

# *The Ovington Oracle*

December, 2025



## *Season's Greetings!*

The winter solstice marks the time I'll be *decking our hall with boughs of holly*, this year it falls on 21 December (3:03pm being the precise time the north pole is tilted furthest from the sun).

There is evidence that the winter solstice was deemed an important moment of the annual cycle for some cultures as far back as the Neolithic; for example at Stonehenge the monument's primary axes seem to have been carefully aligned on a sight-line pointing to the winter solstice sunset.



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### Village events this month:

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>1</b> VH	<b>2</b> Y	<b>3</b> B	4	5	6	<b>7</b> C
<b>8</b> VH	<b>9</b> Y	10	11	12	13	<b>14</b> C
<b>15</b> VH	<b>16</b> Y	<b>17</b> B	18	<b>19</b> YC	20	<b>21</b> C
<b>22</b> VH	<b>23</b> Y	<b>24</b> C	25	26	27	<b>28</b> C
<b>29</b> VH	<b>30</b> Y	<b>31</b> VH				

VH=Village Hall Event, C=Church,  
Y=Yoga, YC=Youth Club, B=Bowls

Parish Council: [ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home](http://ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home)

Oracle back copies (and more): [ovington.org.uk](http://ovington.org.uk)

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## Messages

Village

### Remembrance:

David Welsted

Our annual Remembrance Service was again well attended; the church had been decorated with many poppies including an outdoor display of a shower of poppies “falling” from the church tower (knitted poppies attached to a long net). All the poppies displayed internally and externally were the result of hard work by Jane and Barry Lambert – A Big “Thank You” to you both for such a wonderful display inside and outside the church!!

### Seasons Greetings:

Linda and Tim wish all our neighbours and friends a very joyful Christmas and a happy New Year. In lieu of cards this year we are giving a donation to **Emmaus Norfolk & Waveney**.

*“Emmaus supports people to work their way out of homelessness.”*



Linda & Tim – Stone House Farm

## Parish Council (PC)

*Laurie Shepherd – Parish Clerk*

A report from the unconfirmed minutes of the 12 November meeting:

### **Present:**

Cllrs David Welsted (DW), Pete Bate (PB), and Karen Weir (KW).

**In attendance:** Clerk and 1 member of the public.

**Apologies:** Tim Birt (TB), Helen Crane (District), Claire Bowes (County)

### **Co-option:**

After a discussion, PB proposed to accept the applicant, seconded by DW and agreed unanimously. Councillor Krissy Marwood joined the meeting. Acceptance of Office paperwork will be signed at the next meeting.

**District Councillor Reports:** circulated prior to the meeting and available on the web-site.

### **Correspondence:**

- Email from Residents on the recent lorry traffic – Unfortunately there is not much the Parish Council can do
- Hedge on Church Road – TB will be arranging a work party to get the hedge cut back.
- The clerk requested advice from Claire Bowes on the drainage issues on Church Road. No response has been received as of yet.

**Planning matters:** none

### **Accounts and Precept update:**

<i>Payments Received</i>	<i>Payments to be made</i>	
Breckland Council (precept)	Norwich Diocesan	£637.50
£2,829.00	HMRC	£1.33
Ovington Allotment Rent £650.00		£1.40
	Bank Charge (Sept/Oct)	£8.50
	Clerk's expenses	£22.48

PB proposed to sign off the payments, agreed unanimously. KW signed the payments.

### **Budget and Precept for 2026/27:**

After a discussion, KW proposed a 5% increase to the precept, agreed unanimously.

### **Telephone box update:**

After a discussion, DW proposed to obtain a quote from a local handyman to aid with the repair, agreed unanimously.

### **Property Flood Resilience survey:**

There was a brief discussion on whether the PC should respond and how to fill out the form. Clerk to complete and send in.

### **Next Meeting(s):**

21 January 2026 at 7:30pm in Village Hall,  
then 18 March, 13 May, 8 July, 16 September, 25 November.

### **PC documents at:**

[ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home](https://ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home)



## Church – St John the Evangelist

*Jean Rockett-Woods (JR-W)*

### Services:

*Patrick Morrow (PM)*

7 Dec – 10:30am	Holy Communion	(Revd PM)
14 Dec – 10:30am	Morning Praise	(JR-W)
21 Dec – 10:30am	Christmas Carols	(Revd PM & JR-W)
24 Dec – 6:00pm	First Mass of Christmas	(Revd PM)
28 Dec – 10:30am	Group Service	(Revd PM)
4 Jan – 9:30am	Epiphany	(Revd Patrick Morrow)



Greetings to you all.

Christmas is a lovely time of the year, although, for some, it can be quite hectic. As you can see from our service dates, there are quite a few services in our Benefice, celebrating this special occasion. If you would like to join us, but don't have transport, please ring me

and I will do my best to arrange lifts for you. I am sure that your children/grandchildren are becoming excited at the prospect of a visit from Father Christmas and may already have started eating a chocolate from their Advent Calendar. I am also sure that chocolate goodies will be available for children at the Ovington Christmas Carol Service as well as the mince pies (and mulled wine for the adults).

Both Jeremy and I will be very busy as we will be celebrating our birthdays, Jeremy will be 80 on 17 December and I will be 78 on 22 December. We will do our best to keep sprightly in both body and mind!

I must, once again, say a big THANK YOU to our church cleaners, flower decorators, and providers of refreshments after our services, and also to the gents and ladies who give up their time to mow the grass in our churchyard.

With love in Christ,

Jean. Tel: 07749 870485

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# Village Hall (VH)

Mike (Village Hall Trustee)

## **Forthcoming Events:**

### **Festive Afternoon Tea** – Sunday 7 December. 3:00pm

We will hold our very popular Ovington Festive Afternoon Tea. This is nearly sold out so phone to get the last tickets and avoid disappointment.

