KERSEY PARISH NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2026



Photograph courtesy of Colin Grannell

"At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them."
Laurence Binyon, "For the Fallen"

CONTACT NUMBERS

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Tuesday Club – Rachel Wells 01473 822230
Table Tennis Club – Adrian Blyth 01473 827805

Parish Council

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Chair: Pete Partridge 07901 913932
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Grays Trust

Chair: Mary Pearce 07947 079422
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Nightingale Trust/Allotments – Info: Natalie Blyth 01473 827805
School – Headteacher: Claire Dunnell Paley 01473 823397
Kersey Playingfield Assoc. (Glebe) – Mark Pertwee 01473 810227
Kersey Community Website ..... www.kerseyparish.gov.uk
Hadleigh Health Practice 01473 822961
West Suffolk Hospital (Bury St Edmunds) 01284 713000
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust 01473 712233

Police ..... The non-emergency number to call if you want to contact the local police is 101 (when it's less urgent than 999).

Defibrillators: There are THREE cPAD (Community Public Access Defibrillators) accessible 24/7 in the Parish. 1) The Bell Inn, Kersey IP7 6DY. 2) West Sampsons Hall Farm, Uplands, Kersey IP7 6EN. 3) Kersey Mill IP7 6DP. A further one is available at Kersey School IP7 6EG when the school is open.

Newsletter Donation: If possible please create a standing order or electronic payment to Kersey St Mary Parochial Church Council: 30-13-52 00694777 quoting KPN and your surname. Next content submission date: **23rd November 2026.**

St Mary's Church

Dear Friends

In the Church Calendar Sunday 29th November is the 1st Sunday of Advent and marks the beginning of the new Church year. Each year in the Church we focus on a different Gospel and next year it will be the Gospel according to Mark. We say "according to…" as it is Mark's account of the ministry of Jesus. Each Gospel writer is slightly different. The four Gospels tell the same central story: the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus. They agree that Jesus proclaimed God's kingdom, healed and welcomed people, died on the cross, and rose again.

But they are written differently because each writer had a different purpose and audience. Matthew often shows Jesus as the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel. Mark is short, urgent and full of action, presenting Jesus as the suffering servant. Luke emphasises Jesus's care for outsiders, the poor and those who were overlooked. John is more reflective, helping us to see Jesus as the Word of God made flesh.

The Gospel writers selected different events, conversations and sayings to help their readers understand who Jesus is. They were not trying to produce four identical reports. Rather, like four people describing the same great event from different places, each gives us something important that the others do not.

Together, the four Gospels give us a richer and fuller picture of Jesus: his power and compassion, his teaching and challenge, his humanity and his divinity. So, what makes Mark different?

No Birth or Childhood Narrative: Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark jumps straight into Jesus's public ministry with his baptism by John the Baptist, containing no stories of Jesus's birth.

Fast-Paced Style ("Immediately"): Mark constantly uses the Greek word euthys (translated as "immediately" or "straightway"), creating a breathless, urgent narrative flow.

Jesus as one of us: Mark portrays a very human Jesus who feels deep emotions—such as anger, grief, pity, and exhaustion.

His portrayal of the Disciples: The disciples are depicted realistically as often confused, slow to understand Jesus's mission, and fearful.

Abrupt Ending: The original text concludes abruptly at Mark 16:8 with the women fleeing the empty tomb in terror and silence, leaving a stark challenge for the reader: Who do you say Jesus is? A "do gooder" and moral teacher, or Jesus is the Son of God, sent by the Father to live among us, to die and rise again for us, and to reconcile us to God? It is a question that is as relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago. For my part some 40 odd years ago I decided that the later was the correct answer and since then I have never looked back.

Yours Geoffrey Clement - Rector

Naomi Partridge 1926 – 2026



Time finally caught up with Kersey's oldest resident on 18th October. Born in nearby Whatfield in 1926 the fourth of five children, she attended the village primary, then Threadneedle Street School in Hadleigh followed by Sudbury High School. Thereafter, she worked in the office at Ladbrooks feed mill in Elmsett.

Naomi met John Partridge at Hadleigh United Reformed Church and they married in 1949, living at Manor Farm, Kersey where she had her first five children – Barby, Rob, Tim, Mary and Pete. In 1960 the family moved to West Sampsons Hall where Chris and Kati duly arrived.

