

# TemerTalk

The background image shows a traditional stone building with a tiled roof. In the foreground, there is a stone well with a metal frame and a hanging basket of flowers. The building has a small arched doorway and a window with a decorative frame. The background shows a hillside with trees under a clear blue sky.

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March 2026

**Inside**

**Daffodil Day • Quizzes**

**The great Moke restoration project  
and all your parish news**

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# TemeTalk

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*A community going forward with God*

## March 2026

Published by the churches of the  
Teme Valley South Group  
*and delivered free to every household*

Designed and typeset by  
Sandra Griffiths  
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ronsmum@icloud.com

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### Editor:

Sandra Griffiths  
Grey Gables, St Michaels  
Tenbury Wells WR15 8TW  
Telephone 07482 482629  
ronsmum@icloud.com

### Distribution:

Jeremy Wyatt and Trevor Matthews  
(Stoke Bliss & Kyre)  
Averil Opperman  
(The Hanleys, Eastham and Rochford)  
Jane Carney (Stanford)

### Priest-in-charge

Rev'd Julia Curtis  
Telephone 01886 853286  
revjuliacurtis@gmail.com

### Parish website

[www.temevalleysouth.org.uk](http://www.temevalleysouth.org.uk)

Items for inclusion should be  
sent to Sandra Griffiths  
by the 18th of the preceding month  
and will be included subject to space

## Dear Readers

Since the start of 2026 we seem to have had one storm after another. Some of them may not have been officially named as storms but there has certainly been a lot of rain and ice and bitterly cold winds. And the flooded roads and those really sneaky potholes that, like the shark in *Jaws*, lurk beneath the flood water to take out your tyres or suspension.

Recently I went to Glasshampton monastery for a retreat day. On the morning of my visit the rain was bucketing down and there was one of those biting easterly winds. I was pleased to get settled into the warm room where I would spend the day. I made a hot drink, settled down in an armchair and started to read Psalm 1.

The words of the psalm conjure up images of trees planted by streams of water and winds that blow the chaff away. As I sat in this quite comfortable space within the monastery, the only sound was the rain beating against the window and the view from the window was of the winds blowing and bending the trees.

I thought about the trees by the stream in the psalm and the windblown chaff and about how deeply rooted we are in our rural communities, through our traditions and our history and how these are etched in the landscape and in our lives.

When the storms of life affect us, we bend and yet we hold fast. We rely on our roots to hold us firm until the storm passes. And when it has passed and we begin to recover, we might find that we have shed a few leaves in the process or even that some of the chaff, the unwanted stuff, has been blown away.

There is a hymn that you may be familiar with. It was written by Pricilla Jane Owens in 1882. It has a nautical theme rather than a rural one. As I sat in the safe, sparse comfort of that room at Glasshampton, I thought about those times when I too had been buffeted by storms in

*Continued on page 3*

This month's cover photograph by Rev'd Julia was taken in the courtyard at Eremo delle Carceri – see page 11.

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## Teme Valley South Contacts

**Priest-in-charge:** Julia Curtis 01886 853286

**Assistant Curate:** Jen Jones 07749 977821

**LLM Reader:** Pete Thorp 07917 783159

**Retired clergy:** Robert Barlow, Sally Jones

### Churchwardens

**Eastham:** Celia Adams 01584 781258

**Rochford:** Ann Prosser 01584 781317

**Stoke Bliss & Kyre:** Jeremy Wyatt 07720 056671

Trevor Matthews 07768 942169

**Hanleys:** Ed Yarnold 07930 882728

**Stanford:** Alexandra Winnington 07891 346783

### Pastoral Team

Ann Prosser 01584 781317

Jenny Barbé 01584 781298

Mel Williams 01584 781284

**Parish Safeguarding Officer:** Kate Walton

07494 104781

## Village Hall Bookings

### Stoke Bliss & Kyre

Janet Powell, 01885 410598

[stokeblisskyrevillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:stokeblisskyrevillagehall@gmail.com)

**Rochford** – Ann Prosser, 01584 781317

**Eastham** –

[bookings@easthammemorialhall.org.uk](mailto:bookings@easthammemorialhall.org.uk)

**Hanley** – Diane, 07879 888336

[hanleyvillagehall@outlook.com](mailto:hanleyvillagehall@outlook.com)

**Stanford** – Catherine Mawby, 07831 303792



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# Parish news

## From the Registers

### Funeral

The funeral of Caroline Pulford took place on Thursday 27th January at Wyre Forest Crematorium. Holding her family and friends in our thoughts at this difficult time.

May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

### Baptism

Congratulations to Henry Iain Adams on his baptism on Sunday 25th January at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Eastham. Welcome to the church family.

### Confirmation

During the spring we shall be running a few sessions at Hanley Rectory for those thinking about Confirmation. This is an important step on your faith journey and is for those from 10 to 100 years old! If you would like to know more, please contact Rev'd Jen Jones, Rev'd Robert Barlow or Rev'd Julia Curtis.

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## Dear Readers

*(Continued from page 1)*

my life.

In the afternoon the skies cleared and the weak sunshine shone through. I decided to venture out. The wind was still cruel and biting but I went for a walk with my red and white collie who ended up with her white socks the same colour as the rest of her, the rich red-brown of the mud beneath our feet, or in her case paws; that rich earth that binds the roots of the trees, holds them firm and yet allows them to flex and bend in whatever the storm throws at them. The mud cling to my wellies was a reminder of what was hidden beneath it and that new shoots would soon be appearing and signs of spring would be seen in the buds on the trees, the yellow heads of daffodils and lambs bouncing around in the fields.

May we, like the trees with their roots planted firmly in the rich earth, hold fast in the hope of new life and new beginnings as winter turns to spring.

