

Old Malden News



**The Parish Magazine of
St John the Baptist, Malden**

January 2026

50p

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Old Malden News

**The Parish Magazine of
St John the Baptist Parish Church Malden
Church Road, Worcester Park KT4 7RY**

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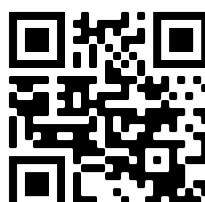
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To receive the Parish Mailing please scan the
QR code with your smart phone camera



Services for January



St John's is OPEN

St John's is open for worship so please see the Parish Mailing for details. Live Streaming of services will continue so you will be able to see services live via our YouTube Channel.

Sunday 8am - Said Eucharist

Sunday 9.45am - Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 11am — Said Eucharist

Coffee hosted by Mothers' Union after the first Wednesday service of the month (except August).

Please make sure you are signed up to our mailing list to get up to date information regarding the services.

<http://eepurl.com/gNz4Tf> or scan the QR Code

Vicar's Letter

Summer is a distant memory as we slog our way through the wet and grey winter towards spring again. One of the highlights of summer is of course the garden, lots of work but also great the reward. For my part there are certain fixtures. There are always petunias galore, just as my grandmother used to have, spilling out of terracotta planters and pots, and hanging baskets, making the patio THE place to relax with a glass of wine or food on a summer's evening. Petunias and geraniums provide that splash of colour that makes the season, but neither would be so effective without their best supporting actress, Lobelia. I fell for this little blue flower the first time I saw it, trailing from a hanging basket outside the pub William IV at Hampstead. Ever since I've had my own outdoor space, Lobelias have been centre stage.

One of the sadder things at the end of summer, is clearing away the old and putting the garden to bed for the winter. Ripping out dead petunias and cutting back the geraniums for a winter indoors just underlines the end of sunny days and summer warmth. This year I was pleasantly surprised to find one little pot still alive in the middle of October. The smallest pot had accommodated the last little petunia and a couple of bits of Lobelia surplus to requirements. I usually buy too much in the garden centre, but nothing goes to waste. The petunia was long gone, but there among the tufts of Lobelia was one little blue bloom, its white eye shouting out that even now a hint of summer lived on. There is no blue quite like it and I was determined to make the most of it.

I duly brought it in and put it on the window sill to brighten the autumn days. The foliage was green, the bloom long-lasting, making me smile at the delightful sight. Yet in a couple of weeks it looked sad and forlorn, but with a good watering and a bit of attention it bounced back again and again every few days until suddenly it just collapsed, the leaves brown and crumbling. It wasn't enough to water and turn to the sunshine, it had done its best for as long as it could, for as long as it was supposed to do. In my selfishness I had held onto it for too long, reluctant to let it go the way all things must. A loud penny dropped in that moment.

I realised that there are many things and many times in life when we need to let go of something or someone. When holding on is the wrong thing to do, and that letting go is not defeat or loss. Summer is well and truly gone, nothing but special memories, but those memories inspire a longing for what is to come, for the summer to be. How many time have we held onto something that isn't actually good for us? To someone or some situation that stunts or mars our living? Is it because we are afraid of what the future holds? Is it "easier" to put up with what we know rather than step out into the unknown? I do find it easier and comforting to look back at the past, I've reached the age where there is more past than future; but we shouldn't be afraid of the future and the things it will bring. There will be change, that's a fact of life, but at the same time we can cherish the riches of the past and let them bear fruit in the here and now.

As we begin the New Year, look forward in confidence. Let go of what hinders and make the most of the opportunities it will bring. We will travel together and God will lead us.

With Every Good Wish for the New Year!.

Michael

Sharing a prayer – God with us

Chris Benson

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the incarnation of thy son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.



Jean-François Millet's painting *The Angelus* depicts a scene in rural France in the 1850s. A bell in the village church has rung, and so this couple have paused from their labours in the fields for a few brief moments to say the Angelus, a brief devotion built on the threefold recitation of the *Ave Maria* ('Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus'). It ends with the prayer above.

