

PRESTON PARISH PAPER

A Happy Christmas to all our Readers

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 3rd December -
Preston Praise for Advent
Sunday at 11.30am for 12
noon in the Church

Tuesday 19th December -
Carols at 6.00pm in the Cock
Horse, Lavenham with the
Preston Pop-up Choir - See
Page 18

Sunday 24th December -
Christmas Carol Service at
5.00pm in the Church - See
Page 6

Sunday 7th January -
Preston Praise for Epiphany
at 11.30am for 12 noon in the
Church

Saturday 20th January -
Defibrillator Awareness
Seminar at 6.00pm in the
Village Hall - See Page 21

EDITORIAL

Thank you for all
yoursupport, and for your
contributions to the PPP.

Our Editorial email address
is:

editorpstmppaper@gmail.com
for future contributions.

PEACE AND JOY TO ALL



*May you have the gladness of
Christmas which is hope;
The spirit of Christmas which
is peace;
The heart of Christmas which
is love.*

If

you've any thoughts, points of view, experiences or protests
to share, please write to the editors. We would love to hear
from you, and so would the rest of our readers.

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

WHO'S WHO IN THE VILLAGE

Parish Council

CHAIRMAN	Peter Korwin		
CLERK	Kay Shorter	07561 060041	prestonpcclerk@gmail.com

Parochial Church Council

RECTOR	Revd Simon Pitcher	247244	rector.lavenham@gmail.com
CHURCHWARDENS	Janet Martin	249020	janet.martin@btconnect.com
	Keith Davis	247112	keithhdavis@btinternet.com

Friends of Preston St Mary Church

CHAIR	Glynis Huggett	01449 741389	glynishuggett@gmail.com
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Village Hall

CHAIRMAN	Annie Mason	07740 820100	ranniemason@btinternet.com
SEC./BOOKINGS	Sue Diggins	247626	sdiggins2rda-east.org.uk

Art Group

Monday mornings, 3 terms of 10 weeks

CO-ORDINATOR	Judy Legg	247515	judyannlegg@gmail.com
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Ladies' Group

Informal gatherings arranged for most months of the year, usually on Mondays

CO-ORDINATOR	Anne Springall	247156	annespringall@gmail.com
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Table Tennis

Thursday Evenings at 7.30 in the Village Hall

CO-ORDINATOR	Dave Williams		williams.jackdaws@btinternet.com
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Carpet Bowls

Friday Afternoons at 2.30 in the Village Hall

CO-ORDINATOR	Maggie Bardzinski		maggiemossbar@aol.com
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Preston Popup Choir

MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Lyn Davis	247112	divalynx@aol.com
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The Six Bells Pub

		247440	reservations@thesixbellspreston.com
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Tree Warden

	Lyn Davis	247112	divalynx@aol.com
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Preston St Mary Parish Paper

News of events & village life, distributed free to every household, bi-monthly

EDITORIAL BOARD	Robyn Lloyd Hughes, Jack Tasker, Caroline Gove		editorpstmppaper@gmail.com
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Doctors' Surgeries

Bildeston	01449 740254	Lavenham	378226
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Local Councillors

Suffolk County Council	Robert Lindsay (Green Party)	robert.lindsay@suffolk.gov.uk
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Babergh District Council	Deborah Saw (Green Party)	deborah.saw@babergh.gov.uk
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Community Liaison Officer	Cally Boardman	cally.boardman@suffolk.gov.uk
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Police - Non-emergency number 101

Police Community Engagement Officer	PC Jon Gerrish	ceosudburyhaverhill@suffolk.police.uk
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Our Ward is North West Cosford

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends

Luke 2 verses 15-21

The Bible reading set for Sunday 31st December, New Year's Eve, is the story of the shepherds visiting Bethlehem and worshipping the Christ child. The Christmas Carol, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night" tells the story.

It is interesting to see how the events of that night change the shepherds. We meet them in the fields, at night, keeping watch over their flocks. They are literally in the dark, a silent lonely vigil, on the lookout for thieves or wild animals intent on



stealing a sheep. They were living in the margins of human society. We can imagine the shepherds feeling that life was passing them by, overlooked, inconsequential, alone.

But to these hard-working individuals the host of angels appear, filling the night sky with the brightness of the heavens, the glory of God, and the Good News that God has acted decisively, entering into the human condition, their condition, in the person of Jesus. He meets them where they are and invites them to share in his life.

The shepherds hurry to Bethlehem and are transformed by what they see there. They recognise in the infant the presence of God. They delight in sharing this news with others. They come away to excitedly spread the news to everyone all that they had seen and heard. In this story we see how God turns human understanding upside down. He welcomes, includes and empowers those who the world was happy to overlook, ignore and pass by. And so the kingdom of God breaks in to change and transform us.

At the start of a New Year perhaps we too can look back at all that has been and give thanks. We can look forward hearing the words of the angels, "Do not be afraid, I bring good news that will cause great joy for all people." May that joy accompany you as we enter a New Year together. May the love of God sustain and strengthen us as we journey on.

Yours in Christ

Simon

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

A LETTER FROM PETE POSTLE, LAY READER

As I write, the conflict in Gaza and Israel still persists: I shall not attempt to add any opinion, other than that I pray - and often am in tears as I see events there unfold.

Instead, I shall first reflect on the service in church that we call All Souls – commemorating those we have known, loved, respected – and still miss dearly. All those relatives and friends that have progressed from this world to the next.

A couple of weeks ago, I travelled up to see my sister for her 88th birthday and, on the way, dropped into the ginormous shopping centre called Meadowhall on the outskirts of Sheffield. It is conveniently placed just off a slip road on the M1. I can thoroughly recommend you to give it a miss unless you are a complete Retail Therapist.

However, I was able to buy there a little device that allows me to review colour slides and upload them to my computer. Back home, I climbed into the attic and retrieved the box full of slides there (some dating back to before our wedding – ie 60 years old!) and have started to get them onto the computer.