*Rev'd Jen Jones*

## "Trainee vicar" on placement with us

During February and March we have the pleasure of hosting Robyn, who is training to be a priest. Do say hello if you see her around our parishes. She introduces herself below:

*"Hello, my name is Robyn and I am looking forward to spending time with you during my placement. I am currently a second year ordinand in training at Cuddesdon. I live in Worcester with my husband Roon and our daughter Penny who will be turning eight this month, as well as our cat Missy.*

*I currently worship at St Stephen's Church in Barbourne and I work as stewardship officer for the diocese, helping churches with their generosity and finances.*

*I am really looking forward to learning more about rural ministry and look forward to meeting as many of you as I can during my time here."*

*Rev'd Julia*

## TemeTalk

email [ronsmum@icloud.com](mailto:ronsmum@icloud.com)

telephone 07482 482629

Deadline for the April issue is 18th March

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# Rochford 49 Club

*Congratulations to this month's  
£25 winners!*

## Wednesday winners

21st January	No 19	Not sold
28th January	No 15	Not sold
4th February	No 5	Not sold
11th February	No 52	Not sold

## Saturday winners

24th January	No 29	Rosemary Ayres
31st January	No 11	Not sold
7th February	No 40	Not sold
14th February	No 14	Pam Burn

As you can see from the numbers of tickets not sold, there are still plenty of numbers available – why not join in? It's just £1 per draw, plus you get two chances each week to win £25!

Remember, you must be in it to win it!  
Ring Norma Goodall on  
**07974 809242**

TemeTalk deadline 18th March  
ronsmum@icloud.com

# Teme Valley Tote

February's prize draw, the tenth in this series, was decided when Rev'd Julia Curtis rolled the dice on 1st February to select the set of random numbers and the starting point. Prizewinners are:

£50 – **Emma Mapp** of Knighton (No 609)

£30 – **David Evington** of Stanford (No 455)

£20 – **Giselle Lockett** of Pensax (No 388)

If you have any queries about the Tote, please contact Robin Dean on 01886 853295 or robin.c.dean@gmail.com – he is still looking for someone to take over its running!

A new series starts in April and your coordinators will be collecting £10 for each entry in the new series. See announcement on page 25.

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## Welcome

Welcome to Josh and Phil who have recently moved into Hollingtree Cottage and to Linda who has moved into Moor Cottage. We hope you will enjoy living in Rochford and make the most of everything this community has to offer.

## Rochford village hall

Work is progressing well on the village hall thanks to a grant from the MHDC Legacy Grant Scheme to improve the hall's insulation and décor. We have also received a very generous anonymous donation from a local charitable trust to refurbish the kitchen. Thanks to everyone who helped with the preparatory work – there will probably be some cleaning and finishing work to do when the builders have finished, so look out for information on the WhatsApp group and please help if you can.

As the hall was closed for pancake day, we are planning to reschedule the village pancake evening to Friday 10th April to celebrate the hall's reopening. Everyone welcome, more details next month. I hope the hall is finished in time!

## Photo competition

Please get your cameras and phones out for the village photo competition to show the highlights of Rochford. The favourite pictures will be enlarged to decorate the walls of the newly refurbished village hall. So please join in and show what makes Rochford such a great place. The pictures will be judged by public vote at the pancake evening, so please email your pictures to [andrew.barbe@btinternet.com](mailto:andrew.barbe@btinternet.com). Please use high definition if you can.

## Neighbourhood lunches

There will be no neighbourhood lunches in March as work is carried out on the hall. If all goes to plan, we hope to restart lunches on 28th April and 26th May.

## Congratulations

Dan Taylor celebrated his 90th birthday in February in style, with a party for friends and family. Dan asked for donations in lieu of presents and would like to thank everyone for their generosity which raised £400 for Acorns Children's Hospice.

## Lambing Café Church

Come along to Parsonage Farm, Rochford on Sunday 8th March at 3pm: your opportunity to get up close and personal with sheep and hopefully newly born lambs. All welcome especially children (unfortunately it is not suitable for pregnant women). We are also pleased to welcome the TVS choir who will lead the singing. Wellies and warm clothing essential. Parking limited, so if you can, please park on the layby and walk down.

## Church flower rota

We are looking for volunteers to help with church flowers. This is not a big commitment, and involves doing altar flowers twice a month for one month a year and helping with Harvest and Christmas decorations. We are working towards more sustainable flowers. If you think you can help or even just provide flowers from your garden, please contact Ann.

## Easter lilies

The church is decorated with white lilies for Easter. Donations in memory of loved ones are used to provide these beautiful Easter lilies. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Ann. Any help with cleaning the church for Easter would be greatly appreciated. Please come along on Saturday 4th April from 2pm.

## Dates for your diary

### Pancake evening and hall reopening

– Friday 10th April

Music events – May and June tbc

Village fête – July tbc

Big Breakfast – Saturday 19th September

Harvest Festival – Sunday 11th October

Village quiz – Friday 20th November

## Contacts

Ann on 01584 781317

Andrew on 07809 658484 or through the parish WhatsApp group

If you would like to be added to the parish WhatsApp group to keep you up-to-date with all village happenings, please send me your mobile number.

*Andrew Barbé*

**TemeTalk deadline 18th March**

# News from Stoke Bliss & Kyre

The gloom of winter has been lifted with a superb display of snowdrops in St Peter's churchyard and now the primroses and native daffodils are coming on as well, keeping the interest going into spring. It's a wonderful treat for visitors to the church and a testament to the hard work of our team of volunteers who look after the churchyard. As we start to think about our own gardens, we have the Plant and Produce Sale to look forward to in April. If you have not been before, I can recommend it as an enjoyable afternoon and an excellent place to stock up on plants for the coming gardening season. Donations of plants and produce for sale are always needed – see contacts below.

