



# DECEMBER 2024 PARISH NEWSLETTER

## DECEMBER SERVICES FOR THE MONTH

### Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November

5pm Lighting of St Denys & Christmas Tree in St Denys Churchyard, followed by the singing of Carols & Hot Refreshments

### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December Advent

10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)  
4pm Denys@4 – Advent focus

### Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December

2pm and 6pm Stanford School Year 3, 4 and 5 Christmas Performance

### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December Advent 2

10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)  
4pm Denys@4 – Christmas Meal at Stanford Primary School  
6pm Carols by Candlelight – St Georges, Hatford

### Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December

2pm and 5.30 pm Stanford School Foundation Stage and Key Stage One Christmas Performance

### Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December

4pm Carols by Candlelight – All Saints, Goosey

### Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December Advent 3

10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)  
6 pm Carols by Candlelight at Stanford

### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December Advent 4

10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)  
4pm Denys@4

### Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve

4pm Crib Service at St Denys  
10pm Holy Communion at St Denys

### Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December

#### Christmas Day

10.15 am Family Holy Communion at St Denys

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December

10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)  
4pm Denys@4 (and others invited)  
End of year Walk – meet in church

### Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January

10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)  
4pm Denys@4 - New year, New Start & Holy Communion

#### WHO'S WHO IN THE PARISH?

<b>Vicar</b>	
The Revd Paul Eddy	710267
<b>Church Wardens</b>	
Maz Galley	710211
Michelle Sinclair	07929733429
<b>Verger</b>	
Susan Mayall	710138

#### IN MEMORY

Our thoughts and prayers go to all the family and friends of people who have recently died. Sadly, this includes:

**Sarah Elliot**

**Derek Monahan Smith**

Open House Saturday's St Denys Church is open between 10 am and noon for coffee and tea, cake and chat. Do pop in.

#### **A Christmas Message from the Vicar**

Dear Parishioners

As we approach the season of Christmas, our hearts are drawn once again to the miracle of God's love made visible in the birth of Jesus Christ. In the familiar words of the prophet Isaiah, we are reminded: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

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Janet Warren 01367 710789 or [jmwarren302@gmail.com](mailto:jmwarren302@gmail.com) Closing date this month is the 18<sup>th</sup> December.

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Christmas is a time of celebration, joy, and togetherness. Yet, it is also a season that invites us to reflect deeply on the profound hope that entered the world that first Christmas night. In the humblest of settings—a stable in Bethlehem—God came to dwell among us, not with grandeur or spectacle, but in vulnerability and simplicity. Through the Christ child, we see the boundless love of God reaching out to every one of us, offering peace to a weary and fractured world.

As we gather with family and friends, exchange gifts, and enjoy festive traditions, let us not lose sight of the heart of this season. Christmas is not just about what we receive or what we give, but about *who* we are in light of the love that has been freely given to us. God's gift of Jesus is an invitation: to embrace a life of grace, forgiveness, and compassion.

For many, this season is filled with joy and excitement. But for others, Christmas may bring feelings of loneliness, loss, or uncertainty. In the busyness of the festivities, let us remember those in need—the lonely neighbour, the struggling family, the person far from home. A kind word, a helping hand, or a simple act of generosity can reflect the very light of Christ to someone in darkness.

In our parish community, we have the privilege of being that light to one another and to our wider neighbourhood. Whether through our carol services or simply sharing in fellowship, let us come together to embody the message of hope and love that the angels proclaimed on that holy night: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men”* (Luke 2:14).

As we journey through this Advent season and prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, I encourage you to take time to pause, to pray, and to rediscover the wonder of Emmanuel—God with us. May this Christmas be a time of renewal for your faith, a source of joy for your heart, and an opportunity to share the light of Christ with all you meet.

