

CRATFIELD NEWS

February 2025



SOUP LUNCH

**Something to warm you up in chilly February
Come along and enjoy a bowl of soup, some bread, tea and cake
VILLAGE HALL 12 – 2PM
WEDNESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY**

Quiz Night at Cratfield Village Hall

Friday 21st March 7.00pm

with quiz master Ian Thompson

Admission 2.50 per person – teams of 4

Light refreshments included

Funds raised will go to Brighter Future International brighterfuture.org.uk

who run two children's homes in Andhra Pradesh, India. Their work also focuses on helping people affected by leprosy and HIV.

Susan & Graham Nixey

Frost, Food, Farming, Flames, Fellowship.

The temperature was well below freezing – but what a fabulous warm, fun and uplifting Benefice service for the Plough Sunday we had at Cratfield on 12th January. We were delighted to welcome Archdeacon Sally Gaze to our service, who spoke to us and blessed the very large plough and tractor in the churchyard and the horse plough inside. We also blessed seeds, water and tools. Rev'd Clive reminded us of his trip to Kagera in Tanzania and how farming and ploughing is so different in Africa. The donations from the service will go directly to a water tank project in a village Clive visited.

Together we all said the East African Masai creed. The simple but profound words of this profession of faith included the line “Jesus, left His home and was always on safari doing good.” What a wonderful lesson to us and example for us to follow, the word safari literally means journey. So we journeyed outside extending the hand of friendship to all, warmed ourselves by the bonfire and had delicious soup. This was the first of our rural festival services – look out for more – next up is Rogation Sunday on 25th May. Many thanks to all who came along and helped make the service a memorable occasion.

Sheila Pipe – Bridge4Rivers Lightwave team

The Little Green Man

When I was small of years and stature
A time of year to clap and capture
Was that of Christmas time.
Holly berries and fairy lights
Shop windows bright with festive sight,
Family games with music and mime.

Christmas morn was long awaited
I crept downstairs with breath abated
To see what I might get.
An orange, nuts, a chocolate bar
A kit to build, but best by far
Two trucks and track for my train set.

One year I had from Santa's sack
A book with cover all gold and black,
It's title "Tales of Wonder".
I loved that book full of manifold glories
With dragons. Demons and adventurous stories.
Reading caused my mind to wander
In realms of the imagination where I found
Knights, strange beasts, legends wound around
Mythical creatures like pixies and elves
Of phantom and fable these childhood tales
Stayed with me, their fascination never fails
To give me gentle pleasure for themselves.

Hark! A tale of wonder is yet maintained
The myth of the elf is firm retained
But now in re-imagined form.
A cheerful, helpful magical creature
In Cratfield village now a transient feature
Doing good in all its norms
We know not where it bides and sleeps
Only that it finds and keeps
A recognition of all people, who habit Cratfield town.
We can but give our grateful thanks
For this small elf, who with his pranks
Brings joy to assuage the hard world's frown.

I still have my Christmas book, it smiles out from the shelves
And still holds in fading print its store of sprites and elves,
But the fanciful figures which inhabit these pages
Are late reminiscence of earlier ages
In later life now I find real satisfaction
Of seeing first-hand the generous action
That emanates from The Cratfield Elf.

Anon

CRATFIELD NEWS

It has often occurred to me what unsung heroes we have in the production team for our monthly magazine, Cratfield News: but then last month, our editor kindly paid tribute to our contributors and, quite rightly, to those who deliver the magazine every month in all weathers! However, this was without so much as a mention of the immense hard work involved in producing the magazine in the first place. This self-effacing modesty must not continue! Something must be done about it! So... through the medium of email, I 'interviewed' our editor, Sue, to learn more about what is involved.

History

Going back to the 80's, the predecessor to the 'News was the Cratfield Chronicle: this was similar to today's magazine, but there were no articles – it contained mostly notices and adverts. This came to an end but in the 1990s, we had the Parish Magazine which catered mostly for church matters across the benefice. Cratfield News, as we know it today, was set up in 2004 by Dawn Nowell and Sue Eade who acted as joint editors. Natalie McKay replaced Dawn in 2010, but stepped down in 2014 to focus on what was to become her highly successful writing career.

