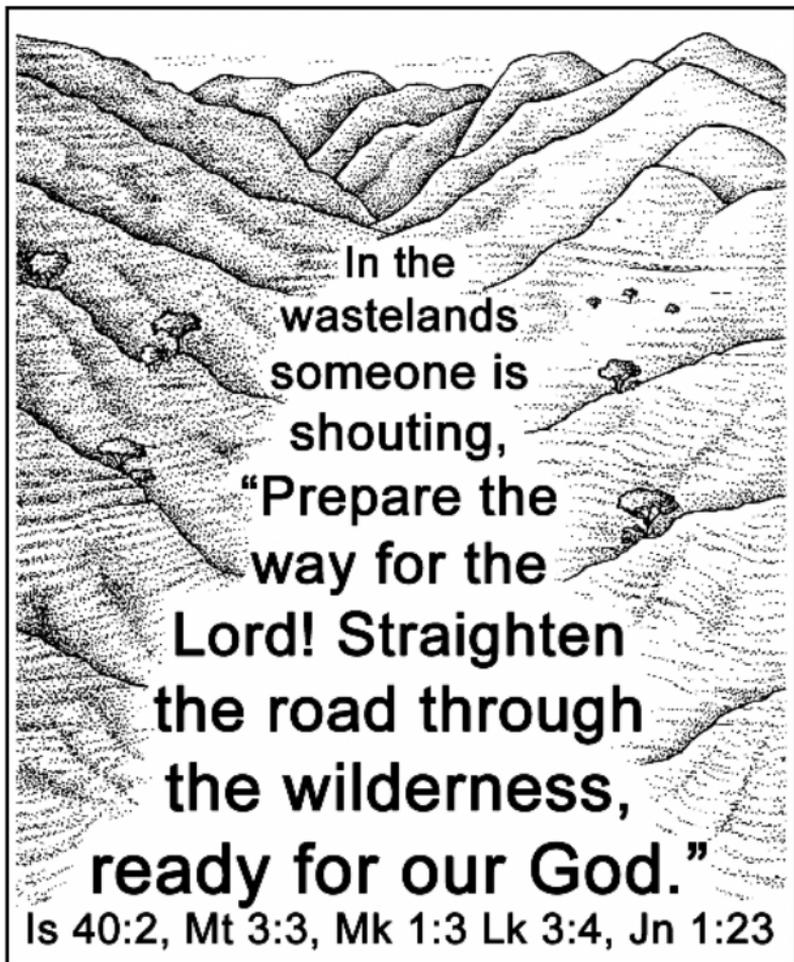


# PEWTALK

£1

February 2025



EAST & WEST TILBURY AND LINFORD PARISH MAGAZINE

Parish web site: [www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)

# BITs AnD PiECes

**Thank you to** all those readers that renewed their £10 subscription for another year - it is very much appreciated. If you read your copy from our website and would like to make a contribution this can be done via the QR code on the calendar page of Pewtalk.

**100 Club** - The first draw was on January 5<sup>th</sup> and the winner was Geraldine Riddles. Geraldine has not been well this year. Hope that she is feeling better soon and look forward to seeing her in St. Catherine's. There are still a few draws to go so still time to join 100 Club and win the £50. *Norman*

**The Thames Chase Heritage Walking Group** are visiting St. Catherine's and Bata's on the morning of February 7<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to join them, the details can be found at: [tickettailor.com/events/thameschase/1525736](http://tickettailor.com/events/thameschase/1525736)

**Church Family Christmas Card** – Thank you to all those who participated in signing the Church family Christmas card. We have sent off a donation of **£38.50** to St Luke's Hospice.

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** – will be the next date for our Joint Service with our friends from the Linford Methodist Church. The service will be at 10.30am at the Linford Methodist Church, East Tilbury Road, Linford. Do please make a note of this date and come along to worship together as a wider church community.

**Our Lent lunches / supper** - will be held on:-  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March at St. Francis at 1pm  
Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at St. Francis at 5pm

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April at St. Francis at 1pm and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April at St. Catherine's at 12noon. Everyone is very welcome to these soup and bread events with donations going to our Lent charity. There will be a 'beetle' drive at the March supper.

