



JANUARY 2026

PARISH NEWSLETTER

JANUARY SERVICES FOR THE MONTH

Sunday 4th January Epiphany
10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)
4pm Denys@4

Sunday 11th January Baptism of Christ
10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)
4.00 pm Denys@4
6.00 pm Evening Service
(All Saints, Goosey)

Sunday 18th January Epiphany 2
10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)
4.00 pm Denys @4

Sunday 25th January Epiphany 3
10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)
4.00 pm Denys @4
6.00 pm Evensong BCP
(St. Georges, Hatford)

Sunday 1st February
Presentation of Christ
10.15 am Holy Communion (Stanford)
4.00 pm Denys @4

WHO'S WHO IN THE PARISH?

Vicar

The Revd Paul Eddy 710267

Church Warden

Maz Galley 07585 553883

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Liz Ward 07808726780

Web Site – stdenys.org stanford in the vale

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

The Vicar Writes – January 2026

"Putting Our Hand Into the Hand of God"

Dear Parishioner

As we step into a brand-new year, I wonder how many of us approach January with a mixture of hope and hesitation.

The calendar may have turned its page, but much in life continues exactly as it was on 31 December - the challenges, the uncertainties, the unanswered questions. Yet there is something about the month of January that invites us to pause, take a breath, and ask ourselves how we want to walk into the days ahead.

At moments like these, my mind returns to a beautiful and much-loved piece of writing, quoted by King George VI during the dark days of 1939. You may well know it:

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied: 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"

These words from Minnie Louise Haskins' poem *The Gate of the Year* speak with remarkable freshness even today. They remind us that what we most need at the start of a new year is not a spotlight that reveals every twist and turn ahead, but a steady hand to hold. The Christian faith does not promise us a detailed map; instead, it offers us a companion - Christ Himself - who walks with us into all that is still unknown.

In our rural communities, we understand something of this. We cannot control the weather, the markets, the harvests, or the countless variables that shape our days. But we do know about trust - trusting the seasons, trusting the land, trusting that seeds planted in quiet soil will, in time, bear fruit. And perhaps this January, we are invited to that same quiet trust in God: not a loud or dramatic faith, but a steady one that shows itself in small, daily ways.

To "put our hand into the hand of God" is to begin the year with openness rather than fear. It is to say, "Lord, I don't know what this year will bring, but I am willing to walk with You through it." It is to believe that whatever joys or sorrows 2026 may hold, we do not face them alone.

My prayer for our parish this year is simple: that we would be people of hope. Hope not built on wishful thinking, but on the deep conviction that God is faithful, God is near, and God is already at work in the places we cannot yet see. Whether this year brings new opportunities, new challenges, or simply more of the

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ordinary routines we know so well, may we find Christ's presence woven through it all.

So as we stand at the gate of another year, may we take His hand - and step forward with courage, peace, and trust.

Every blessing for 2026,

Paul

Revd Paul Eddy

Vicar

Stanford Church Bell Ringers

Thank you to everyone that noticed the bell ringing during 2025 and especially to those that noticed the improving quality of ringing.

We have taught a number of new ringers since about 2021, just a few new people each year, and it has been great to witness their development and enjoyment of the art of bellringing.

As well as ringing bells at our own towns and villages, bell ringers often ring at other bell towers. It can be a very social activity.

In October, our district ringers organised an outing to the Cotswolds. A group of more than 20 ringers met up and rang at Bourton on the Hill, Blockley, Moreton in Marsh (where we also had a lovely pub lunch), Broadwell, Stow on the Wold and Burford. There was also the opportunity to take a look at the bells themselves at Blockley and a fantastic CCTV set-up allowed us to watch the bells above our heads as we rang at Burford.

At the beginning of December, one of our youngsters rang at Winchester Cathedral, welcomed by the local ringers while in the area for a family visit to the Christmas markets.

In November, at Stanford in the Vale, we welcomed ringers from Harwell and Drayton who visited as part of their outing to the Vale of the White Horse. In January we are expecting more visitors – the Gloucestershire Golden Oldies.

If you are interested in knowing more – or you would just like to see the inside of the church tower and how bells are rung, please visit us in the church tower on a Tuesday (7.30-9pm) or Sunday (9.45-10.15am) (ideally contacting us in advance via e-mail at StDenysChurchBells@btinternet.com, just in case there has been a change in arrangements). We look forward to meeting you.

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.

Stanford in the Vale Volunteer Hospital

Taxi Service -

Should you require a lift for a hospital or dental appointment and cannot get there any other way, - call **07473550559** and leave a message stating your name and the location, date and time of your appointments. One of our drivers will then be in contact with you - please allow 3 to 4 days for a response

Would you be happy to drive someone needing to get to a doctors or hospital appointment? Could be just local in Faringdon or Wantage, or further afield in Oxford and Swindon. We are down to very few drivers, and this is a very important service for people who cannot easily get to these appointments. It would be very sad if we had to close the service. Please contact Bobbie on the above phone number for more details.

Repair Café

We will be meeting as usual on **Saturday 3rd January** at the Social Club from 11am until about 2pm. Anything that stopped working Christmas we might be able to fix. Why not join us as a volunteer we need more people

Email stanfordrepaircafe@silkie.co.uk phone 01367 710283

Wednesday 7th January 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 FILM CLUB FRIDAY 9th JANUARY THE PENGUIN LESSONS



Synopsis: Starring Oscar nominee Steve Coogan, this poignant dramedy from director Peter Cattaneo (Military Wives, TIFF '19) follows an Englishman's personal and political awakening after he adopts a penguin during a cataclysmic period in Argentine history.