Before Cratfield obtained its own printer, production was done at Laxfield Vicarage and later at Brundish Village Hall using the Benefice photocopier.

Cratfield News today

The magazine is fully funded from selling advertising space; this pays for the paper, ink and printing costs. Advertisers generally approach the production team for space. From 2004-2019 Geoff Moore was treasurer now Graham Nixey runs this part of the operation, controlling the finances, sending out invoices, chasing payment and so on. The magazine covers its own costs and occasionally a kind voluntary donation is made to boost the coffers!

Sue receives contributions for the magazine (for which, she says, she is "always immensely grateful!") – and if any spaces need filling, she adds recipes, poems and quizzes accordingly! She then juggles with the layout, adjusting font size, paragraphs and pictures before we get the finished magazine ready for printing.

When using the Benefice photocopier became no longer viable in 2015 Pete Sparrow, Production Manager, stepped in to help, he makes further tweaks to the layout before doing the print run, which numbers 2,100 sheets of A4! These are then returned to Nick and Sue. Thankfully, the printer ensures that the pages are in the correct order, but the task of separating out, then folding and stapling 175 magazines is no small task. Sue says that they have it

“down to a fine art” (taking “about an hour and a half, flat out”) but, nevertheless, they have our admiration for doing this month after month for so many years! Sue says that she probably spends about 12 – 15 hours on the magazine, every month.

What about holidays and illness? Sue says: “I have, on several occasions, put the mag together whilst on holiday. (We have) only ever once missed one issue, way back when Dawn was ill. I put out an A4 flyer with one or two notices.”

When completed, magazines are bagged up and delivered to our team of volunteer distributors who come around and push copies into letterboxes, far and wide. They are: Julie & Andy (34 copies), Rebecca & Robert (28), Dan & Linzi (30), Andrew (20), Maisie (25), Mary (17), Andy & Richard (18). The Cratfield News really is the lifeblood of the village; in tandem with the Village Hall committee who arrange so efficiently the schedule of varied events for our village - and Cratfield Concerts - it's the magazine that keeps us informed about what is going on; with our fantastic events and committed group of volunteers producing our informative magazine, our vibrant community is bound together – something we can all have pride in.

So, as the magazine enters its 21st year of production, we must say a massive ‘Thank you’ to Sue, Nick, Pete, Graham, and our great team of volunteers. What you do for us is invaluable.

Andrew Weight

FEBRUARY

February is the border between winter and spring.

In February, nature reminds us that even in the coldest moments, beauty can still flourish.

February teaches us the value of patience as we eagerly await the arrival of spring's vibrant colours.

In February there is everything to hope for and nothing to regret.

Without Valentine's Day, February would be, well, January!

There is always in February some one day, at least, when one smells the yet distant, but surely coming, summer.

MICHAEL OLIVER

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Cllr Dan Elford Tel: 01986 798649 - Village collection

Cllr Richard Chivers Tel: 07900 187350 - Silverleys Green collection

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ICS

REGISTERED MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF CHIMNEY SWEEPS

These pages are normally devoted to Jeremy's nautical tales, however the Parish Council feel that the following is of importance at the moment. Never fear Jeremy will be back next month with another interesting story.

HEDGE TRIMMING

Winter is the traditional time for many forms of woodland/tree management, hedge trimming, hedge laying, pollarding and coppicing. These all rely on a tree's extraordinary ability to regenerate itself. When a tree is under attack and cannot continue with its normal growth cycle, it's had its main trunk or branches cut off or it's been attacked by disease, it will try to replace this growth with new fresh shoots. The oldest known living organisms in England are coppiced trees in the south west, thought to be well over a thousand years old. People first started coppicing trees, typically hazel, chestnut and willow, back in the neolithic period. A hazel tree would be cut close to the ground. Next spring three or more shoots would appear. In five or six years these shoots would have grown into useable, strong sticks which would be cut and the whole process would start again. Examples of coppiced woodland can be found in several of the small woods around Cratfield. A good example of pollarding are the three horse chestnut trees outside the church. They were, I believe, diseased and in danger of dropping branches on people's heads. The main trunk was cut down at about three metres and about ten years later we are rewarded with three vibrant, healthy trees.

