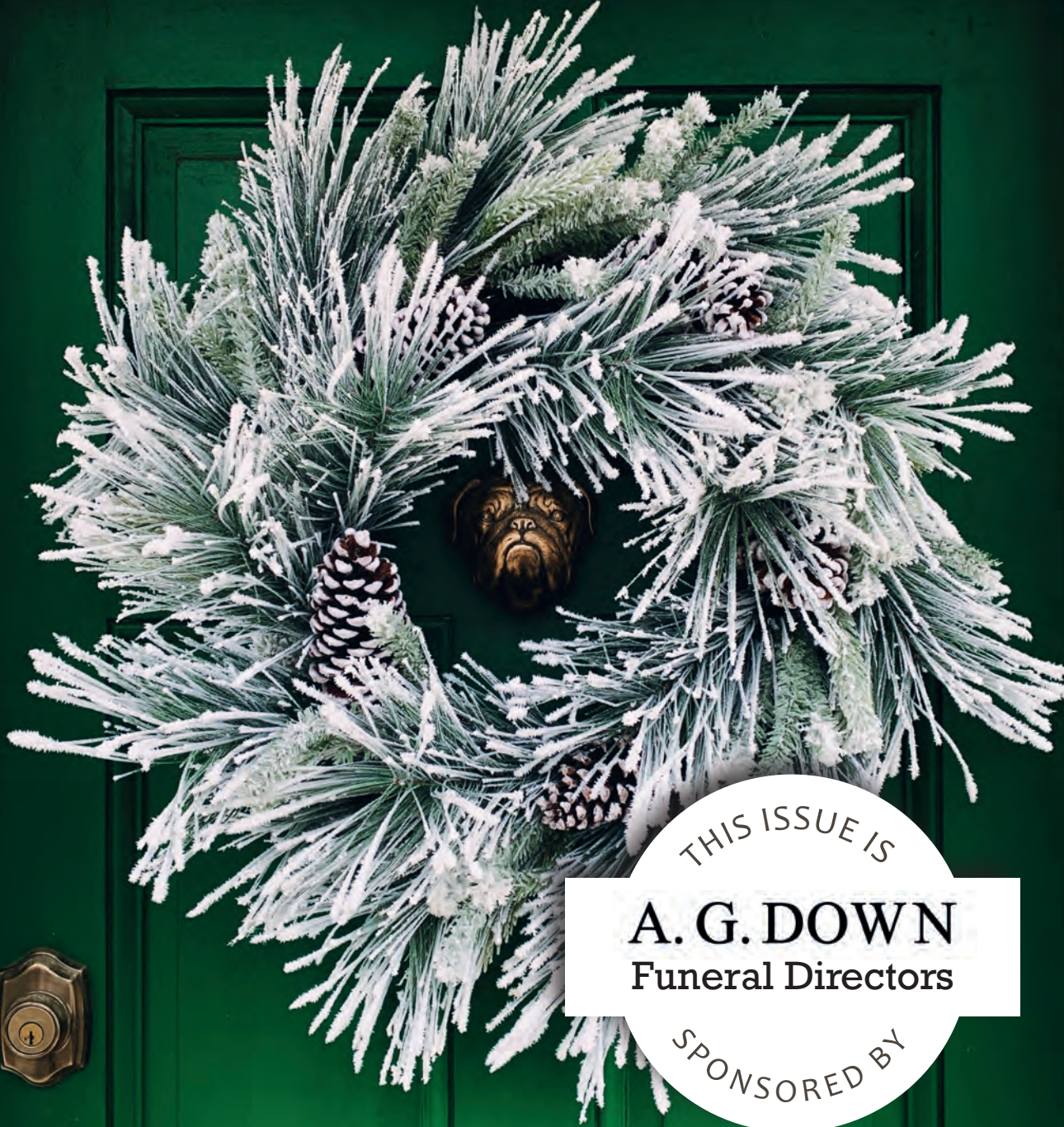


the **Bridge** December 2024/January 2025

A community magazine for Bridport
supported by the Anglican Church



THIS ISSUE IS
A. G. DOWN
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The Christian Fellowship 458227

St Mary & St Catherine (Roman Catholic)

Father Colin Groombridge 424754 presbytery
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 for the February 2025 issue is 5pm
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A story of hope & love for our troubled world

All over the country, all over the world, in the last weeks of December and the early weeks of January, there are people – many of them tiny children – acting out the story of Christmas.

Here in Bridport the newborn baby Jesus is welcomed each year in a retelling of the nativity, in schools, community centres, and in churches, too.

At the Bridport Nativity – involving many churches and so many in the community – you’ll find all the usual suspects: shepherds (well, men, women and small children wearing tea towels on their heads); fleecy alpacas posing as camels; tinsel-clad angels; blingy three kings; a shy donkey who is never ever persuaded to come into church (I mean the stable); and a star shining from the top of our tallest actor’s head, pointing the way.

The Bridport Nativity happens, just as the nativities everywhere happen, sometimes with hilarious mishaps along the way, but always, somehow, conveying a message of hope and love.

We always try to recruit a newborn to play the part of the infant Jesus for the Bridport Nativity. One year we had an eight-week-old who slept through the whole

thing peacefully, even when the brass band reached fever pitch! Another year it was a two-and-a-half-year-old, who ran around, dancing when we sang carols, delighting everyone!

And usually hundreds of people, many of whom rarely step inside a church, enter

into the story as they take a break from yet more Christmas shopping.

I wonder if in the Palestinian town of Bethlehem in the West Bank or in Gaza this Christmas, communities might gather to retell the story, despite all that is happening in our war-torn world. Or in Ukraine, Sudan or Syria.

Last year, a priest in Bethlehem said: “If Jesus were born today, he would be born under rubble.”

This age-old story, which can often seem remote and distant – a fairy tale, even, on some days – is not a story just for the church. It is for everyone, it belongs to everyone. And it is told every year in all kinds of places, even places of conflict.

If you let it into your heart, the story is very real and very near. It is a story set in a country under occupation, of a family forced to flee their home and become refugees. A story we often make cosy and twee, which in fact speaks of welcoming in new life, new hope, in the midst of fear and uncertainty.

For some new hope feels out of reach. And yet, we tell the story of Christmas once more, a story of hope.

On that first Christmas it was local. It was personal. God had come near in a very specific place. That happens every time we allow the story to be a part of our lives – and that’s the whole point, isn’t it? That God comes to us locally, personally, into the mess of our lives.

What changes with the birth of Jesus is this: God becomes flesh. God moves among us in a specific, local, eating-and-drinking kind of way, in the person of Jesus.

And somehow, the power of that story of love and hope, against all the odds, shines through in those countless re-tellings in school halls, perhaps amid the rubble, and in churches every year... and it is happening again this Christmas!

I pray for hope and peace for all this Christmas.
Canon Deb Smith



Canon Deb Smith

It’s a story set in a country under occupation, of a family forced to flee their home and become refugees... a story of hope

Merry Christmas to our readers

Another year has flown by and it’s already time for our bumper December/January magazine!

For this issue I had the great pleasure of interviewing new Walditch resident David Brazier, who I had happened to bump into a few weeks earlier while he was photographing a lifesize cutout of George Clooney to advertise the village’s phonebox library. Celebrity friends aside, David is a fascinating person and an asset to our community – read more about him on page 15.

This year’s Christian Aid Christmas Appeal is supporting refugee families in Sudan, an area with longstanding links to the Parish of Bridport. By giving whatever you can – maybe the price of a box of Christmas crackers – you can help people who have practically nothing. Details are on page 16.



Olivia Daly
Editor

CHURCH SERVICES

DECEMBER 2024						
Date	St Mary's Bridport	St Swithun's Allington	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton	Holy Trinity Bradpole	St Mary's Walditch	St John's West Bay
Sun 1 <i>Advent Sunday</i>	10am Parish service of HC	4pm CC (hall)				4pm Churches Together carols
<i>Mon 2</i>						10am MPR
<i>Tues 3</i>				2.30pm HC		
<i>Wed 4</i>	2.30pm HC					
<i>Thurs 5</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 8 <i>Advent 2</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am MP 4pm Taizé Prayer in Advent (CTiBD)	9.30am Christingle service		11am HC
<i>Mon 9</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 12</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 15 <i>Advent 3</i>	8am BCP HC 11am Morning Worship with carols	9.30am Eucharist 4pm Joint service at RC Church (see page 26)	11am HC	9.30am HC	11am Service of Baptism	11am MP
<i>Mon 16</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 19</i>	7.30pm Blue Light Carols (see page 10)	10am Eucharist			10am MP	
<i>Sat 21</i>	11am Bridport Nativity		6pm Carol service			
Sun 22 <i>Advent 4</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Matins	3pm Carol service	3pm Carol service	11am MP
<i>Mon 23</i>						10am MPR
Tues 24 <i>Christmas Eve</i>	4pm Crib service 11.30pm HC	6pm Eucharist	8pm HC	4pm Crib service 10pm HC	4pm Carols at The Hyde	
Wed 25 <i>Christmas Day</i>	10am HC			10am Christmas Praise + HC	11am HC	11am HC
<i>Thurs 26</i> <i>Boxing Day</i>						12.30pm- Post-swim carols (see page 10)
<i>Sat 28</i>						4pm Service of Wholeness and Healing
Sun 29		9.30am Eucharist				

HC = Holy Communion / BCP = Book of Common Prayer / CC = Contemplative Church / MP = Morning Praise / MPR = Morning Prayer

JANUARY 2025

Date	St Mary's Bridport	St Swithun's Allington	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton	Holy Trinity Bradpole	St Mary's Walditch	St John's West Bay
<i>Wed 1</i>	2.30pm HC					
<i>Thurs 2</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 5 <i>1st Sun of Epiphany</i>	8am BCP HC 4pm Epiphany carols	4pm CC		10am Parish service of HC		
<i>Mon 6</i>						10am MPR
<i>Tues 7</i>				2.30pm HC		
<i>Thurs 9</i>		10am Eucharist			10am Morning Praise	
Sun 12 <i>2nd Sun of Epiphany</i>	8am BCP HC 10.30am Covenant service at Bridport United Church	9.30am Eucharist	11am MP	9.30am MP		11am HC
<i>Mon 13</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 16</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 19 <i>3rd Sun of Epiphany</i>	8am BCP HC 11am Morning Worship	9.30am Eucharist	11am HC	9.30am HC		11am MP
<i>Mon 20</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 23</i>		10am Eucharist				
<i>Sat 25</i>						4pm Service of Wholeness and Healing
Sun 26 <i>4th Sun of Epiphany</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Matins	9.30am MP	11am HC	11am MP
<i>Mon 27</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 30</i>		10am Eucharist				

HC = Holy Communion / BCP = Book of Common Prayer / CC = Contemplative Church / MP = Morning Praise / MPR = Morning Prayer

On your own this Christmas? Join us for lunch!

This is an invitation to anyone who will be celebrating Christmas on their own and would like some company for lunch.

Churches Together are helping to provide a sit-down Christmas lunch at the Bridport United Church Hall on Wednesday 25 December. To book a meal, please give Sue Herman a ring on 422598.



Guests should arrive around noon ready for the meal at 12.30pm.

If you would like to help with preparation, serving and clearing the meal, or transporting people to and from the United Church Hall – or if you can lead the singing of carols and other Christmas songs after the meal – please contact Sue as before.

Piano play dates prove a tuneful hit at St Swithun's

Following the generous gift of a grand piano to St Swithun's in late 2023, the church has been holding monthly 'play dates' to make the most of its fabulous new instrument. Charles Jullens, who looks after the administration of these events, brings us an update...

Here at St Swithun's we are having a great deal of fun playing and listening to our wonderful grand piano.

Inspired by the Channel 4 television series *The Piano*, our own Piano at St Swithun's is a monthly event at the church, usually held on the second Saturday. We started in April and have been amazed by the response we have had and the performances we have enjoyed.