Certification: 12

Cast: Bruno Blas, Steve Coogan, Julia Fossi, Jonathan Pryce

**Village Hall • Friday 9th January • Pay by Card
19:00 for 19:30 start • Bar & Refreshments**

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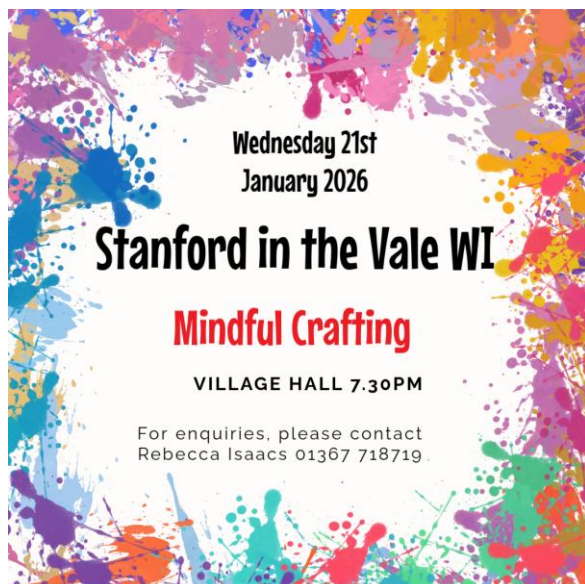
STANFORD IN THE VALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
WEDNESDAY 14th JANUARY @ 7.30 in the large
village hall

THE WOMEN OF BLETCHLEY PARK

GUEST SPEAKER : BILL KING

Visitors welcome : admission fee £5

Tea & Coffee available from 7.15



Stanford in the Vale Village Hall **Curry Evening**

Saturday, 24th January

6:30 for 7:00pm

Menu Highlights

STARTERS: Poppadum's with Dips:

- Mango Chutney
- Yoghurt & Mint
- Lime Pickle

- Tomato, Onion & Coriander

MAINS: Chicken Curry (Medium Hot)
Basmati Rice

Spinach & Mushroom Coconut Curry (Mild)

Potato & Red Pepper (Spicy)

Prawn & Chick Pea (Thai Style)

Indian Beer on Sale plus Bar

Tickets: £20.00 each

Limited Numbers – Book Early!

Contact: jmwarren302@gmail.com

07891013114

Gardening Club

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday January 28th at 2.30 pm in the Village Hall.**

The speaker will be Fay Pendell and her subject will be **"My Dad and the Chelsea Garden"**. Fay's father was Bill Pendell of the 11th Armoured Division. He was chosen by D-Day Revisited to represent the Normandy veterans in this garden at the Chelsea Flower Show. The garden was then gifted to the town of Arromanches in Normandy. Visitors welcome.

Refreshments and Raffle.

Please note the change of time for this meeting. The February and March meetings will also be in the afternoon.

Annual subscription of £15 due in January.

Enquiries: Rosemary Packer 01367 710445

Gardening Tips for January

- Prune apple and pear trees (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/fruit/apples/pruning-made-easy>)
- Clean pots and greenhouses ready for spring.
- Check houseplants regularly to avoid drying out.
- Inspect stored tubers of dahlias, begonias and cannas for rot or drying out.
- Start forcing rhubarb.
- Keep putting out food and fresh water for birds.
- Cut off hellebore leaves at the base to discourage black spot and show off flowers.

It's Panto Time – Oh yes, it is.

STANFORD IN THE VALE DRAMA GROUP

Proudly present

'CINDERELLA' by Ben Crocker

At Stanford in the Vale Village Hall

DATES: Thursday 5th February 7.30pm

Friday 6th February 7.30pm

Saturday 7th February 2.30pm
7.30pm

Doors Open at 7.00pm (2.00pm for Matinee)

BAR Available – Cash or Card (Not Matinee)

Raffle and refreshments

TICKETS: £10.00 £5.00 Concessions
(Under 16 & Seniors)

Available from the Stanford Coffee Shop – Cash
Only

Enquiries 710400

Come on ease your Winter Blues.

A laugh, a boo, is what to choose.

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Pre-school news – January 2026

It has been a busy term with lots of excitement during the last couple of weeks regarding Christmas. The children have made salt dough decorations for their Christmas trees and used a variety of resources to make cards for their families. They have been busy wrapping presents and writing letters to Father Christmas in the Elf Workshop. We have shared Christmas themed stories – the children favourite being Father Christmas Needs a Wee. We finished of the term with our performance of songs in the church for the families.

Many thanks to Megan Rolls for supporting the Pre-school again this year. She very kindly gave us the opportunity to sell refreshments at her Christmas Bazaar where we made some extra funds for the Pre-school.

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

If you are interested in registering your child with us please visit 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

Year 2 - Ava and Teo

Year 4 - Millie

Year 5 - Rosie

Year 6 - Imogen, Melody, Phoebe, George and Mary

Key Stage One - We have been so busy this month practicing for our nativity and put on the most wonderful performances of it to the school, parents and carers! It was brilliant and we are all so proud of ourselves!

Year Three, Year Four and Year Five - We have also been working incredibly hard to put together our nativity - we had lots of lines, songs and dances to learn but all did a fantastic job. All of our audiences were blown away by our excellent shows!

Year Six - We have been learning all about North America this term and have planned our own road trip across the USA. We have also been working hard in English to create wonderful adventure narratives all about our 'failed projects' which we designed based on 'The Barnabus Project'.

As a school we had a wonderful Christmas Art Day - this year it was an eco- themed day where we made the most of recyclable materials to create some wonderful Christmas themed art pieces. As well as this, in what is always a very busy term, we have enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch and a wonderful visit to the panto!

Thank you for reading our report.
Take care and keep safe.

To include items in February's newsletter please send to jmwarren302@gmail.com or telephone 01367 710789 and leave a message.

Closing date: 18th January 2026

Late items can no long be accepted

