ST MARYS
NANTWICH

February 2026





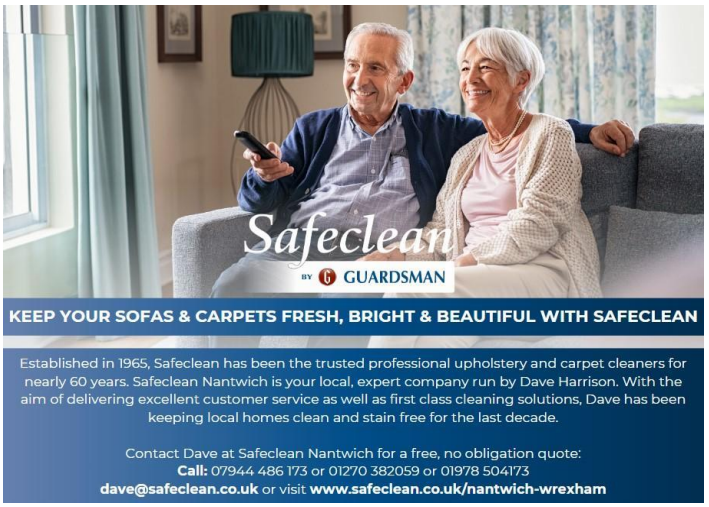
A.W.Burrows & Son
Independent Family Funeral Directors

ESTABLISHED: 1841

Complete Funeral Arrangements, Funeral Plans Arranged,
Personal Day and Night Service,
Private Chapel of Rest in Peaceful Rural Surroundings.
Snowdrop Villa, Swanley, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 8QB

Tel: 01270 524243 / 07711468917
Email :info@awburrows.com
www.awburrowsnantwich.co.uk





KEEP YOUR SOFAS & CARPETS FRESH, BRIGHT & BEAUTIFUL WITH SAFECLEAN

Established in 1965, Safeclean has been the trusted professional upholstery and carpet cleaners for nearly 60 years. Safeclean Nantwich is your local, expert company run by Dave Harrison. With the aim of delivering excellent customer service as well as first class cleaning solutions, Dave has been keeping local homes clean and stain free for the last decade.

Contact Dave at Safeclean Nantwich for a free, no obligation quote:
Call: 07944 486 173 or 01270 382059 or 01978 504173
dave@safeclean.co.uk or visit **www.safeclean.co.uk/nantwich-wrexham**

Would you like to advertise here?

Please contact
St. Mary's Parish Office:
01270 625268 or
office@stmarysnantwich.org.uk
for further details

Advertising Rates 2026	1/4 - £123 Portrait only
1/16 - £37 Landscape only	
1/8 - £75 Landscape only	
1/2 - £180 Landscape only	

Front cover: *St. Mary's, Monday, 5th January 2026.*
Photo: Jonathan White. See pp. 24-25 for more snow photos.



From the Rector

Have you ever had to empty one of your bins and search through the rubbish? Not a pleasant task, but in 1934 it was the daily work of 25 year old Colin Roberts. Not in his own back yard, but in the bowels of the John Rylands Library, Manchester, with the contents of excavated dumps of ancient Egyptian cities.

Roberts had been tasked with cataloguing a collection of papyri, still unexamined decades after being unearthed. Sifting through mostly mundane accounts and trade documents, it was painstaking work. Until one day a fragment smaller than his hand caught his eye.

He read the Greek text on each side and immediately recognised phrases from St. John's account of the trial of Christ, including the word "truth", from Jesus' saying "For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth".

From the style of handwriting, Roberts could date the manuscript to the reign of Emperor Hadrian early in the 2nd century. There and then, he knew that he held in his hands the oldest known copy of any part of the New Testament. It remains so today, known as the P52 fragment, on permanent display in its own case in the library.

At the time, the prevailing view among biblical scholars was that John's Gospel was written late in the 2nd century, long after any living memory of Jesus, by someone giving free rein to their imagination in a work of historical fiction. Why else was it so different to the other gospels?

Roberts' finding caused a return to the long held view that the Fourth Gospel dates from late in the 1st century, the work of an eyewitness, but after longer and deeper reflection on the events. As the saying goes, life is lived forward, but understood backwards. Or as Robert Browning put it in his poem *A death in the desert*, which imagines the last hours of St. John's life, "what first were guessed as points I now knew stars".

St. John in his maturity, gathering the fragments of his memory, finds them opening up to reveal new and universal depths of truth. "What is truth?" Pilate replied. John's Gospel gives us the answer. Join us as we study it in our Lent course (see p. 8).

Mark Hart (Rector)

Oxley's
Funeral Services

Family Owned and Serving the Community for Three Generations

Caring & Dedicated Funeral Directors providing a Complete 24 Hour Service

Individually tailored funerals at competitive prices to meet your personal requirements



- Diplomas in Funeral Arranging & Administration NAFD Dip. FAA
- Finance Available
- Monumental Masonry
- Pre-Paid Funeral Plans

CREWE
01270 214009
Cumberland House
Market Close

NANTWICH
01270 625230
32 Pillory Street
Nantwich

enquiries@oxleysfuneralservices.co.uk
www.oxleysfuneralservices.co.uk
Serving Nantwich, Crewe and all Surrounding Areas

ST MARYS
NANTWICH

February Magazine Deadline: Friday, 20th February 2026

Please send submissions to:
mah4now@yahoo.com

Mary's Mobile Hairdressing

Mary has been working in the industry for 25 years and specialises in mature ladies hair styles.

Call today to book an appointment in the comfort of your own home.

Covering the Nantwich and surrounding area.

Call 07890 096 249

EXERCISE CLASS

Specifically designed for people with neurological conditions including (not limited to) stroke, Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, spinal cord injury, brain tumour

PHYSIOTHERAPY INSTRUCTED
EVERY TUESDAY
@ 10:30 AM

THE GOODWILL HALL, WREXHAM ROAD, FADDILEY
CW5 8HY

£15 per session

Why Join Our Class?

Expert guidance from experienced physiotherapists

Exercise regularly and increase your general fitness and wellbeing.

Supportive Environment with a cup of *tea or coffee* together after the class.

Book your place:

Helen Bleasdale
07813 927714

Jacinta Sharp
07419 779828

We also offer one to one neurological physiotherapy assessment and treatment in your own home.

neuro.physio@outlook.com
jacinta@sharpneurological.com

TEACHING SINCE 2010

YOGA

7PM TUESDAY

PARISH HALL



TIME FOR YOU

FRIENDLY GROUP

CLASSES FOR ALL ABILITIES

IMPROVED WELLBEING



CONTACT RUSSELL

SOY@YOGA-BIJA.ME.UK
07712 610 120
YOGA-BIJA.ME.UK

What's New?