**Revd. Dr. Sue Lucas** has been appointed as the new Archdeacon of Southend, filling the vacancy created when the Ven. Mike Power was transferred to be the Archdeacon of West Ham. Revd. Sue (who was the Team Rector for East Ham) will be installed at Chelmsford Cathedral on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 3,30pm. All are very welcome.



**SHOE BOX APPEAL 2024**

By filling a shoebox with simple things you can bring hope this Christmas

shooboxappeal.org  
Thank you for filling shoeboxes

St Catherine's Church  
29 Shoeboxes

Transforming lives through Christian care

## A prayer for all those affected by sickness and ill-health

*Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

## Reflections from The Rectory



As the calendar turns to reveal the month of February I feel myself breathe a sigh of relief.

After the grey, cold and gloomy weeks of January, it is time to feel hopeful and to look forward. As we make our way through the weeks of February the mornings and evenings get increasingly lighter, we hear the bird song return and pushing through the very cold earth will be the tips of the earliest spring flowers.

Snowdrops in particular speak to me of resilience and courage and are such a joy to see whenever and wherever they appear. Very often they can be found in and around churchyards, in wooded glades and country lanes. Most people will know these winter wonders as Snowdrops but they are also known as 'Candlemas Bells' because they often appear around 'Candlemas' which is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

Candlemas is a day of significance in the Churches year because it brings to an end the joyful celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany and points us towards Lent and Easter. Traditionally on this day the candles that would be used in the church throughout the rest of the year would be blessed during the service. The list includes Candles for the Altar; candles to light as a prayer for others; candles for Baptism candidates and candles for Wedding couples. The candles in a church serve as a reminder of one of the ways Jesus described himself. He said, 'I am the light of the world'. As Christians we also seek to be lights shining in the darkness.



**And this year we will also be filling the church with Christingle candles as we hold a special afternoon where children are invited to 'Come and make a Christingle at Candlemas' (see below more details).**

Candlemas is also known as 'The Presentation of Christ in the Temple'. It commemorates the ritual purification of Mary, 40 days after the birth of her son Jesus and the presentation of the baby to God in the Temple at Jerusalem. In Jewish tradition women were considered unclean after the birth of a child. For 40 days (after a birth of a boy) and for 60 days (after the birth of a girl), they weren't allowed to worship in the temple. At the end of the 40 or 60 days, women would be taken to the Temple or Synagogue to be purified after which they could take part in religious services once again.

Similarly the Christian Church made provision for special prayers to be said acknowledging the safe delivery of a child to its mother. In the Book of Common of Prayer there is a service called 'The Thanksgiving of Women after Child-Birth' commonly called 'The Churching of Women.' It is something our grandmothers and great-grandmothers may well have gone to church to partake in before they went out and about with the new baby.

The story of The Presentation of Christ in the Temple can be found in the Gospel of Luke (chapter 2 verses 22-38). Luke tells us that Mary and Joseph were met by the elderly

Prophetess Anna and Prophet Simeon. Simeon holds the baby Jesus and calls him a 'Light to the World'. If you have ever attended a service of Evening Prayer or Evensong you will have heard the 'Song of Simeon' in the canticle the 'Nunc Dimittis'. The words are as follows:

'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.'

*(Book of Common Prayer 1662)*

Simeon had been waiting his whole life long for God's promised Messiah to come and in the infant Jesus he recognises that the promise has been fulfilled. It is a moment of ending but also the place of a new beginning.

And so within the church a season has come to an end and the next one begins.

Sundays are now described as 'Sundays before Lent' and 'Ash Wednesday', on the 5<sup>th</sup> March this year, marks the start of Lent and the journey towards Holy Week and Easter.

I hope like me you will enjoy this month of February and when you see those beautiful snowdrops spare a moment to think of Candlemas and the light shining in the darkness.

Stay safe and take care and every Blessing,

*Revd. Michèle*



**'Come and make a Christingle at  
Candlemas'**



**at St Catherine's, East Tilbury  
on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February at 3pm**

As the season of Christmas reaches its conclusion we invite you to come to this very special activity. Children attending will make their own Christingles, and after some refreshments, we will have a short service where the Christingles will be lit reminding us that the light of Christ shines in the darkness well beyond the 25<sup>th</sup> December.

