



OLD HILLS MALVERN HEADLINES

21st & 28th December 2025



Keeping you in touch with your churches across Powick, Callow End, Guarlford and Madresfield with Newland

SERVICES FOR THE COMING PERIOD

SUNDAY 21ST DECEMBER

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

8.00am BCP Communion at Powick
(With Rev Gary Crellin)

11.00am Community Carols at Powick –
Special Service with Carols and Readings
(With the Morning Praise Team)

5.00pm Carols and Brass at Guarlford
(See poster for more details)

BCP Readings:

The Epistle: Philippians 4: 4-7 (BCP p53)
The Gospel: St John 1: 19-28 (BCP P53-54)

Collect: *(Common Worship – for Gaudete)*

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

TUESDAY 23RD DECEMBER

1.30pm Crib Service at Madresfield *(With Rev Gary Crellin)*

CHRISTMAS EVE

4.00pm Crib Service at Callow End

8.00pm First Communion of Christmas at Madresfield

10.00pm First Communion of Christmas at Powick
(Both Communions with Rev Gary Crellin)

CHRISTMAS DAY

11.00am Christmas Communion at Christchurch
(With Rev Gary Crellin)

11.00am Christmas Presence at Powick
(With Julia Davis)

Readings: (Set III – pp23-26)

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Communions

Isaiah 52: 7-10, Hebrews 1: 1-4, John 1: 1-14

Christmas Presence at Powick

Luke 2: 1-20 (pp18)

Collect:

Almighty God, you have given us your only begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ your Son, Our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Continued overleaf.....

THE VICAR'S BLOG

Drawing Ever Closer to Christmas

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Luke 2:10

As we journey into this final stretch of Advent, the nearness of Christmas is beginning to feel very real indeed. The schools have nearly finished, the nativity costumes have been tucked away for another year, and our homes are slowly settling into the gentle hum of Christmas preparation. Although Carol services are few in number this year, the Care Homes we serve are in good voice and it's been a delight to be with the residents and staff for a good festive sing! Don't forget, we are trying something different, and in keeping with our drive for greater community engagement, with Carol services at Powick and Guarlford on the 21st of December. Go on, you know you want to....

The past few weeks have brought the usual round of nativity plays in our schools and at the MEYC - full of tea-towel shepherds, woolly sheep, a surprisingly confident collection of angels and a really bright set of stars. One particular school play still makes me smile: the nativity with *only one shepherd* in the evening performance. Just one small child standing in the glow of the angel's announcement, holding his sheep as if it were the most precious part in the whole production. It was endearing, but it also spoke to me deeply.

In ministry - and in life - there are moments when we feel like that lone shepherd: standing somewhat exposed, listening for God's voice in the noise, trusting that we're part of something much larger than we understand. Yet that single shepherd still heard the angel. He still followed the call. And as Christmas approaches, that is our invitation too: to keep listening, to stay attentive, to follow the light even when we feel small or overwhelmed.

And overwhelmed, many of us have been. The rush to the shops these past days has been almost dizzying, queues winding out of the car parks, half-empty shelves, frantic searches for the "last minute something" we suddenly realise we forgot. Even the world of online ordering, for all its convenience, has not saved us from stress: the feverish checking of delivery dates, the frantic hope that a missing parcel might still arrive "in time," the apologetic emails from couriers who have simply run out of hours in the day.

Yet, as the bustle begins to settle - and it will - something gentler emerges. The rush makes way for reflection. The noise gives way to a quieter expectation. And the anxious hope that the right parcels will arrive becomes a deeper, more lasting hope: the kind that Advent has been nurturing in us all along.

Because Christmas isn't found in the parcels or the queues. It arrives in the stillness of a manger. It comes from the vulnerability of a child. It is discovered in the extraordinary truth that God steps into our world, into our chaos, into our exhausted December hearts, and brings light that no darkness can overcome.

As we move through the next couple of weeks into the heart of Christmas itself, may we allow the frantic pace of the season to soften. May we see the bright lights on our houses not only as festive cheer but as signs of a greater illumination - Christ's light, shining in dark places, reminding us that hope is not fragile, but abundant and enduring.

