



December Newsletter

ST MARY'S
CHURCH
BEVERLEY

Christmas Gift

Each year, the John Lewis Christmas advert has become something of a cultural moment. This year's offering, *Where Love Lives*, tells the story of a father and son who struggle to find the right words for their relationship. On Christmas morning, the father discovers a gift: a vinyl record of Alison Limerick's 1990s classic, *Where Love Lives*. As the music plays, he is transported back to his youth, but also to tender memories of his son as a baby and toddler. Finally, father and son embrace, wordlessly expressing what they could not say aloud. The advert closes with the tagline: "If you can't find the words, find the gift."

It's a moving reminder that gifts can speak when words fail. Yet as Christians, we know that at Christmas God did something even more profound: He gave us the Word itself, made flesh. St John's Gospel begins with those majestic lines: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:1,14).

Where human language falters, God's gift of Jesus speaks volumes.

In Christ, God communicates His love not through symbols or gestures alone, but through a living presence among us.

The John Lewis advert shows a son reaching out to his father with music, bridging a gap of silence. At Christmas, God bridges the infinite gap between heaven and earth. The gift of Jesus is not simply a token of affection, but the very presence of God in our midst. Jesus is both the Word and the Gift—the message and the medium. He is the one who makes the Father known, who embodies love in action, who reconciles us when words are not enough.

As we move through December into January, we are invited to ponder what it means to receive this gift. The advert's father is overwhelmed by memories and emotions as the music plays. In a similar way, the season of Christmas invites us to be overwhelmed by grace: to remember God's faithfulness, to recall moments of His presence in our lives, and to embrace anew the gift of Christ.

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Gift...

The hug between father and son is a picture of reconciliation. In Jesus, God embraces humanity, drawing us close despite our failings.

January often feels like a quieter, more subdued month after the festivities. Yet the gift of Christ is not seasonal. The Word made flesh continues to dwell among us, offering light in our darkness and hope in our weariness. As we step into a new year, we are called to carry that gift forward—to embody love in our own relationships, to speak words of kindness, and when words fail, to let our actions communicate God's grace.

And as Epiphany reminds us, the Magi brought gifts to the Christ child, recognising Him as King. Their journey shows us that the right response to God's gift is to offer ourselves in return. So as 2026 begins, may we bring our lives as gifts to Christ—lives of worship, service, and love—trusting that He remains the Word who speaks, and the Gift who saves.

May Christ, the Word and the Gift, dwell richly in you this season and throughout the year.

Perfectly Imperfect

A big thank you goes out to Andrew, Ellis, Steve, Claire-Louise, Keith, Bridget, James, Sue, Helena, Rachel, Iris, Nick, Paul, Lee and Ian who spent most of Friday decorating church for Christmas. The church looks stunning and it was great fun.

There was great hilarity, as after finally getting the enormous tree covered in lights and lifted into position, the star dropped so far over, it literally looked as if it was heaven touching earth.

Ellis saved the day with incredible daring and a long stick with a spoon attached.

The crypt looks beautiful, the animals have arrived and no doubt the angels will appear soon. We are especially grateful to Iris who wasn't able to go to nursery and instead helped make sure that everything was as it should be.

Why not enter our caption competition. Send your suggestions through for the photos and the best suggestions will make it into the January newsletter



Small Groups

I have been a member of various small groups for over 30 years, in each of the churches where Ian, my husband, and I have worshipped. When we came to St Mary's 3 years ago we asked if there was a home group we could join and were invited to a new group that was just being established.

If you have never been a member of a small group you are probably wondering why it's a good idea to join one and what you might gain from membership. For me, primarily, it's a way of getting to know people who worship at the same church at a deeper level and of learning about our faith together. Time to speak to people on Sunday is often limited and in St Mary's there are several congregations meeting at different times.

Our small group consists of some people who attend different services to me, so it's unlikely that I'd get to know them if we didn't belong to the same group. We study different books of the Bible, discuss current affairs

from a Christian perspective, follow Advent and Lent courses and also meet together for social events such as walks, meals and cinema trips. Those who feel able to are encouraged to take turns at leading sessions but there is no pressure on people who would rather contribute in other ways. Small groups also offers the chance to pray for each other, form friendships and help each other in practical ways when needed.

