

December

2025



50p

St Peter's

Leckhampton Parish Church
Parish Magazine



www.stpetersleck.org

parishofficeleckhampton@btinternet.com

part of the South Cheltenham Team Ministry.

The contents of this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the PCC or the editor, but are those of the individual contributors

Our Vision Statement

St Peter's Church, Leckhampton
exists to love and worship God,
to serve its neighbours and
to share the love of Jesus Christ.

The Parish Prayer

Loving God
Open our eyes that we might see you.
Open our ears that we might hear you.
Open our hearts and minds that we
Might respond to you and bring others to know you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ
Our Lord who lights our way.
Amen

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St Peter's

Leckhampton Parish Church

In this December issue...

	Pages
Gary writes..... End of an Era	4 – 5
Editor writes.....End of an Era 2	5 – 6
Services and Readings	7
Parish Register	8
Notes from the Director of Music	9
Groups	10
Craft-T-Time	11
Eco. Heralds of Spring	12 - 13
LLHS Friday Lunches	14
Diocesan Messenger	15 – 17
Rotas	30
Parish directory	31
Contacts 32	

Gary writes.....

End of an Era

After many years of faithful service, dedication and creativity, we will be bringing our monthly parish magazine to a close. This edition will be the last and marks the end of a significant chapter in the life of the church.

It would be impossible to do so without first expressing my heartfelt gratitude:

To all who have contributed over the many years – editors, writers, proof-readers, distributors, advertisers, business managers, photographers and those who have quietly supported behind the scenes – thank you. Your work has kept the church community informed, connected, and encouraged month after month. Your commitment has been a gift to us all, and I offer my sincere appreciation for the time, energy, and prayer you have poured into this ministry.

Thank you especially to David Webber, the retiring editor, for whom this final magazine will be his 200th edition.

As we look ahead, we recognise that times are changing. The way people share and receive information has shifted dramatically in recent years, with most communication now taking place digitally. Many churches and community groups have adapted their publications to reflect the growing use of on-line platforms, and we feel that the time is right for us to explore this also.

With that in mind, I am pleased to share some good news:

Next year, we will launch a new quarterly (seasonal) church magazine. This refreshed format will allow us to continue sharing stories, updates, reflections and events, but in a way that better fits both modern communication habits and the rhythm of our church year.

The new magazine will be:

- Available on-line for everyone to read at no cost.
- Posted to anyone who prefers a printed copy, for an annual subscription of £6 per year, which will cover admin, printing and postage. If you would like to **OPT-IN** to receive this by post, please contact the Parish Office at parishofficeleck@gmail.com or call 01242 513647.

We hope this new approach will help us reach more people, reduce waste, and ensure that our church news continues to be accessible to all who want it, whether digitally or on paper.

As we close the door on the monthly parish magazine, we do so with gratitude, fond memories, and excitement for what comes next.

Thank you once again to everyone who has shaped this ministry. We look forward to sharing the first issue of our new seasonal magazine with you in March 2026.

Revd Gary.

End of an Era 2

Welcome to my last magazine as editor. Not only the last, but the 200th edition as I have been editor for just over 16 years. I took over from David Bayne when Rev Felicity moved on to pastures new.

For the first few years I would produce the magazine and print out one copy, then John Drinkwater would take it to the former rector, Canon George Smith, who, some of you will remember, had a printing press in the rectory. He would print them, then John would drive out to collect them and they would both enjoy a pub lunch. When Canon George was no longer able to do the printing we used The Copy Shop in Suffolk Road, and by this time everything was on a disc and so much easier.

With time the printing equipment in the Parish Office became much more sophisticated so we were able to print in-house and greatly reduce costs, and thanks are due to Liz Johnson for taking this on.

The adverts were always a valuable source of income, and some advertisers have supported us for many years, and although the PCC could not endorse any particular advertiser it was good to be able to support local businesses. The Business Manager initially was John Drinkwater, then Sue Marlow took over, sending out invoices and collecting subscriptions. I was Distribution Manager for a while, Jim Moylan took it on for a few years, to be followed by Peter Davies.

