



**The Parish Magazine for
Alphamstone, Lamarsh,
Great & Little Henny, Middleton,
Twinstead & Wickham St Pauls**



February 2026

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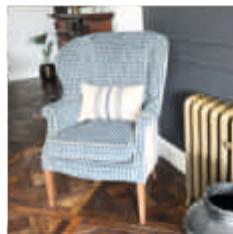
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Please note all copy to be emailed to the editor by the 8th of the month, thank you

Dear Reader,

On page 36 you will see, during Twinstead's pages, that David Holland (who is also Lookout's Chairman) has written a plea for more contributions to Lookout, and I quote: "please consider offering some written or photographic content for future editions of Lookout.....what around you makes your heart sing?.....No matter what it is that brings you joy in this delightful place, why not write about it, let us publish it in Lookout, and let others know of the wonders of the natural world around us. Or maybe, you could let us have your tips to expand our gardening or cooking skills with your special recipes. The readership of Lookout will, I feel sure, be grateful for your effort to share your passions."

Will you help us please, who put Lookout together, and will you give further pleasure to our readers please? With a distribution of over 390 copies of Lookout, your contribution will surely be appreciated. Contributions can be sent to me, gdby@goodbodys.net or to David via lookoutparishmag@gmail.com

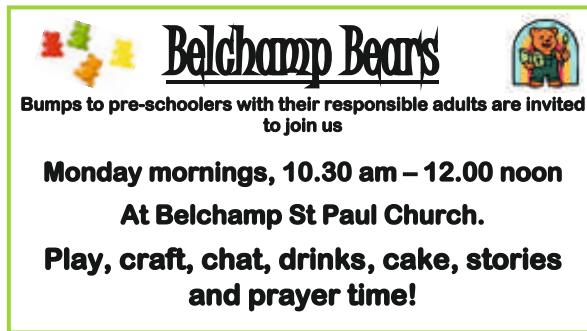
We look forward to hearing from you!

With my good wishes

Susannah

Here is a charming example of a reader sending me the following poem she found, and as 'they' say....."Enjoy"!! Thank you also to Sarah Wells for the cover photograph of Lamarsh church which she has taken.

The computer swallowed grandma. Yes, honestly it's true!
She pressed 'control' and 'enter' and disappeared from view.
It devoured her completely, the thought just makes me squirm.
She must have caught a virus or been eaten by a worm.
I've searched through the recycle bin and files of every kind:
I've even used the internet, but nothing did I find.
In desperation, I asked Jeeves my searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative. Not a thing was found 'on line'.
So, if inside your 'inbox', my Grandma you should see,
Please 'Copy, Scan' and 'Paste' her and send her back to me.



Belchamp Bears

Bumps to pre-schoolers with their responsible adults are invited to join us

Monday mornings, 10.30 am – 12.00 noon
At Belchamp St Paul Church.
Play, craft, chat, drinks, cake, stories and prayer time!



January 2026

Dear Look Out Readers

Many of you will be aware that The Lamarsh Lion Community Pub is transitioning from a Management-run pub to a Tenancy Model. This basically means that instead of the Pub being run on a day-to-day basis by the Committee, we are looking for a tenant to take over the business and pay rent to the Company.

This is an exciting opportunity for both the pub and you, our customers. We hope to get a tenant in place as soon as possible who will be a professional in the hospitality field with expertise in running a successful Pub.

While we transition we will remain OPEN, be staffed in part by volunteers and we very much look forward to your support. The details of opening times for the pub and the kitchen are published elsewhere in this magazine.

If you are not already a Shareholder and would like to buy shares (only £50 each) please do contact the pub and we can give you an application form.

We have some exciting projects including a terrace out front for which we are currently seeking approval of a funding application.

At this time, when the press is constantly filled with stories of the difficult times facing the hospitality industry and pub closures, please do support your local pubs to ensure that we are all able to continue to serve the Community as we at the Lamarsh Lion have done for over 700 years.

With best wishes for a very Happy and Healthy 2026 and we look forward to welcoming you to the Lamarsh Lion before long,

Ian Gibbs

On behalf of the Lamarsh Lion Committee

Contact details:

www.lamarshlion.co.uk Tel: 01787 227007 info@lamarshlion.co.uk

The Lamarsh Lion, Bures Road, Lamarsh, Bures CO8 5EP

Pastoral Ponderings



from The Venerable Robin King.

Dear Friends,

I'm not a great fan of New Year resolutions, partly because I'm no good at them and partly because if something is worth doing, why wait for a new year before starting? But if I had one plea for a 'worldwide resolution', it would be that we show a bit more kindness and understanding towards one another.

On the 28th January, Bishop Sarah Mullally will legally become the Archbishop of Canterbury, but it didn't take long after her appointment was announced for the headlines to list her alleged failings as Bishop of London – and many of those voices came from within the church. I appreciate that there will be things she hasn't done that she could have, and things she could have done but hasn't, but she has some gifts too – and is human like the rest of us.

A friend of mine was once talking to a teacher at his daughter's school and the two of them quickly discovered that they both had a strong Christian faith. As the conversation developed, they also discovered that they had differences of opinion about certain aspects of faith – and the teacher ended the conversation by saying to my friend that they probably would not be able to work together because of these disagreements. My friend walked away very disheartened, thinking that in a school where there were very few children or staff willing to admit to any faith at all, these two should have been firm allies. Didn't they have bigger tasks in hand than to argue amongst themselves?

This is a tension experienced many centuries ago by an Old Testament hero, Nehemiah, who was trying to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after a sticky period for God's people. The trouble was, the Jewish leaders at the time were taking advantage of the weak and poor to gain money and slaves. The response to this behaviour was essentially for Nehemiah and the oppressed to cry out, 'our children are the same as yours; and yet you are forcing our sons and daughters to be slaves; we are powerless, and our fields and vineyards now belong to others.' In other words, 'it's bad enough fighting the enemy outside the walls, but to have to defend ourselves from friends within the walls in tragic.'

The words of Psalm 55 spring to mind, (v.12-13), "It is not enemies who taunt me - I could bear that; it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me - I could hide from them. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend."

If we can change anything in 2026, let it be that we remember that the gospel is good news for all the world, not bad news for one another in the church. Seeing a group of people who have different ways of doing things, and yet working together for a greater cause, is a powerful sign that will be noticed. It will be worth the effort!

Robin King.

Update on Church Buildings – February 2026



As many of you will be aware, following advice from both an architect and a structural engineer, we have made the difficult decision to temporarily close both Henny and Twinstead church buildings.

Both buildings have experienced significant structural issues following the prolonged hot and dry summer of 2025. Cracks that have been present for some years and carefully monitored, have worsened considerably, giving rise to concerns about safety.

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting the written structural engineer's reports for both churches, which will provide a clearer understanding of the situation and help guide our next steps. Further investigative tests are also planned for the spring to assess what may be happening beneath the buildings.

Rev Claire Wilkinson (Team Vicar)

DAWS HALL OPEN DAYS 2026

Snowdrops

15th February



Wildflowers and Roses

7th and 14th June

Autumn Colours

25th October and 1st November

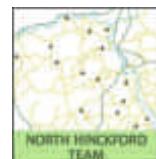
All are 10:00 to 15:00 and entry by donation.

Details as always on our website: dawshallnature.co.uk/events

Come and walk the Prayer Labyrinth

St Mary's, Great and Little Henny

(what3words://glass.cares.lyrics)



A Prayer Labyrinth has been mown into the grass outside the church at Great Henny, and we welcome visitors and passing walkers to prayerfully walk the path.