On behalf of our four congregations in the parish, I wish you and your loved ones a blessed and peaceful Christmas. May the hope, joy, and love of Christ fill your homes and lives now and always. We look forward to seeing you at one or more of our Christmas services. You will be made very welcome. With every blessing,

Paul

Revd Paul Eddy FRSA

**Vicar of Stanford in the Vale with Goosey & Hatford**

## **Church Bell Ringing**

### **How did you spend your Sunday afternoon?**

I spent some of mine perched on a wooden beam, high up in the church tower – about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way up from the ground – trying to persuade a 7” bolt to move out of a large piece of wood. The main

purpose of that piece of wood, called a headstock, is to hold a 3cwt (187kg) bell up. The bolts (2 of them) were holding a smaller piece of wood, called a stay, which is also attached to the headstock. The stay's purpose is to allow the bell to rest upright – with the heavy bell “mouth” pointing up.

### **Why, you might ask, was I doing that?**

Well, the stay is not only designed to enable the bell stay upright when required, it is also designed to break if too much pressure is applied as, if the stay didn't give way, then other parts of the structure would instead be damaged and, while inconvenient, replacing a stay is much easier and economical than paying thousands of pounds to repair a bell installation. This particular stay had broken, and I was removing the remnant in order to get a precise specification for the replacement.

It's not for everyone, but it is fascinating to see how the tower and how the bell frame are constructed. Sitting next to a bell that is 133 years old (one of the younger bells in our tower, 5 of them are 324 years old), in a part of the tower that was built in the Middle Ages, on a frame that is constructed in a very similar manner to that which would have been used when the bells were first cast, is, some would say, a privilege. It is certainly interesting and different.

We now have the replacement stay and some nice new shiny bolts and by the time you read this, we should have installed the replacement stay and the bell will be back in use.

### **If you or anyone you know would be interested in being involved in maintaining the bell installation in the future, please do get in touch.**

No pre-knowledge is required but you would need to be reasonably fit, be able to ascend ladders and to climb around the structure. Please do get in touch via e-mail ([StDenysChurchBells@btinternet.com](mailto:StDenysChurchBells@btinternet.com)) or by talking to the vicar, the church wardens or the tower captain. (I should add that the drop from the frame is not the full  $\frac{3}{4}$  height of the church tower. There are two floors between).

Please do also contact us, via the e-mail address, if you'd like to get involved in ringing the church bells. Full training provided.

Incidentally, I am reliably told that one of the carpenters involved in the construction of the bell frame carved his initials somewhere. I look every time I am working in the bell chamber - but I have yet to find them. There is a lot of wood there!

Jackie Tower Captain

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### WHEELCHAIR LOAN

With Christmas drawing near and family and friends visiting, just a reminder that we have a wheelchair available for short term loan.

This service is available throughout the year for hospital appointments, social outings, visitors, day trips etc but is most often used during holiday times. If you are a resident of Stanford in the Vale and would like to borrow it for any reason, **free of charge**, just give us a call on 01367 710724.

### OPEN MIC NIGHTS in the village:

These start at **8pm every 1st Wednesday** of the month in the Horse and Jockey and every 3rd Thursday of the month in the Social Club (no need to be a Social Club member to attend the open mics). Come along to enjoy a fun night of free entertainment and/or to perform to an enthusiastic audience.

### Repair Café

During November we will be open in the Coffee shop on **Saturday 1st December** from 11am – 1pm for advice and small items. We can take small items for you for repair. Derek 01367 710283 – [reco@clara.co.uk](mailto:reco@clara.co.uk)

### Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**7.30 pm Stanford in the Vale Parish Council Meeting in Stanford in the Vale Village Hall** - check noticeboards or Parish Council website for details. Members of the public are welcome to attend

### Stanford in the Vale Village Hall

**Prize Christmas Bingo  
Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Doors open at 7 for Eyes-down at 7.30pm

**Cash prize for Last House**

Bar and raffle

Contact: J. Warren [jmwarren302@gmail.com](mailto:jmwarren302@gmail.com) or  
01367 710789

### Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue's Christmas Fayre Saturday 7th December 2024 at Benson Village Hall, 10am - 4pm. Free Entry.

