day Mardle

An opportunity for men to quench their thirst for good company and conversation, share good food and, perhaps, to enjoy a glass of something.



New members are always given a warm welcome.

Ferry House, Surlingham

Wednesday: Dec.4th, Jan 8th, Feb 5th

(every month, normally 1st Wednesday)

Any time between 12 noon and 2 pm

Any questions, please contact David Fairbourn on 01508 538437 or email surlingham.midday.mardle@gmail.com

Worship in Stillness

This is held at 9:30 am on Monday Mornings and has returned to Cherry House, Wheel Road, Alington.

Half an hour of praise, silence, meditation and prayer followed by tea and coffee for those wishing to stay.

Rockland St Mary Benefice Update

What's on in Rockland Benefice in December and January

Tree of Light Service. The Church year begins on Advent Sunday, December 1st. Advent is the season leading to Christmas, a time when we especially remember those we have loved and lost. The special Tree of Light service in Rockland Church at 3.30 pm is an opportunity to remember our loved ones, light candles and write their names on a star to be placed on the Christmas tree. We would like to invite you to join us. If you're unable to attend, you're welcome to send us the names of those you remember; we will write them on a star and place them on the Tree. The stars will remain on the tree in Church until the end of Christmas (January 5th) and you're welcome to visit on any day during that period. Please contact us for more information.

Warm Welcome Mondays at the Barn, 11.30 am - 4 pm. Last month Warm Welcome at the Barn resumed its weekly opening pattern, and we hope you may experience its warm atmosphere, drinks, snacks and lunches - all free - all welcome! The last Warm Welcome of the year will be our Christmas lunch on December 16th, with carols and more! In the New Year Warm Welcome Mondays will restart on January 8th and continue until March 31st.

"O Radiant Dawn" Advent Reflections. Helen will be sharing a set of Advent reflections based on her experience within health care chaplaincy. Helen writes '

The darkest hours are just before the dawn. In that darkness we are poised and longing; ready to notice the earliest promise of light; the hope beneath the horizon.

Advent is the Spiritual Season of noticing and inhabiting the darkness before the dawn. The darkness is about us and around us. As humans we abide in this world which we share and we explore the existential mystery of the darkness which lies beyond.

The light is all about God and Jesus or whatever name we give to the One who gives us Hope and Meaning. Christmas is the time when we receive the light of God's Son. We respond by lightening our homes and in a multitude of ways we brighten this world which we share.

In my work as Hospice Chaplain, I am familiar and comfortable sitting in the darkness. Equally, I am overwhelmingly blessed to share the light. My vocation is to dwell in both and to minister to all who sit in each. Darkness and light are both alike to Thee (Psalm 139 v12).

I invite you to join me on a journey this Advent. Are you ready to live in the light and to explore the dark? A pack of resources including Bible verses, reflection, prayers and images will be available.'

Please follow Helen's Facebook page or request a paper copy from us.

Advent and Christmas Video Services. These will be published on Helen Garrard's You Tube Channel after December 8th. Please contact us if you need assistance in finding the links.

Carols, Christingles, Cribbs and Christmas services. Please look out for details on the back page of this issue, village websites, Rockland Churches FB page, posters and church noticeboards.

Christmas Communion at home. If you or someone you know is unable to come to church through illness or mobility issues and would like to receive communion during the Christmas period, Helen and I would be happy to bring you communion at home. Please contact us on 01508 538014 for further information.

Wassail at the Green Lane Community Orchard. Planted in Rockland St. Mary by a large band of volunteers earlier this year, the orchard is going to be blessed with a Wassail. The celebration begins at 3pm on January 11th. Please bring a torch!

Blessing the Waters. Epiphany comes after Christmas and is a time when we give thanks for all the ways in which Jesus became known to the world. January 12th is the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, and we celebrate by blessing the waters of the River Yare that flows around our Group, and all who travel and find recreation on the water. We're gathering outside the Surlingham Ferry House at 2.30 pm for this short and moving service.

With seasons' greetings and warmest wishes,

Revds Nick and Helen Garrard

Thurton Benefice Update

What's on in the Thurton Benefice, December and January

Advent begins on the 1st December and it is a season which, outside of the Church, seems to have been lost in all the busy-ness of the run up to Christmas. The Advent Wreath is the most visible sign of the season in our church buildings, and I am often asked why some churches have 3 purple, 1 pink and 1 white candle whilst others have 4 red candles and 1 white.

Traditionally, if the church uses coloured vestments, the purple/pink (or more accurately rose/white) combination should be used to match the vestments. If coloured vestments are not part of the local church tradition, the red/white combination is more commonly used.

During the lighting of the candles on the four Sundays of Advent, we remember those who were looking forward to the coming of Christ, the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), the Prophets, John the Baptist and Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Strictly speaking, the vestment matching candles should be used during Advent and then replaced on Christmas Day with the Red/White to mark the beginning of the Christmas celebration and lit each week until the end of Epiphanytide.