"What's new?" in some form is a very common greeting in most languages. So, what's new for you? The year 2026 obviously, only a few weeks old. The human spirit is so restless that we are always looking for something new. Maybe this is behind the odd modern expression "Been there, done that, got the tee shirt". But for a Christian, newness is altogether different.

Many centuries ago the writer of the book of Lamentations in the Old Testament (chapter 3 v.22-23) wrote "the steadfast love for the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end … they are new every morning".

In the New Testament, writing from personal experience, St. Paul says "if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5: 17). So, what's new? Christ is, every day, every minute of our lives, no matter what the circumstances. Sometimes it doesn't seem like that. But remember, as someone once said, "with Christ, you are always in the majority".

We should not stop looking for new ideas, new challenges, new experiences, but we need to remember that what is really new is not what comes and goes, but what lasts, and is New every morning … a personal relationship with Jesus. An old hymn puts it like this "New every morning is the love – our wakening and uprising prove. Through sleep and darkness safely brought; restored to life, and power, and thought. If on our daily course our mind be set to hallow all we find, new treasures still, of countless price God will provide for sacrifice." It ends with these challenging words "and help us, this and every day to live more nearly as we pray".

So, let's remember, each new day, what (Who) is really New! Happy New Year of our Lord (AD) 2026.

David Marsh, retired priest

Church News

Candlemas Compline

Sung Compline for Candlemas, with Concordia - **Sunday, 1st February 6pm**.

Community Choir

Join us for an evening of singing for fun at the next Community Choir Singing on **Monday, 2nd February**, 7-8.30pm in church. Sign up at the back of church or contact Alison Phillips 07891 620678.

Encounter Supper

The next Encounter Supper will be held on **Sunday, 15th February** at 7.15pm in the Parish Hall. This is a bring and share buffet meal. Our guest speaker will be Rachael Rivers, formerly of St. Mary's and now Lay Reader at St. Mary's Wistaston and St. Luke's Willaston. Everyone is welcome. Booking is essential either with Carole Tilt or the Parish Office by 12th February.

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday, **18th February** - Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes at 8am, 11am, and 7.30pm.

February Breakfast

The February breakfast will take place at The Tea Lounge at Nantwich Football Stadium at 8.30am on **Saturday, 21st February**. The speaker will be Tim Emerton, Head of Fundraising at the Boaz Trust (supported by St. Mary's Mission Support). The Boaz Trust is a Manchester-based charity supporting people facing homelessness after claiming asylum. Boaz is currently experiencing an unprecedented scale of hostility towards its work and the people it supports. It says *"Like so many other asylum and migration charities, we have become increasingly alarmed in recent months by the decimation of asylum principles, the growth of the far right and their sentiments, and the "protests" outside hotels housing people seeking asylum. We are working in a volatile and hostile political landscape"*.

Sign up on the sheet at the back of church or phone the office. If you book, we need to pay, so we have to ask you to pay if you fail to turn up.

Breakfast dates for your diary

The 2026 breakfasts will take place as usual, in The Tea Lounge at the Nantwich Football Stadium, at 8.30am on the following Saturdays:

21st March
18th April
16th May
20th June
19th September
17th October
28th November

C S Lewis Study Day

A C S Lewis Study Day will be held in the Parish Hall on **Saturday, 28th February**. Come along and learn more about Lewis and his writing. For further details see the weekly notices or contact the Parish Office.

Electoral Roll Revision

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 22nd April** at 7.30pm. Now is the time to make sure you are a member of the Electoral Roll if you are not already. If you joined the Electoral Roll last year you will remain a member without doing anything. If you are new to St. Mary's, or haven't yet enrolled, please complete one of the forms available in church. Details of the elections to take place at the annual meetings will be published in due course.

Church Shop

The Church Shop is open again with St. Mary's branded goods and a selection of greeting cards. Please do support us.



Nativity costumes

Do you have any nativity costumes that you don't know what to do with? We'd love to add them to our collection for Crib services and All Age Nativity. Any condition/size, headpieces or crooks – anything gratefully received! Please drop off to the Parish Office or leave in church.

Lent Course 2026
Come and See: The Good News according to John

The first words spoken by Jesus in St. John's Gospel are: **"What are you looking for?"** His next words are: **"Come and see."** The whole Gospel is an invitation to find the way to abundant life and a loving home.

It is written in the simplest language, yet its meaning is inexhaustibly rich.

The Gospel is full of questions asked by Jesus, or asked of Jesus. They are found in stories of particular people of a certain time and place, but as we read we find ourselves asking, or being asked, the same questions.

This short book tells the story of one person, Jesus Christ, while showing the way to the meaning of every life and of the whole universe.

I think it is the greatest book ever written, and for centuries the Church has given it that level of dignity in its worship.

Whether or not you are a Christian, and no matter how much or little you know of the faith, you are invited to join us this Lent.

We will read the Gospel together, and be helped in how to read it. And we will share our questions.

Come and see:
This five part Lent course will run on both Tuesdays at 2pm and Wednesdays at 7.30pm, for five consecutive weeks. For each of the weeks you may come to either session.

Each session will last an hour and a quarter, and be held in St. Mary's Nantwich.

	Tuesday 2pm	Wednesday 7.30pm
Week 1	24th February	25th February
Week 2	3rd March	4th March
Week 3	10th March	11th March
Week 4	17th March	18th March
Week 5	24th March	25th March

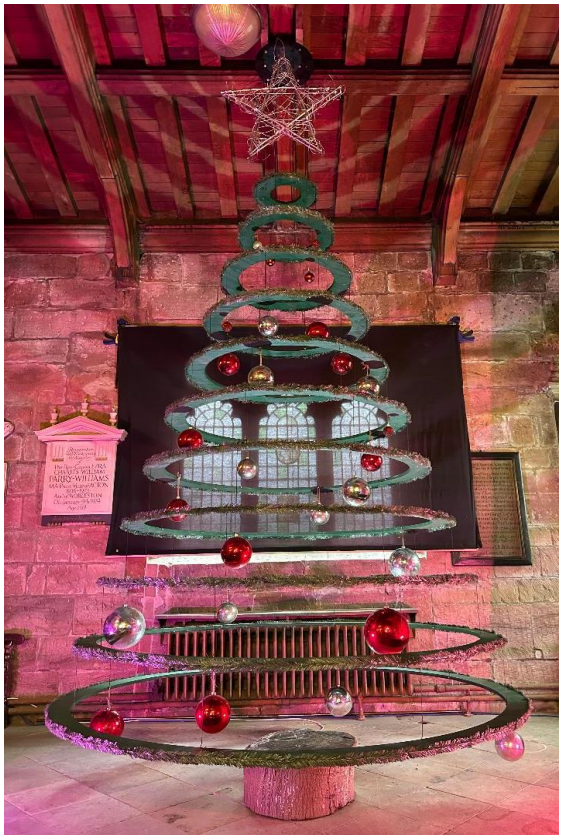
If you wish to attend, please add your name to the list at the back of church or contact the Parish Office.