In January, we are in that rather strange period between Christmas and Easter, in which the first thirty years of Our Lord's earthly life are telescoped into just three months or so. The angels have 'left [us] and gone into heaven' [Luke 2:15], and we are reminded, perhaps uncomfortably, that after the joy, wonder and glory of Christmas come the grim events of Holy Week, but which culminate so gloriously in the resurrection.

The prayer that ends the Angelus reminds us that it is in those events, rather than in the stable at Bethlehem, that our salvation – the restoration of our relationship with God – truly lies. The message of the Angel Gabriel is that Jesus will be ‘God with us’ [Matthew 1:23]. He will ‘save his people from their sins’ [Matthew 1:21] – but not until Calvary.

Meanwhile, we stand in urgent need of *grace*, the undeserved favour of God’s redemptive love, freely available to all who accept it. Through that grace we have access to God working in us and for us, enabling us to live lives that reflect the values and manners of his kingdom, and, one hopes, attract them to those we encounter day by day.

My last ‘sharing a prayer’ article was about the prayer in *O little town of Bethlehem*, that Jesus might be ‘born in us today’; the prayer that ends the Angelus takes that a stage further, asking that as we share in the incarnation, so we may also share in the salvation achieved through the cross and Easter triumph. The reply of Mary to Gabriel should be ours also: ‘Be it unto me according to thy word.’ Amen to that.

How well do you know characters in the Bible?

D

This month, we reach the letter D and here are a few names which you may recognise...

You may think of others.....

Daniel	a noble Jewish youth captured by Nebuchadnezzar II but still remaining faithful to God
David	King of ancient Israel & Judah
Delilah	female seductress who betrayed Samson
Dan	5 th son of Jacob who founded House of Dan
Darius	Darius the Mede's decree caused Daniel to be thrown into prison. Another Darius was Darius the Great who helped with rebuilding the Temple after the return from Babylon
Deborah	a prophetess and judge in Israel
Dorcas	also known as Tabitha, an early disciple of Jesus

Dionysius member of the high court in Athens who was converted to Christianity by Paul

Dinah daughter of Leah and Jacob

Demetrius name of two people in the New Testament: a silversmith who opposed Paul in Ephesus and a Christian commended by John

Damaris an early believer who heard Paul in Athens

Didymus meaning 'twin' in Greek and another name for Thomas

Drusilla Jewish wife of Felix, the Roman governor in Judea

MCB

Visit September 2025

Bishop +Martin and I had a chat in my office with Father Michael. The children were impressed by his full bishop regalia and I led collective worship, giving him the opportunity to see and hear what young people experience in collective worship, he read the Gaelic blessing at the end.

Children led + Martin around our spiritual garden with the faith team and then moved to our forest school where he planted and blessed a small oak tree.

The children were delighted.

Lucy McMullan

Head teacher



Building Bridges at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Peace Symposium

Social Cohesion in a Time of Division

As head teacher at Malden Parochial, I was privileged to attend the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's Peace Symposium, "Social Cohesion in a Time of Division." The afternoon was marked by fellowship, reflection, and a shared commitment to unity.

A Meeting of Minds and Hearts

The Mayor of Kingston, Paul Kohler MP for Wimbledon and leaders from across faiths spoke with conviction about dialogue and respect as antidotes to division. The symposium embodied how communities can transcend differences to embrace shared values of compassion, justice, and peace.

Fellowship and Hospitality

The warmth of hospitality was evident in the generous meal, where sharing food created space for connection and informal dialogue, reminding us that peace is often forged in acts of fellowship.

Looking Ahead

In times of division, unity can be cultivated daily through dialogue, education, and shared humanity. I left with renewed hope that when communities come together sincerely, peace is inevitable.