So, there is our wedding, our honeymoon (in Bournemouth in father-in-laws caravan), holidays, cars, houses. All happy memories.

And pictures of Mum and Dad, my brothers, some friends. All those relatives and friends that have progressed from this world but not from our memories.

Which brings me to Advent – the four Sundays preceding Christmas. The first is 3rd December this year (incidentally, the latest day of a year it can fall on). Advent is the start of the Church Year, a time to reflect on how we prepare ourselves and our homes for Christ's birthday. A month of prayer, reflection and appreciating the love that you can share and receive from your parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, partners, children, friends, work colleagues – and any other category I might have missed! Love them, kiss them, hug them – they are what life means for you and me.

So, my love to you all

Pete Postle.

Christmas

And is it true, this most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea become a Child on earth for me.

John Betjeman

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, LAVENHAM



Many will be aware that there is a social club in Lavenham, but the main raison d'être of The Royal British Legion is to aid and support ex members of the armed forces or their dependents who are experiencing difficulties.

If you fall in that category, or know someone who might, and would like to speak to The Legion, please phone 01787 249571 or 07817 316024 in complete confidence.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL 2023

Thank you very much for everyone's kind donations for the British Legion Poppy appeal. Roy Hollocks with the help of his granddaughters Mia and Emily raised £388.04 in Preston. Special thanks to Mia and Emily - it's so good to see young people volunteering to help others in this way.



The Poppy collection in the Lavenham district this year raised a total of almost £5000. This is a fine effort. Our thanks are also due to Kay Shorter, Poppy Organiser for the district.

This year the Remembrance Sunday parade and Service in Lavenham was well attended. It began at 9.30am in the Market Place, where nearly 50 soldiers from Wattisham were on parade as wreaths were laid on behalf of the Crown, the local authorities, the armed services (including the United States Air Force), the Royal British Legion and other local interests. Then the troops marched through the village to the Church, where a special service included the naming of the war dead and a two-minute silence.

In Preston we held a service of Remembrance in the Church on Saturday November 11th, which included a two-minute silence at the War Memorial.

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY CRIB AND CAROL SERVICE



5.00PM SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER 2023

Children are especially welcome and are asked to come dressed as any of the Nativity characters or animals

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DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

Preston St Mary Parish Paper Advertising Charges

ONE-OFF ADVERTISEMENTS

Local Events	Free of charge
Full page advertisements for locals	£9.00
Full page advertisements for non-locals	£18.00

FOR 6 ISSUES

Local Organisations

Quarter Page	£9.00
Half Page	£18.00
Full Page	£36.00

Non-Local Organisations

Half Page	£36.00
Full Page	£54.00

Issues: Feb/Mar; Apr/May; Jun/Jul; Aug/Sep; Oct/Nov; Dec/Jan

Editor: editorpstmppaper@gmail.com

Copy Dates: At least one month prior to issue date

THE COCKTAIL HOUR

Bubbles recommends this one.

CHRISTMAS PUNCH

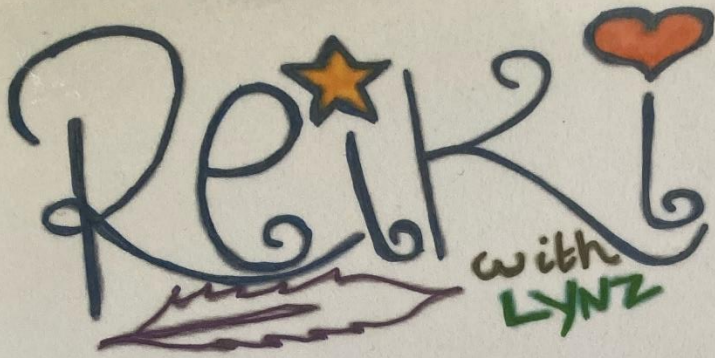
Serves 8

1 litre fruity red wine
4 tablespoons sugar
1 cinnamon stick
400 ml boiling water
4 measures brandy
4 measures sherry
4 measures orange liqueur
Garnish – orange wedges

Put wine, sugar and cinnamon into a large pan and warm over low heat. Stir gently until sugar is dissolved. Add remaining ingredients and stir gently.

Serve in a heatproof glass with fruit wedges.
DO NOT BOIL!

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024



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Reiki is a natural healing system using life force energy and intention, by placing hands on the body in various positions or at a distance.

Reiki can help with **stress, anxiety, depression, pain, sleep, strengthens the immune system and removes energetic blocks**, just to name a few! Reiki is a complementary therapy that works alongside medical procedures.

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1 hour at £25 course of 3 at £65 & 6 at £120

30 minutes at £15 course of 3 at £35 & 6 £70

*Discount for multiple people at the same location

**Discount for people who need the help but can't afford the full amount

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

PRESTON ST MARY & DISTRICT LADIES CLUB

New Members will be warmly welcomed to our meetings, so do come and join our group of lively ladies. Our annual subscription is only £10, and just £2 when you attend a meeting, which includes raffle prizes and refreshments. Village Hall meetings start at 7.30pm and are usually held on the 2nd Monday of the month. However, in the summer we do try to alternate Village Hall monthly meetings with interesting outings wherever possible.

PROGRAMME

Please Note that our usual Christmas meal in December will be postponed until the Spring.

REPORT ON PREVIOUS MEETINGS

13th November Tim Bridges gave us a very entertaining evening reciting a selection of his poems. Before reading each poem, Tim gave a short explanation of the thoughts which prompted him to write it. For the most part, many of his thoughts for his poems came to him by observing such simple things as a dropped flower on the pavement or a walk down a country lane. Some poems were humorous, others were written as birthday poems for his friends, but each poem was very interesting and uniquely different. It seems that Tim, when the muse strikes, has the ability to create a poem about almost anything. We are very lucky to have such a brilliant poet in our Village and we give him our thanks for such an enjoyable evening, and also for being so willing to share his poems with us.

