Amelcote Benefice

The Messenger



December-January-February 2026-7

INSIDE

p2 Note from the Rector
p3 Services
p4 Advent services etc
P5 Advent concert
P6 Crafts&Play, Lunches
p7 Carol services
P8 Renew Café
P9 Well Group, Foodbank
p10 Bishop Debbie
p11 Notices
p12 Who's Who



From the Rector, Advent & Christmas 2026

The Biblical book of Daniel, which is often read at this time of year, is a book that bears inspection today. Yes, we are talking different time, different economic and social structures and autocratic, almost tyrannical rulers; however, the sentiments are the same, whatever the time and culture and so powerful. Take, for example, Daniel chapter 5. This reading is Belshazzar's feast and one reflection on it reads "we know something about the transition of power between the Babylonians and the Persians, and there are good historical reasons why it happened, but our writer is not interested in them. This book [the Biblical book of Daniel] wants to show us, above all, that God controls everything and everyone. If there is a regime change, then God is behind it and God has his reasons. Its readers are encouraged to believe this, even when it is not easy to see, and know that ultimately, they can feel safe in God's world". Words indeed for us to mull over and reflect on in these days when all seems chaos and turmoil.

We are fast approaching the seasons of Advent and Christmas, the time of reflection and preparation when we lead up to the climax – the overwhelming love of God for his world in sending his Son, Jesus, to show us the way back to God which we will celebrate in our benefice churches over the Christmas period. One phrase used to describe Jesus is "prince of peace", in other words the epitome of love, tolerance and harmony. Let us take this opportunity to listen again to the story of God's working out of his purpose for humanity and pledge ourselves to listen to and follow the Prince of Peace, not just at this time but each and every day.

May God indeed grant every one of us a
happy and peaceful Christmas and 2027.



Services in the Amelcote Benefice

Date	***Time***	***Service***	***Church***
Dec 6th	10am	Holy Communion	Cold Higham (Hall)
Dec 13th	10am	Holy Communion	Tiffield
Dec 20th	10am 3.30pm 4.00pm	Holy Communion Carol Service Carol Service	Pattishall Tiffield Gayton
Dec 22nd	6pm	Carol Service	Pattishall
Dec 24th	9.30pm	Midnight in Bethlehem Holy Communion	Pattishall
Dec 25th	10am	Christmas Day Holy Communion	Pattishall
Dec 27th		NO SERVICE	
Further Advent & Christmas mid-week services. *Stations of the Nativity Thurs 3rd,10th,17th Dec 7pm Holy Cross.* *Stations of Epiphany Wed 6th Jan 7pm Holy Cross*			
Jan 3rd	10am	Holy Communion	Cold Higham (Hall)
Jan 10th	10am	Holy Communion	Tiffield
Jan 17th	10am	Holy Communion	Pattishall
Jan 24th	10am	Holy Communion	Gayton
Jan 31st	10am	Holy Communion	Pattishall
Feb 7th	10am	Holy Communion	Cold Higham (Hall)
Feb 10th	7pm	Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday	Pattishall
Feb 14th	10am	Holy Communion	Tiffield
Feb 21st	10am	Holy Communion	Pattishall
Feb 28th	10am	Holy Communion	Gayton

We have a weekly news email for service information, prayers and readings. Please email Chris Bulleid on amelcote.info@gmail.com if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

Advent/Christmas 2026
Special services

Do come and join us at **7pm** in Holy Cross church for a special service as we go through Advent and towards Christmas

Stations of the Nativity

Thursdays 3rd, 10th, 17th December 2026

AND

Stations of the Epiphany

Wednesday 6th January 2027

Advent Reflections at Astcote Chapel

'DON'T BE AFRAID'

Tuesday 24th November
Hope is hiding in plain sight

Tuesday 1st December
A new chapter is beginning

Tuesday 8th December
God is nearer than we think

Tuesday 15th December
God interrupts for good reasons

All sessions 7.30-9pm in the Kitchen

Tea/coffee served - No charge



This Advent and Christmas the Church of England invites us to focus on the first and greatest Christmas gift of all: the gift of God being born as one of us in Jesus Christ.