We do our best to foster a warm, informal atmosphere. Far from expecting musical perfection, we encourage enthusiasm and enjoyment over everything else in a way we hope reflects the spirit of Richard Godfrey's generous gift of our Estonia concert grand piano.

By leaving space in our recitals for pianists who turn up to play without having booked a slot, we have

Right: this young pianist delighted the audience with a piece by Fauré in October



enjoyed exhilarating performances from people who have just been visiting Bridport and happened to see our posters in town. The spontaneity of some of these performances has added hugely to the experience of our audiences, who often sit in wonder at what they have stumbled upon. We also find that some pianists prefer to play during our intervals or towards the end of the recitals when the audience is not listening intently.

Our special thanks go to a number of regular pianists who have supported us through the year. Without their dedication we could not be sure that any of the events would go ahead. Many of these players practise new pieces weeks in advance, while others improvise, displaying skills honed over many years. Some play favourite classical pieces, others play music composed for the theatre, unusual early music, or even works they have composed themselves. We have been treated to short talks about music in St Swithun's of yesteryear and we have musicians of all ages coming to play.

So please come along – either to play or to listen! Although everyone likes to respect the performances by not distracting our pianists, there's no need to stay from the beginning to the end. Tea, coffee and often cakes are available during the interval, usually just after 11am. It's something different and interesting to do on a Saturday: an opportunity for reflection and a haven from the bustle of town.

If you'd like to book a time to play, please contact me on 07814 388327. We are having a break in December, but Piano at St Swithun's will resume on 11 January.

Charles Jullens

Calling all pianists!

We now have a **GRAND PIANO** and on **Saturday 11th January**

10.30am till 12 noon, the church will be open to receive pianists in short slots of up to 15 minutes each



No matter whether you're a complete beginner or concert pianist, young or old, ALL are welcome!

Not a performer? Come and listen, and be the audience

PLEASE BOOK

Tel: Charles
07814388327

St Swithun's Church Allington

MOBILE HAIRDRESSER

All aspects of hairdressing
Over 25 years' experience

For price list and appointments please contact Kelly on 07864 799679



Get into the festive spirit with Bridport Christmas Cheer!

Christmas Cheer is a magical evening celebrating the arrival of the festive season in Bridport. This year's event is on Wednesday 4 December.

The town puts on its Christmas finery to welcome everyone: decorations and trees are up along the streets; shop windows are decorated and stocked with a fantastic selection of gifts and goodies; and pubs, bars and restaurants are ready to greet hungry and thirsty visitors.

There's entertainment for the whole family to enjoy, including, in Bucky Doo Square:

- Carol singing by local primary schools, 3.45–5.15pm
- The Bridport Rock Choir singing seasonal songs
- Bridport Mayor Cllr Anne Rickard switches on the Christmas lights at 6pm

In the Electric Palace:

- Christmas ballet by Perfect Pirouettes, 5.15–5.45pm
- New Christmas Food & Drink Fayre, a tasty selection of seasonal produce from local producers

In the Arts Centre there are more than 30 arts, crafts and charity stalls selling unique Christmas gifts, while many shops in the town centre stay open late and some offer seasonal refreshments.



There's a festive market along East, West and South Streets, plus a funfair in South Street. Bridport Museum offers Christmas fun, refreshments and carol singing at 6pm, while Bridport Christian Fellowship is serving coffee and mince pies and singing carols in East Street, 4.30–8pm. The United Church's Christmas tree festival is open 4–7pm.

There's also the chance to vote for the town's best shop window. Voting is open until Friday 13 December at www.bridportandwestbay.co.uk so have a good look round during Christmas Cheer before choosing!

St Swithun's Church, Allington

**A concert by
St Swithun's Band**

**Monday 9 December
at 7.30pm**

**Christmas music,
carols & mince pies**

**Free admission
with collection**

All welcome!



CHRISTMAS TOYS & TREATS

**Free or by donation
Thursdays 12 & 19 December
9.30–11am at St Swithun's Church**

Open to all. Toys will be available alongside the regular food stall.

If you'd like to donate toys, treats or even wrapping paper for the stall, please bring your items to St Swithun's Church between 10am and 3pm weekdays.

Please make sure any pre-loved toys are safe, not broken, have all their parts and are clean. Thank you!

For more information contact
Peter Wilson: 07778 159826 /
peterjwilson8@btinternet.com





**Bridport Parish
Wild and Messy
Church**

**Thursday 12th December
3.30pm-5.30pm**

**St.Swithuns Church hall
free event for children &
parents and carers**

JOIN US ON OUR
JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM
ART,CRAFTS & NATURE
ACTIVITIES &
REFRESHMENTS
ALL WELCOME

For more information call
Angie 07704959426 or
Lorna 0746985994






**BRIDPORT PARISH
WILD & MESSY
& Church**

**Thursday 9th January
3.30pm-5.30pm**

**St Swithuns Church hall
Free event for children,
parents and carers**

**ART,CRAFTS, SEWING & NATURE
ACTIVITIES & REFRESHMENTS
ALL WELCOME**

WE ARE THINKING ABOUT
COMPASSION & BLESSING
BY BAKING & SELLING CAKES TO RAISE
MONEY FOR
MERCY SHIPS

For more information call
Angie 07704959426 or
Lorna 0746985994





Bridport Christian Fellowship

*We would like to welcome you to our
2024 Christmas services*



Sunday 8th December
Outdoor service at
Bucky Doo Square 11am-12pm
Followed by refreshments



Sunday 8th December Christingle service 4pm-5pm
For all the family. Followed by refreshments

Sunday 22nd December Carols by Candlelight 4pm
Followed by refreshments

Wednesday 25th December Christmas Day service 10am

*Bridport Christian Fellowship
Kings Square DT6 3QD (back of East Street Car park)*

www.bridportchristianfellowship.org

The Parish of Bridport is running Advent study groups across the town

This year's book for Advent study is *Do Not Be Afraid* by Rachel Mann.

Groups will meet in five Bridport venues plus online to discuss the book and the issues and thoughts it raises. The group details and contacts are:

Mondays 10.30am–noon

St John's Church, West Bay
The Revd Philip Ringer 425774

Wednesdays at 2.30pm

Holy Trinity Church, Bradpole
Martin Whiting 424086

Thursdays at 11am

St Swithun's Church, Allington. Yvonne Welch 459587

Thursdays at 3pm

Holy Trinity, Bothenhampton
Graham Purse 423220 / 07882 158995

Thursdays at 7.30pm

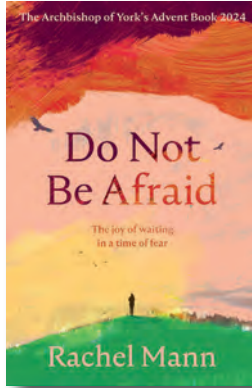
Online via Zoom. The Revd Lorna Johnson
07501 408221 / lorna@parishofbridport.org

Fridays at 2.15pm

Tamarisk Cottage, Walditch. James Craddock 458725

Wednesday meditations

There will also be a guided meditation on scripture and paintings on Wednesdays 4, 11 and 18 December at 4pm at St Mary's Church in South Street. Discussion afterwards. Contact the Revd Cally Burch 07746 561144 / pioneervicar@parishofbridport.org



A statement from the Bishop of Salisbury following the resignation of Justin Welby as Archbishop of Canterbury

I, together with Bishop Karen and Bishop Andrew, respect the decision of Archbishop Justin to step aside from his role as Archbishop of Canterbury and will continue to pray for him and his family. Archbishop Justin has taken personal and institutional responsibility to enable deeper change.

The Makin review has exposed horrific abuse and misuse of power over many years. Questions out of this report must be addressed by the church in a trauma-informed way, which places victims and survivors at the centre of it. In recent days the focus of debate has moved away from this, so I would ask us to refocus our attention back to the experience of victims and survivors and the lessons we must learn from doing so.

In this diocese we will continue to work to implement good safeguarding practices, supported by clergy and volunteers in our parishes and advised by our professional safeguarding team. We remain committed to engaging with victims and survivors of abuse.

I offer this prayer which sustains me daily:
*Thanks be to you, our Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given us,
for all the pains and difficulties you bear with us.
O merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,
may we see you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
day by day. Amen.*

If you have felt affected by issues raised in the report, you can speak to Safe Spaces, a free, independent support service providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone impacted by church-related abuse (0300 303 1056 / safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk).

*The Rt Revd Stephen Lake
Bishop of Salisbury*

Salisbury Diocese Safeguarding Team:
safeguarding@salisbury.anglican.org
Parish of Bridport Safeguarding Officer:
PSO@parishofbridport.org



Come to the Woodman pub in South St for beer and carols from 7pm on Tuesday 17 December. Our team rector, Canon Deb Smith, will be there singing her heart out!

FURNITURE RESTORATION

Antique restoration & bespoke furniture
Furniture carefully restored & new commissions undertaken
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Phil Meadley 01297 560335
phil.meadley@btinternet.com

Churches Together in Bridport & District: forthcoming events

It's been a busy few months with a new chair and secretary settling in, although thankfully with Ruth Jenkins still as treasurer.

We are restarting some things from before Covid and are looking at new initiatives, so watch this space! I'd be delighted to hear from anyone who has ideas about future activities.

If you'd like to come to any of these events but can't get there, please ask members of your church or community if they can offer a lift. If no one can help, give me a ring on 422597 to see if I can find someone.
Sue Herman, Chair, CTiBD

Pray Bridport

This has now restarted. It's an informal time of prayer and reflection for about an hour, usually starting at 6.30pm. The next three dates are (all Tuesdays):
10 December at St Mary & St Catherine RC Church
7 January at the Beacon Church
11 February at Bridport United Church (BUC)

Vigil for Peace

This has been held on the first Saturday of each month outside the Chapel in the Garden from 12–12.15pm. BUC is now hosting it on the third Saturday of the month at the front of the church. Do come and join us, even if only for a moment.

Sunday afternoon teas

We are restarting these, quarterly to start with but monthly if they are popular. No booking required – just turn up. How they are run depends on the individual churches. The first one at BUC will have happened by

the time you read this but the second is high tea at the Christian Fellowship on 15 January at 2.30pm.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Lighting of the Christmas tree at West Bay

Sunday 1 December at 3pm
This event is preceded by the West Bay Days annual award ceremony in St John's Church. After the ceremony there will be a short carol service (including the traditional congregational singing of The Twelve Days of Christmas) before we adjourn to Harbour Green for the lighting of the tree.
The Revd Philip Ringer on behalf of CTiBD



Advent Carol Service Sunday 1 December at 4pm
St Mary & St Catherine RC Church

Taizé service Sunday 8 December at 4pm
Holy Trinity Church, Bothenhampton.

Blue Light Carol Service

Thursday 19 December at 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, South Street, Bridport
Now in its 15th year, this annual event allows all members of the Emergency Services to come together for a seasonal celebration, especially those who will be on duty or on call on Christmas Day.

This is an open invitation to all. The service will be followed by seasonal refreshments and there will be a collection for the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance.
The Revd Philip Ringer, Chaplain to Bridport Police

Bridport Nativity is on Saturday 21 December at 11am in St Mary's Bridport. We need people of all ages to play a part in re-telling the greatest story of all time. So if you would like to dress up as a shepherd, an angel or a king, please email philipringer@aol.com or just turn up on the day. There are no lines to learn!

Community carols on Boxing Day

Around the Christmas tree at West Bay at 12.30pm (after the swim) on 26 December. Come as you are, stay for as long as you like and sing your favourite carols. If you play an instrument, why not bring that along too?

Epiphany service Sunday 5 January at 4pm
Bridport Christian Fellowship at 4pm

This season's final organ recital at St Swithun's Church

Sunday 1 December at 3pm
Students taught by Richard Godfrey under the Salisbury Diocese PipeUp scheme, from beginners to Grade 8+

A programme of mostly short pieces, but including substantial works by JS Bach.



Tim Russ

Admission is free with a retiring collection
St Swithun's Church, North Allington DT6 5DU

Young Bridport Christians confirmed at Salisbury

The Revd Cally Burch, Pioneer Team Vicar, looks back at the confirmation of three local young people – among many others – in Salisbury last month...

