

# ST MARY & ST PETER NEWSLETTER



## December 2025

## CHURCH SERVICES

### **7th December – Second Sunday of Advent**

9.30am at St Peter's – Morning Worship

### **14th December – Third Sunday of Advent**

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy Communion

5.00pm at St Peter's – "Blue Christmas"

### **21st December – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

9.30am at St Peter's – Holy Communion

3.00pm at St Peter's – Seven Lessons and Carols

### **24th December – Christmas Eve**

4.00pm at St Mary's – Christingle

11.00pm at St Peter's – Midnight Mass

### **25th December – Christmas Day**

10.00am at St Mary's – Holy Communion

### **27th December – Saturday**

3.00pm at St Peter's churchyard – Forest Church

### **28th December – Christmas 1, Holy Innocents**

10.30am at West Bergholt – United celebration Holy Communion

### **4th January – Christmas 2, Celebration of the Epiphany**

9.30am at St Peter's – Morning Worship

### **11th January – Epiphany 1, Baptism of Christ**

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy Communion

### **18th January – Second Sunday of Epiphany**

9.30am at St Peter's – Holy Communion

### **24th January – Saturday**

3.00pm at St Peter's churchyard – Forest Church

### **25 h January – Third Sunday of Epiphany**

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy Communion



To check for other services and any alterations please email The Reverend Heather Wilcox – [RevHWilcox@outlook.com](mailto:RevHWilcox@outlook.com)

**Deadline for submissions for the February edition: 10th January**  
**Contact the editor via email: [lwbnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:lwbnewsletter@gmail.com)**

## Welcome to the December Newsletter.



**F**irst of all, let me wish all residents of our two villages a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We have several local events to look forward to over the festive season and I hope to meet many of you at one or other in the coming weeks.

This time of year brings out both the best and the worst in us, I find. The short days and freezing nights make life more of a challenge for some of us, the congested shops and roads slow things down and the need to get everything done in time for the celebrations just adds to the tension. On the other hand, there is something very comforting and almost timeless about listening to a brass (or, better, silver) band in the street; sharing food and drink with colleagues, neighbours and random passers-by; wrapping up against the frost to break the ice

so the birds can get a drink.

Long may this continue.

PLEASE NOTE that the copy deadline for the next issue is **January 10th**. This is due to my planned absence at the end of January: Norway, thank you for asking, and yes, it will be very cold but I hope to have thawed out in time to produce the March issue. *Have a lovely Christmas break, one and all!*

*Steve Pollington,*  
Editor



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Did you know Langham Community Shop has been here  
for you for over 20 years!  
Welcoming you every day, 364 days a year, that's over 7500  
times the doors have been opened every morning!



And the most staggering part of all, every friendly,  
helpful, kind and caring person welcoming you when you  
walk through the door is a VOLUNTEER.

We are not just a group of people that turn up every now  
and again, we are a family, we are friends and we all do it  
for each other, for the shop and for our amazing community.

Many of our volunteers have been here since the very  
beginning, some played a huge part in getting the shop  
started and everyone has helped to keep it what it is today.

**We are proud of what we do,  
and we will continue for many more years.**

We regularly see too many small, local businesses closing  
around us. With your constant and continued support  
we will continue to work hard and always be here for you.

You can also be part of our family; you can support us  
and help us to stay here where we belong.

We can not just always rely on the generosity of what we  
have, we need more volunteers to keep us going and  
be able to stay open later as we have now managed to do.

Langham Community Centre's

**100 Club Draw**

**October winners were**

- 1st Edna Tomlinson
- 2nd Elizabeth Ellis
- 3rd Langham Bowls Club
- 4th Denise Hobday

**New members welcome.**

**Contact**

01206 323007

shannon955@msn.com .

## **WHEELCHAIR LOAN**

The Short Term Wheelchair Loan Charity (Reg. No.112657, [www.wheelchairloancharity.com](http://www.wheelchairloancharity.com)), based at Clacton Hospital, helps people needing the short-term use of a wheelchair. The chairs are for all ages and reasons. The service is a perfect interim solution if you require a wheelchair for an occasion such as a holiday, a wedding or to help accommodate a visiting relative. The service is funded by donations and is free to users, although a deposit of £40 from borrowers is asked for.