## Plant and Produce Sale

The annual Plant and Produce Sale will be held at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall on Saturday 25th April from 2.30 to 4.30pm. This very popular sale kicks off the gardening season for many and is a great place to pick up a bargain from the wide range of perennials, annual bedding and vegetable plants on offer. Alongside the plants, look out for crafts and produce, or take time to enjoy tea and cake in the garden.

Donations of plants and produce (jams, chutneys etc) are welcome. Please contact Helen Kyle on [helenvkyle@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:helenvkyle@yahoo.co.uk) or 01885 410210..

## Churchyard tidy sessions

There has been a date change for the start of our 2026 churchyard working parties – the new date is Saturday 28th March from 10am to 12 noon, at St Peter's Church, Stoke Bliss. All welcome, refreshments provided.

## Open Gardens returns

Save the date for the 2026 Stoke Bliss & Kyre Open Gardens which returns this summer on Sunday 14th June from 2 to 4pm. Varied private gardens across the village will be welcoming visitors, offering a great opportunity to look, admire and bag some ideas for your own gardens.

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## Keeping you informed

Stay up to date with village news and events for Stoke Bliss and Kyre via the community group on Facebook – search "Stoke Bliss & Kyre Community" to join. If you are not already on the SBK email list, contact Julia Berry at [sbkvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:sbkvillagehall@gmail.com) to join.

*Jeremy Wyatt*

## Social Night and Quiz

The Social Night on 27th March sees the return of our ever-popular quiz. Entry on the evening will be £12.50 per person which includes a delicious two-course supper. Our very reasonably priced bar will open at 7pm to help raise funds (please respect our fund-raising efforts by only consuming drinks purchased on the premises). Kick off for questions will be around 7.15. Teams will be restricted to 4 people, and of course, there will be prizes and glory for the winning team!

*Trevor Matthews*

*Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall Committee*



The logo features a central plate with a decorative floral border. On the plate, the text reads "Stoke Bliss & Kyre NEIGHBOURHOOD LUNCH". To the left of the plate is a fork and to the right is a knife.

**Thursday 12th March  
Thursday 9th April**  
at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall  
**12.30pm welcome, lunch served at 1pm**  
Two courses plus refreshments  
To book call 07396 813137  
or [sbkclunch@gmail.com](mailto:sbkclunch@gmail.com)  
**We look forward to seeing you**

## Social Night & Quiz

Friday 27th March  
Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall  
Bar opens at 7, food served at 8pm  
Please book food at [sbkvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:sbkvillagehall@gmail.com)  
Next Social Night is Friday 24th April

# Eastham Jottings

## Church flowers and cleaning

March – Celia Adams

April – Diane Clarke

There are vacancies on the rota. If you can help please contact Celia Adams on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com.

## Eastham Coffee Morning

Please join us at the coffee morning on Thursday 5th March at 10.30am at Eastham Memorial Hall for coffee, the monthly raffle and a catch up.

5th March – Alison Neary

2nd April – Josie Ward

## Pub Night

Join us for a lively quiz at Pub Night on Friday 20th March at 7pm at Eastham Memorial Hall! Gather your friends and put your knowledge to the test with a series of keenly competed general knowledge rounds – there's something for everyone and plenty of friendly rivalry along the way. Whether you're a trivia buff or just in it for the fun, it promises to be a great evening following the highly successful skittles evening in December. Tables of 4, £3 per head. Starts at 7.30pm. Some great prizes to the winning team. Just turn up on the night.

## Church and churchyard spring clean

Please come and help with tidying up the churchyard on Saturday 18th April from 10am to 12.30pm followed by a barbecue. We will be tidying up the inside of the church at the same time. Please bring garden utensils, dusters and mops. Everyone welcome, creche available!

## Teme Valley Tote

Payment is due on 1st April for the next 12 draws for prizes of £50, £30 or £20 per month.

Get cash please **as soon as possible** to Celia Adams. Online payments accepted, please contact Celia for bank details on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com .

Don't miss out– remember “you've got to be in it to win it”.

## Eastham Memorial Hall AGM

The AGM of Eastham Memorial Hall is on Monday 18th May at 7pm. This is a public meeting and is open to all Eastham residents. For more information contact Celia Adams on 01584 781258.

## Barbara Selkirk

We were very sad to hear of Barbara's death at the age of just 67. Barbara had lived in the Teme Valley since the early 1980s. A highly accomplished accountant, born in Twickenham, she later established her own independent practice after undertaking several significant financial projects over a long career.

Barbara had been the independent examiner of Eastham Memorial Hall since 2020. She gave her time freely and was an unfailing source of support and wise advice for which we are deeply grateful. She also supported local charities around Tenbury with characteristic generosity. Our sincere condolences go to Barbara's partner Simon and her sister Diane at this sad time.

## Eastham freestyle litter pick

Meet at Eastham Memorial Hall on Saturday 14th March at 9.30am. Join us for a morning of keeping Eastham “spick and span”! Gloves, bags and good company provided. Return from 11am onwards for fabulous refreshments and lovely treats – a perfect reward for a morning's hard work!

## Save the date for Eastham Fête

Eastham Fête will be on Sunday 16th August starting at 12 noon. If you would like to help in any way please let us know as soon as possible: email easthamfete@gmail.com.

*Celia Adams*

*See more Eastham Jottings on page 13*

## Activities at Eastham Memorial Hall

- Pilates – on Tuesdays at 1.10 and 2.20pm. For details or a taster session please contact Sue on 07974 343609 or sue579@icloud.com.

