

MOMSS MAGAZINE



Drawing by Bella Maisie (age 6)
of Middlezoy & Othery Schools

DECEMBER 2024 / JANUARY 2025



MOMSS MAGAZINE

This publication is hand delivered
FREE to over 1,040 homes within the
villages in the United Benefice:
**Middlezoy, Othery, Moorlinch,
Stawell, Sutton Mallet & Greinton**

It can also be found at:

www.middlezoyvillagehall.org.uk

and www.stawellvillage.info and

www.achurchnearyou.com/Othery/page

MOMSS is issued 11 times a year (there is a joint December/January issue) and is designed as a Community Magazine. It is produced by volunteers, with the authority of the United Benefice Churchwardens, for the villagers' benefit.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Committee: Richard Graham, Anita Winslade, Jane Stryker and Isobel Davis.

Editor this month: Anita Winslade

Compiler this month: Isobel Davis

NEWS ARTICLES

We regret we cannot guarantee inclusion of articles or photographs and may need to edit copy due to space limitations.

Submitting articles: Copy preferred in Microsoft Word format.

Email to momssgeditor@live.co.uk

300 word limit please.

Submit handwritten copy via one of the members of the committee if you are unable to find someone to help you transfer it to email. We cannot guarantee its accurate inclusion.

Submitting photos or artwork:

also momssgeditor@live.co.uk

We gladly accept news and views from all groups or individuals, however, the Committee has overriding editorial control. We cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from any error, inaccuracies or omission from any copy or advertising. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the United Benefice, the Editorial teams or the publisher.

MOMSS Publishing House Style

Articles submitted to the magazine are put into MOMSS house style. This uses Gill Sans 10pt for general text with Gill Sans bold 10pt for sub-headings. Arial Black 10pt is used for main headings. Example of our date format is '25 December' – the st, rd, th are only used after dates with no month alongside. There is no need to insert year unless referring to year ahead. We use a 12 hour time format eg '5.30pm'. Italics, bold or underlining will not be included.

Advertising costs

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For further pricing information and technical details phone

Jane Stryker Tel: 01458 210661

E-mail momssgadverts@live.co.uk

Please note: Copy and payment for adverts must be received by 12th of the month (see date of deadlines on this page).

Advertising space is limited. We cannot guarantee single adverts will be accepted for publication.

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**DON'T FORGET !
February 2025 edition deadlines:
Adverts 12 January
Articles 15 January**

THANK YOU

This edition of MOMSS Magazine has been sponsored anonymously so that it can continue to be delivered free of charge to each home in our villages. We are very grateful to all our sponsors and advertisers.

We are also very grateful for all the colourful pictures we received, drawn by the children in the Stawell Youth Club and Middlezoy & Othery Schools. They certainly light up the covers.
MOMSS Magazine Committee

LETTER FROM REV DEBORAH KIRK



ADVENT WAITING

I have read that by the time we are seventy years old, we will have spent three years of our lives just waiting: waiting in the queue to pay for the shopping, waiting in the doctor's surgery, waiting for lunch to be ready, waiting for transport, waiting for news of that job or for your teenager to get in from their party or for the results of those health checks.

In the days before I was a minister, one of my jobs was an administrator in a primary school and as Christmas approached, the children would get more and more excited – filled with anticipation as the last days of term ticked by. And they would come and look at the Nativity laid out in reception, and ask with open-eyed wonder on their faces. 'When will Christmas come?'

Here we are again in the season of Advent waiting. Supposing Christmas Day was tomorrow – would you be ready? Something adults say very wisely which most children think is nonsense is: '

"It is better to travel than to arrive". Meaning that often the looking forward to something is almost better than the 'something' itself.

Whether you think that is true for you or not, it's as if we need these next 4 weeks to work our way through the days like a journey, opening the doors of the Advent calendar, lighting our Advent candles, doing our various preparations, reflecting on the lectionary readings and each day remembering a little bit more about what Christmas means. As we get our homes ready, we get our hearts ready too.

T S Eliot wrote: "the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time". Advent is an encouragement to take the time to really *journey* through the days, so that when we hear those wonderful words of John's Prologue on Christmas morning - even though we have heard them many times before - we will hear them with fresh wonder and joy, as if it is the first time:

" In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being ... ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth".

What about making a little Advent feature for your home - an angel holding the promise - a rough path - a white candle? Every day during Advent, remove a stone as you pray. On



Christmas Day remember the promise fulfilled in Jesus, light the white candle - and the path will be clear!

Faithful God,

As this season of Advent begins,

Help me to be patient in waiting,

trusting that Your Grace is sufficient for me.

Help me to be courageous in waiting,

Trusting that Your strength will carry me through.

Help me to be loving in waiting,

Trusting that the love brought down to us at Christmas in Jesus Christ

Is the love that will bring eternal peace into every heart. Amen

Peace for the journey,

Deborah, Superintendent, Methodist Circuit

GENERAL ITEMS

MIDDLEZOY & OTHERY SCHOOLS

The children have returned from their half-term break and we have a lot of exciting activities lined up between now and Christmas.

Darrell Wakelam, our favourite artist, has spent two days working with the children to create a Remembrance Day memorial piece of art, which we are looking forward to putting up on display.

The children also made poppy wreaths for both the school and St Michael's Church and Unicorn Class made individual poppies. These formed part of our Armistice Day Assembly and two-minute silence on 11 November.

Our KS2 children will be visiting Wells Cathedral where they will take part in two workshops - stained-glass art and singing.

This half-term it is the turn of Phoenix Class to benefit from additional sports coaching with Helen Sheerman from Somerton Rugby Club.

Mrs Silver and her team are getting ready for their Nativity performance in December and a selection of children will also be singing at Middlezoy Chapel's coffee morning.

To wrap the term up, we have a visit to the Pantomime to look forwards to and our annual Christmas Dinner provided by our wonderful PTA.

On behalf of Mrs Hayward and all the staff, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Heidi Braithwaite, Office Assistant – Middlezoy & Othery Schools

Phone: 01823 698464 Email: office@othmid.ppat365.org



SKY AT NIGHT December 2024 January 2025

Sunrise Sunset

Beginning of December 7.53am-4.07pm

End of December 8.15am-4.14pm

Beginning of January 8.15am-4.15pm

End of January 7.49am-5.00pm

Moon Phases December:

New Moon 1st / First Quarter 8th / Full 15th / Last Quarter 22nd / New Moon 30th

January: First Quarter 6th / Full Moon 13th / Last Quarter 21st / New Moon 29th

Planets

Venus which has been slowly moving upwards from its position low in the south-west

after sunset starts to approach maximum brilliance. It sets later as we move from 2024 into 2025, not setting until 8.45pm during January. Saturn which has put on such a good show recently is now not so prominent and sets during the early evening. The planet of the moment is Jupiter shining high and is at its closest to the Earth on 6 December and is at opposition on 7th when it reaches a position opposite the Sun; use a pair of binoculars to spot its four brightest moons. Mars the red planet is the third brightest planet now and is at its closest to the Earth since 2022 on 12 January. Like Jupiter it is visible all night long, look for it close to the full moon on 13 January.

