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The Messenger

Published free for Holy Trinity, Cleeve and St Barnabas, Claverham

Issue 414 January 2026

Christmas brings with it a promise—of hope, peace, joy, and love—that is meant to stay with us long beyond a single season. But sometimes, after all the waiting of Advent, once that promise finally arrives, it can feel as though we pack it away with the decorations for another year. The beauty of the season lingers for a moment, and then normal life resumes, tugging our attention elsewhere.

In a favourite poem of mine, Howard Thurman reminds us that the message of Christmas was never meant to be stored away. Once the angels' song has quieted, the star in the sky has gone, and the shepherds have returned to their hillside, *that* is when the work of Christmas truly begins.

Christ does not enter the world merely to illuminate a holy night; He comes to illuminate our daily living. The new year invites us to ask how the hope we celebrated might become hope we practice, how the peace we proclaimed might become peace we cultivate.

So we look around and ask: Who needs kindness? Where can we bring patience? What small act of generosity is ours to offer? The work of Christmas is simple: to embody the love we welcomed at the manger.

May this January be a reminder that Christmas doesn't end—it continues in us, as we carry its promise into the world.

Every Blessing, *Daile*

The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

January Services

Holy Trinity Cleeve and St Barnabas Claverham

Sunday 4th January
10am Holy Communion in Holy Trinity

Sunday 11th January
10am Holy Communion in St Barnabas

Sunday 18th January
10am Holy Communion in Holy Trinity

Sunday 25th January
9.30am Cafe Church - breakfast served from 9.15am
10am Morning Worship in St Barnabas

Thursdays 9.30am in Holy Trinity
15th & 29th Morning Prayer
8th & 22th Holy Communion

All are welcome

For more information please contact Revd Daile Wilshere 01934 904765

Yatton Benefice Services

1st SUNDAY 4th January
8.30am St. John's: BCP Holy Communion
10.00am St. Mary's: Holy Communion
11.00am All Saints': All Together
2nd SUNDAY 11th January
8.30am All Saints': BCP Holy Communion
10.00am St. Mary's: Morning Prayer
11.00am St. John's: All Together
3rd SUNDAY 18th January
10.00am St. Mary's: Holy Communion
11.00am All Saints': Holy Communion
4th SUNDAY 25th January
10.00am St. Mary's: Holy Communion
11.00am St. John's: Holy Communion
MID-WEEK SERVICES on Tuesdays and Wednesdays:
8.15am Morning Prayer on Zoom
Contact Mike Cooke for the link

A lot has been going on since the November Messenger!

Holy Trinity Christmas Fayre was held on the 15th November which raised an amazing £2240 which will cover the last payment to be made for the resurfacing of the HT car park.
Very many thanks to everyone who pulled out all the stops to raise this amount, and give the village a very enjoyable day!

Christmas Celebrations in Cleeve and Claverham

Christmas with Court de Wyck School

This December has been busy with an Advent themed Assembly in early December, where the children were already over-excited about Christmas. How the school staff managed to make it through to the end of term, I don't know!
Work then begun with the Spiritual Group to plan the school Carol service and on the 11th December the children were brought by coach to Holy Trinity for the service. It was a lovely service with the children, staff and members of Holy Trinity present too. The Spiritual Group led the service with confidence and gave us a percussion surprise to Ding Dong Merrily on High.
The choir sang Away in a Manger beautifully, while also playing starring roles in the Nativity Story, and we all heard the story of the First Christmas through the eyes of a grumpy owl. Daile lit an outdoor sparkler inside to help explain the difference between happiness and joy *(don't tell the health and safety churchwarden!)* There was even some impromptu Christian karaoke at the end the service while we waited for the coaches to arrive! But rather than me telling you how good it was, here are some of the children's thoughts ... and some pictures.

'I enjoyed the singing.' 'My favourite part was the karaoke at the end of the service'. 'I liked the Grumpy owl story'.' I enjoyed taking part in the service and introducing the hymns' 'I liked hiding the bells and playing them when we sang Ding Dong Merrily on High.' 'I like being part of the Spiritual Group.'

Christingle

This year our Christingle was a little different. Before the service people made their own Christingle, played hand bells, completed activity sheets and ate lovely refreshments. In the service Daile shared what happens when the dust of the earth meets the light of the world and iron dust was sprinkled over the candle flames and the flames sparkled like sparklers. When the candles were lit everyone was asked to think about the baby Jesus, and as the service ended the children marched in the light of Jesus around the church ringing their bells.