9th October Robyn Lloyd Hughes gave us a wonderful talk entitled **The Ups and Downs of a Small Corner of Suffolk**. This meeting was open to all, and Robyn did not disappoint. With the aid of a TV monitor and his computer, he illustrated a walk through time and history, paying particular attention to our small corner of Suffolk. Robyn began with the "Big Bang" and the birth of our world, followed by the various geological and climatic changes which turned Britain into an island. He then traced our path through the Celtic, Roman, Saxon and Norman ages, then the story of Preston from its record in the Domesday Book, to the manors of the Middle Ages, and the Civil War. Robyn's talk was so interesting and detailed that I fear I have not been able to do it justice in one small paragraph. The Ladies and their guests donated a total of £35 to Robyn's charity the Friends of Lavenham Airfield to show their appreciation.

Wishing you all a
Very Merry Christmas
and happy and healthy
2024

Contact Anne Springall on 01787 247156 or email annespringall@gmail.com for more information about any of our meetings I am always glad to hear from you.

QUIZ TIME

There are no prizes – answers are on Page 32

1. Who developed the first practical radar system?
2. Which artist painted "Girl with a Pearl Earring"?
3. Which toy was the first to be advertised on TV?
4. Outside which New York Building was John Lennon shot?
5. How many of Snow White's Dwarves' names end in "Y"?
6. Who wrote "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings"?
7. Lateral Epicondylitis is a condition commonly known by what name?
8. In which city was Anne Frank's hiding place?
9. Which bone are babies born without?
10. Which chess piece can only move diagonally?
11. In mediaeval England, what was used as currency, specifically for rental agreements?
12. What are the two fruit juices in a Cosmopolitan?

HISTORY NOTES



Ancient maps of Preston St Mary show plenty of wells in the Whelp Street area. Most have been filled in – except the one at Spring cottage. Mary Mares, churchwarden and former owner, stopped the builders of her kitchen extension from giving the well the usual treatment. It's a fine example. Most are about 30" in diameter. But this one is nearly twice that and 17' deep. Perhaps it served a number of dwellings. It's now ornamental. Testing the water for domestic consumption would be an expensive business. Dave and Jacque Williams at Colliers Farm have a well which is inhabited by little black frogs!

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

CATS - NATURE LOVERS?



Everybody loves David Attenbrough's programmes - including these two who watched the last one for 3/4hour. Now, cat lovers, is this normal?

FILM REVIEW – THE GREAT ESCAPER



If this film is no longer doing the rounds do make an effort to see it.

“The Great Escaper” tells the {true} story of a veteran who wants to attend commemorations of the D-day landings, has missed the organised visit and decides to make his own way despite his 90 years and without telling his care home or wife. It turned out to be Glenda Jackson's last film (she died in June) and also Michael Caine's. He has just reached 90 and announced his retirement. Superbly acted in both major and minor roles it is superbly directed – nobody being allowed to hog the limelight. Sensitive moments concerning old age, relationships and warfare are skilfully presented - one leaves the cinema with the feeling of having learned something and wishing everybody could see it. I bought my poppy from a very elderly vet who deemed it “brilliant”. Happy retirement Michael Caine, and R.I.P. Glenda Jackson. Congratulations, Oliver Parker. JT

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

Mrs Mary St Preston our village agony aunt answers some more of your problems.....

Dear Mrs St P

When I make tea, I take the teabag out of the mug and place it in a small bowl. My husband is infuriated by this practice telling me that I should cut out the middleman and throw it directly in the bin. I have explained to him, time and again, that bin juice is formed almost entirely of liquid from used tea bags, and that it is always best to leave the bag to dry out first, thus avoiding noxious brown residue at the bottom of the kitchen bin. This issue is causing marital tension and we would welcome some mediation on this matter.

Yours Edna J Trellis Bildeston



Thank you Edna for your timely letter and hello to you in far-away Bildeston! I say timely as this issue is something I have had personal experience of in the St Preston household. And it too has caused a degree of marital tension in your neighbouring village.

Kitchen bins! We all need them but we all hate them! Unsightly; tucked away, if we're lucky; smelly; full of foul stuff; blue bottle magnets; constantly needing to be cleaned out; liners which never quite fit; liners that split, tear and leak; lids that snag the nails. How many man hours have we all wasted in the shops trying to find the correct liner for our bins? Supermarket shelves have more choices of size, shape and build than our tiny brains can cope with! We are all martyrs to our kitchen waste but we can't live without our bins! I tasked Mr P to come up with a design eliminating the bin altogether: a suction tube with a two way tap to chute the kitchen waste to the blue or the black bin. Alas, he fell at the first hurdle; it was 'beyond what a person of his sensibilities was able to perform'. He also has a bad back.

So.... we come onto that perennial domestic debate, familiar in households up and down the land: to dry out or to not dry out. That is the question. Like you, I very much prefer the intermediate drying station for individual tea bags. But how to train your other half? My suggestion would be to lure him, rather like a freshwater trout. What you need is an amusing receptacle that he'll find hard pressed NOT to use! Christmas all sewn up for years to come!

Some favourites of mine, and ones which I change around from day to day to keep Mr Preston on his toes, are small ceramic dishes with pithy phrases such as the following:

*"YOU OLD BAG"
"TEA BAGS - PRIDE OF PLACE"
"LET TIRED TEA BAGS REST"
"LET ME HOLD THE BAG!"
"HOW YOU BREWIN'?"
"WITCHES' BREW"
"LEAVE ME BE, I'M DRINKING TEA"
"ALWAYS IN HOT WATER"
"SIP IT, SIP IT, REAL GOOD"*

*These will amuse him so much that he'll WANT to use the dish! (Either that or the sayings will annoy him so much, he'll want to cover it each time with a used tea bag)
Good luck and mine's a cuppa!*

Mary

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

CHRISTKINDLMARKT. . . WITH ADDED PIZZA TOPPING



We had two beautifully sunny days while the committee of the Friends of the Church worked to set up this year's Christkindlmarkt event in the lovely setting of Manor Barn. Thank you Carol and Wendy! Boxes of glittering Gisela Graham Christmas decorations were trundled in and lovingly arranged on tables kindly loaned by the Village Hall, and greenery was cut from gardens and the surrounding countryside to festoon the beams - (what an amazing amount of green stuff it takes!)