Constellation

During the period over Christmas and into the new year the night sky is dominated by the bright, prominent and unmistakable shape of the stars of the constellation of Orion the Hunter. The most prominent stars in Orion are blood-red Betelgeuse top left which will one day explode as a supernova, Rigel a blue-white extremely hot star located bottom right and the three stars which form Orion's belt which are left to right Alintak, Alnilam and Mintaka. Below the belt you can see a glowing cloud of gas which is visible to the naked eye and forms Orion's sword. This area is a stellar nursery where new stars are being born and is a fantastic sight with binoculars.



Phenomena

21 December is the day when the Sun reaches its lowest point in the sky as we experience the winter solstice and our shortest day.

On the night of 3-4 January we have the peak of the Quadrantid meteor shower which occasionally produces colourful shooting stars.

Paul Adamson 01823698156

SOMERSET LEVELS STARGAZERS

There is no December meeting but on 29 January we hold our first of 2025 where we welcome back Bud Budzinski who will be talking about the life and times of Sir Isaac Newton. The meeting will be held at 7.30pm in Othery Village Hall TA7 0QU.

We will also have a night sky guide and latest astronomy news.

If you are lucky enough to get an astronomical telescope or pair of binoculars for Christmas and want to learn all about the night sky why not come and join our friendly club where you will receive a warm welcome.

Admission is £3 with membership available. Free tea and coffee are also provided. We are also on Zoom.

For more details please contact somersetlevelsstargazers@hotmail.com

Follow us on Facebook.

Paul Adamson 01823698156

FARM DIARY

This is written for non-farmers who live surrounded by farmland.

In the Field. Two dry weeks in November allowed a lot of catching up with field work. Conditions were not ideal but needs must. In the end, the plough was used to turn up some dry soils; not part of our long-term plan. We waited and waited to drill our winter

wheat as we call autumn sown wheat. It involved a lot of head scratching and visits to fields to determine whether conditions allowed drilling. This absorbed a lot of time. With sandy soil, it can rain one day and field work can be done the next but, with soils with some clay content, one can have to wait for some time. If it is possible to make a sausage in one's hand, the soil is too wet for traffic. Whether wheat drilled in the middle of November will yield adequately depends on the winter weather.

Head Winds. The weather is the biggest of these as most farmers are totally dependent on it. Luckily, in the summer we had some rain so that the crops were mediocre. Without this rain they would have been a disaster after the wet cold spring. This autumn, we have already scrapped some oil seed rape that succumbed to slugs and birds. Global markets affect our prices and with the USA election it has become more difficult to predict crop prices. America

is a major exporter of maize, wheat and soya. Shortly after this election, we sold the remainder of our wheat from the last harvest - apart from a part load of wheat. The government provides head winds as well. The author knows one local farmer who is turning his farm over to solar panels and they will join a neighbour's. That is another significant block of land not producing food. Family farms are now in the firing line and the NFU disagrees with the Chancellor as to how many farms it will affect. The NFU leader is saying 75% of the total farmed area will be affected. Presumably that will affect 75% of our food production. This is a long term matter and the chickens will only come home to roost long after these current politicians have left office. It is causing disconsolation in our industry. Family businesses make up 90% of privately owned firms in the UK employing 14 million people according to Melissa Lawford of The Daily Telegraph dated 15 July 2024. Some household names in Somerset will be affected by these changes.

Richard Graham

WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

The meeting of the WFA in December is on Wednesday 11th in Othery village hall; this is a get together with a short talk on Jerusalem 1917. Please let us know for catering purposes if you would like to attend.

On Wednesday 8 January we welcome back Dr John Scanlon talking about Italy. Everyone is welcome to our meetings, you do not have to be a member.

We hope to see you next year. if you wish to join our mailing list please send an email



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Somerset WFA

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When any bus in Somerset fails to operate for reasons within the control of the local bus operator causing passengers to miss connections to other bus/rail services suitable compensation will be provided on a case-by-case basis. Where the passenger has made alternative travel arrangements a receipt for the costs should be submitted with the complaint.

For help claiming compensation, email somersetbuspartnership@gmail.com with the subject 'Compensation' and the details of your journey.

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<https://www.firstbus.co.uk/help-support/help-and-support/#form-scrollto>

OTHERY VILLAGE NEWS

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

The church is currently only open from 9am to 3.30pm, Mondays to Fridays during school term days and for church services. Genuine visitors can phone 07714 672316 to arrange for access at other times.
Churchwardens & PCC

CHRISTMAS EVE CRIB SERVICE

The time is fast approaching for us once more to tell the story of Jesus's birth through our Crib and Carol Service at 3pm on Christmas Eve at St Michael's Othery. It's always a delightful occasion with the older children telling the Christmas story as the costumed younger children build the nativity scene and we all join in singing the carols. Everyone is welcome. We are hoping to involve as many of the children and young people as wish to take part in the service. We need young people and older children (8 year-olds and above) to do the readings and younger children to help build the nativity scene in the crib. If your child/children would like to participate please contact Mo on mo.wright2@btinternet.com or Isobel on isobeldav@gmail.com or 01823 698119 so that we can try to include everyone who would like to take part. Children who want to



dress up as a nativity character can either come in their own nativity costume or go to the Church Room after 2.30pm on Christmas Eve to find a costume which we are hoping the school will kindly lend to us again this year for the service. *Isobel Davis*

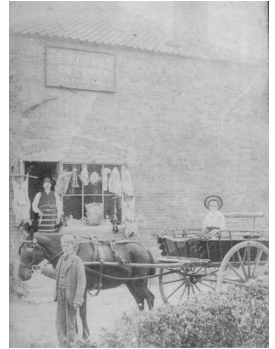
OTHERY LOCAL HISTORY – WHO LIVED IN YOUR HOUSE?

In 1841 the population of Othery was about 673, living in 134 households. They were farmers, shopkeepers, tradespeople and some working from home, not forgetting the vicar and teachers. Of course, many of the houses here now did not exist then but equally there were houses and cottages there then which have since disappeared.

I wonder who lived in your house or worked in the orchard or field where your house now stands. In the hope of possibly finding out the history of your house and its occupants and see some old photographs of the village, taken from our village history archives, come along to the Church Room during the day on Friday 14 February or Saturday 15 February.

(Enquiries ring 01823 698162 or 698156)

Kath Cowles and Pat Adamson



OTHERY BOOK READING GROUP

In November the group discussed *Cuddy* by Benjamin Myers which won the 2023 Goldsmiths Historical Prize and was chosen as book of the year by several newspapers. *Cuddy* is the affectionate name for St Cuthbert of Lindisfarne who was a monk, bishop and hermit.

A century after his death his remains were removed to prevent desecration by the Danes. After a further two centuries they were eventually interred in Durham, whose cathedral was built in his honour.

The novel is in four sections set centuries apart starting with the group, mainly monks, who accompany his body in their search for a suitable safe resting place for their beloved saint; a tale of a champion archer, his abused wife and her stonemason lover; a 19th century professor hired to oversee one of several exhumations and a young man caring for his mother in present times who finds solace in the cathedral. Connecting threads run through the novel using similar names for characters. The presence of owl-eyed youths and other characters linking the different eras while employing different styles for each separate book. Durham Cathedral and *Cuddy* are important figures throughout the novel. Myers is a poet and this shows in his wonderful descriptive prose which is full of his love for the north of England.

Although some found the early part difficult to get into and a few members had yet to finish the novel, most loved the book saying it was “one of the richest reads I’ve had for a long time”, “a book that changed me”, “loved it from beginning to end”, “language a joy”. A work which rewards perseverance.