**You will need to book a place for your child/children and all children must be accompanied by an adult**

**For further information and to book a place for your child/children call**

**Revd. Michèle on 07749 303622 or email: [mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk](mailto:mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk)**

## Baptism stories

On Sunday January 12<sup>th</sup> the 'Baptism of Christ' was celebrated at our morning service and Revd. Michèle, in her sermon, asked the congregation if they remembered their Baptism. It was lovely to hear so many different stories from those who could remember their baptism. They varied from Linda's baptism in the River Jordan, Tony's full immersion baptism in to the Baptist Church, to my baptism in St. Catherine's at six weeks old.

Michèle told us of a Baptism in a Churchwarden's swimming pool in her previous Parish and Tony told us that a Church he visits in Boumemouth in September has a special Sunday when they baptise people in the Sea. *Norman*

***Linda's and Tony's baptismal stories follow.....Ed***

### Linda's account

A Journey of Faith: My Baptism in the Jordan River

Reflecting on my recent trip to Israel, I find it hard to put into words just how transformative the experience was. Initially, I embarked on this pilgrimage with my parents, not expecting much but hoping for a meaningful adventure. Little did I know that this journey would turn out to be one of the most blessed and peaceful experiences of my life.

As we arrived in Tel Aviv, the vibrant energy of the city welcomed us. However, it was the drive to Jerusalem and Bethlehem that truly captivated my spirit. The landscapes were steeped in history, and visiting the birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem filled me with awe. Each moment felt significant, as if I were walking in the footsteps of those who had come before me.

The highlight of the trip came when we visited the Jordan River for baptism. I was likely the youngest in our group, surrounded by fellow pilgrims who were equally eager to deepen their faith. We were instructed to wear white garments, a symbol of purity, and to cross our arms over our chests as we prepared for the sacred moment.

As I stepped into the cool waters of the Jordan, I felt a wave of emotion wash over me. The priest, embodying the spirit of John the Baptist, spoke words of blessing as he lowered me into the water. In that moment, I felt an

overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit, as if I was being reborn. Emerging from the water, I was filled with a sense of peace and renewal that I had never experienced before.



For me, this baptism was not just a ritual; it was a profound spiritual awakening. It marked a new chapter in my life, one filled with hope, faith, and a deeper understanding of my beliefs. The journey had connected me not just with the land and its history, but also with my own spiritual self.

In sharing this experience, I hope to inspire others to embark on their own journeys of faith. Whether we are young or old, these moments of connection—whether through baptism in the Jordan or simply through visiting sacred sites—have the power to transform us. My trip to Israel was a reminder of the beauty of faith and the incredible blessings that come when we open our hearts to new experiences.

*Linda Okoli*

### **Tony's recollection**

I belonged to Leigh Beck Baptist church where I attended boys brigade from 1975. During that time I become a Christian and believed in Jesus Christ.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1983 I was baptised by full immersion by the Reverend Jim Gilfillan. I still recall the experience as one of the most exciting times of my life and was truly filled with the holy spirit. The event took place during the evening service and the church was filled. Usually there are several candidates but on this occasion there was only me being baptised. I remember doing a testimony on how I found Jesus and what it meant to me. I was then invited into the baptism bath, the heaters were not working and the water was freezing but I was so focused on my baptism that it did not matter. Jim supported my weight and I remember the words clearly; 'I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' and on the prompt 'Holy Spirit' he immersed me into the water. I felt so completely filled with the Holy Spirit that the words I write cannot describe how I felt, just awesome. Even now, while I write these words the feeling of that time comes back to me. The unfortunate thing about that time was that my parents did not attend as they do not believe in Jesus Christ and the faith I have.

After the event I then decided to become a missionary for the Baptist missionary society and was going to go to Nepal and work with the local community on hydro-electric installations once my apprenticeship had finished but my parents had other ideas so the idea never took off.

Every year during September, a church in Poole where I have attended, have a Baptism in the sea for several candidates and three church elders do the Baptism, the whole church takes over part of the beach and perform the baptism, a truly wonderful experience which brings my baptism back into my mind.

