

# CANALSIDE NEWS

for JANUARY 2026



## Thought from the Rectory

I once saw the comedian David Mitchell do a piece about Christmas, concluding with the line “But I like my time each year visiting the people of Christmas-land, and they’re certainly a lot nicer than their neighbours: the tedious, puritanical, impecunious, miserable people of January-land, who bang on endlessly about their failed diets while shaking with nicotine withdrawal. Good luck getting a present out of those jerks.”

There is definitely something strange about the period that follows Christmas, sliding into the memory as swiftly as the cardboard and paper of the presents slide into the recycling box. I am writing this in the week between Christmas and New Year, a strange, suspended time before January starts with celebration, fireworks and cheering. But then that celebration also fades and we’re left with January: all the bitterness of deep winter but now all the twinkly lights have been taken away.

Through Advent, we talked a lot about Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Problem is, with January taking hold, there is a danger that those four can fade as quickly as Christmas. The tree is gone, there’s nothing to unwrap, I feel guilty for too many chocolates eaten and I now don’t feel at all hopeful, peaceful, joyous or loving. Maybe a challenge to us all is, as Christians, to continue bringing those themes to life even when we don’t feel them. While we pack away our Christmas decorations each year, the message of Christmas doesn’t need to be packed away. The things we sang in our carols remain true in January and July, just as much as in December. Heaven reaches down and touches earth and Christ is seen among us. The Word becomes flesh and dwells with us. Veiled in flesh, the godhead see: Hail the incarnate deity. Let’s all sing Hark! the Herald

Angels Sing during January because those words are just as true and vital to our faith.

Whatever January looks like for you, as we button up our coats against the cold and think about how winter is drawing on, may we all hold to the hope, peace, joy and love that we proclaim in Advent and Christmas. The darkness will not last, and spring is coming. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. Chris

## Financial Update for Hilperton and Staverton Parish

In last month's Canalside News I reported that we were heading for a year end deficit of £15,000. Although there is still going to be a deficit we have managed to reduce it to around £11,500. Quite a remarkable reduction and is mainly down to your generosity at recent fundraising, from increased regular giving and very kind one off donations. **THANKYOU.** Despite the deficit we have had quite a successful year in a number of areas: the total raised from Fundraising was £8,458 which is almost double the total for 2024 and regular church giving was just over £5,000 higher than in the previous year. **THANKYOU.** Unfortunately our income from one off donations, bequests and grants was £24,000 lower than in 2024. Our expenses for the year were around £10,000 higher than in the previous year as a result of the unforeseen heating repairs at St Michael's and likewise at St Mary Magdalen's plus kitchen roof repairs. We have managed to meet all of our financial commitments other than the Parish Share (the amount we pay to the Diocese each year). The total amount due was £50,000 and it now looks like we will only be able to pay £39,000. We are now talking to the Diocese about the deficit and will keep you updated. **THANKYOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT.** *Michael*

## Used Postage Stamps

Don't forget to let us have all your postage stamps from the Christmas season. It would be great if you could save all your stamps and pass them on to Bill and Marilyn Stubbs who in turn pass them on to the Bible Society. Just

pop them into the Storehouses boxes in the church porches and we will pass them on for you.

## 100 Club News

Congratulations to the winner of the December 100 Club Draw: Jonathan Richards

## Readers / Intercessors / Welcomers and Coffee makers

We are always looking for more people to help us in the above areas. Sometimes people can feel that they have been overlooked and think to themselves – I could do that but they have never asked me to. Don't wait to be asked just let Michael know.