On the day itself the weather was not so kind, but with the promise of warming Glühwein and Biddle's delicious sourdough pizzas, spirits were high. Our stallholders displayed their wares, the decorations sparkled, raffle tickets were sold and the Preston Pop-Up choir sang merrily and with enthusiasm. It was a very enjoyable day designed to give everyone a good time and raise funds for our lovely church building

The Friends committee would like to thank everyone who makes this festive day such a delight and we were very pleased with the amount raised. A total of £2,500! It's a lot of work for the organising team, and we do enjoy it... but it would be good to see more people on the day to make it all worthwhile, so please make a note in your diaries next year, and bring your friends along!

Glynis Huggett

Chair - Friends of the Church of Preston St Mary

POETS' CORNER

An Ageing Poet's Lament

Now farmers store their harvest hoard,
And Xylem sleeps sound with Phloem,
That time again? Oh spare us Lord,
Not another Autumn poem!

Now woodsmoke fills the air once more,
We warmer clothes and Gore-Tex don.
And wistful verse returns to bore....
Us, happens every year, move on!

And mushrooms, yes! And misty morns,
Dead leaves? Break out the garden rake.
More Autumn poems, stifled yawns
Been done before, for heaven's sake!

It's getting harder every year
To think of Autumn things to say.
Keats' 'mellow fruitfulness' I fear's
Just wasps and rotting pears; decay....

Remembrance Day comes every year,
Don't even get me started....
My memory will soon, I fear
Join with those brave departed.

So pity me this equinox,
Smoky days and lethal conkers.
The endless cycle taunts and mocks,
And sends me stark, stone bonkers!

©Tim Bridges October 2023



LE BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU EST ARRIVÉ!

By tradition, the new Beaujolais “arrives” on the third Thursday in November, so 16th November found Bubbles and Jack stocking up with the famous plonk in Calais ready to streak up to Suffolk the following morning and welcome fellow Whelp Street-ers to a celebration at Spring Cottage that evening - *comme d’habitude*. ‘Don’t know the French for “a good time was had by all” so: “a good time was had by all!”

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

SESAW – Suffolk and Essex Small Animal Welfare

Hello Preston Parishioners

One of our supporters has the ideal gift for avid readers. They say everyone has a book inside them. Well in Frank Payne's case it's not one, not two - but three!

Frank Payne started to chronicle his full and interesting life during lockdown, as a fundraising exercise for SESA. "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow" began with his childhood in wartime London to a promising career in sports journalism cut short by National Service. "Well Worth Waiting For" charts extreme highs and lows in sales and advertising, whilst raising a family and rescuing dogs.

The trilogy is completed with "It All Kicks Off on Sunday" which lifts the lid on the inside story of football after forty three years as a referee. Our awesome author is offering all three volumes for £12, a perfect Christmas present or enjoyable holiday reading for you. Frank is donating all proceeds to SESA, please phone him on 01206 263006 or email cahors@live.co.uk to place an order.



Now that winter has arrived, please check our website or Facebook pages before visiting us as our seasonal shutdown begins in December. Ollie (the Black) Cat joins me in wishing all our friends and rehomed animals health and happiness for Christmas and the New Year. I would say more but Mum told me to stop writing. I'm not to get any big ideas - the world is not ready for the memoirs of me,

Kenny (the Boss) Chihuahua.

Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Registered Charity No.1124029, Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. Tel: 01787 210888, email: info@sesaw.co.uk website: www.sesaw.co.uk

CRAFT FAIR

The annual charity Craft Fair held at Whatfield Village Hall attracted over 240 people last month and raised £1800 for Success After Stroke. The Organiser, Mandy Squirrell, expressed special thanks to her family and friends for their hard work and to the visitors for helping to make the event such a success.

Whatfield Village Hall has already been booked for next year's Craft Fair on Sunday 13th October 2024.

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

MANY THANKS TO ALL USERS AND
SUPPORTERS
OF THE VILLAGE HALL
AND MERRY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE

HARVEST LUNCH

On 15th October about 30 people gathered in the Village Hall for a lunch after the Harvest Songs of Praise service in the church. Preston's Culinary Crew (The Scoff Squad??) prepared the superb treats to their usual very high standard, with two bounteous courses for all to enjoy. Many thanks to all whose efforts made the event such a success. A small surplus was generated, shared between the Village Hall and the Parish Church.

VILLAGE HALL QUIZ

This evening, previously a regular feature of the calendar, was revived for the first time since those dark days of the Covid restrictions. Clearly, it has been missed, as about 50 contestants entered the fray, split into 9 teams. The Preston Ashes Trophy was won by Janet's Jewels after an evening of tense competition. The event was enhanced by some superb catering, with *Light Refreshments* becoming a finger buffet supper, served at just the right time and of an exceptional standard – yet another trademark of our gatherings in the Village Hall.

This is the quiz where the prizes are so worthless that it's not worth cheating, where the essence is to have a bit of fun and where the social side of the event far outweighs any monetary gain. Nevertheless, a surplus of just over £400 was generated. As always, a team effort and thanks to all who participated in any way.

2024 EVENTS

The committee have yet to meet to decide the events that we will arrange during 2024. This is your chance to sway us! Please let any of us know what you would like us to do.

ANNIE MASON, Chairman, 07740 820100 (PC title "The Chair")
SUE DIGGINS, Secretary, 01787 247626 (PC title "The Quill")
KEITH DAVIS, Treasurer, 01787 247112 (PC title "The Till")

QUIZ NEWS



The winners of the Village Hall Quiz on November 25th were Janet's Jewels, a team consisting of Janet Martin, her daughter Anna and son-in-law Alex, Philip and Linda Buckler and Geoff Poole, who beat the defending champions into second place.