One of the gems of the service came later. One little girl shared with her parents how when holding their Christingle and the lady told them to think about Jesus, she didn't, she was thinking about Paw Patrol! Out of the mouth of babes … this one gets added to the collection of wonderful things children say and examples of how they keep us grounded!

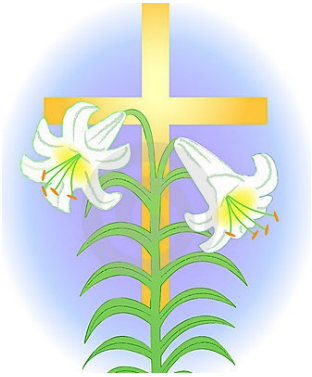
Christmas in a Box -

Then on Monday 15th December a team from Holy Trinity, led by Jane Gillis from Bristol Schools Connections, visited Robin and Goldfinch classes of year 1 and 2 children with Christmas in a Box, for an interactive, immersive and reflective retelling of the Nativity.

The children enjoyed hearing the story and collecting their special items to help them remember different parts of the story,such as a star to remind them of the Wise Men, a labyrinth to remember the journey taken by Mary and Joseph and a heart to remember that God loves them. The team look forward to returning in March to share Easter in a Box with years 3 and 4.

We are looking for more volunteers to help us. The only experience you need is a willingness to spend a morning in the school, as full training and lots of ncouragement will be given. If you would like to know more - have a chat with Daile or Dave.

Amid the preparations for Christmas there was also sadness at the death of Derek Hancock, whose funeral was held at St Barnabas church on 12th December. Derek had been a member of St Barnabas for many years and will be greatly missed. A packed church supported Derek's family at the service which was taken by Rev John Angle.



We also had sad news of the death of Geraldine Taylor, wife of Rev Richard Taylor. Geraldine's funeral will be at 2pm on Thursday 15th January 2026 at St Mary's followed by refreshments in the Chapter House.

Please remember the families of Derek and Geraldine in your prayers at this time of loss.

A Joyful Crib Service at Bickley

This year's Crib Service was held in a barn at Bickley. The Nativity story was told through the eyes of a rather grumpy owl, who was most put out by the noise and the many visitors invading *his* barn. Determined to escape the disturbance, the owl complained loudly — until everything changed when the baby was born and he discovered true joy.

Carols were sung with enthusiasm, the children delighted everyone as they acted out the Nativity, and afterwards we enjoyed lovely refreshments and warm fellowship together.

The highlight for many, however, was surely Jay Jay, a Bengal eagle owl who had been brought to the service by Michelle from Owl Enlightenment.

About Owl Enlightment

Owl Enlightment offers restraint-free flying, educational and therapeutic experiences with owls, giving the birds freedom of choice and creating a truly unique shared experience. They also rescue and rehabilitate captive-bred owls that have been neglected, abandoned or abused. Michelle has written a children's book, *Hope Has Feathers*, which tells the true stories of these birds and promotes animal welfare, second chances and compassion. All proceeds go towards the care and upkeep of the owls.**owlenlightment.org**
owlenlightment@gmail.com

We want to say Thank you for your very generous and unexpected Christmas gift that we received from everyone at Holy Trinity and St Barnabas. Happy New Year to you all. Daile and Paul

Prayer Tree

This year our Christmas Tree became our prayer tree – people were encouraged to write prayers on stars. These prayers were then used in some of our services, and when they are taken down the prayers will be placed in a basket and through the month of January the prayers will be prayed for on a Thursday morning so that every prayer request is prayed for. The children from Court de Wyck wrote prayers too. Among the children's prayers were thank you prayers for friends, family, animals and creation, but one stood out which was

Thank you, God, for helping my brother when he finds things hard. Amen

There were a range of prayers praying for individuals and situations around the world. These included the Ukraine, people who are ill, people who are hungry and homeless, people who are less fortunate than us, and people living in nursing homes. One that stood out was the following prayer.

Pray for people who are judged because of difference – race, religion, nationality, disability or anything else they are treated unfairly for.

There were also the heartfelt, emotional prayers, which tug at the heart strings when we realise that this is a child's real experience. One was about their fear over a death of a parent, another about not knowing when they will see their mum, another was about doing well in a gym exam.

These prayers reveal the depth of our children's hearts and souls—their worries, concerns, and hopes—spoken with honesty and courage. Please remember to pray for Court de Wyck school, the teachers, staff and children. Why not, pick up a couple of the prayers from the basket in church and pray them on behalf of the children when next in church.