Carol Services will be held across the Benefice as follows:

Ashby St Mary - Sunday 22nd December at 6pm

Bergh Apton - Sunday 22nd December at 6pm

Framingham Pigot - Sunday 15th December at 4pm

Thurton - Sunday 15th December at 11am

Yelverton - Sunday 22nd December at 4pm

Christingle Service at Thurton Parish Church on Sunday 22nd December at 4pm

Christmas Eve:

Crib Service at Bergh Apton Parish Church at 4pm

First Mass of Christmas at Framingham Pigot Church at 8pm

Christmas Day Services of Holy Communion will be at:

Ashby St Mary at 11am

Bergh Apton at 10am

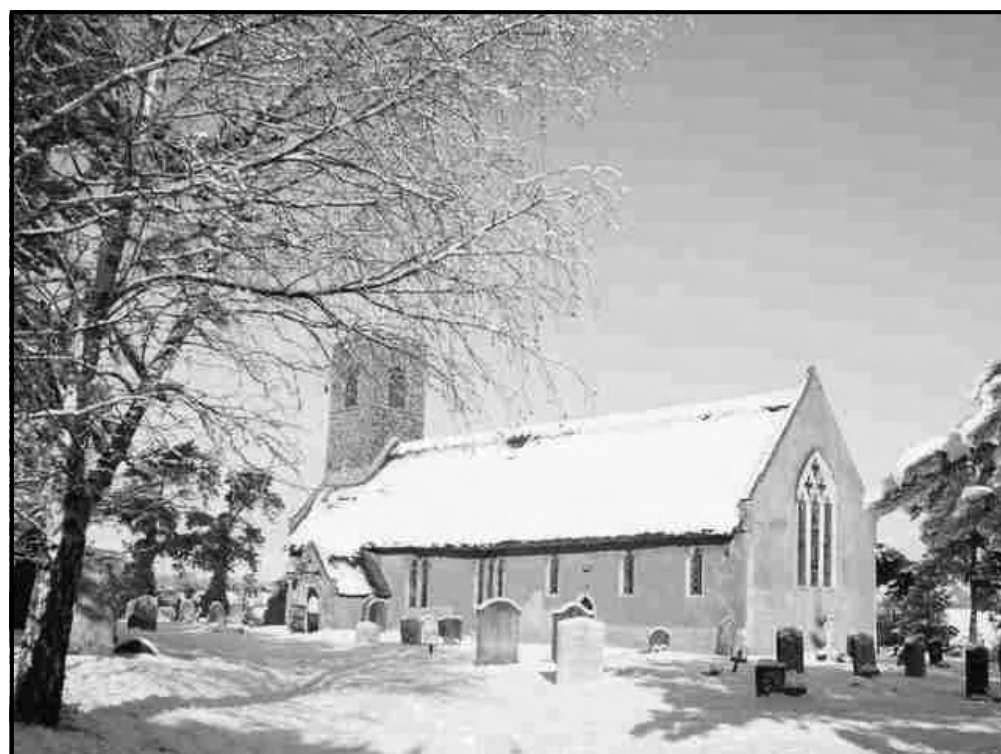
Yelverton at 9.30am

Safeguarding: The churches of the Thurton Benefice are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our Church community. If you have a safeguarding concern please contact our Safeguarding Officer, Mrs Leo Smith, 01508 493695 or myself on 01508 484174. Where a child or adult is at imminent risk, call 999.

Home visits and Home Communions: I am very keen to visit anyone who is unwell or feeling isolated or lonely, either simply for a conversation or to share Holy Communion in their home.

Please do contact me if you, or anyone you know, would like a visit. I am particularly keen to hear if a parishioner has been admitted to hospital; I would rather be told several times than not at all!

Revd Chris Ellis: 01508 484174



Snow covered Thurton Church



From the Registers

WEDDINGS

17/08/24	James TILLY and Elly HARDESTY	Bergh Apton
18/09/24	Paul and Janis SLOPER (Affirmation of vows)	Framingham Pigot
28/09/24	Robert NORMAN and Elizabeth PAGE	Carleton St Peter

FUNERALS, BURIALS, CREMATATIONS, INTERMENT OF ASHES

08/10/24	Peter AMIS (96)	Bergh Apton
24/10/24	Jack HODDY (78)	Ashby St Mary
05/11/24	Peter NOBBS (97)	Framingham Pigot
08/11/24	Joan (SALLY) COLLINS (93)	Rockland St Mary

Joan COLLINS, always known as Sally, passed away on the 8th November. Many villagers will remember Sally, a popular lady, who was a loyal member of The Bramrocks for many, many years. Her funeral will be held on Tuesday December 3rd at 11 am at Waveney Memorial Park & Crematorium, Warren's Lane, Benacre Road, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 7XE. Sally's friends, neighbours, colleagues and members of the Bramrocks Drama Group will be very welcome to join the family on the day.

Carleton St Peter wedding

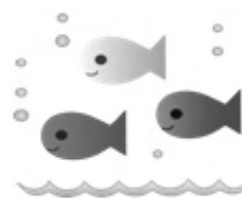
Robert NORMAN and Elizabeth PAGE were married on Saturday 28th September in Carleton St Peter Church. It was the first wedding for over 10 years to be held in St Peter's Church. It was a lovely sunny day and the bride and groom were joined by friends and family to celebrate their wedding.

Guests arrived by a traditional red double decker bus and a string quartet played during the ceremony. The church was transformed by a fantastic display of flowers and candles. It was lovely to see the church so vibrant on a very joyous occasion.



The Little Fish Toddler Group

Parents, Grandparents and Carers are invited to join the Little Fish Toddler Group at Ashby St. Mary & Thurton Village Hall from 10.30 am - 12 noon on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.



