

# HOLY TRINITY TAUNTON

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Christmas/January 2025

# *Holy Trinity Service Times*

Services are as follows:

**Sunday**

**8.00am, 10.00am & 4.00pm**

**Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10.00am  
Friday 12.30pm**

**Saturday**

**10.00am and 6.00pm**

**All services will continue to be streamed,  
except for Saturday 6pm and Sunday 8am.**

**Service times may occasionally vary – please see  
weekly notice sheet for details.**

To access streamed services:



@ Holy Trinity Taunton



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Fr Julian can be emailed directly: [frjulianssc@gmail.com](mailto:frjulianssc@gmail.com)



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**FR JULIAN WRITES...**



Christmas/January 2025

I always say to couples preparing for marriage that it may only be in the last couple of weeks before the wedding that they can actually begin to look forward to it. There seems to be an increasing amount to do in preparation, and if ain't done by a fortnight before the event, then it just ain't going to be done. And it's much the same for Christmas. We hurtle around, buying, writing, posting, decorating, but it's only just before the event that we can actually begin to anticipate what it's all about.

There's always a lot of pressure to celebrate Christmas 'properly', although every single one of us has a definition for 'properly', be it food, family, presents or whatever. We are put under pressure, overtly or covertly to ensure we do things 'properly'. Family want things done as they like; food has to be agreeable to all, presents apportioned appropriately, the right drinks got in and so on. We're under pressure from this. Also we have Christmas lights and decorations around from the end of November, adverts all concerned with exhorting us that the more we spend, the more we love or are loved. Even if we don't feel under pressure, actually we are, in some way, all the more so if we haven't the means to 'conform' and so can feel guilty.

I believe we can relieve some of the pressure that we are under, self-imposed or otherwise, by celebrating Christmas 'properly'. What do I mean by that? By actually focussing on what Christmas is really about. The birth of Christ, the light coming into the darkness, God becoming man. The birth of hope, the promise of redemption, the assurance of love and God's favour. I cannot think that God would wish his Son's birth to be marked by anxiety and stress – that surely defeats the object of the exercise?

Many of the carols we sing at Christmas concern peace. We celebrate the birth of Christ, the prince of peace. The angel greeted Mary with words of peace: 'Do not be afraid'. After his resurrection, Jesus' first words were 'Peace be with you'. And as we head into Christmas and into the New Year, we think of the need for peace in Syria, Ukraine, Lebanon, Gaza and the Sudan, amongst many other places; of more covert cyber attacks and espionage by Russia and China.

Cynics might say or think that the birth of Jesus hasn't actually made much practical difference; as prince of peace he would clearly be seen as not doing his job. But let's just think of the words of one carol: 'O hush the noise, ye men of strife...'. It is us who cause the lack of peace, and it is us who have to bring it about: 'and hear the angels sing' is how the carol continues and: 'Peace on earth, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King'.

'It came upon the midnight clear' is, of course, the carol to which I refer. Often only sung at the Midnight Mass for obvious reasons, it actually contains much about the purpose of Christ's birth. It is through him alone that we can find the means to bring about a more peaceful, a more just society and world, when man will no longer be at war with man, and the message of peace is heard above all cries of distress.

So we look forward to Christmas. Now it is with us, and the New Year beckons. Our proper celebration of the festive season doesn't end with the fireworks on New Year's day, but begins with the Saviour's birth and continues, and will continue until the angels' message is fulfilled. And that is up to us. We must listen and learn and act.

May we all be able to celebrate Christmas 'properly', free from stress and debt, and approach the New Year with true hope and expectation that the birth of Christ WILL make a real difference.

With my prayers and all good wishes for a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year,

*Fr Julian*



## LATE DECEMBER & JANUARY SAINTS

### Fr Julian's idiosyncratic selection of saints

Some saints from Christmas-tide and onwards.

**26th: St Stephen** (c5 AD – 34) The first martyr in Christianity, stoned to death for blasphemy by the Jews. The man later to become St Paul, guarded the cloaks at the murder; all this is recounted in the Acts of the Apostles.