Mark Hart (Rector)

Church Walk



A group from St. Mary's enjoyed a church walk to Acton on Saturday, 6th December. After leaving from the Parish Hall at 10am and walking through the town, across Mill Island and down Welsh Row, we joined the canal towpath. Along the way we spotted swans, moorhens and ducks, admired the brightly painted narrow boats and marvelled at the abundance of berries in the hedgerows. Crossing the canal at Acton Bridge, we walked across the fields and through the interesting and well maintained churchyard.



A very warm welcome awaited us from the team at Acton Church and we were allocated a pew to store our waterproofs, muddy boots and rucksacks. We spent some time admiring the Christmas Tree Festival which was on the theme of "Storybook Christmas" and favourites included trees decorated as "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe", "The Lord of the Rings" and the Old and New Testaments.

We were served tea, coffee and hot mince pies by some of the Tea at the Tower volunteers and enjoyed the refreshments in a cosy corner surrounded by Christmas trees. After browsing the craft stall, entering a raffle and completing a quiz it was time for the return walk. Retracing our steps back to Nantwich everyone agreed that it had been a very enjoyable morning.

The next church walk is on **Saturday, 7th March**. Everyone is welcome and details will be advertised in the weekly news sheet.

Carole Tilt

Farewell to Seniors' Lounge (2013 - December 2025)

During a trip to Spring Harvest in 2013, Ros Reid was inspired to start a monthly social and informal worship group for St. Mary's, aiming to attract older or isolated people wanting something to do on a Sunday afternoon. With the help of Cathie and Stewart Riddell "Seniors' Lounge" was born, with a warm welcome for all and a unique mix of social time, a shared fun quiz or game and a short time of worship. All who came enjoyed it and returned regularly.

Chatwins Bakery very kindly donated tempting fresh cream cakes and savoury treats each month, Stewart became master of washing up and Celia Benoy excelled in cake presentation! A number of other volunteers helped in different ways over the years - in the kitchen, serving and chatting and helping people to get to the meeting by driving them. Willing clergy took it in turns to give a short talk and lead prayers during the worship. Once a year, Ros and Cathie planned and led a summer midweek day trip to a wide variety of suitable and interesting places and shared this with people from the Mothers' Union and any others who were interested. Many fond memories were created from these special occasions.



Cathie has been technology wizard, using her skills, imagination and a lot of time to produce and lead quizzes, games and popular hymns each month, using the hall TV screen linked with her iPad.

It was particularly lovely that Cathie's mum got involved until the end of her life, creating some really wonderful relevant and fun quizzes on a wide variety of subjects.

Photos taken in November and December.



Sadly, Ros, Cathie and Stewart have become unable to continue to support Seniors' Lounge and their combined talents are irreplaceable. We thank God for Ros' inspiration and offer them very grateful thanks for their faithful years of dedicated service and for the memories they have made with us. It has been a privilege and joy to volunteer with them for the last 9 years.



Our last meeting was held in December. We were delighted that they were able to be with us and we celebrated with Lionel Virr playing the piano for us all to sing carols. All of us who have been part of Seniors' Lounge mourn its passing and will miss the fun and fellowship. If reading this article inspires you to want to create and lead a new monthly Sunday afternoon social/worship group for St. Mary's, please talk to Mark!

Mary Harris, Pastoral Worker

"My stammer does not define who I am" *(King George VI)*

Linda Lewis (verger, choir member and 9.30 service musician) shared her personal story and important facts and figures about stammering at the first 2026 breakfast. The theme for International Stammering Awareness Day (22nd October) this year is "One size does not fit all". This is something with which Linda agrees. She emphasised that she was telling us her experience.

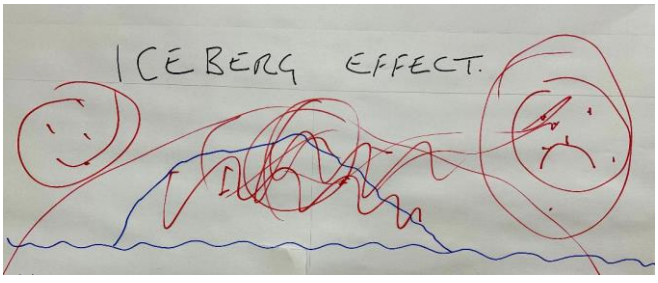


Some facts and figures: There is debate about the cause of stammering – is it physical or psychological? One in 50 adults in the UK have a stammer. A lot hide it. 8% of children will experience a stammer. There are famous politicians, actors, musicians who have a stammer. There are different types of stammers: repeated letter(s) or getting stuck so nothing comes out. Every stammerer is different. Linda struggles with the letters "St" – she used a fabricated address with "St"s in every line to illustrate this to us.

Linda's story: Linda lived with her grandparents and didn't appreciate that she had a mother (who had left when she was a baby). When Linda was eight, her grandfather died and her mother appeared – saying *"If you want to address me you call me by my first name"*. Scared by this, Linda ran to the outside loo and when she came back into the house she stammered and has done ever since. She reflects that it must have been psychological shock that triggered her stammer.

School wasn't a happy place –children can be cruel – imitating her, laughing at her when she'd been picked to read out in class and only managed two words and calling out "can't you speak properly?" But she did quite well, because one or two teachers saw her potential and not just her stammer. And she became skilled playing the organ because she hid away in church practising.

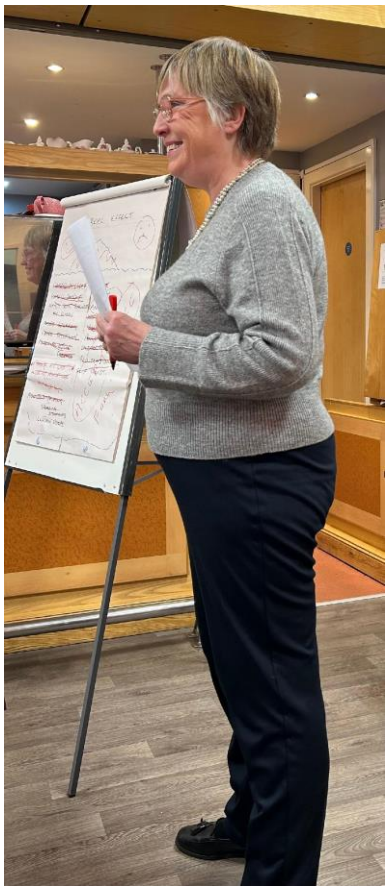
The iceberg effect: Linda listed the negative things she felt, the situations she avoided, the people she hated etc. and showed how all these were bubbling away in the 90% below the surface (like an iceberg).