I have always maintained that the magazine is a St Peter's church magazine, and, although community news is welcomed, church matters should

always take priority, and that the number of adverts should be limited otherwise it would become just another advertising directory. I also thought it was important to mark memorable events, such as the death of Queen Elizabeth and the coronation of King Charles, and the commemoration of 100 years since the end of WW1.

I have also strived to uphold the integrity of the magazine and of St Peter's. I once had to refuse an advert from an auction house as their sale of war memorabilia featured a large swastika!

Every copy of the magazine is sent to the Diocesan Press Office for their archives and also to the British Library. The Diocesan Archives hold copies of magazines from before 1895. There are also some copies in a Time Capsule I placed under the flooring of the reordering. (Not to be opened for 50 years, in case you're tempted!)

My thanks to everyone who has contributed to the magazine over the years. I have never been short of material.

The end of an era. I was hoping that someone would come forward to take the magazine on, but sadly not, though I know Gary has liaised with a couple of people about the future. Read all about it in Gary's Lead article.

David Webber

Advent Carol Service
Sunday 30th November
6pm

Christmas Carol Service
Sunday 21st December
6pm

Live Stream Services for December

We will be live streaming the 10am service from St. Peter's most weeks.
 This can be accessed via: www.facebook.com/stpetersleckhampton or
 from www.stpetersleck.org

Readings for December

Date	Day	Readings
7 th	ST NICHOLAS	Isaiah 11.1–10 Romans 15.4–13 Matthew 3.1-12
14 th	GAUDETE SUNDAY	Isaiah 35.1–10 James 5.7–10 Matthew 11.2–11
21 st	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Isaiah 7.10–16 Romans 1.1–7 Matthew 1.18–end
24 th	CHRISTMAS EVE	Isaiah 52. 7-10 Hebrews 1.1-4 John 1. 1-14
25 th	CHRISTMAS DAY	Isaiah 9.2-7 Titus 2.11-14 Luke 2.1-14
28 th	1 ST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	Isaiah 63.7-9 Hebrews 2.10-end Matthew 2.13-end

From the Parish Registers

There were no baptisms in November

We congratulate those who were recently married

Katie Ann Keegan & Harry James Hearn on 15th November

We offer our sincere sympathy to the families of those who have recently died, especially:

Romie Lockwood on 20th October aged 90

Shirley Weaving on 31st October aged 84

AtaLoss.org is the UK's most comprehensive hub of bereavement support and information for anyone bereaved and for those supporting them. You can easily search using filters according to age, location or relationship to the deceased and find support from the many hundreds of services listed, confident that the details are accurate, up to date and offer choices from a wide range of support available. Useful things to read, helplines and a FREE live-chat counselling service are also available on www.ataloss.org to help anyone deal with their loss, whatever the circumstances and whatever their faith or none.

Bereavement Support Please contact one of the clergy if you would like to talk about a bereavement. Please visit the church Wellbeing webpage for more details.

Celebrate or Commemorate with Flowers

The Flower Guild would like to give you the opportunity to celebrate a special occasion or commemorate someone by sponsoring a pedestal of flowers at the high altar in church. The flowers would be of the colour appropriate to the church calendar or a colour of your choice if the calendar permits. We would appreciate a donation of £20 towards the flowers. The occasion can be acknowledged in the church news sheet or can be kept confidential – the choice is yours. If you would like to mark a special date in this way please have a word with Averil Murray (Flower Guild Co-ordinator) or Sally Marlow (Flower Guild Treasurer) or email sally.marlow@softcopy.co.uk.