It was a real joy to attend the confirmation of nearly 50 people of all ages on 2 November at Salisbury Cathedral.

As well as our three young candidates and their families, there were about 10 of us from the Parish of Bridport, which made it even more special. We had all been involved in nurturing our young people in their faith, so it meant a lot to us all to be there.

The service was beautifully organised, an awe-inspiring mix of holy and accessible, formal and relaxed, large and intimate, grand and simple. Very atmospherically, it started in the dark and ended in light, including from the 50 candles that the candidates held aloft as they took Christ's light out into the world! It was a double joy that Josfin was baptised in the cathedral font before being confirmed. Our thanks to the Revd Lorna for organising everything for us.

Our young people's faith has been nurtured in their families and by the parish. Michelle and Josfin have been regular attenders at St Mary's Church Sunday School. Mish Bartlett is a member of the team there and is Josfin's godmother along with cherished family friends Margi and Chris Savory. Mish said she found



Pictured: Mish Bartlett, the Revd Cally Burch, Josfin Komi, the Revd Lorna Johnson, Christopher Foote, Miriam Digny (seated) and Jane Trower at Salisbury Cathedral after the confirmation service

the ceremony very spiritual and moving, and her Sunday School colleague Jane Trower added: "It was a very special moment when Bishop Andrew placed his hands on each of their heads as they were confirmed and blessed as they take their next steps in their journey of faith."

Christopher was baptised at St Swithun's and as a child was a regular at June Goodburn's Saturday Club. In the last two years he and Miriam have been young leaders of the Parish of Bridport Wild & Messy Club. All three prepared for confirmation by attending an after-school course for 10 weeks. "The course involved lots of hot chocolate, toast and puzzling out together what it means to follow Jesus," said Lorna. "We were often quite lost for words at the fresh insightful contributions these new young Christians made and we listened as much as we taught."

The following day at St Swithun's was also a real delight. It was so appropriate to be celebrating All Saints all together in a parish-wide Eucharist with three new believers taking their first Holy Communion. This was the living embodiment of what the feast of All Saints is all about: the uniting of generations of faithful believers across time and space as part of the whole Body of Christ. What a privilege it was for Lorna and me to be the first ones to give them Communion! It was also wonderful to have younger siblings Hannah and Michelle reading prayers with Mish and serving as acolytes. Future confirmation candidates? We hope so!
The Revd Cally Burch
See p25 for more news of November's parish service



**Help us prepare the St Mary's Bells
for the next 100 years!**

FUN QUIZ

Saturday 14 December at 7pm

Doors open 6.30pm

St Mary's Church, South Street

£5 per person

Max 6 per table – individuals welcome

Prizes and raffle

Bring your own drinks and nibbles

More info and booking: 07568 461024

BRIDPORT ARTSCENTRE WHAT'S ON **DECEMBER**

FILM | DANCE | MUSIC | THEATRE | SPOKENWORD | COMEDY | TAKE PART

Sun 1st	SHACKLETON THE GREATEST STORY OF SURVIVAL (U)	7:30pm
Tue 3rd	MADE IN ENGLAND (12)	7:30pm
Fri 6th	MOSCOW DRUG CLUB	7:30pm
Sun 8th	A WINTERS TAIL BY LAST BAGUETTE THEATRE COMPANY	10am, 11:30am, 2pm
Thu 12th	DOPE, ROPE AND HOPE A CINE FILM CELEBRATION	7:30pm
Sat 14th	CHRISTMASSY CHRISTMAS SHOW OF CHRITMASSY CHRISTMASNESS	2pm
Sat 14th	BASSIE GRACIE'S SPEAKEASY	7:30pm
Sun 2nd	A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PG)	2pm
Thu 19th	OPERA COCKTAIL OPERA UP CLOSE	3pm, 7:30pm
Thu 19th	BRIDPORT'S CULTURE CAFE	7pm




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BTC hears about residents' priorities for the town

Over the summer, Bridport town councillors visited various venues, community groups and events to engage with local residents about their priorities for the town.

This formed part of the consultation for Bridport's next five-year plan, which guides the council's activities, outlining key projects that we will undertake alongside our ongoing services, and supports the annual budget-setting process and long-term financial planning.

The feedback we received was wide-ranging, but certain issues were raised more frequently:

- Positive views on local events making Bridport a welcoming and eventful town including the carnival and torchlight procession, hat festival and charter fair
- Calls for support for activities aimed at young people, especially teenagers, and the creation of more social spaces
- Complaints about overgrown footpaths
- A desire to protect and maintain green spaces
- A demand for more social and affordable housing, especially housing for younger people rather than retirement communities
- Concerns over infrastructure, particularly GP services, with the growth of large developments and the impact of retirement communities on local services
- Calls for action on speeding in residential areas
- Enhancing pedestrian experience in the town
- Concerns about the appearance of the town centre, including issues with weeds and maintenance
- Frustration over the number of vacant shops and the dominance of charity shops
- Complaints about high car parking fees
- Concerns over sewage discharge issues into the rivers and sea
- A need for revitalisation of the bus station and more reliable bus services
- Difficulty accessing further education, with colleges too far away and travel costs high, leading young people to move away or not pursue higher education.

These concerns will be taken into account as we continue planning for the town's future. While some issues fall within our ongoing work, many of the larger issues such as education and housing are outside our direct control and are the responsibility of Dorset



Pictured: members of Bridport Town Council engaged with residents this summer at points including a stall in Bucky Doo Square

Council or the national government. However, we acknowledge our role in advocating for these matters at higher levels of government.

The full council will review the priorities in November and finalise the five-year plan, which will then be published on our website. If you would like to discuss any issues that matter to you, we encourage you to attend one of the upcoming ward drop-in sessions. These informal events provide an opportunity to speak directly with your local councillor. You can find dates for these sessions, along with details about your ward, ward clerk, and ward councillors, on our website at www.bridport-tc.gov.uk.

Caroline Pearce

Project Manager, Bridport Town Council

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A holistic approach to education: former headteacher David Brazier



This month we meet a newish member of the community. David Brazier has had a successful career in education and retired to Walditch this summer after more than a decade as head of a boys' school in Surrey. We met him at his new home to hear how he and his wife are settling in...

The Bridge: David, welcome to Bridport – and to Walditch! What brings you here?

David Brazier: We moved here from Beaconsfield. We'd sold our home there but weren't quite sure where we wanted to move to – first we started looking for a second home in Totnes, as we liked the vibe there. Then we discovered that some friends had bought a campsite in Broadoak. We went to stay with them there and really liked it – and particularly Bridport. We looked at some houses and just fell in love with this one in Walditch, so we bought it and moved here in July.

TB: How are you settling in?

DB: I like the countryside, the sea and the beach and I feel blessed to be here. Everyone has been very friendly and within a week of our arrival we'd been invited to a garden party. My wife, Lizzie, joined the Women of Walditch group, who meet in the village hall, and she's volunteering with the Bank of Dreams and Nightmares in Bridport, helping to deliver children's creative writing projects. And I was asked to look after the phonebox library here in Walditch! We definitely feel at home.



TB: It sounds like you're going to be busy here, even though you've retired from your career in education. What led you into teaching?

DB: One of the most important influences on my life was Dr Kathleen Raine, an expert in the work of William Blake, and herself a poet and scholar of enormous philosophical vision. I wrote to her when I was studying Blake at university and she invited me to her home in London; we went on to form a deep friendship and I felt she had adopted me as her 'spiritual grandson'.

Kathleen understood the 'great battle' of life to be between deadening materialism, in which nothing is sacred, and living 'in the light of the Spirit'. She summed this up using Blake's words: "Everything that lives is holy." She was driven by a vision of Spirit-led education, and in her 80s she established Temenos, a charity that offers education in philosophy and the arts along the principles of the sacred traditions of East and West.

She was an extraordinary woman who animated a room with her

being – and she changed my life. I'd gone to university in my late 20s, after a few years working in industry, and my friendship with Kathleen made me resolve to become a teacher.

TB: How did you establish yourself in this field?

DB: Initially I went into prep schools. I loved teaching and I always strove to bring what I'd learnt from Kathleen and Temenos to my work, teaching in an imaginative vein. I loved the classroom but I also enjoyed life at independent schools, with sport in the afternoon (I love coaching cricket) and grounds that keep the pupils in touch with nature.

I had a few head-of-department posts then I was headhunted by the Cognita group of independent schools set up by Chris Woodhead, who was the Chief Inspector of Schools in England in the 1990s. I got my first headship at Long Close in Slough, where I worked to change the cultural values of the school and establish a new ethos of inspirational teaching.

Then in 2013 I saw an advert for the headship at St James Senior Boys' School in Ashford. They were looking for someone with an interest in meditation and philosophy, and I saw an opportunity to bring my two interests together and offer pupils a fully holistic education.

TB: And you got the job...?

DB: I did – and I stayed there until my retirement this year. The St James schools were founded by



David Brazier's holistic approach to education continued

Leon MacClaren, an economist, teacher and philosopher who espoused the principles of Advaita Vedanta – simply put, each human is 'pure awareness', a pure and perfect being. In this context the job of an educator is to remove impediments to light. The school incorporates meditation and mindfulness into each day, and, unusually for UK schools, pupils also learn Sanskrit.

Happily, a holistic approach to education is becoming more mainstream – the Mindfulness in School Project was set up 15 years ago to teach children this vital skill – but at St James reflection and meditation have been embedded for decades. This was my dream job.

I'm proud of what I achieved during my 11 years at St James – visitors to the school would say they could feel the special energy. I ended my working life feeling

complete, like I'd achieved what I was sent to earth to do.

TB: Do you think boys do better in single-sex schools?

DB: Yes, I think they do. They stay a bit more innocent and they don't align themselves with girls.

TB: How does the experience of pupils at St James differ from your own schooldays?

DB: I went to a Seventh-day Adventist school, where there was lots of Bible study, but I wanted a more direct experience of the spiritual life. I had a lively mind but I've always valued stillness and later I took up meditation and studied Sanskrit. As the years have passed, I've kept an interest in Christian theology alongside other philosophies, and I have an

inclusive attitude to the spiritual – I've learnt that there are many paths to God.

TB: What about your own children? Have they followed you into education?

DB: My son Peter has – he teaches economics and maths at a school in London, where he also coaches cricket, just like his dad did! My daughter, Grace, is a project manager in the construction industry, also in London.

Lizzie is my second wife. We knew each other when we were at school and we went to a drama club together. I always wanted to ask her out! Then after my first marriage ended, I found her on Friends Reunited and we fell in love.

David writes weekly on Substack: www.davidbrazier.substack.com

Are you all set for a cracking Christmas?

This year I'll be spending Christmas with my family.

On Christmas Day, along with the other goodies that we are so lucky to enjoy, there will be crackers to pull. They are a colourful traditional decoration for the table and give a few moments of fun as they are pulled, make a snap (sometimes) and deliver a hat, terrible joke, small gift and my favourite – a jolly, flimsy, faintly ridiculous paper hat.

The price of crackers is usually £10 to £30, but I have a suggestion – why not make your own? You could then donate what you usually spend on crackers to Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal for Sudan.

The Parish of Bridport has had a diocesan

link with Sudan for over 50 years, so it seems especially important that we help in any way we can through this year's Christian Aid Christmas Appeal.

The appeal highlights the story of Shede (*pictured*), who had to flee to South Sudan after her brothers were killed, taking her youngest daughter Siada, her eldest daughter and her granddaughter Mariem. Shede says: "Fighting broke out and homes were bombed. Food was no longer available. The situation was dire. The conditions were very bad for us." Her husband stayed behind, and she has been able to speak to him since. Her older daughter travelled onwards to find work to help support the family, and Shede now cares for the two little girls



alone. She couldn't bring anything with her to the refugee settlement.

Christian Aid works in the settlement with its partner, Smile Again African Development Organisation, and with your help they can help refugees like Shede to buy nutritious meals, medicine, blankets and more – and find some comfort and joy during upheaval, uncertainty and conflict.