Hedge laying relies on this ability to regenerate growth. A hedge will be thinned out and detritus removed including ivy and bramble. Suitable branches will be partially cut and bent over until parallel to the ground. The hedge then cut to a manageable height and staked with wooden supports (hazel coppice stays are ideal) until the spring growth takes a hold. The parallel branches sprout shoots and fresh growth appears all over the hedge. Any holes and gaps can be filled with sprouting branches. Again there are lovely examples of recent professionally laid hedges on the Halesworth road going through Chediston and at the beginning of Manse Lane in Cratfield. As far as wildlife goes, there are two trains of thought. Some say all the fresh growth associated with a recently laid hedge offers greater feeding potential and habitat for both insect and vertebrates than on old, overgrown hedge with less new growth. Others think the greater volume of hedge and detritus associated with an overgrown hedge offers the better option.

It is a legal responsibility, however, that if you own a hedge that borders a footpath (pavement) then that hedge must not restrict people's ability to walk along the footpath. There are about twenty houses in the village

that have a footpath outside their house. Suffolk County Council have been rather active in telling some of these households to cut their hedges back. While the 1.2 metre path width requested by the County Council seems excessive, there are very few places where the tarmacked footpath could be that wide, but it is only reasonable that people are able to walk safely along the path.

So if your hedge has turned onto a bush, then now is the time to trim it. Just think, you'll be able to sit back and enjoy all that lovely spring growth.

Cratfield Parish Council

Mobile Library Dates 2025
Silverleys Green 14.00 – 14.20
The Poacher 14.30 – 14.45

February 18th, March 18th, April 15th, May 13th, June 10th,
July 8th, August 8th, September 2nd, 30th, October 28th, November 25th,
December 23rd.

Printer Cartridge Recycling

Printer cartridge recycling will aid **MacMillan Cancer Support**.

A box of 2- cartridges could raise about £10, depending on size and brand. Empty/used cartridges without packaging are accepted, as are unused or out of date ones within packaging.

Both original and recycled types are accepted.

Laser/toner cartridges are **NOT** accepted.

If you would like to dispose of your printer cartridges and support this worthy cause there will be a box for collection at the back of the church by the book shelves.

Cratfield Allotment to Rent



CPC has a large allotment available from the 1st October for Cratfield residents.

For further details contact the Parish Clerk:

Tel: 07774 734411 or Email: clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk

Dad jokes!

1. "I've just been diagnosed as colourblind. Surprised me too, straight out of the pink!"
2. "I used to be addicted to the hokey pokey, but I managed to turn it around."
3. "Last night my wife and I watched three films back to back. Luckily, I was the one facing the TV."
4. "What do I like about living in Switzerland? Well, for one thing the flag is a big plus."
5. "Why can't you hear a Pterodactyl go to the bathroom? Because the pee is silent."
6. "I'm terrified of elevators, so I'm going to start taking steps to avoid them."
7. "I bought shoes from a drug dealer once. I don't know what he laced them with, but I was tripping all day."
8. "What did the buffalo say to his son when he left for school? Bison."
9. "Whatever you do, don't trust atoms. They make up everything."
10. "This graveyard must be very popular, people are just dying to get in here."
11. "I used to hate facial hair... But then it grew on me."

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VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – FEBRUARY

A FRESH LICK OF PAINT..

Since we had our beautiful new floor laid in the bar area and back lobby, we were very conscious how tired the rest of these areas now looked. Many thanks to those volunteers from the committee who gathered on a very cold night to move everything out of these areas for the decorators to move in for 3 days to sand, fill and paint. And, to the volunteers who came back out (fuelled by coffee and cake) to put everything back. All managed with no disruption to any hall bookings or hirers – no mean feat!

POP UP PUB – FRIDAY 7th FEBRUARY / 7th MARCH 6 – 9pm

Many thanks to all our volunteers on the rota and everyone 'behind the scenes' who enable this monthly event to happen. We get lovely feedback on the evenings – and now have quite a band of regulars who come from the surrounding villages too as word about the good food and community spirit spreads.