For more information see Bishop Debbie's Christmas Message on p10

Fiori Musicali



Candlelight Advent Concert

Sunday 29 November
4.30pm

Holy Cross Church, Pattishall
nr Towcester, Northants
NN12 9NB

Hauntingly beautiful, reflective music for the season before Christmas.

An atmospheric Advent Candlelight concert in the delightful village church at Pattishall - recorded in the Domesday Book.

JS Bach *Chorale prelude on 'Wachet auf'*
G Homilius *Chorale prelude on 'Nun freut euch'*
G Kauffmann *Chorale prelude on 'Gelobet seist Du'*
Krebs Chorale *prelude on 'Nun freut euch'.*
JS Bach *'Jesu joy of man's desiring'*

Gail Hennessy *baroque oboe*
Rebecca Toal *baroque trumpet*
Singers from the Fiori Musicali Choir
Penelope Rapson *director/chamber organ*

Tickets **£25** *Main area*
£15 *Restricted view*

Concessions for children, students and blue badge. Wheelchair users, free ticket for carer.

Full details & booking @
www.ticketsource.co.uk/fiori
or simply scan here.

HOLY CROSS CHURCH, PATTISHALL

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL CRAFTS & PLAY

FRIDAY

11th December

3.30-5 pm



Make Xmas treats and celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Everyone welcome



Winter Warmer Lunches

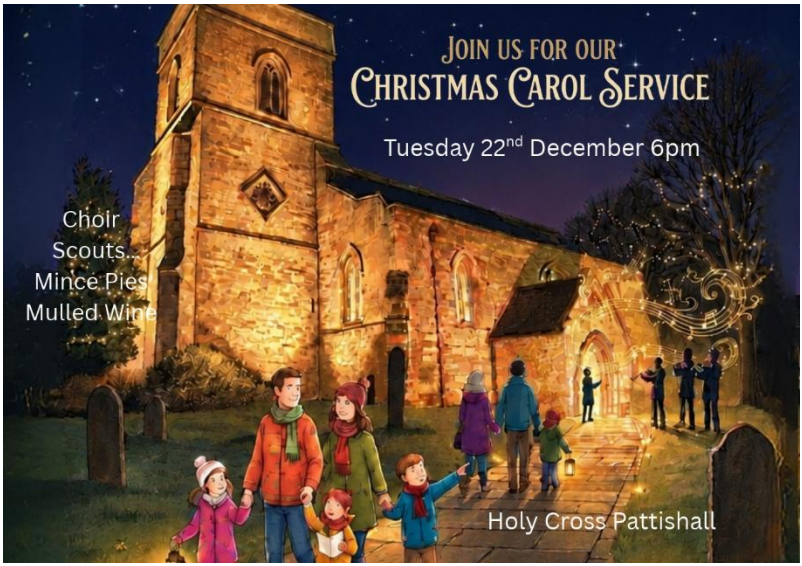




Holy Cross Church

12 - 2 pm

6th Dec, 3rd Jan, 7th Feb, 7th Mar



Services of Lessons and Carols

St John, Tiffield
Sunday 20th December 3.30pm

St Mary, Gayton
Sunday 20th December 4pm

Holy Cross, Pattishall
Tuesday 22nd December 6pm

Seasonal refreshments

All welcome

Renew 169 Wellbeing Cafe, Towcester

At our November Well Group meeting we were treated to a presentation and talk from Jemma Campanaro, manager of the Renew 169 cafe, and Paul Saxton. One of the first things Jemma said about the cafe was 'it is OK not to be OK'. The Renew cafe has moved to temporary accommodation in Towcester from its original place at 169 Watling Street (due to environmental concerns). It is now located on Mondays & Wednesdays at the Sawpits Centre, Towbury Lane NN12 6EX, and on Tuesdays & Thursdays at The Chantry House, 88 Watling Street East NN12 6BT. Winter opening hours are 10.30-1 pm.

They are keen to spread the message and success of this venture, because it is a 'drop-in' which combats isolation and loneliness, offering support to local people. It describes itself as a 'safe space where people with emotional or mental health difficulties are welcomed,' and there is someone to listen and chat. Volunteers work a rota to run the cafe, cook and serve. There are hobbies and activities guided by 'five ways of wellbeing'. Fridays has a more specialist outreach for Grief therapy and in the afternoon offers Sponne school students a space for togetherness.