Labyrinths have been used for centuries in Christian spirituality and beyond, as a meditative tool for prayer, contemplation or simply slowing down. The labyrinth is a spiritual tool that meets you where you are. We believe God welcomes all who seek, doubt, or wonder. Let this be a space of grace, love, and welcome—just as you are.

Everyone is welcome, this space is open to you. You don't need to say any special prayers or believe any particular doctrine to benefit from this quiet, sacred journey.

Jesus said "I am the way, the truth, and the life." – John 14:6

North Hinckford Services February 2026

	1 February Candlemas Gold/white	8 February 2 nd Sunday Before Lent Green	15 February Sunday next Before Lent Green	18 February Ash Wednesday Purple	22 February 1 st Sunday in Lent Purple
ALWAYS CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR ANY CHANGES AND UPDATES www.northhinckfordteam.org					
Alphamstone	9.30am Morning Prayer BCP Lay-led	9.30am Holy Communion			4.00pm Evensong
Belchamp Otten					9.00am Holy Communion BCP
Belchamp St Paul		9.30am Holy Communion			
Belchamp Walter			11.15am Service of the Word		
Borley	11.15am Holy Communion				
Bulmer		11.15am Holy Communion			
Foxearth		10.30am Morning Prayer (Village Hall)	9.30am Service of the Word (Village Hall)		
Henny	9.30am Holy Communion (Parish Room)				
Lamarshe			11.15am Holy Communion		
Liston					
Middleton	11.15am Holy Communion				
Ovington	9.30am Holy Communion				
Pentlow		11.15am Holy Communion			
Twinstead					
Wickham St Paul			9.30am Holy Communion		



Café Worship

6.30pm
Holy Communion
with imposition
of Ashes
at
Belchamp St Paul

Refreshments
served from
10.15am

**10.30am
at
Bulmer**

Smile Lines



The rules of marriage - How can a stranger tell if two people are married?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.

Derrick, age 8

SIX VILLAGES DIARY DATES 2026

W.S.P. Post Office opens Tuesday and Thursday 10.00 – 1.00pm in the Village Hall.

Bowls every Monday 2.00-4.30 in Wickham Village Hall.

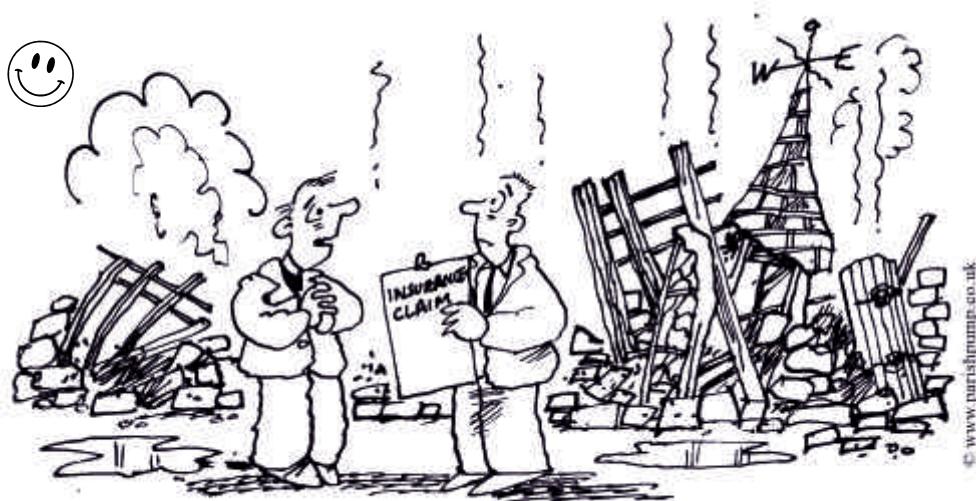
For Lamash's regular events please see Lamash pages. Church Service Rotas on page 8.

February

Sun 1	10.15	Big Breakfast	Alphamstone V.Hall
Tues 3	10.30-12.00	Coffee Morning	"
	2.00	Craft Group	Parish Room, Henny
Thurs 5	10.30-12.00	Community Café	Lamash V.Hall
Tues 10	10.30-12.00	Ladies Circle	Middleton church
Wed 11	1.10-1.40	Mobile Library	The Green, WSP
Sun 15	10.00-3.00	Snowdrops Open Day	Daws Hall
	5.00	Social Club	Alphamstone V.Hall
Tues 17	9.30-11.30	Crafty Women	Carter's Café, WSP
	10.30-12.00	Coffee Morning	Alphamstone V.Hall
	10.30	Pancake Day	Village Hall, WSP
	12.00-2.00	"	Twinstead V.Hall
Fri 20	12.30-1.30	Soup & Cake	Village Hall, WSP
Sat 21	10.00-12.00	V.Hall Social	Twinstead V.Hall

March

Tues 3	10.30-12.00	Coffee Morning	Alphamstone V.Hall
	2.00	Craft Group	Henny Parish Room
Sat 7	2.30	Flower Arrangement Demo	Twinstead V.Hall
Tues 10	7.00	W.I. Open Meeting	WSP Village Hall
Sat 14	10.00-12.00	V.Hall Social	Twinstead V.Hall
Sat 14 & 15		Litter Pick	Henny Village
Tues 17	10.30-12.00	Coffee Morning	Alphamstone V.Hall
Fri 20	12.30-1.30	Sandwich & Cake	WSP Village Hall
	7.00	Antiques Roadshow	Henny Parish Room



...er... apart from this little hiccup... it was an excellent church pancake supper..

Local Bus Guide

DART Bus Service works within our area and can be used by ringing 0115 777 3187 or dart@central-connect.co.uk to book a place. A postcode is required and they will give you times for collection and drop-off. A single fare without concessions is £3.

DaRT 3 Service

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Demand Response Transport (DaRT) is an alternative way of providing access to key services in rural areas.

DaRT services differ from bus services as they are flexible and may divert on and off route to collect and drop off passengers within their operating area.

DaRT 3 is available Monday to Saturday from 6am - 8pm (no operation on Bank Holidays).

To book DaRT 3 call 0115 777 3187 or email dart@central-connect.co.uk

Please note that email bookings are not confirmed until you have received a response from the DaRT booking centre. All DaRT bookings are subject to availability.

Essex Libraries

Take part in Essex Library Service's exciting reading challenges this winter.

For children: The Winter Reading Challenge

Children can meet six adorable 'Pawfessionals' and enjoy a mix of reading and creative activities free of charge. If you finish, you can enter a prize draw to win some amazing goodies, including children's Kindles!

Find out more about the Winter Reading Challenge 2026:

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/digital-content/winter-reading-challenge/childrens-challenge>

For adults: Winter Reading Bingo

Expand your reading list with 16 inspiring prompts in the online Winter Reading Bingo. Complete a line of four and enter the prize draw to win book vouchers worth up to £100 or a book bundle!

Play Reading Bingo online: <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/news/adult-winter-bingo-challenge-2026>

Start your winter reading adventure today! Both challenges will run until 22 February.

Free events for February half term!

From themed crafts and activities to author events, dogs, and the Winter Reading Challenge, there are plenty of ways to keep your little ones entertained over half term at your local library. Become an Ocean Explorer, interview a police officer, enjoy tales of a mind-reading sausage dog, and much more!