The menu from Cratfield Kitchen is posted on the village Facebook (search Cratfield Village on Facebook) the Monday before – so do check it out to see what is on offer.

RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN – FRIDAY 14th MARCH 10am – 12noon

It has been a few years since the Rural Coffee Caravan came to see us. Do come along for some company and a catch up with your neighbours over a cup of tea or coffee – with biscuits and home-made cakes too! There will be a wide range of information available on local services and opportunities should you need it, along with the free refreshments.

VILLAGE HALL TALK – SATURDAY 12TH APRIL – 7 FOR 7.30 / £6 on the door

St Kilda: beautiful, remote, dangerous – and its lost civilisation

Andrew Weight's stories about his trips to the Scottish islands have been featured in our magazine for some time now and we have reached the point in his adventures where he spends several days on the hard-to-reach and unforgettable St Kilda.

Designed as a companion to these articles, Andrew will be giving a talk and also showing excerpts from the film he made of his travels there; this also includes archive footage of the St Kildans making perilous rock climbs to harvest seabirds and eggs, and their dangerous seafaring exploits. In St Kilda, death was always around the corner from the moment you were born: in addition, Victorian visitors brought germs to which the St Kildans had no immunity, having lived in total isolation for 1,000s of years. Their numbers

decimated, the remaining 36 islanders sadly evacuated in 1930, unable to continue with their unique way of life. Fine Scottish fayre and a dram of whisky (or two!) available during the interval!

BOOK NOW VIA cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com

INDOOR BOWLS – ALTERNATE TUESDAYS – ! UPDATED DATES BELOW FOR 2025 !

Dates for 2025 = February 4 + 18 / March 4 + 18 / April 1 + 15 + 29 / May 20 / June 3 + 17 / July 1 + 15 + 29 / August 19 / September 2 + 16 + 30 / October 14 + 28 / November 25/ December 9. Do come along and have a go – no experience required – all good fun! Tea & Coffee available and there is a suggested donation of £2 to play. Any queries please contact Nigel 07445351861 or Elliott 07963676207.

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – FEBRUARY WINNERS

The winners for February are: 1st prize (£15) number 35 - Shirley Symonds; 2nd prize (£10) number 59 - Mark Aryaenia and 3rd prize (£5) number 64 - Colin Bain. Draw by D Britton; congratulations to all the winners!

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

CRATFIELD DOG SHOW – SUNDAY 4TH MAY

MURDER MYSTERY & FOOD NIGHT – SATURDAY 19TH JULY

CLASSIC CAR EVENT – SUNDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL MEETINGS – 7.00pm

Thursday 13th February / 15th May / 14th August / 13th November + Open Forum/AGM/Committee Meeting

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February Recipe – Tagliatelle with lamb meatballs and artichokes

Ingredients (serves 2)

1 garlic clove Pinch of flaky sea salt 10 pitted green olives (chopped)
250g lamb mince 25g breadcrumbs (fresh or dried) 1 medium egg splash of
olive oil 400g tin artichokes (halved, liquid reserved) 150g single cream 1 tsp
dried oregano 100g dried tagliatelle bunch of parsley (leaves chopped) parmesan
to serve

Method

1. Roughly chop garlic, add to pestle and mortar with a pinch o flaky sea salt. Grind to a paste, then add the olives and grind those too. In a mixing bowl combine the paste with the mince, breadcrumbs, egg and plenty of salt and pepper. Roll into 10 equal balls
2. Heat a splash of oil in a shallow pan with a lid over a high heat, add the meatballs and brown all over. Tip in the artichokes, along with the liquid, then the cream and oregano. Turn the heat down to medium simmer and cook with lid on for 5 minutes, then lid off for 5 minutes
3. Cook the tagliatelle for 10 minutes. Drain and add to the meatballs, then stir in the chopped parsley and some parmesan. Reserve a little of each to garnish.