Lucy McMullan

Head teacher



Word Search Puzzle No.7

W	M	R	X	A	S	J	L	A	R	C	H	E	R	P
G	I	A	I	M	R	L	B	L	U	N	O	Z	A	S
S	B	L	Y	E	E	N	D	G	T	R	D	R	G	U
E	T	T	L	C	W	B	E	R	T	R	R	D	L	I
I	H	U	R	I	D	O	O	W	E	Y	P	O	E	L
V	A	U	G	H	A	N	T	W	R	N	Q	W	B	E
A	P	E	R	B	X	M	U	A	T	E	I	L	I	D
D	R	M	G	W	Y	T	S	H	I	G	N	A	R	V
D	F	Y	W	D	S	R	Y	S	P	D	E	N	T	D
L	T	A	L	L	I	S	D	W	P	I	T	D	W	S
O	T	F	O	R	C	R	C	A	E	R	T	E	I	B
N	Q	H	K	T	C	J	B	L	T	E	I	C	S	L
R	E	N	R	E	V	A	T	T	T	L	R	Y	T	I
A	N	R	O	L	D	I	N	O	G	O	B	O	L	S
T	A	Y	L	O	R	W	E	N	A	C	X	B	E	S

Arnold Delius Tallis

Archer Dowland Taverner

Arne Elgar Taylor

Bax Holst Tippett

Birtwistle Parry Vaughan

Britten Purcell Walton

Bird Rutter Weir

Coleridge Shaw Williams

Croft Smyth Wood

Davies Stainer

Find the British Composers in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

Hyphenated names are split ^{up}!

St. John's Christmas Fair - 29 November 2025

The smell of hot dogs wafted from the forecourt into the church hall as the time approached 11 o'clock and visitors arrived to get into the Christmas spirit. Fair trade goods, sweet treats, children's toys, toiletries and raffle tickets were on offer in the small hall, but the most popular stall was serving refreshments; tea, coffee and a selection of mouth-watering cakes as visitors sat down to catch up with their friends and escape the cold, damp weather.

In the larger hall, tombolas offered the chance to win filled mugs and a variety of bottles. Festive jams and preserves, knitted toys and decorations, jewelry, books and gifts were for sale, while Father Michael did a roaring trade with home-made flavoured gin and St. John's Christmas puddings.

At 11 o'clock and 1 o'clock, the hall filled up with children from Malden Parochial School who sang carols with headteacher Mrs. McMullan and created a festive atmosphere for all to enjoy. After their performances, the children were able to join their friends and take part in a variety of games and activities.

The Fundraising Team would like to thank everybody who gave up their time to set up and clear away and to work on a stall, as well as those who donated cakes, sausages, prizes and goods for sale. We are very grateful to our congregation and local community, including the Girl Guides, and especially to the children, parents and staff of Malden Parochial School for supporting this event. We raised over £2,100.

The Fundraising Team

SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

St. John's Sunday Lunch Club is for anyone within the local community who lives alone and would like to join likeminded people for a meal and good company. There is no charge but a donation of £5.00 is recommended. It is run on the first Sunday of every month.

This event is by invitation only as numbers are restricted to 30, so there is quite often a waiting list.

A two-course meal is prepared and cooked by volunteers and all expenses paid. At the moment we do not have enough cooks to cover 12 months. Please consider helping us either on your own, as a family or with a group of friends. It really is a lovely group to be a part of where people have time to chat and laugh together over a meal and glass of wine.

The Club is very appreciative of the team of volunteer cooks and helpers most of whom come from outside of St. John's congregation. Thank you very much to our cooks; Judy, Beth, Ian and Heather, Iluska, Chester, Deborah and Alastair and the Herbert family and friends. Also thanks to helpers; Anne, Billy, Lyn, Heather, George, Emma and Angela.

We are extremely grateful to all who help in so many ways to make this much needed event successful.