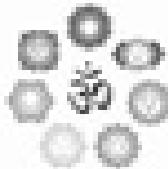
Explore events near you: <https://library-events.essex.gov.uk/search>

Book of the Month - February

The Book of the Month for February is A Cold Wind from Moscow by Rory Clements. A top-secret nuclear scientist, a South London criminal gangster and a Russian hitman are part of the enthralling eighth instalment in the Tom Wilde spy thriller series. Download it free with your library membership. Listen to A Cold Wind from Moscow: <https://campaigns.borrowbox.com/6UZY> <https://campaigns.borrowbox.com/FMT4>

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Crafty Women

Enjoying Crafts Together

2026 for Crafty Women continues at Carter's Cafe, Coxes Farm Shop, Wickham St Pauls from 9.30 – 11.30am on **Tuesday 17th February**.

Perhaps your New Year's resolution was to try your hand at a craft. You would be made most welcome to join us for some time of swapping ideas, getting help, happy chatter and possibly some refreshments from the kitchen.

More details from Rosemary Ingram 07958 744421 jingram@outlook.com

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Alphamstone

Magazine Contact **Melinda Varcoe 01787 269570**



Melinda Varcoe writes:

Poor old February doesn't get much of a look-in when considering the important events in our national culture. Apart from Valentine's Day, it's always been a low time, a waiting game for spring, but if you know where to look there are some strange and wonderful things happening.

Imbolc is an ancient festival marking the beginning of spring in the pagan year. It's the feast day of Brigid or Bride; as was so often the case, she was adopted as a Christian saint by the church although she was a pagan goddess, and wherever Wiccans, Druids or pagans gather to celebrate, there are feasts, blessing ceremonies, and story-telling. Fire and water are important elements in the rituals, and light in the darkness to bring joy and hope to the world. Candlemas is the church's version of this, but it's a universal theme.

In Northumberland, an ancient rite on the river Tweed at Pedwell is observed on 1st February. This originally involved the blessing by the vicar of Berwick of the nets, boats, water and catch of salmon in the river, and continues today, although the fishing is now done by line. Salmon was an important staple food in mediaeval times, so a good catch was more than just a fisherman's day out. The first line of the season is ceremonially cast, and a dram or two and some shortbread are shared afterwards.

At the other end of England, in St Blazey, Cornwall, another blessing takes place at the beginning of the month. St Blaise is the patron saint of both wool carders and sore throats, (anyone like to offer an explanation as to why these two should be connected??), and after a procession led by an illuminated giant ram, people gather in the church to have their throats blessed with crossed candles. Being Cornwall, and given that the blessed throats will be on fine singing form, there'll be traditional Cornish music, and plenty of cider and saffron buns!

Nearer home in Woodbridge, Suffolk, George Carlow, owner of The Bull Hotel, died in 1738, leaving a small legacy to provide 'bread for the poor', which became known as Carlow's Dole. This lapsed for some years but was revived in 2024. A blessing ceremony and tea is held at The Bull Hotel, and little rolls are distributed to the children of The Abbey School; his original stipulation that this should be done from the top of his tomb in the grounds of the pub is sadly not feasible, as it lies in what is now a private garden, but the food is provided by The Bull and a local cake shop, and while not necessarily needy or poor, the children are gleeful recipients!

I do love the rich treasury of customs, traditions and quirks you can discover with a little delving into British folklore and history!

Alphamstone Village Hall

Kathryn Parsons writes:

All the trustees would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Healthy 2026.

Not sure where last year went, but it certainly flew past quickly!

I know Christmas seems long gone but I would like to thank everyone who supported the **Christmas craft morning and raffle**. Sue gave all of her craft takings to the village hall fund and in total we raised an amazing **£940**.

I also took 16 tubs of chocolates to the Sudbury food bank, for which they were very grateful, so thank you for that donation on behalf of all those who received them.

In the December issue I thanked all of my trustees for their support over the year but there is also another valued member of the team. That is **Ian Rutledge**. For years the treasurer's role has been taken by one of the trustees, but when Martin stepped back Ian came forward. Not a trustee, but a trusted and valuable member of the team! Behind the scenes he keeps a close eye on all the finances, pays all the bills and balances the accounts. Not a pretty or flashy role but one that is very necessary and important. So thank you to Ian.

Big Breakfast Sunday Feb 1st 10.15 for 10.30, £12.50 per head

As we start this new year the events come round again and the first one you might like to join in with is a belly-busting **Big Breakfast on Sunday 1st February**. Matt once again dons his apron to cook up a full English Breakfast, **£12.50 per head**. Spaces usually fill quickly but there may be some places still left so please ring Laura on 07887 685651 if you fancy coming along. **10.15 for a 10.30am** food service.

Vegetarian and GF are available but please let Laura know on booking.

The new oven arrived in early December so this will be a good full use of all its ovens, grill and rings; it looks amazing and has already been used for sausage rolls and Belgian buns for coffee mornings. We have all been appreciative of the grant which enabled us to buy it. Thank you, Essex Association of Local Councils.

Coffee Mornings

Coffee Mornings are up and running fortnightly on alternate Tuesdays, 10.30am - 12.00. Everyone more than welcome. Lovely ground coffee, delicious cakes and loads of company and chat. The next dates are: **Tuesday 3rd February, 17th February, 3rd March and 17th March**.

Easy Fundraising

If you haven't already signed up to easyfundraising and allocated Alphamstone Village Hall as your charity to support then can I please encourage you to do so. It means that most times when you shop online or do a 'click and collect' or food delivery, the hall gets a little amount of money at no extra cost to yourself. Since we signed up as



a charitable member we have raised £508.18, and that is with only 14 of us signed up. Imagine the total if another five joined in! That money came at no effort to anyone and is much needed and appreciated.

I would like to end this with a mention of **Desmond Bridge**, an important friend and ex-resident of Alphamstone, who sadly passed away on Boxing Day. I know that there will be other tributes in this magazine dedicated to his memory, but I would just like to say here that part of his work within Alphamstone was as Chairman of Trustees of our village hall for nine years from 2015. Over that time he worked hard to keep the hall in good shape and promoted it as the centre of our community. He was at the helm and giving confidence to his team through the uncertain financial times of Covid, and all the new rules on re-opening afterwards. The hall flourished under his management. I took over from him in 2024 and his boots are hard to fill! He worked alongside most of the current trustees and he will be missed by all.

Alphamstone Social Club

The film club runs on the third Sunday of the month at the Village Hall. February date is Sunday 15th, 5pm. If you'd like more information, please contact me on melindavarcoe@gmail.com

Christmas Eve Carols

The Varcoes would like to thank the generous Alphamstonians who helped us raise £150 for Médecins sans Frontières with our carolling on Christmas Eve. And special thanks to the Fryers, whose warm welcome at the end of a cold trek round the village always starts the festive spirit flowing in the nicest way!



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Desmond Bridge an affectionate reminiscence

Desmond died on Boxing Day, aged 72

Desmond and Jane and little Hannah came to live at Upper Goulds over 40 years ago. At the time Desmond was working as a jobber in gilt-edged securities on the Stock Exchange, from which career he retired shortly after The Big Bang in 1986. He then trained in furniture restoration, which happily occupied him until ill health made life so difficult for him.

The Stock Exchange's loss was definitely Alphamstone's gain. For about 35 years Desmond was churchwarden of St Barnabas, and alongside Charles Dinwiddie and Mark Maley he led the Friends of St Barnabas, raising a significant amount of money to carry out extensive repairs to the walls and the roof. He was also a great Village Hall supporter, and for several years was treasurer for the annual fete on the village green. These are activities which Alphamstonians are probably aware of, but there were others too, notably his work with the wider benefice of which St Barnabas is a part, and his chairmanship of the Ferriers Barn Trust in Bures.