The result of the November Six Bells quiz was, frankly, a muddle but The Wonders of Whelp Street were well and truly knocked off their perch by The Interlopers. Remember: the first Wednesday in the month, Quiz and Curry night, teams of four at the Six Bells.

COOKS' CORNER

There are a lot of quinces around this year. Quince jelly is easy to make.

Make sure the quinces are ripe. They should be very aromatic.

Take 3lb of quinces and 1lb of cooking apples, quarter them and cover with water in a preserving pan. Add the juice of a lemon, cover with water, bring to the boil and simmer gently until the fruit is cooked and soft. Mash against the side of the pan then hang all in a jelly-bag overnight. Discard the contents of the jelly-bag, and to the liquid add 1lb of sugar. Boil up to setting point then cool and store in clean jars.

Quince jelly is good simply spread on toast – or with cheese. It also transforms gravy – and, presumably, other sauces.

NATURE NOTES

Everybody has heard of Dutch Elm disease. You may also have noticed that there are plenty of young elms around. Alas, that does not indicate a recovery for they, typically, will die at around the age of 15. They will stand dead and forlorn for a few years then blow over in an exceptional gale. At least six have died in Whelp Street in the last few years, ruining one car and adding a few dents to another. Beware of dead elms near you.

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

BET YOU CAN'T NAME THIS RIVER



Actually, it's not a river – it's Whelp Street on Friday, 20th October. A white-water canoeist would have found it challenging!

PRESTON ST MARY POP-UP CHOIR



The Choir gave a concert in Clare Parish Church on October 6th, when we repeated our performance of songs from Andrew Lloyd Webber's Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and followed it with a selection of Songs from the Shows.

Since then we have sung carols at the Christkindlmarkt.

Our next engagement is to sing at Lawshall Village Hall on December 2nd. Then on December 19th we will be singing carols and Christmas songs in the Cock Horse Inn in Lavenham. We will also be singing at the Christmas Carol Service – see you there!

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024



**Registration
for January
2024 is
Now Open!**

- DID YOU KNOW YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR 15 OR 30 HOURS FUNDING?
- OFSTED GOOD PROVIDER
- LARGE OUTDOOR SPACE & FOREST SCHOOL
- HOT LUNCHES AVAILABLE
- JANUARY 2024- NEW OPENING HOURS 8AM -5PM!



For more information about funding, available sessions and visiting our Pre-school please contact us on: lavenham.preschool@gmail.com or 01787 249 738
<http://www.lavenhampreschool.co.uk/>

Early Years Funding- What you need to know

The government plans to extend the 30-hours offer to children of working parents from age nine months in England as part of a plan to encourage parents back into work.

The scheme will be extended in phases, with 15 hours a week offered to all two-year-old children from April 2024, 15 hours a week offered to all children from nine months old from September 2024 and an additional 15 hours for working parents of all children from nine months from September 2025.

If you would like to know more about funding, availability and what Lavenham Pre-school can offer, we would happily navigate you through it.

Please contact us on: lavenham.preschool@gmail.com or 01787 249738

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

PRESTON ST MARY VILLAGE HANDBELLS

The history of handbells reaches as far back as 5th century China but in England seems to have started sometime in the 17th century when they were used by bellringers to practise their art.

Rather than using the huge bells in Church towers for rehearsals they used handbells which did not disturb the whole surrounding community. By the 1830s and 40s this art form had been taken to the United States by the Peake family and PT Barnum and by the 1950s and 60s there were hundreds of groups. There must once have been an interest locally because there is still an East Anglian Section of the Hand Ringers of Great Britain (HRGB).

Did you know that Preston Village was also gifted its very own set of handbells which you can view in your local pub the Six Bells? Do go and have a look. Does anyone know who donated the bells? Was it Mr Chambers?

There is documentation that states that the set of twelve handbells that hangs in the Six Bells belongs to the Village of Preston St Mary and was handed over to Mr Adrian Thorpe by Mr Chambers of Lavenham who granted him the Custodianship of the handbells in 1997.

It also says that the Custodian has rights as to their usage and may nominate any future Custodian. On 17th October 2004 Mr Thorpe signed a paper saying that he named Richard Martin of Preston Hall as Custodian of the handbells. He was to pass this position on when he wished to relinquish it to a named successor. That successor is Mark Ward, proprietor of the Six Bells, who is now the Custodian of the Bells.

Janet Martin

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mac Chambers (1911-1999) was our Bell Captain for many years and rang from the 1930s to the 1990s. He told Joy and me that the Preston hand bells were bought by the bell ringers (don't know when), kept in the pub, and were given to 'the Village' – not the Church, not the pub.

Mac lived in the bungalow at Model Farm, which is now the site of two new houses. He was a familiar sight around the village on his bicycle. In his final years he moved into sheltered housing in Lavenham. His grave is in Preston Churchyard.

Robyn Lloyd Hughes



Defibrillator Awareness

Cardiac Arrest Response Seminar

Preston St Mary Parish Council would like to invite you to an awareness session for the defibrillator that is on the wall at the Village Hall.

The demonstration will take place on Saturday 20th January 2024 at 18.00 hrs.

There is a limit of 50 attendees to this session so it will be essential to book a place with Kay Shorter, Parish Clerk, either by email prestonpcclerk@gmail.com or by calling 01787 249492.

CHT works with the ambulance service to provide community awareness sessions, or can offer an inclusive full training programme if required through its training partners. Annual retraining is advised on formally trained people.

The CHT community awareness 'CARS' programme is unique and has been recognised as being ideal for a community to create awareness of the issues surrounding treating a patient in the community. It is not a formal classroom course, but designed to answer questions, give basic instruction, be interactive and create confidence.



DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

THE LAST OF THE SUMMER WINE IN PRESTON ST. MARY 2023!

In the early Autumn of 2022, a discussion took place between a few Committee members of Preston's Friends of the Church at a wine tasting in Lavenham Church. We had the idea that we should put on our own wine tasting event for the village. I put my hand up to lead the organising for the Committee.

We went for Friday 15th September – in the Village Hall - still warm enough to venture into viticultural pursuits when most people ought to have returned from summer vacations. We went for candlelight (thanks to Glynis Huggett for her excellent steer on illumination) supplemented by carefully chosen fairy lights thanks to Jude Shenton and other Committee members.

A good and reliable wine merchant and knowledgeable presentation were deemed essential. We chose Charles Eton of Nethergate Wines in Bury who had been recommended to me by a trustworthy source. Charles came equipped with numerous offerings from vineyards all over the globe – there was something for everyone (including the teetotal guests who imbibed non alcoholic fizz).



It was essential for the tickets to be priced as affordable and to ensure that we met a governing objective of raising a decent amount for the fabric of our Church.

So, it all came together thanks to early and detailed planning and the evening got under way with the booming voice of Charles. The volume from the guests increased as the evening wore on and the wines diluted vocal inhibitions.

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On each of the 8 tables the wines were accompanied by a wonderful array of cheeses, grapes and delicious sourdough from Biddle's bread. My favoured *fromage* was Langres, from an area of France I know well from family holidays in yesteryear!

Some two and a half hours later the evening started to draw to a close with Charles taking a goodly number of wine orders from the audience.

The event raised over £360 towards the Fabric of the Church.

Very many thanks to all who supported this event and special thanks to those committee members who worked tirelessly with preparation and in sourcing high quality ancillary foods which differentiated the evening as a quality event. Thanks are also due to those who kindly donated raffle prizes and of course to Charles as well as the Village Hall Committee for their parts.

Should we repeat it next year and in a similar format? Let us have your thoughts!

Richard Graylen

PETER NIEMY



PRESTON PEOPLE

As one of the recent new arrivals to Preston St. Mary, I was very pleased when asked to say a bit about myself and our family.

Most of my life has been characterised by moves to new places, and this has been another new experience for me. I'm originally from Canada. This will be evident from my accent, and I've spent the past 26 years in the UK patiently explaining that Canadians don't generally mind being mistaken for Americans!

My father was a pilot in the Canadian air force and my mother was a nurse. As a result, our family lived in many locations in Canada, the US and even Germany. I was educated as an electrical engineer and began my career in the flight simulation and pilot training industry. Over 40 years later I've recently retired from this same industry after spending over half of this doing international sales and business development. I've been lucky enough to have visited 77 different countries to date.

My wife Lisa and I have two lovely daughters Florence and Holly who have both just completed university, and we have our 4th generation of "Spotty Dog" called Spice. We're very excited by our move to Preston St. Mary, and are busy getting to know the area better. Lisa and I are now members of the Bury St. Edmunds Golf Club, and this is one of our main passions at the moment along with travelling. We're looking forward to meeting our new neighbours.

CONFESSIONS OF A PRESTON 'PETROLHEAD' Nigel Catchpole

I have always had a great respect and love for the Ford Blue Oval. My first car in 1975 (I was a Ford electrical apprentice at the time) after passing my driving test was a Ford Cortina Mark II for which I paid the princely sum of £275.

I have proudly owned a number of cars over the years, including an iconic Silver/Black Audi Quattro Turbo, but as in our lives, we need to sell cars to buy a replacement and do not to have the opportunity to put them in store for the future.

My dream was always to own a Ford Mustang, the iconic 1960s Coupe, and in July 2015, the dream became a reality



I went to see a number of Mustangs travelling quite a distance to do so. A friend of mine informed me of a Mustang for sale on eBay. I was slightly dubious of buying online as it were but had the opportunity to visit Saffron Walden to see the car. The seller was a main player in the UK Ford Mustang owners club having family in Arizona. He had shipped in a number of them, so the pedigree seemed very good to me towards the purchase. The car was shipped over from the US in a 40 foot container box by the seller accompanied in the container by a 1969 fastback Mustang in indigo blue, which was stunning. I purchased my car which was extremely clean interior, exterior and underneath - which you would expect from a desert state Car.

A number of modifications had already taken place, including rack and pinion, a crossover stainless steel exhaust system, disc brakes to the front of the car, ground to top restoration and respray several years before. The wheels and tyres were exactly the same as on the GT500.

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The engine, replaced in the 1980s, is a V8 small block Cleveland plant Windsor unit fitted with Edelbrock twin carburettors.

The interior of the car is blue and white with a Mustang extra "Pony Pack" which has small chrome embossed plaques with Mustangs on them. The colour is desert blue which was a limited colour that sets off the lines of the car beautifully.



The car was registered in Arizona on 1st January 1965. Mustangs were first produced by the Ford Motor company in the summer of 1964 and were referred to as 64 1/2's.

Sadly I had an engine problem, some six years ago just before moving here to the village, but I had a neighbour who was an expert on these matters and did an amazing job in repair. The engine was completely stripped down, where we discovered that it was not a 289 but a 302 cubic inch block, 5 Litres in new money, which is somewhat rare and valuable. Likewise, engine components, piston rods and such are of a very high quality racing nature.

With the engine now running to perfection and with the assisted sound of the crossover exhaust the sound is impressive, particularly if you are driving behind it. I then needed to have the engine tuned and took it to a great team which also did a first class job and on the rolling road and on the back wheels clocked at 290 brake horsepower. I also had the leaf springs replaced to give added traction to the road due to the torque of the engine and she sits on the road as when she was driven off the Assembly Line.

The Automatic Transmission is original and is a three-stage system. As with most American classics, cornering is not its major point but on a straight road and with the opportunity of giving revs, when the second stage port of the carburettor kicks in you really feel it.