The group’s next book will be discussed at the January meeting.



Mollie O’Flanagan

OTHERY VILLAGE HALL

A massive thank you to everyone who came to our very first OVH Beerfest. It was a fabulous, well-supported event. A huge thank you to Paul and Julie Willis for providing the sausages for the hotdogs from their locally reared pigs and to Vinyl Act for their music set – OVH Beerfest 2025 is in the planning!

If you have any ideas for other events, then please do contact us on the details below. Remember that Enrico's Pizza will be at the hall every second Friday of the month with other visiting food vans as advertised.

SAVE THE DATES!

Looking forward to the festive season we have two events planned for December – keep an eye out for the posters around the village and in our noticeboard for full details.
Village Christmas Party - Sunday 8 December – everyone welcome, free entry to all.
Carol Singing event - Friday 20 December. We are hoping to have children from Middlezoy & Othery Schools leading us in singing some carols, with mince pies and mulled wine being served free. Please come and join us for what will be a lovely festive occasion.

Regular events

Happy hour at the village hall bar on the first Friday of the month. All drinks and snacks 50% off from 7pm to 8.30pm.

Local groups including Pilates, the Western Front Association, Short Mat Bowls, Little Pickles and Somerset Levels Stargazers as advertised on the village hall website

www.otheryvillagehall.org.uk

And finally

If you are new to the village or haven't had a chance to join us yet then it would be lovely to meet you at our regular Friday night bar socials, starting at 7pm.

We are always looking to expand our group of volunteers to either help set up, run or tidy up after our events or help run the bar on a Friday night. If you do have some time to spare and would like to get involved, then please speak to a member of the committee or contact us on the details below. Thank you.

Emz Pilates & Yoga (FB/Insta/Youtube)

Pilates Curry Rivel Village Hall Mon 6.30pm

Yoga Curry Rivel Village Hall Mon 7.30pm

Yoga Othery Village Hall Wed 9.30am

Pilates East Lyng Village Hall Wed 7.30pm

Pilates Westonzoyland Village Hall Thurs 9.30am

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Rachael Selway
Secretary

E: otheryvillagehall@hotmail.co.uk

T: 07456 653252

Website: www.otheryvillagehall.org.uk



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY OTHERY REMEMBERS



On 10 November, 110 years after the end of the First World War, St Michael's church hosted the annual Service of Remembrance when villagers and local organisations paid respects and gave thanks for all the people who went overseas and served their country, returned home safe or wounded or lost their lives so that peace would be restored.

We thank Reverends Chrystabel and David Ager for leading the service which also thanked all the men and women who have served our country in all the wars and conflicts since then. The collection of £119 was given to the Royal British Legion. After the service the congregation enjoyed light refreshments in the Church Room.

Mervyn Winslade, Churchwarden

BREAKFAST CAFÉ CHURCH

Café Church is church with a difference. Seated round tables in the Church Room we drink fresh coffee and eat a simple breakfast from 9.30am for about 40 minutes, followed by a bit of a discussion using sets of question cards. We sing a few songs, sometimes hear a short talk, say some prayers, but we're relaxed about it all. Our next Breakfast Café will be on Sunday 22 December.

If you've not been yet, why not give it a try, you will be most welcome whether you are a church-goer or not.



Isobel Davis

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TUESDAY COFFEE MORNINGS



Coffee Mornings are held in the Church Room every Tuesday between 10am and 12 noon. We offer tea, hot chocolate and a variety of coffees so there is something to suit everyone's taste. We also have a selection of home-made marmalade and sometimes chutney! We have a number of books for sale (25p each) with a varied selection of authors and we even have jigsaw puzzles for those of you who fancy a challenge.

This is a great opportunity to meet up with friends and relax for a while, so please come along and join us - you'll be made very welcome.

Coffee Morning Committee



MOORLINCH VILLAGE NEWS

CHARITY CRAFT AND COFFEE MORNING - THANK YOU

We had a really wonderful morning at the Moorlinch Church Hall on 2nd November. There were fabulous cakes, baked goods, preserves and the most beautiful varied crafts made by people from Moorlinch, the Stitch Club and our nearby communities. As well as raising enough to buy 37 places to support homeless people through a donation to Crisis at Christmas, MacMillan Cancer Support receives a sizeable donation as does Heads Up Leicester, thanks to some of the stall holders' fundraising. Thank you to everyone who donated, helped and supported us on the day. We're delighted with the result and that everyone had such an enjoyable morning.

Sam Dawe

STITCH CLUB – YEAR 3 !

The Moorlinch Stitch club is now into its third year and going from strength to strength with around 20 'members of the group of which 10 or more regularly come along each month with their own projects. Ranging from embroidery and needlepoint, to knitting and crochet, it's a relaxing way to spend the morning with like-minded people and gather ideas and support for your own work.

The group had its own very successful stall at the recent Moorlinch Charity Craft and Coffee Morning. The items made specially for the stall were all donated and contributed a fantastic £193 to Crisis at Christmas.

Meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the Moorlinch Church Hall, all are welcome to pop in and see what we do and join us for a coffee one day, and people of all stitching skill levels can join the group. There is a small charge for hall hire and refreshments.

This year several of us have been helping with the Moorlinch commemorative textile which has been beautifully designed by Liz Tapper and organised by Liz and Margaret Gould. As a result, more people are coming into the club for additional support and companionship while working on the textile.

Please contact Margaret Gould margaretgould24@gmail.com or Samantha Dawe on sam.eastend@gmail.com if you would like further information or wish to join or just visit us one (fourth) Tuesday!

Sam Dawe



ST MARY'S CHURCH REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE

Our traditional service, led by Jane Sedgman, a Reader from the Wheathill benefice, was well attended by people of all ages. Thanks to Margaret and her flower fairies the church was beautifully decorated with greenery and red poppies. The collection of over £150 was given to the Royal British Legion. Following the service, we enjoyed a curry lunch with naan bread made by Peter Robbins, one half of the Baker Brothers, bhajis, samosas and delicious trifles. Many thanks to our bell ringers, those who helped organise or took part in the service, to the church decorators and the amazing catering team in the hall.



Jane Stryker

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 1 December – United Benefice Advent Service 4.30pm with Bishop Trevor Willmott

Sunday 8 December – Reimagining Christingle 4.30pm – outdoor service with sausages, sweets, sparklers and fire pits

Sunday 22 December – Carols by Candlelight 4.30pm with mulled wine and mince pies



EXTRAORDINARY MOORLINCH VILLAGE MEETING

Thursday 14 November 2025

Following the recent death of Anne Farmer, Chair of the Village Meeting, an Extraordinary Meeting was held on 14 November in the Church Hall.

Tony Leigh presided over the meeting and paid tribute to the chairmanship of Anne and announced that Lis Oliver, our Clerk, was standing down with immediate effect. Again, Tony thanked Lis for all her hard work and achievements over the last couple of years and Lis updated us on any ongoing issues. Two candidates had put their names forward for Chair and Clerk and as they were unopposed there was no vote. John Gould was welcomed as Chair and Richard Hennah as Clerk. Both spoke briefly to the meeting.

