

ST MARY'S GAMLINGAY, HATLEY ST GEORGE & ST MARY'S EVERTON



Weekly newsletter 9 January 2026



From Hilary:

The second Sunday of Epiphany celebrates the Baptism of Christ - quite a jump from last week's remembering of the Magi's arrival as they visited the Holy Family. In continuing to celebrate the beginnings of who Jesus is, as God-made-human, this is a good time to revisit our own commitments, made for us if we were baptised as infants, and affirmed at confirmation by those of us who have 'signed up' to belonging to Church in this way.

The Methodist church has traditionally renewed a covenant - a two-way promise, at New Year and this very worthy tradition is being adopted by Christians of all denominations. There will be an opportunity to consider this form of covenant promise at Church this Sunday.

The Baptist church family in Gamlingay uses [this prayer](#) – the introduction is their own, but the words in bold are common to Methodist and Anglican forms of the covenant prayer, giving over to God complete trust in the way forward.

The Epiphany season, when gifts and journeys are to the fore, is a good time to reflect on the degree to which we are prepared to trust God for our well-being in all things.

The prayer has space for a signature and there will also be some printed copies in churches on Sunday.

NEWS FROM EVERTON

Soup and Social began this week in the snow. Some were put off, but the usual blend of food and company was appreciated by all who attended. Hilary provided a soup but could not be there in person because of the clash with Gamlingay's Simple Lunch.

The Buildings Project Group will be meeting at the end of the month. Anyone interested is invited to a Church Project Group Symposium organised in Ely in early February to bring together project groups to share expertise, hear advice and ask questions. Details from Jonathan or Hilary.

Churchyard Regulations have been a difficulty at Everton from well before Hilary's time. Christmas has seen a proliferation of attention to graves in the churchyard much of which, unfortunately, is prohibited by church regulations (these rules apply to all churchyards in the Diocese, and are specific to churchyards, not council cemeteries). The Archdeacons have contacted clergy and PCCs across the Diocese to encourage keeping of the rules. Key points to note:

- *The bed of the grave should be allowed to settle to ground level and be grassed over, it must not be 'dressed' or enclosed in any way. Any planting must be compatible with grass mowing.*
- *Memorials must conform to current regulations, and permission applied for. No additions are allowed, this includes flower holders, especially stone ones. Stone and pottery ornaments are not allowed.*
- *Wreaths and floral tributes should be of natural materials: plastic flowers are prohibited.*
- *Also prohibited (but not a problem at present here), is any form of lighting.*

It is worth noting that small, prohibited items that are temporary and removed after a period are unlikely to attract attention. Also, there is a process (though costly and time-consuming) by which items outside the simple regulations can be applied for.

NEWS FROM GAMLINGAY

The New Year Concert was a great success, attended by over 50 people of all ages. Just over £340 each was raised for church and for the very worthwhile charity raising awareness of lifestyle interventions for young people to contribute to better mental health (there's a link to YPMH below). It was moving to learn of the gap between research, understanding and clinical and social practice which the charity aims to bridge.

A huge 'thank you' to everyone who worked hard to bring the event together - Peter for advertising, Jane and team for delicious refreshments and organization. We were privileged to attend a professional concert for which our special thanks go to Angela Crispe who offered the clarinet quartet.

First Memory Lane of the year meets on **27th January**, theme still to be confirmed.

Simple Lunch on the 6th was an enjoyable affair, though with fewer present than sometimes. Coinciding with the Everton Soup and Socials affects some of our regulars, but also the snow and ice underfoot may have put some off. Those who did come enjoyed good food and good company. Special thanks to Jane Orchiston who helped on her birthday. Next one will be on Tuesday 20th January.

Churchyard work will continue with volunteers, weather permitting, which hasn't been the case so far!

The Funeral of Doreen Daphne Howell took place on Wednesday followed by burial in Everton churchyard. Well done and thank you to everyone who helped give Daph a good send-off.

Happy New Year to all!

The New Year concert by the Arundo Clarinet Quartet was enjoyed by an audience of 53 people. Many thanks to those who provided refreshments! A total of £684.02 was raised to be split between St. Mary's and the charity – [The Foundation for Young People's Mental Health \(YPMH\)](#).

There are leaflets in church for the charity if anyone wants to learn more about their work or make a donation directly to them.

Jane Orchiston.

Benefice Services and Events

Midweek said Eucharist services take place at St Mary's in Gamlingay every Wednesday at 9.30am but watch for late cancellations especially during holiday seasons.

January

Sunday 11th January - Epiphany 1 (Baptism of Christ)

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 18th January - Epiphany 2, Start of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

9.30am Parish Eucharist Unity and Healing time at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

4pm Evensong at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 25th January - Epiphany 3

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

February

Sunday 1st February Epiphany 4 Celebrating the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

9.30am Parish All Age Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay + Baptism

11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 8th February 2 before Lent

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 15th February Sunday next before Lent

9.30am Parish Eucharist with healing time at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

4pm Evensong at St. Mary's, Everton

Wednesday 18th Ash Wednesday

9.30am Ash Wednesday Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

7.00pm Ash Wednesday Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

Sunday 22nd First Sunday of Lent

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Gamlingay

11.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's, Everton

*A reminder that if you are temporarily or permanently unable to attend church services and would like to receive communion in your own home, please let us know. For Gamlingay and Hatley contact Hilary or Valerie.
For Everton contact Hilary.*

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Please let Brenda Elcome have any articles or pictures for the newsletter by Wednesday afternoon to Brenda.elcome@gmail.com

The Big Blunham Book Sale

Will be held on Saturday 28th February 2026. 10.00 am to 3.00 pm in Blunham Parish Church, MK44 3NQ,

There will be an enormous selection of nearly new books - specialist and fiction sorted into categories.

Homemade soup, homemade cakes, hot dogs, teas and coffees served all day. All profits to Blunham Church Fabric Fund. For further details please ring Sue and Peter Holden 01767 640572