



Cotswold Edge

December 2023

The Church Newsletter for
Marshfield, Cold Ashton,
Tormarton and West Littleton



Benefice Contacts

**For information about Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals or Pastoral Visits
please contact the Vicar, The Rev Sally Wheeler**

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Email: marshfield.benefice@gmail.com

Associate Minister: Rev. Lynne Godfrey 01249 446734

Curate: Rev Sharon Roberts 07903 011030 s.roberts5454@outlook.com

Lay Ministers	Aurea Hart (LLM)	01225 891453
	Mike Strathdee (LLM)	01225 891001
	Andrew Gammie	01225 892392

Safeguarding Officer	Aurea Hart	01225 891453
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St Mary's Church, Marshfield

Churchwardens	Eric Pullin	01225 891351
	Paul White	01225 891765
PCC Secretary	Steve Williams	zen323167@zenco.uk
PCC Treasurer	Kate Brain	01225 892582
Gift Aid/Giving Officer	Peter Brunyate	01225 891508
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Church Bookings	marshfield.benefice@gmail.com	

Holy Trinity, Cold Ashton

Churchwarden	Monica Green	01225 891669
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PCC Treasurer	Georgina Perceval-Maxwell	07771 776290

St Mary Magdalene Church, Tormarton

Churchwardens	Richard Lawrence	01454 218730
	Stewart Waters	01454 218393
PCC Secretary	Vacant	
PCC Treasurer	Janet Wells	01454 218549

St James' Church, West Littleton

Churchwardens	David Adams	01225 891100
	Beccy Derry-Evans	
PCC Treasurer	Michael Horgan	01225 891486

Marshfield Chapel	David Spence	01225 891115
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Tormarton Newsletter:	Janet Wells	01454 218549

***Benefice website* www.marshfieldchurch.org**

***To put items on website please contact Richard Shreeve* 01225 891169**

Tormarton www.tormarton.org West Littleton www.westlittleton.com

Bristol Diocese www.bristol.anglican.org/

Church of England www.churchofengland.org

For information on Christian Faith: www.christianity.org.uk.

Becoming Like Christ

To become like Christ may seem quite presumptuous. Surely we can't be like the Son of God, he was completely unique and perfect, wasn't he? He had all the Christmas angels announcing when he came, and we hardly expect that for us! Yet there are several places in Scripture where we are encouraged to aim for just that, to be like Jesus.

Consider first how in John 20 Jesus said "as the Father has sent me, I am sending you". We are supposed to be sent in the same way as Jesus. How was that? At Christmas we remember how God gave Jesus in a weak and vulnerable form, not as some powerful ruler. He came in poverty to bring interior riches. Maybe we can learn how strength, image, influence are not necessarily our pattern for action, but rather personal, open-hearted action.

Then Paul tells in his letter to the Philippians of how we should "have the same mindset as Christ Jesus", when Jesus was not counting equality with God something to be used or held on to, but took the form of a servant. I do often wonder whether loving service is actually the central Christian ethic, not any of our other activities. Serving would certainly be Christlike – remember the disciples' foot washing? Paul also in the same letter wanted to become "like [Christ] in his death", and through that to know his own resurrection. So it's not just service, but sacrificial service – work that costs us something, for which we have to give up our status, comfort, what else? – to "lose our lives" as Jesus himself said – to which we need to aspire.

While it is true that John wrote that we shall only be fully like Christ when he finally appears again, yet we are clearly meant to follow Jesus' example and seek Jesus' qualities in our lives here and now.

How might that work out in our daily lives? We can perhaps view our situations as areas where God has placed us to be like Christ, to bring something of Jesus' character into those groups or places. We might be the person who speaks that word, or who says that silent prayer, that only we are in a position to give. We may feel unworthy (and in fact we are) but if His life in us is allowed to take root, then it will be His life that is shown as we seek to be more like Christ. We can ask ourselves when faced with a decision, or when given the opportunity to serve: "what would be Christlike in this situation?".

We shall be singing soon as part of one of the well known carols "Be born in us today" – may the reality of that life in us make us more like Christ, bit by bit, character trait by character trait, day by day.