Through much of his time living here Desmond suffered with kidney disease, and for years his life was regulated by the need for dialysis every few days, which had to be performed in hospital. Eventually he had a kidney transplant which was successful for some years, but when that failed there was another long wait before a second suitable donor could be found. Desmond didn't let any of this affect his thoughtfulness and generosity to others. The Varcoes have every reason to be grateful for Desmond's gift for helping others. One day Stephen was working with an electric chop-saw, and the safety guard jammed. The result was that he nearly chopped his thumb off. As he staggered out of the barn leaving a trail of blood behind, Desmond arrived with the Parish Magazine. Without concern for his schedule or his upholstery he was his ambulance driver to A&E. The fact that today Stephen still has two functioning thumbs is down to him.

A couple of years ago Desmond made the move from Upper Goulds Farm to a new home in Yorkshire, near Hannah, her husband Alex and his grandson Arthur. Sadly he had only a short time to enjoy that new life, but, although we all missed him very much, it must have been wonderful to be able to watch Arthur growing up, and to see so much more of the family.

No appreciation of Desmond could ignore the terrible loss of his beloved wife Jane. She died on New Years Day 2009, just short of her 60th birthday. Her stone is in the churchyard at Alphamstone, where Desmond's ashes will be buried alongside hers.

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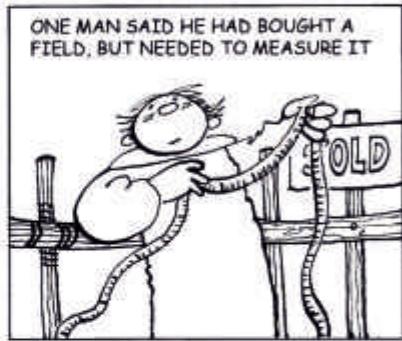
JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



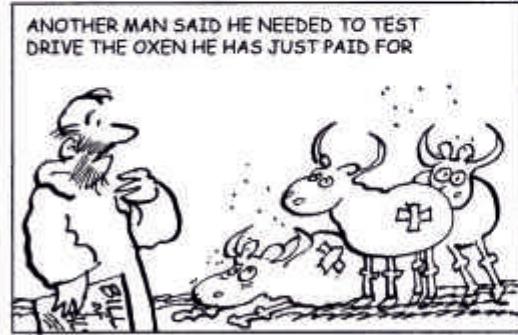
ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A PARTY



BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES



ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T LET HIM OUT!



SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.

Great & Little Henny

Magazine Contact **Stella Bixley 01787 269317**



Henny Craft Group

All welcome. Come and bring your sewing, knitting, art and craft projects to work on whilst having a chat over a cuppa and cake. There will be a charge of £3 to cover the cost of hall hire, heating and refreshments. If you are planning to attend it would be helpful if you could email: sue.trott@yahoo.co.uk so we have an idea of numbers for refreshments and setting up the room.

Future meetings held at Henny Parish Room at 2.00:

Tuesday 3rd February & Tuesday 3rd March



Henny Parish Room News

Address: Henny Parish Room, Clay Hill, Great Henny CO10 7NL

Registered charity no. 301315 **All tickets and information: Stella Bixley 01787 269317**

If you would like to be updated with the latest news simply scan the QR code (right) and tap the request to join.

Henny Parish Room Facebook Page -

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Henny-Parish-Room/788850521144073>

Henny Parish Rooms
WhatsApp group



Please consider using **easyfundraising** every time you shop online, via **Henny Parish Room Raising vital funds to maintain H.P.R. for our community**

Great & Little Henny Litter Pick

Volunteers welcomed for the annual village litter pick, which will take place over the weekend of the **14th and 15th March**. Equipment and high visibility vests will be provided. Please contact stellabixley@gmail.com if you would like to take part, and to be allocated an area for you to cover as close to your home as possible.

Date for your diary

Henny Quiz Night - Saturday 30th May

Henny Parish Room Lottery

1st Prize £35 2nd Prize £20 3rd Prize £15

Prize winners for the December 2025 Draw

1st Prize 54, 2nd Prize 121, 3rd Prize 127

Prize winners for the January 2026 Draw

1st Prize 134, 2nd Prize 76, 3rd Prize 126

Tickets are just £1.00 each and you can hold as many as you like.

If you would like to join the Henny Parish Room Lottery just contact us and we will send you an application form.

E – mail hennyparishroom@gmail.com or ring 07939 243 631.

In aid of Henny Parish Room funds

HENNY PARISH ROOMS

Come and join the local villagers for COFFEE AND SWAP

Enjoy a homemade cake, bacon rolls and hot drinks with a catch up.

If you have surplus items to share with your neighbours you can bring them along too. Perhaps a plant cutting, seeds, unwanted crafting items, jigsaws, fashion accessories, gifts or bottles of alcohol, magazines or garden produce.

All surplus items will be deposited on a table for others to take home.

Next Henny Coffee & Swap: Saturday 11th April 2026, 10.00-1.00pm.

Great Henny 'Antiques Roadshow' Evening

Henny Parish Room on Friday 20th March 2026, 7.00pm, in aid of H.P.R. funds

Tickets £10.00 Includes a glass of wine and nibbles on arrival

We are delighted to welcome our guest speakers, James Grinter, Director, and Jonathan Benson, Director, of Reeman Dansie Auctions, Colchester.

James and Jonathan will introduce a fascinating insight into their professional work and the World of Antiques today. James has extensive knowledge covering a variety of subjects including Royal Memorabilia, Furniture, Oriental Ceramics, Weapons, Militaria, and Classic Cars. Jonathan specialises in Fine Art, Wine and Spirits, Taxidermy, and Field

Sports Memorabilia. **The main focus of the evening will be our own 'Antiques Roadshow' and attendees are warmly invited to bring in antiques and items of interest for James and Jonathan to consider, discuss and give an indication of value.** CTicket numbers are limited for this informative and enjoyable evening and need to be purchased in advance. Please contact Stella to purchase your tickets stellabixley@gmail.com

Garden Clippings

I have just returned from a stroll around the garden, the sun is shining and the sky is cloudless, all is very still and quiet. One of the days between Christmas and New Year when the frenetic pre-Christmas period of lists is over! Christmas card lists, presents to

buy lists, goodies for Christmas, and the most important “not to forget to do” list! Having managed to accomplish most of the items on my various lists, I can now relax and enjoy my walk. It feels as if life in the garden has also slowed down and relaxed. A robin serenades me from the top of a shrub as I walk past. A swan sits calmly preening beside the bridge over the outlet to the river, just slightly ruffling his feathers in warning as I pass by but not particularly bothered by my presence. Looking down as I pass over the sluice gates bridge, I am momentarily mesmerised by the numerous bubbles, glistening in the sunlight, as they are swiftly carried over the sluice into the millpond. The bubbles formed after the cascade of water down from the river above the sluice gates. On my walk I noticed various tasks that need to be done over the next few weeks, oh dear, I fear another list is going to be necessary!

The heron is with us every day. Patiently standing completely still in its favourite hunting spots. When not hunting it perches higher up on the surrounding low level branches or stands on the railings of the sluice gates bridge, presumably watching the world go by! It is very used to our comings and goings and rarely flies off. It is an incredibly handsome bird and is a joy to observe around the millpond.