In her teens, Linda attended a Christian conference and asked for healing for her speech. The message she heard from God was that there is not an instant fix because the problem isn't speech, it's what's inside you. Linda reflects now, that God was right – she had to deal with her fear in small steps. She did: she took a job as a post-person (not much speaking involved), then a move to admin which was a step in faith, then to a successful career at Barclays Bank where the role needed face to face interaction.

Linda's coping mechanisms and non-stammering scenarios: In preparation for this talk, Mark offered to run Linda's flip chart script on a laptop. No thanks Mark – a flip chart is Linda's comfort blanket. On away days at Barclays Bank, Linda would always ensure that she was the first presenter and that she had a flip chart. At the breakfast, she used the flip chart highly effectively, illustrating all the underlying emotions in her iceberg and those she has overcome through accepting that her speech is not perfect, but also by forgiving those whom she previously hated or was angry with, shifting the negatives to positives.

Linda shared with us the six occasions when she does not stammer: 1. singing, 2. whispering, 3.being angry, 4. talking to pets, 5. talking to herself, 6. talking in unison with others – which she illustrated reading out the "St" address with Emma Kennedy.



Happy face: Linda no longer avoids speaking situations (although she did admit to some anxiety before talking at the breakfast and waking up very early on the day!). She no longer feels shame, isolation, frustration, self-doubt and other negative emotions. She does still have a fear of needing to repeat something (like address and post code) and her coping mechanism here is to speak very clearly and loudly the first time. The biggest compliment to Linda is if someone says that they didn't realise she has a stammer – which many people have said.

And happy faces all round at the breakfast for such an interesting, personal and moving talk and for Linda being willing to move out of her comfort zone to educate us all about the hidden aspects of stammering. This was the best attended breakfast so far since we resumed post-Covid, so happy faces for the Tea Lounge too.

Mothers' Union News



On 19th November, the Mothers' Union committee met in church to decorate our tree for the Christmas Tree Festival that weekend. We kept the theme simple, making our own baubles highlighting the many initiatives and campaigns supported by the MU locally and globally. Over 4,000 visitors came to see the trees on the weekend of 21st November. We hope this was a creative witness that sparked conversations and raised awareness of Mothers' Union in the wider community.

Our members meeting in November was well attended, and we had a very interesting, photographic, guided tour of the Church Tower and Belfry given by Tower Captain Stefan Zientek and Andrea Howell-Jones.

In December we held our Carol Service and party in the Parish Hall. Rector Mark led us in worship and prayer. He read poetry with a Christmas theme and Lionel Virr accompanied our Carol singing on the piano. We concluded with coffee, tea, mince pies and stolen. The raffle raised a few more pounds than usual as we had pretty good prizes to win.

Judith Pearson was our speaker in January telling us about "Infiorata" in Italy. This translates as "decorated with flowers". Judith spent over 11 years living in Italy where she and her husband joined a local Ifiorata community group. She described the process of using seeds, flowers, petals, sand and other natural materials to create amazing street art and shared lots of colourful photographs of the village of Paciano transformed into a living tapestry as the Infiorata group decorated the street and pavements with breathtaking floral carpets to celebrate Corpus Domini.

We have a collection of toiletries and underwear ongoing during January. The donated items are sent to MyCWA (Cheshire Without Abuse) who support families in our local refuge.

Our 2026 programme is available in the church magazine rack. Anyone is welcome to attend any of our meetings and you will be made most welcome. We usually meet at 2.15pm in the Parish Hall on the 3rd Friday of each month. Our theme is "Join us and Join in" so why not pick up a programme and Join us and Join in? We are planning a trip in June and hope to invite our friends from church to join us. Our next meeting is our AGM on 20th February and will include details of our trip and of course tea, coffee and fellowship. All welcome.

New Rector of St. Lawrence, Gnosall and other churches

The collation and induction of Rev. Rachael Griffiths (previously youth and children's worker here at St. Mary's) as Rector of Adbaston, High Offley, Knightley, Norbury, Woodseaves, Gnosall and Moreton (the Staffordshire Border Group of Churches) took place on Wednesday, 14th January at St. Lawrence Church Gnosall. (Grade 1 listed, 11th century Norman architecture origins with later additions and modifications).



Seen here with the Archdeacon of Stoke-upon-Trent and the Bishop of Lichfield, Rachael was collated by the Bishop and inducted by the Archdeacon. She was then very warmly welcomed with genuine, heartfelt greetings from representatives of the benefice and community, the local Methodist and Catholic Churches, a councillor representing county, district and parish councils, the two Church schools and the Deanery Lay Chair.

The Bishop asked for a show of hands from Cheshire people supporting - and there was quite a crowd, including other clergy.

Prayers and best wishes for Rachael as she starts this new role.



St. Lawrence Church, Gnosall

Cursillo & Chips!

It's often joked that Chester Cursillo runs on CAKE! Here's proof that for our local Cursillo group it also includes Fish and Chips. Revs. Tim and Norma Robinson were able to join us for a very sociable evening and reminiscence about their time at St. Mary's.

Rev. Canon David Taylor gave a Witness Talk about the value of being ecumenical and of Churches Together in Nantwich and Rev. Brian Statham set this in a Biblical context.

Cursillo people usually meet in small groups of three or four, but not to eat Fish and Chips, it's for more spiritual food, encouraging each other in our Christian lives. The meetings are short and held regularly, often in each others homes where we listen as each has a turn reflecting on what has been happening in their life in terms of Prayer, Study and Action, and what we might do next. It's about listening, not commenting and so this simple method helps us notice where God is in our lives and gives us opportunity to grow in faith.



If you'd like to know more, or join in, contact Sue Hutt via St. Mary's Parish Office *(office@stmarysnantwich.org.uk)*.

Prayer of the Month

This prayer comes from a book, well known in the sixties by a French monk, Michel Quoist. These extracts are from a longer prayer, "Lord I have time". It says so much about our attitude to life that few other words are needed. The title of the book is Prayers of Life.

"I went out Lord.
Men were coming out.
They were coming and going,
Walking and running.
Everything was rushing, cars, lorries, the street, the whole town.
Men were rushing not to waste time.
They were rushing after time,
To catch up with time,
To gain time. ...

But we mist not lose time
waste time.
kill time,
For time is a gift that you give us,
But a perishable gift,
A gift that does not keep.

Lord, I have time,
I have plenty of time,
All the time that you give me,
The years of my life,
The days of my years,
The hours of my days,
They are all mine.
Mine to fill, quietly, calmly,
But to fill completely, up to the brim,
To offer them to you, that of their insipid water
You may make a rich wine such as you made once in Cana of Galilee.

I am not asking you tonight, Lord, for time to do this and then that,
But for your grace to do conscientiously, in the time that you give me, what you want me to do."