Andrew Gammie

From the Benefice Registers

Weddings

There were no weddings in November.

Baptisms

25th November St Mary's Marshfield: Zachary and Harry Meynell

Funerals

There were no funerals in November.

Congratulations to Aurea and Christopher Hart who celebrate their 55th Wedding Anniversary on 28th December.

Breakfast Church December 3rd at 8.30am in Marshfield Church we continue to meet relatives of Jesus from the Bible. It is every first Sunday of the month so put those dates in your diaries!

Gift Services 3rd December take place in Marshfield, Cold Ashton and Tormarton Churches. The Sisters of the Church in Bristol welcome our gifts to help those struggling: toiletries for men and women or warm accessories - scarves, gloves, hats; money towards Christmas food and £15 Argos Vouchers for parents to buy a gift for their children. Please bring your gift(s) to church on 3rd December at any of the services taking place. (NB West Littleton organise their own giving to the Sisters through the village).

Advent Choral Celebration 3rd December 6pm: Service for the Benefice in Marshfield Church. Come join from across the Benefice to celebrate the start of Advent 2023 and worship together with beautiful choral music as part of the service.

Advent Tree of Hope

In the build-up to Christmas, it can be difficult as we miss those who are no longer with us. This year, there will again be an Advent Tree in St Mary's Church on which the names of your loved ones can be placed as a simple act of remembering. It is also a 'Tree of Hope' so prayers for specific situations can be attached, as can a 'thank you' for your answered prayers. Tags will be in the church by the tree and the church is open daily.



Cafe Church: Monday 4th December in Marshfield Church Hall, 12.30-2.30pm. Cafe Church meets on the first Monday of the month for a light lunch, warm venue and friendly company, along with a 'Thought for the Day' from a Christian perspective. Everyone is welcome. Contacts for transport: Rev Lynne Godfrey lynne.rev@sky.com, 01249 446734; Aurea Hart aurea.hart@gmail.com, 01225 891453.

Village Prayer: Every Tuesday 10-10.30am in the Chapel. Every second Tuesday of the month a Village Midweek Communion brings us all together. December: Marshfield Chapel on Tuesday 12th.

Local House of Prayer Monday 4th, 11th & 18th December, 1.30-2pm via Marshfield Church Zoom Room, praying for our community.

Thursday morning Prayer Group: This group meets fortnightly in St Mary's Church Marshfield between 10.30am-11.00am; December 7th and 21st.

Benefice Study Group in Marshfield: A fortnightly Bible study group is open to new members on Monday 11th December at the home of Melanie and Rowan Hardy (Broadway Cottage, Sheepfair Lane, Marshfield). NB Other groups are not meeting this month.

Monthly Home Group at the Vicarage Every 4th Thursday hosted by Sally. All welcome as we explore the book of James. 10am -12 noon

Edward Bear Toddler Club run by Chapel and Church

For parents, grandparents or carers and their preschool children on Friday 15th December 9.30am-10.30am in Marshfield Chapel.

Cold Ashton: Some dates for your diary

Coffee morning every Thursday at the Village Hall 10-12pm.

Table Tennis every Tuesday at the Village Hall 7- 9pm

Christmas Party Friday the 15th December 7pm to 12pm. Father Christmas arrives at 7.15pm so do bring your kids, please let Nic Wylde know how many please. Music by Steve West with a Michael Bublé Tribute. Raffle, Games and Dancing. BYO food to share with a cash/ card bar.

New Years Eve Party Sunday the 31st December 8pm until late in Cold Ashton Parish Hall. It's a casual celebration, BYO Food and Drink and bring in the New Year with friends.

Tormarton

Village Coffee Mornings on Mondays 4th, 18th December 10am-noon thanks to Rupert and Penny at The Compass Inn - a chance to meet and enjoy complimentary coffee and tea!

Christmas Party! 3-5pm in the Village Hall.

Charities we are supporting this Christmas in the Benefice:

Gift Day services: the Sisters of the Church

Marshfield Carol Service: CAP (Christians Against Poverty)

Christmas Eve Christingle: The Children's Society

Marshfield Christmas Services Information:

The Christmas card with services for Marshfield Church and Chapel will be delivered in Marshfield and be available to pick up in the other Benefice churches. Local church notice boards will also show what is on with reminders through the village WhatsApp groups for Cold Ashton and Tormarton.