- Yoga – every Wednesday at 10am. Ring Zoe on 07962 981456 or see [www.zedyoga.co.uk](http://www.zedyoga.co.uk). Taster sessions available.

Yoga workshop weekend on 28th/29th March, contact Zoe for more information.

- Fitball – on Thursdays from 1.30 to 2.30pm. An exercise class using yoga balls to help improve posture and balance, build strength, flexibility and co-ordination. Please contact Michelle on 07837 359403 to book your place. The first session is a taster.

# Hanley Happenings

## Hanley Spring Clean

The start of spring is a great time to spring clean Hanley. Why not join us on Wednesday 4th March at 11am at the village hall for the first litter pick of the year. I know how infuriated you get when inconsiderate people drop litter or throw it out of their car window. So let's join together to clean it up. We will cover New Road down to Hanley William, Broadheath and Hanley Childe. On return to the hall there will be a free lunch, which is open to all. If you would like to join the litter pick and stay for the lunch, or if you are not able to litter pick but would like to attend the lunch from 12 noon until 3pm please call or message Diane on 07879 888336.

## Books at Hanley village hall

For several years there has been a regular trickle of a wide selection of books on the exchange trolley. Money donated for books is sent to West Midlands Air Ambulance. This is only a small amount but every penny helps this invaluable organisation to keep flying. If you have books to donate or if you would like to take some to read please deliver your donations to my letterbox at Tally Ho Cottage or give them to a committee member who will pass them on. Many thanks for the donations received so far this year.

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email: [reception@ajopticians.co.uk](mailto:reception@ajopticians.co.uk)  
[www.andrewjelleyopticians.co.uk](http://www.andrewjelleyopticians.co.uk)

## Free lunches at Hanley village hall

The inaugural free lunch was very successful and well attended. The soup, sandwiches and cake were much appreciated as was the opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours.

Our next free lunches will start on **Wednesday 4th March** with the litter pick followed by lunch available to everyone from 12 noon to 3pm. You don't have to attend the litter pick to get a free lunch!

At our free lunch on **Wednesday 18th March** we will be joined by a local police officer who will answer all your questions about the local area. Come along from 12 noon to 3pm and we will serve a free lunch while you grill the local bobby.

On **Wednesday 1st April** we will have a Gardeners' Question Time and plant swap from 12 noon to 3pm alongside the free lunch. Bring your excess seeds and plants and swap them for something you haven't got. If you haven't got anything to swap but would like to take advantage of the plants and seeds on offer, just make a small donation. Local horticulturist Sam Garness, who holds an RHS certificate in horticulture, HNC professional gardening and a BTEC in garden design, will also be on hand to answer your gardening questions.

To book any of these free lunches please call or message Diane on 07879 888336.

## Hanley Village Hall Table Tennis Club

Improve your reactions and keep fit in a very sociable environment. All ages, any gender, whether you have never held a bat or you're a seasoned player, all are welcome. Just come along to one of our sessions on Monday evenings from 7 to 9pm. No need to book, we'll be very happy to welcome you to our group. The first session is a free taster session. Then pay and play for just £3 per session.

## Thomas Curran

In October's TemeTalk we reported that Ed Yarnold was looking for information about Thomas Curran, late of Brickyard Cottages, Hanley Broadheath, who was a prisoner of war in the Far East during the Second World War.

Ed would like to thank everyone who responded to his request. He now has lots of information: apparently the poor chap had a very difficult life. Ed is planning to write about him for next month's TemeTalk.

*Carole Gardner*

# Stanford • Stanford • Stanford

## Services in Stanford

### Sunday 1st March

Holy Communion at 10am with hymns

### Thursday 2nd April

Maundy Thursday service at 6.30pm with choir

### Sunday 5th April

Dawn Service at 6am with Holy Communion

Refreshments will be served after the services on 1st March and 5th April.

## Church drive

The drive at St Mary's church is badly damaged from all the rain. We plan for the next churchyard working party to remedy some of the problem when the ground has dried out.

## Daffodil Day

Daffodil Day will be on Saturday 21st March from 2.30 to 5pm at Stanford village hall. This event was very popular last year and as we are always surrounded by daffodils in March we are holding it again.

Artist Mel Williams and lay minister and creative artist Jill Smith will lead an afternoon of arts activities including painting, making paper daffodils and glass painting. Adults and children are welcome. There will be tea, scones and cakes.

Please message or call Alexandra on 07891 346783 for more information.

## Stanford Fête

Stanford Fête in aid of the village hall and St Mary's church will be held on Saturday 6th June at The White Pheasant, Orleton Court by kind permission of Tom and Amber Spilbury.

If you can help at this event, would like to run an activity or have a stand, please contact Sue Softly on 07929 479865 or Alexandra Winnington on 07891 346783.

So far we have a tombola! There will be live musicians and something for all ages. Please support this event if you can. More details later.

## Teme Valley Tote

The tote year starts again on 1st April. If you want to be in with a chance of winning please contact Alexandra Winnington on 07891 346783 or email alexandra.winnington@gmail.com for details of how to buy tickets for the year.

The monthly prizes are £50, £30 and £20.

## News from Mill Farm



A new dog grooming business is opening at Mill Farm, run by Grace Sparey. Treatments include bathing, drying, brushing, detangling – clipping or scissor – plus finishing and nail trimming. For more information call Grace on 07817 473390 or look for Stanford\_Dog-Grooming on Facebook or Instagram.

## Stanford news on Facebook

If you would like to see what's happening in Stanford or connect with local businesses, do follow the Stanford with Orleton News page at facebook.com/stanfordwithorleton.