**27th: St John Evangelist** (c6 – c100) There are many Johns who are mixed often combined with each other. John the Evangelist is traditionally the 'beloved disciple' and the author of St John's gospel, although scholars now doubt this.



**28th: Holy Innocents** (c7 – 2BC) The dating reflects the consensus that Jesus was not born at 0 AD. There is no mention other than in St Matthew's gospel about the Innocents' massacre, but it fits in with Herod's character.

**29th: St Thomas a'Beckett** (1119/20-1170) Beckett served as Lord Chancellor from 1155 to 1162, and then as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 until his death in 1170. He engaged in conflict with Henry II, King of England, over the rights and privileges of the Church and was murdered by followers of the King in Canterbury Cathedral. Soon after his death, he was canonised by Pope Alexander III. His shrine in Canterbury Cathedral was the most visited in England until the Reformation, when it was destroyed by Henry VIII.



**2nd: St Basil and St Gregory Nazianzen** These two men were friends and were born about 330, in Cappadocia (Turkey). Meeting when studying in Athens, they were influential in combating Arianism, which denied the divinity of Christ. Both were considerable theologians defending the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and themselves formed a

formidable Trinity with Gregory of Nyssa. Together with Basil's brother St Gregory of Nyssa they are known as the 'Cappadocian Fathers' after the area in today's Turkey where they lived and taught.

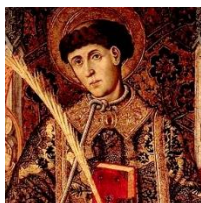
**13th: St Hilary** (c310-367) Born in Poitiers (France) to pagan parents, through studying the Old and New Testaments, he and his wife and daughter became Christians. St Hilary was He was again a defender of the Holy Trinity and another scourge of the Arians. He eventually was elected as Bishop of Poitiers. His name means 'happy' or 'cheerful'; the root of 'hilarious'.



**21st: St Agnes** (c291-c304) is a virgin martyr, who was killed in the Diocletian persecutions because of her Christian faith which antagonised her suitors. Her foster-sister was found praying by her grave, and was stoned to death.



**22nd: St Vincent** (d. c304) Vincent was Spain's protomartyr, living in Saragossa. Ordained deacon, he was commissioned by his bishop Valerius to preach throughout Spain. As Valerius had a speech impediment, Vincent would speak on his behalf. Refusing to deny their Christian faith, both men were martyred, again, under Diocletian.



**28th: St Thomas Aquinas** c. 1225–1274) was an Italian Dominican friar and priest, the foremost Scholastic thinker, as well one of the most influential philosophers and theologians in the Western tradition. He was from the county of Aquino in Sicily.



## COMBINED SERVICE WITH THE GOOD SHEPHERD

As is now our usual custom on the fifth Sunday of the month, we shall be having a joint Parish Mass with our friends from the Good Shepherd, this time at Holy Trinity, on Sunday 29th December.

# CALENDAR FOR CHRISTMAS & JANUARY

The Sundays, readings and themes, and Saints days for Christmas and January are listed below.