The School Christmas Service will take place on 14th December at 1.30pm in St Mary's Church

The Great Big Nativity Marshfield 10th December at 10.30am - a chance to dress up as a character from the Nativity as we retell the wonder of Jesus' first coming in Bethlehem.



Benefice Christmas Carol Services

Cold Ashton December 10th at 6pm

Marshfield December 17th at 7.30pm

Tormarton December 17th at 5.00pm

West Littleton December 22nd at 5.00pm

Christmas Eve Benefice services at Marshfield

9.00am: Quiet Service for Christmas at St Mary's Church, Marshfield

5.00pm: Christingle Service at St Mary's Church, Marshfield

11.30pm: Midnight Communion at St Mary's Church, Marshfield

Christmas Day

There will be a service in each of our churches on Christmas Day. Please see the back page for details.



Information about Flags on the Church flagpole

You may notice that there is sometimes a flag flying in Marshfield Churchyard. Each month going forward we will notify flag flying days and why. In November the union flag was flying for Remembrance (a national occasion) and for King Charles' 75th birthday. In December flags will fly on the following days - subject to wind speeds of less than 30mph (Force 6)!

Sunday Dec. 3rd: St George's Cross for the start of Advent

Wednesday Dec. 6th: St George's Cross for St Nicholas Day

Sunday 24th December until 6th January : St George's Cross to mark the 12 days of Christmas and the start of Epiphany.

Advent Carols *by* *Candlelight*



St Mary's Church, Marshfield
6pm Sunday 3rd December 2023

A special service with choir
for the whole community
to celebrate the Advent Season

Traditional advent carols and refreshments afterwards

ST MARY'S MARSHFIELD

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

SUNDAY
17 DECEMBER
7.30PM



JOIN US IN CHURCH
FOR A TRADITIONAL
CAROL SERVICE
WITH CHOIR

followed by mulled wine and mince pies

ST MARY'S MARSHFIELD

Christingle Service



Sunday
24th Dec 5pm

Singing led by
the children's choir
and instrumentalists

Advance Notice: Plough Sunday January 14th



Benefice Plough Service Sunday 14th January 11.30am at Marshfield Church followed by a hot lunch



Sing Away the Winter Blues

An informal singing session of old and new favourite songs
A session that will make our voices and brains work and will leave
us with a smile on our faces

No singing experience required! Just a fun sing

Tuesdays in the Chapel (starting 7th Nov.)

2-3.15 pm

£1 per session

For more details contact: Sally Kerr Tel:892126 or Frances Gammie email: fgammie@gmail.com



The new Bishop of Swindon takes up his role in December after his consecration in Canterbury by Archbishop Justin. The Venerable Neil Warwick, has been in the Diocese since 2019 when he took up the role of Archdeacon of Bristol. Marshfield Benefice, as part of Chippenham Deanery is under his oversight so we hope to see him here soon!

Israel and Gaza

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.'
Matthew 5.9

Please join in praying for all those affected by the terrible violence in Israel and Gaza, and for all who work for peace, unity and healing.

A Prayer for Peace in Israel and Gaza

Heavenly Father, we pray for the many people whose lives have been torn apart by conflict in Israel and Gaza.

We pray especially for those who have died, those who are grieving, the injured and those now without food, shelter or medical supplies. Strengthen and support the work of all relief organisations.

We pray also for those who have the power to bring peace. May they be touched by a spirit of compassion and kindness. Lord hear us as we pray in the power of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Marshfield Church will host a Prayer Vigil for Peace throughout Monday 4th December. Come into the Church to light a candle and pray. Led prayers at 7pm. We continue to pray for peace in Ukraine, for refugees and for the displaced.

Alpha: Big Questions of Life – do you have questions you have always wanted to ask about the Christian faith? Do you want to learn more about what Christians believe? An honest place to explore, challenge and share with others. Starting in January.