Belonging to the church family also teaches us to be patient, more generous and understanding but this can be challenging as in any family. Not everyone in a small group would naturally be friends but that's good because we aren't a clique and we must learn to get along and welcome people, so this is the challenge sometimes.

Give it a try if you've never been to one, I'm sure you'll find it beneficial.

Jane Jackson

From our children and young people



Y team had a brilliant time at the fire station, seniors had great fun baking and powersurge learned what it means to be part of the church family

Rosalind's Eyegaze

This week Rosalind used her eyegaze to request reading a story about Puffins she chose 'I like' and then looked at a photo of one of her favourite stories that is displayed as an icon on her eyegaze. She went back and forth several times until we found the magazine! She then enjoyed reading the story with me. It was wonderful for Rosalind to have some agency in her life and at 12 years old finally be able to chose and communicate what activity she would like to do.

We are still in the process of purchasing all the equipment and getting the eyegaze fully set up but already Rosalind is reaping the benefit. It will take hard work as Rosalind slowly begins to learn language from scratch whilst dealing with RETT syndrome but the eyegaze will finally allow her a voice.

I'd just like to express my thanks again to everyone within the St Mary's community who have been inspired by Rosalind's daily positivity and determination into contributing to the eyegaze.

The generosity was amazing and the list of activity humbling:

- walking the Cleveland Way
- 3 Peaks Challenge,
- 15 Laps of the Humber Bridge
- Quiz night
- making and selling art and crafts
- contributing raffle prizes
- bake sales
- a coffee morning
- silent walk
- sponsored runs
- sorting out gift aid
- acting in a Murder Mystery
- generous donations from individuals
- Anne Crossley's amazing commitment, positivity and organisational skills



The eyegaze has seen everyone come together to support a member of their Church.

God Bless you,
Kathryn (her mum)

Eyegaze devices are specialized communication tools that track eye movements to give people with severe physical disabilities a way to speak, learn, and interact with technology. They are important because they restore independence, enable communication, and open access to education, work, and social life.

Anna Chaplain

by John Edmond

On Sunday 23rd November, Carolyn Kirk was welcomed and licensed as our 'Anna Chaplain'.

Carolyn brings to us a rich and extraordinary journey of Christian witness. Together with her husband, she has served for many years as a missionary—walking alongside communities facing hardship, offering practical help, comfort, and the hope of the gospel. Those years of missionary service have formed in her a heart attentive to human need, a courage that persists through challenge, and a profound trust in God's sustaining grace. These gifts now come to fruition again as she steps into her calling today.

The ministry of an Anna Chaplain takes its inspiration from Anna, who appears in Luke's Gospel (2: 37- 40). Anna is the faithful widow who waited patiently in the Temple, steadfast in prayer, watching for the consolation of Israel. When the Christ-child was brought before her, by Mary and Joseph, she recognised the presence of God and gave thanks. In the same spirit, an Anna Chaplain seeks to recognise and reveal the presence of Christ in the lives of older people—many of whom carry long stories of faith, resilience, and quiet endurance.



This ministry asks not for hurried words, but for the grace of listening. It calls for gentleness, for patience, and for the ability to sit with another person's joys and sorrows alike. Older people can face uncertainty, diminishing health, or loneliness; yet they also hold wisdom, humour, and memories that deserve honour. The Anna Chaplain stands alongside them, reminding each one that they remain beloved children of God, treasured and never forgotten. We witness this through the many visits to Care Homes and personal visits to homes, by organising lifts to go here and there, through our now bustling Vintage Years events and monthly lunch, through our Prayer Circle and Home Communion...and so much more.

We acknowledge that this role is borne out of the prompting of the Holy Spirit. We commission her to continue her life and ministry as a bearer of peace—to bring comfort to the anxious, encouragement to the weary, and a steady witness to God's faithfulness in every season of life. Her vast missionary experience alongside her husband Tom, has taught her the language of compassion; her life of prayer equips her to minister with humility and strength; and her love for Christ is the foundation of all she offers.