So let us walk towards Christmas together, a little more slowly now, a little more gratefully, with hearts open to the wonder that is coming. Every blessing as we approach the joy of Christmas, Gary

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For more information, please see our website: www.oldhillsmalvern.co.uk

If you would like to be included in the email circulation list for this newsletter, please contact Liz Edwards, the Parish Administrator on oldhillsmalvern@gmail.com

SUNDAY 28TH DECEMBER

The First Sunday of Christmas

10.30am Benefice Christmas Communion at Callow End
(With Rev Dr William Rumball)

Readings:

Jeremiah 31: 15-17, 1 Corinthians 1: 26-29
Matthew 2: 13-18

Collect:

Heavenly Father, whose children suffered at the hands of Herod, though they had done no wrong: by the suffering of your Son and by the innocence of our lives frustrate all evil designs and establish your reign of justice and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Intercessions for each week will be available to download from the website each Friday.

Midweek Communion – The Orchard Room

10.30-11.30am 18th December & 15th January

*By the kind invitation of the new landlord at The Swan at Newland, and in conjunction with our friends from Malvern Link with Cowleigh parish, please join us for **Carols and Beer on Wednesday 17th December** from 7pm (food available, subject to reservation from 5pm). Let's welcome the season in with a proper Inn setting!*

CAROLS LIGHTS

& BRASS

WHEN: Sunday 21st December at 5pm

WHERE: at Guarlford church

FOR: mince pies, mulled wine & carols with the Chase Brass Band

THEN ON TO: Kath's Magic in Penny Close

FOR: festive songs in Kath's well-lit drive

AND donations in the red bucket for Dementia and the band's annual charity



Community Christmas Trees

On Display in

St Peter's Church, Powick

Saturday 20th December 2-4pm

Christmas Music, Light Refreshments

FREE EVENT



CARE HOME CAROLS

At Severn Heights, Callow End
3pm, Friday 19th December



GUARLFORD CHURCH HAS A NEW BELL!



Some of you may remember that Guarlford church's original bell went 'missing' many years ago. At long last the church has acquired a new bell which will hopefully be in place in time for Christmas.

It is a large antique bronze bell made by James Barwell.

Barwell had a company in Great Hampton Street, Birmingham and made bells ranging from handbells and church bells to animal bells. Great Hampton Street was a key area of the city and part of the 1727 turnpike road connecting Birmingham to Wednesbury. The route was improved in 1801 as part of the London-Holyhead Mail Road. The road was disturnpiked in 1870. It is now part of the jewellery quarter conservation area.

Operating dates for the company are rather vague, but it is thought to have been founded in 1784. In 1840 James purchased Samuel Fiddian's 'Steam and Water' company. He then used the Fiddian trademark on his Brass goods.

There are many Barwell bells across the country, but this one is rather special because it is ours! The replacement bell will be in the church for the service on the 21st of December.

YOU ARE WORTH YOUR WEIGHT IN GOLD (AND FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH)

We have had a busy year - a year as ever with its ups and downs. We have lost some good friends but gained some others. Our churches are still active in ministry, even though ministry is changing as society changes. I would like to thank all of you (be you wardens, on the PCC, or congregation members) for all of your support this year in so many ways. Instead of a gift or cards, Alison and I would like to host an Epiphany Tea and Cake celebration to thank you all on the 12th of January 2026 from 3-5pm. All are welcome. Stay for the afternoon - or just pop in. The event will hopefully be at St James' Callow End and final details will be promoted in the first edition of Headlines next year. In the meantime, do pick up a chocolate heart and coin from the baskets in the churches over Christmas as a small gesture of my thanks. Merry Christmas to you all - and I do hope it will be healthy as well as peaceful for you all.

Rev Gary, Alison, and family

ZOOM ACCESS CODES

Codes and access numbers for ALL Old Hills Malvern Meetings and Services 2025:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86594255282?pwd=UkZ2cytyMUd2OWN2Sy8yZndoMS8rZz09>

SAFEGUARDING: We are all responsible for protecting ourselves and others from abuse, harm, or neglect, especially our children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and report safeguarding concerns. If you have any concerns or questions, then please contact Gary (01905 8303270) or Sheila (07912 030805).