BELLRINGING 2024

Tears, Training and Triumphs

The tears were for the loss of a much loved and enthusiastic bellringer, Gilly Hayward. Gilly's passion for ringing resulted in two very interesting ringers' outings to bells near her places of work; one to Highgrove and



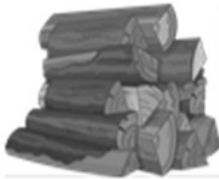
one to Cranborne in Dorset. She will be very much missed in the tower for her ringing and her friendship. Requested by the ringers, the local Moorlinch blacksmith made an excellent and unique memorial to Gilly and it now proudly hangs in the ringing chamber.

Training was arranged by Andrew, the tower training person, for several of our new(er) ringers; sometimes at Hillfarrance, near Taunton but mostly by Andrew himself up in the tower, arranged to fit in with ringers' availability.

The training paid off as our partially 'new' team gained in skill and confidence and rang poignantly on half muffled bells for two funerals and Remembrance Sunday. We are always happy to welcome new ringers to this very sociable activity.

Fridays from 6pm are practise nights and lessons before this time can be arranged. So come up and join with us to see what we do and perhaps 'have a go' yourself.

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BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND IN VEGANUARY 2025 MOORLINCH VEGAN LUNCH – SATURDAY 18 JANUARY

Yes, to celebrate Veganuary we are back again to tickle your taste buds with delicious and varied vegan dishes. Menus are being devised as we type but whatever is selected will be tasty and appetising.

Tickets will be £15 and all money raised will go to the charity Shelter who offer one-to-one, personalised help with housing issues and homelessness. Places will be limited so give us an early indication if you will be attending. More details will be on the village email and Facebook page so watch that space.

Carrie, Jane and Pam



STAWELL & SUTTON MALLET VILLAGE NEWS

Information is available on the website www.stawellvillage.info

ST. FRANCIS CHURCH

It's that time of year again, a busy time for our church, when we plan for our festive activities.

Our Christingle and Gift Service is at 10am on Sunday 8 December this year, at which we make our Christingles to reflect the light of Christ in our world; a rather troubled world right now, which needs all the prayers we can offer.

As usual, we ask for gifts, unwrapped, for all age groups, which we donate to the Salvation Army for distribution. If you are unable to come to the service, they can be left at the font or with Ruth at the Old School. They can be collected as well, just phone Ruth on 01278 722914.

The Carol Service will be on Friday 20 December at 7pm, after which we enjoy mulled wine and mince pies. There will be an alternative for those who are not partial to them. Do come along for a good sing and a glass of warmth.

On Christmas Eve, Denise Rogers and her youth group will be leading the Crib Service which is at 3pm.

Christmas is such a special time of year and everyone is welcome to join in our celebrations.

There will be a board in the church porch on which can be pinned individual Christmas cards for the village as a whole.

Thank you, on behalf of the Church Committee.

Ruth Peberdy



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COMING EVENTS

On Saturday 14 December the monthly Coffee Morning will be held from 10am till 12 noon at Johnnie and Arlette's, The Old Manor. *St Francis Church Committee*



STAWELL AND SUTTON MALLET VILLAGE HALL

December

Saturday 7th	10.30am-1pm	Hub Cafe
Saturday 7th	7pm	Christmas Carols with Burtle Silver Band & Hub Pub food will be available.

January

Saturday 11th	10.30am-1pm	Hub Cafe
Saturday 11th	7pm	Film night, film not known yet
Monday 20th	2pm-4pm	Whist afternoon
Saturday 25th	8pm	Hub Pub

Maxine Hughes, Chairperson

GREINTON VILLAGE NEWS

VILLAGE NEWS

In November, an open meeting was held to discuss the future of Greinton's parish church. This is the latest in a series of meetings and comes in the wake of discussions with the Archdeacon for Wells and the diocesan church buildings advisor. The good news is that a superficial examination of the church's structure suggests it is in reasonable shape. However, the meeting agreed that a full structural survey is long overdue and should be arranged to check for any major work required. More concerningly, the parish does not currently have sufficient active members of the church to fulfil the roles of a Parochial Church Council (the management committee that runs the church). We are looking into ways to overcome this problem.

On a more positive note, the Act of Remembrance was well attended and we are hoping for a similarly successful Christmas Celebration event, which will take place on the Sunday before Christmas, 22 December, starting at 5pm. This is designed for all the family, regardless of religion, and is a great opportunity to get together with friends and neighbours for some Christmas cheer. As always, we are keen to involve as many people as possible so, if you would like to read a short seasonal poem, or have a song or piece of music you would like to hear, please let Toby Crispin know as soon as possible.

The village hall's autumn Mouse Racing event took place at the Bere Cider Company Barn in November, primarily to offer a larger venue and avoid last year's cramped conditions. It was a great success and a considerable amount was raised for both the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance and village hall funds. Many thanks to all involved. By the time you read this, our Christmas Bingo night, which coincides with our monthly pub night on Friday 6 December, will be upon us. Doors open at 6pm. There won't be a pub night in January but there will almost certainly be a New Year's Eve party in the village hall instead. Next pub night will be Friday 7 February.

Work continues to improve the village's resilience to water run-off collecting on the

A361 and causing problems to both local and through traffic. We have received a grant from Somerset Prepared which will be spent on improvements to drainage and equipment to help control and disperse water off the road.

Finally, community carol singing will take place around the village on Friday 20 December. All are welcome to join in – meet outside the church at 4pm. Dress for the weather and bring a torch or lantern. We will finish at West Town Farm with warm drinks and nibbles at about 6pm.

Toby Crispin

MIDDLEZOY VILLAGE NEWS

WEEKLY COFFEE MORNINGS

Every Monday (excluding bank holidays) 10am - 12 noon at the Methodist Chapel. Please come along on 9 and/or 16 December to help get into the Christmas spirit. On the 9th we are being entertained by the Kellywood Four with some Christmas melodies and on the 16th we welcome the school children from Middlezoy & Othery Schools who will entertain us.

Also on the 16th we will hold our Christmas raffle (donations of prizes would be much appreciated) and this year we will again match the amount raised from our funds and together this will be given to Holy Cross Church Bell Tower Fund. We will also be presenting donations to several village organisations, this will be from funds raised from the coffee morning throughout the year. Please come along and enjoy sausage rolls and mince pies with your cuppa.

Thanks again to all the volunteers without whom this weekly event would not take place. Thank you too to all of you that continue to support us.

We will resume the coffee mornings on Monday 30 December. Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jill Darby (Co-ordinator)

MIDDLEZOY WOMEN'S SOCIAL CLUB

The Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch takes place in the village hall on Saturday 7 December. If you are aged 60 or over you should have received an invite. If you have not received the invite and you would like to attend, please let me know. We are looking forward to being



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entertained by the Taunton Ukulele Strummers.

Thank you for supporting our fundraising events this year which has helped towards hosting both the summer outing and the Christmas lunch.

Happy Christmas to you all and all the best for 2025.

Jill Darby (Chair)

MIDDLEZOY VILLAGE HALL

The music quiz that we had in November was a great success and a lot of fun had by all. We had approximately 60 people taking part in teams of 6. Many thanks to Mike and Sally Evans who helped organise the event and thank you to Ian, Sammy and Evie who helped run the bar.