24 MIDNIGHT MASS Readings: Isaiah 52.7-10; Heb. 1.1-4; John 1.1-14

25 CHRISTMAS DAY Readings: Isaiah 9.2-7; Titus 2.11-14; Luke 2.1-14

26 Thu S. Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr

27 Fri S. JOHN, APOSTLE & EVANGELIST

28 Sat The Holy Innocents

29 CHRISTMAS 1 *Theme: The Holy Family*

Readings: 1 Samuel 2.18-20 & 26; Colossians 3.12-17; Luke 2.41-52

31 Tue S. Sylvester, Pope (335)

1 Wed The Naming of Jesus

2 Thu SS. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops (379 & 389)

5 THE EPIPHANY *Theme: Revelation*

Readings: Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

12 EPIPHANY 1 *Theme: The Baptism of the Lord*

Readings: Isaiah 43.1-7; Acts 8.14-17; Luke 3.15-17, 21-22

13 Mon S Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, Teacher (367)

17 Fri S. Anthony of Egypt, Hermit. Abbot, (356)

18 Sat *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*



19 EPIPHANY 2 *Theme: The Church's Bridegroom*

Readings: Isaiah 62.1-5; 1 Corinthians 12.1-11; John 2.1-11

20 Mon S. Sebastian, Roman Martyr (3rd C)

21 Tue S. Agnes, Child Martyr at Rome (304)

22 Wed S. Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon, Martyr (c.304)

24 Fri S. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, Teacher (1622)

25 Sat THE CONVERSION OF S. PAUL

26 EPIPHANY 3 *Theme: The Law of the Lord*

Readings: Nehemiah 8.1-3,5-6&8-10; 1 Cor. 12.12-31a; Luke 4.14-21

27 Mon S. Angela Merici, Founder of Ursuline Nuns (1540)

28 Tue S. Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Philosopher, Teacher (1274)

30 Thu Charles I, King & Martyr (1649)

31 Fri S. John Bosco, Priest, Founder of Silesian Order (1888)



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

## SERVICES

Christmas Eve	4.00pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	10.00am Family Mass with Carols
Boxing Day	10.00am Mass (S. Stephen)
Friday 27th	12.30pm Mass & Soup Lunch (S. John the Apostle)
Saturday 28th	10.00am Mass (Holy Innocents)
Sunday 29th	10.00am Parish Mass (The Holy Family)
Sunday 5th	10.00am Parish Mass for the Epiphany

### **THE DAY OF WELCOMING**

*Blessings on the one  
who brings new life to birth,  
who brings goodness to our world,  
who brings joy into our hearts,  
who brings peace to the earth,  
who brings hope to our despair,  
The Saviour, the God who is with us.*

*We praise you, Lord,  
for the marvel of your care  
for the joy of your presence,  
for the gift of your peace  
This Christmas. Amen.*



Contributed by Jane Laurence

# Spotlight on...



## **Jane Laurence**

Most of you will know Jane well but talking to her today I think that she hides her light under a bushel. Let's see what you think.



*Thank you so very much for speaking with me today, Jane, tell us where you came from originally, do you have any family and what did you do for a living?*

I was born in Watford in Hertfordshire and aged three my family moved to Stevenage New Town, as my father (Fr Jeff – I am sure many of you will remember him) took up a new parish there. Aged eight we moved again to Cottered, a village near Stevenage. I went to Ware Girls Grammar School and Stevenage College where I was one of the very first to take psychology at A Level. When my school days were ended, I taught myself touch typing from a book! I attained good speeds, remember it was all manual typewriters in those days, and thus my career in administration was set.

My first job was in Mary Sumner House in Westminster, the HQ of The Mothers' Union. After a year or so I moved to UCL (University College London) where I worked in a Postgrad Department and ended up running it for a while. During this time I lived in a shared house in Kensington which had a Christian Foundation, it was sociable and loosely community based. One of the things I took on whilst there was volunteer visiting at the large mental health unit in Kensington.

Aged 22 I decided to educate myself further and went to the University of Kent at Canterbury to read Theology. There I studied Christianity, Judaism, learned Hebrew, did a module on art history and met Julian in the first class of the first term of our first year! We married in 1981 (before we graduated) and after graduating my first job was at St Edmunds School in Canterbury. I was only there a year as Julian was working in Maidstone so we moved to a village outside Maidstone and eventually I started in the office of the same reinsurance company that he was working for. There I ended up being involved with some of the

accounts and staff training, however Oxford beckoned as Julian was accepted for ordination training, so in 1986 off we went. There I worked initially as secretary to the Vicar of The University Church of St Mary's in Oxford and then became the administrator there, responsible for the day to day running of the church and office. After 2 years, Julian had become Fr Julian, so we went to Yeovil where Fr Julian was curate at St Michael's, then after 3 years we moved across Yeovil when Julian became Vicar of Barwick and Hospital Chaplain. I obtained a post at Yeotec at Yeovil College working with Youth Training (YTS) and Employment Training schemes.