Dot Roxby

News in Pictures



Our thanks to David Allman who has generously given his time and expertise to make this beautiful nativity stable. It was dedicated on Christmas Day, in memory of Amanda Palin, who died suddenly in 2023. Amanda was a regular attender of our 9.30am service, and helped with the children's groups. Amanda's family made a donation, to be used for children's work, and this has provided the lovely oak. It was Susie Phillips' idea to replace the old stable, located each year here in the south transept (where Little Fish is held) with one which is more open for viewing the interior. The knitted figures were used previously, but the set is missing an ox, as the Rector pointed out on Christmas morning.

We are sorry to report the death on Tuesday, 15th January of Keith Billing, a regular and much loved member of our 10.45am congregation and a steward for many years, and the first chairman of Nantwich Town Council (1974-76). Keith's funeral will be in church on Tuesday, 17th February at 11am.





During our worship on Sunday, 18th January we learnt with great sadness of the death of Dorothy Relton earlier that morning. Dorothy's service at St Mary's has been long and wide, including her exceptional care of hundreds of baptism families. Funeral details and obituary to follow.

Christmas Decorations





Thank you to Glenys Ellis and all the team who decorated the church so beautifully and imaginatively for Christmas.







Christmas Concerts

In addition to all St. Mary's Christmas services, four school services, and the Oxley's carol service, the church was kept busy with nine concerts in December. Just a few are highlighted here.



Concordia: Grace Lewis presents flowers to Alison Phillips, Conductor



The Nantwich Singers



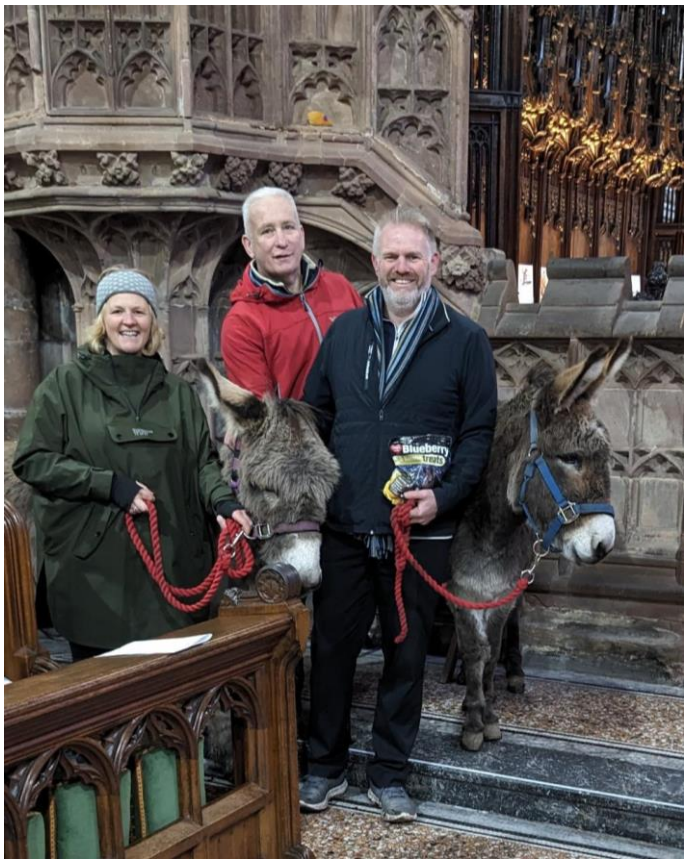
The Band and Drums of the Cheshire Constabulary



The Grove Singers

Christmas Services

It was encouraging for all who contributed to the Christmas services that the attendances were so high this year, increased by 25% above last year, and up to pre-Covid levels and beyond. The Carol Service was exceptional both for the quality of the music from the choir, and the attendance of 600, with more in the south porch and outside watching the livestream on phones, and singing along. 1600 attended the crib services, and it showed that the team had worked hard to pull together a really good script and a thoroughly rehearsed performance. Our thanks are due to the choir and the crib service team, but also to all the stewards, servers, sidespersons, lesson readers, and to the social committee, who for the first time provided mulled wine and mince pies after the carol service.



The first packed out service of Christmas was the All Age Nativity with the donkeys, Daisy and Harry. Like last year, Daisy came through the chancel gates and wouldn't walk any further. It was Harry's first time in St. Mary's, and he walked around happily several times, encouraged by carrot rather than stick. L to R: Liz Parkin, Harry, Michael-John Parkin, Damien Philliben, Daisy.

A still from the livestream of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.





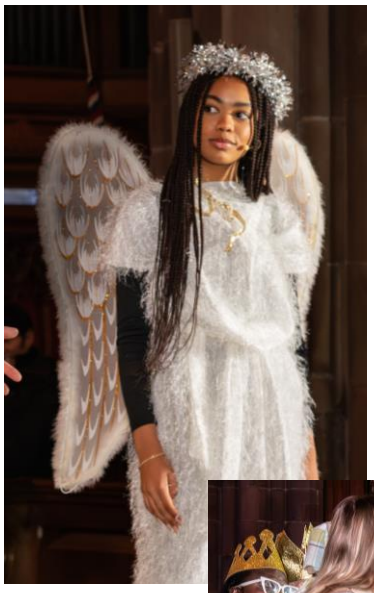




Crib Service

"The Twelve Days of Christmas"











St. Mary's in the snow

5th January 2026
Photos:
Jonathan White






Photo: Jonathan White

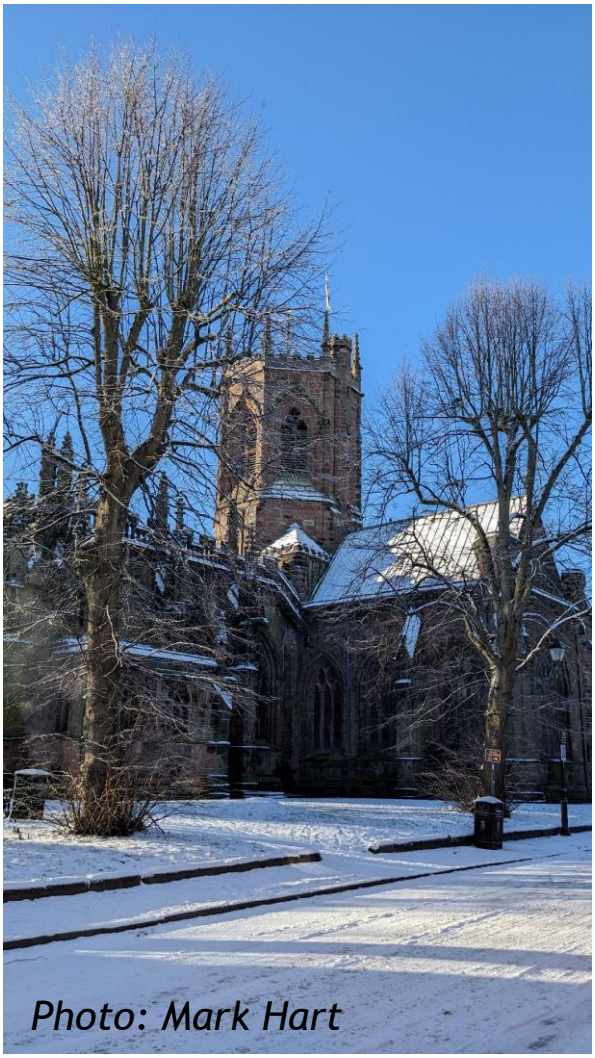

Photo: Mark Hart


Photo: Mark Hart

Congratulations ...