The bar will be open on the Friday before Christmas Eve and it's hoped there will be a food wagon attending the evening as well. We will be opening from 6pm on Christmas Eve till late and we will be putting on mince pies and sausage rolls. There will also be Christmas carols for everyone to sing along to.

In the new year we are hoping to put on Saturday night events at least once a month, these will be things like general knowledge quizzes, bingo, etc.

Every Friday evening we have the food wagons turn up; details of who is attending is posted on the Middlezoy Facebook page.

We are still looking for more volunteers to help run and organise events for the future, if you would like to, come along to one of our meetings, we hold them on the first Monday of every month starting at 7.30pm and we usually aim to finish no later than 9pm.

Paul Baker, Acting MCP Chair

MIDDLEZOY HERITAGE SOCIETY

The Heritage Society meets on the first Thursday of every month in the church at 10am. The aim of the society is to record the history and social life of the village. The meetings are open to all.

We also arrange visits to learn more of the history of this area. Recently we visited the Brick and Tile Museum in Wylds Road, Bridgwater (next to Jewson's). One of our group, Jon Cran, is a volunteer at the museum and therefore we had our own personal tour.

An interesting fact is that at one time there were 16 brick and tile factories in the town taking advantage of local clay and silt and, at that time, a buoyant port. Also did you know that Bridgwater bricks uniquely have 20 holes? We are sure Jon will provide many more interesting facts if you give the museum a visit.

Middlezoy Heritage Society

HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Remembrance

The church was beautifully decorated by the village Craft Group, the pulpit, screen, font, pews, bellringers' balustrade and windows ledges were decorated with knitted and crocheted poppies. Thank you to the talented ladies.

Over 50 adults and several children attended the Village Remembrance Service on 10 November. The service was led by Rev Stuart Innalls from the Methodist Circuit.

Twelve local organisations laid wreaths at the memorial plaque in the church.

Posada (The figures of Mary, Joseph and the donkey)

The Posada figures start their journeys with a blessing at the Advent UB Service at



Moorlinch on 1st December. They will then travel to Middlezoy and be received into homes around the village as a welcome to the Lord Jesus into hearts and lives. The journey ends at Holy Cross church during the Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas at Holy Cross will be celebrated through 3 services during Christmas week:

On Sunday 22 December the Annual Village Carol Service will commence at 6pm.

The church will be candle lit and the carols and readings will all be well known.

On Christmas Eve there is the Crib Service commencing at 3pm.

This is a family friendly service relating the Christmas story and help will be needed to develop the crib scene. If previous years are repeated, we will again have a crib scene like no other.

On Christmas Day, at 10am, we welcome everyone from the benefice. The service will be led by the Reverends David and Christabel Ager who, after finding what Santa has delivered, will travel from Devon to lead a communion service in the church.

In addition, on **Wednesday 18 December** there will be Carol Singing around the village. Meet at the village shop at 6pm finishing at 11a Main Road for a festive gathering. If you cannot go round the village please still come to 11a Main Road to join in the festive fun. Festive drinks and food will be there for all to enjoy. All ages are very welcome, from babes in arms to OAPs. Hope you can make it.



Middlezoy PCC

MIDDLEZOY METHODIST CHURCH

Peekaboo – No sessions during the Christmas holidays. First session back is on 10 January, 9.30am-12noon.

Soup and Sweet lunch – no lunch in December, but back for Tuesday 14 January from 1pm, £7.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS:

Sunday 8 December at 5pm – the Village Nativity and Christingle at the Chapel. Come as a Nativity character, or use some of the costumes available and join in as you wish to retell the story of the first Christmas. We shall have Christingles for the children, and finish by lighting a candle in the darkness!

Wednesday 18 December at 3pm - Coffee and Carols at the Chapel.

Come along to an informal time over festive treats. Choose your favourite carols to sing, and listen to some Christmas readings. All welcome.

Sunday 22 December, 6pm - United Carol Service at Holy Cross.

Sunday 29 December, 6.30pm Service with Holy Communion, led by Rev Deborah Kirk.

JANUARY SERVICES:

Sunday 12 January, 10.30am – United Covenant Service with Anglican friends, in the Chapel, led by Rev Deborah Kirk.

Sunday 26 January, 6.30pm – Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Deborah Kirk.

Booking the Methodist Church for your events:

Don't forget that the Chapel space and back room are available to hire - phone Jill Darby on 698000.



*Rev Deborah Kirk, Minister deborah.m.kirk@gmail.com 01823 334854
Ildiko Haraszti Minister-in-Training, ildikotutor@gmail.com*

MIDDLEZOY PARISH COUNCIL

Middlezoy Parish Council are looking for a replacement Clerk to the Council.

Unfortunately our present Clerk, due to work commitments, has had to resign so we are looking to replace him.

You don't need to be experienced in parish council clerking as full training will be given. We pay travel expenses at 45 pence per mile and depending on the level of experience we pay 4 hours per week work with the parish council. We meet every third Tuesday of the month except in August when there are no meetings. For further information please contact Paul Baker, Chair of Middlezoy Parish Council on 0776 0887 907.

We are also two councillors short so if you feel you would like to become a member of the Parish Council and help support the local community you would be very welcome, for further information please contact me on the above number.

Paul Baker, Chair, Middlezoy Parish Council

BENEFACTICE, DEANERY AND DIOCESAN NEWS

PROCESSES WHILE WE ARE IN VACANCY

The churchwardens are the people to contact for arranging baptisms, weddings and funerals during the vacancy of the post of Priest-in-Charge for the United Benefice of MOMSS&G.

Details of normal regular services are being arranged with the Area Dean and will be published as usual in this magazine and on posters.

UB Churchwardens

COMMON FUND 2025

What our churches are asked to pay to the diocese to cover resources received

The Bath and Wells Diocese cost £15.26m to run in 2024. £11.24m of this came from the parishes in the form of the Parish Share. This does not include the cathedral and its staff and the Bishop's Palace, all of which are funded separately by the Church Commissioners. Approximately three quarters of the cost is the training, salary, pension and housing cost of the clergy. In 2025 a new system is being operated after two consultations in the diocese this year. Under the old system, 30% of parishes in the diocese were financially supporting the remaining 70% which was considered unsustainable and needed to be addressed.

The Common Fund of 2025 will not be parish based but benefice based as clergy are allocated to benefices. The new Benefice Share will be the sum of three parts. Part A, making up roughly 75%, will be the direct ministry cost, in our case as a half time post in vacancy. Part B, about 13%, is a proportion of diocesan wide costs of curates, ordinands, archdeacons and support services, including Flourish House, the diocesan offices in Wells. Part C, about 12% of the whole, is a mutuality and generosity contribution for funding benefices that suffer extreme rural sparsity or deprivation and also could enable new churches. Our benefice will thus be asked for A+B+C or £53,891. This represents a huge increase, however it will be phased in over 5 years. The amount requested from



the benefice for 2025 is £34,573.

At a recent meeting of the wardens and church representatives it was decided to apportion the share between the churches in the benefice according to the number of their regular worshippers, rather than by a more complicated formula suggested by the diocese. So for 2025 the share for Middlezoy is £10,517, for Othery £8,413, Moorlinch £5,609 and for Stawell £9,114. For Greinton a flat rate of £920 was suggested by the diocese. In 2024 the share from our combined churches was £29,743 so this will immediately represent a substantial increase.

The future of our benefice is currently under discussion, but if we are still in vacancy after 18 months the Benefice Share will automatically be reduced.