Thank you to everyone who has helped with our Christmas Celebrations, from making Christingles, to decorating our churches, to donating to the Mission to Seafarers, or helping at the Christmas fair, to making mince pies and helping with Christmas in a Box, to reading a lesson, giving lifts, and so much more. Your help and support are appreciated. *Daile*

Christmas in the Warm Room

In December there were some lovely warm and welcoming Thursday afternoons. Always starting with delicious soup and on occasions followed by unexpected entertainment. One week Rodney visited with his hand bells, and another week Daile brought a new game for us to play *(and showed us her cheating competitive side!).* Our resident poet has captured these moments for us, in a way that I couldn't do justice to. *Lin*

The Warm Room. By JR.

Last Thursday, it was manic.
Court de Wyck came through the door.
They had a super Christmas service,
leaving hay strewn across the floor.

My face said it all,
as I gripped a nearby table,
but the vicar was unfazed
the church is now a stable.

Luckily for us, Christmas fairies
cleared the mess.
We didn't want Helen Bailey
arriving in distress!

No sooner had they gone,
we had our jobs to do.
Warm up the soup, set out the rolls,
ready to welcome you.

Back to Rodney and his bells
when all is said and done,
he gave us all such a laugh,
we thought we'd have more fun.

So Ann got out her Christmas tree,
prizes, decorations,
Quality street in a tub.
To raise our expectations,

I prepared a Christmas quiz,
but it seemed a little tame,
so we allowed rude answers
to liven up the game.

It was a Christmas alphabet
which required some endeavour.
Finding seasonal words….
Some answers were quite clever.

Jan wrote antacid reflux
for the letter A.
We would have preferred … Angel,
but we let her have her way.

Nick, he went quite highbrow,
Balthazar for the letter B,
but the vicar managed to lower the tone
elasticated trousers for E.

When Daile produced a clever game,
we must have looked like fools.
As people grappled with magnets.
She kept changing all the rules!

Now, midst all this jollity,
the chatter and the fun,
people needed to be fed,
jobs needed to be done.

But we had a secret weapon,
a woman's dream called Paul
chained up to the kitchen sink,
he washed up for us all.

When I offered to relieve him,
he said, ‘Oh, it doesn't matter.
I like to be busy on my own
away from female chatter.’

So thank you, Lynn and Dave
for organizing this lot,
and Dave for giving people lifts,
whether they want to come or not!

Thank you, Lynn, for all the soups
the Christmas dinner one was a winner.
Boiling up the FOCOS meal,
Paul took some home for his dinner.

And lastly, thanks for coming.
It wouldn't happen without you.
And thank you, all the helpers,
but it is what we do.

Again, a huge thank you to the Warm Room Team for their hospitality and welcome.

Carol Services.

Both St Barnabas and Holy Trinity held Carol Services on 21st December.
It was a good job we had some very knowledgeable children in the front pew of St Barnabas to answer Daile's tricky questions! We were all in good voice to sing the well loved Christmas carols which told the story of the birth of Christ.
There was a very special member of the congregation in the form of a young baby who was very well behaved - almost angelic(!) when Daile walked round with him for us to say 'hello' to! Wonderfull! We all had a glass of Bucks Fizz before we left to go home. Thank you to all those who made the church look so beautiful.

Daile had a busy day as she then took the Carol Service at Holy Trinity. The church was beautifully lit by candlelight.

January Music Concert at St Mary's Yatton. Saturday 31st January at 7.30pm

Trumpet concert by Jo Harris with piano and organ accompaniment by Daniel King Smith at St Mary's, Yatton, 31st January.

The YMS is delighted to welcome two outstanding professional musicians to start our 2026 Spring season.

Their concert will be the first time the society has hosted a solo trumpet concert and the first with both a piano and organ accompaniment. They will raise our spirits after a dreary winter to welcome the spring with beautiful eclectic music from Telemann to Gershwin.

A concert sure to delight our audience and a rare opportunity to hear a trumpet and organ play in St Mary's.