Please visit www.fundraise.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2024/christmas-appeal-sudan and give what you can.

Jill Henderson



West Dorset Beekeeping Association is the bee's knees for apiarists across the area

Members of West Dorset Beekeeping Association have been meeting for an astonishing

134 years to share their craft.

The charity draws its members from across West Dorset and provides free advice and support on all bee-related matters to members and the general public. In the spring and summer, members of the association are regularly called on to collect swarms and identify bee colonies that appear in local gardens. It's surprising where they choose to settle – air bricks, post boxes, nest boxes, compost bins and chimneys are all popular.

The main annual showcase for WDBKA is the bee marquee at the Melpash Show. It hosts a hotly contested honey show with an interesting array of exhibits. The observation hives offer visitors a safe glimpse into the heart of a colony and additional information points help to promote awareness of biodiversity and the vital role of all pollinators. The show also celebrates the true value of local honey and its provenance, offering taste tests using cheap supermarket honey alongside honey from the club's colonies to illustrate the difference between the two.

The association has its own teaching apiary in Netherbury. Student beekeepers help to look after the bees, and the honey harvest is sold to raise funds to maintain the colonies and provide equipment. Both full members and friends of the association are free to visit when the apiary is open, and beesuits are available to borrow – in



Pictured: suited and booted for protection against stings, keen prospective beekeepers gather round their tutor on a WDBKA course

fact, everything is provided except for wellingtons and a pair of rubber gloves! A monthly email newsletter keeps everyone informed about the club's events.

This year WDBKA has been raising awareness of the imminent threat of the Asian hornet and the devastating impact it can have on all insects, not just honey bees. Chairman Peter Crabbe is also the Asian hornet co-ordinator and is very happy to visit interested groups to talk about the Asian hornet. Peter can also help with monitoring this invasive pest and is available by email at asianhornet@westdorsetbees.org.uk.

A key part of the club is the promotion and sharing of knowledge. Good beekeepers never stop learning and the bees always have something new to share. The WDBKA annual course for new beekeepers is a popular, cost-effective route into beekeeping. Student feedback is always very

complimentary and praises the enthusiasm and commitment of the tutor team as well as the high level of enjoyment the sessions bring.
Sally Boxall

WDBKA's next course starts on Tuesday 4 February and comprises seven evening theory meetings at the Christian Fellowship Hall followed by three tutored sessions in the club apiary. For details visit www.westdorsetbees.org.uk or contact Carole Brown at secwestdorsetbees@gmail.com or 01308 456210. You can also keep up to date with the club's activities on Facebook.



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ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967

Director of music – Tim Linsley

07830 308701

Tower captain – Bob Hardwick 420632



How we are making Jesus known?

I am writing this column at the end of a week of mild but very dull, gloomy weather, and it would be easy to be despondent, but instead I find my thoughts turning to this question: How has St Mary's Bridport shown the light of Christ as part of the diocese's aim to make Jesus known to the community it was built to serve?

I could list every service, every event. I could tell you the numbers of people who have passed through. I could tell the stories from the visitors' book. I could talk about what people have said.

Any one of these, however, wouldn't give the full picture of what happens week in, week out, as the clergy, the congregation, the visitors, the musicians, the leaders of prayers, and the readers combine to proclaim that Jesus is the light of the world that shines in these dark times – and that he cares about you.

The range of activities and services in October alone shows this well:

- Sunday Holy Communion using the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship
- Monthly afternoon Communion service and tea for those who find it difficult to get to church on Sunday
- Sunday School
- Morning Worship using the Iona Community's liturgy
- Hosting Trafalgar Day and Hospital Sunday services
- All Souls service (early November)
- Hosting the Taizé singing group
- Hosting the Bridport Food Bank and the associated clothes bank
- Hosting parish team prayers

- Coffee and cake on a Saturday
- Supporting the bells' centenary appeal
- Gaining the Eco Church Silver Award
- Decorating the church for Harvest Festival using natural material from the churchyard
- Having the church open every day for visitors seeking a quiet place or who are interested in the history, supported by leaflets giving information about the church and directions for a reflective churchyard walk.

Now that Advent is beginning, we look forward to building the Christmas crib, to the Blue Light Carol Service, to hosting the Bridport Nativity and to welcoming local primary schools for their Christmas services as well as planning for our own carol and crib services and hosting a reflective Advent group.

Thank you to the small team who enable all of this to happen. We are pleased to offer St Mary's for the large civic services as much as for the smaller, more specific and personal groups. In each of these events we are aiming to show and share the light of Christ.

Peter Wright

Covid-19 made an impact in many ways, and many of our regular donors haven't been able to support the church as they once did. If you can make a donation, whatever you can give, you'll be helping to maintain our beautiful church and its ministry in the heart of Bridport.



Bridport Town Council CENTRAL WARD

Ward clerk – Will Austin 456722
enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

The town council recently considered a planning application for a 'retirement community' development

of 45 apartments and 28 cottages at the JC Phillips site off South Street. Councillors are very unhappy with the proposals and have submitted a strong objection, focusing on the need for more affordable housing, rather than more open-market retirement accommodation. It's Dorset Council that decides the application – Bridport Town Council is consulted and can make comments but doesn't make the decision, which we expect to be made in December or January.

On 10 November the town centre hosted the annual Remembrance Sunday parade, which saw a great →

BTC Central Ward continued...

turnout of participating organisations and residents, all led by the mayor of Bridport, Cllr Anne Rickard. A service of Remembrance followed at St Mary’s Church. The town council organises the parade on behalf of the Royal British Legion, and particular thanks go to my colleague Claire for arranging another poignant, dignified and respectful event, which reminded us of the service and sacrifice of so many.

Residents and visitors might have noticed what looked like cameras being installed in town centre streets in early November. They were actually traffic sensors, put up temporarily as part of a traffic survey by Dorset Council to assess the effect of the new 20mph zone.

I mentioned in my last report that improvements were planned for Bridport Football Club car park, and these are now under way. At the time of writing, we are still on track to complete by the end of December. Works have also started on the replacement of the



Above: this riverside site is the subject of a planning application that’s unpopular among town councillors

outdoor skate park at Plottingham Field, and I hope by the time you read this, it will be up and running – or should that be rolling...?

Will Austin

**HOLY TRINITY
Bothenhampton**

Parish editor – Barbara Ffooks 423122
Children & youth worker –
Jean Mitchell 422127
Director of music – vacancy

From the parish editor

We are now in the season of Advent, a contemplative time preparing for the festival of Christmas. It is also a time for being together, and there are a number of events planned, starting with a Bothenhampton village Christmas social and amateur art exhibition. This will be held in the village hall on Sunday 1 December from 4 to 7pm. There is a lot of artistic talent in Bothenhampton and this is an opportunity to see the work of friends and neighbours.

There’s no charge for this event but you are welcome to bring along food or drink or make a contribution towards the hire of the hall. If you’d like to contribute a plate of food, please contact Rachael on 07979 805808. If you’d like to exhibit some of your artwork, please contact Sue on 07761 974076.

The coffee morning in Holy Trinity on Saturday 7 December will have a festive air, with a Christmas raffle and no doubt other Christmas goods on offer, lovely homemade cakes and bakes, plus handbell ringing. Do come along, 10am till 12 noon. The first coffee morning

**Traditional service of
Lessons and Carols**

**Saturday 21 December at 6pm
Holy Trinity Bothenhampton
All welcome!**



of 2025 will be on Saturday 4 January.

The Luncheon Club will be serving Christmas dinner on Thursday 12 December in the village hall, 12 for 12.30pm. Please contact Heather Purse if you would like to reserve a place (see details on the opposite page). The price on this occasion is £10. The following lunch is on Thursday 9 January, priced at £7.

If you would appreciate a peaceful interlude in a busy day, there is a Taizé prayer service on Sunday 8 December at 4pm in Holy Trinity. This will be led by Churches Together with a choir and musicians.

The Brownies meet each Friday in the village hall, and on Friday 13 December they will be holding a carol service at 6pm in Holy Trinity Church, to which all are welcome.

The village hall is regularly used by local groups and is well looked after by the hall committee, who are hosting a cheese and wine evening on Saturday 14 December. Tickets are £5 from Heather Purse and David Weston (see below right for details).

A service of traditional lessons and carols will be held in Holy Trinity on Saturday 21 December at 6pm and everyone is welcome. On Christmas Eve there will be Holy Communion at 8pm. There is no service on Christmas Day nor on 29 December in Bothenhampton, but please see the table of services at other churches (page 4) where you may wish to attend.

A new distributor is needed to deliver The Bridge in Maple Gardens, Bothenhampton. If you can help please phone me on 423122.

Film nights will continue through the winter. If you would like to join the mailing list please email Nick Child (lcnc2413@outlook.com) who sends out details of films by email each month.

Barbara Ffooks

FILM NIGHTS in Bothenhampton Village Hall

- Saturday 28 December – It’s a Wonderful Life
- Saturday 25 January – title to be announced
- Doors open 7pm, film starts at 7.30pm
- Admission £5 • Refreshments available
- Please book by emailing lcnc2413@outlook.com

Luncheon Club

at Bothenhampton Village Hall

Thursday 12 December

From 12 noon; lunch served at 12.30pm

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- Turkey or nut roast
- Christmas pudding

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Heather Purse 423220
heatherpurse@yahoo.co.uk



Bothenhampton Village Hall Committee

invite you to a

Cheese & Wine Party

Saturday 14 December at 7pm

Tickets £5 to include food, a glass of wine & a ticket for the raffle, from Heather Purse (423220) or David Weston. Additional raffle tickets are available to buy



ST MARY’S Walditch

Parish editor – James Craddock 458725
walditchbridgejsc@outlook.com
Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421
If you have any pastoral or personal issues, please contact the
Revd Ann Ayling on 424896

A story for Christmas

The Gift of the Magi is a short story by the American writer O Henry and was first published in a New York newspaper in 1905. Henry, whose real name was William Porter, was a pharmacist as well as a talented writer. He suffered from poor health throughout his life and died in 1910 at the age of 47.

The story, set in the early 20th century in New York, is about a young American married couple, very poor

but deeply in love, who want to buy each other a Christmas present.

On Christmas Eve the young wife has only the very modest amount of \$1.87 in savings. However, she has beautiful (and fashionable) long brown hair, of which she is immensely proud, and she decides to sell it to a high-society wig maker in order to buy her husband a platinum chain for his fob watch, which is a valuable family heirloom and his most prized possession.

When her husband arrives home from work she gives him the gift, admitting that she bought it by selling her hair. Her husband then presents his Christmas gift to her – ornamental hair combs, which he bought by selling the fob watch.

By their mutual actions the young couple show how much they love each other. The story ends with the →



ST MARY’S Walditch continued...

narrator declaring that people who sacrifice their material possessions for those they love are as wise as the Magi.

To this day, people visiting O Henry’s grave in Asheville, North Carolina, leave \$1.87 in coins, which the cemetery gives to local public libraries.

James Craddock

Walditch Garden Group

As we do not meet in December, our next garden group meeting is on Thursday 30 January 2025. Newcomers are warmly welcomed so do come along and join us. Seasonal topics, garden discussion and tea/coffee and biscuits throughout the year have made this a popular slot on the village hall calendar.

We meet at 10am in Walditch Village Hall on the last Thursday of every month (except December). We wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy 2025.

Jane Mowatt

December and January gardening jobs:

Look after visiting wildlife and prevent ponds and bird baths freezing over. To avoid risk of rot, reduce watering of plants that are overwintering under cover. Prune tall bush roses to guard against windrock; prune wisteria and other vigorous climbers. Continue to plant and winter-prune fruit trees and bushes; take root cuttings from perennials; take new-year hardwood cuttings of trees and shrubs. Chit early potatoes and start sowing early vegetable crops and some summer bedding plants under cover. Warm the soil with cloches for early seed-sowing outdoors. Clean pots and seed trays ready for the joy of spring sowing.