MOMSS Committee

CHURCHES AND CHAPELS

Open Daily

The united benefice churches in Middlezoy and Stawell are open daily for private prayer; see their notice boards for their opening times. Othery church is currently only open from 9am to 3.30pm, Mondays to Fridays during school term days and for church services. Genuine visitors can phone 07714 672316 to arrange for access at other times.

BENEFICE/MIDDLEZOY PRAYER GROUP

Please do not think you have to be a member of the local churches as we are very willing to pray for anyone who asks. The prayer group feel it is needed so please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing middlezoyprayers@gmail.com.

The Prayer Group

BISHOP'S LETTER

“JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD”



“All is calm, all is bright” may not be the words that many of us would use to describe our experience of either the run up to Christmas or the feast itself. Presents to buy and wrap, food to order and cook, events and church services to be part of. And that’s before we’ve negotiated the big day itself. I saw one website recently that claimed that Christmas is considered as one of the six most stressful life events, along with divorce, moving house and changing jobs!

In the midst of such chaos, our churches offer an opportunity to find peace during this busy time – of stillness, quiet and the opportunity to stand back from all the pressures that the season contains. This year, the Church of England’s theme for Advent and Christmas is Follow the Star: Calm and Bright. The theme draws on some of the lyrics of the famous carol, Silent Night:



“Silent Night! Holy Night! All is calm, all is bright ...”

To be calm and bright is to be invited into the still centre of the Christmas story. It’s to contemplate Mary holding the new-born Jesus, the Light of the World. It’s to open ourselves to the joy of the angels as they tell the shepherds “Do not be afraid - Fear not!” It’s to encounter the wonder of the wise men as they discover that the gift of this child is for the whole world.

May your Christmas 2024 be ‘Calm and Bright’!

Bishop Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells

The Common Worship (Year C) readings and lessons for the following services:

DATE	SEASON	READINGS	
December 1 Sun	First of Advent (Year C)	OT: Jeremiah, chapter 33, verses 14 to 16 Psalm: 25, verses 1 to 10 Epistle: 1 Thessalonians, chapter 3, verses 9 to 13 (the end) Gospel: Luke, chapter 21, verses 25 to 36	
8 Sun	Second of Advent	OT: Malachi, chapter 3, verses 1 to 4 Psalm: Isaiah, chapter 12, verses 1 to 6 Epistle: Philippians, chapter 1, verses 3 to 11 Gospel: Luke, chapter 3, verses 1 to 6	
15 Sun	Third of Advent	OT: Zephaniah, chapter 3, verses 14 to 20 (the end) Psalm: 146 Epistle: Philippians, chapter 4, verses 4 to 9 Gospel: Luke, chapter 3, verses 7 to 20	
22 Sun	Fourth of Advent	OT: Micah, chapter 5, verses 1 to 5a Psalm: 80 Epistle: Hebrews, chapter 10, verses 5 to 10 Gospel: Luke, chapter 1, verses 39 to 56	
24 Tue Christmas Eve	Midnight Mass Set I	OT: Isaiah, chapter 9, verses 2 to 7 Psalm: 96 Epistle: Titus, chapter 2, verses 11 to 14 Gospel: Luke, chapter 2, verses 1 to 20	
25 Wed 	Christmas Day Set III	OT: Isaiah, chapter 52, verses 7 to 10 Psalm: 98 Epistle: Hebrews, chapter 1, verses 1 to 12 Gospel: John, chapter 1, verses 1 to 14	
29 Sun	First of Christmas	OT: 1 Samuel, chapter 2, verses 18 to 26 Psalm: 148 Epistle: Colossians, chapter 3, verses 12 to 17 Gospel: Luke, chapter 2, verses 41 to 52 (the end)	
January 2025 5 Sun	Second of Christmas	OT: Jeremiah, chapter 31, verses 7 to 14 Psalm: 147, verses 13 to 21 (the end) Epistle: Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 3 to 14 Gospel: John, chapter 1, verses 1 to 18	
12 Sun	Baptism of Christ	OT: Isaiah, chapter 43, verses 1 to 7m Psalm: 29 Epistle: Acts, chapter 8, verses 14 to 17 Gospel: Luke, chapter 3, verses 15 to 17, 21 and 22	
19 Sun	Epiphany 2	OT: Isaiah, chapter 62, verses 1 to 5 Psalm: 36, verses 5 to 10 Epistle: 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 1 to 11 Gospel: John, chapter 2, verses 1 to 11	
26 Sun	Epiphany 3	OT: Nehemiah, chapter 8, verses 1 to 10 Psalm: 19 Epistle: 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 12 to 31a Gospel: Luke, chapter 4, verses 14 to 21	

THE HOLY THORN

The cutting of the Glastonbury Holy Thorn is a royal tradition that involves sending a sprig of the holy thorn to the monarch for Christmas. It is thought Joseph of Arimathea visited Glastonbury with the Holy Grail. He thrust his staff into Wearyall Hill, which then grew into the original thorn tree. Each year a sprig of it is cut by the eldest child at St John's infant school in Glastonbury. This year it will be sent to King Charles. The tradition is a reminder of the historic ties between the monarchy, Glastonbury, and the church.



AROUND AND ABOUT BEYOND THE BENEFICE

THE WI - MORE THAN JAM AND JERUSALEM

Think fun and frolics, trips and treats

There are talks, activities and events for every woman, single or wed. You can have a bit of fun, make friends, try a new hobby or just explore a new venue. Whichever WI you attend you can be sure of a warm welcome.



WIs near us

Ashcott and Pedwell	7.30pm	Third Thursday	Ashcott Village Hall, TA7 9PZ
Shapwick Starlets	7.30pm	Second Tuesday	Village Hall, Station Rd, TA7 9NJ
Westonzoyland	7.15pm	Second Wednesday	Village Hall Cheer Lane TA7 0EZ

Local times can vary so it is best to contact Somerset Federation before attending for the first time 01278 287034.

Westonzoyland WI

Come to our December meeting on Wednesday 11th and join our Christmas party and get to know everyone or after Christmas come along on Wednesday 8 January to blow away those post-holiday blues.

Should you fancy a night out with the girls, come and see us. We welcome you.

For any further information please email: zoywisec@gmail.com or call Gill Wilkinson on 01823 698429.

Gill Wilkinson, Secretary

MUSIC ON THE LEVELS

Music on the Levels reveals its programme for 2025

As it approaches its fifteenth year, Music on the Levels announces another varied programme of Sunday afternoon concerts.

It is maintaining its winning formula of making the concerts free to attend while raising money to cover costs by offering refreshments at modest charges, holding a raffle and accepting donations.

All concerts are held in St Mary's church on Main Road, Westonzoyland, TA7 0EP.

The concerts start at 3pm with refreshments available from 2.15pm.

The 2025 season starts with **The Barnacle Buys on Sunday 26 January**. This is a group of sea shanty singers based in North Somerset that exists to enjoy their



The Barnacle Buys appearing on Sunday 26 January

craft, entertain audiences and raise money for charities, mainly Children’s Hospice SW and RNLI. Expect a bit of swagger along with the songs!

The remaining concerts are as follows:

Sunday 23 February - Trio Paradis, presenting *The Latin American Collection*.