A few days later and the weather has turned much colder and we are now in a spell of sharp overnight frosts, snow and ice. The millpond has frozen over apart from the area beneath the sluice gates when there is a strong flow of water. The heron is now faced with a sheet of ice across the surface and frequents a sunny, sheltered spot on the bank, presumably to keep warm! The arched branches of the fallen tree of many years ago, protrude from the ice, and are still used by the pigeons but now to access the ice, rather than for washing. I have been fascinated watching them walk about on the ice, pecking at goodness knows what and, with my rather vivid imagination, I wait for them to suddenly start skating across the ice having a “Bolero” moment! They obviously do not suffer with cold feet as it appears to be the fear of the ice not supporting them that makes them flutter off rather than the necessity to leave the ice. There were at least six strutting about, and at one point a dove joined them who boldly marched into the centre of the millpond, apparently with no hesitation given the thin ice beneath its feet! Now the ice has a dusting of snow atop the ice and the large footprints of the heron can clearly be seen. Given the size of the heron the ice must be thicker than one would imagine.

Occasionally one of the cygnets returns to the area. The resident male seems to accept his offspring joining him and does not chase it off. However, any other swan who ventures into this stretch of the river soon gets chased away. Only yesterday I saw a swan swimming hastily past and not that far behind was the male, with wings puffed out menacingly, following along in hot pursuit. Given the speed of the retreating swan I think it had definitely got the message that its presence was not welcome!

Before I close I must just tell you about the most captivating and informative book I have just finished reading, providing an insight into the lives of otters. It follows a year in the life of a young female otter. It has taught me so much about otters and it also touches on other creatures residing along the river. It is a beautifully written account and one I **SB** would recommend to anyone with an interest in otters.

“The Otters’ Tale” by Simon Cooper ISBN 978-0-00-818974-7



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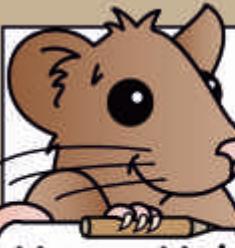
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Mouse Makes

Read the story in
Luke 4:1-13



SECOND TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power
and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:
"Worship the Lord your God
and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God first
Worship only Him.



FORTYDAYSSONKLO
TDOWNONWORSHIP
TESTWORLDLTUNB
LVTEMPTATIONGR
EIAMJESUSFNGDE
NLKPDESERTEROA
THOLYSPIRITYMD
IMJERUSALEMFSJ
WILDERNESSJUMP

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?

What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him?

What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do?

What did Jesus say? v9

ROGLORYLO
IBAPTISED
VOFOOTHD
SERVEBTI
JORDANJEG
LORDNH

FIRST TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible
Learn God's word.



THIRD TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

God cares, trust
Him do not test Him.





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Sunday: 12 – 3 pm

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Bingo Nights – Third Friday of every month (7:30 pm start)

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www.lamarashlion.co.uk

Contact details:

Tel: 01787 227007 info@lamarashlion.co.uk

The Lamarash Lion, Bures Road, Lamarash, Bures CO8 5EP

Lamarsh

Magazine Contact **Brett & Rosemary Johnson 01787 227988**



Lamarsh Village Hall

www.lamarshvillagehall.com

Instagram lamarsh_village_hall **Facebook** Lamarsh Village Hall

Charity Number **301351**

Broadband Facility

Ultrafast Broadband, provided by Gigaclear, is available to all Village Hall users.

Regular Events

Community Library Free to join. Books refreshed regularly.	Every Thursday and every first and third Saturday of month.	10.30 to 11.30am
Community Cafe (with Lottery Draw) First Thursday of month	5 February	10.30am to 12 midday
Find the Flow Yoga with Daphne. abctoolkityoga@gmail.com	Wednesday mornings	10-11.15am
Pilates with Sophie sophieparishpilates@gmail.com	Saturday mornings	8am-9am



Lamarsh Lottery

January 2026 Lottery Winners

1st prize (£30) – number 126

2nd prize (£20) - number 20

3rd prize (£10) - number 23

The village lottery is drawn the first Thursday of the month at the same time as the coffee morning. Thank you everyone who has supported this.

It is £1 per ticket per month and you can have as many tickets as you would like.

You've got to be in it to win it! Buy a ticket now

Email: jane@lamarshvillagehall.com

Registered Charity No. 301351

Lottery registered with Braintree Council Registration no: LOT1207



Lamarsh Lion

Please see Ian's letter and important update about Lamarsh Lion on **Page 5**.

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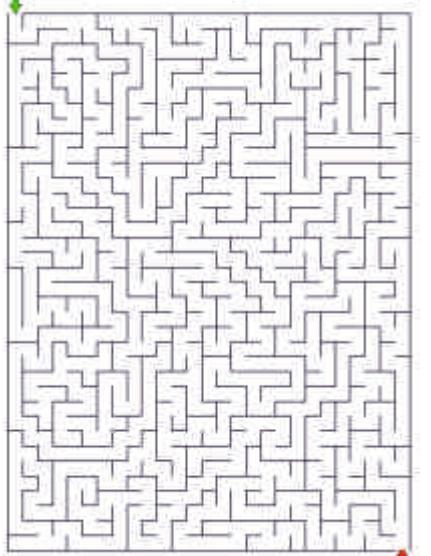
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Maze



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he's giving up the remote control and
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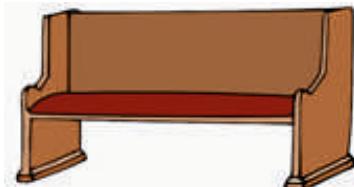
Sudoku Solution on page 31

						7	2
					9	5	3
6	7			3	2	9	
9				1			
4	1	6				7	9
				6			1
			3	1	8		4
2		7	4				6
8	4						

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Middleton

Magazine Contact **Jude Johnson 01787 582559**



From The Church Wardens' Pew

As this is being written we are into the month connected to Janus and like him have an opportunity to look back and also forward. Last month was a busy and successful one for us. Our Christmas Market was very well supported despite the threat of dismal weather. Many had worked very hard leading up to the market, sourcing goods, collecting for the raffle, making cakes and tree decorations, ensuring there were enough bottle bags and bottles, and so the list goes on. There was a good turn out of helpers to set the church up as a market place, man the stalls and to put it back together after the event as a place of worship. During the market, visitor experience was enhanced by the variety of refreshments including tea, cakes, mulled wine and a BBQ. Our treasurer was kept busy counting the income which was a very pleasing £1054.70. Well done everyone, and a big thank you to all who helped, and to those who visited and supported the event.

Judith Morgan and family led our singing of carols around the village on Saturday 19 December. It is always good to be led by folk who are musical and can sing very well (descants and several part harmonies), masking the well intentioned contribution of the potential growlers at the back. This year the singing was at a slightly earlier time than usual - something to do with the final of a dancing event on the television that evening and we didn't want to interrupt that! We were fundraising to support the work of the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and thanks to the generosity of villagers, £263 was raised and sent to the Ambulance Trust.

The following day our Carol by Candlelight Service was held in the church which had been beautifully decorated on the Friday and Saturday before the service. Many remarked how lovely the church looked and some recorded their appreciation in the visitors book. Rev Claire led the well attended service which included moments for reflection throughout and made it a very meaningful and enjoyable experience. Judith Morgan's much appreciated keyboard playing accompanied the singing . After the service the congregation stayed to enjoy the seasonal mulled wine and mince pies. The collection was shared between the Children's Society and the church.

4 January saw our first Sunday service of the new year celebrating the Epiphany with frankincense being burnt. A very smokey moment!

The fund raising by the PCC, and the valuable support of the Friends of All Saints towards fabric costs over the past year, have given us an achievement to celebrate. Through careful management of funds guided by our treasurer, William Lees, we have been able to pay the much increased Parish Share of £5000 in full. No mean achievement for a small rural parish.

Currently there is snow on the ground, yet there are signs of growth with aconites in bloom, snowdrops and daffodils pushing through and emails whizzing around about what fund raising and social events we are going to do this year. Details elsewhere in Lookout.