We have enjoyed lots of holidays with the car with friends and family, also proudly using the car for friends' and family's Weddings or Prom night events. On arriving at an event such as a Prom evening, following in Bentleys, Aston Martins, et cetera the Mustang still causes a stir

It is a great joy to drive and along with my Ska and Retro music is something I hope to continue for many years

Happy driving to you all

Nigel

OBITUARY – MICHAEL PORTER



Mike (Michael) Porter died on 9th November in hospice care after a sudden collapse of his health five weeks earlier (advanced metastatic pancreatic cancer)

Michael and his late wife Dawn moved to Preston St Mary around 1985 when they “escaped” London. He was a professional flautist and Dawn had been an opera singer with the D’Oyly Carte Opera Company, which is how they met in the 1960s. Dawn died in 2009 and Michael lived in Preston St Mary until 2012 when he moved to Italy to be near his daughter Charlotte and her husband.

Michael was a churchwarden here for a number of years, and regularly played the flute at our services. I have very fond memories of playing the organ to accompany his playing.

He is being cremated in Italy and in the New Year his ashes will be interred in Preston Churchyard. RLH

NEWS FROM THE NEIGHBOURS

Lots of lively village life:

Since the last issue there was a 70s-80s night at Monks Eleigh village hall which raised £3,000 for a muscular dystrophy charity. Well done Kerry.

Brent Eleigh had one of their famous quizzes. Eight to a table, food drink and cash raised for their old but elegant village hall.

Kettlebaston had a very successful village supper with Spanish food and live Spanish music. Cash for the church upkeep.



Don't forget to come to the traditional Preston St Mary Carol Service at 5pm on Christmas Eve. Always a highlight of the year!

Children are especially welcome.

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&

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Scientific evidence shows that acupuncture treatment can stimulate the brain and spinal cord to produce natural pain-relieving chemicals such as endorphins, melatonin (which promotes sleep) and serotonin (to promote well-being). Based on strong scientific evidence available so far for its effectiveness, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends acupuncture as a treatment option for chronic lower back pain, chronic tension-type headaches and migraines. Large scientific studies also indicate that acupuncture can help relieve pain caused by osteoarthritis.

"I have found your sessions to be beneficial for my neck...I also found the acupuncture to be incredibly relaxing. Your fees are very reasonable for the high value of therapy you offer." Ben Holden, Rattlesden. See website for more examples of what patients say.

Ring 01787 247 726 or e-mail Hua@lavenhamphysio.co.uk to book an initial appointment. For more information, see www.LavenhamPhysio.co.uk

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DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

END OF AN ERA FOR MONKS ELEIGH POST OFFICE?



Not quite. Mandy Coll is about to “reach retirement age” but will continue to open the Monks Eleigh Post Office part time. “A lot of my customers are from Preston”, she remarks. Congrats, Mandy.

Autumn 2023 Opening Hours

May be subject to alterations dependent on volunteer availability (Check our social pages)

Community Shop

Monday-Friday	9.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday & Sunday	10.00am – 12.30pm

Post Office (Until 30th December 2023)

Mon & Tues – Thurs & Fri	9.00am – 5.00pm
Wednesday	9.00am – 1.00pm
Saturday	9.00am – 12.30pm
Sunday	Closed

Many local shops and particularly Post Offices are closing in these tough times. We are fortunate to have a local amenity such as this.

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

LAVENHAM GARDENING CLUB

A wet autumn has followed a wet summer, making it difficult to do much work in the garden. Hopefully, drier weather will come in December, as there are still jobs to be done.

Shrubs and trees can be shaped or thinned, although hard pruning will stimulate new growth - just remove branches that are dead, damaged, crossing or overcrowded. Shorten or tie in any long stems that may get wind damaged, especially on roses, buddleias or climbers. Shorten wisteria side shoots to 2-3 buds. Aside from keeping size in check, pruning shrubs such as elders or cotinus, will encourage them to produce their best coloured leaves next year, or larger leaves on trees such as catalpas (Indian bean tree) or paulownia (Foxglove tree).

Planting can continue unless the ground is frozen. It is recommended to stake new trees only 1/3 way up the trunk, allowing the top to move in the wind, which helps to strengthen the roots. However, rocking at the base creates a hole, which will fill up with water and rot the root crown.

On fine days, continue to collect leaves - cutting them up by running over with a lawnmower will help them rot down more quickly. Finish trimming hedges and mulching beds. Move tender plants or give them protection from cold and wind. You may want to give fruit trees a winter wash against pests and diseases. Squelchy lawns need spiking - make holes with a fork, then brush in sharp sand to aid drainage. Pull out invasive weeds for a 'head start' in spring. It's a good idea to cover beds with cloches or a sheet of polythene weighed down at the edges, to keep soil warm and dry until you are ready to cultivate. As the weather gets colder and the ground is frozen or waterlogged, being outdoors is less attractive to many of us. Winter evenings are good for browsing seed catalogues, planning for summer vegetables and flowers. Sweet peas, some annual bedding plants or early veg can be sown in January and you can start chitting potatoes. When you look out at the bare garden you may make plans to develop structure in the garden, or just enjoy the beauty of frost or snow adorning an otherwise plain view.

Plants for Dec & Jan: Evergreen trees or shrubs with long lasting berries eg Cotoneaster, Pyracantha; shrubs with coloured stems, eg Cornus 'Midwinter Fire'; fragrant flowers eg Skimmias; Mahonia 'Charity' or 'Winter Sun'; Daphne 'Odora' or 'Aureomarginata'; Eleagnus; Winter flowering Jasmine, Viburnums & Heathers (Erica Carnea, which don't need an acid soil to thrive); Hamamelis (Witch Hazel); Sarcococca (Christmas Box); Lonicera Fragrantissima; Bergenia; Ivy; Helleborus Niger; Corkscrew Hazel, early bulbs.