The weather has been atrocious this winter with endless rain and we think of the farmers having to move stock around and the effect on crop planting and growing. Many people have had mishaps with their cars due to water or ice and in a hilly area it is quite challenging. I drove along a lane near Crundle End and it was so fragile that I felt it might give way into a water trough on one side, or the hill on the other side. You cannot be too careful so please take care. Roll on spring.

*Alexandra Winnington*

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# The Filling Station

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 19th March at Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.15 for a 7.30pm start. We are delighted to welcome Tim Crow from Worcester as our speaker. Tim Crow is best known as the founder and first head teacher of The River School in Worcester, a successful Christian independent school. He has been a church leader and is a well respected Bible teacher. He has a passion for drama and has directed many productions, including the recent Passion plays near Worcester Cathedral. His broad experience and deep love for Jesus will ensure a rich and challenging talk.

We look forward to your joining us for these evenings of fellowship, worship, teaching and refreshments. If you are not on our mailing list and would like further information please contact me on kate.harley6@gmail.com.

# A sad story of tortoises

The classical tragedians would have struggled to write a play so dark.

On a lake amid the mountains of Macedonia there is an island. Here, where Greece meets Albania, there is food. There is safety. There are no predators. But the residents of this haven are doomed to extinction.

Why? Because there are too many males. And the females – battered, sexually harassed, exhausted – would as soon flee as reproduce and are slipping and falling off cliffs.

Scientists have calculated that the last female Hermann's tortoise of Golem Grad will starve, fatally fall or die of stress sometime in the 2080s. When she does, she will be a rare example of what biologists call a "sex-based extinction vortex".

*from The Times, 18th February*



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# Sabbatical wanderings in Assisi

As promised last month, I am delighted to share with you a few thoughts and impressions from my trip to Assisi last November.

Very early one Monday I left a rainy, dark Stanstead Airport with my two travelling companions, Sian and Lucy. We share a common interest in St Francis and St Clare of Assisi and although they had both visited Assisi before, there was a definite sense of excitement and adventure as we travelled across Europe. We gazed down on the snow sprinkled Alps below us and emerged from our plane onto the tarmac at Perugia. The sky was a deep blue and the air was warm, a weather pattern we enjoyed for all of our visit.

Assisi is a UNESCO world heritage site and, walking through its steep, narrow medieval streets and piazzas, time just seemed to melt away. It is the place where in the 1200s St Francis lived, set up his community of brothers and now rests, surrounded by four of them in the crypt of the Basilica. It is also the place where St Clare established her community at San Damiano. Clare took inspi-



ration from the life of Francis, as they both lived remarkable lives devoted to Christ. Francis and his brothers were known for preaching, living in extreme poverty, and serving those at the margins of society. They lived in the midst of God's creation and Francis particularly never ceased to marvel at its awe-inspiring wonder. Clare, being a medieval

woman, was obliged to live an enclosed life but drew to her a group of women as they followed her friend Francis in his example.

Whilst in Assisi we stayed at St Anthony's Guest House, enjoying the central location and the hospitality of modern day Franciscan sisters. We walked up to the place of mountain retreat used by Francis and his brothers (Eremo delle Carceri), visited the church where both Francis and Clare were baptised, saw their childhood homes, walked down the hill to San Damiano and spent a day exploring the Basilica and its wonderful art works. We also found the tiny church Francis rebuilt and close to it the place where Francis died – both now surrounded by a larger church sited on the plain beneath the old part of Assisi. The stories I had read about Francis and Clare came to life as we stood and worshipped where they had 800 years ago.

There is so much more I could say ... but will end with the reflection that the Umbrian suppers, wine, coffee and gelato also helped to make those days of pilgrimage ones which I shall treasure for a long time. If you are interested in knowing more about following St Francis today, do get in touch.

*Rev'd Julia*

**This month's cover photograph** by Rev'd Julia was taken in the courtyard at Eremo delle Carceri, a hermitage complex located 791 metres above sea level in a steep forest gorge on Monte Subasio above Assisi. The monastery is on the site where St Francis and his companions spent many hours walking, praying and living in isolated caves.



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**Saturday 2nd May, 11am to 4pm**

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**Sunday 20th June (time tba)**

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## More Eastham Jottings

### Pilates and Yoga at Eastham Memorial Hall

This month, Sue and Zoe are celebrating five years since the completion of the new Eastham Memorial Hall. The extremely hard work of the committee and volunteers has resulted in a cosy, warm and clean space in a picturesque setting that is appreciated by all who use it.

Pilates classes and Zed Yoga classes and workshops have been running here over that time and are well attended and growing in popularity. Highly qualified, experienced teachers teach the small and friendly classes.

If you are interested in any of our classes, please contact Zoe at [info@zedyoga.co.uk](mailto:info@zedyoga.co.uk) or Sue at [sue@pilatesforall.co.uk](mailto:sue@pilatesforall.co.uk). We look forward to welcoming you.

### New Fitball Class

Rejuven8 Fitness & Wellbeing is running a new fitball class at Eastham Memorial Hall every Thursday afternoon from 1.30 to 2.30pm. Fitball offers a variety of exercises using a yoga ball, which can help improve strength, balance, coordination and flexibility.

### TemeTalk deadline 18th March

Please note this is the *last* day for contributions – the sooner you send your items to the editor, the more chance there is that they will be included

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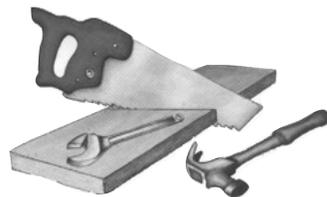
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Tile painting  
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3D art  
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#### Tuesday

##### Tai Chi for Exercise

Bromyard Public Hall, 10 to 11am

Fitball – Edwyn Ralph Village Hall

1 to 2pm and 5.45 to 6.45pm

#### Thursday

##### Fitball

Eastham Village Hall, 1.30 to 2.30pm

##### Tai Chi for Exercise

Stalmarshe Castle Park, 5.30 to 6.30pm

Contact Michelle on 07837 359403  
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## Afternoon Tea

Saturday 18th April  
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### What's Lent about?