Each session has activities for your little ones including: Singing and Movement Time, Bible Story Time, Craft and Snack Time. £1.50 covers the cost of materials and snacks.

Next date is 11th December.

Please phone Judy on 07812734275 with any questions. We would love you to join us!

We are kindly sponsored by the Bramerton Group of Churches.

Wednesday Fellowship

This is a meeting for all people in the Bramerton Group and beyond! Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month 2 - 4 pm at Alington and Yelverton Village Hall. We have Christian and secular speakers followed by tea / coffee, cake and fellowship. All welcome.

December 11th - "Life in the 17th Century" Speaker Mistress Sheffield

January 8th - "This is my Life" Speaker Barbara Sinha

February 12th - "The Gilbert and Sullivan Era" Speaker Jim Stebbings.

For more information please contact Pat Barter on 01508 493570.

THE PORINGLAND SINGERS in a Christmas Concert



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Religious Christmas Word Search

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K K A E W D M O I R L H Y A N
R Z O J T I G A Q U P Z V N G
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WORD LIST

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BETHLEHEM	JESUS CHRIST	MARY	PROPHECY	STAR
FRANKINCENSE	JOSEPH	MYRRH	SHEPHERD	WISEMEN

Crib Service

Bergh Apton Church



Christmas Eve
4 o'clock

Come along to take part in the retelling of the wonderful Christmas Story.

Or maybe just enjoy the telling.

For Children of All Ages
- toddlers to great(!)grandparents



South Yare Wildlife Group

Biodiversity Project Success

Climate Change is the primary driver of Biodiversity loss. And Climate Change depends on Biodiversity as part of the solution. So clearly the two are linked and cannot be separated.

Elizabeth Mrema - United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

Climate Change and the loss of animal and plant species are the greatest threats that our planet face, and although the challenges are immense, it is good to be able to report that we, in the South Yare Wildlife Group, have been actively helping to increase biodiversity. It may be only a small step, but we have been successful in re-introducing a lost species back into Broadland; the Large Marsh Grasshopper!



Mainland Great Britain has 10 species of grasshopper and The Large Marsh Grasshopper (LMG) is by far the largest and most impressive, but although it was once common in Norfolk, its numbers had dwindled until it was restricted to just a few wet bogs in Dorset and the New Forest. Therefore 'Hop for Hope' project was launched (a collaboration between Citizen Zoo, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Natural England and the SYWG). We enlisted the help of 'citizen keeper' volunteers to help rear the LMGs with the aim of re-introduction to suitable sites in East Anglia, where it had previously existed 50-100 years ago. The LMGs were reared and released successfully in selected sites in East Anglian from 2018. The South Yare Wildlife Group has been involved in the project for the last three

years, contributing funding, identifying suitable habitats, arranging site visits and enlisting the all important 'citizen keepers' to carefully rear the LMG from tiny eggs to full adults, and this year saw the first reintroduction of the LMG to the Broad, at the Ted Ellis Nature Reserve at Wheatfen. The LMGs were released on July 14th and August 18th and although they quickly dispersed into the marshland habitat, they were subsequently spotted living happily in their new environment.

They were part of 1,500 hoppers released across Norfolk this year and it is hoped that the ones released at Wheatfen will have laid eggs that will hatch next year and spread across the Yare Valley marshes.

A big thank you to the Citizen Keepers and all involved in the Hop of Hope project. A small but significant step in reversing the loss of Biodiversity.



Future events:

Challenges and Successes of Re-Wilding the East with Hugh Somerleyton of The Somerleyton Estate, Wednesday November 27th at 7.30 pm Poringland Community Centre.

Winter Walk December, please look at our website for time and place.

www.southyarewildlifegroup.org



Loddon Flower Club

Are you ready??

However you celebrate the Festive season we wish you all a great time.



Why not start your celebrations at our **Christmas Open evening on Tuesday 3rd December**, which will be held in our usual venue St John's Chapel, doors will open at 6.15 pm for a 7 pm start. Come and browse our stalls with a glass of punch and Christmas nibbles included for £12. We have a Tombola, a picture board to win a Christmas Cake, a Quiz to win a Garden voucher, raffle for a Cheese and Wine hamper and a Beauty hamper, and a Christmas themed table where you can buy Christmas wreaths, table decorations, cakes, fudge and more.

Our demonstrator for the evening will be Linda Kingcott. Her title for the arrangements, which will also be raffled at the end of the evening, is 'It's a Sort of Magic'.

We hold our annual Lunch for members in January so we have no meeting.

On **Tuesday February 4th**, we have a talk by Gail Harland, who returns to tell us about Hellebores, 'a cure for Madness or the start of one!'. I'm sure it will be very interesting and informative as her talks usually are. Doors open for the evening at 6.30 pm for a 7 pm start, usual place, St John's Lecture Hall, George Lane, Loddon.

We have a website - www.loddonflowerclub.co.uk - and a Facebook page. If you need help with family flowers or would like further information about our friendly club please call Tricia on 01508 480522 or Jenny on 01508 520254 or email us at loddonflowerclub@gmail.com

We wish you, your family and friends a very Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you soon.

Looking for Young Conservation Volunteers!

Are you at high school and aged 11-16? Do you love the outdoors and would you like to connect with other young people who share your interests?



Perhaps you are considering training for a job in nature as part of your post 16 pathway, and would like to build your skills and get some real-life experience?