Many attractions, including Santa's Grotto, Christmas Gifts, Tombola, Raffle, Crafts Stalls, Children's Games & Activities, and an onsite Café for food and drinks!

Santa's Grotto pre-bookings online via our website [www.oxfordshirewildliferescue.co.uk](http://www.oxfordshirewildliferescue.co.uk)

### St Denys Handbell Ringers

We have had a great month rehearsing our music for the Christmas season where we have challenged ourselves practicing both 12-bell and 2-octave music. We are looking forward to playing at our bookings and hope to see many of you at the **Stanford in the Vale Social Club on Saturday 7th**, and at the **St Denys' Church Carol Service on Sunday 15th December**.

Lastly, we would all like to wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year! If you would like to start the new year with a new hobby, or would like to book us for an event, please send us an e-mail to Jackie at [StDenys.HBR@btinternet.com](mailto:StDenys.HBR@btinternet.com)

### Stanford Social Club

**CHRISTMAS FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY ON SATURDAY 7th DECEMBER AT 12pm until 4pm**  
Bar open for mulled wine /mince pies /Hot and Cold Drinks  
ALL DIFFERENT KIND OF STALLS.  
EVERYONE WELCOME

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CHRISTMAS BINGO ON FRIDAY 13th DECEMBER  
PRIZES AND MONEY, EYE'S DOWN AT 7.30pm  
EVERYONE WELCOME

### STANFORD IN THE VALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**WEDNESDAY 11th DECEMBER  
@7.30 in the large Village Hall  
CAN ONIONS CURE EARACHE  
( Medical advice from the 1700's )  
With MELANIE KING  
Visitors welcome, entrance fee £5**

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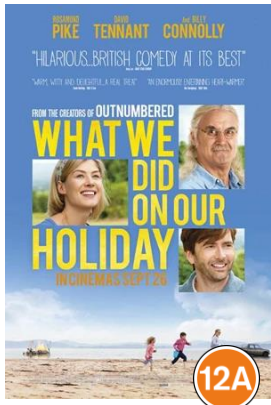
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## Stanford Village Hall Film Club

### What we did on our Holiday

#### A Special Request – Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December



**Synopsis: WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAY** is a hilarious journey through an unforgettable family holiday as a couple attempt to keep their impending divorce secret from their extended family.

Director(s): Andy Hamilton, Guy Jenkin  
Cast: Billy Connolly, Ben Miller, Rosamund Pike, David Tennant

Doors open 7.00 pm, film starts at 7.30pm.

Tickets: U18's £3 Adult £5

Card payments only

Bar and Refreshments available



**Home Instead The Companionship Café** runs once a month at the Village Hall. It is open to all and it's free, being a charitable group by Home Instead Charities, with volunteers from the local Home Instead hosting it. Come along for a cuppa, cake, company and creative activities and fun quizzes. It's at 1.30-3.30pm drop in anytime, On **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December.**

#### Folk Session at The Horse & Jockey and the William Titchener Connection

Did you know that there are folk songs from our village? In the 1920s and 30s a folklorist from the US called Dr James Madison Carpenter travelled throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland collecting folk songs and tunes. It was 1932 when he got to Stanford and met a singer called William Titchener. Titchener gave him about 6 songs, Carpenter wrote down the words and made recordings onto wax cylinder, and these records are available online.

When some local folk musicians and singers were invited by the Horse & Jockey to set up a regular folk session, it was decided that it was a great opportunity to sing William Titchener's songs again.

The session happens on the 2nd Thursday of the month and the next one will be on **13<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm.** It is an informal evening of traditional folk tunes and songs. Everyone is welcome to play, sing, join in with the choruses and or listen and soak up the atmosphere. Some of the tunes and songs are very local, like Titchener's songs or tunes from villages in the area, some are from further afield.

For more details contact [jane.bird@gmail.com](mailto:jane.bird@gmail.com)

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## Stanford in the Vale Volunteer

### Hospital Taxi Service

Should you require a lift for a hospital or dental appointment - call **05603 660 122** and leave a message. If a driver is found, they will contact you.