Let us therefore surround Carolyn and her Anna Friends – June Yates, Gill Hulme, Michelle Glover, Angela Faulkner, John Faulkner, Cassie Newbold, Carol Crossland and Lesley Wood - with our prayers, our support and our love. May we all honour this ministry by valuing the older members of our community, by listening well, and by continuing to cultivate here at St Mary's a culture where all generations are embraced – the older members have so much to learn from the young and equally vice versa.

Christmas at St Mary's

Festival of Christmas Carol Services on Sunday 14th December (between 9.30-4pm) Carol Services at the following times: 10am, 11am, 12.30pm 2pm, 3pm Mulled wine, Hot Chocolate and Mince Pies, and Children's Activities.



Carols by Candlelight (Nine Lessons and Carols Service): Thursday 18th December 7.30pm Our traditional Nine Lessons and Carols Service lit in beautiful candlelight.

Drop in for Mince pies and Carols: Saturday 20th December (between 10am-1pm) Festive Carols and a warm welcome (Choir begins at 11am). There is a small charge of £3.50 for refreshments; hot chocolate, tea and coffee and mince pies.



A Victorian Christmas with Scrooge on Friday 19th and Saturday 20th December: Doors open at 5.30pm for refreshments, parlour games, music and crafts. The show starts at 7pm

A festive event with offering a celebration of Christmas for all the community by welcoming people to experience Charles Dicken's 'A Christmas Carol' in a new way with mulled wine, hot chocolate tea, and coffee. There will be games, crafts and a wonderful show. With the help of professional actors this will be a thoughtful, riotous, joyful and affecting presentation of this story of redemption.



Family Nativity Service: Sunday 21st December at 11.15am Children can dress up and we celebrate the birth of Jesus.



Christingle Services on Christmas Eve: 11.15am, 1pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm Wonder filled services for families, with oranges, sweets and candles.

Christmas Day 8am Christmas Holy Communion: a quiet celebration of Jesus's birth

Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Celebration Communion Joyful celebration of this most special day for families

Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day: A chance to share Christmas together. Let us know if you are coming



New Year's Eve Service (between 5.30pm-7.30pm) followed by nibbles and a glass of wine

We are exploring ideas and would like your views

We are at the very early stages of exploring how we might make best use of the North Transept as it needs restoration and it is no longer needed to house the old organ pipes.

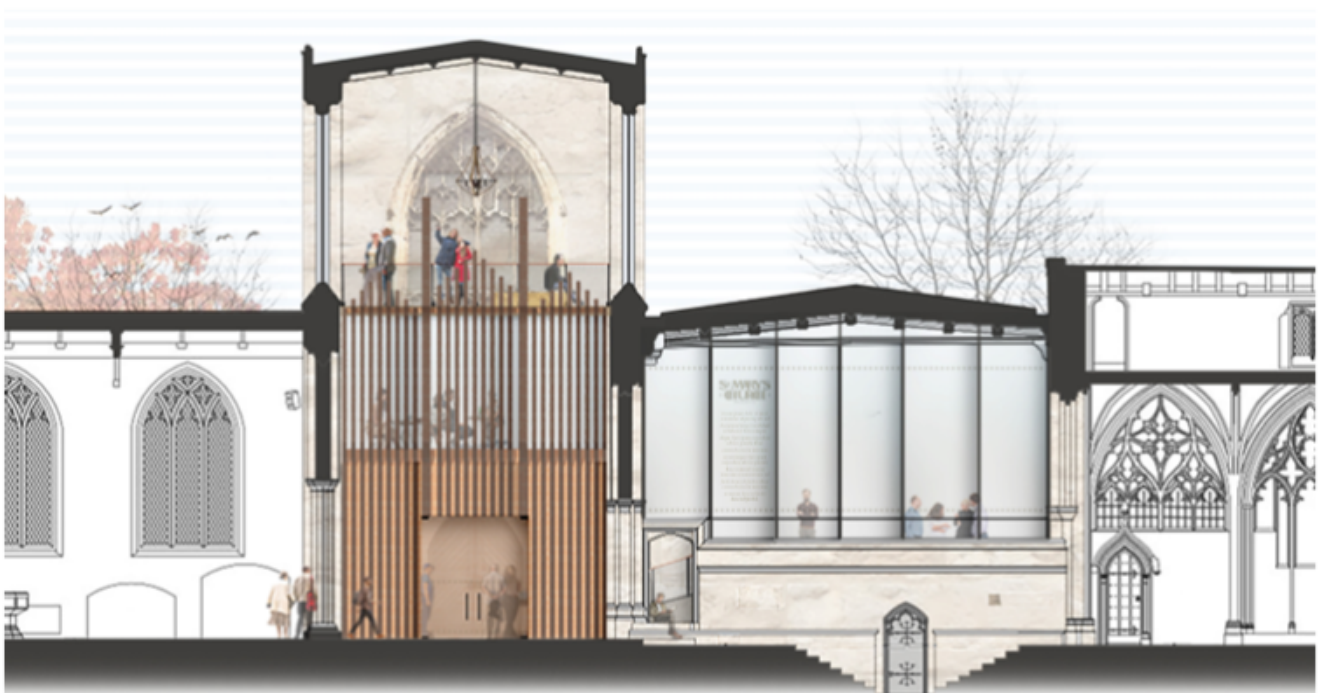
We have developed some ideas over the last two years and we would like to share them with you. We would love to hear your thoughts and Fiona Jenkinson will be engaging in conversations with you over the next few weeks.