Or you could be looking to volunteer for your Duke of Edinburgh Award. If you are one of the increasing numbers of young people suffering from eco-anxiety, helping nature in a practical way could also help you to feel better. Whatever your motivation - nature needs you!

If the answer is yes to some of these questions, then you might like to join the Ents. Ents is run by Wheatfen Forest School. We work at a range of wildlife sites including Wheatfen, Bergh Apton Conservation Trust, Fair Farm in Postwick, among other places. Bergh Apton is currently our main venue, because there is so much great work to be done there.

We will arrange a work party one Sunday a month in term time. Once you have registered your interest, you will join a pool of volunteers who will be invited to come to each work party. You don't have to come to every one, and it is free to take part.

If a young person in your household is interested in volunteering, you can register interest at www.wheatfenforestschool.co.uk/young-explorers

Rose Hoare,
Managing Director, Wheatfen Forest School CIC.
The Covey, Surlingham, Norfolk, NR14 7AL.

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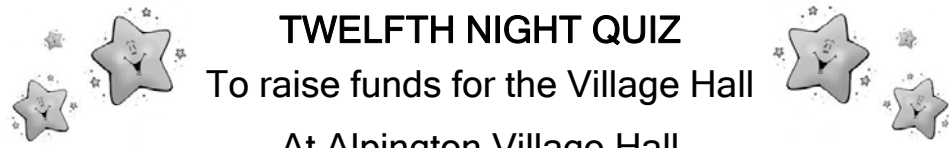
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Village News

Alpington & Yelverton



TWELFTH NIGHT QUIZ

To raise funds for the Village Hall

At Alpington Village Hall
on **Saturday, 11th January, 2025**
at 7 pm for 7.30 pm start

BYO Drinks and Nibbles

Mulled Wine and Mince Pies provided

Tables of up to 6 people, £7 per person

Please contact Pat Barter on 01508 493570
to book a table or individual seats



Bergh Apton

Bergh Apton & District Society
Bergh Apton Village Hall, Cooke's Road,
Bergh Apton, NR15 1AA

We welcome in 2025 with a **SOCIAL EVENING**
commencing at 7.30 pm on **Wednesday 8th January**

Ray will be indulging us in Norfolk nostalgia and Lynton
will be treating us to one of his wonderful buffets. **Cost is £5 pp. Raffle**

An outline of trips planned for the year and the
opportunity for regulars to offer suggestions as to where
visits might be arranged to will also take place.

On **12th February** *PETE GOODRUM* will be back taking
us through *A look at Saturday Night Telly*. **£4 pp**
beginning at 7.30 pm. Tea/coffee and biscuits served.
Raffle.

We look forward to seeing visitors, old and new.

Bramerton Helping Hand

With winter almost upon us, please remember the
Bramerton Helping Hand charity is ready to help
residents who may be struggling to keep warm and pay
energy or food bills as temperatures drop. In the past
the charity has helped residents to buy heating oil or
logs, have boilers and other essential domestic
appliances repaired / replaced, and has dealt with a
host of other domestic emergencies.

The Helping Hand team has also arranged maintenance
for resident's gardens which became overgrown due to
illness or accidents. A wheelchair is also available at no
cost for use by those with limited mobility in Bramerton.

If you know of anyone who may need help please
contact Dick Meadows, tel 01508 538771, email
dick.meadows@outlook.com. All approaches are dealt
with in strictest confidence. They can be made
personally or on behalf of someone else.

Bramerton

From Church to Norwich to Foodbank Warehouse

Like other churches in the Group, St. Peter's Church,
Bramerton had a collection for the Norwich Foodbank
during its Harvest Festival Service. The next day we
filled the car boot with the village donations and drove to
the Foodbank Warehouse to deliver them.

We were very impressed with the
efficiency of the volunteer staff as
they dealt with deliveries. Tins of
vegetables were stacked on
different shelves and pasta, rice,
soups and cereals on others.
We particularly noted the care
taken to provide products like long-
life lacto-free milks for those with
allergies, bought with cash
donations. Items were then packed
carefully to be delivered to
Foodbanks across the County.



One can't help feeling sad that
Foodbanks are still necessary
these days but at the same time
glad that people are willing to offer
generous donations and volunteers
to give their time. If you want to find
out more go to:

norwich.foodbank.org.uk



Please note that St. Peter's
Church, Bramerton, will have its next Foodbank
collection during the **Carol Service on 15th December at 3.30 pm.**