Life in those days was hectic with seven children and a farmer to look after and feed. She was a super cook with guests and friends always welcome at West Sampsons. Somehow she also found time to host Bed and Breakfast guests as well as doing the farm book keeping and wages. Dad died suddenly in 1982 and eventually when the younger two married and moved out Mum downsized to Rose Cottage, where she lived for the rest of her life. She learned to ski at the age of fifty and travelled widely with various friends and farm tour groups.

A real family woman, Mum helped with many of her twenty Grandchildren and loved seeing her fourteen Great Grandchildren, keeping up with special events and birthdays until very recently. She was a regular at Chapel and played the harmonium at the Kersey Tye Mission Room for many years. She volunteered for the WRVS giving lifts and delivering meals to people who were often younger than she was!

In February of this year she celebrated her one hundredth birthday and enjoyed her many cards and visitors. Hers was a happy, long and full life, well lived.

Her funeral will take place on the afternoon of 13th November at St Mary's Church and she will be laid to rest in peace with Dad in the village where she lived for 77 years.

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St Mary's Church: Parochial Church Council

You may have noticed a few buckets in the church strategically placed to collect rainwater drips. We have commissioned some work on the outside masonry and soakaways which will be completed as soon as the Diocese gives their approval. Our roofing contractor will return to check out the lead sheeting on the roof.

ST MARY'S CHURCH SERVICES

Celtic prayer every Tuesday at 9.30am

1st November	11am	Holy Communion	Rev Geoffrey Clement
8th November	10.45am	Remembrance	Rev Geoffrey Clement
15th November	4pm	Evensong	Jim Sephton
22nd November	11am	No service at Kersey: Aldham Church	
29th November		No service at Kersey	

DIARY DATES

30th October 7pm for 7.30pm	Misty tales and myths	St Mary's Church
3rd November 2.30pm	Tuesday Club	Village Hall
4th November 7pm	Parochial Church Council	
11th November 9am-12noon	Coffee Morning*	St Mary's Church
16th November 7.30pm	Parish Council	St Mary's Church
20th November 7.30pm	KCPC quiz night	Village Hall
1st December 2.30pm	Tuesday Club party	Village Hall
1st December 6.30pm	Christmas tree lighting	

*The coffee morning will include the children's Remembrance service at 10.45am followed by the 2 minutes silence at 11am. Anyone is welcome to stay for this short service.

St Mary's Church History: The Tower and the Bells

St Mary's Church is crowned by an imposing 80-foot, 15th-century Perpendicular tower, built at the west end of the nave between about 1430 and 1445, the black death delaying its construction by 100 years. Its prominent position on the southern ridge above Kersey makes it a defining feature of the village landscape. The tower is richly decorated with flint flushwork, buttresses and battlements, and has been praised for its exceptionally fine setting.

The construction was supported by local gifts. In 1430, chaplain Robert Skete left £2 towards the "new bell tower", followed by a gift from William Tye in 1434. By 1445, John Gybbe contributed to the tower's battlements and to its bells. The tower was built slightly off-centre, probably to avoid unstable ground to the north-west or because the nave may once have been intended for widening.

Two skeletons were found beneath the tower floor in 1983. They may have been burials in the earlier churchyard, although they could also have been benefactors buried within the tower they helped fund.

The tower now contains a peal of eight bells, rung from the ground floor. In 1553, Kersey had five "great bells"; all were recast between 1576 and 1716. The oldest surviving bell is No. 5, cast in 1576 by Stephen Tonni of Bury St Edmunds. Other historic bells include No. 7, cast by John Hodson of London in 1662, and No. 6, cast by Christopher Hodson in 1689. Bells Nos. 3 and 4 were made by Thomas Gardiner of Sudbury in 1716.

A major restoration in 1969 lowered the bell frame within the tower and included recasting the tenor bell. Funded through flower festivals and charitable grants, the restored bells were dedicated in June 1970. Two further bells, the treble and No. 2, were cast by Taylors in 1985, completing today's eight-bell ring. The turret clock was installed in 1925 and moved to be north/south oriented in 1969 sharing the space with the newly lowered bells.

Together, the tower and its bells and the clock express the faith, generosity and long-term care of Kersey's community across nearly six centuries.

CG



The Six Bells

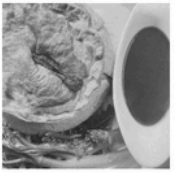
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Kersey Village News

SYMPATHY

We send our sympathy to all the family members of Naomi Partridge who recently passed away.