Vision: The proposed internal works at St Mary's Church will transform the former organ space into a vibrant, multi-level community hub. This will become a place for learning, creativity and inspiration. The intervention celebrates the church's heritage while reimagining it for modern day needs.

Impact: At ground level, a new welcoming entrance will open the church to those who are presently unable to access the building.

This space will also serve as an exhibition and workshop area, reflecting the church's commitment to nurturing young people. Here, young people will explore heritage skills and contribute to the restoration of St Mary's through our innovative Traditional Occupations Module. This will foster pride in heritage and craftsmanship, while creating a sense of connection to the history of St Mary's Church and its present-day community outreach.

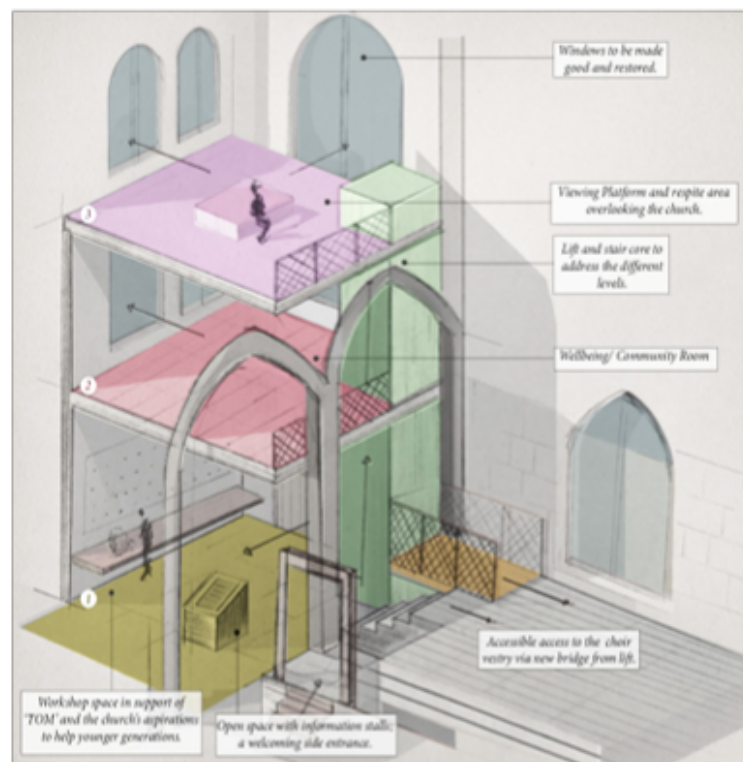
Above this space there will be versatile wellbeing and community rooms which will offer space for small gatherings and creative workshops, in a calm, natural light filled environment designed to be supportive of those with sensory needs.



Those using these spaces will be inspired as they are immersed in the beauty of the building that they will be helping to sustain. In doing so, they will continue an authentic tradition of learning and skill development rooted in the heritage itself, skills that can also be applied to the care of other outstanding historic buildings.