Brenda Smith

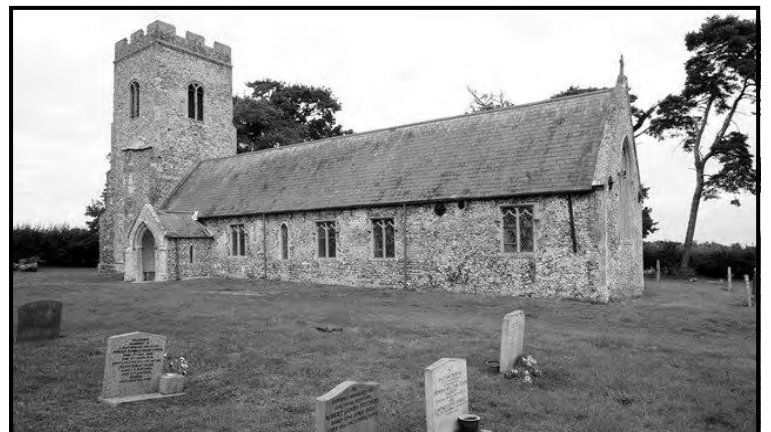
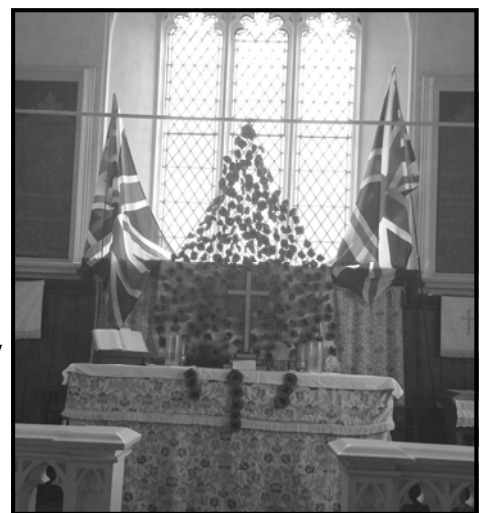
Carleton St Peter

Maureen Vale and Linda
Goffin have been busy
knitting remembrance
poppies and have created a
breathtaking display over
the altar.

Please pop in to see it
before it is taken down early
December.

Thank you to all of you who
have supported us
throughout
2024 and I
wish you
all good
health and
happiness
in 2025.

Annie



Village News

Claxton

St. Andrew's Church, Claxton

We were pleased to host the 2024 Inter Parish Quiz and Harvest Supper on the 21st September in Claxton village hall. Members of the PCC each devised a set of questions to challenge participants and to introduce some diversity of topics including an 'artwork and artist' table top round. A power point presentation was used to facilitate the process and to deliver the questions and answers. There were teams from Surlingham, Rockland, Thurton, Claxton and Ashby St Mary. The winning team, Surlingham, will hopefully host the event next year.

We have decided not to hold a Wassail this year but are planning a more traditional **Carol Service on Sunday 15th December at 9.30 am**. Light refreshments will be provided. We are also considering an informal celebration on the morning of Christmas day, look out for posters.

As 2024 draws to an end, we would like to thank all those who have supported the PCC and helped with our fund-raising efforts this year.

Claxton Community Café

Each month sees the hall buzzing with conversation as customers enjoy the homemade fare on offer and the friendly atmosphere. We now regularly attract residents from other villages and always have a wide range of ages. In October we raised money for MacMillan and were pleased to donate £260.

Our December Café (Wednesday 4th) will once again feature craft stalls and a raffle so come along and purchase some of your Christmas presents. Cafés in December, January and February will run from 11 am - 1:30 pm when simple lunches of homemade soup will be available alongside our usual fare.

We are always looking for volunteers to assist our team, either on a regular basis or just occasionally. If you can help in any way, whether it is baking, serving or lending a hand with the washing up please speak to one of us at the next café.

Claxton Village Hall

We have recently had a new heating system installed in the hall. We hope the new air source heat pump will keep all areas of the hall warm as well as being kinder to the environment. There are still one or two finishing touches to be completed but we are looking forward to benefiting from the new system during the winter.

The hall is seeing an increasing number of bookings and it is good to see it being used by a range of hirers.

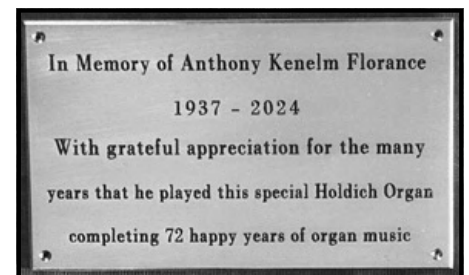
Outside, the planters continue to make a colourful approach to the car park and we have been pleased to be flying the Norfolk flag most days. A list of the days on which other flags may be flown (in line with Government guidelines) is displayed on the hall notice boards and village websites.

Framingham Pigot

St Andrew's Church news

Sheena Florance and Family were delighted when Ben du Brow suggested a plaque was put on the organ in St Andrew's Church at Framingham Pigot, to remember Anthony's long life of playing the organ in many churches.

Thanks very much to Ben, Mr Bowers and to the Rector Chris Ellis when the plaque was blessed at the morning service on Sunday 29th September.



All Souls' Service at Framingham Pigot

The annual All Souls' Service in the Thurton Benefice took place at Framingham Pigot Church on Sunday 3rd November.

This quiet, reflective service was well attended by those who had been bereaved in the past year as well as many who wished to remember a less recently deceased loved one by name and light a candle in their memory.

The short address referenced the poem entitled 'All Souls' Day' by Frances Bellerby which was read as part of the service and made connections between the changes of the seasons of nature and the Church year, and the remembrance of loved ones who still walk beside us but do not disturb the autumn leaves with their footsteps.

After the service, everyone enjoyed refreshments and the opportunity to share their bereavement journeys.

Fr Chris.



Village News

Framingham Pigot continued ...

A Petrol Head's Paradise!



On a beautiful day in early August, the first of a fleet of around 100 Classic cars slowly rolled into the car park of Framingham Pigot Church.

The drivers had already dined well on a hearty breakfast at Highway's Garden Centre and St Andrew's was the first of many churches they were to visit that day on their Annual August Rally.

Members of the Congregation were on hand to act as guides around the church and were very busy welcoming everyone and answering numerous questions on Church history.