Featured plant of the month: hellebore

Hellebores are classic plants for winter interest, with elegant, nodding blooms in shades of green, white, pink or ruby (some examples are pictured below). These perennials have a long flowering period, lasting well into spring. Mainly evergreen with handsome leaves, they thrive in shadier spots.

Below, left to right: hellebore varieties ‘Christmas Carol’, ‘Lily’, ‘Niger’ and ‘True Love’



Thelma’s hymn notes

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

This carol was composed by the Revd Edmund Sears (1810–76), an American Unitarian minister from Massachusetts. It was first published in 1849 and is widely thought to be Sears’s response to the recently ended war between the USA and Mexico.

The carol’s words speak of “the woes of sin and strife”, “man at war with man” and “life’s crushing load” – and ultimately of a time when peace will cover the earth. As well as reflecting on the Mexican war, it also foretells the horror of the 1861–65 American Civil War, in which more Americans died than in any other conflict before or since. Although the carol is no longer as popular as it once was, the words are sadly still very fitting for today’s world.

The traditional English melody was adapted by Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900), best known for his operatic collaborations with the librettist and dramatist WS Gilbert, producing the famous HMS Pinafore, The Pirates of Penzance and The Mikado.

Let us hope for peace around the world in 2025.

Thelma’s Catmas Carol

Joy to the world, ’cause cats are here!
 They fill all hearts with love.
 Let everyone prepare some fo-oo-od for them...
 And let them eat their fill!
 And let them eat their fill!
 And let them eat their fill!

Thelma Pulman, organist at St Mary’s Walditch



Hellebores are beautiful unique perennials, easy to grow and undemanding. Ideal for planting in groups and naturalising, they are also resistant to deer and rabbits, making them a great choice for wildlife gardens.

Plant with other shade-loving plants such as ferns, hostas and astilbes. Common names for hellebores include Lenten rose and Christmas rose.

Bridport Town Council BOTHENHAMPTON & WALDITCH WARD

Ward clerk – Jo Hughes 07398 171955
bandw.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

Thank you to all those Bothenhampton and Walditch residents who took the time to complete and return the 20mph survey that was delivered with the October issue of The Bridge. In total, 179 responses were received with 95% of respondents supporting a reduction in the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph for certain roads in the ward. The next step for Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward will be to liaise with the town council's other wards that are considering 20mph speed limits. It is likely that the town council will need to commission traffic surveys to obtain up-to-date traffic data on those roads being considered for 20mph before a single Bridport parish 20mph application can be submitted to Dorset Council.

I am pleased to report that Dorset Council has been quick to act on a couple of recent issues in the ward. First, following the fall of a branch in September that blocked Walditch Road, Dorset Council's highways department issued a tree report and met with the owner

of the land on each side of the road to explain the action that needs to be carried out on the trees lining the road to ensure the safety of the highway.

Second, after a resident got in touch about some tyres dumped on Lower Walditch Lane, I reported this issue to Dorset Council's waste management team and the tyres were removed in a matter of days.

If you spot a problem on a road or pavement, you can report it to Dorset Council using their online portal: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/report-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement. Issues that can be reported include drainage, flooding and gully clearing, potholes, hedges, trees and verges, abandoned vehicles, weeds and moss, fly-tipping and graffiti, street lighting and footpath and bridleway issues. When reporting an issue online, photos are always helpful.

The next Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward public engagement session will take place in January but if you would like to discuss any items of interest or concern in the ward with your ward councillors in the meantime, you can find their contact details online at www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/wards/bothenhampton-walditch-ward. Alternatively, you can email me at bandw.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk.
Jo Hughes



Remembrance Sunday

We held the Act of Remembrance after the morning service on 10 November at the war memorial (pictured) in the churchyard.

Councillors Anna Killick and Paddy Mooney laid a wreath on behalf of the Bridport Town Council Bradpole ward.



Two special Advent services

A children's Christingle service (adults are invited too!) will be held at 9.30am on Sunday 8 December in the church, which will be set out in café style, so do come along and make a Christingle (pictured right).

A symbolic orange is used in Christian services during Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. The orange is decorated with a red ribbon, sweets or dried fruit, and

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

Parish editor – Douglas Baldwin 424232
douglas.baldwin@seaside20.plus.com
Tower captain – Janet Robinson 07913
549946 / htbrabells@parishofbridport.org
For pastoral or personal issues, please contact the Revd Janis Moore 425644
(Wednesday is her day off)

a candle (this will be a battery-operated tealight!) and each part has a specific meaning. The orange represents the world; the red ribbon represents the love of God; sweets or dried fruit represent God's creations and blessings of the seasons; and the candle represents Jesus as the light of the world bringing hope to those in darkness.



HOLY TRINITY Bradpole continued...

At 4pm on Christmas Eve there will be a crib service for all the family, based on the Christmas story, 'The Greatest Story in History'. The nativity set figures will be brought to the crib.



Village lunch club

The club will be lunching in Long's Fish & Chip Restaurant on Tuesdays 10 December and 14 January. Please contact Thelma Pulman (458533) for details.

Other groups

The Mothers' Union will meet at 3pm on 17 December and at 2.30pm on 21 January (both Tuesdays). The Crafty Group will meet on 5 and 19 December and 2 and 16 January (all Thursdays). Please contact Daphne King (427552) for more information.

Tots@Ten

Pre-school children are welcome to join others, with parents and carers, normally every Wednesday during term time in the church where there are toys to play with and lots of space. Refreshments are served. There is no charge. The last meeting this year will be on 18 December and the first in 2025 will be on 15 January.

Ministry Aviation Fellowship

Holy Trinity has enjoyed a long relationship with the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) and the congregation collects used postcards for them to help with their fundraising. On Sunday 23 February, Dr Luc Vandamme, MAF's regional coordinator, will visit the church and speak during the morning service about the organisation's activities. Working in partnership with hundreds of other Christian and relief organisations, MAF delivers practical help, physical healing and spiritual hope to some of the world's most remote and inaccessible communities. Its pilots fly their light aircraft to more destinations than the six largest airlines in the world combined, landing on desert and jungle airstrips, lakes and rivers, tracks and roads to provide a lifeline for some of the world's poorest people.



Bradpole Forster Village Hall

On 7 October the trustees held the annual general meeting of the hall, which is a charitable incorporated organisation. Seven members of the public were also

there. Sarah Kilcoyne, chair of the trustees, outlined the work that had been done in the past year or so, some personally by the trustees and some by contractors. The list included general redecoration of the main hall, entrance, kitchen and toilets; new ceiling tiles and overhead lighting in the main hall; a new set of crockery in the kitchen; and a general tidying. Trustees hope to find a more suitable place to store the tables and chairs, leaving more space in the hall.

The trustees were grateful to the parish council, (which ceased to function on 31 March) for donating some funds to the hall and supplying a bench, which has been installed outside. Some of the money had been spent on a clock, the design of which is in keeping with the age of the building, and the rest will be used for general maintenance.

Treasurer Colin McReavie presented the accounts for the year to 31 August 2023. There was a healthy cash balance at the end which has been maintained this year. A good number of organisations use the hall but there are still slots available. The new online booking system will be available and Alan Smart, a local resident, volunteered to monitor it on behalf of the trustees. Users of the hall were asked to report any problems to the caretaker, Jim Bryant (427493), when they arose so that he could deal with them quickly.

A call for another trustee was answered by Douglas Baldwin, who had been a trustee a few years ago.

The defibrillator, which is installed outside the hall, is now being maintained by Bridport Town Council and people were encouraged to use it in appropriate circumstances, not to be put off by the thought of using it because there are simple instructions and it can save lives. Sandy Goldsmith, secretary of the town council's Bradpole Ward, gave a vote of thanks to the trustees for the work they had done and continue to do.

In the new year, it is hoped to arrange for a speaker from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance to give a talk to an open meeting in the hall about the work of the air ambulance, and to give a demonstration of resuscitation and the use of a defibrillator.

Bradpole Buzz Group

The group would love some support with the following:

- Practical help with planting
- Offers of wild plants and seeds from your garden
- Suggestions and general support

We will be meeting on Wednesday 4 and Saturdays 14 and 28 December, and then on Wednesdays 8 and 29 and Saturday 18 January. Phone Rose Van den Akker on 01308 425756 or email bradpolebuzz@gmail.com.



Bridport Town Council BRADPOLE WARD

Ward clerk – Sandy Goldsmith
07944 523084

bradpole.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

The November ward meeting was well attended by 37 members of the public. Most had come to voice their concerns about the planning application for the slaughterhouse in Mangerton Lane.

Other topics discussed at the meeting included housing needs in the ward, and Cllr Killick asked those present for their views on the lack of suitable accommodation for local people.

Residents also asked councillors to consider additional pedestrian refuges along St Andrews Road to allow pedestrians to cross the road safely.

Many of you are aware that yet again an HGV vehicle tried to enter Bradpole village via Lee Lane and was

thwarted by the bridge. The lane had to be closed overnight to allow recovery of the vehicle. Councillors are working with Dorset Council in the hope of installing clearer signage at the junction of Lee Lane and the A35 and to consider whether they could take any other measures to avoid a reoccurrence.

With the colder winter days approaching, several venues in Bridport are offering a warm welcome and providing refreshments free of charge or for a small donation. These places are open to everyone in the community and offer a great chance to make new friends and chat. For more information see your local noticeboards or visit the town council's website at www.bridport-tc.gov.uk.

Keep in touch

The next public meeting will be held at 7pm on Monday 20 January in Bradpole Village Hall. The agenda will be posted at least five days beforehand on the ward noticeboards, the Bradpole community website (www.bradpole.org.uk) and Bridport Town Council website (www.bridport-tc.gov.uk).

Your ward councillors are always ready to listen to any concerns you have regarding Bradpole Ward. You can contact me on 07944 523084 or by email at bradpole.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a healthy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Sandy Goldsmith



ST SWITHUN'S Allington

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November's parish service at St Swithun's

The monthly Bridport parish service was held at St Swithun's on All Saints Sunday, 3 November. On this feast day, all saints and martyrs of the Church are honoured alongside all deceased Christians as witnesses to the faith.

The service was conducted by the Revd Cally Burch, Pioneer Vicar, with the Revd Lorna Johnson, Associate Priest. We also celebrated the first Holy Communion of

three newly confirmed young parishioners, Miriam Digy, Josfin Komi and Christopher Foote, who had been confirmed the previous day with over 50 others by Bishop Andrew at Salisbury Cathedral.

The congregation sang four hymns: For All the Saints Who From Their Labours Rest; Let All the World in Every Corner Sing; O God, Our Help in Ages Past; and O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing.

The collect started with the moving words: "Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and one fellowship in the mystical body of your son, Christ our Lord."

Cally gave a short but profound sermon revealing how all those present were saints. She also talked about the early death of her talented artist cousin, who left behind three masterpieces – her three daughters – as well as a devout Roman Catholic schoolfriend whose passing had prompted an annual school reunion of her peers. We were all reminded to remember every saint across the globe and up and down the ages, past, present, future. →

ST SWITHUN'S Allington continued...

Mish Bartlett led the parish prayers, helped by two children, Michelle and Hannah, whose opening prayer was deeply spiritual: "Lord, you welcome us into your family, no matter who we are or where we are from. We come from scattered lives and separate places; we all come as your children. Thank you, steadfast God, for your forgiveness and for your assurance. Today especially, we ask for your blessing on Josfin, Miriam and Christopher as they set out on their journey of faith. We come, loved and treasured to worship you."

The Revd John Rees gave a moving testimony of a devout member of his previous parish, who on retirement founded a Christian bookshop, which against all the odds continues to trade. This individual, he said, was a true saint.

At the end of the service, Miriam, Josfin and Christopher led the congregation outside with lighted candles for a final blessing. Before refreshments were served, the three young people received gifts in the church hall and they thanked Lorna and St Mary's Sunday School teachers Jane Trower and Mish for all their hard work during confirmation preparation.

James Craddock

Ragtime meets Boogie!