Lent may originally have followed Epiphany, just as Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness followed immediately on from his baptism, but it soon became firmly attached to Easter. It became the principal occasion for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from the Church's fellowship for whatever reason. This history explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study and preparation for Easter.

### Muddy Boots Mission Area Lent Reflections

As usual there will be Lent reflections across the Muddy Boots Mission Area (Wyre Forest West, Four Rivers and Teme Valley). We'll be following part of the Pilgrim Course of the Church of England and we will be looking at the Lord's Prayer. The sessions are as follows:

- Week 1 – Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name
- Week 2 – Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven
- Week 3 – Give us today our daily bread
- Week 4 – Forgive us our sins as we forgive those

who sin against us

Week 5 – Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

### Locations and times

**Great Witley** – there will be face to face sessions for the Four Rivers Group at 2.30 to 4pm on Wednesdays at the Rectory (that's David's house), 1 Chiltern Close, Great Witley: 25th February, 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th March.

**Online** – via Zoom on the Wednesdays in Lent at 7 to 8.30pm. Contact Sallie for more details.

**Around the Teme Valley** – these will be held on Fridays in Lent from 10.30am to 12 noon in various people's homes, and on Tuesdays at 2pm at The Hatt, Lower Sapey. Contact Julia or Jen for details.

Feel free to mix and match to suit you.

Contact details:

Rev'd Sallie Butcher, 01299 896837

email [sallie@wyreforestwest.org.uk](mailto:sallie@wyreforestwest.org.uk)

Rev'd Julia Quinn

email [revjulia@wyreforestwest.org.uk](mailto:revjulia@wyreforestwest.org.uk)

Rev'd Julia Curtis, 01886 853286

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## REGAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR MARCH AT THE REGAL

\*programme as of 17/02/2025



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Tuesday 3 March, 7:15 pm

### LIVE MUSIC



**James Yorkston**  
Friday 6 March, 7:30 pm

### LIVE MUSIC



**Maddie Morris**  
Thursday 12 March, 8:00 pm



**George Boomsma**  
Friday 13 March, 7:30 pm



**Wuthering Heights (15)**  
Sat 14 Mar, 7:00 pm, Wed 18 Mar, 1:00 pm



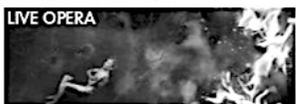
**Dairi Farrell**  
Thursday 19 March, 8:00 pm



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# Ludlow Rotary invites grant applications

The window is now open for local community groups to apply for a grant from Ludlow Rotary.

Ludlow Rotary Cares is the name the club has given to its annual scheme aimed at supporting community life in and around Ludlow by offering modest grants to local charities and organisations. The maximum grant available is £750.

Over the past 11 years the Ludlow Rotary Club has been able to distribute £60,000 to over 110 local community projects through this scheme. In 2025 alone, the club made 13 grants totalling £8,000.

As in previous years the club intends to be very open-minded about the types of activities it will support so long as the project or programme responds to a community need in or within 15 miles of Ludlow and meets its criteria on the giving of



grants. What the club will need to understand is exactly what the money will be used for, who will benefit from it and how much difference it will make.

Further information and a simple application form can be found on the website [www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk](http://www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk). Organisations need to get their applications in by 19th April.



*Leintwardine Social Group enjoying the protection of their new gazebo on a hot summer's day: one of the grants awarded in 2025*

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# Ancient stories for contemporary wisdom

Welcome to a series of short articles which look at ancient stories and how we can draw from them wisdom for living today. This first article looks at the Genesis story right at the very beginning of the Bible which tells of the start of everything. It's not a story of history or science but one told to bring hope and reassurance.

Like stories of King Arthur or Robin Hood, it's a story that uses an old tale to inspire later generations. The stories of Arthur inspire courage and chivalry. The stories of Robin Hood inspire standing up against oppressive power. The Genesis story inspires hope in a time of chaos. Contemporary scholarship suggests that the story as we have it now was told at a time when life for the people of God, the Israelites, had fallen apart. They had been ethnically cleansed to Babylon. The temple where they met with God had been razed to the

ground. The royal household descended from King David had been ended. The land God had promised them had been lost. The God they used to meet in Temple worship had seemingly deserted them. Instead, in Babylon, they were surrounded by people who worshipped the sun, moon and stars as gods. The God of the Israelites had apparently abandoned them and everything was chaos.

This story starts with chaos. It tells of the raw material that God uses for creation. It's chaos waters, dark, swirling, turbulent, unpredictable. God breaths across the chaos and starts to bring order. The story reminds the Israelites that the Babylonian "gods" – the sun, moon and stars – are only there because their God calls them into being.

The world today can feel dark, swirling, turbulent, unpredictable chaos. Our personal lives may sometimes feel the same. But God is big enough to deal with any amount of chaos. That brings hope and reassurance.

*Robert Barlow*

## Word of the month – lunation

A lunation is the time it takes for the moon to complete a full cycle of phases. From new moon to full moon and back again, a lunation is about 29.5 days. Whether you're tracking tides or traditions, a lunation helps you appreciate the moon's celestial rhythm.