<b>Parish of Hilperton and Staverton</b> <b>FUNDRAISING DIARY FOR 2026</b> <b>Details of some events are yet to be confirmed but for now make a note in your diaries and we will keep you posted if and when those details change</b>						
Month	Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location	
FEB	Sat	7 <sup>th</sup>	1400 – 1600	JUMBLE SALE (see poster)	St Mary Magdalen's	
	Wed	25 <sup>th</sup>	TBD	LENT LUNCH	St Mary Magdalen's	
MAR	Sat	28 <sup>th</sup>	1000-1200	CHURCH AND CHARITY COFFEE MORNING	St Mary Magdalen's	
APR	Sun	19 <sup>th</sup>	1500	CONCERT BY THE EBONITE CLARINET ENSEMBLE	St Mary Magdalen's	
MAY	Fri	8 <sup>th</sup>	1930	QUIZ NIGHT	St Mary Magdalen's	
	Sat	23 <sup>rd</sup>	TBD	PENTECOST THEMED COMMUNITY DAY	St Mary Magdalen's	
JUN	Sat	TBC	TBC	HILPERTON VILLAGE FETE	Hilperton Village Hall	
JUL	TBD	TBD	TBD	POSSIBLE FUNDRAISING/SPONSORSHIP EVENT	TBD	
AUG	Sun	23 <sup>rd</sup>	1200	BARBECUE AFTER MORNING SERVICE	St Mary Magdalen's	
SEP	Sat	19 <sup>th</sup>	1000-1200	COFFEE MORNING	St Mary Magdalen's	
OCT	Fri	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1900	HARVEST SUPPER	St Mary Magdalen's	
NOV	Sat	21 <sup>st</sup>	1000-1200	CHRISTMAS FESTIVE FAYRE	St Mary's Magdalen's	
	Fri	27 <sup>th</sup>	1900	QUIZ NIGHT	St Mary Magdalen's	



**SATURDAY 7TH FEBRUARY**  
**ST MARY MAGDALEN'S CHURCH HALL**  
**HORSE ROAD HILPERTON FROM 2 TIL 4PM**  
**ADMISSION £1 (CHILDREN FREE)**

**JUMBLE WANTED**

Please search your cupboards for clothing you no longer need (clean & in good condition, please) & bring to the church between 10 am & 12 noon or leave in the porch at 42 St Mary's Close from Feb 1st. Contact Alison for further Details 01225 781579

**HELP NEEDED**

If you can help with setting up on the morning of the sale and/or at the event in the afternoon, please let Alison know. In addition, a clothes rail that can be borrowed for the event would be extremely useful.

Thank you.

**Come grab a bargain - most items only 50p!**

## Prayer Requests



It is important that we pray for all who seek our support. Please let Michael know of anyone who particularly needs our prayers. Do ensure that you have their permission.

### ***This month we pray for..***

+ Alison Meader  
+ Amelia-Lily and family

+ Andrew Margetts  
+ Audrey Sheppard  
+ Barbara Tucker  
+ Bob Cradock  
+ Catherine  
+ Cathy and Ian  
+ Chloe Stevens  
+ Colin Jackson  
+ Collette Miyagawa  
+ Colston Carpenter

+ Dave, Rosemary, Matthew & Family  
+ Eve and Jim Banks  
+ Hannah, Ash, Oliver & baby Leo  
+ Heather  
+ Helen Thomas  
+ Hilary & Mark Heaton  
+ Irene Hicks  
+ Isabelle & Family  
+ Jeannette  
+ Joanna Martin  
+ Laurence & Family  
+ Maggie & Family  
+ Mark Johnson

+ Maureen Mitchell  
+ Michelle  
+ Mike Aldridge  
+ Mitchel and Divine  
+ Richard Marshman  
+ Roger Emes  
+ Rosa Light  
+ Tanya  
+ Val, Phil and family  
+ Viv and Jan



- We pray for all those who are mourning the loss of a loved one at this time especially the friends and family of Valerie Womersley, Danny Daniels, Mary Gredington and Doreen Hateley
- We pray for the people of Sudan at this time of conflict, including Archbishop Ezekiel as he leads the Anglican Church there.

## Ellie

As you all know Danny Daniels passed away recently and we are still trying to find a loving home for Ellie his cat (see photo). If you can help or know someone who can please let Michael know as soon as possible please.



## Foodbanks Update

Together with many other Foodbanks across the country both Melksham and Trowbridge are desperate for more donations, as the demand is very high at present, so please give as generously as you are able.

# Storehouse Foodbank



## HELP!

If you can donate any food or hygiene items PLEASE, pop them in our trolleys or come on down and bring them to us. If you are a little flush; you can do online shopping with ASDA as they will deliver to us on your behalf. Please drop into the building as we now do a breakfast for the homeless so eggs are always needed plus cheese, butter bacon etc as we have a fridge freezer, and fridge. Fruit and vegetables are always welcome but do not put in a trolley. Please continue to donate to us so we can keep blessing the people of Trowbridge. Thank you all.

