

# ST LEONARD'S CHURCH SANDRIDGE

## PARISH MAGAZINE

### FEBRUARY 2026



DIARY FOR FEBRUARY  
LETTER FROM OUR VICAR  
CHRISTMAS EVENTS & SERVICES ROUND UP  
SPENCER HALL IN SANDRIDGE  
CRAFT CHURCH 2026  
CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS  
PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

## FEBRUARY DIARY

Sunday 1 Feb	10am	Holy Communion with hymns
Tuesday 3	10am	Traditional Holy Communion
Sunday 8	10am	Holy Communion with hymns
Tuesday 10	10am	Traditional Holy Communion
Sunday 15	10am	Holy Communion with hymns
<b>Wed 18</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>	
	10am	Holy Communion with imposition of ashes
<b>Saturday 21</b>	<b>10-12</b>	<b>Craft Church: the theme is Purple</b>
Sunday 22	10am <b>4pm</b>	Holy Communion with imposition of ashes <b>Compline</b>
Tuesday 24	10am	Traditional Holy Communion



## MARCH DIARY

Sun 1 March	10am <b>4pm</b>	Holy Communion with hymns <b>Compline</b>
Tuesday 3	10am	Traditional Holy Communion
Sunday 8	10am <b>4pm</b>	Holy Communion with hymns <b>Compline</b>
Tuesday 10	10am	Traditional Holy Communion
<b>Sunday 15</b>	<b>Mothering Sunday</b>	
	10am	Holy Communion with hymns



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**The church is open daily from 10.00am until at least 3.00pm**  
*Cover photo by Peter Hyde of Sandridge's postbox topper*

## Letter from our Vicar

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Some years ago we went on a short break to Salzburg in Austria. I remember it was March 2020 – because Austria went into lockdown during our visit! But before that happened, we'd had a lovely few days with our children and their partners. One day the female contingent went on a coach tour of the places featured in the film *The Sound of Music*, which is of course based on the real-life story of the von Trapp family under Nazi occupation. It was great fun, driving from one familiar site to another, drinking lukewarm white wine and singing along to the soundtrack.

That trip reminds me of two things: firstly, that when times are hard we need to think of our favourite things. Not necessarily raindrops on roses, or whiskers on kittens. We all have our favourite things. For some of us, life may be hard for specific reasons - finances, relationships, or health perhaps. For others of us it may be the general sadness caused by the short grey cold days. But all of us can try to think positive thoughts. If you are struggling with that, let me give you one to hold onto. God loves you. He loves you a vast amount and he loves you exactly as you are. He prefers it when you are feeling happy. He doesn't necessarily want you to be in the situation you are in. But whether you are in a good place or not, believe this incredible truth. God loves you.

The second thing the trip reminds me of is the fragility of our lives. That glimpse of life in Austria during World War II, no matter how wrapped up in charming song and dance, reminds us that peace and safety cannot be relied upon. It reminds us that our lives can be turned upside down in a short moment. One day I was on holiday, the next I was returning home, in a mask, in a plane full of apprehension. When times are hard, many of us turn to God in prayer. Perhaps because a problem shared is a problem halved, or because it gives us comfort and hope to talk to such a great listener. And when times are good, it is a joyful thing to acknowledge that and give thanks.

Do remember the church is open every day for personal prayer and you can always leave a prayer on our prayer tree, or take away a suitable prayer from the prayer station. Please also remember that Sundays at 10.00am are a time of shared prayer and thanksgiving and all are welcome. And know that God hears each and every one of our prayers: whether sung in a hymn, whispered in the darkness or sent as an unformed thought.

I pray that 2026 will be a year of peace for you, in which you feel the endless love of Almighty God.

**Revd Wendy**

## House Lane Churchyard

At this time of year there is generally less maintenance to do in the churchyards. However, one task that happens a month or so after Christmas is a tidy up in the House Lane churchyard to remove Christmas tributes. At the same time there is also a general tidy to remove dead plants, plant pots, broken items, breakable items and so on from the graves. If you would like to retrieve a tribute from a grave then **please do so before Friday 6 February** as, weather and all other things permitting, the clearance will happen on Saturday 7 February. Any offers of help with this are most welcome.

The Diocese has recently released new versions of the Churchyard Regulations 2025 and the Churchyards Handbook: Guide for Families. These are apparently only slightly different from the old versions. Both can be easily accessed via the St Albans Diocesan website, and should also be on our own website too. A paper copy is kept in the church porch.