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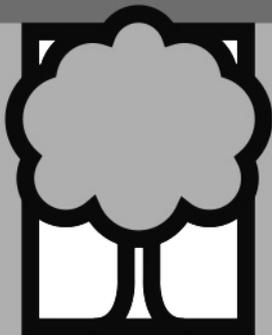
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# The great Moke restoration project



*Peter Lambert with his Mini Moke at Tenbury Show*

*Shelly Perkins' neighbour and good friend Peter Lambert has just finished the restoration of his lovely Mini Moke. He is much too modest to write about it himself so Shelly thought she would step up and shout about his single-handed restoration. This article first appeared in Moking Magazine last year ...*

Our neighbour Peter Lambert welcomed us to Hanley Broadheath nearly 15 years ago, offering a friendly and knowledgeable hand to two first-time home owners navigating the trials and tribulations of an old country cottage. We are often in Pete's, workshop, poking through trays of washers, nails and spanners in search of something to help re-hang a gate or to get our mower re-started. A plethora of tools is always neatly laid out amongst his phalanx of heavy duty engineering equipment, lathes and much more besides. It was early on, on one such foray, that I noticed the dominating shape in the centre of his garage hidden underneath a drooping tarpaulin. "What's under there, Pete?" I asked. "It's a Mini Moke!" he replied, delight lighting up his face. I looked blank, "What on earth?" I replied "is a Mini Moke?" He peeled back the tarpaulin reverently. Underneath squatted the rusted green chassis of a low slung vehicle, with no seats, no roof, no wheels. It was tricky to get a feeling for what the Moke actually was, but over the years I became much better acquainted with the delights of Moking through Pete's great Moke restoration project!

Pete's Moke was a relic from his rebellious youth! He bought it second hand in 1968 from Runner Moke in London. He drove it to work every day come hell or high water for nearly 20

years, braving sun, rain, snow and ice. The Moke regularly carried Pete, his three friends and their camping gear on trips to Scotland, leaving home at 10 o'clock at night and not stopping until they reached their destination up north, the Moke chugging bravely along!

By the 80s, wear and tear began to get the better of the Moke so it was put out to grass – prolonged stays in various garages and sheds and even a silage pit!

When Pete retired the great Moke restoration project began. Requests for items online started to come in – Pete doesn't do the internet. Help also came from other mechanically minded neighbours who dusted down various bits of kit from their own classic vehicle supplies and agonised over ignition issues and cups of tea. Progress was steady at first but the restoration set a more earnest pace last spring when Pete decided that the Moke's inaugural outing would be to Tenbury Show.

The Moke was shining and resplendent by late July and had successfully navigated some short test drives around the local lanes in readiness for her official launch! Pete arranged to join a procession of vintage vehicles, including several tractors, saying that he could always be towed home if all else failed. We all crossed our fingers.

I am happy to say that the Moke breezed down to the Show where she was much admired by many people, especially those who, like me, had never heard of a Mini Moke. She has been merrily zipping about the lanes ever since!

The final steps for her restoration will include a new hood and some work on her interior upholstery to return her to her former glory.

When I asked Pete if he was pleased to have her back on the road he smiled coyly and said "It's stiff into third but it's going again!" – which I think means 'Yes!'"

*Shelly Perkins*



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# Teme Valley Wildlife

The Teme Valley Wildlife Group's first talk in 2026 was on the subject of owls and, as luck would have it, one made a rare appearance in our garden around the same time. During 30 years living in the Teme valley, I have only ever seen four types of owl around here. The most common, which I'm hearing at dusk nearly every day at the moment, is the tawny owl. Tawnies are the large chestnut brown owls who sound the well-known tu-whit, tu-woo noise, which is answered kee-wick by the females. They are the commonest British owl, live in parks and woods, hunt by night and roost by day.

I have had two lovely encounters with tawnies in my garden. Years ago, my husband and I were watching one hooting loudly from our neighbour's large weeping willow tree. Our cat joined us, all looking up into the branches. Suddenly the owl took off and flew directly over us as if to give us a better view – even to the cat. The second occasion was when I went up into our or-



*A mistle thrush*

chard in the middle of the night to check my sheep during lambing. As I tended to them, I saw a silent owl sitting in the tree next to their sheep shelter. He was watching me and looked very wise, as if to say that he'd seen more lambing than I had!

Beautiful white-fronted barn owls I've only seen occasionally and never in my garden. These birds have a reputation for being able to fly utterly silently which, combined with their white colouration, gives them a ghostly aspect. Driving along quiet country lanes at dawn and dusk may reveal their graceful hunting habits. Quite a few times, I've stopped my car to watch one quartering a field or dipping low either side of a lane hedge looking for small furry animals. Also beside a lane, sitting in the shadow of an enormous oak tree, I once saw a long-eared owl. This had beautiful amber eyes and was keeping dry atop a fence post during a night of torrential rain.

*Continued on page 24*

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Continued from page 23

But the bird encountered in January was a little owl. And, surprisingly, it was being chased by two chattering mistle thrushes in broad daylight. Little owls are not native birds, but they are little, just eight and a half inches tall. They were introduced from the Continent at the end of the last century and are birds of the open countryside. They frequently fly by day as well as by night and feed on small birds and a large variety of insects. Mistle thrushes are bigger, at ten and a half inches tall, and highly territorial. They breed early in the season and are at their most aggressive in February when they have eggs in the nest. My pair was clearly having no truck with a passing little owl. They made a fearful racket seeing it off, but the little character didn't have time to make the call that gives it its common name of screech owl.

The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group will be at 7.30pm on Thursday 12th March

at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall. We welcome Alicia Leow-Dyke whose talk will be an update on the Welsh beaver project and concerns the re-introduction of this once-native mammal. Members and friends are welcome. It is just £3 on the door.