‘Notes from The Director of Music’

Well, fresh from having done our Advent Carol service, we enter the busy period of December! Our morning services will feature a lovely range of choral music. For example, the first Sunday will see the



choir perform a beautiful modern piece called ‘Why not buy an extra present?’. This is followed on the second Sunday (‘Gaudete Sunday’) with a rousing arrangement of the ancient ‘Gaudete’ complete with some percussion! On the third Sunday, which is the 4th Sunday in Advent when we traditionally focus on ‘Mary’, the choir will perform Gorecki’s ‘Totus Tuus’ - a stunningly moving piece which translates as ‘totally yours’. This prayer of consecration to the Virgin Mary was written by Saint John Paul II, who after having lost his mother as a boy, began a lifelong devotion to the Virgin Mary that lasted the rest of his life. These Sundays will feature organ voluntaries by Bennett (a jolly ‘dance’ on the plainsong Ave Virgo Virginum), Reger (his chorale prelude on ‘Wachet Auf’) and Flor Peeters (his amazing toccata, fugue and hymn on ‘Ave Maris Stella’).

In addition to these services, the choir will lead our 9 Lessons & Carols service (along with organ and brass). This will feature a host of lovely items by composers such as Rutter, Leighton, Gardner, Cornelius and more. They will also lead our Midnight Mass service, which will feature various bits of choral music (including the Charpentier ‘Messe de Minuit’ for the Sanctus/Benedictus/Agnus Dei, as well as the Victoria ‘O magnum mysterium’ as the anthem). Following a lively anthem on Christmas morning (by Wells entitled ‘A Christmas Carillon’), the choir will take a well earned rest for the following week and return in early January.

My grateful thanks go to all of the choir and musicians who support the music at St. Peter’s. I couldn’t hope to work with a lovelier bunch of people, and we are all so grateful for the support and gratitude we receive from Gary and the whole church community.

Dr. Kit Perona-Wright **Director of Music**

Community Café

10am-12pm on the third Saturday of each month at The Dug Out Cafe, Burrows Field, Moorend Grove, Cheltenham GL53 OHA .

Little Pebbles

*Tuesdays 10.00 to 11.30 in the Cottages during term time.
Please contact the Parish Office for details.*

Amie Lidbetter can be contacted via the Parish Office.

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Youth News The Youth program can be found here.
<https://southcheltenham.wordpress.com/youth/>

Abbie Marsh
JNC Professional Youth Worker
South Cheltenham Churches
e: abbie@cnc.church
m: 07708540732

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Men's Group

Thursday 4th November 12.30 for lunch at The Wheatsheaf

John Laurence, john.laurence.chelt@gmail.com,
Tel. 07717222687

(Apologies for my error last month. Look out for John's email to confirm the above!) DRW

Craft-T-Time

The Craft Group put on a great display of their work in the Cottages..
Do join our friendly and supportive group on Wednesday mornings from 10-12 in the Cottages. All are welcome to join, even if just for a 'cuppa' and a chat.

Helen Skill coordinator



Heralds of Spring

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

-Percy Bysshe Shelley

What signs in nature show that spring is coming? We notice the days are getting longer and warmer, birds start singing and flowers begin to bloom. But for the lepidopterist, one who studies butterflies and moths, the coming of spring is heralded by the first butterfly of the year.

It is a joyful moment, which came early this year. On 22 February I spotted a Brimstone, a beautiful pale yellow butterfly, in my garden. A few years ago, my first sighting was of a Peacock. Its red colouring and eye-spots are unmistakable, as it feeds on nectar-rich flowers, but the underside of its wings is so dark that the Peacock appears black in flight.



The UK has 59 butterfly species: 57 resident species and two regular migrants, the Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow. In spring these exquisite creatures fly thousands of miles from southern Europe and North Africa to breed in the UK.

Glorious examples of nature's diversity, butterflies are also highly sensitive indicators of the health of the environment. They play a crucial role in the food chain, as well as being pollinators, in common with moths, bees and wasps.

Unfortunately, numbers of most butterfly species are declining. One factor is uncharacteristic weather caused by climate change. In 2024 it was too cool and wet in the crucial months, whereas this year it was too hot and dry from June to August. Other factors include the loss of suitable habitats and the use of pesticides.

Some species have become extinct, but one species, the Large Blue, has been successfully reintroduced into the UK. This was achieved by studying its life cycle minutely and creating the right habitat.