At the top level, a viewing platform and rest area will provide a quiet spot to pause and enjoy views across the church including the extraordinary carvings and the underappreciated and unseen North Window. The design echoes the facade of the former organ, reimagined in a contemporary way.

Approach: Carefully chosen materials will preserve the historic fabric, while restored windows and a new lift and stair core ensure full accessibility. A guiding concept is the transition from solidity to transparency, allowing visitors to see more as they ascend. This thoughtful reimagining weaves together history and possibility, transforming a static structure into a place that will become a centre for enhancing people's lives through heritage.



Get involved
Fill in a short survey .
Use the QR code or pick
up a paper copy from
church



News from the PCC (Church Council)

St Mary's Church Parochial Church Council is the executive body responsible for managing the Church's finances, property, and mission, alongside the vicar and elected members of the congregation.

Here is a little summary of what took place at our last meeting.

Mission: Christmas is an important time for mission and outreach and so the PCC discussed how we might create opportunities to make meaningful connection with people who visit our church over the Christmas Season. The PCC suggested that we should have nominated individuals whose only responsibility is to welcome people and invite them to find out more about church and faith. The idea of a welcome desk at the back of church was well received. We are aware that we need lots of volunteers to make this happen.

The PCC felt that it is important to get publicity out into the community and Becky has arranged invitations and a leaflet drop to 16,000 homes in Beverley. She has also arranged for every child at our school to receive an invitation, and a large poster is on the church gates. We are encouraging people to take the invitations and invite others.

Buildings: We have made a lot of progress in the church building.

- The new staging has fitted in well.
- The West Door brush seals have been added to combat drafts in church
- The heating of the hall is being assessed by external consultants to consider the efficacy of air source heating.
- The WiFi and sound technical work is continuing and further training is on offer for those interested in using the sound desk.
- The PCC were informed of the plans to develop the North Transept (please see page 9 for outline plans which will form the basis of our consultations)

Communication

The PCC discussed options for improving how we communicate with the congregation and community. Social media has been explored with the young people of the church, and we have appointed a young person to assist with this as social media creator for platforms that we don't currently use. We can all help through talking about events and inviting people along.

Christmas

- More volunteers are required in all Christmas activities. A thankyou was said to those who have volunteered so far.
- Church Christmas dinner. The sign up for the dinner will be available via the office. A donation of £15 will be requested, to ensure quality and commitment. Should people find that payment difficult, they do not have to pay.

Next meeting: 20.1.2025

December Worship

*Join us for morning prayer Mon - Wed 8.30am
(not between Christmas and New Year)*

Thursday 4th December

10:00 – 11:00

Holy Communion Service

Sunday 7th December 2025

Advent 2:

Isaiah 40:1-5, Luke 1: 5-25

08:00 – 09:00

Holy Communion Service

09:30 – 10:45

Holy Communion with Choir

11:15 – 12:45

The 11.15 Service

18:30 – 20:00

BCP Communion Service

Thursday, 11 December

10:00 – 11:00

Holy Communion Service

Saturday 13th December

19.00 Celtic Evening Prayer

Sunday 14th December

Advent 3: *Isaiah 35: 1-10, Luke 1: 26-38*

8.00 -9.00

Holy Communion

9.30am

Bubble Church in the Church hall

10.00am Mini Carol Service

11.00am Mini Carol Service

12.30pm Mini Carol Service

14.00pm Mini Carol Service

15.00pm Mini Carol Service

18.30 – 19.30

Evensong

19.00 – 20.30

The Praise Service in the Church Hall

Thursday 18th December

10.00 – 11:00

Holy Communion Service

19.00 – 21.00

Nine Lessons and Carols Service

Sunday 21st December

Advent 4:

Galatians 4:4-7, Matthew 1: 18- 25

08:00 – 09:00

Holy Communion Service

Holy Communion with Choir

11:15 – 12:45

The 11.15 Nativity Service

16.00pm

A Quiet Christmas Service

18:30 – 20:00

Evensong

Wednesday 24th December

Christmas Eve

11.00am Christingle Service

13.00pm Christingle Service

14.30pm Christingle Service

16.30pm Christingle Service

23.30pm

Midnight Communion

Thursday 25th December

Christmas Day

8.00 -9.00

Holy Communion Service

10.30 – 11.30

Christmas Celebration Communion Service

Saturday 27th December

19.00pm Celtic Communion Service

Sunday 28th December

08:00 – 09:00

Holy Communion Service

09:30 – 10:45

Holy Communion with Choir

11:15 – 12:45

The 11.15 Service

18:30 – 20:00

Evensong (no choir)