STOP PRESS News just in. Kathy Foster and Sherrye Dix are hosting a Strawberry Tea again on **28 June 2026**.

Friends of All Saints News

A date has now been set for the annual **Quiz Night - 25th April** - so put it in your diary and start thinking about who you would like to join. As in prior years, tickets will be available for teams of up to 6 people, so please feel free to invite family and friends. Start brushing up on your knowledge of TV, films, music, historical facts, current affairs, etc to boost your brainpower ahead of the date and to give your team the best chance of winning the prizes that will be on offer. For more details of the event, including ticket prices, see March issue of Lookout.

Thinking caps are also on for ideas about future fundraising/social events. If you have ideas of events you would like to see happen, feel free to shout them out – or maybe mentioning them to a member of the Friends Committee would be more productive! Ideas always welcome!

With fundraising events in mind, if you have received any gifts over the Christmas period (or otherwise) that were not quite to your taste and can't return them, we are always very grateful to receive suitable items to use as raffle prizes. Any of the Friends or PCC committee members would be very happy to receive things that we can keep for the next suitable event. Thank you so much.

Ladies Circle

Our Christmas supper was held in the church in early December. Twelve ladies and one bat attended our very enjoyable buffet. Many thanks to everyone who brought food, organised the liquid refreshment, laid the table and washed up.



As from January 2026 Ladies Circle is changing from meeting for afternoon tea to having morning coffee. On the second Tuesday of the month we will now meet in the church from 10.30 to 12.00. **The date for February will be the 10th.** Do come and join us if you are free.

Best Wishes for a Happy, Healthy 2026.

Anita

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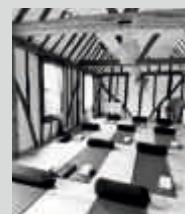
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This modern Village Hall, situated on the edge of the Village Green, is available for hire by residents of Wickham St Pauls & neighbouring parishes for wedding breakfasts, private parties, birthdays, etc

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Sandra O'Sullivan: 01787 269255

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Stella Bixley 01787 269317

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Sudoku solution

3	5	9	6	4	1	8	7	2
1	2	4	8	7	9	5	6	3
6	7	8	5	3	2	9	1	4
9	3	5	7	1	4	6	2	8
4	1	6	3	2	8	7	9	5
7	8	2	9	6	5	4	3	1
5	9	3	1	8	7	2	4	6
2	6	7	4	5	3	1	8	9
8	4	1	2	9	6	3	5	7

Twinstead

Magazine Contact **David Holland 01787 269693**



David Holland writes:

Hello, I hope your New Year has started well, and continues that way all year long. I also hope that by the time you read this month's Lookout, it is warmer than at the time of writing! Our weather is taking its toll these days, and there is no clearer evidence of this than at our beloved Church. This architecturally almost unique, arts and crafts rural parish church is under threat. On the 16th December, we received the following sad notice from Twinstead PCC:

Temporary Closure of Twinstead Parish Church

With very heavy hearts we must share the devastating news that, due to serious structural concerns, we need to close Twinstead Church with immediate effect. The long, hot summer has sadly worsened existing cracks around the east end of the church; between the altar and the choir stalls. The cracks around the entrance doorway are also causing considerable concern. There has also been significant debris falling within the church, and the stained glass is no longer secure.

The church's architect, and a structural engineer, have undertaken a site visit, and further tests will need to be carried out in the new year. In the meantime, we have been advised to close the church, to ensure everyone's safety.

As more information becomes available, we will provide regular updates through Lookout Magazine and other usual channels. The church will remain closed until we have more details.

If you have practical, professional, or financial gifts that may help us in this challenging season, we would be grateful to hear from you.

If you are seeking an alternative service meanwhile, please check:

www.northhinckfordteam.org

Please pray for and continue to support our church and community.

Twinstead PCC, December 2025

I have to tell you that we are not alone here in Twinstead with these problems, and the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Great Henny has also been closed for similar reasons.



MUSIC ON YOUR DOORSTEP: TWINSTEAD'S CAROL SINGERS

On Christmas Eve, Lorraine Garnham and some of her family, wrapped up in warm winter clothes, decided to go out and sing some carols to the people in Twinstead. They had a lot of fun. Lily and Holly were even able to sing 'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer' in Spanish!

On their return home, they were really pleased to find out that they had been able to collect £64.40. They have decided to send the money to the charity Shelter, to help homeless people.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF TWINSTEAD VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thank you to the members of the village who attended the above meeting on November 27th. The current committee members were all re-elected and, at a short meeting following the AGM, Jane Bingham-Wallis was elected as Chairman, Vernon Nott as Treasurer and Jane Howson as Secretary. Sally Burns and Mary Weavers are also members of the committee.

The Village Hall Management Committee wish everyone health and happiness for 2026. We also thank you for all your support throughout 2025 and look forward to welcoming you to events this year. If anyone has any ideas for future events please do let us know.

LITTER PICK

A huge thank you to our volunteers who collected several bags of rubbish from our verges.

PANCAKE DAY - Tuesday, 17th February 12.0-2pm Twinstead Village Hall

Come along to our annual pancake bonanza and enjoy eating lots of homemade pancakes and having a gossip with neighbours! In aid of our church.

VILLAGE HALL SOCIAL - SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21st

The February coffee morning will take place on the **Third** Saturday, the 21st, from 10-12 in Twinstead Village Hall. As always, tea, coffee, homemade cakes and sausage rolls will be available along with plenty of good company.



HOWEVER...

Thanks to the generosity of William and Henrietta Drake, we still had our Carol Service which was a lovely uplifting event that took place in Twinstead Manor's Coachhouse. This turned out to be a charming venue with a large snooker table providing the alter table complete with candle stands etc., plenty of comfy chairs for us all, and overall, a lovely, quite intimate atmosphere for this important event in the life of the village. We sang joyful festive carols and heard traditional Gospel verses read by members of the community. Refreshments including warming mulled wine, sausage rolls, and mince pies were served afterwards.

Though I am not a regular church-goer, I like many, if not most of the Twinstead community, value our little church greatly. I personally see it as an icon of our culture, and a symbol of the source of the values by which we live. The building therefore has an importance for us all, and as we move into 2026, it will be important to work to source the funds to repair the church fabric, so that we can hopefully sing next year's carols within the fine decorative brickwork of our unique cultural asset: the Church of St John the Evangelist, Twinstead. I am sure we all wish those tasked with making this structural repair project happen, every success, and thank them for the inevitably hard work needed to achieve this.

WREATH MAKING MORNING



Eight participants had a fun morning at our Wreath Making session which was put together at the last minute. We will give more warning of this event next time! Thanks go to Sally Burns who ran the class and, together with her supervision and the participant's ideas, eight beautiful wreaths were created.

Flower Arranging demonstration Saturday 7th March 2.30pm, Village Hall, Twinstead

Mary and Carol have organised a Flower Arranging demonstration. Tickets £10 each and this will include a raffle ticket to win one of the arrangements. Refreshments will be provided.

Please contact either Carol 01787 269052, or Mary 01787 269689 to book your place. Payment in cash at the door please. Places limited.

Coffee Morning

The March Coffee Morning will be held on **Saturday 14th** and the date for April is **Saturday 11th**.

TWINSTEAD VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

Lottery Results from Carol Swan for December and January.