In 1994 we moved to Holy Trinity. I got a temporary post with Mencap but stayed there sixteen years! There I worked in community support, becoming an office manager and latterly having special responsibility for running the inactive side of a national service called the Mencap Visiting Service (MVS) which involved dealing with the parents of people with learning disabilities. This was challenging at times but a role I enjoyed. Just before I left Mencap, I wrote a history of MVS for its 50th anniversary. Unfortunately in 2012 I was made redundant, so I ended my working days in admin in Creech St Michael. Happily retired now I have more time for my interests and hobbies and of course, Holy Trinity where I am involved with the website, the sound system and streaming service and the magazine. I am also a Lay Pastoral Assistant (LPA) for prayer and healing and take part in healing services and other external events.

*My goodness, that's a lot – do you have time for hobbies and interests?*  
I have quite a few interests but in particular I love art, history, reading, Egyptology, travel, jigsaws and more recently, I have taken to gardening. Our poodle Romney takes up quite a lot of my time too!

*What are your particularly proud of?*

Some years ago, I was asked by the Bishop of Bath & Wells to be an Examining Chaplain for the Diocese. This is the part of the diocese's process for assessing candidates to the priesthood. My role was to interview and ask probing questions and then to report back. Here I was able to draw upon all the people skills I gained over the years. I think that this role is the thing I am most proud of and where, maybe, I have made the most difference.



*What would you say is important to you and what does your faith and Holy Trinity mean to you?*

My faith is very important to me, I am a lifelong practicing Christian and that faith has developed over the years. My faith helps me get through both good and bad times and I have a great belief in hope, particularly Christian hope. What Holy Trinity means to me, and this has been said by quite a few in 'Spotlight', is that we are a family and we all continue to build on that family foundation, one where everyone looks out for everyone else.

*Thank you, Jane, you have lived in many places and gained many skills along the way, thank you for sharing them.*

Pauline Holt

## HOLY TRINITY WINNERS

### November 2024

1st	Wendy Burge	£55.00
2nd	Jason Stevens	£33.00
3rd	John & Liz Clarke	£22.00

## SHORTBREAD

Shortbread is widely associated with Christmas and Hogmanay (New Year's Eve) festivities in Scotland having originated there.

My mother had a Scottish father and spent many a Christmas and New Year in Scotland as a child. This being the case, shortbread has always had a part in my family's New Year celebrations. My mother liked to maintain the Scottish tradition of First Footing at Hogmanay where the first person to cross a threshold at Midnight brings a gift which could be coal or some shortbread as these were believed to bring good luck for the year ahead. She usually went outside our house and came back in with a lump of coal and then we would have some shortbread! Fr Julian and I still have shortbread round New Year.

Shortbread was invented in Scotland in the 12th century. It originated from a medieval biscuit bread, which was a twice-baked bread roll

made from leftover dough, sugar, and spices. It was later refined in the 16th century and is often credited to Mary, Queen of Scots, though there is little evidence of this. The refinement likely involved substituting butter for yeast, which gave shortbread its characteristic crumbly texture – hence the name shortbread. The first printed recipe was in 1736, from a Scotswoman named Mrs McLintock. Shortbread was considered expensive so was reserved as a luxury for special times such as Christmas, Hogmanay and weddings hence it became a tradition for these occasions.

Mary has provided a recipe for shortbread (see below). Do try it, It's a great way to start the New Year.

Jane Laurence

## A RECIPE FOR JANUARY

### SHORTBREAD

#### *Ingredients*

100g/4oz Softened butter  
50g/2oz Caster sugar  
150g/5oz Plain flour  
50g/2oz Ground rice



#### *Method*

- Preheat oven at 170° C.
- Cream butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
- Gradually stir in flour and rice.
- Draw the mixture together and roll into a sausage shape about 5cm/2” diameter.
- Using a sharp knife, slice biscuits about 1cm thick.
- Lay on a lined baking tray and cook for 10-15 minutes until lightly brown.
- Dust with caster sugar and cool on a rack.

Mary Patey

# CHRISTMAS FAIR

What a marvellous sum £2,278.25!

I can only echo the general thank you that was given in Church, to those who supported in whatever way or ran stalls. I know and appreciate the hours of work that went into making the fete a success what a great team we are.

