



The Ross Parishes

rossparishes.uk

Ross-on-Wye  
Walford  
Brampton Abbotts

# Newsletter

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026

The Second Sunday after Christmas

*A very warm welcome to worship in our parishes today*

*growing inclusive, intergenerational churches that inspire faith, hope and love*

## Today's Services

### Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January

8.00am Said Communion, St Mary's  
9.30am All Age Eucharist, St Mary's  
9.30am Parish Communion - Walford

## Music for today's services

### 9.30am All Age Eucharist, St Mary's

Setting: Mass of St Thomas - *Thorne*  
Introit: 94 As with gladness  
Gradual: 59 Angels from the realms of glory  
Offertory: 68 In the bleak midwinter  
Communion: Lully, lulla, lullay - *Stopford*  
Post Communion: 72 Joy to the world

### 9.30am Parish Communion, Walford

521 Once in royal David's city  
633 The advent of our King  
326 In the bleak midwinter  
631 Tell out, my soul

## Readings and Prayers for today

**Collect** - Almighty God, in the birth of your Son you have poured on us the new light of your incarnate Word, and shown us the fullness of your love: help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love that we may know the fullness of his joy; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**First Reading** (*Reader: A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Ephesians.*) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of

truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. [Ephesians 1: 3-14]

**Reader:** This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**

### **Gospel Reading**

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."') From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known. [John 1.10-18]

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### **For our prayers**

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**Those who are ill:** Terry Harding, Rosie Taylor, Rene Keogh, Sylvia Greer, Sue Spence and all who are living with long term illnesses or health problems.

**Those who have died,** and those who mourn; among them Anthony Marsh (known as Richard)

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### **Letter from Colin**

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During the closing weeks of last year I heard first hand and also by report the emotion "I will be glad when this year is over". So what was it about 2025 that was so bad? Where does that indomitable human spirit of hope that next year will be better come from? Remember what hope is, it is the expectation that something good is possible, even when circumstances are uncertain. And we can't deny that 2025 was a year of uncertainties! It seems that the three main causes for wanting a year over are personal grief and illness, fear for safety for self and family and the world not progressing as we think it should. Illness and death strike randomly, yes in 2025 you may have suffered more, but don't blame the year. Safety for self and family is a difficult one. We see it in gang culture, military takeovers, loss of community, isolation and the constant stream of media advice that we should not be comfortable in our own skin. But don't blame 2025. Thirdly, is the world progressing as we think it should? Is my standard of living always increasing? Are the leaders of the nations following my advice? Is the council spending their resources as I think they should? Whether the answer is 'yes' or 'no', don't blame 2025.

Remember God's promises, he has come to save us from the fear and reality of sin and death, and he will come again to put all wrongs right. We expected him in 2025, and we again expect him in 2026 but really we don't have a clue, so what can we do to not want a particular year to go away? Live in hope: learn to cherish yesterday, dream tomorrow but live today. Happy New Year. Colin.

## News from the Ross Parishes

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**Lift to church needed** – is anyone able to offer a lift to church on Sundays to John Spencer (widower of Jean Spencer). He lives in Corinium Road, off Roman Way. If you can help, please contact the office for further information. Thank you.

**Level access to church** - You will have noticed that this is now restored via the temporary ramp at the east end of the church. We suggest that you park in Crossfields car park at the junction of Old Maid's Walk and Church Street. Disabled badge holders are entitled to three hours free parking but is free for everyone on Sundays.

**Celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany, Tuesday 6th January, a Festal Eucharist in St Mary's at 7.00pm.** After Christmas comes very quickly another great festival day of the church, the Epiphany. To mark and celebrate the visit of the Kings to the infant Christ there will be an evening Eucharist in St Mary's, for worshippers from across the benefice. We will also be inviting friends from the other churches in Ross and area. Our Choir will offer music specially for the day. And a drinks and nibbles party will follow the service. All are most warmly invited.

**Epiphany Come, Sing & Sup** - Sunday 11th January. Join us at 4pm to sing in the choir, or come along at 6pm for the service. We're delighted that Ruth Cartledge (harp) will be accompanying some of the music. There's a supper after the service (£12.50) please book then pay on the night. Booking and details at [rossparishes.uk/come-sing](http://rossparishes.uk/come-sing) we need to know by today please.

**Organ Recital by Suzy St Clair** at St Mary's, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February. Tickets are £10 on the door and include tea and cake in the interval. Susy has played for us before and is a friend of Janet and Nick. We greatly look forward to this.

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## *Update on the Spire in Peril project*

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It might look like little is happening, but we are facing a very complex and expensive project and a lot has been going on, mainly unseen. A full, brand new team consisting of architect, structural engineer, steeplejack, health and safety adviser and professional fundraiser, is now in place and much investigative work is going on to try to find the cause of the problem with the pinnacles. Some grant applications are already going in for stage one of the works – the development stage - which will involve de-risking (to make the pinnacles safe for the immediate future) and this will also involve some investigations and dismantling to help with the diagnosis of the problem.

We are delighted that a number of individuals and organisations are, off their own bat, organising fundraising for us. This is most helpful, not just for the funds raised, but because it all helps to show community interest and engagement to major funders. If you are planning something (especially grant applications – we need to monitor those), or you know of others who are, please let Jane, Mark or Kelvin know. Keep your eye on the website after Christmas when we'll launch a dedicated page which will include all future updates. Donations so far:

- £1000 - Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust towards costs of a professional fundraiser
- £1000 has been given by an anonymous individual doner
- £1000 from Barratt Homes for the disabled ramp,
- £1500 from The Ross Choristers - from their Christmas concert (held in the church)
- The Ross Penyard Singers have held a raffle for us at a recent concert.

- Schools holding Christmas services in church have given us their retiring collections.
- A friend is pursuing a grant application of their own and funding from the Roaring Megs.
- Ed Swindells (wildlife photographer) is raising funds for us via his YouTube channel.

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## This week in the Ross Parishes

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<b>Every day</b>	9.00am Morning Prayer by Zoom, <a href="http://rossparishes.uk/morning-prayer">rossparishes.uk/morning-prayer</a>
<b>Mon 5<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	10.00 Tots in Tune, St Mary's Hall 12.00pm Prayers for St Mary's, St Mary's 9.00pm Compline
<b>Tue 6<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	9.00am Community Larder and Tea & Toast, St Mary's Hall 7.00pm Eucharist for Epiphany, St Mary's
<b>Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	8.45am Toast and Toddle, St Mary's 11.15 Ponder and Pray (via zoom) 9.00pm Compline
<b>Thu 8<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	10.00am Said Communion, St Mary's
<b>Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	12.30 Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Richard Marsh, St Mary's

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## Further ahead

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Sat 11th Jan	4.00pm Come, Sing & Sup for Epiphany, St Mary's (more above)
Sun 25th Jan	6.00pm Choral Evensong for the Conversion of St Paul
Sun 1st Feb	6.00pm Candlemas Carol Service (with Holy Trinity Choir, Hereford)
Sat 7th Feb	2.30pm organ Recital by Suzy St Clair, St Mary's (see above)
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb	6.00pm Candlemas Carol Service (see above)

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## Contacts

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