Lottery results for draw held

Friday 5th December

£20 Ticket No. 67 .. Hale

£10 Ticket No. 19 .. Weston

£10 Ticket No. 2 .. Rob & Joe

Lottery results for draw held

Friday 2nd January

£20 Ticket No 16 .. Woods

£10 Ticket No. 68 .. Hale

£10 Ticket No. 27 .. MacDonald

Congratulations everyone.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone for your continued support of the Village Lottery, we hope you will stay with us into 2026. Pat, Mary and myself each wish you all a Happy and prosperous New Year. A gentle reminder that subscriptions are now due (apart from Pat's group)

TAILPIECE

As your Village Coordinator, I wanted to finish this month with a plea: please consider offering some written or photographic content for future editions of Lookout. In the past, I have regaled you with tales of glorious footpath walks with clouds of linnets above them. But what around you makes your heart sing? Currently, Pamela and I are watching for the first signs of the rooks assembling to start nesting in the oaks above us. It fascinates us to watch them build, raise a family, teach the young to fly, and to soar on the wind as it rises over the trees. They seem to set the young a target at an early stage: to fly from the oaks that are their birthplace to the great cedar tree in the Hall grounds. We marvel at the way they post guards who courageously chase off raiding buzzards and kites. For you it may be the hares in the fields that is the sight which lifts your day. No matter what it is that brings you joy in this delightful place, why not write about it, let us publish it in Lookout, and let others know of the wonders of the natural world around us. Or maybe, you could let us have your tips to expand our gardening or cooking skills with your special recipes. The readership of Lookout will, I feel sure, be grateful for your effort to share your passions. Please send contributions to: lookoutparishmagazine@gmail.com

The Hennys, Middleton and Twinstead Parish Council Notice of future meeting dates in 2026

NB: Agendas include Public Speaking Time

15th January Parish Council Meeting

12th March Parish Council Meeting

14th May Annual General, & Parish Council Meeting

9th July Parish Council Meeting

17th September Parish Council Meeting

12th November Parish Council Meeting

Agendas published 1 week before meeting dates here:

<https://e-voice.org.uk/hennymiddletontwinsteadparishcouncil/>



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For information regarding Services and Benefice Church events please see notices at the beginning of Lookout

Flowers in church: Mrs Rudd.

Mobile Library: Wednesday February 11th at 13.10-13.40, beside the Village Green.

Shrove Tuesday 17th February

Please come along to the village hall at 10.30am for Pancakes (including gluten free). Donations welcome in aid of the village church.

March Talks in the church

Dates are still being finalised, but please look out for the exact dates and times in next month's issue of Lookout. Details will also be published on the Wickham St. Pauls Facebook site.

Book Swap and Food Bank

We have a lot of books at the back of the church that you are free to take or swap. We also have a box in the porch for any contributions to the Food Bank, which will be taken to the Food Bank in Sudbury.

Grit Bins

Just a reminder, (particularly as it's snowing as I write this), that there is a grit bin on Church Road and another one near the village hall. If the paths are icy especially outside any vulnerable residents, please feel free to spread some grit. and finally, as usual, beware of yellow snow warnings.

Smile Lines

It hurts

A little girl told her mother one day before lunch that her stomach was hurting. Her mother replied: "That's because it's empty, you have to put something into it!"

That evening the minister and his wife came for dinner. The minister looked a bit rough and explained that his head was hurting him. The little girl gave him a sweet smile and said encouragingly: "That's because it's empty, you have to put something into it!"



POST OFFICE - OPENING TIMES AND INFORMATION

The Post Office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-1pm



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Wickham W.I.

SOUP AND CAKE LUNCH

provided by the WSP W.I. on the third Friday in the month

WICKHAM ST. PAULS VILLAGE HALL

Friday 20th February 2026
and
Friday 20th March 2026
(Sandwiches)



Serving from 12.30 to 1.30

All welcome – lifts available (phone 267854)

WI OPEN MEETING

On **Tuesday March 10th** and **Tuesday June 9th** the WI will be holding two open meetings. The meetings start at 7pm and the cost for non-members is £5. Everyone (ladies or gents) are very welcome. There is no need to book, just turn up.

On March 10th our speaker is John Richard a magician who will be amazing us with some of his tricks. A number of us have seen him perform at another WI and we can thoroughly recommend him.

On June 9th our speaker is Jane Hoggar who will be entertaining us with tales of the “Divas of Les Folie Bergeres”. This will be the second visit from Jane who blew us away with her performance last time. In fact she was so good we have invited her back.

Refreshments after the talks are included and you can stay or not for our WI business.

Looking back...

W.I meeting

November's meeting was an entertaining and enlightening presentation by Steve Lester, who is a member of the Titanic Historical Society, and assisted with the formation of the fabulous 'Titanic Experience' exhibition in Belfast. His talk was about the authentic details of the history and demise of the supership 'Titanic', that sank on April 14/15th 1912 on her maiden voyage, after hitting an iceberg with the loss of over 1500 lives.



Steve has had a fascination about this largest ocean liner for over thirty years and is passionate to give talks to highlight the truth, dispersing the myths given over the past years and especially those portrayed by Hollywood's film Titanic. In his presentation, he took 35 members and 5 guests through the ship's life and ultimate demise, telling the true story and not that portrayed by Hollywood's film Titanic.

Steve gave a brief history of the building of the three superships built in Edwardian times by White Star, first was 'Olympic', then 'Titanic', followed by 'Gigantic' (which was quickly re-named to Britannia following the sinking of the Titanic).

In June 1911, the 'Olympic' made its maiden voyage from Belfast to Southampton but collided with a naval battleship HMS Hawke and had to return to Belfast for repairs

The Titanic, with over 2200 passengers and crew left Southampton four days earlier, calling at Queenstown (now known as Cobh), Ireland, travelling to Cherbourg in France before heading across the Atlantic to New York.

These superships were designed to have in excess of 4,000 passengers, one way tickets ranged from a cost of £85 standard to £862 for 1st class State room. Original plans to have 40 lifeboats on board had been shelved, as these would cause a problem on the Promenade deck due to the First Class passengers unable to take a stroll around the deck. Further reports using the Titanic footage deemed it was required to have only 16 wooden lifeboats and 4 collapsible ones!

To make his talk more dramatic and poignant, Steve had six members of the W.I. read out to the rest of the ladies, statements from eyewitnesses and survivors of the actual events that occurred on the fateful night. So many factors that contributed to this dreadful fate could have been avoided, one of which was after a change of officers, the key to the cupboard of binoculars was mislaid, meaning the crew of the Crow's nest had no binoculars to use to look out for possible icebergs

Christmas Craft Market – Saturday 6th December 2025

The Craft Fayre went very well. We had just under one hundred people attending, with fourteen Crafters and the majority enjoying good sales. Thanks to Glynis Hughes and hubby Tim for their dedicated organisation.

I would also like to give special thanks to all our helpers on the day:-

Ann Robertson, Susan Springford, Pam, Mary Weaver, Carole Francis, Janice Bowles, Sara Richman, Janice Barlow, Lee & Martin

AND to all the lovely ladies who made and donated the delicious food to be sold on the day.

We made just under £700, which was donated to our Village Hall for essential maintenance and improvements.

Linda

Christingle

On Thursday 11th December, Revd. Claire led a short Christingle service. She explained the significance of each element of the christingle and gave a step-by-step demonstration to the 5 children and 8 adults on how to make them. All the materials were provided and the Christingles were taken home to remind everyone of the true meaning of Christmas. Hot chocolate was provided at the end of the service.



Carol Singing Around the Village

On Wednesday 17th December a small but select group of villagers sang their way round Wickham St Pauls, collecting money for the British Heart Foundation in memory of John Smith from Windsors in Shellards Lane. The British Heart Foundation (BHF) helps fund lifesaving research to help keep hearts beating and protect the hearts of those we love most.