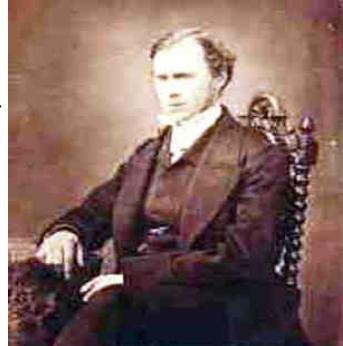
The rota for cooks in 2026 is now being put together so if you are interested in helping please contact Pat Lovegrove patlovegrove4@gmail.com.

150th Anniversary Celebration

On 7th December 2025, a special service of Choral Evensong was held at St John's. This was on the exact date of the Consecration of the new build in 1875. Our Choral Evensong completed the 150th Anniversary celebrations for the building of the Main Nave – the earlier concert taking place in June.

The inspiration for this 1875 church extension came from the Revd Canon William Chetwynd-Stapylton who was an important benefactor to the benefice – remaining in the parish for 44 years although originally only planning for 2 years.

(1825-1919). On the first Sunday of his incumbency, the attendance was just seven but thankfully this increased over the years



With the new Victorian extension, St John's Church doubled in size, responding to the increase in the local population.

The Celebratory Evensong included music by Stanford, the Reading Responses (1692), Charles Wood's Anthem 'O Thou, the Central Orb' and Robert Stone's Lord's Prayer (1548).

Our thanks to Barry for organising and rehearsing the event, for the guest organist, Simon Harvey, St John's Choir and for guest singers who enlarged the choir to make it a truly special occasion.

MCB

Some interesting forthcoming events/anniversaries in 2026

January 12 th	50 th anniversary of the death of Agatha Christie
January 22 nd	125 years since death of Queen Victoria
January 27 th	125 years since the death of Giuseppe Verdi
March 7 th	150 th anniversary of Alexander Graham Bell's telephone
April 21 st	100 th anniversary of the birth of Queen Elizabeth II
June 10 th	100 th anniversary of the births of Antoni Gaudi & Marilyn Monroe
June 11 th	250 th anniversary of the birth of John Constable
July 4 th	250 th anniversary of Independence Day
July 10 th	100 th anniversary of Louis Daguerre – photographer
July 12 th	100 years since the death of Charles Wood - composer
August 27 th	450 years since the death of Titian
September 9 th	125 years since the death of Toulouse-Lautrec
October 3 rd	800 th anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi
November	Projected arrival of Voyage 1 probe to be one light day away from our planet for a milestone in deep space exploration

December 5 th	125 th anniversary of the birth of Walt Disney and the 100 th anniversary of the death of Claude Monet
December 4 th	50 years since the death of Benjamin Britten
December 19 th	175 years since the death of William Turner

Also in 2026

- 100th anniversary of the First Transatlantic Two-Way phone call
- 100th anniversary of Sir David Attenborough's birth
- 400th anniversary of the birth of Robert Boyle – chemist
- 60th anniversary of the launch of the Blu-ray Disc system
- 90th anniversary of the first flight of the Hawker Hurricane
- 200th anniversary of the founding of London Zoo

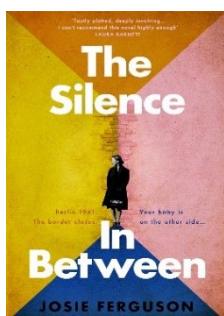
You will probably find many more.....

MCB

St John's Reading Group 2026

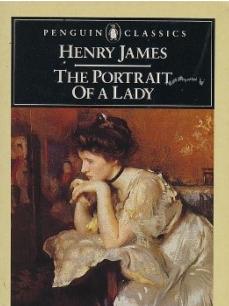
JANUARY

Our choice for discussion at our December meeting was **The Paris Library** by Janet Skeslien Charles. This novel was a popular read and the setting in wartime Paris was particularly interesting. The novel has two time eras – one begins in 1939 Paris and the other in 1983 Montana. Odile Gustafson is the elderly neighbour living in Montana – but she has an amazing history. This novel begins with Odile and her life at the American Library in Paris just as WWII breaks out. Based on good research, we learn of the real-life characters who, under the American librarian, Miss Reeder, create the Soldiers' Service to deliver books to servicemen and who with her loyal staff (including Odile) will risk their own lives by delivering books to Jewish readers after they were forbidden from entering the library. As a result of the bravery and dedication of the staff, the library remained open throughout the war. Lily is the young adolescent in 1980s Montana who becomes friends with her elderly neighbour Odile who has begun a new life in the USA after the war. The novel inspired a good discussion and an average score of 8/10.



