

Dates for the Diary

4 Jan St Paul's church *Bring & Share Lunch* after Joint Benefice Service

14 Jan, 7.30pm St Andrew's church Prayer Meeting for Local Schools

Feb date to be advised – Alpha Course St. Paul's Church

17 to 19 April 2026 Greenways Benefice weekend away Northamptonshire

Carol Singing at Morrisons and The Gardens

Members of St. Nicholas gathered to sing carols inside Morrisons store during December and we managed to do a collection in aid of 'Doorway' which raised £ 97.00

It was a successful evening ending with mince pies and coffee.

See you next year !

St Pauls Church Board Game Night

First Thursday of the month 7.30pm in St. Pauls Church Hall

All ages welcome

Bring your own game or play one of ours

Contact Details

Facebook@harnishchurch

Rector

Revd Andrew Gilmour tel: TBA

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Some of our Lay Ministers

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John Moncrieff

Barbara Wood – Reader Emeritus

Newsletter, Mark Sheppard Tel: 07834 453544 sheppardfamily@bybridge.uk

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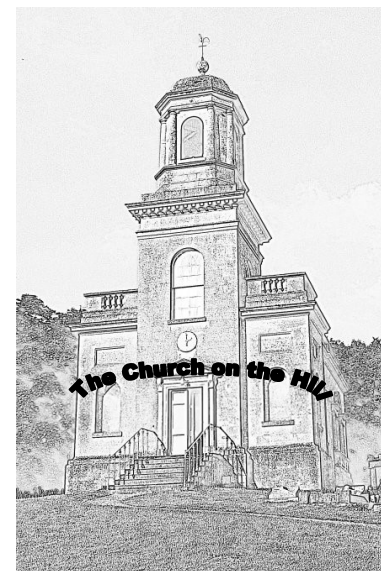
Greenways Group of Churches

St. Nicholas News January 2026

The Rt Rev Maurice Wood (1916-2007)

Bishop Maurice Wood prayer seems appropriate for Hardenhuish:

"Make us like a city set on a hill whose light cannot be hidden; so that men and women and children may find Christ as the light of the world, and his church as the family of the redeemed, and eternal life as the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord"



Sunday	4 th January	10.00am	Benefice Service at St. Paul's
Sunday	11 th January	3.30pm	Afternoon Praise with Communion
Sunday	18 th January	3.30pm	Afternoon Praise
Sunday	25 th January	3.30pm	Afternoon Praise

Ministry Musings

Dates for the Diary

St Pauls Church Board Game Night

December Crossword Answers

Carol Singing at Morrisons and The Gardens

Andrew Gilmour Licensed as Rector of Greenways Benefice

Ministry Musings

Most of the Christmas festivities are over, possibly our decorations packed away for another year and we have settled down to the routine activities of the New Year. But of course we must not forget Epiphany, the celebration of the coming of the three wise and learned men from the east. They were men who studied the stars and had decided to follow one particularly bright star. They were convinced that this star was a sign of the birth of a king. The star had led them to Jerusalem, the obvious place for the birth of the King of the Jews, and they visited Herod's palace to pay their respects.

Herod was very disturbed. He knew nothing of the birth of a new king, and he believed his role as King was at risk. After consulting all the religious men he knew, he learned that the prophets of old had indeed told of the coming of 'the Root of Jesse.' The wily Herod met secretly with the Magi and indicated that they should look to Bethlehem for the new King. He made out that he too would go to worship him.

Of course we know that the wise men eventually found Jesus and his parents in a house in Bethlehem. An account of this is often part of the Nativity story read at our carol services, which makes us think, perhaps, that it happened shortly after the shepherds amazing experience. In fact it was a couple of years or so later.

Joseph and Mary had decided to make their home in Bethlehem and had moved into a house in the town. Joseph was an experienced carpenter with house-building skills, so he may even have built a dwelling for his young family.

Imagine the excitement when the three noble men turned up at the home of the young family! And what gifts they brought, gifts suitable for a king – gold, frankincense and myrrh !

We all know and love that story, but we seldom read on in Matthew's gospel. The birth of King Jesus had tragic consequences. God warned the Magi and Joseph to expect trouble. Fortunately for the holy family the Magi

recognized the danger posed by Herod's greed, and returned to their own country by another route. And Joseph packed up his family and they escaped to Egypt.

Herod, of course, was furious when he realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi. His revenge was terrible! *He gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.* (Matthew 2:16)

I have long noticed how often a significant tragedy has happened around our Christmas celebrations, not always in Britain. So often we hear terrible stories – mass shootings, loss of ships at sea, unexplained explosions, even natural disasters. Think of the recent shootings on Bondi Beach. Many innocent lives cruelly lost to the bullets of fanatics.

I can't begin to explain why these things happen. I *do* know that Jesus didn't escape death. As a grown man He taught his way of love and finally he died the death of a criminal on a cross. How His Father must have grieved! God shares our sadness.

However Jesus rose again, bringing the promise of forgiveness of our sins and eternal life with our God. For this we praise God. Emmanuel, our God, is with us whatever the horrors of our world throw at us. God is not just for Christmas!

Happy New Year to you all. May you know God's blessings always.

Barbara

Andrew Gilmour Licensed as Rector of Greenways Benefice

The Diocese of Bristol is pleased to share that The Revd Andrew Gilmour has been licensed as Rector of the Greenways Benefice.

Revd Andrew was licensed by the Rt Revd Neil Warwick, Acting Bishop of Bristol and Bishop of Swindon, at St Paul's, Chippenham, on Thursday 11 December 2025



As an undergraduate, Andrew studied Ecology in Scotland. He then made the transition from ecology to youth work, first as an intern at St Paul's and St George's in Edinburgh. He then spent five years as the youth pastor at St Aldates, Oxford. Following his time in youth ministry, Andrew was ordained in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, in 2022 after completing his training at Wycliffe Hall. He served his curacy at Christ Church Abingdon.

Speaking about his new role, Andrew said:

"I am grateful to God for the opportunity to come and join in with the good things happening in Chippenham. I'm excited to step into the role of Rector of Greenways Benefice, and as a first-time incumbent I'm also feeling a fair few nerves! The lay leaders and church members have done a fantastic job during the vacancy and I'm really looking forward to praying with them as we begin to seek the Lord and see what he has in store for Greenways. I'm excited to make lots of new friends in the church, town and diocese!"

Crossword Answers from December 2025

Based on NIV

ACROSS:

- 1, Overwhelmed.
- 9, Valleys.
- 10, Strap.
- 11, Top.
- 13, Reel.
- 16, To do.
- 17, Incite.
- 18, Load.
- 20, West.
- 21, Notice.
- 22, Wash.
- 23, Thin.
- 25, Ash.
- 28, Noah's.
- 29, Ever hot.
- 30, Onesiphorus

DOWN:

- 2, Value.
- 3, Reed.
- 4, Host.
- 5, Lisp.
- 6, Ear lobe.
- 7, Overflowing.
- 8, Opportunity.
- 12, Obtain.
- 14, Lid.
- 15, A cross.
- 19, Abstain.
- 20, Wet.

- 24, Hindu.
- 25, Asks.
- 26, Help.
- 27, Hero.