All the cars were in immaculate condition and many enthusiasts really enjoyed admiring the fine engineering and gleaming bodywork.

Thankfully the field was perfect for the excess parking and not a sea of mud after the rain of early summer!!

Eventually all the cars moved off to continue their journey around the county churches and it seemed everyone had a wonderful morning.

Rockland St Mary

MacMillan Coffee Morning



We did very well with our MacMillan Coffee Morning which was very well attended.

I'd like to say a **huge 'thank you'**

- to all the helpers
- to all the bakers who donated such lovely cakes, scones, sausage rolls, etc
- to all those who donated super raffle prizes
- to all the stallholders

Finally, special thanks to all those who came along to support us and helped make this event so successful. We raised the amazing sum of £687!!



It was lovely to see friends catching up with each other and to see so many new faces all enjoying themselves and helping to raise money for this worthwhile cause.

Jayne Regan

ROCKLAND AND HELLINGTON

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- WILL LOSING THE WINTER FUEL PAYMENT MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO HEAT YOUR HOME?

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Those living within the villages who are in need of financial assistance can apply to the Winter Hardship Fund for a one-off payment to help with costs.

The closing date for applications is December 31st. Please get in contact, we are here to help.

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Village News

Rockland St Mary continued . . .

Rockland St Mary & District W.I.

Firstly, a warm welcome to those new members of the W.I. who have joined us in the last couple of months.

In November we will have enjoyed Lynton Johnson giving his very popular demonstration of Christmas Food and Flowers, a not to be missed evening.

In December we celebrate with a Christmas party when we enjoy putting on our own entertainment with a home-produced play, lots of quizzes and good food to share.

There will be a new programme of meetings and activities for the New Year, look out for posters in local notice boards.

We are responsible for the upkeep of the flower pot at the top of Surlingham Lane, and we have fun choosing the planting every year for the Spring and Autumn. This photo was taken in July.



New members are always welcome, so do come along and give us a try! All meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm in the Margaret Mack Hall. Contact Sandra 538100 or Ruth 538231 for details.

Surlingham

Beautiful locally hand made items were sold and exhibited at the Craft Fayre on 19th October. They proved irresistible and I came away with much, even a frog! There was lots of delicious cake too and £600 was raised for the Church Tower Fund. Many thanks to all who participated.

The School Harvest Celebration was held in the Church and the children's art and written work is on display.



It was sad to see the 'Bugs' come down in the Church but now is Remembrance time and there is a curtain of poppies hanging, with a single fallen poppy. It seems poignant at this time of uncertainty and bloodshed. There is also a cross of crochet poppies.

With a Clean Up and Bloom Grant the Parish council purchased 200 each of Bluebell, native narcissus and snakehead fritillary bulbs. The first two varieties have been planted at the Community Orchard and at St. Saviour's. The fritillaries were planted at the Staithe for damper conditions.

We look forward to spring but firstly there is Advent and Christmas. The Carol Service is on 22nd December at 3.30 pm. There is a lovely new weekly singing group held on Thursdays at 2.30 pm in the Rockland Parish Room so you can get warmed up!

Pippa

Schools and Nursery News

At both Rockland and Surlingham Primary Schools we achieved some of the best SATS results in the county. Although our schools are small in size, we provide a fantastic education and our children enjoy a wide range of educational experiences. We have also recently been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM) across both schools. This is a highly regarded national award that recognizes excellence in primary school science education.

Rockland Primary School are proud to have a beautiful Nursery onsite. Sunbeams Nursery caters for children aged from 3 upwards for 30 hours a week. We have a wonderful Early Years setting which inspires children's curiosity and we tailor our curriculum daily to support the children's learning. The nursery provides an excellent transition into either Rockland or Surlingham Primary Schools with many children building their hours throughout the year so they are full time and ready to start school in September.

To find out more about our schools and nursery we have **open mornings on Monday 9th December, Monday 3rd February and Thursday 24th April**. Rockland Primary School and Sunbeams Nursery will be open from 10.30 am - 12 noon and Surlingham Primary School from 9 am - 10.30 am. Anyone is welcome to visit, and stay, and play opportunities are available for little ones. We also welcome anyone looking at moving schools in older year groups and can offer one-to-one tours with the Head Teacher if this is preferred. Please spread the word and help us to support, grow and protect these schools, which are such an asset to the local community.

Friends of Rockland St Mary School (FORMS)

We raised a fantastic £1,853.09 over two days at Rockland St Mary Community Café, keeping Scarecrow Hunters fed and watered. Thank you to all our helpers and bakers at the café and to everyone who came out to support us. The Scarecrow Trail was a great success again this year raising an amazing total of £2,158.23! That makes a grand total of £4,010.32 raised for the school.

The winning scarecrow, with an enormous 267 votes, was Alington Girl Guides' 'Little Mermaid'. The girls worked so hard and completely independently of their Leaders and their Scarecrow is definitely a worthy winner!!!



We have, however, made the hard decision not to go ahead with the Scarecrow Trail next year. It was harder than usual to get people to make Scarecrows this year which is a sign that it needs a rest. Even the best Events and Ideas need a rest to ensure they remain full of energy and ready to come back better than ever in the future. The last thing we would want is for the Scarecrow Trail to just Fizzle out. But what a High to go out on!! Keep an eye out on our Facebook page or for leaflets through the door for when FORMS does another Scarecrow Trail in the future.