In summary, there is very little which can be put on a grave in a churchyard apart from living cut flowers and small pot plants. Please do not add or renew any edging or chippings of any kind, which are unauthorised due to the maintenance and safety issues they raise. If you have any queries at all, we'd be most grateful if you could contact us, using the form on our website, before placing something on a grave.

As this magazine is published, we will be coming to the end of the time when people can comment on our application to remove some trees and shrubs from particular graves. You will need to make contact urgently if you feel this affects you in any way. The holly trees are self-seeded and, together with another shrub and a conifer, need to be removed to ensure the graves, and those around them, remain usable in the future.

*Revd Wendy Sellers*

### From the Registers

#### Burial of Ashes:

15 November 2025 – Kelvin John Gaines

10 January 2026 – Judith Mary Cooper





## Lent 2026

It is amazing to think that we are almost in Lent already and turning our faces and our lives towards Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Easter is a 'moveable feast' and this year falls on Sunday 5 April.

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday**, which this year is **Wednesday 18 February**. Traditionally, we are marked with a cross in ash on our foreheads (a sign of mourning) and these words are used: *"Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ"*

'Ashing' is offered on **Ash Wednesday at our 10.00am service** and on the following **Sunday, 22 February, also at 10.00am**. We are marked with a cross in ash to symbolise our intention to live better lives. As the season is one of penitence and reflection, it is hoped we will all think about our lives and how we can improve both who we are and, most importantly, our relationship with God.

This year we have decided on an exciting new development and will be offering the service of **Compline on Sundays throughout Lent** (but not on Mothering Sunday). The dates are:

**Sundays 22 February, 1, 8, 22 and 29 March.**

The service will start at **4.00pm** and last about half an hour; refreshments will be offered from 3.30pm. Compline is an ancient and beautiful service to close the day and will take place in our even more ancient chancel which will be candle-lit. Each service will include a short reflection on the nature of prayer and the encouragement for us all to find ways to connect with God.

As ever, all are most welcome at these services. No-one is expected to attend every time, to contribute to the service (unless they wish to) or indeed to donate. Compline will simply offer a time of calm within our wonderful church.

***Revd Wendy Sellers***

## Musical Storytelling for Christmas

### A concert by Alban Duo

On Sunday 14 December, we were treated to another lovely festive concert by Alban Duo (aka Emma and Stephanie) with a delightful mix of Christmas and classical favourites, played by four hands on one piano. Emma and Steph had the same piano teacher at school and it was she who first suggested they might like to play duets together. The rest, as they say, is history!



After the concert, the audience enjoyed some Christmassy bites and nibbles in the Roland King room, washed down with a glass or two of Prosecco. There was no admission charge but the girls invited donations to two charities: St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme and St Leonard's church. Thanks to the generosity of the audience, £330 was shared between the two charities.



If you've never heard the girls play, do keep an eye out next Christmas, when it's hoped they will play for us again, in what's fast becoming an annual event.

***Ros Adlard***  
***Magazine Editor***

***Photos: Peter Hyde***



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*St Albans Bach Choir is a Registered Charity: No. 285602*

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# SANDRIDGE WINTER FUNDRAISER

# QUIZ NIGHT

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## **Spencer Hall, Sandridge: The Heart of the Community and the Perfect Venue for Every Occasion**

Tucked in the centre of Sandridge village, Spencer Hall has long been one of Hertfordshire's most welcoming and versatile community venues. Whether you're planning a weekly class, hosting a celebration, or searching for a reliable space for your organisation's activities, Spencer Hall offers the ideal blend of convenience, comfort and character.

The hall's bright, spacious interior provides a flexible backdrop for an impressive range of uses. Regular hirers value the generous floor space, excellent acoustics and easy layout that suits everything from fitness classes and dance groups to craft workshops, children's activities and community meetings. With seating for around 120 people, the hall is equally suited to larger gatherings, performances and social events. Its neutral décor allows every group to make the space their own, whether for a recurring session or a one-off event, and the hall can be configured to suit a wide range of layouts. The adjoining bar area provides a welcoming social space for breaks or post-event gatherings.