Congratulations to John Naylor, Musical Director of the Nantwich Choral Society since 2005, who was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to music in the 2026 New Year Honours.



Congratulations to William John Arthur Statham, son of John & Hannah Statham, here looking delighted to have been baptised, on Sunday, 18th January.

What Happened to Lord Bishop Robert Burnell's 1270s-80s Church? An Investigation

We know that Lord Bishop Robert Burnell (1239-1292), of Acton Burnell near Shrewsbury, who held part of the Barony of Nantwich, as well as gaining the advowson (the right of a patron to appoint a priest to a parish) to Nantwich St. Mary's, built a new church in the late 13th century.

We also know that on behalf of King Edward I, he began the building of Vale Royal Abbey, near Winsford, in the late 1270s. It is believed that at this time he also began building work on the Church of St. Mary in Nantwich. We also know that he set up an annual fair, by Royal Charter in the town, which was held on the eve, day, and morrow, of St. Bartholomew's Day, 24th August, in 1283.

However, what has not been proved, is whether his church was completed (although to have the right to appoint the priest(s) of the Church suggests this), or what happened to it. We only have a little of its stonework, and parts of a re-used and re-built window remaining in the North Aisle. Before the mid and late 19th century restorations, his late 13th century West Front still existed, and we only have some of his stonework remaining, to its internal stonework walls. However, it is thought that the majority of the footprint of the later mid to late 14th century Church, believed to have been founded by Sir David Cradock, stands on the foundations of Burnell's Church.

To read the full article, with annotated photographs and a drawing, as well as a transitional plan, and to find out what happened to Burnell's St. Mary's, please go to:

https://sites.google.com/site/charlesfaireyhistorian/publications/what-happened-to-burnells-late-c13th-nantwich-church



Burnell's West Front, 1810

Forthcoming Events

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

Come and Sing

Handel's

Messiah



Sarah Helsby Hughes – soprano
Harriet Goodwin – mezzo soprano
William Smith – tenor
Peter Edge – baritone
Nantwich Sinfonia
leader Mark Lansom

John Naylor – Conductor

Rehearsals: 10.00 – 12.00, 13.45 – 15.30
Performance: 17.30

St Mary's Church, Nantwich
Saturday 7th February 2026

Singer Fee: £20.00
Registration forms from www.nantwichchoral.org.uk

Audience Tickets for the performance: £15, Students: £5
Available from: The Civic Hall, Nantwich
All Choir Members and at the door
Online at: WeGotTickets.com

Registered Charity No: 516572

THE BEATLES
A STRING QUARTET TRIBUTE



A celebration of the Fab Four's best music and beyond, transformed for a breathtaking live string quartet performance in one of Nantwich's most iconic settings.

14th February · 7:30pm
St Mary's Church, Nantwich

ST MARYS NANTWICH

Egerton Strings

Tickets available online or at St Mary's office

Book Now

egertonstrings.co.uk

ACTON AOS

THE BEST OF BOND

BY CANDLELIGHT
FEATURING CREWE BRASS
SATURDAY 7TH MARCH 2026 AT 7.30PM
ST MARY'S CHURCH, NANTWICH

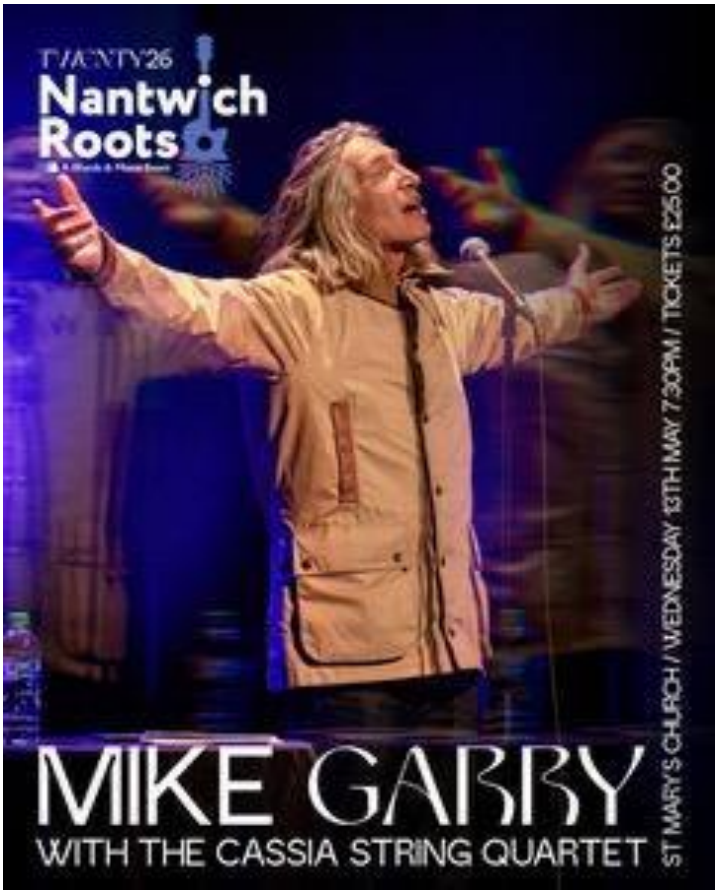


Crewe Brass

HTTPS://BUYTICKETS.AT/STMARYSNANTWICH/1958677
TICKETS - £15.00 EACH



CREWE BRASS
CHARITY NO: 1125938



Mike Garry and the Cassia String Quartet

Dr. Mike Garry is an internationally acclaimed poet, who will perform at St. Mary's in collaboration with the Cassia String Quartet on **Wednesday, 13th May** as part of Nantwich Roots Festival. This combination of spoken word and classical music has created a totally new sound.

A librarian before becoming a poet, Mike was also active in Manchester literacy programmes and first started performing his poems in mental health hospitals, children's homes and prisons. He is passionate about bringing live poetry to places it wouldn't normally reach, giving people a voice and using poetry to be that voice. His work focuses on places and people, championing the underdog and finding beauty amongst ugliness and triumph amidst tragedy. He quickly became a major figure in English 21st century poetry.

Mike has performed in Nantwich several times as a special guest on John Cooper Clarke's shows, but this is his first time in the spotlight. Mike Garry and The Cassia String Quartet have collaborated intermittently for 10 years.