*Tony*

### **That Big Freeze of 1955** by *Tim Lenton*

Seventy years ago, from early February 1955 and well into March, a Big Freeze took place in Britain. Deep snow and freezing temperatures caused havoc, with many places cut off. The RAF dropped food and medical supplies to affected areas, while thousands of sheep died from exposure.

Although the winters of 1947 and 1963 have attracted more publicity, 1955 saw severe weather in most parts of Britain, as well as in other parts of Europe and North America.

Snow fell in many areas of the UK from 11<sup>th</sup> February onwards, with night frosts gradually worsening and blizzards developing over the north of Scotland, where the RAF scrambled to do several rescues: in Caithness the response by emergency services was known as Operation Snowdrop. An exhausting search for a postman from Thurso, who went missing in the deep snow, eventually led to his being found at a remote farm where he had sought refuge.

Several snowploughs were stranded, and the heavy snow spread gradually south, reaching as far as the Scillies and the Channel Islands. In North Norfolk there were 10ft drifts on the coast road, and Lancashire had its worst storm for 14 years. Devon, Cornwall and the Peak District had similar experiences.

More than 70 roads in Britain were blocked by snow, according to the Automobile Association, and hundreds of vehicles were abandoned in snowdrifts. Many parts of the country were cut off from essential supplies, and rail travel was disrupted. Church attendance was also hit, of course.

Temperatures in some places fell below 28F (-3C) – the lowest for 30 years, and February's record UK minimum was set. That year also experienced the last May snowfall of the century, but despite all that, there was plenty of sunshine, and as a total contrast, there was a drought and a heatwave the following summer.

### **National Nest Box Week – 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> February**

Where can birds raise their young these days? As our gardens and parklands become smaller and tidier, too many natural nest sites – such as holes in trees, old buildings and unkempt hedgerows – are rapidly disappearing



No wonder that our sparrows, green finches and swifts are in precipitous decline, and that one in four of our UK bird species are now under serious threat.

This makes it more important than ever to care for our remaining birds. By feeding, providing water and putting up nest boxes we can give them a safe space to raise their chicks.

National Nest Box Week encourages bird conservation across the UK, and it's easy to get involved, whether you're a teacher, part of a local wildlife group, or just wanting to boost the bird numbers in your own garden.

Visit: <https://www.countryfile.com/wildlife/birds/national-nest-box-week-how-to-help-birds-in-your-garden>

## The January meeting of the P.C.C.

The Parochial Church Council met at St. Francis on 6<sup>th</sup> January.

The meeting started with a review of the Christmas activities and events, which was essentially as reported in the January edition of Pewtalk. The events that were not covered in that report were the:-

The joint service with the Linford Methodist congregation on 29<sup>th</sup> December was held in a very informal (café) setting. Although this Sunday was between Christmas and the New Year there was a good attendance and it was a wonderful time of worship.

The New Year party held at St. Francis on the afternoon and early evening of New Year's Eve took the form of a 'Bring and Share' buffet meal with the opportunity to play a selection of table games and a quiz. The event ended with a short time of worship to reflect on 2024 and look forward to 2025.

A couple of points that emerged from the review were that we need to acquire some more figures for the crib service as, this year we almost had too few for the children that attended. It was also agreed that, although the Christmas Eve midnight service was well attended, it was very tiring for those organising it and the Christmas Day service (especially Revd. Michèle). It was agreed that next year any such service would start at 11pm rather than 11.30pm.

Having dealt with the past, the dates for the Lent charity meals were set and it was agreed that we would not have a pancake evening this year and have an evening Lent supper instead.

Moving on, the meeting considered and accepted the Church wardens' report which noted, amongst other things, that the churches' boilers had been serviced, that the fire extinguishers were due to be serviced and the churches' electrics needed to be inspected with these latter items being put in hand.

The next item on the agenda was the Treasurer's report. Norman reported that the church accounts, as at the end of November, were healthy with income and expenditure to date roughly in balance. We had received the monies for the sale of a part of the West Tilbury churchyard to the owner of St. James church. He then, referring to the 'Parish Giving Scheme', expressed some concerns that he had with regard to the Gift Aided Small Donations if we adopted this method of giving. This would be discussed further at the next meeting.