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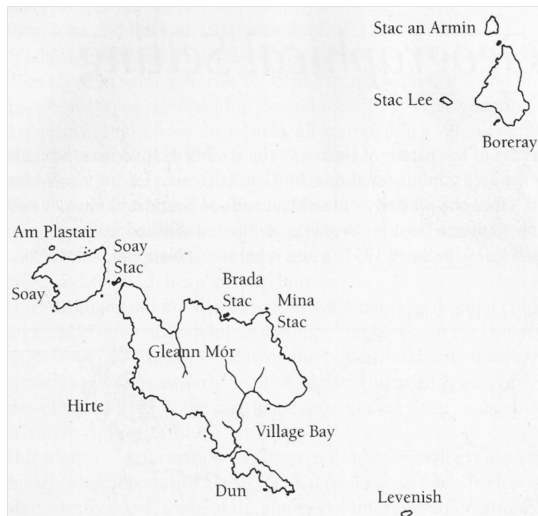
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Exploring the Scottish Islands – with a collapsible bike!
St Kilda (Population: 0 – last inhabitants evacuated in 1930)
Part 4: The St Kildan way of life (ii)



Last month, I described how the island of Soay was used as a natural 'sheep pen' – other islands had their uses too. Dun – a finger of land separated from Hirta by a narrow channel and covered in lush clover grass – was used solely for wintering young lambs. Boreray, 4 miles away, was also tended throughout the year. In the Spring, a group would go there to collect eggs and count their Blackfaced sheep (sheep would be lost, being blown over the rocks). In June, they went to take the wool from the sheep (using penknives!) and a third visit was made, in early Autumn, to kill young gannets. The main visit, though, was the one in summer where half a dozen men

(chosen by lot) would stay on Boreray for about two weeks. None of the islands were easy to gain access to and Boreray was no exception, landing being akin to mountaineering on seaweed-covered near-vertical slopes from a boat heaving up and down 15 feet with the swell – but they would bring their dogs with them (good climbers also, by necessity), which were invaluable for rounding up the sheep. (Now feral on Boreray, the sheep are classed as a rare breed, they're described as 'originating from the archipelago' and, indeed, are called 'The Boreray Blackface'.) The men would overnight in a half-underground dwelling, which consisted of a main chamber with sleeping areas coming off it. Previous visits would've ensured that there was a supply of peat ready for the fire, and a pre-lit, glowing peat would be brought with them in a pot as a fire-starter: bird nests also made excellent kindling! ...And a well on the island provided fresh drinking water.

The St Kildans, when working on Boreray, had a unique method of communication with Hirta, the main island, 4 miles away: the grassy slopes of Boreray could be seen from a high point on Hirta and the men would remove a 12 foot square patch of turf, leaving a square brown patch, highly visible against the green of the grass. This could be seen by those keeping watch on Hirta, and the position of the brown square meant different things: a square on the southern slope meant that their work was finished and they were ready to return. If the brown square was offset to one side, it meant that they were short of food – offset to the other side indicated injury or death. The St Kildans were primarily cragsmen, with crofting being a secondary occupation. The archipelago is described by UNESCO as supporting the 'largest seabird colony in the north-east Atlantic'. The seabirds are numerous (estimated at a million), with gannets, fulmars and puffins in vast numbers. Despite the islanders harvesting very many birds, and their eggs, for both sustenance and by-products (mostly as 'rent' payments), the population of the birds never waned markedly; in fact, the harvesting had to be done on an industrial scale, because the birds (once prepared and salted) had to keep a whole village in meat through the long, harsh winter months ahead.

To be fully prepared for winter, the entire year had to be carefully choreographed: by the end of August, after the fulmar harvest but before that of the gannet, it was time to harvest the crops. This was a critical operation as a sudden storm or a lashing of rain could destroy the entire harvest, so everyone, young and old, worked on this from dawn till dusk and beyond. Most winters, the cattle were kept in hay but at times when supplies fell short, one of the first tasks of the women (who sometimes did more hard, physical work than the men) was to go and pick grass from the ledges that were inaccessible to the sheep: dangerous work, but it had to be done. (There were certain jobs that the men simply didn't do: they were apparently very good at shouting, arms folded, at the women though!)