Enquiries may be phoned to 01255 201763 or emailed to [wheelchairloan@gmail.com](mailto:wheelchairloan@gmail.com)



# **CALOR GAS BOTTLES**

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## BOXTED W. I.

The W.I. organisation is centred on friendship, campaigning, education and FUN...our November meeting certainly didn't disappoint!

After reporting and 2026 planning discussions and with the festive season

looming the members got creative with some chocolatey fun.

The theme was sweet treats - with much fun and laughter, icing dust, kneading, rolling and chatter we eventually produced rum truffles, peppermint creams, chocolate bark, chocolate marshmallows and perky





penguins (of varying states of character 😊 ) before conducting an extensive clean up!

Most importantly, this year the meeting coincided with Remembrance Day and with it in the forefront of our minds we produced beautiful poppy cakes to enjoy with our refreshments.

Finally, a seasonal mention; we will be supporting some of our members performing 'What Sweet Music' with the amazing Nayland choir on Sunday 7th December. ( tickets from [naylandevents.org](http://naylandevents.org) if this notice reaches you before the event).

*Happy Christmas and thank you to Steve and those that put together our villages' magazine!*



## Santa Paws

St Marys Church, Lawford  
6<sup>th</sup> December  
10.00 – 1.00pm

Bring your gorgeous Hounds to see **SANTA PAWS** and receive a doggie gift. Cost £5.00 per dog

Christmas stalls, Grand Raffle & draw together with the ever-popular Woof Down Café

Book a slot by phoning or texting 07922791247

## COLCHESTER SUGARCRAFT

We are a small friendly club who welcome everyone who is interested in cake decorating and making flowers and models from sugarpaste. We meet at **Stanway Community Hall** on the last Thursday of every month at 7.30. Visitors £5 includes refreshments.

**January 29<sup>th</sup>** Valentine Bunny Vasantha Manohar **February 26<sup>th</sup>** Fuchsia Natalie Porter **March 26<sup>th</sup>** Easter theme Jacqui Kelly **April 30<sup>th</sup>** A.G.M. Sugarpaste model. Renew membership £40 per year.

Contact Sue Albins [Sue28albins@btinternet.com](mailto:Sue28albins@btinternet.com) or 01026 251955.

Where do you find joy?  
Each of us, might give a  
different answer. I find

joy in the changing of the seasons, I am particularly fond of Autumn, on a crisp, sunny autumnal morning, walking along a path of crispy leaves, gives me a great, childlike joy. What I really want to do, is run through them, arms outstretched, laughing and smiling, but perhaps age has constrained my childlike enthusiasm.

Joy is found in many other places too, spending time with family and friends, a meal out, the simple pleasures of life. As Christians one of the fruits of the spirit is joy. Joy is part of who we are, and yet often I have heard it said, that Christians don't appear to be too joyful, which is a great shame, after all joy is at the heart of Christianity.

We live in times where it might seem hard to find joy, the world seems to be an increasingly worrisome place.

Cast our minds back 2000 years or so ago, and perhaps the world was no less worrisome, particularly to a young girl, not yet married, who encountered an angel. The Jews lived under Roman occupation, conflict sadly was never that far away. Mary's world view might have been smaller, satellite communications and social media were a long way off into the future,

*Where do you find Joy?*

but there would have been the stresses and strains of daily living that we all experience today to a greater or lesser extent. So when an angel comes to announce her pregnancy, it is hard to imagine Mary hearing good news. An unplanned teenage pregnancy, amongst the small town gossips, and that's before we even consider how Joseph might feel about all this.

Yet, Good news and Joy are at the heart of the Christmas Message. And indeed as Mary greets her cousin Elizabeth, she sings 'My soul rejoices in God my saviour'. As the angels greet the shepherds on the hillside that first Christmas night, they say 'Do not be afraid, for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people.'

The joy of Christmas is that deep-seated joy, a rejoicing in our souls, that nothing can dispel. I hope and pray you know this joy for yourselves this Christmas time. and that you may have many joy-filled moments in the month ahead.

***May God Bless you and your families  
this Christmas time***

Heather

## LANGHAM LADIES

**A**t the Langham Ladies November meeting Dorothy O'Grady demonstrated ways of making the wrapping of presents look very attractive, some looking like handbags.