Village News

Thurton

Harvest in Thurton

At the Harvest Service, held at St Ethelbert's Church in Thurton on the 20th October, the donations brought to the church by the children of



Primary School for their school harvest service in the church earlier in the week, were blessed before being taken to the Norwich Foodbank. I am very grateful to our Youth Worker, Gary Watson, for leading the school service.

My thanks also to parishioners across the benefice for the food donations at the various Harvest Services which will help families who are struggling with the cost of living as winter approaches.

Fr Chris.



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Poringland and District W.E.A - Adult Learning Within Reach. Spring Term 2025

"British Cinema 1895 - 1970: an introduction", a talk given by Nigel Herwin. This informal course will chart the changing fortunes of the British film industry up to 1970. Discover the background to some films you'll know, and some you certainly won't!

Starting on **Thursday 23rd January 2025** at 10.30 am in Brooke Village Hall, Norwich Road, Brooke, NR15 1AB (*please note our change of venue*), the course comprises 8 sessions of two hours each, including a short break for tea/coffee and biscuits. The cost is £67.20 for the course, free to those on certain means tested benefits. You can enrol online at wea.org.uk or by phoning 0300 303 3464, quoting course no. Q00019645. Do come along and join us! As places are limited, please book early.

The WEA is a charity registered in England and Wales (no. 1112775) and in Scotland (no. SC039239).

Poringland Community Cinema

Poringland Community Centre

Tickets £5 on the door (includes tea or coffee).
Doors open at 6.45pm, film starts at 7.30pm.

FRIDAY 13th DECEMBER

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Film December 6th

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John on 01508 494358 or Carol on 01508 492630

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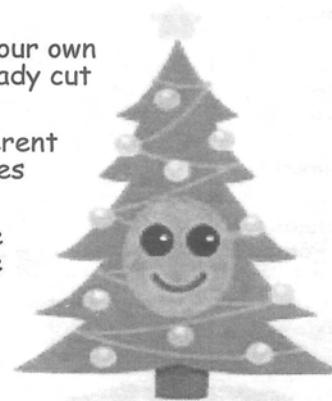


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VILLAGE HALLS

Alpington and Yelverton - Main hall, large committee / club room, kitchen and dining area. Excellent heating. Car park. Children's play area. £10.50 an hour for regular user groups and private functions. Business and trade £21 an hour. For bookings email: alpingtonvillagehall@gmail.com or call mobile 07747 443567, Website address: www.alpingtonvillagehall.wordpress.com.

Ashby and Thurton - Main hall with kitchen facilities and/or committee room available for private hire per hour, day or half day. Discounted rates for regular contract bookings. Ideal for meeting groups and social activities. Please contact Laura Vaissiere, telephone: 01508 480773 or email: ashbythurtonvillagehall@gmail.com.

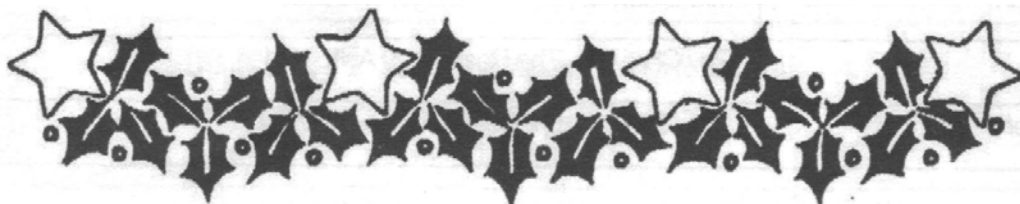
Bergh Apton - Large main hall with stage plus smaller room, fully-fitted kitchen, heating throughout. Disabled toilet with baby-changing area. Large car park, gardens and play park. Contact Hilary Ling on 01508 480439 or email hilary.ling@btinternet.com.

Bramerton - Spacious, refurbished hall with separate fully equipped kitchen. Beautiful enclosed garden and large car park. Disabled facilities. £9 per hour, minimum hire 2 hours. Daily rate available and discounted rates for regular bookings. Please contact Alison, 07976264469 or Duncan, 01508 538444.

Claxton & Carleton St Peter - Spacious refurbished well-equipped hall. Fitted kitchen. Ideal for one-off functions and regular users. Disabled facilities. Large car park. Free high speed broadband. £10 per hour or by session. Bar available. Contact Judy Jackson, 01508 480128 or Sarah Carter, 01508 480555, or email: contact@claxtonvillagehall.co.uk. Website: www.claxtonvillagehall.co.uk

Rockland St Mary - Margaret Mack Hall available evenings and weekends for private parties, meetings and social activities. Rates per hour or per day. Contact after 4 pm please, Deb Sayles, 01508 537077, or email: deborah.sayles8@gmail.com.

Rockland St Mary - The Parish Room is available for hire. With excellent kitchen facilities it is ideal for social functions, parties, clubs and meetings. Hire rates are extremely reasonable. Contact Jayne Regan, 01508 538087.



