



**St Gregory's Church
Castlemorton
WR13 6BQ**

**NEWSLETTER
January 2026**

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Further information at <https://berrowlongdon.org.uk>

Dear Friends,

In possibly every church magazine in the country the January edition will begin with some clichéd reference to New Year's resolutions, whether made, kept or neither. Well, I'd hate to deprive the good readers of Castlemorton, so here goes...

It's that time of year again! New Year's resolutions! We're still making them, but the percentage is declining (down to 35% of people). Our track record isn't great either. Only 8% of people who make resolutions achieve them and studies suggest that 80-92% of resolutions fail within three months, with 23% quitting in the first week. Of those who do make them, 48% are about improving fitness, 38% finances, 36% mental health, 34% about losing weight and 32% improved diet. Studies don't reveal the number trying to do all five.

What's fascinating, though, is the focus on transformation. I doubt whether anyone's resolution is to watch more daytime TV (no stats exist) but, if it was, they would notice that this trend covers many areas, from *Homes under the Hammer* to *Love your Garden* to *Dr Pimple Popper* – all aspiring to improvement in some form or other.

There is a desire and a pressure to become new. New routines. New diets. New planners. We are continually told that, with this new iPad/blender/fitness app, everything will finally fall into place. Ultimately, we seek transformation, but we're not so hot at achieving it.

To this challenging situation, the Bible has the answer:

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain (Psalm 127)

More challengingly,

Apart from me (said Jesus), you can do nothing (John 15:5)

But also If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

And I know the plans I have for you (says God), plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

God has great plans for you but the only one who can empower you to achieve them is Him.

I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength (St Paul to the Philippians).

2026 can be that amazing year of transformation – with God as a friend and helper.

Jeremy Cox
Authorised Lay Minister

Diary Dates

Services across the Berrow and Longdon benefices

Sunday Epiphany 1	11 January	8.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	BCP Holy Communion Holy Communion Kaleidoscope	Bushley Birtsmorton Castlemorton
Sunday Epiphany 2	18 January	10.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	Family Communion (Dr Ali Gray) Holy Communion (Bishop Hugh) Start The Week	Castlemorton Berrow Castlemorton
Sunday Epiphany 3	25 January	8.30am 10.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	BCP Holy Communion All Age Worship Holy Communion Start The Week	Eldersfield Pendock Cross Longdon Castlemorton
Sunday Epiphany 4	1 February	10.30am 5.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Communion Evensong Start The Week	Queenhill Hollybush Castlemorton
Sunday Epiphany 5	8 February	8.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	BCP Holy Communion Holy Communion Kaleidoscope	Bushley Birtsmorton Castlemorton
Friday	13 February	2.00pm	Castlemorton School Gold Book Service	Castlemorton
Sunday Epiphany 6	15 February	10.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	Family Communion All Age Worship Start The Week	Castlemorton Eldersfield Castlemorton
Ash Wednesday	18 February	7.30pm	Holy Communion	Pendock Cross
Sunday Lent 1	22 February	8.30am 10.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	BCP Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion Start The Week	Eldersfield Berrow Longdon Castlemorton

Refreshments are served after most services and children's activities are provided at St Gregory's during morning services. All are very welcome.

Start The Week / Kaleidoscope 6.30pm

We shall be meeting in the church each week from now on.

On the second Sunday in the month (except for November), **Kaleidoscope** will take place – a relaxed service where we shall develop understanding of The Lord's Prayer over the year, supported by a variety of music, readings, prayer and a short address.

On all other Sundays, we have introduced **Start The Week** - an opportunity to gather to pray together for world challenges, national concerns and our local community. This too will be very informal (shorter than Kaleidoscope, as there is no address); we shall listen to a reading or two and sing a few songs as well.

All are warmly invited to come along to any of these gatherings at 6.30pm on Sundays.

We hope to see you when you are able to join us.

Other Events at Castlemorton and in the wider benefices

Tuesday	13 January	10.30 - 11.30	Bible Study at Tudor House	Fisher's Place, Pendock
Thursday	15 January	7.30pm	<i>White Bird</i> film £5 admission See overleaf for details of Morton Majestic	Castlemorton Parish Hall
Friday	23 January	7.30 - 9.30pm	Bell ringing practice	Castlemorton
Thursday	29 January	7.30pm	<i>Why Swifts needs help</i> Details overleaf	Castlemorton Parish Hall
Thursday	5 February	7.30pm	<i>The Seeds of Vandana Shiva</i> film See overleaf for details of Morton Majestic	Castlemorton Parish Hall
Saturday	7 February	10.00 - 11.30	CaCoffany	Castlemorton
Tuesday	10 February	10.30 - 11.30	Bible Study at Tudor House	Fisher's Place, Pendock
Thursday	19 February	Lent Course starts – details to follow next month		
Thursday	19 February	7.30pm	<i>The Marching Band</i> film See overleaf for details of Morton Majestic	Castlemorton Parish Hall

Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to all who gave so generously and supported this cause before Christmas. Over 40 boxes were donated and have been very much appreciated by their recipients.



St Gregory's, Castlemorton

Start The Week

A new venture for the New Year

As 2026 begins, why not set aside time for reflection and peace?

Start the Week is a new short weekly gathering with a bible passage, song and prayer for our church, our community and ourselves.



Join us at 6.30pm, beginning on Sunday 4 January in the church

We would love to see you!

Kaleidoscope



A lay-led, relaxed and informal service featuring a variety of worship music, bible readings, prayer and a short address.

Sunday 8 February at 6.30pm

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,
Who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive our trespasses
As we forgive those who
trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the Kingdom
The Power and the Glory
Forever and ever
Amen

In 2026 we shall examine in greater depth a phrase of The Lord's Prayer each month.

The theme in February will be

Who art in Heaven

Do come along and join us – the service will be followed by refreshments.

All are very welcome!

CaCoffany!

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Saturdays

7 February, 7 March, 11 April, 9 May
6 June, 4 July, 5 September, 3 October
7 November, 5 December

10.00 – 11.30am

A monthly coffee morning with the chance to sing uplifting hymns and listen to guest musicians



**10.00 Singing favourite hymns
10.20 Guest musicians
10.30 Singing favourite hymns
10.50 Coffee, cake and chat**

**No admission charge
All welcome!**



All films £5



White Bird

Thursday, 15 January



The Seeds of Vandana Shiva

Thursday, 5 February



The Marching Band

Thursday, 19 February

For details of the programme at our own local cinema, visit
<http://www.castlemortoncinema.co.uk>

Castlemorton Environmental Group

Why Swifts Need Help



CEG invite you to a talk led by Simon Evans, ornithologist and secretary of the RSPB Worcester and Malvern Local Group.

The Swift is an amazing and beautiful bird that is in decline in the UK. Simon will talk about the problems they face and how we can help them.

**Castlemorton Parish Hall
Thursday 29th January at 7:30pm**

Entry £2.50 cash, with tea or coffee and biscuits provided.

Time marches on apace and it will not be long before we find ourselves in the period of Lent. Ash Wednesday falls on 18 February this year and, as New Year's resolutions begin to flag, Lent provides another opportunity to consider renewal in our lives.

A Lent Course is being prepared by our Lay Minister Michael and full details will appear next month.

Meanwhile, Jeremy offers much to consider in his letter this month. Good luck with your targets for 2026!

Lent Course 2026