Sunday 30 March - Rolling Harmony. Glorious music rooted in English and American singing traditions.

Sunday 27 April - The Fitzwarren Trio. Well-known classical pieces and new compositions inspired by Somerset.

Sunday 18 May - Steve Jinski, Folk Acoustic Guitar. “This is lovely stuff. You can hear all the love that’s gone into it” – Bob Harris Radio 2.

Sunday 29 June - Lutes and other instruments, presented by Steve Graham with ravishing music.

Sunday 28 September - Jacquelyn Bevan and Oscar Tabor. Piano and virtuoso violin.

Sunday 26 October - Spirit of the Blues. Julia Titus recreates the songs of Bessie Smith.

Sunday 30 November - Kingsbury Band. The ever-popular forty-piece concert band. Further information:

f.challenger@icloud.com 01278 699071. Website: <https://musiconthelevels.com>

Useful INFORMATION

DEFIBRILLATOR MACHINES

From the scene of an incident, call 999, ask for Ambulance.

Ascertain the condition of the patient. If a defibrillator is required give the following information about the nearest machine.



Call sign

Greinton Phone Box	TA7 9BW	CHT-RT-1583	
Middlezoy Chapel	TA7 0NZ	SC0253	
Middlezoy Village Hall	TA7 0PG	SC0254	(machine at car park end)
Moorlinch Farm	TA7 9BU		
Othery Village Hall	TA7 0QU		
Stawell Village Hall	TA7 9AD		

Within 200m of a defibrillator they can give you the code to open the cabinet on post code alone, farther away the call sign is required.

FOODBANKS

Any donation is appreciated and will reach the people who need it.

DONATION POINTS

Middlezoy: Holy Cross Church, Village Coffee Mornings or Meadowbank, 11a Main Rd.

Othery: St Michael’s Church Porch.

Moorlinch: Spring Cottage, Pit Hill Lane, Moorlinch or St Mary’s Church Porch.

Stawell: The Old Post Office, Stawell

Cash Donation: By contacting the relevant Foodbank you can make either a single or a regular donation. If you are in a position to give via Gift Aid, the Foodbank will be able to claim back the tax you have paid on this.



To obtain assistance from a Foodbank you need a referral from: Citizens Advice Bureau: Clarence House High St, Bridgwater, TA6 3BH 03444 889623 or your Village Agent, local GP surgery, schools, health visitors and social workers.

Bridgwater Foodbank can be contacted by email info@bridgwater.foodbank.org.uk or phone 01278 434636 or 07804 119273 (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays). They will help put you in touch with one of the agencies that can help with a referral.

Langport Cares email langportcares/foodbank@gmail.com

HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING & REFUSE COLLECTIONS

The schedules for the MOMSS & G area are:

MIDDLEZOY

Recycling Boxes, every week:

Wednesdays 4, 11, 18, Friday 27 December, Thursday 2, Wednesdays 8, 15, 22, 29 January

Black Wheeled Bins, every 3 weeks:

Wednesday 11 December, Thursday 2, Wednesday 22 January

Garden Waste Bins, every other week: Mondays 2, 16 December, 13, 27 January

OTHERY

Recycling Boxes, every week:

Fridays 6, 13, 20, Sunday 29 December, Saturday 4, Fridays 10, 17, 24, 31 January

Black Wheeled Bins, every 3 weeks: Fridays 20 December, 10, 31 January

Garden Waste Bins, every other week:

Thursdays 12 December, 9, 23 January November

MOORLINCH, STAWELL, SUTTON MALLET & GREINTON

Recycling Boxes, every week:

Wednesdays 4, 11, 18, Friday 27 December, Thursday 2, Wednesdays 8, 15, 22, 29 January

Black Wheeled Bins, every 3 weeks:

Wednesdays 11 December, Thursday 2, Wednesday 22 January

Garden Waste Bins, every other week: Thursdays 5, 19 December, 16, 30 January

RECYCLING CENTRES

Winter opening times

All 16 Somerset recycling sites open at weekends

9am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

9am to 5pm weekdays.

Full details of each site, location, opening times, materials they will accept etc. can be found at :

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste/find-your-nearest-recycling-centre/>

MOBILE LIBRARY

Taunton Area, Route P

The service continues every 4 weeks on Fridays:

Next visit: 13 December, 24 January

Stawell Village Hall 10.10am - 10.40am

Moorlinch Tapmoor Road Junction 10.55am - 11.15am

Middlezoy Main Road Bus Stop 12.20pm - 1pm

For further information about reading books online contact

Libraries Direct on 0300 123 2224 or visit www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries



MOMSS COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Please advise momssgeditor@live.co.uk of amendments/additions

ANGLICAN CHURCH INFORMATION

Priest-in-Charge: Vacancy

Contact your village Churchwarden or contact person listed below

United Benefice Readers

Pauline Davies 01278 451280 and Richard Graham 01278 722284

Parish Auxiliary Lay Ministers

Mervyn Winslade (Othery); Ruth Peberdy (Stawell)

Churchwardens

Middlezoy: Ian Campbell 01823 698790

Othery: Mervyn Winslade 01823 698368 and Anthony Betty 07801 233676

Moorlinch: Fiona Hixon 01458 211096

Stawell Deputy Warden: Richard Graham 01278 722284

Sutton Mallet contact: Brian Lishman 01278 722579

Greinton contact: Jean Heywood 01458 210497

METHODIST CHAPEL MIDDLEZOY

Minister: Rev Deborah Kirk 01823 334854

Local Contact: Jill Darby jilldrb@gmail.com 01823 698000

Bookings: <https://middlezoychapeluk.wordpress.com/bookings/> or Jill Darby (above)

PARISH COUNCILS/MEETINGS

Middlezoy - Chairman: Paul Baker 07760 887907

Othery - Chairman: Andrew Tizzard 01823 690284

Moorlinch - Meeting Chairman: John Gould 01458 210801

Stawell and Sutton Mallet - Chairman: Philip Jay

Greinton - Enquiries: Toby Crispin 01458 210227

VILLAGE AMENITIES

Middlezoy: The George Inn 01823 698215;

Shop 01823 587222 open Mon, Tues 8.45am-1.00, 1.30-4.30pm, Wed 8.45am-11.00am,

Thurs, Fri 8.45am-1.00, 1.30-5pm, Sat 8.45am-12 noon;

P.O. 01823 698981 open Mon, Tues 10.00am-1.00, 1.30-4.30pm, Wed closed,

Thurs, Fri 10.00am-1.00, 1.30-5pm, Sat closed; Village Hall 07885 195418

Othery: School 01823 698464; Othery Village Hall 01823 690482

Moorlinch: Ring O'Bells 01458 210358; Church Hall 01458 210755

Stawell & Sutton Mallet: Village Hall 01278 723665

Greinton: Village Hall 01458 210277

POLICE: Emergencies only tel: 999 ; Non emergencies tel: 101

CRIMESTOPPERS: 8am-10pm Weekdays 0800 555111;

NHS: Tel: 111

DISTRICT PCSOs: Georgia Coles 07889 659466; Tom Russell 07935 013566

VILLAGE AGENTS

To contact a Village Agent ring 01823 331222 and they will find the most suitable person to deal with your query. Referrals can also be made via doctors' surgeries.