*Stephanie Mcroft*

*For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, please visit our Facebook page. A programme of events, newsletter and bird survey are available on our website. We hold meetings on the second Thursday of the month to which all are welcome. Please contact us via our website. Please note that it is a new one and the up-to-date web address is [www.teme-valley-wildlife.org](http://www.teme-valley-wildlife.org).*



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# Teme Valley Tote

A new series of the Teme Valley Tote starts in April. The last series paid out £1,200 to lucky winners and £3,460 was given to the parishes of Teme Valley North and Teme Valley South.

Again this year the price of each subscription is £10 – for this you will be entered in each of 12 monthly draws with the possibility of winning £50, £30 or £20 each month

Your local Teme Valley South co-ordinators are:

- Eastham – Celia Adams
- Stanford – Alexandra Winnington
- Stoke Bliss and Kyre – Margaret Yarnold

They will try to contact you during March. If you have internet banking you can subscribe by Bank Giro Credit. The account name is North Teme Group of Churches Tote Account, sort code

20-39-64, account number 30947539. Please put your name and district as a reference and email me on [robin.c.dean@gmail.com](mailto:robin.c.dean@gmail.com).

If you currently pay by standing order you will be entered automatically. If there is any problem I will contact you when these come in on 1st April. If you wish to pay by standing order I can send you the form.

Or you can send a cheque made payable to North Teme Group of Churches Tote Account to me at Rectory Cottage, Stanford Bridge, Worcester WR6 6ST

If you have any queries about the Tote, please contact me on 01886 853295 or email [robin.c.dean@gmail.com](mailto:robin.c.dean@gmail.com)

*Robin Dean*  
*Teme Valley Tote Organiser*



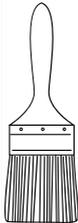
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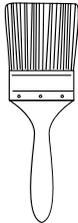


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# What's on in Teme Valley South

## March

- 4th Wednesday Litter pick (11am) and free lunch, Hanley Village Hall, 12 noon  
5th Thursday Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am  
7th Saturday Willow Obelisk Class, Hanley Village Hall, 2.00pm  
8th Sunday Lambing Café Church, Parsonage Farm, Rochford, 3.00pm  
12th Thursday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm  
14th Saturday Willow Obelisk Class, Hanley Village Hall, 2.00pm  
Eastham freestyle litter pick, Eastham Memorial Hall, 9.30am  
18th Wednesday Free lunch and visit from local police, Hanley Village Hall, 12 noon  
19th Thursday The Filling Station, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7.15pm  
20th Friday Pub and Quiz Night, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7.30pm  
Daffodil Day, Stanford Village Hall, 2.30pm  
27th Friday Social and Quiz Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7pm  
28th Saturday Churchyard tidy session, St Peter's Church, Stoke Bliss, 10am

## April

- 1st Wednesday Free lunch, Gardeners' Question Time and plant swap, Hanley VH, 12 noon  
2nd Thursday Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am  
9th Thursday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm  
10th Friday Pancake Evening, Rochford Village Hall  
11th Saturday Weaving course, Hollow Meadow, Stoke Bliss, 10am  
18th Saturday Church and churchyard tidy, Eastham church, 10.30am  
Afternoon tea, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 3.30pm  
24th Friday Social Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.00 for 8.00pm  
25th Saturday Plant and Produce Sale, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 2.30pm  
28th Tuesday Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm

## May

- 2nd Saturday Beltane Spring Celebration, Hollow Meadow, Stoke Bliss, 11am  
7th Thursday Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am  
14th Thursday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm  
18th Monday Eastham Memorial Hall AGM, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7pm  
26th Tuesday Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm  
30th Saturday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Spring Barbecue

**Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the previous month  
telephone 07482 482629 or email [ronsmum@icloud.com](mailto:ronsmum@icloud.com)**

# Services

## March/April 2026

Daily prayer continues at 9am and 7pm on Zoom, contact Rev'd Julia if you would like to join us. The blessings group meets regularly and is co-ordinated by Richard Skerrett, who can be contacted on 01886 853099 for more details.

The Church of England has a pre-recorded weekly on-line service which can be found by searching 'Church of England Weekly Services' or accessed on their website [www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online/weekly-online-services](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online/weekly-online-services)

### Services Schedule

#### Sunday 1st March

10.00am Stanford Church Holy Communion and Hymns

#### Sunday 8th March

9.30am Stoke Bliss Church Holy Communion  
 3.00pm Parsonage Farm, Rochford Lambing Café Church with the Relishing Rural Choir

#### Sunday 15th March

10.00am Eastham Church **Mothering Sunday**  
 2.00pm All Age Worship and Holy Communion  
 Walking Church

#### Sunday 22nd March

10.00am Rochford Church All Age Worship and Holy Communion  
 4.00pm Kyre Church Celtic Holy Communion

#### Sunday 29th March

10.00am Hanley Rectory to Village Hall Joint Palm Sunday Celebration  
 4.00pm Hanley Village Hall Iona Eucharist for Palm Sunday

#### Monday 30th March

Worcester Cathedral Chrism Service

#### Thursday 2nd April

6.30pm Stanford Church **Maundy Thursday**  
 Maundy Thursday Service with the Relishing Rural Choir  
*(includes stripping the altars and foot washing)*

#### Friday 3rd April

10am to 2pm Kyre Church **Good Friday**  
 2 to 3pm Kyre Church "Stations of the Cross"  
 Holy Communion (with reserved sacrament)

#### Sunday 5th April

6.00am Stanford Church **Easter Day**  
 9.30am Hanley Childe Church Dawn Service with Holy Communion  
 10.00am Stoke Bliss Church Easter Fun for All  
 10.00am Rochford Church Holy Communion  
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