For those planning private celebrations, Spencer Hall delivers all the essentials for a memorable occasion. The fully licensed bar and ample room for dining, dancing or entertainment make it a popular choice for birthdays, anniversaries, family parties (bouncy castles are permitted) and celebrations of life. The hall's location beside Sandridge Rovers Football Club and Sandridge Cricket Club adds to its appeal, offering generous parking and a sense of being part of a lively, well-loved community hub.

Local organisations frequently choose Spencer Hall for its reliability and ease of access. The hall sits conveniently on Sandridge High Street, making it simple for guests to find and attend events. Its management team is known for being supportive, responsive and committed to helping hirers run successful activities. Many groups return year after year, drawn by the hall's practicality and the warm, community-minded atmosphere that surrounds it.

Spencer Hall isn't just a venue; it's a place where the community comes together, where ideas grow and where memories are made. For regular bookings or special occasions, it remains one of Sandridge's most dependable and inviting spaces - ready to welcome your event, your group, or your celebration.

**For enquiries please contact Colin Neal:  
c.neal2@sky.com or 07747 875172**

## Sandridge Evening WI

Having our keep-fit speaker call off at the last minute didn't deter us from doing our own thing! With a CD of ABBA, and our two Carols who go to exercise classes, we had a great time. The exercises are surprisingly energetic as we march our feet at the same time as stretching arms, moving heads and shoulders. The fact that it was all a bit 'made up as we go along' didn't matter, nor the fact that some arms and legs were moving in different directions and timing to others! There was much laughter and we all felt we had a good workout.



We are a small group, but very friendly, and have some very interesting speakers. In February we have our birthday party and are delighted *Katies' Jumping Fleas* will be joining us: see the flyer on the opposite page and look out for the poster in the porch at St Leonard's. You would be very welcome to come along and see what we do.

**Tricia Campbell**  
**07760 354120**

## Craft Church 2026



After our post-Christmas break, the first Craft Church of 2026 will take place on **Saturday 21 February**. Running from **10.00am to 12.00 noon**, it offers families activities, crafts, refreshments and a chance to chat with others, as well as to our happy band of volunteers. We usually end with a story and a chat.

We do understand that some families have to drop in late or leave early due to other commitments. There is no charge, although some people do kindly make a donation. If you are coming along, please ensure you leave contact details when you sign in, in case of emergency.

We hope to see you there – all are most welcome.

***Krystyna, Kathy and Jenny***

To celebrate our birthday, we  
are hosting an evening with

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Evening  
WI*

# **Katie's Jumping Fleas**

Please get in  
touch beforehand  
if you would like to  
attend



**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February**  
7.30pm (for 7.45pm)

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# CHRISTMAS AT ST LEONARD'S 1

## Christmas Fair

Once again, the church hosted another very successful Christmas Fair, with the usual popular stalls, tombolas and raffles, and the added bonus of a visit by Father Christmas! Every year it's one of our most popular events, with FC's visit being a particular draw this year: even Wendy couldn't resist a chat with Santa!

The hamper raffle in particular was a real draw, raising almost 25% of the final figure of **£1,679**. A **huge thank you** to all the helpers who set up the Fair, those who donated gifts and home-made goods for sale, those who manned stalls, provided and served refreshments, and of course cleared up afterwards.





## CHRISTMAS AT ST LEONARD'S 2

### Christmas services

There really was something for everyone at St Leonard's this Christmas, with not one but two carol services by candlelight, a crib service for families, Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, and of course the service on Christmas morning to welcome the baby Jesus into the world.



*Photography by Peter Hyde*

Here is a selection of photos from those services, which were attended by more than 400 people. Our congregations were especially generous this year, raising almost **£1,100** at the carol and crib services, half of which the church has donated to Home-Start Hertfordshire. This charity helps parents gain the skills and confidence they need to nurture their children, dealing with post-natal depression, bereavement, isolation, health difficulties and other issues.





# Christmas Quiz!

To get you into the Christmas mood, or to play with friends and family on Christmas Day, try this quiz: each anagram is the title of a well-known Christmas carol. The number in brackets is the number of words in the answer.