£15 for adults and £10 for children. For tickets text: 07880935765

### **New Year's Eve Party** – 31 December 8:00pm onwards

As usual we are having a party at the village hall. This is completely free to villagers. Come along and have some fun. games, karaoke etc.

FREE

Bring your own drinks etc.

## **Regular Events:**

- Coffee mornings every Monday from 10:30am to noon. Tea, coffee and plenty of cake!
- Messy Moments, weekly on a Monday 1:30pm to 2:30pm.  
(messymomentsnorfolk@hotmail.com)
- Yoga classes every Tuesday.
- Indoor carpet bowls alternate Wednesdays 7:00 for 7:30pm, come and try your skills.
- Youth Club usually last Friday of the month but 19 December.

The Village Hall is available to hire, only £6 per hour for village residents or £12 if you live outside the village. Please ring Mike on 07733236689 ([mike@snicket.uk](mailto:mike@snicket.uk)).

The hall is there for the village so please come and support us. If you wish to contact the committee with any ideas etc please email us at

[ovingtonvillagehall.ovington@gmail.com](mailto:ovingtonvillagehall.ovington@gmail.com)

Website: [ovingtonvillagehall.co.uk](http://ovingtonvillagehall.co.uk)

The VH Trustees

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## Rainfall

Tim



October rainfall was 47.5mm ( 1<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" ).

As of 26 October the monthly running total stood at 67mm.

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## Youth Club

Kaz Mason



### **19 December – Christmas Special**

(usually last Friday of the month)  
at the Village Hall 6:00 – 8:00pm

**For ages 6–16 years**

FREE entry, squash & biscuits

Tuck-shop selling: Milkshakes, Fizzy Drinks,  
Crisps, Chocolate Bars, Sweets and  
Home-made Goodies.

Check our Facebook page for updates:  
Ovington Youth Club, Norfolk

Please txt / call if you wish your child to attend.

Ovington Youth Club has earned the 'Welcomes Young Carers 2025' badge.

Kaz & Jo (Ovington Youth Club Leaders) – 07880935765



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# First Christmas

*Revd Patrick Morrow*

My first Christmas in the parishes. How I am looking forward to it! I am one of those Christians who, if pressed, would say that Holy Week and Easter are even more important. But there is no doubt that Christmas takes us close to the heart of Christian faith – if you engage with the narrative. God longs to be with us, and so comes to us, to us as we are - always in danger of pushing out people who don't fit in. So no palace, only a stable for the baby Jesus.

Except you probably know the Bible doesn't mention a stable; it just talks about a manger, a trough. This might have been in a cave, or in someone's house (humans and animals slept in close quarters). It is surely a tradition in its own right - debunking the Christmas story - no stable, no three kings, and especially no reason to think it all happened on 25 December 1 AD. Indeed, there'll doubtless be new articles saying that the Church hijacked a major pagan festival. Evidence for this is... partial at best. True, the Romans thought of 25 December as the winter solstice. But there are no grounds to think that pagans celebrated it (25th, specifically) in grand fashion, or that it marked a god's birthday. That is to say: pagan celebrations did come about, but they are not recorded as earlier than the Christian ones.

So why 25 December? There is another theory. We know that 25 March was already well established by the 4th century, as the Christian Feast of, well, Just About Everything. It was Good Friday and Easter day rolled into one, and it also marked the day of Jesus' conception (so he died on the day his story began). 25 March is of course still Lady Day – the Feast of the Annunciation to Mary. I suspect you can see where this is going. 25 December is exactly 9 months from this embedded date. It really might be that way round.

Whether that convinces you or not, I and the churches wish you the joys of the season. And perhaps try out this idea in a lull in your celebrations: God longs to be with us, and so comes to us, to us as we are.

Revd Patrick Morrow,

Email: [patrickmorrow@live.co.uk](mailto:patrickmorrow@live.co.uk)

Tel: 01760 330258

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## Winter Fuel Payment Scams

Action Fraud

Beware of winter fuel payment scams.

Between April and September 2025, Action Fraud has received 2,790 crime reports relating to Winter Fuel Payment scams, with victims reporting losses totalling over £27,000.

Winter Fuel Payments are made automatically, you do not need to do anything. If you receive any text messages about Winter Fuel Payments, it's a scam.

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040, or call Police Scotland on 101.

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## Out-of-village Events

Sue Rothwell



Dereham Walkers are Welcome is a not for profit organisation. Please come and join us for an enjoyable walk in and around Dereham.

We have a varied programme of longer walks including regular 'short walk' of around four miles is on the first Friday of the month and for those looking for a shorter, slower walking experience our 'Easy Tuesday Walks' of just two miles are on the second Tuesday of each month.

Our regular *New Year's Day Walk*, on Thursday 1 January, will start 10:00am at the bottom of Church Street near the bell tower and will finish with seasonal refreshments!

There is no charge for 'normal' walks, although donations gratefully accepted. More at:

[DerehaWaW.org.uk](http://DerehaWaW.org.uk)



## And Finally ...

Tim

A poem by Christina Rossetti (1830–1894). Later set to music by Gustav Holst this became a famous Christmas carol.

### In the Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day,  
Breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him, whom angels fall before,  
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.



### Submission deadline for next issue: 20 December

Edit and Production: Timothy Birt (01953-889208)  
(on recycled paper using an Ecosys printer) Stone House Farm, The Street. IP25 6RT

Thanks to proof reader: Christine Reilly (885848)

Please send contributions to above or email: [oracle@ovington.org.uk](mailto:oracle@ovington.org.uk)