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	1st Dec Advent Sunday Purple	8th Dec Advent 2 Purple	15th Dec Advent 3 Rose or Purple	22nd Dec Advent 4 Purple	24th Dec Christmas Eve White or Gold	25th Dec Christmas Day White/Gold	29th Dec Christmas 1 White	5th Jan Epiphany White	12th Jan Baptism of Christ White/Gold	19th Jan Epiphany 2 White	26th Jan Epiphany 3 White	2nd Feb Epiphany 4 White
Ashby St Mary	11.00 PT			18.00 Carol Service PT		11.00 HC	Group service at 10 am Surlingham	11.00 MP		11.00 PT		16.00 HC
Bergh Apton	09.30 PT		09.30 PT	18.00 Carol Service PT	16.00 Crib Service PT	10.00 HC	Group service at 10 am Surlingham	09.30 PT		09.30 PT	09.30 HC BCP	09.30 PT
Bramerton			3.30pm Carol Service			9.30am HC	Group service at 10 am Surlingham		11am HC			
Carleton St Peter				11am Carol Service			Group service at 10 am Surlingham	11am HC				11am MP
Claxton	9.30am HC		9.30am Carol Service				Group service at 10 am Surlingham	9.30am HC			10am All Age @ Village Hall?	9.30am HC
Framingham Pigot	09.30 HC		16.00 Carol Service	11.00 HC	20.00 First Mass of Christmas		Group service at 10 am Surlingham	09.30 HC		16.00 HC		09.30 HC
Kirby Bedon			5pm Carol Service			11am HC	Group service at 10 am Surlingham			11am HC		
Rockland St Mary	10.30am-12pm Café Church in Parish Room 3.30pm Tree of Light	9.30am HC	5pm Carol Service		6pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Mass		Group service at 10 am Surlingham		9.30am HC			
Surlingham		11am HC	11am HC	3.30pm Carol Service		10am Family Service	10am GROUP SERVICE HC		2.30pm Blessing of the Waters Surlingham Ferry	9.30am HC		
Thurton		10.00 Benefice HC	11.00 Christmas Carols PT	16.00 Christingle PT			Group service at 10 am Surlingham	16.00 HC		11.00 PT		11.00 PT
Yelverton	09.30 Advent PT		09.30 HC	16.00 Carol Service PT		09.30 HC	Group service at 10 am Surlingham	09.30 PT	10.00 Benefice HC	09.30 HC	16.00 All 4	09.30 PT

CODE: HC = Holy Communion; **E Praise** = Evening Praise; FC = Family Communion; FW = Family Worship; MP = Morning Prayer; EP = Evening Prayer; .PT = Parish Team; VM = Vestry Meeting. **WASSAIL at Rockland Community Orchard on Wednesday 11th December at 3 pm. Holy Communion at Yelverton on Thursday 2nd January at 10.30 am.**

BIBLE READINGS Sunday by Sunday: December 2024 & January 2025

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel	
01/12/24	Jeremiah 33.14-16	1 Thessalonians 3.9-13	Luke 21.25-36	Advent Sunday
08/12/24	Baruch 5.1-9	Philippians 1.3-11	Luke 3.1-6	Advent 2
15/12/24	Zephaniah 3.14-20	Philippians 4.4-7	Luke 3.7-18	Advent 3
22/12/24	Micah 5.2-5a	Hebrews 10.5-10	Luke 1.39-45[46-55]	Advent 4
24/12/24	Isaiah 9.2-7	Titus 2.11-14	Luke 2.1-20	Christmas Eve
25/12/24	Isaiah 52.7-10	Hebrews 1.1-4[5-12]	John 1.1-14	Christmas Day
29/12/24	1 Samuel 2.18-20,26	Colossians 3.12-17	Luke 2.41-52	Christmas 1
05/01/25	Isaiah 60.1-6	Ephesians 3.1-12	Matthew 2.1-12	Epiphany
12/01/25	Isaiah 43.1-7	Acts 8.14-17	Luke 3.15-7,21-22	Baptism of Christ
19/01/25	Isaiah 62.1-5	1 Corinthians 12.1-11	John 2.1-11	Epiphany 2
26/01/25	Nehemiah 8.1-3,5-6,8-10	1 Corinthians 12.12-31a	Luke 4.14-21	Epiphany 3
02/02/25	Malachi 3.1-5	Hebrews 2.14-18	Luke 2.22-40	Candlemas

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Many thanks to all our
advertisers - old and new -
and to all our readers for your
support throughout the year.

We would like to wish you all a
very merry Christmas and a
happy and healthy 2025!

Angie and Liz

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Please note: At Holy Communion, where only two readings are used, the first reading will usually be the Epistle, and the second will always be the Gospel reading. At other services where two readings are used, the first will usually be the Old Testament reading, and the second can be either the Epistle or the Gospel readings.



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		<table><tr><th>Times of Masses</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Saturday</td><td>6 pm</td></tr><tr><td>Sunday</td><td>9 am</td></tr><tr><td>Tues</td><td>6 pm</td></tr><tr><td>Wed -Saturday</td><td>10 am</td></tr></table> Staff days off. Monday Revd Chris Ellis Thursday Revd Mandy Ansell Friday Revd Nick Garrard Revd Helen Garrard		Times of Masses		Saturday	6 pm	Sunday	9 am	Tues	6 pm	Wed -Saturday
Times of Masses												
Saturday	6 pm											
Sunday	9 am											
Tues	6 pm											
Wed -Saturday	10 am											
NEXT ASSEMBLY: SATURDAY JANUARY 25th, BERGH APTON VILLAGE HALL, COOKE'S ROAD, NR15 1AA, 9am - 11am (approx)												