St Swithun's was full to capacity on the afternoon of Sunday 20 October when Mike Denham and Julian Phillips came to introduce us to some music of the 20th Century – 'From Ragtime to Boogie'.

It gave us a splendid chance to showcase our grand piano, and they certainly did that. With a combination of words and music – sometimes playing individually, sometimes together, and supplemented by Julian's skill at whistling – they absolutely raised the roof!

By the end of the afternoon there was even dancing in the aisles, and responses to the event as people left included "joyous" and "uplifting".



Top: Josfin Komi, the Revd Lorna Johnson, verger Graham Williams, the Revd Cally Burch, Miriam Digy and Christopher Foote with siblings Hannah and Michelle at the St Swithun's November parish service.

Lower pic: Outside the church after the service

St Swithun's was delighted to welcome not only many from our Bridport community but also the well-known duo's fans from further afield including from Sherborne, Swanage and Sturminster Newton.

The afternoon also was a wonderful opportunity to talk about our plans for the future of our buildings.

Yvonne Welch

St Swithun's and Bridport Catholic Parish will hold a joint service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Mary & St Catherine Church in Victoria Grove at 4pm on Sunday 15 December. Mince pies will be served afterwards. Come early at 3.15pm for Christmas carols and music.

Left: Pianists Mike Denham (left in photo) and Julian Phillips came to St Swithun's to entertain a capacity crowd with their programme 'From Ragtime to Boogie'

Bridport Town Council WEST & ALLINGTON WARD

Ward clerk – Amy Stephenson
bridportwest.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

Winter is now upon us and with all the weather that it brings we are looking to recruit more volunteer flood wardens in our area (training and support will be provided). Or would you like to be a ‘hot-spot spotter’?! These are volunteers in known flooding areas who can tell us about potential blockages in drains and other issues that can make flooding worse. This way we can try and get the right agencies to act as quickly as possible in the areas they are needed.

Interested? Please contact me or you can also contact Bridport Town Council directly. We are working in conjunction with the town council to update its flood plan, so if there are areas in the ward that are prone to flooding but that we may not already be aware of, please let us know by emailing me at the address above.

Do you have any small woodworking hand tools you no longer need? If so, please consider donating them to the Allington Hillbillies, the volunteer group who look



Above: volunteer flood wardens & ‘hot-spot spotters’ help to protect the town from the effects of flooding

after part of Allington Hill. They’ll use them for making green wood products from coppiced hazel and willow to raise money for the events and activities they put on for the community to enjoy. Please contact us if you have anything and we will gladly pass your details on.

Our next engagement session will be on Tuesday 14 January at 6.30pm in Cherry Tree Communal Room. These sessions are open to all and give you the chance to meet your councillors and discuss items of interest in your ward. We are hoping to have the local police at either this meeting or a future meeting to talk about issues of concern in the ward.

Amy Stephenson

ST JOHN’S West Bay

Parish editor – Sue Pollock
07903 558568
Chapel warden –
Rosemary Russell 423013

News from St John’s

Due to the indisposition of your regular correspondent I have been asked to bring you news from St John’s for this issue.

Advent Sunday on 1 December sees the lighting of the Christmas tree on the green, beginning with the annual awards from West Bay Days in the church at 3pm.

On Monday 2 December from 10.30am to 12 noon I will be leading an Advent study group in the church. We will be using the parish’s Advent book, *Do Not Be Afraid* by Rachel Mann.

“Lighten our darkness” are the opening words of the third collect of Evening Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer. By the time this issue reaches you, we will at long last have electric lighting restored in St John’s.

Thank you to all who have worked so tirelessly to ensure that this has happened.

I look forward to being able to preside at Christmas Communion at 11am on Christmas Day itself, with all those who care to join me.

In keeping with the tradition of this column, there is some more news from around the Bay. The WI have a Knit & Natter session on Wednesday 4 December, then on 11 December they have their Christmas social (2.30–4.30pm) with all the usual festivities and a visiting ukulele band. At their meeting on 8 January, members will hear from a wartime nurse about her life during wartime. I am reliably informed that new members are welcome – contact Alison Ridge (01308 897293) or Maggie Hooper (07720 056310).

As I look forward to the New Year I am reminded of those lovely words from Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith’s hymn *Lord, For the Years*: “Past put behind us, for the future take us... Lord for the years we bring our thanks today.” God’s richest blessings to you, your families and all you pray for.

The Revd Philip Ringer



Bridport Town Council WEST BAY WARD

Ward clerk – Will Austin 456722
enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

Ward councillors have been pressing for action on 'joyriding' and other speeding problems in the area over the past few months. At their last public meeting, councillors were asked about the possibility of traffic calming on West Bay Road, and they are looking into that with the help of Dorset Council, who would make any decisions on taking it forward. There would be public engagement on the idea so the community will get its say, and we know there will be differing views. It's more likely that we'll see a speed limit reduction on Station Road, which is seeing more and more pedestrians using a narrow lane that currently has a 60mph limit.

Councillors are also pressing Dorset Council and the police for action to address joyriding in the Station and West Bay Road car parks. This longstanding problem has proved difficult to resolve: police resources are limited, and things like locking-up times and height barriers present as many problems as they solve. However, your town councillors are determined to see more attention paid to the matter, which is both antisocial and dangerous. A reminder to residents to report your concerns – call 101 if not urgent, or 999 if a crime is in progress. Not every call will result in an



Above: stallholder Richard is a regular fixture at West Bay Car Boot Sale

immediate influx of flashing blue lights, but the build-up of reports for a particular area will affect how often you see patrols in West Bay.

The town council manages West Bay Car Boot Sale on Sunday mornings from April to October, and puts all the stall fees into a grants fund, which is now open for applications for 2024–25. Forms and guidance can be downloaded from www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/services/annual-grants and the closing date is Monday 6 January 2025 at 9am.

Finally, to remind you that West Bay Discovery Centre's opening hours have changed for the winter months as follows:

- December: open selected days from Boxing Day to New Year's Day
- January: closed
- February: open 7 days of half-term week, 15–23 Feb
- March: open weekends until 15 March

Will Austin

Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Jane Wilson
01308 341159

Church secretary – Sue Herman
422598 / bridportsec@gmail.com

incorporating UPLODERS CHAPEL

Correspondent – Carol Hall
423163 / carol.a.gribb@gmail.com

Friends and fellowship bring hope at Christmas

Sitting looking out of the window while writing this it's difficult to believe there are only a few weeks until Christmas: the garden is still full of colour with carnations, marigolds, roses, pansies in full flower and

the thermometer reading 17°C. And the birds seem as confused as the plants – I saw a sparrow the other day with a beakful of nesting material! I only hope it gets cold enough soon enough to stop them laying any eggs.

But however confused the natural world – of which we are a part – is feeling, the weeks just keep rolling on as they always do until we hit Advent Sunday. Advent is the season of waiting and of hope, and at the moment hope is something we all need. Everywhere we look we see things that are profoundly depressing: wars, natural catastrophes, poverty (this one on our own streets with a number of people now sleeping rough in Bridport's doorways and on benches), knife crime, the rise in antisemitism... the list seems endless, and hope and happiness with life seem like a distant dream.

But in the midst of all this despair hope can be found. Look at the number of people in our home town who give up so much of their time (and money) to help;

people who run the food banks, those who serve hot meals to all who come to their door on most days of the week; those volunteers, often elderly, who lug heavy suitcases of donated clothes to different locations on different days so those who can't afford clothes can have what they need – and countless others, often unseen, who are good neighbours or who dip into their own, often meagre pockets to help those worse off. I was talking the other day to a volunteer who seems to spend almost all their time helping out at one place or another, and I asked when they had time to follow any of their own extensive list of hobbies.

The answer was: "I don't have much time to do the things I love, but I wouldn't be comfortable giving myself the luxury of time when there are so many people who need so much. It just wouldn't be right." That answer lights a beacon of hope – and makes me question whether I am doing enough, or just selfishly enjoying my own agenda.

I think it might inspire us all to take a close look at our lives and see whether we, in our own ways, are beacons of hope. We can't all be doing all the physical things, but we can all stop and talk to people and listen to them whether they are rough sleepers, at food banks or just people who desperately need a friendly ear.

Not having anyone to talk to, to share worries with or tell of a lovely experience is now thought to be as bad for our health as many physical illnesses – and this is particularly true at Christmas time when memories may surface of happy past Christmases and of loved ones no longer with us.

This is why the Christmas Day lunch is so important – it provides a space for people to share some of the day with other people who might otherwise not see anyone. Fellowship and food are two of the most essential things for humankind's wellbeing. And the number of people who willingly give up a large part of Christmas day with their families to come to BUC is amazing: they come to give lifts to those who need them; to serve the meal; to help with anything that needs doing; and, most importantly, to sit with our guests and chat and make them feel welcome. For me this certainly lights a beacon of hope and these people deserve all our thanks: surely this is what celebrating Christmas is all about, not just using lovely comforting words in church, but living Jesus' command to look after one another and "love, as I have loved you".

So on that note of hope I will wish everyone a happy, peaceful and blessed Christmas and a peaceful and fulfilled 2025. My wish for the new year is that we may all be a bit more aware of our local needs and offer whatever help we can. We can't change the world, but every small act of kindness and love can make our community a better and happier place.

Sue Herman

Bridport United Church

Christmas Tree Festival

Wednesday 4th December until Sunday 15th December 2024

Opening Service Tuesday, 3rd December at 6 pm

Also open during Bridport Christmas Cheer, 4th December 4 - 7 pm

Opening hours:
Monday - Thursday 10 am - 1 pm
Fridays 2 pm - 6 pm
Saturdays 9 am - 3 pm
Sundays 2 pm - 4 pm

December services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 1	10.30am	Gwyneth Owen (HC)
	4pm	Soul Space
Sunday 8	10.30am	Giving service with Jane Wilson
Sunday 15	10.30am	Chris Warren
	4pm	Carol service
Sunday 22	10.30am	Jane Wilson
Tuesday 24	4pm	Candlelit Communion
Wed 25	10.30am	Jane Wilson
Sunday 29	10.30am	Local arrangement

January services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 5	10.30am	Tony Wells
	4pm	Soul Space
Sunday 12	10.30am	Covenant service & HC with Jane Wilson
Sunday 19	10.30am	Jane Wilson
Sunday 26	10.30am	Ruth Lownsborough
	4pm	Healing service and HC with Jane Wilson



Bridport UNITED CHURCH continued...

Special events at BUC

Tues 3 Dec	6pm	Christmas tree festival opening service
4–15 Dec		Christmas tree festival (see page 29 for times)
Sat 7 Dec	10am	Christmas Fayre with bacon baps and coffee
Sat 14 Dec	9–11.30	Big Breakfast with Bridport Steel Band
Sat 14 Dec	7.30pm	Bridport Choral Society Christmas Concert
Thurs 19 Dec	3.30pm	Messy Nativity
Wed 25 Dec	12 for 12.30pm	Christmas Day lunch (see page 5)
Thurs 1 Jan	3pm	‘Tea at the Ritz’ – please book with Sue (422598)
Sat 11 Jan	9–11.30	Big Breakfast

Regular events

Coffee morning every Wednesday and Saturday 10am to noon. Lunch Club fourth Wednesday of the month (third in December; see below).

Please check with individual groups about their arrangements over Christmas.

Mondays	9.30am	Toddlers group (term only)	
	10am	Art group (inner hall – not 23/30 Dec or 6 Jan)	
	Tuesdays	2pm	Bridport Blind Club (first & third – not 17 Dec)
		2pm	Bridport U3A (third Tues in Dec, fourth in Jan)
		4.30pm	Rainbows (term only)
		5.30pm	Brownies (term only)
	Wednesdays	7.30pm	Bridport Big Band (church)
7.30pm		West Dorset Singers	
12.30pm		Lunch Club (third Wed in Dec, fourth Wed in Jan) Two-course, home-cooked meal. All welcome. Please book by phoning 422598	
6pm		Fitsteps	
7.30pm		Kickboxing (inner hall)	
Thursdays	2pm	History Society (second)	
	2pm	Thursday Club (third)	
	3.30pm	Tea, chat, games & crafts. All welcome Messy Church (third Thurs in Dec, fourth Thurs in Jan)	
Fridays	6pm	Fusion Dance	
	6pm	Kickboxing (inner hall)	

From Uploders Chapel

I know I am repeating myself but, as I said last month, you will notice that there is no information in my column about further chapel services. That is because we have had to come to the sad decision to stop worship here owing to the lack of attendance at services.