Club News: In September, members were treated to an interesting talk by our celebrity speaker, Pippa Greenwood, about her varied career in gardening. Climate change is something which concerns us all and, at our Oct meeting, Jim Paine gave us an illustrated analysis of the problems and ways in which we can reduce our impact on the planet. We are looking forward to our November Quiz night with Thorpe Morieux Gardening Club.

A note about the Annuals Plant Sale - our President, Hugh Howlett, has for many years allowed the annuals for the club sale to be grown in his greenhouse, generously heating it in the early stages. Hugh is now living in Laxfield House, which means we can no longer use those facilities. We are looking for an alternative space, or for volunteers to help us grow on plants from plugs, so that we can continue to hold an annuals sale. This is one of the main sources of funding for the club. Please contact Carolyn on 01787 247489 if you think you can help.

Diary dates:

Dec No meeting

Jan members annual New Year party

Feb AGM

Meetings are held on the last Weds of the month at Lavenham Village Hall 7.30pm
details on website: <https://lavenhamgardeningclub.co.uk>.

Best wishes for the festive season, on behalf of the Club

Carolyn Jenkins



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A Happy Christmas to all our Readers

AGRICULTURAL NOTES

Ask anyone what they're looking forward to at Christmas and you'll get a similar answer - except the farmer. His view of the immediate future always involves the weather. Drilling of oats and wheat in October was suddenly followed by 156mil of rain in 2 weeks. Grain immersed in water will not



germinate so if the soil does not dry out quickish that crop could be ruined. There are also beans awaiting suitable weather to be sown. This period is also given over to the increasing amount of machinery to be maintained. Much of the work requires expert help but the farmer, among many other things has to be a good mechanic.

QUIZ TIME ANSWERS from Page 10

1. Sir Robert Watson-Watt
2. Vermeer.
3. Mr Potato Head
4. The Dakota Building
5. Five - Grrumpy, Sneezy, Happy, Dopey, Sleepy.
6. Maya Angelou
7. Tennis Elbow
8. Amsterdam
9. The Knee Cap
10. The Bishop
11. Eels
12. Cranberry and Lime

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024



Opening Hours

Monday 10.00 – 1.00
Tuesday 10.00 – 1.00 & 2.00 – 5.00
Thursday 10.00 – 1.00 & 2.00 – 5.00
Friday 10.00 – 1.00 & 2.00 – 5.00
Saturday 10.00 – 2.00
Sunday & Wednesday - CLOSED



The future of libraries in Suffolk – Have your Say

Suffolk County Council have started their consultation and want to hear your views on Suffolk Libraries. We're encouraging everyone who visits our libraries or uses the library service to take part in this consultation and have their say!

Suffolk Libraries offer free books to borrow and provide community spaces to learn, socialize and take part in activities. You can access the online survey by visiting www.suffolk.gov.uk/LibraryConsultation

Those who cannot access the consultation online can request a printed copy by calling 0345 603 1842 or visiting the library where we have paper copies with self-addressed envelopes available.

Please take the opportunity to express your views. It will only take a few minutes. This survey is **particularly important** because Suffolk County Council's contract with Suffolk Libraries comes to an end on 31st May 2025, with a new contract set to begin in June 2025.

The council is seeking views from the public about what is important to them, ahead of awarding the new contract. **The consultation is open until Friday 26 January 2024.**

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Contact Details

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Tel No: 01787 247729

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Email: lavenham.library@suffolklibraries.co.uk

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DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

UNITED BENEFICE OF LAVENHAM WITH PRESTON ST MARY

Rector: The Revd. Simon Pitcher

The Rectory, Church Street, Lavenham, Sudbury, CO10 9SA Tel: 01787 247244

Curate: The Revd. Graham Naylor

41 Spire Chase, Sudbury, CO10 1PZ Tel: 07768 283636

Reader: Mr Pete Postle

7 Hall Road, Lavenham, Sudbury, CO10 9QU Tel: 01787 248564

CALENDAR OF BENEFICE SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY 3rd December ADVENT 1	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	MORNING WORSHIP
	PRESTON	12 NOON	11.30am Refreshments before PRESTON PRAISE
SUNDAY 10th December ADVENT 2	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)
	PRESTON	6.00PM	EVENSONG
SUNDAY 17th December ADVENT 3	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)
	NO SERVICE AT PRESTON	LAVENHAM	6.00PM CAROL SERVICE
SUNDAY 24th December CHRISTMAS EVE ADVENT 4	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	2.00PM	CRIB SERVICE
	PRESTON	5.00PM	CAROL SERVICE
	LAVENHAM	11.30PM	MIDNIGHT COMMUNION
MONDAY 25th December CHRISTMAS DAY	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)
SUNDAY 31st December NAMING OF JESUS CHRISTMAS 1	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
NO SERVICE AT PRESTON	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)

THE FOLLOWING MID-WEEK SERVICES ARE HELD EVERY WEEK

WEDNESDAY (Except 27th December) LAVENHAM 10.00AM HOLY COMMUNION

Note: BCP = Book of Common Prayer (traditional language)

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024

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7 Hall Road, Lavenham, Sudbury, CO10 9QU Tel: 01787 248564

CALENDAR OF BENEFICE SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY 7th JANUARY EPIPHANY	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	MORNING WORSHIP
	PRESTON	12 NOON	11.30am Refreshments before PRESTON PRAISE
SUNDAY 14th JANUARY EPIPHANY 2	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)
	PRESTON	6.00PM	EVENSONG
SUNDAY 21st JANUARY EPIPHANY 3	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)
	PRESTON	6.00PM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
SUNDAY 28th JANUARY EPIPHANY 4	LAVENHAM	8.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)
	LAVENHAM	10.15AM	HOLY COMMUNION (CW)
	PRESTON	6.00PM	EVENSONG

THE FOLLOWING MID-WEEK SERVICES ARE HELD EVERY WEEK

WEDNESDAY	LAVENHAM	10.00AM	HOLY COMMUNION
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Note: BCP = Book of Common Prayer (traditional language)

DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!