Paul started by helping in the Repair Cafe (runs on the last Saturday in the month) and became a trustee in 2025. He organises fundraising events and opportunities for the community. He also manages the Community garden at the Tove Valley Centre which grows vegetables used in lunches offered to customers, and can be sold for funds.

It was a very interesting talk, engaged our attention and led to further questions about the future of the Cafe. From 2027 they are intending to move to new premises within the same building as the Food Bank, Riverside, at the end of Islington Road. Wherever the cafe is sited, there is a quiet room or prayer space, as well as the cafe. There is no obligation to join in prayer activities, and the cafe is open to those of all faiths or none. The Renew Cafe concept was founded some thirty years ago, often situated in churches, and continues to flourish. This branch was an intiative of Churches Together in Towcester.

Ali Brierley

Well Group

Well Group is a Christian ladies group which meets monthly to share food and fellowship.

Thursday 3rd December 12-2 pm: Rev Kim Shorley – Creative crafts

Thursday 7th January 12-2 pm: Speaker to be confirmed

Thursday 4th February 12-2 pm: Speaker from MIND

All women are welcome to join us - please get in touch with
Ali on 01327 830770 albrierley@btinternet.com or
Ann on 01327 830907 ann.atkin51@btinternet.com

Towcester Foodbank
Ending Hunger Together

We collect food for **Towcester Foodbank**, in the porch at Holy Cross and at Holmeview, 8 Greenway, Eastcote, on Fridays.

Please ensure that all food is non-perishable and well within sell by date.

If you need to receive food from the foodbank, or would like to know which items are currently most needed click this link

Towcester Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis

The Gift of Christmas



I wonder how many nativity plays you have watched over the years and how many times you have been drawn into the Christmas story. There is something about seeing it acted out in front of us that brings it alive each year. Maybe we find ourselves relating to Mary and her willingness to say yes to God, or perhaps you wonder about the shepherds and the unexpected joy they experienced in coming face to face with Jesus, or maybe you find sympathy for all those innkeepers who had no room as you try to squeeze another camp bed into your house for visiting family.

This year the Church of England has produced a booklet of reflections that feature Christians whose daily lives have given them a particular connection with the Gospel stories about the birth of Jesus. The reflections are introduced by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Following Archbishop Sarah's reflection for Christmas Day, we will hear from contributors whose work has required them to keep watch by night; those who have worked to support new parents, to care for new-born lambs or observe the stars. Twelve people – with very different backgrounds and callings – will explore how the blessings of heaven entered so many ordinary lives and invite us to share those blessings by the welcome, hospitality and service we offer to others.

I would encourage you to get a copy of this and to reflect yourselves on the gift of Christmas – what it means to you and to those around you.

May you come face to face with Jesus this Christmas and experience the joy and wonder of his incarnation

‘For unto us a child is born’

+ Debbie

More information on The Gift of Christmas resources can be found at cofe.io/TheGiftOfChristmas

The Rt Revd Debbie Sellin
Bishop of Peterborough

The Diocese of Peterborough

Click the logo above for the latest news from around the Diocese

Pastoral Matters

If you are in need of someone to talk to, or would like to pray with someone, please contact
Jean Pugh, Pastoral Minister on 01327 830909 or 07711329664



Thanks to all who have contributed to this issue.

Please send items for the March/April/May Messenger to
Margaret Bulleid amelcote.messenger@gmail.com
by February 15th

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas!

Who's Who in the Amelcote Benefice

Rector

Revd Marion Reynolds
01327 624203

Lay Pastoral Minister

Jean Pugh
07711 329664

Churchwardens

Cold Higham	Contact Rector	01327 624203
Gayton	David Coppock	01604 859645
Pattishall	Alison Brierley	01327 830770
Tiffield	Mike Dean	01327 350077
	Rachel Holloway	01327 353172

The Amelcote Benefice

St Luke, Cold Higham: St Mary, Gayton:
Holy Cross, Pattishall: St John the Baptist, Tiffield