There was a final service on 24 November to celebrate the work of the chapel in times gone by.

Unfortunately, the way forward at the chapel is still not completely clear. Sadly, as seems to be the problem with anything these days, there are so many rules and regulations that have to be followed, which always takes time! It is also clear that the strict Methodist rules do not allow alcohol to be drunk on the premises. The Chapel is Grade II listed and ongoing running costs are around £3,000 each year. Also in most circumstances there would need to be a lease, which would incur a rental, although it is not certain how much this would be. Still a lot to be sorted out.

Thank you so much to all who came to the second community meeting and showed your support. If you like, you can still be added to the WhatsApp group that the Revd Peter Clark has set up to keep all interested folk up to date as much as possible. So, if you haven't given him your contact details already and want to help, you can email him at revptc@btinternet.com and then you can sort out the necessary info between you.

So with all this in mind, I am hoping we can look forward to a Definitely Delightful December and a Justifiably Joyous January.

Carol Hall

**St MARY & St CATHERINE
Roman Catholic Church**

Parish priest – Fr Colin Groombridge
colin.groombridge@prcdtr.org.uk

Presbytery 424754

Secretary – Faith Leborgne 422594
bridport@prcdtr.org.uk

A perfect gift

We have recently returned from an amazing trip to Thailand, a country my wife has wanted to visit since a friend brought her back a butterfly ring from Bangkok when she was seven!

Thailand is a predominantly Buddhist country, with more than 20,000 temples up and down the land.

We visited many of them during our stay and were struck by their beauty and the devotion of those who worshipped there.

We were particularly struck by the monks, who each morning left their temple, bowls in hand, to walk the streets collecting the offerings that many of the locals had prepared for them. Our guide explained that the monks did not beg, but instead walked the same route each morning knowing that each day many people would be waiting to present them with a freshly prepared meal! The only food they would have that day. She told us that her own mother would regularly wake early and by 5 o'clock would be at the stove preparing her day's gift with great care. Like so many we met, she had very little but was prepared to give so generously what she had.

The devotion of the people was truly humbling, and it made me reflect on my own faith. Would I be prepared to give so much of my time and sacrifice so much for others? It made me once again appreciate just how

much we can learn from people of different faiths.

Deacon Mark Brown



Sunday Mass is at 10am at the Roman Catholic church in Victoria Grove and is streamed online at www.bridportcatholics.org.uk and the Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page. For updates about Sunday and weekday Mass, and information about services during Advent and Christmas, see the weekly newsletter on this website or look for updates on Facebook.

St Swithun's and Bridport Catholic Parish will hold a joint service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Mary & St Catherine Church in Victoria Grove at 4pm on Sunday 15 December. Mince pies will be served afterwards. Come early at 3.15pm for Christmas carols and music.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
King's Lane (in East St car park)
 Office 424437 • David Collins 458227
info@bridportchristianfellowship.org
www.bridportchristianfellowship.org



**BRIDPORT
 CHRISTIAN
 FELLOWSHIP**

We would like to wish everyone a peaceful and blessed Christmas and New Year.

We are a member church of the UK Evangelical Alliance and an Ichthus Link Church. We meet for worship every Sunday at 10.30am and at various times during the week.

We seek to bless the community of Bridport with the Good News of Jesus, and you are warmly invited to our Sunday services or any of our activities during the week.

Activities may change during specific times of the year, and there is more information on our website: www.bridportchristianfellowship.org

- Mondays:** Meals Project for those who find themselves in difficult situations. Discipleship group meets at 7pm.
- Tuesdays:** Three House groups meet at 2–3pm, 2.30–4pm and 7.30–9.30pm.
- Wednesdays:** One House group meets at 7–9pm.

- Precious Ones Baby & Toddlers Group, for under-4s and their parents or carers, meets in the church at 9.30–11.30am.
- Fridays:** One House group meets at 12.30–2pm. You can also come along and join in our Art Group, 10am–12 noon. You don't have to be brilliant at art!
- Saturdays:** Pray Chat coffee bar with free tea, coffee and cake, 10am–12.30pm.
- Sundays:** 10.30am–12 noon is our weekly service. On the first Sunday in the month, we also join together for a meal or BBQ after the service.

- Christmas 2024 activities at BCF:**
- Wednesday 4 December** – Bridport Christmas Cheer from 5pm
- Sunday 8 December** – Outdoor service in Bucky Doo Square, 11am–12pn, followed by refreshments in church. Christingle service 4–5pm (all ages welcome) followed by refreshments.
- Sunday 22 December** – Carols by Candlelight service at 5pm followed by refreshments.
- Wednesday 25 December** – Christmas Day service at 10am.



BEACON CHURCH Priory Lane, Bridport

Church office 456031
office@beaconchurchbridport.co.uk
www.beaconchurchbridport.co.uk

All are welcome to join us at Beacon Church this Christmas.

On Sunday 15 December we will be having a family Christmas service with Christmas songs, a performance from the children and other Christmas activities. All ages are welcome to our fun celebration of Christmas. Prizes for the best dressed nativity character or animal!

On Sunday 22 December we will be having our carol service at 4pm followed by mince pies and mulled wine. Join us to get into the festive spirit with traditional Christmas carols.

Then on 29 December we will be going on a Christmas walk starting at the Symondsburry Estate car park at 10.30am and lasting about an hour depending on the weather. Feel free to bring some Christmas nibbles to share and wear your favourite Christmas jumper.



Beacon
CHURCH BRIDPORT

For unto us
a child is born!

This Christmas at Beacon

15th December Family service
Doors open at 10AM Service at 10.30AM

22nd December Carol service
Service 4-5PM
Mulled wine and mince pies following the service

29th December Christmas walk
Meet Symondsburry estate car park
10,30AM

Bridport QUAKER MEETING The Meeting House 97 South Street

Correspondent – Jeni Edwards
538105 / jeni.edwards69@gmail.com

The way ahead

The world today seems to be in a mess! The Israel/Palestine conflict, the Ukraine/Russia standoff, to name but two, and every news bulletin reports more unrest and dissension. A well-loved Quaker quote says: “We are called to live ‘in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars...’ ” (Advices and Queries no. 31)

It is easy to get caught up in a state of denial when we look at the fractured world of today. The big picture is frightening, indeed overwhelming, so we have to

concentrate on what we can do in our own little place.

Bridport has many people working in all sorts of ways to bring positive change. There is a tree planting group, a group encouraging sustainable clothing, school gardening for food, a bee conservation group, beach litter cleaning, networks for more environmentally friendly housing and so it goes on. And these groups are part of Dorset-wide organisations that are in touch with nationwide ones. All we can do is set out on the path from here into the future and plod on with hope.

Meeting is held at the Meeting House on South Street at 10.30am for an hour on Sunday mornings and 10.30am for half an hour on Wednesday mornings. All are welcome.

The Quaker website at www.bridportquakers.org contains all the details you need to book a room for an event or to find out more about us.

Jeni Edwards



Get involved: local clubs, groups & societies

Please contact the editor (details on page 2) if you'd like your group to appear here. Entries are free but are limited to a few lines and are for non-profit community groups and clubs and their events (not ticketed events such as concerts). Unless otherwise stated, all phone numbers are Bridport (01308).



Bridport & District Allotment Society (BADAS) is open to all. Membership is £5/year and gives discount at several gardening suppliers. Contact 250260 / email BADASHUB@outlook.com. More details online at www.bridportallotmentsociety.co.uk

Burton Bradstock Duplicate Bridge Group meets at the village hall on Tuesdays 1.45–4.45pm. Contact Kathy 485626.

Bridport Bridge Club meets at St Swithun's Hall on Tuesday afternoons (beginners/rusty players; not fourth Tuesday), Wednesday evenings and Friday afternoons (relaxed; not third Friday), plus online on Thursday evenings. Beginners' lessons started in mid-October. See www.bridgewebs.com/bridport or phone Martin Angold 01308 861120.

Bridport & District Model Railway Club meets each Tuesday at Askerswell village hall 7–9pm. Members can run their stock on the club 'test track' or operate a club layout. Chairman Geoff Purse 423220.

West Dorset Flower Club meets at the WI Hall, North Street, at 2.30pm on the second Monday each month with demonstrations and speakers. On Monday 9 December Allison Finch will present 'Traditions of Christmas' and there will be a competition on the theme of 'Candles at Christmas'. Phone 456339.

Bridport Stage Company theatre group has recently finished its performances of The Snow Queen at The Bull Hotel, with proceeds having been donated to Samaritans. To get involved in future productions, email Valerie: tasterella@hotmail.co.uk. No experience is needed, and all ages are welcome.

Friday Dance Group for women meets every Friday 11.30am–12.30pm at St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. Come and enjoy dancing as you like to a range of music. First session free. Details from Sue 425037.

Bridport Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings at 7.30pm at the United Church Hall. Contact Fiona Kenward fekenward@gmail.com

Bridport Blind Club is a social club for the visually impaired. It meets twice a month for tea, entertainment & chat. Part of Dorset Blind Association, which provides personal and technical help. Ian Ibbotson 898484.

Free play singing, circle toning, layering and creating spontaneous tunes, with improvised sound and world rhythms. Tuesdays 1.30pm at Bridport Youth & Community Centre, Gundry Lane. For more info phone Pen 07713 008290.

West Dorset Music Community Orchestra meets on Wednesdays in term time 6.30–7.45pm at the Christian Fellowship Hall in East Street car park. Contact 456297 / www.westdorsetmusic.org.uk

West Dorset Singers (formerly the New Elizabethan Singers) meet for choral rehearsals in the United Church Hall on Tuesdays at 7.30pm from September to May. For more info contact the membership secretary, Jill Edwards: membership@westdorsetsingers.org

Bridport & District Gardening Club will meet at the WI Hall, North Street on Thursday 16 January, 7 for 7.30pm, when Neil Lucas will present 'Grasses and their place in the garden'. Neil is the UK's leading specialist in ornamental grasses and is the director of Knoll Gardens near Wimborne, where he has been developing his naturalistic style for 29 years. Non-members £2. www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk
ASCape offers social opportunities and support for autistic young people and those with social anxiety aged 4–25 and their families. Contact info@ascapegroup.org or visit www.ascapegroup.org

Voices of Hope Singing Group is open to all ages and abilities. Easy, uplifting, joyful songs from around the world, some rounds and some in parts. Borough Gardens (off South Street) or The Chapel in the Garden if it's raining, Fridays at 11am. Suggested donation £5. janesilvercorren@gmail.com / 07887 675161 for more details or to join the mailing list.

Bridport Scottish Dancers meet on Wednesdays mid-Sept to May at 7.15pm in St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. All welcome, no partner required. £3 per session incl. refreshments. Basic tuition in first hour. Please wear soft shoes. Caroline 538141 / Tony 01297 560335 / www.bridportscottishdancers.org.uk

Bridport Folk Dance Club meets every Monday 7.15–9.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. All welcome, including beginners. Phone 458165 or 459001. →

The Cowshed Wellbeing Gardens group meets on Tuesdays 2–4pm. Gardening, talking, art & workshops for people with health vulnerabilities or wishing to enhance wellbeing. Access is to the left of Bridport Medical Centre. For details please text 07769 720773.