**Please use the collection boxes in the porches of St Mary Magdalen's and St Michael's to drop off food donations etc.**

If you prefer you can make a one off financial donation or support Trowbridge Storehouse regularly, please follow the link below and select storehouse.

<https://westwiltsvineyard.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/zk54op3a>

**Storehouse is always in need of carrier bags**

Melksham Foodbank continue to need all items, especially tinned meats and vegetables. The demand for support is very high (please ensure all items are well within the best before date). The demand for support is very high (please ensure all items are well within the best before date). They can also take large bags of rice, tea bags, sugar & pasta as these can be decanted into

smaller bags for distribution. Please take your donations to the porch at St George's, Semington before 6pm on Wednesday.

Our continued support of Melksham FoodBank and Trowbridge StoreHouse is vital, and a part of our response to God's generosity to us.

## CANALSIDE DIARY

Please pray for all events taking place in the next few weeks

Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location
<b>JANUARY 2026</b>				
Th	1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>NEW YEAR'S DAY</b>		
Su	4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EPIPHANY SUNDAY</b>		
		1030	<b>Service of Holy Communion</b>	St Michael's
		1500	<b>Service of BCP Holy Communion</b>	St Mary the Virgin
		1800	<b>Service of Healing and Wholeness</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	6 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer</b> <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IKy2vBYNviwibNcoWUqgTtf4hpwQTA.1">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IKy2vBYNviwibNcoWUqgTtf4hpwQTA.1</a>	Online
		1450	<b>Collective Worship</b>	St George's School
W	7 <sup>th</sup>	1000	<b>Midweek Morning Worship</b>	St Michael's
		1430	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Hilperton School
Th	8 <sup>th</sup>	0900	<b>Semington Morning Prayer</b> <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBqqYKytMMRbYvZ5JZFZm.1">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBqqYKytMMRbYvZ5JZFZm.1</a>	Online
		1430	<b>Friendship Group</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
		1445	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Staverton School
F	9 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Toddlers@theTin</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	11 <sup>th</sup>	<b>BAPTISM OF CHRIST / FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b>		
		0915	<b>Breakfast Church</b>	St George's Church
		1030	<b>Service of Holy Communion</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	13 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer</b> Use link above	Online
		1450	<b>Collective Worship</b>	St George's School
W	14 <sup>th</sup>	1000	<b>Midweek Communion</b>	St Michael's
		1430	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Hilperton School

Th	15 <sup>th</sup>	0900	<b>Semington Morning Prayer</b> Use link above	Online
		0930	<b>Funeral: Valerie Womersley</b>	St Michael's
		1000 1200	<b>Community Café</b>	St Mary Magdalen'
		1445	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Staverton School
F	16 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Toddlers@theTin</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	18 <sup>th</sup>	<b>PLOUGH SUNDAY / SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b>		
		0930	<b>Service of Holy Communion</b>	St George's Church
		1030	<b>Service of Holy Communion</b>	St Michael's
M	19 <sup>th</sup>	1000	<b>Funeral: Danny Daniels</b>	St Michael's
Tu	20 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer</b> Use link above	Online
W	21 <sup>st</sup>	1000	<b>Midweek Morning Worship</b>	St Michael's
		1430	<b>Open the Book</b>	Hilperton School
Th	22 <sup>nd</sup>	0900	<b>Semington Morning Prayer</b> Use link above	Online
		1045	<b>Open the Book</b>	St George's School
		1445	<b>Open the Book</b>	Staverton School
F	23 <sup>rd</sup>	0930	<b>Toddlers@theTin</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b>		
		1030	<b>'Explore' Service</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
		1600	<b>Tea@theTin</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	27 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer</b> <b>(NOT online – IN PERSON)</b>	St Michael's
		1450	<b>Collective Worship</b>	St George's School
W	28 <sup>th</sup>	1000	<b>Midweek Communion</b>	St Michael's
		1430	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Hilperton School
Th	29 <sup>th</sup>	0900	<b>Semington Morning Prayer</b> Use link above	Online
		1445	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Staverton School
F	30 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Toddlers@theTin</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
<b>FEBRUARY 2026</b>				
Su	1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>CANDLEMAS</b>		
		1030	<b>Service of Holy Communion</b>	St Michael's
		1500	<b>Service of BCP Holy Communion</b>	St Mary the Virgin
Tu	3 <sup>rd</sup>	0930	<b>Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer</b> <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IKy2vBYNviwibNcoWUpqTtf4hpwQTA.1">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IKy2vBYNviwibNcoWUpqTtf4hpwQTA.1</a>	Online