HELP WANTED

By Timothy Tocher

Santa needs new reindeer.
 The first bunch has grown old.
 Dasher has arthritis;
 Comet hates the cold.
 Prancer's sick of staring
 at Dancer's big behind.
 Cupid married Blitzen
 and Donder lost his mind.
 Dancer's mad at Vixen
 for stepping on his toes.
 Vixen's being thrown out—
 she laughed at Rudolph's nose.
 If you are a reindeer
 we hope you will apply.
 There is just one tricky part:
 You must know how to fly.

I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
 Their old, familiar carols play
 And wild and sweet
 The words repeat
 Of peace on earth, good will to men!

THE CHRISTMAS ROSE

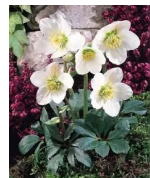
What is the flower that blooms each year
 In flowerless days,
 Making a little blaze
 On the bleak earth, giving my heart some cheer?
 Harsh the sky and hard the ground
 When the Christmas rose is found.
 Look! its white star, low on earth,
 Rays a vision of rebirth.

Who is the child that's born each year —
 His bedding, straw:
 His grace, enough to thaw
 My wintering life, and melt a world's despair?

Harsh the sky and hard the earth
 When the Christmas child comes forth.
 Look! around a stable throne
 Beasts and wise men are at one.

What men are we that, year on year,
 We Herod-wise
 In our cold wits devise
 A death of innocents, a rule of fear?

Hushed your earth, full-starred your sky
 For a new nativity:
 Be born in us, relieve our plight,
 Christmas child, you rose of light!



Late Poet Laureate, Cecil DAY-LEWIS only child of Rev F C Day Lewis was born in Ireland in 1904. When Cecil was four, his mother died and the family moved to England.

The Helleborus niger (Christmas Rose) can bloom in the darkest months of the year.

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 Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 9QT

Telephone: 01458 210627 or 01458 860157

Email: mfranksandsons@gmail.com

Website: www.mfranksandsons.co.uk

~~~~~ THE FIRST CHRISTMAS ~~~~~

Many hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God had promised his people that he would send a saviour to our world. This promise was recorded and written down by messengers to whom God revealed the future. The saviour would be called 'Messiah' or 'Christ'; both words mean 'Chosen One'. Part of the promise was that he would be descended from David, Israel's greatest king, and that's exactly what the family tree of Jesus Christ shows. In fact, his ancestors go right back to Abraham himself.

One day, a day just like any other, in Nazareth, a town in Galilee, an angel appeared without warning to a young virgin called Mary, who was engaged to a man named Joseph. The sudden appearance of an angel gave Mary a terrible fright, but the angel said, *'Don't be afraid, Mary. I am Gabriel and I have been sent with a message from God for you. God is pleased with you.'*

Mary was badly shaken - what on earth could the angel mean? Gabriel assured her. *'There's no need to worry, Mary. God is pleased with you, and you are going to have a baby boy - you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be a great man and will be known as God's Son.'*

'But how?' Mary asked. *'I'm a virgin.'* Gabriel explained that God's Holy Spirit would form the baby within her. Gabriel encouraged Mary to believe that nothing is impossible with God. Mary responded with simple, accepting faith. *'I'm honoured to serve God in whatever way he sees fit.'*

When Joseph discovered Mary was pregnant, all he could imagine was that she must have been unfaithful to him. But he was a caring man, and did not want to shame her, so he decided to break off their engagement with a minimum of fuss. But an angel told him in a dream that Mary had done nothing wrong. The baby inside her was unique, the only one ever to be formed by God without human intervention. As if that wasn't enough, what was happening to Mary had been described by one of God's messengers, some 800 years beforehand. The angel told Joseph to name the child 'Jesus', meaning 'saviour', because he would make it possible for everyone to be forgiven for all the wrong things they have done. In Jesus, God himself would live among the people of earth.

Some little while later the Roman emperor, Augustus, ordered a census of his entire Empire. This required every man to return to his place of birth to register, along with any family he might have. So Joseph had to journey to Bethlehem, because he was a descendant of king David. Mary, who was heavily pregnant, went with him. And so it was that she gave birth to her firstborn son in Bethlehem. Because of the chaos caused by the census, Mary and Joseph had nowhere to stay except a stable, so Mary wrapped her newborn son up tight, and used a manger for a cot.

After his death, followers of Jesus wrote about the significance of his birth and life: 'Although Jesus was himself God and shared God's nature, he didn't cling to that privilege. Quite the opposite; he was willing to become nothing, a servant, one of us - and even to die for us.'

(A Fresh Retelling of Matt 1:1-4, Luke 1:26-38, Matt 1:19-25, Luke 2:1-7, Phil 2: 6-7)





Christ
is
Born





Thank you to the children of Middlezoy & Othery Schools and to the members of Stawell Youth Club for their wonderful drawings, used throughout this magazine.



**The United Benefice Ministry Team
and the MOMSS committee
wish you all a very Happy Christmas
and a peaceful New Year**



SERVICES CHART FOR CHAPEL AND UB CHURCHES DECEMBER & JANUARY

DATE	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
December 1 Sun (First of Advent)	4.30 pm	United Benefice Advent service and start of Posada Journeys	St Mary's, Moorlinch
8 Sun (Second of Advent)	10.00 am 10.00 am 4.30 pm 5.00 pm	Prayer and Praise Christingle service Reimagining Christingle Joint Nativity service	St Michael's, Othery St Francis, Stawell St Mary's, Moorlinch Methodist Chapel, Middlezoy
15 Sun (Third of Advent)	10.00 am	United Benefice Communion service	St Francis, Stawell
20 Fri	6.00 pm	Carol service	St Francis, Stawell
22 Sun (Fourth of Advent)	9.30 am 4.30 pm 6.00 pm	Breakfast Café Carols by Candlelight Joint Carol Service	St Michael's, Othery St Mary's, Moorlinch Holy Cross, Middlezoy
24 Tue (Christmas Eve) 	3.00 pm 3.00 pm 3.00 pm 6.00 pm 11.30 pm	Carols and Crib service Carols and Crib service Carols and Crib service Carol Service United Benefice Midnight Mass	Holy Cross, Middlezoy St Michael's, Othery St Francis, Stawell Sutton Mallet church St Mary's Moorlinch
25 Wed (Christmas Day) 	10.00 am 	United Benefice Communion service 	Holy Cross, Middlezoy 
29 Sun (First of Christmas)	10.00 am 6.30 pm	United Benefice Communion service Circuit Communion service	St Michael's, Othery Methodist Chapel, Middlezoy
January 2025 5 Sun (Second of Christmas)	10.00 am 10.00 am 10.00 am 10.00 am	Worship For All Prayer and Praise Morning Prayer Morning Worship	Holy Cross, Middlezoy St Michael's, Othery St Mary's, Moorlinch St Francis, Stawell
12 Sun (Baptism of Christ)	10.30 am	Joint Covenant service Methodist Chapel and United Benefice members	Methodist Chapel, Middlezoy
19 Sun (Epiphany 2)	10.00 am	United Benefice Communion Service	St Mary's Moorlinch
26 Sun (Epiphany 3)	10.00 am 10.00 am 10.00 am 6.30 pm	Communion service Morning Prayer Morning Worship Circuit Communion Service	St Michael's, Othery St Mary's, Moorlinch St Francis, Stawell Methodist Chapel, Middlezoy