**NB** The cartoons are not clues!

1. THIS WARM ETHICS (2)
2. FLASHY ASTRONOMER FROM LEG GEL (6)
3. SONIC GAS KNOWLEDGE (3)
4. THY LION HOG (3)
5. WILD RENOWNED RANT (2)
6. RACY ADDITIVE ONLY SONIC (5)
7. HID HEALTHY NOVELTY (5)
8. TINSEL TWO (3)
9. THE CHALK SLED (3)
10. MANAGE RAIN WAY (4)
11. TROUBLEDLY TRIM ME (3)
12. GREEN MOTEL DYSENTRY GERM (5)
13. KNEEL DOTTILY (2)
14. EARTH SHAKING DANGER SHELL (5)
15. SWEET GHERKIN (3)
16. HANDWRITTEN BIKE MILE (4)
17. HARDY SYMBOLIC (3)
18. LIFT SHELTER NOW (3)
19. JILL BEGS LEN (2)
20. DUG MAINTAIN PETROCHEMICAL (6)
21. WORTHY JOLT ODE (4)
22. BOOM TWENTIETH HOTEL FELL (5)
23. WHERE STEPCHILD WED SHAH (3)
24. DEPLORED HE IS THE ODDER RUNNER (5)
25. TO WISHY WASHY RARE CRUMMIES (6)



Good luck!

***Ros Adlard, Magazine Editor***

# Christmas Quiz Answers!

How did you get on with the anagrams of Christmas carols and songs? If you are still puzzling over any, here are the answers to put you out of your misery! Congratulations if you solved them all: sorry to say there is no prize!



1. WHITE CHRISTMAS
2. ANGELS FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY
3. GOOD KING WENCESLAS
4. O HOLY NIGHT
5. WINTER WONDERLAND
6. ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY
7. THE HOLLY AND THE IVY
8. LET IT SNOW
9. DECK THE HALLS
10. AWAY IN A MANGER
11. LITTLE DRUMMER BOY
12. GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN
13. LITTLE DONKEY
14. HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING
15. WE THREE KINGS
16. IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER
17. MARY'S BOY CHILD
18. THE FIRST NOEL
19. JINGLE BELLS
20. IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR
21. JOY TO THE WORLD
22. O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM
23. WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED
24. RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER
25. WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

*Ros Adlard, Magazine Editor*

## ***SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL***



### **SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL**

Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Wednesday  
14 January 2026 at 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors John Hale, Maurice Wells,  
Graham Leonard (Chair), Carol Chalkley, Debbie Chachulski,  
Mike White, Anne Thomas, James Lambert, Adam Twidell,  
Mary Ternouth

**OFFICERS:** Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk; Emma Hostler,  
Deputy Clerk; Rebecca Pannese, Project, Facilities & Community  
Engagement Officer (PACE); Stef Hayes, Community Centres  
Manager

**ABSENT:** Councillors Julie Oakley, June Reid

### **6082 TO RECEIVE AND FORMALLY ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Jenny Roberts,  
Raihaanah Ahmed

### **6083 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

There was none.

### **6084 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2025**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10 December 2025 were reviewed. They were agreed to be a correct record and It was unanimously:

## **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting be approved and signed by the Chair.

## **6085 QUESTIONS TO OFFICERS**

There was none.

## **6086 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

## **CLERK'S REPORTS**

### **6087 Monthly Accounts**

Members reviewed a schedule of creditor payments for the period 11 December 2025 to 14 January 2026. It was unanimously:

## **Resolved**

To approve payment of the online transfers on this schedule on 16 January 2026 and to ratify the payment of standing charges and debit card payments already made.

### **6088 Public Toilets in Marshalswick and Sandridge Village**

Members discussed an exchange of correspondence between the Clerk and the District Council regarding the continued provision of public toilets in both the village and Marshalswick. The Clerk was asked to write further seeking a resolution to the threatened closure of these facilities. It was proposed by Cllr Wells and seconded by Cllr Chachulski before it was unanimously:

## **Resolved**

To delegate to the Finance Committee authority to negotiate a financial contribution to the refurbishment of each block if an agreement can be reached.

### **6089 Matters of Note**

- Staff appraisals will be carried out in early January 2026. These will be taken to the HR Committee on 2 February 2026.
- A request for the 2026/27 precept has been made to St Albans District Council. This will be received in April (50%) and September (50%).

- The Clerk has met with officers from the District Council regarding pending asset transfers. It is expected the Jersey Farm Woodland Park transfer will complete in April 2026 and the Sandringham Crescent playground/open space in the early summer.
- 31 swift boxes have been received for installation in advance of this year's migration. 14 of these are double boxes. A bat box will also be installed at one address.

## **COUNCILLOR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **6090 Grant Applications**

There were no grant applications this month.