CONGRATULATIONS

Belated congratulations to Daniel Hall and Ria Tampion who were married at St Mary's in September. We wish them every happiness for the future.

TUESDAY CLUB

At our Tuesday club meeting in October we were joined by Chris Parfitt from Rendlesham who came to talk about his "Hebridean Cruise". In June last year he travelled to Oban where he joined the boat called the Glen Shield for the cruise. The boat accommodated twelve people plus four crew members. Their destination was the islands of St Kilda. As the Atlantic seas can be treacherous they were not sure if they would get there, they needed a forecast of three days good weather before embarking on the trip. After taking shelter part way they were eventually given the go ahead to head for Hirta, the largest of the group of islands. After transferring to a tender, they eventually reached the island uninhabited since 1930 when the last remaining 30 people left were taken to the mainland. Among those was a six year old boy named Norman John Gilles who, in later life, joined the navy and eventually settled in Chelmomdiston. On the island they lived in simple stone dwellings called black houses. Life was hard there. The diet consisted mainly of sea birds and their eggs which they had to collect by descending barefoot down the side of the very steep cliffs. They kept a few cows and sheep which supplemented their diet and the wool from the sheep meant they were able to weave and knit socks and gloves. When the people moved to the mainland, life was strange as they had never seen a tree or used money. It was a fascinating story of what living was like on these remote islands. This was accompanied by some lovely photos of the puffins and razorbills, the boat and the island.

Competition for a "Holiday memory" was won by Sarah Panton.

Next meeting is on 3rd November at 2.30pm in the Village Hall with Laura Wright talking about her work with helicopters. Competition is 'Something beginning with H'.

CHURCH CLEANING

Week beginning 2nd November: Marvin Kuzamba and Esme Chapman

Week beginning 16th November: Sue Jones and Lynn English

Week beginning 30th November: Neil and Joan Hutton

DONATIONS

Thank you to those households who have donated to the newsletter printing. Donations are still being accepted either to your distributer, online or Rachel Wells.

RAINFALL

From the 22nd September to 22nd October 46mm (almost 1.9 inches) of rainfall was recorded in Vale Lane.

Rachel Wells

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The Nightingale Trust

The trust was set up in 1583 with the remit to help those experiencing hardship within the parish of Kersey. The Trust is still here, working hard to maintain that ethos, helping those that are finding it difficult to cope with the rising cost of living. Payments are made in December that perhaps can help in some way towards winter fuel bills, rising food costs etc. We also make donations to the Hadleigh Food Bank who can also help parishioners of Kersey.
Are you finding it difficult to cope with rising costs? Do you know of anyone that could benefit from some assistance. Please contact me. All suggestions and conversations will be in the strictest confidence. Contact Natalie Blyth - 07487 816966 - 01473 827805 - nablyth1@gmail.com

The Nightingale Trust - Allotments

The Nightingale Trust are members of Kings Seeds Allotment and Horticultural Societies and Gardening Seeds Scheme. Once again, last year was another successful year, and we managed to obtain a 50% discount - the total order value for seeds needs to be £200 or more. We managed this easily last year with orders totalling just over £900. NOTE - 50% discount only available on seed orders, excludes seed potatoes, onion sets, ancillary items etc. Orders for these items can be placed if required at the same time. With this discount, why not try something new for next year's growing season - maybe some more drought tolerant varieties!!

If you would like to take advantage of this great offer and for more information, please contact me. I have a small supply of brochures, or you can browse online then contact me - 01473 827805, 07487 816966 or email nablyth1@gmail.com. Orders need to be with me by 10th November. I look forward to hearing from you. Natalie Blyth, 9 Vale Lane.

The Nightingale Trust - Allotments waiting list

The Nightingale Trust run the allotment site in Kersey. Are you thinking of having an allotment? If so, please let me know so that I can add you to the waiting list. Plots may be available soon.

Please contact Natalie Blyth for more information:
01473 827804, 07487 816966 or email nablyth1@gmail.com.

News from Kersey Primary School

Dear Kersey Residents,
We are very excited to invite you to be part of something new that we hope will become a much-loved **Kersey tradition**.