However, the men and boys came into their own when it came to their death-defying feats of bravery at giddy heights on the vast cliffs and near-vertical rock stacks... more next month.



Anne MacKinnon and son Finlay, carrying harvested fulmars ashore – Boreray and Stacs in the background.

Next month: Part 5 - More on the St Kildan way of life

Andrew Weight

Cratfield Parish Council

Meeting Dates 2025

All meetings are held in The Village Hall, Manse Lane, Cratfield, IP19 0DJ

- Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 7.30 pm
– Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 7.30 pm

The agenda is displayed on village noticeboards and on CPC's website (<https://cratfield-pc.gov.uk>) three days before the meeting. Planning meetings and additional meetings may be arranged as needed.

~ Members of the Public are Welcome to Attend all Meetings ~

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Email: clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk or Tel: 07774 734411

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Spring Workshops ...

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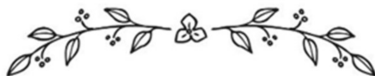
Mar 22nd: Woodfire Cooking II - The Ember Edition

Mar 23rd: Spoon Carving and Supper

Apr 27th: Folk Painting and Supper

May 17th: Foray & Fire Cooking

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Mace

Dear Friends,

Well, I am now ensconced in the Vicarage in Noyes Avenue and slowly settling into a new way of life.

I mentioned last month the Awayday due to take place on 25th January at Wilby Village Hall which will be chaired by Archdeacon Rich and attended by Katie De Bourcier who has a leading role in 'Leading your Church in Growth' (LyCiG for short!) in the diocese. This will help to form the platform for the ongoing development of the Four Rivers Benefice of churches. A variety of people from across the benefice attended the launch at the Debenham Leisure Centre last summer and it is something upon which we can build, dare I say, and grow the Kingdom of God together. I am hoping that there will be objectives agreed at the Awayday by our eight parishes describing how we will work together to sustain our communities in the love of God.

It would be remiss of me if I didn't mention the Plough Sunday service held at St Mary's, Cratfield on 12th January at which the majority of parishes were represented. Thank you to the Lightwave Team led by Sheila Pipe for putting together a service which explored the very roots of rural life with Gerald Western responding to questions put to him by Archdeacon Sally about the horse plough which had been brought into church. There was also a focus upon Kagera, Kenya, and I am sure there will be more news in about the sponsoring of a water tower for our 'adopted' village as the project continues. The service culminated with us all leaving the church to circle the huge modern plough, and everybody shook hands as we gathered. Andy provided great warmth in the traditional Cratfield way, and we ended the morning with home-made soup and rolls – much needed in the cold air!

I could not help but reflect that morning on the beauty of our countryside in the thick frost as I drove over to Cratfield and imagined the contrast with what the people of California were experiencing with those horrendous fires.

I wonder where might we be this time next year? In the words of Archdeacon Rich, we need to get out there and shine!! Shine with the light of Christ in everything we do and nurture new growth as we sow seeds and germinate the growth of the Kingdom in the Four Rivers Benefice.

Prayers and blessings, Revd Chrissie

February CRATFIELD CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 9th	Sunday 23rd
6.00pm Evening Prayer	9.30am Holy communion
Isaiah 6:1-8,(9-end) 1 Cor 15:1-11 Luke 5:1-11	Gen 2:4b-9, 15-end Revelation ch. 4 Luke 8:22-25

February BENEFICE SERVICES

February	2nd	9th	16th	23rd
Bedfield		10.30am Holy Com- munion		10.30am Morning Praise
Brundish			10.30am Holy Com- munion Candlemas	
Laxfield	10.30am Celtic Service	10.30 Morning Praise	10.30am Holy Com- munion	6.00pm Hartismere House
Monk Soham	11.00am Family Service Candlemas	11.00am BCP Morning Prayer	11.00am Holy Com- munion	
Tanning- ton	11.00am Holy Commun- ion			
Wilby		10.30am Village Wor- ship	10.30am Village Wor- ship	10.30am Holy Com- munion
Worling- worth	Support Tan- nington	11.00am Holy Com- munion	11.00am Let's Cele- brate	11.00am Morning Pray- er

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