She also showed us how to recycle paper using paper that would normally be thrown out but as a wrapping looked very different. Wallpaper, brown parcel paper, leaflets, maps etc can all be used. After the demonstration Dorothy got the members all involved in making rosettes made from off cuts of paper, which the members enjoyed doing. The rosettes are tied onto the front of the parcel with attractive coloured ribbons.

**December 11th meeting** is our Christmas Party. Games and a lovely buffet and carol-singing will be enjoyed by the members .



Secret Santa will take place so if a member wants to join in , she must bring a wrapped present , value no more than £5 to the meeting.

We look forward to seeing our members in the New Year January 8th when the yearly subscription £25 will be due. It is hoped that our members have enjoyed the last year, we have a good program for 2026 so hopefully all our members will rejoin and new members will be made very welcome.

*Langham Ladies organisers wish  
our members and all the  
villagers in Langham and  
Boxted A Very Enjoyable  
Christmas and Good Health  
and Happiness in the New  
Year.*



*New Members will always be made welcome also if you want to give it a try come as a guest £5 to see what we are about.*

## BOXTED RUNNERS

On Sunday 2nd November one of the most long standing and respected members of Boxted Runners **Kelly Smith took on the New York Marathon.**

This iconic race, which celebrated its 54th edition this year, brings to a close the 2025 season of the World Marathon Majors, which includes Tokyo, Boston,

London, Berlin, Chicago and Sydney. 55,000 runners lined up alongside Kelly. Yes they lined up alongside *her*.

Kelly is an inspiration to all of the Boxted Runners and we all knew she would do herself and Boxted Runners proud on the day.

Kelly always gives nothing less than her absolute best to any event she enters.

She went through half way in 1:39:38 and went on to finish in 3:25:07. A truly wonderful time.

All Kelly's training clearly paid off on the day. She really put the hard miles in during the months leading up to the race.

*Kelly you can be extremely proud of yourself. I know that all of us at Boxted Runners are absolutely in awe of you. Thank you for being a Boxted Runner Kelly. You fully deserve all the praise you receive.*

If you feel inspired by Kelly please feel free to get in touch with us. Find out more on - [www.boxtedrunners.co.uk](http://www.boxtedrunners.co.uk)



Ian Bown

# BOXTED METHODIST SILVER BAND

**D**ecember approaches and the Band is getting ready for our carol playing activities.

After playing for the **Christmas Tree lighting** on **30<sup>th</sup> November** we can be heard playing in the village again on the following nights (weather permitting) **11<sup>th</sup> Mill Road and Workhouse Hill; 15<sup>th</sup> Windmill Close, Eastside and Newmans Drive; 16<sup>th</sup> Church Street; 18<sup>th</sup> Hill Farm and Cage Lane; 23<sup>rd</sup> The Cross area.**

We also invite you to a Festive concert of **music and carols** on **13<sup>th</sup> December 6 pm** at **Nayland Village Hall** - retiring collection and includes fancy dress competition for the children. We will also be playing at the carol service in **St Peter's church** at **3pm on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>.**

*We wish you a very 'Happy Christmas' and hope you enjoy our music making.*

Any queries message Liz  
07803935688 or check our website.



The background of the entire image is a close-up photograph of autumn foliage. It features large, brown, textured leaves with prominent veins, some of which are slightly curled. Interspersed among the leaves are clusters of small, round berries in shades of red and green. The lighting is soft, creating a warm, natural feel.

**LANGHAM**  
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*Sunday & Bank Hol*  
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**@ St. Peter's Church, Boxted**  
**Sunday 7th December**  
**3.00 - 5.00pm**



## BOXED HISTORY GROUP

In the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century people who fell foul of the law were given hard labouring jobs to do, such as going down the mines. It proved too easy to escape, however, so an alternative was needed: Transportation was proposed and those convicted were told that they would be sent to “lands beyond the sea”. At first this was America but when Britain lost the colony after the American War of Independence this destination was no longer an option. An alternative was found in Australia.

The idea behind transportation was very simple: if all the bad people were sent away only law-abiding ones would remain and Britain would have a healthy society. Transportation was very common: most people in towns and villages knew someone who had been transported. Most of those transported landed in Sydney Bay, although Joseph Banks, who had sailed with

Captain Cook, had recommended Botany Bay. Most people who were sent away were young men, mainly because they were fit and able to do the hard work they were given on arrival. However, women were transported as well. They were given lighter jobs such as in the factories that were being established there. The offences that they had committed were often relatively trivial, often committed out of desperate need.