We have chosen 10th November, St Martin's Day, to launch our new Kersey lantern tradition, inspired by the German custom of children making lanterns and processing through their communities to bring light to the darker evenings. Although our own lantern parade will take place at Candlemas in February, St Martin's Day provides a meaningful starting point for our journey.
As a small village school, we see this as a wonderful opportunity to connect our children, families and wider community with traditions from around the world. We hope to broaden the children's understanding of life beyond Kersey, while celebrating the place they call home and strengthening the sense of community that makes our village so special.
Today marks the beginning of our journey towards a Kersey Lantern Parade, which we will hold at Candlemas on **2nd February.**
We would love you, our village community, to be part of this journey too.

Light up your window
As we approach the parade, we would love residents to make or display a lantern in your window. It could be something you make yourself, a traditional lantern, or simply a candle in a safe holder.
Imagine the children walking through Kersey in February, carrying their lanterns and seeing the village glowing with lights along the route. It would be a wonderful way of showing our children that they are surrounded by a community that cares about them.

Join our Lantern Parade
On **2nd February,** our school children and their families will walk through the village with their lanterns, stopping at some of the special places in Kersey along the way. We will share short readings and reflections about light, friendship, community and our beautiful countryside, before finishing at the church for a celebration and, of course, hot chocolate!
We would love everyone in Kersey to join us, young, old, family and friends. Whether you are walking alongside us, watching from your doorstep or simply lighting up your window.
Our school vision is 'On a journey together', and we cannot think of a better way to bring that vision to life. This is not just a school event - it is an opportunity for the whole village to come together, share in a special tradition and create something magical for our children.
We hope you will help us light up Kersey and be part of the beginning of what we hope will become a very special annual tradition.
More details to come over the next few months.
With warmest wishes,
Kersey Primary School

'On a journey together.'

Kersey Village Hall

"To the men and women of Kersey, I want to say
this is your hall,
come here and use it,
be friendly towards one another,
because friendship built this hall
and friendship will maintain it"

This is a quotation from the 26 January 1935 edition of the Bury Free Press and reports the words of Mr. Anson Stiff on the opening of Kersey Village Hall.
I found it in Anthony Zurbrugg's and Rachael Boast's lovely new book, *Kersey - Colours and Light*, and was immediately struck by how apposite it is to our present circumstance. We are very much in need of your friendship to help us maintain the hall. You will probably have received our appeal letter. Some of you have already responded and we thank you with all our hearts. There is still a long way to go, so here are the particulars once again:
Setting up a standing order gives us a regular and dependable income. However small the amount you choose to donate, it all helps.
Our bank details are:
Sort code: 20-44-51
Account number: 03331008
Account name: Kersey Village Hall
Please use your first initial, surname and VHF as reference.
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Philippa Harris

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Farming Notes October 2026

Although some people like the warmth of summer and others love the winter for its snow and skiing, Autumn has always been my favourite time of year. The trees are turning beautiful shades of red, brown and gold; the weather is generally neither too hot, nor too cold nor too windy. The sunrises and sunsets lie across the land with a warm rich hue at the beginning and end of every day. The wild animals are busy mating and stocking up for the coming seasons. Occasionally a storm will blow up and tear across the landscape, reminding everyone that summer is at an end. Winter is coming.

Arable

Ryan has been working tirelessly to get the fields cultivated, sown and rolled with the next seasons crops, ensuring they get the best start possible. This is a crucial aspect of the arable farming process.

Ryan has been using his experience to judge the saturation of the soil to ensure the best possible conditions for sowing. Where possible we prefer to use our Vaderstad drill which uses discs to cut a furrow for seeds to be planted in. However, this only works well in the dry.



With the wet weather of the last couple of weeks Ryan has had to switch to a tine drill which uses metal teeth called tines, dragged through the soil instead of the discs. The drilling is then followed by a pre-emergent spray which selectively kills any weeds as they emerge, allowing the crop the best possible start upon emergence.

Livestock

The embryo flush and transfer process was completed on three of our pedigree British Blue cows with a total of nine viable embryos obtained. These were implanted in seven of our Simmental crossbred recipient cows. Some of the embryos were a lower quality when examined under the microscope. These were inserted as twins in recipient cows to increase the likelihood of success. The next stage will be pregnancy scanning of the recipients in late November. Those that are confirmed to have held the embryos are expected to calve in July next year.