Our choice for our January meeting is **The Silence In Between** – set in 1961 Berlin and flashbacks to wartime Berlin. There are devastating consequences for a family when the Berlin Wall goes up almost overnight. On the other side of the Wall, in the East, a new-born baby is in hospital but the parents are trapped in the West. A daring plan to rescue the child has to be devised. It is a memorable read, sometimes quite disturbing but very emotional. It is a debut novel by Josie Ferguson and was shortlisted for the Waterstones Debut Fiction Prize.

After much discussion, we finally selected our 'classic' For February. Not a short read, but '**The Portrait of a Lady**' by Henry James. The cover introduction reveals that Isabel Archer, a beautiful spirited American, is brought to Europe by her wealthy aunt with the expectation that she will soon marry. Instead of opting for one of the two suitable suitors, Isabel chooses Gilbert Osmond, who turns out to be domineering and emotionally abusive. We look forward to a good read here – good that January is quite a long month!



If you are seeking something different to read on a dark winter's afternoon, then maybe Val McDermid's '**Winter – the story of a season**' will interest you. Described as a 'Memoir of warmth and wonder in the coldest season', it becomes a journey through Scotland and the beauty of winter. A gentle, non-demanding read.

Have you ever started a book and then realised that you are not totally sure that you have made the right choice? Well, I have done just that. I am reading Kate Summerscale's true crime book entitled '**The Murders at 10 Rillington Place – The Peepshow**'. It is a chilling account of life in the early 1950s and the crimes perpetrated by Reginald Christie. I remember the magnificent portrayal of this murderer by Richard Attenborough in his crime horror film of 1971. Perhaps I need to hurry up and read it before Christmas so that I can focus on a gentler read that will not give me nightmares!

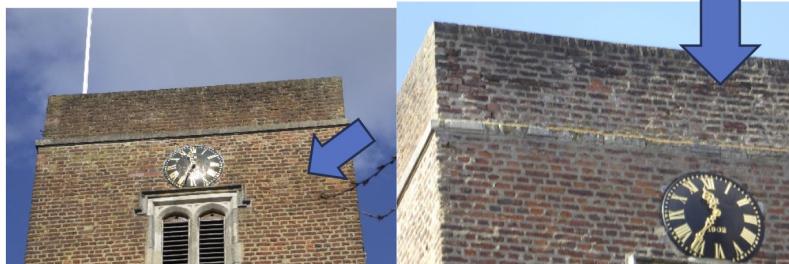
As I write this, Christmas is just a week away and by the time you read this, you will have celebrated Christmas. So it leaves me to wish you all a very Happy New Year and hope you are ready to start your new Christmas books! January meeting on 8th January at 8.00pm Church Coffee Lounge!



THE RESTORE PROJECT IS NOT OVER YET!

Phase 1, the buttress repair may be over but there is still a need to complete repairs to;

- The tower brickwork
- The broken tower roofing & parapet
- The leaking nave roof & dormer window
- The leaking vestry roof
- Internal damp.



The overall cost of repairs remains about £450,000, although this sum has been reduced by our ability to fund the buttress repairs from grants from Marshall's Charity and the Surrey Churches Preservation Trust.

Nevertheless, to make the overall project financially feasible it is being undertaken in stages (Phases).

Repairs apart, we want to expand our community support by

- Opening our building to wider community use as a hub for use by heritage, nature, and environmental organisations.
- Building on our current social care activities, such as supporting carers' of family members and friends with dementia, and offering ways of helping people prepare for the death of loved ones (Dying Matters/ GraveTalk).
- A greater involvement with our local schools by hosting school groups exploring our rich historical and natural heritage.