So what can we do to reverse the downward trend? We can grow plants on which butterflies and moths can feed or lay their eggs, such as purple-flowered buddleia and pale lilac scabious. We can also join organisations such as Butterfly Conservation (BC) and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, which both work for the welfare of butterflies and moths.

Butterfly Conservation is the largest insect conservation charity in Europe, with branches throughout the UK. We are fortunate to have a flourishing branch here in Gloucestershire with many volunteers and several nature reserves. It organises family activity days and leads walks from May to August, where you can learn to spot and identify butterfly species.

From September to March, BC also runs conservation work parties on its sites to thin trees and reduce scrub and brambles in order to improve the habitat.

Sir Winston Churchill had a passion for British butterflies and was concerned about their declining numbers. In his lifetime several species became extinct, including the Large Tortoiseshell. Let us hope we can reverse this trend and preserve our wonderful butterfly species for the benefit of future generations.

butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Pocket Guide to the Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland by Richard Lewington

The Butterfly Isles by Patrick Barkham is an account of his travels to observe and record all the UK species in a single year.

Margaret Kelly





Leckhampton Local History Society

Programme 2025-26

Meetings are usually held in St. Peter's Church on the last Tuesday of the month starting at 7.30pm. Admission is free for members and under-18s, £3 for visitors. For more information about the Society visit www.lhs.org.uk or email leckhamptonlhs@gmail.com

December event - to be confirmed

Tuesday 27th January 2026

'The Arts and Crafts Movement in Cotswold Churches' - Kirsty Hartsiotis

24th February 2026

Research and Display Evening

Tuesday 31st March 2026

'Tolkien and the Cotswolds - the shaping of Middle Earth' - Andy Meller

Tuesday 28th April 2026

'A walk down memory lane via steam, tram & horse' - Ian Boskett

Tuesday 26th May 2026 – AGM

FRIDAY LUNCH with FRIENDS 2025

Come and enjoy a light lunch with friends old and new

Friday 28 November

12.30 – 2pm at the home of Sally & Peter Marlow

1 Vineries Close (off Kidnappers Lane)

Donations for The Children's Society will be welcome

Please come and join us!

The Diocesan Messenger

Clips, cribs, and community: Advent at Sodbury Vale

This year, Sodbury Vale Benefice is spreading seasonal cheer online with their digital Advent calendar – inviting everyone to share in the hopes, memories, and joy of Christmas as seen through the eyes of their community.

Running from 1 to 26 December, the calendar features 26 virtual ‘doors’, each one revealing a 45-second to one-minute short video clip of a different person or group from the benefice’s four churches.

Every clip gives a glimpse into how people in Sodbury Vale celebrate Christmas, from favourite memories to reflections on what the season means to them.

“We’ve made a joyful digital countdown to Christmas for all to enjoy,” said the Revd Christine Butler, Rector of Sodbury Vale Benefice. “We wanted to make more of Advent in the lead up to Christmas, and to make something that’s a bit of fun too. It’s a daily moment of festive cheer and connection; a space to reflect on the wonder of Christmas and the hope Advent brings. We thought it would be sad to stop on Christmas Day, so we added Boxing Day as well. People will have to wait for the exact date each day to watch the video clips.”

Each calendar door is also illustrated with images from CribFest 2024, the benefice’s much-loved annual nativity display that showcases nativity cribs from around the world – from simple handmade cribs to stunning semi-precious displays.

“A lot of people tell us that CribFest starts off their Christmas, and that in the years we didn’t have it, they felt bereft. People come from quite a long way to attend, because some of the cribs are just amazing and from all over the world,” Christine said.

Excitement is already building for CribFest 2025, running from 3 to 7 December at St John’s Church, Chipping Sodbury. This year’s theme, ‘Good News’, aims to point visitors towards the story of Jesus. On the final day, the town is hosting its annual ‘Chipping Sodbury Christmas Sunday’, complete with two donkeys in the lay-by next to the church.