With the Electoral Roll report it was noted that a full revision is required this year and those that wished to be on the roll would need to reapply.

There were no safeguarding issues to report.

There were no synod reports but the next Deanery Synod was to be on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

Revd. Michèle then gave her report on Parish life since the last P.C.C. covering the services, activities and events that she had been involved in.



# Mouse Makes

"Love is

love is \_\_\_\_\_  
 It does not, \_\_\_\_\_  
 it does not \_\_\_\_\_  
 it is not \_\_\_\_\_  
 it does not \_\_\_\_\_

others, it is not self-

it is not easily

it keeps no record of

Love delights in

it always

from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

The steadfast **love** of the Lord never \_\_\_\_\_;  
 His \_\_\_\_\_ never come to an end;  
 they are new every

Lamentations 3:20-23



I pray... you will understand...  
 the greatness of Christ's **love**,

how \_\_\_\_\_  
 and how \_\_\_\_\_  
 and how \_\_\_\_\_  
 that **love** is.  
 Ephesians 3:18-19

God is **love**.  
 whoever \_\_\_\_\_  
 in **love** \_\_\_\_\_  
 in God, and God \_\_\_\_\_  
 in them.

1 John 4:16



Give \_\_\_\_\_  
 to the Lord, for He is \_\_\_\_\_  
 his steadfast **love**  
 endures

Psalms 136:1

HOW DOES  
 GOD LOVE ME?

**God sent me a saviour:**

He sent His one and only  
 Son into the world so  
 that we might have  
 eternal life through Him.

1 John 4:9

**God gave me His spirit:**

He has given you the  
 Holy Spirit to fill our hearts  
 with His **love**.

Romans 5:5

**God called me His child:**

See what great **love** the  
 Father has for us that He  
 would call us His children.

1 John 1:3

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus told us to:  
**LOVE** the Lord your God with  
 all your **heart**, all your **soul**  
 and with all your **mind**.

Matthew 22:37

**LOVE** your neighbour the  
 same as you **love** yourself.

Matthew 22:39

P T Y D E B P O P T E L T  
 E R D L N M A Y R F D G R A  
 A U G O D J T H O P E F U L  
 C S K V U U I K T S F L T O  
 E T P E R S E V E R E S H Y  
 K I N D E T N B C S N L F A  
 M N I Y S L T W T S D M U L  
 I G R A C I O U S E S K L I  
 H U M B L E S E L F L E S S

GOD • LOVE  
 PATIENT • KIND  
 GRACIOUS • PEACE  
 JUST • TRUTHFUL  
 TRUSTING • LOYAL  
 HOPEFUL  
 PERSEVERES  
 ENDURES  
 HUMBLE  
 SELFLESS  
 PROTECTS • DEFENDS



## PARISH DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

All services and events may be changed in the light of any new developments.

Please see our weekly newsletter for the latest Information. It can be found on our

Website: [www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)

|        |  |                         |
|--------|--|-------------------------|
| 2 Feb  | <b>Candlemas</b><br>Holy Communion at St. Catherine's  | 10.00am                 |
|        | <b>'Come and Make a Christingle'</b> at St. Catherine's  | 3.00pm                  |
| 3 Feb  | Bible Study and Fellowship Group at St. Francis  | 10-30am-noon            |
| 5 Feb  | Mid-week Communion at St. Francis<br><i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>                     | 10.00am<br>10.30am-noon |
| 6 Feb  | Foodbank at St. Francis  | 11.00am-1pm             |
| 7 Feb  | Thames Chase Heritage walking group visiting St. Catherine's   | 10.15am                 |
| 9 Feb  | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday before Lent</b><br>Holy Communion at St. Catherine's                        | 10.00am                 |
|        | Baptism at St. Catherine's   | 12noon                  |
| 12 Feb | Mid-week Morning Prayer at St. Francis<br><i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>                | 10.00am<br>10.30am-noon |
| 13 Feb | Foodbank at St. Francis  | 11.00am-1pm             |
| 16 Feb | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday before Lent</b><br>'Worshipping Together' Family Service at St. Catherine's | 10.00am                 |
|        | Café communion at St. Francis  | 3.30pm                  |
| 19 Feb | Mid-week Morning Prayer at St. Francis<br><i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>                | 10.00am<br>10.30am-noon |
| 20 Feb | Foodbank at St. Francis  | 11.00am-1pm             |
| 23 Feb | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent</b><br>Holy Communion at St. Catherine's                        | 10.00am                 |
| 24 Feb | P.C.C. Meeting at St. Francis  | 2.00pm                  |
| 26 Feb | Mid-week Morning Prayer at St. Francis<br><i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>                | 10.00am<br>10.30am-noon |
| 27 Feb | Foodbank at St. Francis  | 11.00am-1pm             |