These are dependent on having structurally safe and sound buildings.

The next stage is PHASE 2, which will;

- Complete the repairs to the tower and tower parapet
- Repair the pitched nave roofs
- Start at least one new activity benefiting our local community – a dementia carers support group is most timely as is the hub.

Estimated cost for the tower repair is £227,000 (ex VAT), the roofs £60,500 (ex VAT), totalling £287,500 plus VAT £57,500. Costs for the social care and hub activities will be on top. Final tenders will up-date these estimates.

To fund Phase 2, our grants committee is putting together applications to a number of external funding organisations. It is a time-consuming

complex process, requiring explaining who we are, what we do, what we want to do, the need for urgent building repairs, how our social activities will benefit the community, our partnerships (what our hub users will do), and providing detailed costs and other financial details.

All grant giving organisations have strict rules stipulating;

- what they fund
- how much they will give
- how much the applicant (**us**) must raise themselves prior to making an application.

While we have so far been successful in raising our own funds, we have also had to employ architectural and advisory professionals and fund Phase 1.

It is critical we continue fundraising to meet the grant giving organisations rules. However, the success of the Restore Project is not only dependent on monies from grant giving organisations, but on us too.

We acknowledge and thank everyone who has donated to the Restore Project – well done!

St John's Knitting & Crochet Group - January 2026

If you would like to learn to crochet or knit, you are very welcome to join us. Why not take up something new in 2026?

St John's Knitting & Crochet Group meets on the last Thursday of the month in the Church Coffee Lounge from 2.00 - 4.00pm -

This month we shall be meeting twice - once on January 8th and then on our 'Birthday' on 29th January.

Open to all - do come and join us!

Crochet 'granny squares' are very much in vogue at the moment so if you would like to create some for yourself - this may be your opportunity.

You can also bring along your projects - tapestry/embroidery - a good opportunity to chat, drink tea and relax. Good for your 'mindfulness' time.

Do join us!

Marilyn





**There are boxes on the church porch bench for
your donations to the Foodbank.**

**Foodbanks are now vital to so many people
and our support is really important.**

Please donate if you are able.

Tinned meat, Long-life milk, Coffee, Rice, Pasta sauce, Squash, Instant mash, Tinned vegetables, Pot Noodles, Oils, Ketchup and mayonnaise, Sanitary towels, Toilet paper, Washing up liquid, Household cleaning products, Washing machine tablets, Shaving foam , Men's and women's deodorant, Tinned potatoes, Crisps and treats, Tinned tomatoes, Shampoo and conditioner, Tooth paste and toothbrushes, Biscuits, Jam , Pasta , Cereals, Pulses, Baked beans , Soup ,Tea.



St. John's weekly get together for all those who would enjoy a cup of tea, piece of cake, and meeting new people! Run by St. John's volunteers every week on **Thursdays from 2:00-4:00pm** at the **Church Hall 411 Malden Road**



The Men's Thing

Spring/summer programme of talks held on the 2nd Saturday of each month in the church extension. Tea, coffee biscuits etc. available from 10am for a 10.30am start. Men and women are all welcome.

January 10th - Post Christmas chat session.

February 14th - A talk by Malcom Sutton titled Life and work on a desert island.

March 7th - A talk by Richard Barrett :- Cacti, a lifelong passion.



Bereavement Café

In partnership with Princess Alice Hospice , St John's runs an informal support group for all those experiencing the loss of a loved one. The next meeting will be in the coffee lounge at St. John's on Tuesday 20th January 2:00- 3:30pm.



With things opening up again please help raise much-needed donations for St John's Old Malden - Repairs Fund when you plan ahead and arrange things to do! From booking staycations and getaways to tickets for concerts or other fun activities, remember to use #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for us. Book now: <http://efraising.org/fx3w1QPP7u>

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