Jo and Daniel's concert starts at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church. Tickets price £15, YMS members and students £10, accompanied children under 16 free.
Details of this concert are on the Yatton Music Society's website www.yms.org.uk

Yatton History Society

Tuesday Jan 6th – talk on Zoom by Brian Margetson on 'Crossing the Severn.'
Tuesday Feb 3rd talk by Katherine Bell on Ancient Textiles
7 30pm Yatton Methodist Church BS49 4DW. For details contact. - yattonlocalhistorysoc@gmail.com

Mothers' UNION

In December our Christmas meeting was held at Bickley where we were fortunate to have Margaret and Jill to lead us in our Carol singing. This worked up an appetite for the delicious meal that was then served to us finishing with traditional Christmas pud or trifle. Many thanks to Elizabeth and David for hosting this very enjoyable meal.

The first meeting in 2026 will be held in Holy Trinity Church room at 12 noon on Tuesday 20th January. This will be our AGM with communion.

Worship – Have Your Say

With a reduction in clergy and volunteers to support services, we are no longer able to hold services in both churches at the same time. We therefore need to work together more closely as a united benefice, sharing our resources and services between our two churches. Our aim in reviewing our service pattern is to strengthen our sense of being one church in two locations, encouraging cooperation, mutual support, and a shared identity.

As part of this process, we are seeking the right balance—respecting tradition while also offering a variety of worship styles that may appeal to new people. To achieve this, we recognise that we will need to ask some difficult but necessary questions and make hard choices.

In September, the PCC agreed to trial a new pattern of worship. On the fourth Sunday of each month, Café Church now begins at 9.30am, followed by a service at St Barnabas at 11.00am.

The PCC will meet on 22nd January to review how this trial has worked and to consider next steps. We would really value your thoughts on how you feel this arrangement has gone, and we would also welcome your feedback on our Christmas pattern of services. Please share your comments with the Deputy Churchwardens or Daile by 20th January.

Dates for your Diary 2026

PCC Dates

Thursday 22nd January at HT
Wed 25th March at HT
Wed 17th June at HT
Saturday Morning – date tbc in July
Thurs 24th September at SB
Wed 18th November at HT

This year our APCM will be on **Sunday 19th Apri**l at Holy Trinity in the context of worship

Lent Course 2026

We are pleased to announce that Bishop Alastair will be leading our Lent Course. He has written a new course which he would like to share with us, before it is available to a wider audience.

The course will begin on **Tuesday 24th February at 2pm, for 6 weeks.**

Tuesday 24th February
Tuesday 3 March
Tuesday 10 March
Tuesday 17 March
Tuesday 24 March
Tuesday 31st March

I am aware that not everyone will be able to attend every week. Feel at ease to come when you are able to.

If your work or family commitments mean you wouldn't be able to attend on a Tuesday afternoon, but you would like to attend, let me know and if we have enough people I will run an evening course as well.

More information about the Lent course will be included in **February's Messenger**.
Daile

Procedure to follow in case of Fire at both Holy Trinity, Cleeve and St Barnabas, Claverham

All Members of the congregation need to leave the building as quickly and calmly as possible following the directions of the Church Wardens (or designated member of PCC) as to which exit to use.
Everyone should congregate in the Church Car park ensuring there is space for emergency vehicles to access.
Church Warden to ensure at start of all services that the Main door is unlocked. In case of Holy Trinity also check outside door to Church room is unlocked.
In the case of a fire Vicar or Service Leader to announce evacuation.
Church warden is responsible for giving orders to prevent confusion. They check that all have left the building.
They are also responsible for ensuring everyone leaves the building quickly, calmly and without panic.
Vicar or Service Leader to co-ordinate outside ensuring everyone evacuated is taken to congregate in Church Car park.
Sidesperson is responsible for calling the Fire brigade. In case of no mobile phone reception, then he/she is responsible for going to nearest open house to use phone.
All Sidespersons are expected to bring a mobile phone when they are on duty, or if they do not have one, ensure they have asked a member of the congregation who has a phone to bring it to the service *Elizabeth*

Claverham Village Hall

The next Ladies'Guild meeting will be a talk about 'Old Radio Shows.' on the 5th February.
The February Village market will be on 21st February.

Jean

Goodbye to Margaret.

At the last Sunday service of the year at St Barnabas, we said goodbye to Margaret Hawks. She has played the organ for us over a period of eighteen months and we have been very appreciative of her skills. However, she has decided to retire.
We will miss her, and there was a presentation of flowers at the end of the service to show our gratitude for the many services that she has played for us. Thank you Margaret!

Claverham Future
'Is Our Concern'

We at Claverham Future continue to work behind the scenes to compile crucial information that will help us raise compelling objections to the planning applications proposed for new developments in Claverham Village. Currently, two applications are on our radar: one located off High Street and the other to the north of Claverham Road. Although these applications have not yet been formally submitted, we must prepare to act swiftly.