They made the UK chart with *St. Anthony: An Ode to Anthony H Wilson*, worked with New Order. They performed at Carnegie Hall for The Tibet House Charity, after which classical composer Philip Glass first heard Mike's poetry, fell in love with his words and invited him to work collaboratively to create some new musical pieces.

This is a truly special Nantwich occasion which Nantwich Roots is very happy to be presenting. Tickets are available from the Civic Hall box office, direct from the festival hotline 07837 626436 or from *https://buytickets.at/wordsmusicfestival/2001154*

I thoroughly recommend this event - Mike Garry is exceptionally entertaining as a performer and I'm looking forward to this collaboration. *Annie Coombs*

See also **"Special Services & Events Calendar"** on p. 36.

From the Registers: December 2025

Funerals

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

1st	John Broomhall (90)
5th	Marian Holmes (89)
9th	Vincent Armstrong (90)
12th	Nigel Bacon (61)
16th	Pauline Simpson (86)
22nd	Pamela Murray (93)
23rd	Mary Myott (100)

Readings for February 2026

1st February *(Presentation of Christ in the Temple)*	Hebrews 2: 14-18 Luke 2: 22-40
8th February *(2nd Sunday before Lent)*	Romans 8: 18-25 Matthew 6: 25-34
15th February *(Sunday next before Lent)*	2 Peter 1: 16-21 Matthew 17:1-9
18th February *(Ash Wednesday)*	2 Corinthians 5: 20b-6: 10 John 8: 1-11
22nd February *(1st Sunday of Lent)*	Romans 5: 12-19 Matthew 4: 1-11

Surprise!

Have you ever thought how easy someone else's job seems to be? We often think "I could do that without much effort" or, alternatively, "no way; I could never do that". It is a surprise when we find that we can or cannot do various things. It is often not that we could not, but that we would not like to do certain jobs or, that we are not trained for it.

Working closely alongside many NHS staff recently I have to be full of admiration. They are doing some unpleasant things, they are understaffed and they are working long hours. For example nurses in hospital are working twelve hour shifts. This is not ideal for family life. Some people like it but many find it difficult.

Care workers working with the most needy members of society, again seem to be doing many long shifts with little time off. Many are from abroad and are extremely kind and competent but underpaid. They may not be allowed to do other jobs because of government restrictions but can be well qualified for other roles. When people criticise the services that are on offer they are following the media and not the kindness which surrounds us.

When teachers are criticised for short hours and long holidays I suggest a visit to a comprehensive school in a difficult area during a working day. Or simply ask your children or grandchildren what is going on in school. You may be surprised at how hard the work is and at how some children behave.

Many volunteers keep things going by giving their time and energy. An example is the team of volunteers who turn up every weekday to help direct people at Leighton Hospital. Parking is nearly impossible near to the entrance. Many disabled people coming for treatment get greeted with a friendly smile, given clear directions to the required department and with someone to push a wheelchair if needed.

The Christian role in the world as I see it is to make the world a better place. We can change the atmosphere with a smile or kind word. It spreads to others and can change someone's week or day for good. This is a job we can all do and you will be surprised at how effective we can be.

Dot Roxby

Regular Services & Groups

The church is open for all our usual regular services, and open to visitors Monday-Saturday, 9.30am-4pm. The 9.30am and 10.45am Sunday services continue to be live-streamed on YouTube most weeks. Services and events below are held weekly unless stated otherwise, and this is the normal pattern, which may occasionally change (check the weekly notice sheet).

Sunday	8.00am	Holy Communion
	9.30am	All Age Worship (Communion 1st Sunday)
	10.45am	Holy Communion
	2.30pm	Holy Baptism (1st and 3rd Sundays)
	3.00pm	Afternoon Prayer or Holy Communion (Richmond Village)
	3.30pm	Holy Baptism (1st and 3rd Sundays)
	6.00pm	Evensong
	7.15pm	Encounter (1st & 3rd Sundays)
Monday	7.00pm	Community Choir Singing (1st Monday)
	8.00pm	Welcome to Baptism (2nd Monday)
Tuesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	10.00am	Mums & Toddlers in the Parish Hall
	3.45pm	SING!@St.Mary's in the Parish Hall
Wednesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Holy Communion
Thursday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	9.30am	Flower Arrangers in Church
	10.00am	Little Fish Toddler Group in Church
	7.00pm	Bellringing practice in the Tower
Friday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	10am-1pm	Place of Welcome in the Parish Hall
	2.00pm	Mothers' Union (3rd Friday) in the Parish Hall
	7.00pm	Choir Practice in Church
	7.30pm	FNL
Saturday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	8.30am	St. Mary's Breakfast (3rd Saturday)
	10.00am	Concordia Practice in Church



Specialist Day Care with a difference

Belong Experience Days
are our way of inviting you to use the facilities at Belong Crewe

Book a FREE 'taster' session

The specialist day care service offers meaningful experiences and the chance to get involved in our community.

- Available weekdays from 10am - 4pm
- Full and varied programme of events
- Enjoy lunch in The Bistro, drinks and snacks
- Access to our specialist gym *(charges apply)*

Get in touch to ask about a free 'taster' session
T: 01270 561 200 | E: enquiries@belong.org.uk

Belong Crewe,
Brookhouse Drive,
Crewe CW2 6NA
www.belong.org.uk

BELONG CREWE

CELEBRATING 46 YEARS 1997 - 2023

Graham Tresidder & Son
CREWE & NANTWICH FUNERAL SERVICES

INDEPENDENT FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS | SINCE 1977



AN INDIVIDUAL CARING & PROFESSIONAL 24HR SERVICE

62 Hospital Street, Nantwich, CW5 5RP
448 Crewe Road, Wistaston, Crewe, CW2 6PZ
The Square, Audlem, CW3 0AB

Golden Charter

www.nantwichfuneralservices.co.uk | 01270 812 512

bentleysolicitors
PERSONAL INJURY EXPERTS

Find us on: facebook.

ACCIDENT OR INJURY?