I wish I could list everyone who has helped but I'd probably miss someone out and don't want to cause upset by doing so. However I must specifically thank Liz Hathway for managing the raffle ticket sales so efficiently.

The prizewinners are listed below:

- 1st Food and Drink hamper - Liz Clarke
- 2nd Drinks Hamper - David Lovelock
- 3rd £80.00 Riverside Butchers Meat voucher - Wendy Burge
- 4th Champagne & 2 Flutes - Pat Hitchcock
- 5th Cheeseboard, Knives, Port, Stilton & Biscuits - David Lovelock
- 6th £40 Balloon stack - Alys Williams
- 7th All things Chocolate hamper - G Bennett
- 8th Decanter, glasses & mulled wine - Mary Patey
- 9th Tin of Gavottes Crispy Brittany Crepes - Wendy Burge
- 10th Bodyshop Shaving Cream & Mashed Socks - Malcom Witcher
- 11th Pub Quiz - David Lovelock

Crafters Quiz: Mary Patey

Pick a Square: 1st prize	John Petty (No 138) (£40.00)
2nd prize	Kay Fuller (No 43)
3rd prize	Dianne Newton (No 24)

Guess the name of the Christmas Cuddly: the name was David - won by Trudi Watkins.

Thank you all once again for doing what you do so willingly and so well.

Wendy Burge, Social Committee

# WHY CHURCHWARDENS LOVE JANUARY!

Hail to the Lord's anointed,  
Both clergyman and lay!  
But they're seldom disappointed  
To get past Christmas Day!  
The hectic Christmas season is  
Of service constantly –  
There can't be better reason  
To welcome January!



The Curate and the Vicar  
A busy schedule keep,  
As they rush, ever quicker –  
They don't get that much sleep.  
And overworked Churchwardens  
And their sidespersons team –  
Sure don't get time for boredom,  
And only seldom scream!



So, when the season's over,  
The crib has been put by,  
The drapes to green changed over,  
They breathe a heartfelt sigh!  
They laugh and smile with pleasure,  
And sing a merry rhyme,  
But short-lived is their leisure –  
For soon comes Easter time!

By Nigel Beeton from the *Parish Pump*

## PRAYER



*Lord Jesus, our Master, go with us  
while we travel to the heavenly country;  
that, following your star,  
we may not wander in the darkness of this world's night,  
while you, who are our Way and Truth and Light,  
shine within us to our journey's end;  
for your mercy's sake. Amen.*

# THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

## 18 – 25 January 2025

It is now 1,700 years since the First Council of Nicaea. Not many people know that. The Council of Nicaea, in 325, was the very first ecumenical council that the Christian Church ever held. A serious heresy had crept into the Eastern Church: Arianism, which taught that Jesus Christ was not divine, but only human.

To resolve the crisis, the Emperor Constantine called a council and summoned both the Western Church and the Eastern Church. Constantine knew that the Church had to get together and pull in the same direction. They did, and out of that Council came the Nicene Creed.



Get together and pull in the same direction. That is a good description of what Christ's Church on earth should be doing. That is the hope of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

For 2025, the theme of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity focuses on belief, in commemoration of the Council of Nicaea, held so long ago.

The Scripture passage chosen for the worship service is Martha's confession of faith in Jesus, as narrated in John 11:17-27. Jesus had said: 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord,' she replied, 'I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.'

Jesus is the Messiah. He is divine. Mary believed in Him, and so did the Council of Nicaea in 325. And so do hundreds of millions of Christians today.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18th to 25th January – the 'octave' of St Peter and St Paul.