"We invite everyone to experience the joy of Advent – through our online calendar, at CribFest, or both," said Christine.

To access the calendar, and for more information about CribFest 2025 and Sodbury Vale Benefice's Christmas services, visit <https://svbcofe.org.uk/cribfest-2025/>.

Grace Network launches ethical Christmas hamper
The Grace Network, based in The Old Department Store in Cirencester, is offering a thoughtful way to give back this Christmas with a hamper that supports communities both locally and internationally.

Created in collaboration with Different Kind, also based in The Old Department Store, each hamper purchase helps fund social enterprises, fair trade producers, and community initiatives – from pay-it-forward meals at The Long Table, to fair-wage work for women in Bangladesh. All proceeds go to Different Kind, which supports the makers behind each product.

The hamper includes products like Dalit candles, handmade by the Dalit people of India which helps fund education for children in underrepresented communities, and Wiggly Kitchen's Social Sauce, made with mulberries picked from Bishop Rachel's garden, which helps marginalised groups learn to cook, garden and connect.

Annie Campbell, Communications and Community Lead for The Grace Network, said: "Each item in the hamper has its own story. Everything has been thoughtfully chosen because it gives back in some way, celebrating community, generosity, faith, and the joy of Christmas."

There are two options available, one priced at £75 and another at £115.

To view the full list of hamper products and costs, visit

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/2025/grace-network-launches-ethical-christmas-hamper/>

Orders can be placed by emailing melissa@thedifferentkind.com.

Events and training

More details for all these events at gloucester.anglican.org/events

**Advent course: scripture and art, Chapter House, 12 College Green,
Gloucester, GL1 2LX, 7 and 14 December**

Explore the Nativity story onsite through scripture, art, prayer, and reflection, guided step by step in community over hot drinks and cake. Online courses on 2, 9 and 16 December are also available.

<https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/advent-course-scripture-and-art-2>

**Christmas – the candlelight concert, Tewkesbury Abbey, Church Street,
Tewkesbury, GL20 5RZ, 8 December**

A festive musical event featuring live performances of classic Christmas songs by singers and a band, performed in a candlelit setting.

<https://www.skiddle.com/whats-on/Gloucester/Tewkesbury-Abbey/Christmas---The-Candlelight-Concert/41054554/#tickets%20>

**Beer and carols, St Philip and St James Leckhampton, 60 Grafton Rd,
Cheltenham GL50 2DD, 20 December**

A selection of beer and carols and a singalong of the best carols and Christmas tunes. <https://pipandjims.org.uk/christmas>

**Gloucester Morris Men and Mummers dance, Gloucester Cathedral Green,
12 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LX, 26 December**

The Gloucester Mummers Play, a traditional and entertaining Boxing Day performance revived in 1969 by local folklore enthusiasts is a free, family-friendly event on Cathedral Green featuring dance, music, and festive fun.

<https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/gloucester-mummers-dance-at-upper-green-25>



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Advent Carol Service
Sunday 30th November
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Frost & Flames: A Symphony of Elements

British Police Symphony Orchestra

Proms Night Spectacular

Musical Director: Dr Richard Jenkinson

6 December 2025

7pm

Symphony Hall
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B:Music

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Dr Richard Jenkinson we sparkle,
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heart-warming, embrace the
energy of Frost & Flames*

Through flickering fire and chilling blizzards,
swirling snowflakes and dancing embers, conductor
Darryl Milson will guide our journey towards
the uplifting piano finale, complete with our
very own indoor firework extravaganza.

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Bring flags, streamers, woolly hats and sunglasses
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How to Train
Your Dragon
John Powell

Firebird Selection
Stravinsky

Polar Express
Silvestri

Frozen
Anderson-Lopez/Lopez

Ski Sunday
(Pop Looks Back)
Fennell

Night on a
Bare Mountain
Mozzart

A Christmas Festival
Anderson

Suspici
Elgar

Our Proms Night Firework Finale Favourites

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NICE

NicheRMS365

+ Slater
Gordon

B:Music

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