If you would like to support the work of the parish and the churches of St. Catherine and St. Francis, this QR code will take you to our 'Give A Little' donation page.



### Life Events during January

#### **Baptism**

none

#### **Weddings**

None

#### **Funeral**

3 January Shirley Geraldine Smith-Allen

9 January Andrew Ingemar Lyon

### Eric Liddell – from Olympic star to Japanese internment prisoner by Tim Lenton

Eighty years ago, on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1945, Scottish athlete Eric Liddell died. An Olympic gold medallist in 1924 at Paris, he had withdrawn from the 100m heat because it was held on a Sunday, and had entered the 400m instead. The story is featured in the film *Chariots of Fire*.

Liddell died in a Japanese internment camp in China, aged 43. He wrote to his wife on the day he died saying he was suffering from a nervous breakdown brought on by overwork, but he was also malnourished and had an undiagnosed brain tumour. Five months after his death, the camp was liberated.

Liddell was born in China to Scottish missionary parents and attended boarding school at Eltham College in South London, where he is remembered as an outstanding all-round athlete “entirely without vanity”. He later went to the University of Edinburgh, which awarded him a posthumous degree last year in recognition of his contribution to sport and humanity.

Originally intending to run in the 200m at Paris, Liddell discovered en route that the heats for the event would take place on a Sunday. So, he switched to the 400m – and won in an Olympic record time of 47.6 seconds.

“God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure,” he said.

He returned to China the following year and stayed there until his death, apart from two furloughs to Scotland, during one of which in 1932 he was ordained a minister of the Congregational Union of Scotland. He then continued his selfless missionary work, largely as a teacher, in China, where he married Florence Mackenzie, a China-born

Canadian. Their daughter Heather died in 2023.

When Scotsman Allan Wells won the 100m gold medal in Moscow in 1980, he dedicated his victory to Eric Liddell.



## The Priest in charge

REVD. MICHÈLE MARSHALL

The Rectory

24, Somerset Road, Linford

Stanford-le-Hope

Essex, SS17 0QA.

Telephone: 01375 671754

email: [mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk](mailto:mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk)

## The Usual Service Pattern

- ◆ 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday's, 10am at St. Catherine's, Holy Communion
- ◆ 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday's, 10am at St. Catherine's, Family Service and at 3.30pm at St. Francis, a service of Café style Holy Communion.
- ◆ 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays a joint service with the Linford Methodist congregation

Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. at St. Francis 1<sup>st</sup> of the month Holy Communion,  
other Wednesdays, Morning Prayer

For Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals please contact Revd. Michèle Marshall

## Our Churchwardens

CHRIS FORD T: 01375-675863

E:- [chris.pewtal@outlook.com](mailto:chris.pewtal@outlook.com)

LES SCHWAR T: 07758-461380

E:- [leslie.bowles2@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.bowles2@gmail.com)

## PEWTALK Editor

Chris Ford

44, Northumberland Road  
Linford, SS17 0PU

T: 01375 675863

E: [pewtalk@talktalk.net](mailto:pewtalk@talktalk.net)

## St. Francis Centre

The centre is available for hire at very reasonable rates. To discuss availability please contact Sheila King at:-

[sheila.kingbookings@outlook.com](mailto:sheila.kingbookings@outlook.com)

## Copy Dates for Pewtalk

*20<sup>th</sup> February 2025*

*22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025*

*22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025*