### **6091 Jersey Farm Woodland Park Pond**

Cllr Thomas updated Members on the progress of this project. It's expected the pond creation will be complete by early February. Works will continue on the newly created butterfly and bee banks.

### **6092 New Climate Control for Marshalswick Community Centre/Committee Room/Parish Office**

Cllr Wells updated councillors on this project. He confirmed the air conditioning units in the office, committee room and main hall were all installed and operational. Significant energy savings are expected to follow and the electricity powering the four units will be from sustainable sources.

### **6093 Oaklands Blossom**

Members of the Planning Committee provided an overview on the 462 page application for this development of 472+ residences. Parking, transport, rights of way and the impact of additional traffic on neighbouring roads were among items discussed. It was noted the construction phase was likely to be around five years and that the Parish Council would be asked to take a lease on the proposed community centre on completion. It was proposed by Cllr Leonard, seconded by Cllr Lambert and unanimously:

### **Resolved**

To delegate to the Planning Committee authority to respond to this early opportunity for consultation.



## **6094 MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES**

Committee Chairs spoke briefly on committee meetings as below  
– Planning Committee – see below.

## **6095 MATTERS OF NOTE ARISING SINCE THE CIRCULATION OF THE AGENDA**

Cllr Chalkley informed the meeting that there will be verge tree planting carried out and funded by Herts County Council this year.

## **6096 PLANNING MATTERS**

The Planning Committee met on 15 December 2025 and 5 January 2026.

Sandridge Parish Council's Planning Committee meets every three weeks to review and respond to planning applications received from the Planning Authority, St. Albans District Council.

Planning applications commented on since the last Full Council meeting are;

- 235 Sandpit Lane: 5/2025/2029
- 17 Hunt Close: 5/2025/2103
- Oaklands Blossom: 5/2025/1875
- 17 Hunt Close: 5/2025/2020
- Land rear of 38-40 Briar Road: 5/2025/2142
- 38 Briar Road: 5/2025/2224
- 11 Packhorse Close: 5/2025/2195

Please note: Planning applications received at the Parish Office from the Planning Authority *after* the Parish Council agenda has been published may also be discussed at the meeting, as may applications of complexity or applications likely to impact heavily on the Green Belt.

## **6097 SUGGESTIONS AND/OR MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS**

There was none.

**Next meeting date – 11 February 2026 at 7.30pm  
Marshalswick Community Centre**

*(The minutes of the December 2025 Parish Council meeting can be read online on the Council website)*

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Paper copies are available free in and outside the church, at  
Carpenter's Nursery, at JTB Butchers and Marshalswick Library.

Alternatively, please contact Peter Hyde  
via the church website for a copy to be delivered.

## Family History Research in Hertfordshire and London

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## Church Directory

**Vicar:** Revd Wendy Sellers 01727 301542  
(Wendy usually works Saturday through to Tuesday lunchtime)

**Churchwardens:** Catherine Bailey and Lee Myers

We have a new generic church email address, which is:  
**sandridgechurch1@gmail.com**  
or you can use the contact form on the church website:  
**www.sandridgechurch.org.uk**

We welcome enquiries about our services, including weddings, funerals and baptisms. We can also help with other enquiries; for example, about bell ringing, flower arranging, Young Church or our church music.

For enquiries about the parish magazine please contact the  
**Magazine Editor:** Rosamund Adlard on **news.stleonards@gmail.com**

**Our Safeguarding Team** can also be contacted via the website contact form, or contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser directly on:  
01727 818107 or 07867 350886 or:  
**safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org**

### Publication notes

The magazine is edited by Rosamund Adlard. Contributions of local interest are welcomed.






If you have such an article, or photographs, please do send them to the Editor by  
**14 February 2026**  
**at the latest**

**news.stleonards@gmail.com**

Christopher  
THE LOCKSMITH

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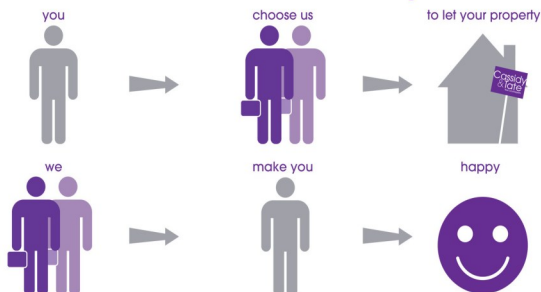


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