Here's How You Can Help Now:

Information Gathering: We urge you to collect any information or evidence that could form a strong objection against the developments off High Street and north of Claverham Road. Photographs are crucial.

Submit Your Findings: Please send this valuable information to ClaverhamFuture@gmail.com. Every piece of evidence will be logged in our comprehensive evidence file.

Stay Informed: We are committed to keeping you updated through our newsletters and alerts. As soon as we receive news that the planning applications have been officially lodged we will advise the whole community.

In the meantime, we are also actively identifying professionals who can assist us once the applications are submitted and are performing some fundraising to cover associated costs. Together, we can stand strong and protect the future of our village. Your involvement and input are invaluable to us, and we thank you for your continued support and vigilance.

Jane Dare

Focos Panto 2025/6

Possibly the most popular and anticipated cultural event in the calendar of Cleeve Village Hall took place on 6th December when an intrepid cast performed their version of 'Aladdin.'

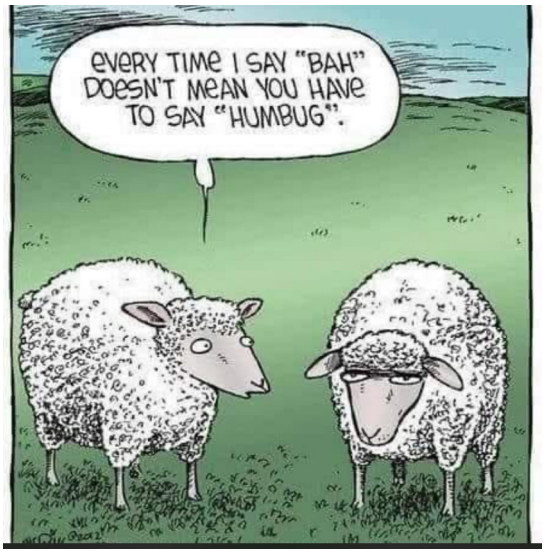
A three course meal was served to the lucky audience before the show, ably assisted by the Cleeve Guides and a debut performance by our vicar, Revd Daile, was much appreciated! Fortunately Tom the Cat was again saved from banishment or worse (!) and an enjoyable evening was had by all. Many thanks to all who gave their time and talents for our entertainment, and to Lin and her helpers for the wonderful meal.

There will be two extra performances on Friday 16th and Saturday 17th Jan at £12.50 a ticket to include a super meal and awesome entertainment. Just a few tickets are left and if you would like to secure one then please ring Dave - 838515.

Holy Trinity Cleaning Rota

June Richards	11th January
Sarah Cush Nick Cush	25th January
Andrea Stoddart Lin Mortimer	8th February
Enid Pring Ron Pring	22nd February

Ron's first joke of the year!
I bought wifey a new fridge for Christmas. I can't wait to see her face light up when she opens it!



Thanks from Wood n Things

We would like to thank all our supporters who helped to raise £1600 for the Children's Hospice South West, and £526 for Cancer Research UK
We hope the everyone had a very happy Christmas and wish you every happiness in 2026 *Paul and Renate*

Wishing all Messenger readers a very happy and healthy 2026!
A huge Thank You to everybody who has made our Christmas celebrations really meaningful and enjoyable, especially to Revd Daile, whose first Christmas with us has been very special. Ed

Thank you for your contributions to this month's Messenger and for the articles, jokes and photos that you have kept me busy with all year!
In the future the Messenger will be published on the last Sunday of each month, so any contributions should be with me by **Tuesday 20th January.**
As usual they can be sent on e mail to carole.perrott@gmx.com, put through the door of 15 Chestnut Drive Claverham, or given to me at church. *Ed*

Useful Church Contacts

Church Office	Mon-Fri 09.30-11.30	.....	01934 832184
Priest in Charge Cleeve & Claverham	Revd Daile Wilshere dailewilshere@live.co.uk		01934 904765 or 07810 551447
Deputy Wardens	Dave & Lin Mortimer	.....	01934 838515
	Elizabeth Vaughan	.....	07787 781716
	Gill Roe	.....	01934 832917
Safeguarding Officer	Jeannie Osmond	.....	01934 832421
Websites	htcleeve.wixsite.com/cleeve-and-claverham		
	yattonchurches.org		
Facebook	facebook.com/Cleeve-and-Claverham-Messenger		