Working conditions in Australia were very harsh. Convicts were usually chained together, although those who showed themselves to be trustworthy could be released from their shackles. Lashings were common.

Eventually they could be released into the community to do work but had to report to the authorities once a week. Sentences were long (ten to fourteen years was typical, as it was not worth handing out short sentences since Australia was so far away and the journey took about six months owing to the ships acting as trading vessels as well and calling in at

various ports. Although harsh for the convicts, the families who were left behind suffered very much. The wives and children usually had no means of support and had to go into the workhouse.

The colony that was established in New South Wales was managed successfully by a young Scotsman called Lachlan Macquarry who had not been popular in Britain but who fulfilled his duties very well in Australia. So successful was he that in 1840 local people complained the they were being overrun by convicts. From then onwards Western Australia (especially around Perth) became a favoured destination.

At the end of their sentence convicts could return home but they had to pay for a place on the ship themselves. For this reason at least ninety percent opted stay in Australia where they could buy land that was available cheaply. The climate too was better than at home. Many forgot about their families in England and remarried. Finding a partner became easier when adverts were placed in British

newspapers encouraging women to emigrate and many responded.

The system continued until the 1860s when it came to an end. It was a harsh system but today in Australia it is fashionable to be able to say that way back you had a convict in the family.

Pip Wright talked to the Boxted History Group about transportation to Australia. The next meeting will be at **8.00pm on Wednesday 19th November** when Danielle present Christmas songs together with a talk.

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## Langham Parish Council Report – December 2025

Starting with some good news, this year's **Annual Fireworks Display** was a great success. The weather was reasonably kind, and around 1200 people came along to watch another excellent professional display put on for us by Dynamic Fireworks. Thank you to our regular main sponsors Langham Hall Estate, L J Rose and Palmer & Partners, and also to all the local volunteers who helped with set-up, tear-down and post-event tidy up. The event made a profit of just over £5k this year, which will be put to good local community use over the coming year.

Turning to the new S106-funded Multi Use Games Area at the Recreation Ground, ETC Sports have been selected as the preferred contractor. Planning approval has taken longer than expected to obtain, and this, together with the requirement to meet various legal requirements associated with Biodiversity Net Gain, means that construction will now have to be delayed until Spring of 2026.

As everyone in the village knows, two large planning issues loom large

on the horizon at the moment. National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Proposals have recently been accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate. Pre-examination is currently underway, with detailed examination and reporting likely to continue through into autumn-2026 before the Secretary of State makes a final decision on the project.

On 10th November, Colchester City Council's Local Plan Committee voted to publish a draft new Local Plan for formal 7 week public consultation running through to mid-January 2026. We've been working hard behind the scenes to prepare a formal LPC response to the consultation, which will run to well over 100 pages of evidence demonstrating that the massive expansion plans for Langham are unsound and unsustainable. It will also be vital that individual residents engage with the consultation process, and we'll be sharing further ideas and suggestions on how best to do this during December.

# Volunteer Chairperson Required for Langham Community Council

## **Are you passionate about making a difference in your community?**

Langham Community Council is seeking a dedicated and enthusiastic Volunteer Chairperson to lead our team and help shape the future of our community centre.

### **The Role will involve:**

- Chairing and facilitating committee meetings in an organised and inclusive manner
- Overseeing the management and strategic direction of the community centre
- Ensuring decisions are transparent and communication is clear to all Trustees
- Working closely with fellow volunteers, staff, and community members

### **Ideally, your proficiency would include:**

- Previous experience of chairing meetings would be an advantage
- Understanding of how a community centre operates
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Committed to transparency, integrity, and community engagement
- Confident, approachable, and a team player

If you are interested in volunteering your time, or would like more background information about the centre, please contact [cathhine1@gmail.com](mailto:cathhine1@gmail.com)

We look forward to hearing from you!