From the *Parish Pump*

## ALL IN THE MONTH OF JANUARY

*It was:*

- 400 years ago, on 13th Jan 1625 that Jan Brueghel the Elder, Flemish artist, died.
- 150 years ago, on 14th Jan 1875 that Albert Schweitzer, German theologian, philosopher, physician, musicologist, writer and humanitarian, was born. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952.
- 100 years ago, on 3rd Jan 1925 that Benito Mussolini declared himself dictator of Italy.
- 80 years ago, on 27th Jan 1945 that the Soviet Red Army liberated Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland. It was the largest Nazi concentration camp and at least 1.1 million prisoners died there.
- 75 years ago, on 6th Jan 1950 that the UK officially recognised the Republic of China and established diplomatic relations.
- Also 75 years ago, on 23rd Jan 1950 that Israel declared Jerusalem was its capital city. Palestine also claims it as its capital.
- 70 years ago, US President Dwight D Eisenhower gave the first televised presidential news conference. The first live conference was given by John F Kennedy in Jan 1961.
- 60 years ago, on 4th Jan 1965 that T S Eliot, American-born British poet, playwright, literary critic and editor died. He won the 1948 Nobel Prize for Literature.
- Also 60 years ago, on 24th Jan 1965 that Winston Churchill died.
- 40 years ago, on 1st Jan 1985 that the first mobile phone call in the UK was made by comedian Ernie Wise. He rang Vodafone's head office in Newbury from St Katherine's Docks in London.
- 25 years ago, on 1st Jan 2000 that the calendar switched over to the year 2000, with no major computer problems from the Y2K 'Millennium Bug'.
- 15 years ago, on 4th Jan 2010 that the Burj Khalifa in Dubai opened. It is the world's tallest structure, standing 2,722 feet (829.8 metres.)
- Also 15 years ago, on 12th Jan 2010 that the Haiti earthquake took place. The capital, Port-au-Prince, was devastated and at least 100,000 people were killed and buried in mass graves.

*From the Parish Pump*





## THE SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

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13 April	The Anchor, Hillfarrance (£10 deposit)
11 May	Pickeridge Golf Club
8 June	The Maypole, Thurloxtton (£5 deposit)

All bookings are for 12.15. Please let me know if you want to come along on the previous Sunday. If you have booked a space but are unable to attend please let me know as soon as possible.

Wendy Burge

### JANUARY CHARM by Nigel Beeton

*It's January, a month most people dislike. It's cold, Christmas is over, it's ages till spring, what is good to say about it? I disagree! Hence this poem.*



The jewel-encrusted branches  
As hoar frost leaves its touch;  
The snowscape that entrances  
That's what I love so much!  
The starlight's diamond splendour  
The peaceful, icy calm;  
It's easy to surrender  
To January charm.



**MAGAZINE DEADLINE:** Wednesday 22nd January 2025

 Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year 

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# PARISH DIRECTORY

VICAR	Fr Julian Laurence	01823 337890
HON. ASST. CLERGY	Bishop Michael Langrish Fr James Finnemore	
LAY PASTORAL ASSISTANTS	Mrs Jane Laurence } Mrs Jenni Llewellyn }	01823 354800 (Church Office)
CHURCHWARDENS	Mr John Godley } Mrs Jenni Llewellyn }	01823 354800 (Church Office)
DEPUTY CHURCHWARDEN	Mrs Liz Hathway }	
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	Mrs Jo Bailey / Mrs Charis Cavaghan-Pack	
DEDICATED SAFEGUARDING LINE		07596 223932
PARISH OFFICE	Administrator: Mrs Pauline Holt	354800
PCC Vice-Chairman	Mr Geraint Jones	01823 284376
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Pauline Holt	(Church Office) 354800
PCC Secretary	Mr Keith Penny	(Church Office) 354800
Electoral Roll Secretary	Mr Richard Tomlinson	(Church Office) 354800
Data Protection	Mr Keith Penny	(Church Office) 354800
Organist & Choir Trainer	Mr Simon Gaunt	01984 641584
Editor of 'Outlook'	Mrs Jane Laurence	01823 337890
'Outlook' advertising	Parish Administrator	01823 354800
Sacristan	Mrs Jenni Llewellyn	01823 354800
Captain of Bellringers	Mrs Margaret Jordan	07972 524557
Church Flowers	Mrs Sylvia Paul	01823 279436
Hall Booking Secretary	Parish Administrator	01823 354800
Trinity Church School	Trinity School, South Street	01823 284128
Head of School	Ms Lisa Eadie	

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