		1450	<b>Collective Worship</b>	St George's School
W	4 <sup>th</sup>	1000	<b>Midweek Morning Worship</b>	St Michael's
		1430	<b>Collective Worship</b>	Hilperton School
Th	5 <sup>th</sup>	0900	<b>Semington Morning Prayer</b> <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBqqYKytMMRbYvZ5JZFZNM.1">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBqqYKytMMRbYvZ5JZFZNM.1</a>	Online
F	6 <sup>th</sup>	0930	<b>Toddlers@theTin</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Sa	7 <sup>th</sup>	1400	<b>Jumble Sale</b>	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT</b>		
		0915	<b>Breakfast Church</b>	St George's Church
		1030	<b>Service of Holy Communion</b>	St Mary Magdalen's

## CANALSIDE CONTACTS

<b>Rector</b>	Rev. Chris Hunter	07396875236 01225 975510	<a href="mailto:rector.canalside@gmail.com">rector.canalside@gmail.com</a>
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<b>Churchwardens</b>			
<b>Semington</b>	David Wildsmith	c/o 01380 870784	c/o <a href="mailto:jackbev.woodward@gmail.com">jackbev.woodward@gmail.com</a>
<b>Hilperton and Staverton</b>	James Newton	07803904947	<a href="mailto:jnewton@churchmouse.org.uk">jnewton@churchmouse.org.uk</a>
	Martyn Carpenter	07831309377	<a href="mailto:martyncarpenter55@gmail.com">martyncarpenter55@gmail.com</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://canalsidebenefice.org.uk">canalsidebenefice.org.uk</a>		
<b>Facebook</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/canalsideparishes">https://www.facebook.com/canalsideparishes</a>		



Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed: kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth that in tranquillity your kingdom may

go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; 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 for ever. Amen.

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*Christian Healing is something we think we know about when in actual fact on the whole we know very little./ **Healing** (literally meaning to make whole) is the process of the restoration of health to an unbalanced, diseased or damaged organism. Healing may be physical or psychological and not without the mutual reception of these two dimensions of human health. With respect to physical damage or disease suffered by an organism, healing involves the repair of living tissue, organs and the biological system as a whole and resumption of normal functioning. That is the general opinion of healing.*

*Christian Healing during the time of Christ's earthly existence took on the miraculous form but since then it has slowly been eroded with humankind's disbelief. Yet Christ said, in [John 14:12](#) "What I'm about to tell you is true. Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. In fact, he will do even greater things"*

*Is it really that the Holy Spirit is not at work in this world or is it that our expectations are too great or is it that our understanding of healing has changed somewhat?*

*I believe the Holy Spirit is as ever present today as it was on the day of Pentecost. If you just need some stillness and contemplation after Christmas this might be the time for you. **Therefore I invite you to join me in a service exploring Healing Ministry on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 6.00 p.m. in St Mary Magdalen's Church, Horse Road, Hilperton.***

## Service of Healing and Wholeness

St Mary Magdalen's, Horse Road, Hilperton

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 6 pm



**JOIN US  
THIS  
SUNDAY!**

# CHURCH SERVICES *in* CANALSIDE BENEFICE *during* JANUARY

	HILPERTON St Michael's	HILPERTON St Mary Magdalen's	SEMINGTON St George's	WHADDON St Mary the Virgin
4 <sup>th</sup> January Epiphany	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION	6pm SERVICE of HEALING and WHOLENESS		3pm BCP HOLY COMMUNION
11 <sup>th</sup> January Baptism of Christ		10.30am HOLY COMMUNION	9.15am BREAKFAST CHURCH	
18 <sup>th</sup> January Plough Sunday	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION		9.15am HOLY COMMUNION	
25 <sup>th</sup> January Third Sunday of Epiphany		10.30am 'EXPLORE' SERVICE		
		4pm TEA@theTIN		
1 <sup>st</sup> February Candlemas	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION			3pm BCP HOLY COMMUNION

Full details of upcoming services and events can be found on our  
website [www.canalside.org.uk](http://www.canalside.org.uk)