# Church Services

## **Sunday 7th December**

9:30am Morning Worship, St. Peter's Church, Boxted

## **Sunday 14th December**

9:30am Holy Communion, St. Mary's Church, Langham

5:00pm Blue Christmas, St. Peter's Church, Boxted

## **Sunday 21st December**

9:30am Holy Communion, St. Peter's Church, Boxted

3:00pm Carol Service, St. Peter's Church, Boxted

## **Christmas Eve 24th December**

4:00pm Christingle, St. Mary's Church, Langham

11:00pm Midnight Mass, St. Peter's Church, Boxted

## **Christmas Day 25th December**

10:00am Christmas Holy Communion,  
St. Mary's Church, Langham

## **Saturday 27th December**

3:00pm Forest Church, St. Peter's Churchyard, Boxted

## **Sunday 28th December**

10:30am United Celebration Service  
St. Mary's Church, West Bergholt



Wishing all of Langham and Boxted a  
**Merry Christmas  
& A Happy New Year**

from Heather, The Ministry Team  
& all the volunteers who help with the work of  
St Peter's Church, Boxted & St Mary's Church, Langham

**"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news  
that will cause great joy for all the people."**



The **Whatfield Craft Fair** was declared a great success in October, despite high winds which threatened to spoil the day.

Creative stallholders offered a glorious range of crafted gifts and visitors enjoyed tasty homemade snacks in the marquee.

Thank you to all who helped to raise a total of £3000 for **Success After Stroke**, a local charity which supports those who have suffered a life changing crisis.

Members meet three times a week at the Stevenson Centre in Great Cornard for various therapies to aid their recovery. The Group also arranges fun events throughout the year, from painting to pantomime. New members welcome, phone 07434 931962 or visit [successafterstroke.org.uk/](http://successafterstroke.org.uk/) for further information.



## BOXTED EVERGREENS

Our Club meets in the village hall every fourth Thursday of the month from 2.00pm to 3.30pm. The age of our members varies but the club would suit anyone over 60 so please come along and you would be given a warm welcome. Our members are always asked for their suggestions before our yearly entertainment programme is arranged and we do try our best to cater for everyone. If you would like more information about our club please call Elaine on 01206 273183.

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## PROBUS CLUB OF COLCHESTER

### Life and The Times of Essex Counties Railways by Peter Jones.

**I**t was first mentioned that it is this year the bicentenary of the Stockton and Darlington railway in 1825. Although the first modern railway was the Liverpool and Manchester in 1830.

Following an Act of Parliament adverts were placed to encourage investment in the building of a railway from London to Great Yarmouth via Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester and Chelmsford. This originally known as the Great Eastern Counties railway. There were more navies employed at that time than the number of soldiers in the British army. For every 2 miles of construction 2 navies died. We must remember this is well before the Health and Safety Executive. In 1837 work started and a most difficult length was Stratford Marshes and the cost of this was far more than originally estimated.

Expenditure was far more than planned and that included compensation to two land owners, who were not keen on the railway being built across their land. So with

funds running out the line from London finished at what is now Colchester North in 1843 on the 29th March. In July 1843 mail was first carried on this railway. The short length to Colchester town centre was constructed 20 years later.

Later a new company raised the funds to complete the line from Colchester to Great Yarmouth. Finally Liverpool Street was opened in 1874. In 1948 the railways were nationalised. In 1984 they were privatised. And today they are being renationalised.

**O**ur club meet every two weeks at the modern club house of Colchester Rugby club. There is ample parking and good wheel chair access. Our club welcomes ladies and gentlemen from the business or Professional community.

If you wish to find out more about the PROBUS club of Colchester. Then please contact the clubs President Mr Alan George on [alangeorgegilbert@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alangeorgegilbert@yahoo.co.uk) or the Hon Secretary Keith Augustus on [KeithAugustus@outlook.com](mailto:KeithAugustus@outlook.com)

## BOXTED HISTORY GROUP

*Meeting every third Wednesday of the month at Boxted Village Hall.*

*7.30 for 8pm.*

*Guests always welcome.*



**Boxted Bingo**

Boxted Village Hall  
Every other Tuesday  
3pm - 5pm  
£8 per session  
(includes 4 games of bingo)

For more information  
Call Dot on 01206 272676

## BOXTED CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Come and join us for a friendly, enjoyable afternoon playing bowls at **Boxted Village Hall on Friday 2 - 4 pm**, Sept to April

Further info please contact:

Michael Hubbard 01206 271892

Sue Smith 07465443795

sueronben@gmail.com

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Langham Scout Group

Meetings are held each Wednesday evening at the Community Centre.

