

January 2026



Benefice Newsletter

SEVEN
CHURCHES

Dear Friends,

Minnie Louise Haskins (12 May 1875 – 3 February 1957) was a British poet and an academic in the field of sociology, best known for being quoted by King George VI in his Royal Christmas Message of 1939. As we stand on the threshold of 2026, those familiar words come to mind: *“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”*

January often feels like a month of contradictions. We are bombarded by the pressure of "New Year, New You" resolutions and the encouragement from the secular world to energise ourselves and 'do things differently. But, in the natural world and in the Church, this is a season of quiet waiting and steady revelation.

In the Church calendar, January is dominated by the season of Epiphany. We remember the Magi following a distant star to find a humble child. Their journey reminds us that seeking God requires patience, movement, and a willingness to look beyond the obvious. They didn't have a GPS – only a light in the sky and an ancient promise. Jesus is our light, and his promises are as real today as they always have been.

For many of us, the "known way" of the past year may have been fraught with challenges.

We have all experienced loss - the loss of our Rector, St John's church, family, friends and colleagues. And life, inevitably, has other challenges too –personal issues, disputes, global uncertainty, and for some- the simple weariness and pressures of daily life. As we enter this new year, I invite you to put your hand into the hand of the God who loves you and who always walks with us all in good times and less good times. We never walk alone, whether we're walking in light or in darkness and his love overcomes the hardest challenge and shines out in the dark places of our world. Remember those words from St John's Gospel – *"What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."*

May this January be a time of hope and gentle beginnings for us all. May we find moments of stillness to hear God's whisper and may the light of the Epiphany star guide our steps toward a year filled with grace, hope, and peace.

With every blessing for the year ahead,

Rev Sue

The residents of Kiln Lane and Upper Street Billingford, have for the 3rd year, put on a fantastic display of Christmas lights, raising £110 for Air Ambulance this year, a very deserving charity.

The Tractor starts the walk around the village. Each participant voting for their favourite.

The winner this year was New Cottage.

Well done to everyone that took part.

Harleston

Forget-Me-Not Cafe and Church

Thursday 8th January
London Rd Church
10.30am - 12.30pm

Chatty Church

Saturday 24th January
King Georges Hall
11.00am-1.00pm

We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and look forward to a Happy, Healthy New Year.

Thank you to everyone who has supported St Leonard's Billingford in 2025 and we look forward to meeting you again this Year.

With all best wishes.

Sue, Georgina, Brian and the congregation of St Leonard's.

St John's update

Firstly a huge thank you to all donations that have come in so far from the Harleston Primary School, Travis for doing his 40 mile run through November and all the other donations we have had come in. we are all very grateful.

So an update on some of the work done so far:

Emergency work to make the property watertight has been completed

All debris internally from the fire has been removed by specialist contractor

Temporary Electrical system has been installed

The damaged Nave west window has been removed by specialist contractors and taken to their premises for assessment.

All damaged contents from inside the church has been disposed of

Contents that may be capable of restoration has been removed off site for assessment by specialist company

The internal scaffold to enable a full inspection of the damage has been installed and hoping for inspection of the roof in the new year

Specialist companies are being approached regarding the internal cleaning of the church

A specialist has been engaged to report on damage to the organ

There is a lot of work to be done but with the great architect and insurance company we have and all the support from everyone we will get there.

So thank you for all the support and donations so far.

We will keep you up to date with the progress as it goes on.

Donations to our churches

If you would like to donate to any of the listed churches please use the QR codes below linked to the church you would like to donate to.

St John's, Harleston. St Leonard's, Billingford. All Saints, Thorpe Abbots



THE REGISTERS - 26TH NOVEMBER 2025 TO 25TH DECEMBER 2025

Baptism

30th Nov Reggie Robert William Baldry- St Leonard's, Billingford

| | | |
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|  | <p>7churches Benefice Services</p> <p>Compline Thursday 22nd January, 6.30pm All Saints, Thorpe Abbots</p> <p>Celebration Service Sunday 25th January 4.30pm St Andrew's , Scole.</p> |  |
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PLEASE PRAY FOR

Fran Pitt-Pladdy, David Barker, Kathy Wood.

If you have a loved one who is very ill and would like them to be on our prayer list then please get in touch with one of our ministers.
(details on the back).

JANUARY SUNDAY SERVICES AND READINGS

| | | | |
|---|---------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sunday 4th Epiphany (Gold) | 9.30am | Holy Communion | St Leonard's, Billingford |
| | 9.30am | Morning Prayer | St Peter & St Paul, Brockdish |
| | 9.30am | Morning Prayer | St Mary's, Redenhall |
| | 9.30am | Morning Prayer | All Saints, Thorpe Abbots |
| | 11.00am | Informal Worship | St Thomas More, Harleston |
| | 11.00am | Informal Worship | St Andrew's, Scole |
| | 4.00pm | Evening Prayer | St Peter's, Needham |
| <i>Ephesians 3.1-12/Matthew 2.1-12</i> | | | |
| Sunday 11th Epiphany 1 (Baptism of Christ) (White) | 11.00am | Benefice Service Holy Communion | St Thomas More, Harleston |
| <i>Isaiah 42:1-9/Matthew 3:13 to the end</i> | | | |
| Sunday 18th Epiphany 2 (White) | 9.30am | Morning Prayer | St Leonard's, Billingford |
| | 9.30am | Holy Communion | St Peter & St Paul, Brockdish |
| | 9.30am | Morning Prayer | St Peter's, Needham |
| | 11.00am | Morning Worship | St Thomas More, Harleston |
| | 11.00am | Holy Communion | St Andrew's, Scole |
| | 4.00pm | Evening Prayer | St Mary's, Redenhall |
| <i>1 Corinthians 1.1-9/John 1.29-42</i> | | | |
| Sunday 25th Epiphany 3 (White) | 9.30am | Morning Prayer | St Peter & St Paul, Brockdish |
| | 11.00am | Morning Prayer | St Thomas More, Harleston |
| | 11.00am | Morning Prayer | St Andrew's, Scole |
| | 4.30pm | Celebration Service | St Andrew's, Scole |
| <i>Acts 9.1-22/Matthew 19.27-end</i> | | | |

CONTACT LIST

Ministry Team

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Churches - Contacts

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| St John's - Harleston | Maureen Youngman | 01379 853605 |
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| St Mary's - Redenhall | Michael Clark | 07427 586806 |
| St Peter's - Needham | Dan Cornish | 07803180861 |
| St Peter & St Paul - Brockdish | Ann Cork | 01379 668635 |
| All Saints - Thorpe Abbots | Christine McDonald | 01379 669116 |
| St Leonard's - Billingford | Georgina King-Fisher | 01379 740759 |
| | Sue Redgrave | 01379 854129 |
| St Andrew's - Scole | Lynda Mansfield | 01379 740401 |
| | Helen Gilbee | 01379 740339 |

Schools

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|----------------------------|--------------|
| Harleston Sancroft Academy | 01379 852561 |
| Scole CEVC Primary | 01379 740654 |

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