December Benefice Prayer Diary

Marshfield with Cold Ashton and Tormarton with West Littleton

Benefice Prayer: Lord, let us not labour for you in vain. Teach us to pray, deepen our fellowship, enable our ministry, strengthen our benefice, and nurture our children, that, united in Christ, we might be a holy temple in which you dwell by your Spirit. Amen

Week 1: 1st-2nd December During the week, please pray:-
for all those looking forward to new beginnings – such as the birth of a baby, a wedding, a new job, a new home, a new responsibility.

Week 2: 3rd-9th December During the week, please pray:-
for the parish of Marshfield, its PCC, and churchwardens;
that the God of peace will give hope to those in countries in conflict and encourage all who work for peace and reconciliation
for Christians who live in our communities but worship elsewhere

Week 3: 10th-16th December During the week, please pray :-
for the parish of Tormarton, its PCC, and churchwardens
for a new care for God's world without abusing its resources
for those who feel "trapped" - by illness, addictions, poverty, broken relationships or any other way

Week 4: 17th -23rd December During the week, please pray:-
for the parish of West Littleton, its PCC and churchwardens
for our linked CMS mission partner Katia Rocks as she reaches out in one of the areas of Brazil that is most in need
for all who find the celebration of Christmas difficult;
those who are ill at home or in hospital, the bereaved, the lost and the lonely.

Week 5: 24th-31st December During the week, please pray:-
for the parish of Cold Ashton, its PCC, and churchwarden
for the Ministry Team - Revs Sally Wheeler, Lynne Godfrey and Sharon Roberts, Andrew Gammie, Aurea Hart and Mike Strathdee
for our Bishops, Vivienne Faull and Neil Warwick and our diocese as we seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit to become a "Transformed Church for everyone – "Bolder, Simpler and Humbler"

Please Note: *If you would like a prayer to be included in the prayers at our Tuesday prayer group or in this Prayer Diary, please contact Paul Sawyer, 16, Fairfield Close, Marshfield (891436) or Sally Wheeler*

Benefice Services for December 2023

Please note: 10.30am services can be joined on Zoom marshfieldchurch.org

Sunday 3rd December

8:30am	Breakfast Church	St Mary's Marshfield	A. Gammie
9:00am	Holy Communion	Holy Trinity Cold Ashton	A. Hart
10.30am	Family Service	St Mary's Tormarton	M. Strathdee
10:30am	Morning Worship	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev S Roberts
6:00pm	Advent Evensong	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev SW/SR

Sunday 10th December

9:00am	Holy Communion	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev L Godfrey
10:30am	Family Service	St Mary's Marshfield	Ministry Team
10:3am	Mattins	St James' West Littleton	A. Hart
6:00pm	Carol Service	Holy Trinity Cold Ashton	Rev S Wheeler

Sunday 17th December

10.30am	Family Communion	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev S Wheeler
5:00pm	Carol Service	St Mary's Tormarton	Rev S Wheeler
7.30pm	Carol Service	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev S Wheeler

Sunday 24th December

9:00am	Communion	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev S Wheeler
5:00pm	Christingle	St Mary's Marshfield	SW/A. Gammie
11:30pm	Midnight Mass	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev SW/SR

Monday 25th December

9:00am	Christmas Holy Comm	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev S Wheeler
10:00am	Holy Communion	St James' West Littleton	Rev L Godfrey
10:30	Family Service	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev SR/MS
10:30	Family Communion	St Mary's Tormarton	Rev S Wheeler
10:30	Holy Communion	St Mary's Marshfield	Rev SW/AG

Chapel Programme for December

Sun 03	10.30am	Gift Service
	6.00pm	David Spence (Advent theme)
Sun 10	10.30am	Gift Service at St Mary's
	6.00pm	Candlelit Carols at the Chapel
Sun 17	10.30am	John Schofield (Christmas theme)
	7.30pm	Join with St Mary's for Candlelit Carols
Sun 24	10.30am	Peter Foster (Christmas theme)
		(no evening service at Chapel)
Mon 25	10.30am	CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE
Sun 31	10.30am	David Spence (New Year message)
		(no evening service)

(*Communion services – the offerings will go to MAF)