**Squirrels 5:00 to 6:00**

**Beavers 4:45 to 6:00**

**Cubs 6:00 to 7:30**

**Scouts 7:30 to 9:00**

**Contact Group Scout Leader:**

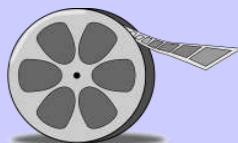
James Puxley 07935 909063

## LANGHAM LADIES

*Any ladies wishing to join the group or to come along as a guest, please telephone Gill Brown on 01206 273286.*

## LANGHAM FILM NIGHTS

For details of films and screening times and to book tickets, go to [www.langhamcommunitycentre.org.uk/next-cinema-screening/](http://www.langhamcommunitycentre.org.uk/next-cinema-screening/)



## Crafty Ladies

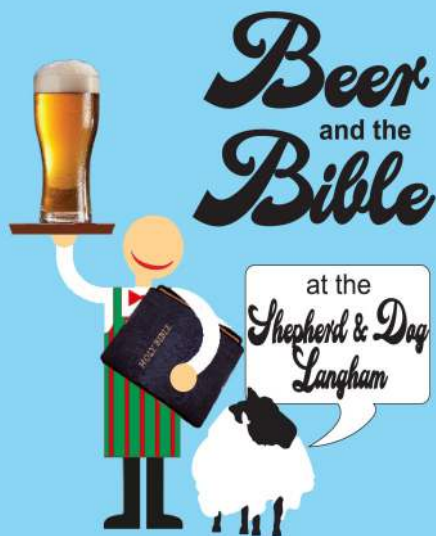
Meet on first Wednesday of each month throughout the year, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm at the Community Centre. Subscription £26 due March and September. Contact Chrissy Todd tel. 07742 131454.

## Carpet Bowls Club

Meet every Tuesday afternoon from 2.00 to 4.00 pm at the Community Centre.

Contact Cliff Jones on 07922 156545 or Mervyn Bushe on 01206 230209.

The Art and Craft Club meet on the **third Wednesday** of each month, 2-4pm at Boxted Village Hall. All welcome - *come and join in!*



Every second Monday of the month  
from 8pm  
All welcome

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- \* Our team of volunteers uses their own cars to provide door-to-door journeys to medical appointments or to pick up prescriptions**
- \* We also visit folk who are housebound for friendly chats**
- \* Registration is very simple—just phone the number for the day shown on the posters or in the Parish Magazine a few days before your appointment**
- \* There is no charge for the service, although donations are very welcome**
- \* All our volunteers are DBS checked and are friendly and experienced**

**Interested in volunteering? Please get in contact with Annette Whybrow:**

**[annettejwhybrow@gmail.com](mailto:annettejwhybrow@gmail.com)**

**01206 272773**

**07983519825**

**Langham with Boxted PCC Registered Charity: 1131211**

# **GOOD NEIGHBOURS**

**Are you elderly, vulnerable or otherwise in need of help, and live in the Parish of Langham with Boxted? We are a group of local Volunteers who can assist:**

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- with collection of items such as prescriptions**
- or make a friendly visit just for a bit of company.**

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**Monday.....230525 or 273324**

**Tuesday.....271813 or 273195**

**Wednesday....272755 or 272013**

**Thursday..... 07765 037892 or 323007**

**Friday..... 272773**

**Please telephone either number shown for the **DAY ON WHICH YOU MAKE YOUR CALL** (not the day of your appointment). If there is no reply, please do not leave a message but **RING ANY OTHER NUMBER.****

**This scheme is associated with the Churches of St Mary's Langham and St Peter's Boxted**

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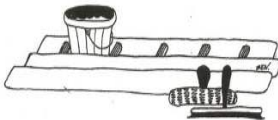
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[RevHWilcox@outlook.com](mailto:RevHWilcox@outlook.com)

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07895 970834

[revdannemason@gmail.com](mailto:revdannemason@gmail.com)

**Curate** Revd Emma Barr

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**Lay Minister** Denise Hobday

230918

**Church Administrator (for the parishes of Langham with Boxted, West Bergholt and Great Horkesley**

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**Deadline for submissions for the  
February edition:**

**10th January**

**Contact the editor via email:**

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# **BOXTED'S** **12 DAYS OF** **CHRISTMAS** **PANTOMIME**

**12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> December at Boxted Village Hall,**

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