Bridport St Mary's Parkrun is a weekly, free, timed run or walk organised by volunteers. Saturdays 9am at St Mary's Field. Great fun for all ages and abilities. Register online first then bring your barcode on your phone or printed out. Find us on Facebook or visit www.parkrun.org.uk/stmarys

Bridport Health Walks are free gentle walks around town. A 30-minute walk every Wednesday and a walk of about 60 minutes on the first and third Thursday each month. Meet in front of the United Church on East St at 9.45am and return for hot refreshments. No need to book, just turn up. For more details contact 01305 252222 / sarah.davies@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Bridport Tree Planting Group plants & gives away 1,000 trees a year in public and private spaces around Bridport. Three free saplings available per household. Help needed to water and weed young trees. Contact joe@thehacketts.uk for details and to receive newsletter. www.westdorsetfriendsoftheearth.org.uk/index.php/more-trees-please

Friends at Greenfields is a social get-together for those on their own, or simply needing a bit of company. Every Thursday 10am–3pm at Greenfields, Bridport Community Hospital. Contact Lyn Goward 488272.

Bridport History Society meets on the second Thursday of each month (except July and August) at the United Church Hall, 2.15 for 2.30pm. Visitors welcome £5pp. Membership is £12 individual / £18 couple. For more info visit www.bridporthistorysociety.org.uk

Bridport Inner Wheel meets monthly at Haddon House, West Bay, to enjoy friendship and listen to speakers as well as helping the community. Contact Sue Pollock 07903 558568 / rognsuewbay@btinternet.com

Bridport Branch Royal Naval Association meets on the third Thursday each month at 7 for 7.30pm in the Bridport & District Social Club, North St. Ex-matelots & all other ex-military welcome. Refreshments available. Contact Peter May glassertonm1141@outlook.com

Bridport Community Carnival Committee enables both carnival processions to happen on the third weekend of August each year. Would you like to get involved with planning this sociable event for 2025? Contact joycedunford@yahoo.co.uk or visit www.bridportcarnival.co.uk

Bridport Community Shed, between Mountfield and Bedford Place, opens Mon, Wed & Thurs 10am to noon. On the first Tuesday of the month there is also an evening stitching session (please book in advance). Contact 07593 880428.

The Harmony Centre provides friendly, informal support for local adults of all ages (18+) who want to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Call in during centre opening hours (Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am–1pm) to find out how we can help you. Now at Unit 1, The Tower Building, St Michael's Estate (entrance via courtyard off Foundry Lane DT6 3RR). Phone 01308 801154.

Bridport Community Front Room offers face-to-face and phone support with mental health practitioners and peer specialists for people reaching a mental health crisis point or needing wellbeing support. Thursday to Sunday 2.15–9.45pm. Based at The Harmony Centre, new address as in previous entry. Phone: 07385 290804.

MMMM! Monday Movie, Meal & Mingling from United Diversity Bridport (UDB) & Sustainable Bridport. Mondays 6–10pm in the White Room, Chapel in the Garden, East St (entry via Rax Lane). Inspiring documentaries and short films by local filmmakers. Admission £3 to cover room hire (UDB members free). Food and drink available. www.ud.coop/mmmm

Bridport & District u3a is for people no longer in full-time employment. Monthly meetings 2pm on the fourth Tuesday each month (except December) in the United Church Hall, East St. The talk lasts about an hour, followed by Q&A and refreshments. There is no talk in December but instead the group will hold its Christmas quiz on Tuesday 17 December. Members free, visitors £3. More than 60 u3a groups meet regularly, covering a huge range of interests. Contact Alastair Forbes 424166 / chair@bridportu3a.org.uk / website www.bridportu3a.org.uk

The u3a Singers Group meets on the first and third Thursdays each month at the WI Hall in North Street, 10am for a 10.30am start. All welcome (no audition). Contact Heather 425219 / www.bridportu3a.org.uk.

Colmer WI meets on the second Thursday each month at 7.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. Visitors welcome to come for a no-obligation evening. Contact Sarah Fletcher sarah.fletcher33@hotmail.co.uk

Citizens Advice is here to help

Need advice on benefits, debt, employment or other issues? Pick up the phone and talk to us on Freephone 0800 144 8848. You can also email us via the contact form at www.bridportca.org.uk or drop in to 45 South Street, Bridport (Mon, Tues & Thurs 10am–3pm, Wed & Fri 10am–1pm).



The Rotary Club of Bridport meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6 for 6.30pm at the Bridport & District Golf Club, Burton Road DT6 4QT. We also hold fundraising and social activities on other dates and elsewhere. We help good causes locally, nationally and internationally and support the local community. Contact Mike Green 07909 990693 / mikegreen@greenmail.net

Bridport Stroke Club meets weekly Sept–Christmas and Feb–July at the Community Room, Vernon’s Court. Contact Chris Farmer: agricols@icloud.com

Bridport Youth Dance offers classes in tap, contemporary, street, urban and musical theatre. To enrol or for more details contact Nikki Northover 07765 971357 / bridportyouthdance01@gmail.com / www.bridportyouthdance.org.uk.

Bridport Community Fridge redistributes surplus food free or for a donation. Usually Tues and Sat 10–11.30am at The Chapel in the Garden, East St. Also at St Swithun’s Church with **Bridport Food Surplus Stall** on Thursdays 9.30–11.30am. See their Facebook page or email events@bridportunitarians.co.uk

Disabled Carers & Friends meet on Thursdays 9am–noon at Vernon’s Court Community Room, South Street. Contact pete.bowditch@hotmail.com / 423620 / 421213 / 427819.

Life+line Bereavement Support is a Parish of Bridport initiative for people of all faiths or none, meeting in a supportive, confidential environment to listen to and encourage one another in our experience of grief. Fourth Monday of every month 2.30–4pm at Greenfields, Bridport Community Hospital. Contact Diana Wright 456967.

Stepping Out Bridport is an exercise and wellbeing programme, led by trained rehabilitation instructors, for people living with or beyond cancer. Monday and Thursday mornings at the Pavilion, Bridport Leisure Centre. All ages welcome. Contact j.perfect@bridportleisure.com. More information at www.steppingoutbridport.co.uk

Bridport St John Ambulance unit meets at TS Keppel, West Allington, on Mondays. Cadets (aged 10–18) 6–7.30pm, adults 7.30–9pm. Volunteers are always welcome to join the unit. For details contact the unit manager: caroline.rendell@sja.org.uk

Girlguiding West Dorset has Rainbow, Brownie, Guide & Ranger groups meeting in Bridport area. Open to girls aged 4+ and adults, we offer an inclusive space for fun and friendship and a wide range of activities within a progressive programme structure offering opportunities and awards. www.girlguiding.org.uk / girlguidingwestdorset@gmail.com

Bellringers in the Parish of Bridport: We always welcome new ringers and are happy to train you on our bells. At St Mary’s Bridport we meet at 7.30pm on Thursdays. Contact Bob Hardwick 420632. At Holy Trinity Bradpole we practise at 7.30pm on Tuesdays. We have a ground-floor ringing chamber and training simulator. Contact Janet Robinson htbrabells@parishofbridport.org

West Bay Harriers are a Bridport-based off-road running group. One-hour trail on country footpaths, etc., every Monday 7pm from in front of The Woodman, South Street. With headtorches in winter. No charge. Contact Pete Brown 07762 257212.

The **National Coastwatch Institution** works with other emergency services to keep people safe along our coastline. Volunteer watchkeepers always needed for lookouts at Burton Bradstock and Charmouth. Contact Station Manager Judy Clarke: judy.clarke@nci.org.uk

Bridport & Lyme Regis Royal Air Forces Assn meets on the second Thursday of the month at 6pm in various locations. Whether currently serving in the RAF, a veteran, a family member, or if you just want to do your bit to help, you are always welcome to join us. Bill Davies: 281200 / buccbill@hotmail.com

Bridport Royal British Legion meets on the third Saturday each month at 10am for a coffee morning. Come along to our hall in Victoria Grove for a chat and to find out about membership and activities.

The newly refurbished hall now has disabled access and is available for hire. Contact Linda 425664 (hall bookings) or Mike Thompson 07974 534945 / mickey_thompson56@hotmail.com (membership).

The Bank of Dreams and Nightmares creative writing charity runs free workshops for children and young adults in local schools and elsewhere. Come and join our Marvellous Mentors supporting children to find their voice. No experience necessary. www.thebankofdreamsandnightmares.org/volunteering

The New Arts Group will next meet at Bridport Town Hall on Thursday 16 January when you are invited to bring along small antiques and curios for expert Marc Allum to talk about. £10 per person to cover costs (no membership fee). Tea/coffee from 1.30pm, talk starts at 2pm. For more details contact jenifer.morley@btinternet.com

Bridport & District Good Neighbour Scheme provides help for people in the community needing transport to medical appointments who cannot use public transport, do not qualify for the hospital car scheme, have no friends or family to help and cannot afford taxi fares. Donation to cover cost of the journey if possible. Contact 07778 211140. →

Golden Cap Association (West Dorset) in support of the National Trust, organises illustrated talks in the United Church Hall, East Street, at 2.30pm. There is no meeting in December, but on Monday 27 January Charlie Wheeler will present 'Abbotsbury Swannery: a year through my lens'. Non-members £5. Contact Sarah Nicks 459855. www.goldencapnt.org.uk

Somerset & Dorset Family History Society (West Dorset Group) meets at Loders Village Hall. Members £1, visitors £3. Email Jane: jferentzi@aol.com

Bridport Dog Training Society has been active for 60+ years and meets on Monday evenings at St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. Contact club secretary Sue Palfrey 07787 289425. A trained dog is a happy dog!

Bridport Art Society is a friendly, non-profit group of artists at all levels of experience which aims to encourage interest in and practice of the visual arts. It holds an annual summer exhibition to celebrate its members' creativity. Find us at www.bridportart.com and on Facebook and Instagram.

Bridport & District RNLI holds five or six events (including Seatown BBQ) each year to raise money. Volunteers always needed. Contact Sadie 07811 470127 or Annie 07790 713156.

Bridport Camera Club meets most Wednesdays from September to May, 7–10pm at Bridport Town Hall. Friendly hub whose members follow all kinds of photographic interests on smartphone, digital camera or film. Non-members £5. Come along to a meeting or visit www.bridportcameraclub.co.uk.

Salway Ash Acoustic Sessions are on the first Tuesday every month at 8pm at the Anchor Inn. Sing, play, join in, listen, enjoy. Contact Harry Britton 421225.

Age UK's Forget-Me-Not dementia support group offers support and information to people living with dementia and their caregivers. Entertainment, speakers and refreshments. Bridport Youth & Community Centre, Gundry Lane, on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 1.30–3pm. £2.50pp. Phone 01305 269444.

Bridport Community Orchard & Allotment group is open to all for sociable monthly working parties in the two orchards in Bridport. The allotment group meets weekly on Thursdays at 2pm to grow and harvest fruit and vegetables together. For dates and details visit www.bridportcommunityorchard.org.uk

Bridport Lions Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm at Haddon House Hotel, West Bay. A social evening frequently also takes place on the fourth Tuesday. We have fundraising events throughout the year raising money to help individuals and groups in our community. Call Sheila Greenaway 07930 636804 / email bridportlionsclub@outlook.com. Website www.bridportlionsclub.org

The Living Tree Cancer Support Group is for anyone affected by cancer: patients, their families, carers and friends. We can help through counselling, complementary therapies, creative activities and simple friendship, all free of charge. Drop-in session every Friday 2.15–4pm at the Friends Meeting House, South St, to relax, talk and meet people. Everyone welcome. 07341 916976 mail@thelivingtree.org.uk / www.thelivingtree.org.uk

Bridport Embroiderers meet in St Swithun's Hall on the third Friday, 10am–3.30pm. Programme includes visiting tutors and caters for beginners and those more experienced in machine and hand embroidery. Many other techniques covered. Monthly fee plus materials. Contact Bridget 07952 517764 / bmtrump@icloud.com

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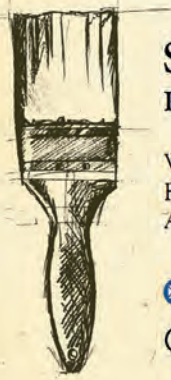


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