Should you not receive a phone call by the day prior to your appointment this usually means a driver has not been found. **We do need more drivers so that this very valuable service can be continued in the village. Several people have been led down recently due to the lack of drivers.**

**Contact Dan – 05603 660 122** for more information – leaving your number and he will get back to you

### Pre-school news –December 2024

We have been learning some new poems and have enjoyed learning the words and actions. We have also been acting out our favourite stories.

We had a fun Halloween Disco for the children which everyone enjoyed and we are looking forward to getting into the Christmas spirit.

We have now signed up as a good cause on the new White Horse Lottery. This is a great way to support the Pre-school and also win some money yourself. Information on how to join can be found here:

<https://www.whitehorselottery.co.uk>

[You can also support the Pre-school by buying online through Easy Fundraising and choosing us as your good cause. At no cost to you every time you shop we will get a commission from the company. https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stanfordpresch/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=rm-en-e2](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stanfordpresch/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_medium=email&utm_content=rm-en-e2)

The Pre-school would be delighted to hear from any companies or individuals who would be interested in supporting the Pre-school financially. Due to a mixture of long-term insufficient funding from government (our only income) and rising financial costs the Pre-school continues to be in a very precarious financial state.

If you are interested in registering your child with us please visit [www.stanfordpreschool.org.uk](http://www.stanfordpreschool.org.uk) and complete a Pre-Registration form or contact the Pre-school on 01367 718696.





## Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School

We have been continuing to enjoy our learning at school and the term remains busy and exciting!

Pupil Parliament

Year One - Jackson and Macy

Year Two - Aria and Noah

Year Three - Willow and Isabelle

Year Four - James and Emily

Year Five - Elodie and Josh

Year Six - Apeha and James B

**Foundation** - We are thinking all about the different celebrations that happen at this time of year and how each one is marked in its own way. We have been focusing on Bonfire Night and Diwali as well as Remembrance Day so far this term.

**Year One** - This term we are learning all about our village, looking at maps and pictures to learn all about the geography of Stanford in the Vale. We have also been continuing to work on our Maths skills by working on addition and subtraction to 20.

**Year Two** - We have been reading out story, *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark* and exploring how characters are developed in stories. We have started swimming this term which we are all really enjoying and are progressing well with our swimming skills.

**Year Three** - We have started this term by extending our Maths skills with a particular focus on column addition. We have also started to learn about the geography of Oxfordshire and comparing it to the geography of Normandy.

**Year Four** - In year 4 we have been getting to know our new teacher as well as being very busy with our learning. We have been learning all about myths and legends ready to write our own versions!

**Year Five** - We had a very interesting trip to an author talk this term which inspired us all.

Alongside this we have started learning all about our topic of Earth and Space including carrying out an exciting phases of the moon activity!

**Year Six** - We had the most amazing week at PGL at the start of term. Everyone had an incredible time, pushing themselves to be brave and showing resilience at every turn. We all enjoyed everything we did - plus the food was delicious!

This term is already shaping up to be incredibly busy! We marked Remembrance Day with a whole school service down at the memorial. Following this we have been marking Choose Respect week by wearing Odd Socks to celebrate our differences, carrying out activities linked to showing respect in class and supporting Children in Need by wearing bright clothes to school and holding a cake sale. In addition to all of this we have also been lucky enough to participate in prayer space this week which gave us all an opportunity to think about our use of prayer.

Please do look on our school website for more information about what we have been doing.

Thank you for reading our report.

Take care and keep safe.

**Van Dieman's** - is there anyone who would be happy to deliver these newsletters to all the houses in Van Dieman's. Do let me know.

**Many thanks to Wendy who has done this for many years.**

To include items in January's newsletter please send to [jmwarren302@gmail.com](mailto:jmwarren302@gmail.com) or telephone **01367 710789** and leave a message.

**Closing date: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024. Late items can no long be accepted**

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