Wednesday 31st December

18.00 – 19.00

New Years Eve Service

Thursday 1st January 2026

10.00 – 11.00

Holy Communion Service

Scrooge

At St Mary's we have a tradition of doing something creative, new and bold each year at Christmas. Three years ago, we were blessed by the Angels. Two years ago we went Through the Wardrobe, a play based on The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. And last year we discovered the story of The Lion, The Unicorn and Me.

These events are intended to entertain our church family but also to reach out to the local community, presenting them with aspects of the Gospel and encouraging reflection on our ever new, ever challenging Christmas story.

This year we are using aspects of the story of **A Christmas Carol** by Charles Dickens as the vehicle for our Christmas mission. The show will be on the evenings of **Friday 19th December** and **Saturday 20th**; we want to create a thoughtful, riotous, joyful and affecting presentation of this story of redemption. There will be acting, music, entertainment and food. And we need your help to accomplish it.

We need people to make costumes, to serve food, to work front of house, to sell tickets, to help organise activities such as games and crafts on the evenings, and of course to come along and watch the show.



We could do with everybody at St Mary's playing some part, so that once more we use the opportunity we have to make public witness this Christmas.

Please volunteer... before we come looking for you.

This year there are only two evenings set aside for the show, Friday 19th and Saturday 20th December.

Jill Edmond or Ian Jackson can tell you more. You can contact them by email:

barchesterian@yahoo.co.uk

Contact the office to volunteer Christmas Events

Festival of Christmas

Sunday 14th Dec (between 9.30-4pm)

Can you volunteer for a couple of hours to help serve refreshments, welcome people or lead activities for children?

Carols by Candlelight (9 lessons and carols)

Thursday 18th Dec (between 5.30-7.30pm)

Can you volunteer to make and serve mulled wine, light candles and or prepare church for the service?

Drop in for mince pies and carols

Saturday 20th Dec (between 10am-1pm)

Can you volunteer for a couple of hours to help serve refreshments and welcome people?

Christingle Making

Tuesday 23rd Dec (between 4pm-5.30pm)

Surrounded by oranges, sweets, Christmas music and hot chocolate - what could be better? Come and help us make our special Christingle packs.

Christmas Day Dinner

Can you join the team preparing for and making Christmas dinner on Christmas Day? If so please sign up.

New Year's Eve (between 5.30pm-7.30pm)

Welcome people and help serve New Year's Eve refreshments.



"Gratitude" Luncheon. What a great turnout and wonderful food.

Thank you to our genius chef Casandra and all the helpers. The phrase "Interrupt Anxiety with Gratitude" from Bishop Guli Francis Dehqani's book "Listening to the music of the soul" was, extraordinarily, placed on the heart of both Paul Machon and Carolyn the same day, and shared with people at the lunch, so we hope the idea blesses anyone reading this. (Her whole book is great and there's a chapter on, guess what? Angels!)

Christmas Tea. Harvest Court. Friday 12 December with music, carols and a Christmas quiz. 2pm. More details next week. Please tell Carolyn if you would like to join us for this Christmas fellowship/natter.

Hull in the Wartime ("Unfolding handkerchiefs" talk with Lee Stow) has been postponed till the new year when evenings are a little lighter for getting home.

Retiring Well Course is starting in January. Last call for interested people! We'd love your company. Please text Carolyn if you would like to join us.

**Our flowers over the Christmas period are gifted to us
in memory of the Wray Family**

Church Office	01482 869137 stmarys.beverley@gmail.com
Vicar Becky Lumley	07584 906812 vicar.stmarys.beverley@gmail.com
Wardens	Jill Edmond Nigel Whiting Ian Jackson Ruth Stebbens

All safeguarding concerns are taken extremely seriously.
Please contact Gill Gregory at the church office if you have a concern.