Choose your LOCAL personal injury Solicitor



- NO WIN NO FEE
- EXPERIENCED QUALIFIED SOLICITORS
- ALL ACCIDENT CLAIM TYPES
- MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE
- GENERAL LITIGATION

CALL FREE ON 0800 533 5800

Stapeley Coach House, London Road, Nantwich.
01270 509 800 www.bentleysolicitors.co.uk

Contacts

Rector:	Rev. Dr. Mark Hart	
	markhart61@gmail.com	620668
	The Rectory, Nantwich CW5 5RQ	
Assistant Priest:	Rev. Dot Woods	dot@stmarysnantwich.org.uk
Honorary Clergy:	Rev. Tony Long	561113
	Rev. David Marsh	610079
	Rev. Brian Statham	07724 133215
	Rev. Canon David Taylor	618936
Reader Emeritus:	Paul Ramsey	623093
Youth and Children's Worker:		
	Graham Christopher	07795 696234
	graham@stmarysnantwich.org.uk	
Churchwardens:	Phil Boxhall	07368 497427
	Paul O'Brien	07973 743909
Verger:	Linda Lewis	07534 272901
Pastoral Worker:	Mary Harris	
	maryhma@icloud.com	628393 or 07753 840118

Adoption Matters:	Robert & Angela Sivocha	01244 390938
Baptism Coordinator:	Jo McCauley	620745
Bellringers:	Mary Stanwell	628900
	marystanwell@icloud.com	
Christian Stewardship Recorder:	Margaret Winzer	623768
Director of Music & SING!	Alison Phillips	07891 620678
Parish Hall Manager:	Nick Leftley	07899 807831
	nicleftley@aol.com	
	(Bookings via mah4now@yahoo.com)	
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Belinda Coghlan	568945
	safeguarding@stmarysnantwich.org.uk	
PCC Secretary:	Beth Roberts	
	pccsecretary@stmarysnantwich.org.uk	
PCC Treasurer:	Steve Lockett	628203

Parish Office:	Gail Johnson & Miriam Harvey	
(Open 9am-12noon Mon-Fri	Church Walk, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5RG	
and until 3.30pm Wed)	office@stmarysnantwich.org.uk	625268

@stmarysnantwich

www.stmarysnantwich.org.uk

Registered Charity no. 1130903

Gavin Palin Funeral Services

01270 624153

Independent Family Funeral Directors

NANTWICH, CREWE, AUDLEM AND SURROUNDING AREAS

Direct Pure Cremation • Traditional Services • Bespoke Arrangements.



- 24 Hour Personal Service • Private Chapel of Rest • Memorials • Floral Tributes
- Obituary Notices • Visual Tributes • Live Streaming Services • Order of Service
- Pre-Paid Funeral Plans • Memorial Jewellery • Eco-Friendly Coffins and Caskets

68 James Hall Street, Nantwich, CW5 5QE

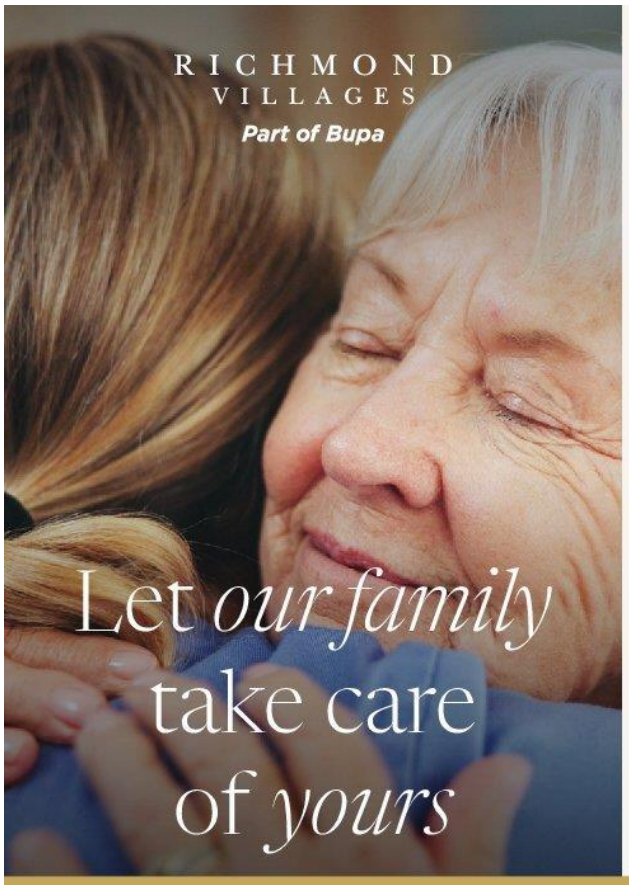
gavinpalinfs@hotmail.co.uk

www.gavinpalinfuneralservices.com

FUNERAL PLANS FROM Golden Charter

Smart Planning for Later Life

SAIF INDEPENDENT FUNERAL DIRECTORS



At Richmond Villages, we believe that exceptional care is more than just meeting needs – it's about creating moments that matter. It's the familiar smile from the same friendly face each morning, the shared stories over lunch, and the laughter of a game well-played with a caring team. Whether you're looking for short- or long-term care, our residents are kept active, engaged, and are part of a community that feels like home. Here, care is in the details – creating moments that bring comfort to our residents and peace of mind to you.

Experience the difference for yourself with our **3 weeks for the price of 2 offer* in our Bupa care home.**

Call *01270 629 080* or visit *richmond-villages.com*

*Terms and conditions apply, visit richmond-villages.com/care-homes for more information.

Richmond Villages Nantwich, St Joseph's Way, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6LZ

Richmond Villages Nantwich **Residential Care | Respite Care**

Special Services & Events Calendar February-April 2026

February	1st	Sung Compline for Candlemas (Concordia), 6pm
	7th	Nantwich Choral Society Come and Sing Day in church Performance 5.30pm
	14th	The Beatles: String Quartet Tribute by candlelight in church, 7.30pm
	15th	Encounter Supper in the Parish Hall, 7.15pm
	18th	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion, 8am, 11am, 7.30pm
	21st	St. Mary's Breakfast at Nantwich Football Club, 8.30am
	24th	Afternoon Lent Course begins in church, 2pm
	25th	Evening Lent Course begins in church, 7.30pm
	28th	C S Lewis Study Day in the Parish Hall
March	7th	Encounter Church Walk Acton Operatic Society Concert in church, 7.30pm
	21st	St. Mary's Breakfast at Nantwich Football Club, 8.30am Concordia Lent at Lunchtime in church, 12noon Candlelight Concert in church, 7.30pm
	23rd	Easter Experience in church (4 days)
	25th	Mothers' Union Lady Day Communion Service, 11am
	28th	Spring Fair in the Parish Hall/Church grounds, 10am-2pm Nantwich Singers Passiontide Concert in church, 3pm
	29th	Palm Sunday Choral Service, 6pm
	31st	Slowly Communion, 7.30pm
April	2nd	Holy Communion and stripping of the altars, 7.30pm
	3rd	10am All Age Worship; 12-3pm The Three Hours
	5th	6am Dawn service; 8am, 9.30am, 10.45am Easter Day services; 6pm Concordia Jazz Mass; 7.15pm Encounter in the Parish Hall
	12th	Eastertide Memorial Service in Church, 6pm
	18th	St. Mary's Breakfast at Nantwich Football Club, 8.30am Illuminated Orchestra Concert in church
	22nd	Annual Parochial Church Meeting in church, 7.30pm
	27th	Applestump Records – Concert in church
	29th	Sound Bath in church, 7.15pm