Thanks to the carollers and the generous residents I am pleased to report we raised an amazing £360.85. A special thank you to the Coopers at Brickwall Farm for hosting us all after our strenuous efforts!

A Belated Happy New Year to you all.

Pam Nuttall

Carols by Candlelight, Christmas Eve

The church looked beautiful and the pews were filled for this lovely service. Revd. Claire led the service and read a Christmas poem. We are very grateful to all the readers, sponsors, flower ladies, helpers, Charles the organist and Cox's for once again donating the Christmas tree. Susan Springford led the congregation in an interactive version of the 12 Days of Christmas which kept everyone on their toes - literally!

W.I. Christmas Lunch

On 17th December, 34 members of the WSP W.I. thoroughly enjoyed their Annual Christmas Lunch at the Kings Head pub in Pebmarsh. We were served a delicious lunch with superb service. Special thanks to Angie and Jenny Trainer (plus beautiful presentations of the prizes by our 'Cellophane Queen' Sandra) for organising the super three hamper raffle prizes. Joan Chambers, Jennie Trainer and Linda Sear were the lucky winners.

Our special Xmas Card created by Sandra (again) was signed by all the W.I. ladies instead of sending each other individual Xmas cards, with a donation made to Cancer Research.



Epiphany, 6th January

Twenty eight people celebrated Epiphany by following the French custom of having a slice of galette des rois and hunting for a 'fevre' or favour hidden inside, which entitled them to wear a crown and be a king or queen for the day, the rest of their family having to obey their every whim.

The tradition is thought to go back to Roman times when a feast was laid on for slaves, and a bean was hidden in the galette; if the slave found it they could lord it over everyone for a day.

The tricolor was flown from the village flagpole and the gathering was serenaded with French music.



Wickham Lottery

Congratulations and a cheque for £25 go to Mr. Peter de Nayer who is the holder of No. 4, the winning bonus ball in the National Lottery for January 2026.

I will be collecting the £12 for the 2026 subscription in the next few weeks. It would be a great help if you could drop the money through my door if you are able - Holly Cottage, School Road. Please make clear who it is from so that I can mark you as 'paid'.

Janice

Parish Council Christmas Lights

Switch-On

Our Christmas tree, complete with a brightly lit star and some 3000 lights, was switched on by Ophelia (Fifi) of the Old School House, who did a great job and her timing was perfect. It was another well-attended evening with some 50 adults and 14 children. Carol singing by the 'Wickham Chapter' of the Hedingham Choir, mince pies and cakes and other delights courtesy of the W.I., and the mulled wine and treats were sponsored by The Victory Inn. Our thanks also to Cox's of Spencer's Farm Shop and Amy and Sarah and of course many thanks to all who came and supported us, not forgetting the Parish Council who organised the event.

Father Christmas was busy in his grotto giving out gifts, and taking notes of Christmas wishes, and he didn't forget those children who could not make it on the night.

Flag Flying Programme

6 February	New Zealand Day	(1902)	New Zealand
10 February	W.I. Meeting		W.I.
14 February	South Georgia	(1992)	South Georgia
20 February	Soup 'n' Cake Village Hall		W.I.

The St. George flag will be flown most of the time in between other appointed flags. We fly some of our Commonwealth Country flags, particularly those which include the Union flag in its canton. We also fly flags from other countries to mark important historical events.

Please remember to send me your contribution for **MARCH** by **Monday 9th February**.

Thank you,

Susannah

Smile Lines

The rules of marriage - What would you do on a first date that was turning sour?

I'd run home and play dead. The next day I would call all the newspapers and make sure they wrote about me in all the dead columns. *Craig, age 9*



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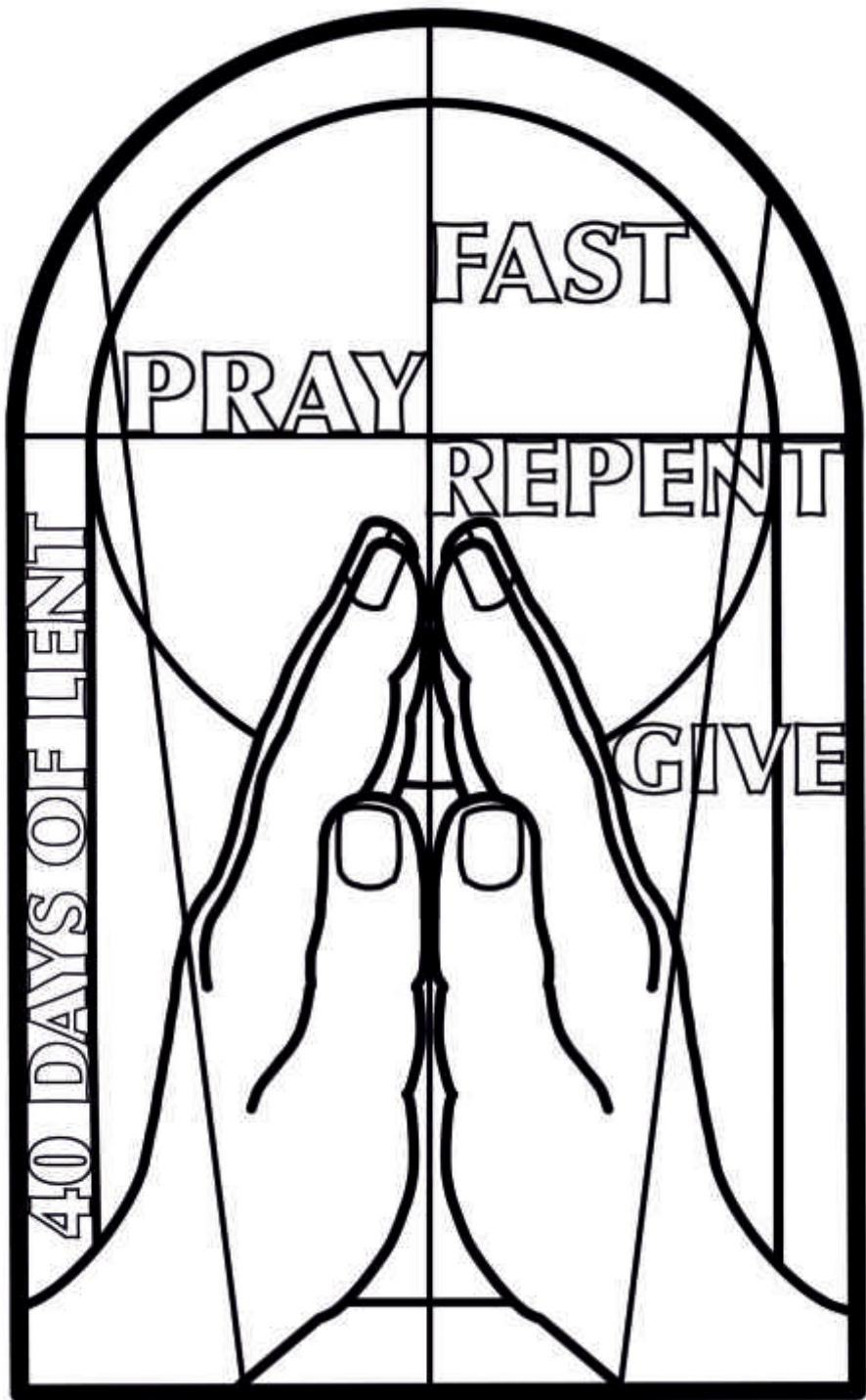
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