Most of the crossbred herd calved in February and March this year and their calves have now grown old enough to no longer require their mother's milk. Both the calves and their mothers were brought into the yards and separated into neighbouring pens. They are kept close but separate over the next week to build the calves independence from their mothers while still allowing them some contact. They are then moved into different yards completely depending on space and other operational requirements.
The calves are doing very well and are enjoying each other's company and the high quality feed they will be raised on during the colder months.

We have had a number of cows calving over the past three months and these have all been very successful with minimal assistance on our part. However, the last cow to calve in this group was a Pedigree British Blue called Trinket. Early on in her calving Chris and Alice recognised signs that her calving would be a difficult one. She was kept under close observation, but it soon became clear that a natural delivery was unlikely to be successful. The vet was called and the calf was delivered by Caesarean Section later that evening. Both the cow and calf have recovered without issue thanks to the skill of Maddy from our local veterinary practice.
We try to avoid these procedures as much as possible and strive for naturally birthing cows but just like humans, sometimes they are necessary to protect both the calf and mother from undue risk.

Written by Liam Buchanan (a New Zealander)

KERSEY PLAYGROUND CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT 2026

The highlight of the Kersey Social Calendar.
Friday 20th November, Kersey Village Hall.
Doors open 7pm, start 7.30pm: Carriages 10.30pm.
Supper provided. Bring your own preferred refreshments.
Teams of up to 8 people. Entrance £17 per person: cash at the door.
Glittering Trophy for the Champions (previous winning team please return the cup)
and Raffle with a multitude of interesting and exciting prizes.
To reserve tables or donate prizes for the raffle:
Jonathan Marsh: jonathan.marsh10@icloud.com
Dominique Young: Dominique.young@btinternet.com
Please book by Monday 16th November to avoid disappointment!

Save the Date



For one night only **Kersey Royale** comes to the Village Hall! Join Kersey Projects for a **fun casino** on **Saturday, 30 January 2027 at 7.30 pm.**

We hope you will come and try your luck. More details to follow!

Christmas Wreath and Table Decoration Workshop

Saturday 5th December 2026, 10.30am - 1.30pm
Kersey Village Hall

This will be a fun, social event with expert tuition from
Rachel Wells, Philippa Harris and Natalie Blyth.
Come along and create a beautiful wreath for your door
and table decoration to grace your festive table.
Seasonal refreshments will be available.
Cost £25.00 - payment in advance please.
Please email: nablyth1@gmail.com if you would like to attend.
Once booked in, Natalie will supply further information.
14 places have been reserved so far so why not add yours to the list!



Lighting of the Kersey Christmas Tree

Join Kersey Projects for a glass of mulled wine and mince pies on:

Tuesday 1 December

6.30pm at The Splash

With our thanks to the Church Bell-ringers who will accompany the switch on.

Pop along to The Bell afterwards to continue the festive cheer.

We look forward to seeing you there!

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The Village Hall Autumn Supper

On the evening of Saturday 17th October, eighty friends and neighbours had a party. It was the Village Hall Autumn Supper and a memorable one. Delicious food was eaten, wine drunk and a great deal of noise was made.

These things do not happen without hard work and there are a lot of people to thank. Firstly, a massive thank you to all those who came; it would not have been a party without you. Thank you, also, to all those who sold tickets and cooked our supper; who set the tables and who ran the bar. Thank you, all who so kindly donated raffle prizes and sold raffle tickets…..and bought them!
Thank you to everyone who cleared tables and washed up. And last, but very far from least, thank you to all those who helped restore order to the hall at the end of the evening.

The rewards from all of this are some happy memories and £1295.12 for our funds. Thank you!

Friends of St Mary (FoSM)

Afternoon Tea with The Three Chordettes

What a wonderful afternoon we had on Sunday 11th October, hosting an afternoon with the vintage swing / jazz harmony trio The Three Chordettes. The tables were set with beautiful flowers and fine bone china tea sets. There were dainty sandwiches, delicious scones and homemade cakes for everyone to enjoy, along with a glass of fizz. We had a lot of fun and raised £1,500 for the church! Thank you, as ever, to our sponsors Nevelli and BGA Print. Our thanks also go to The Swan Hotel at Lavenham and The Bell at Kersey for their generous raffle prizes of an afternoon tea for two and a food voucher respectively. Finally, a huge shout out to our fabulous FoSM team for putting on such a brilliant event.

The Christmas party in December and is sold out.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S 500 CLUB LOTTERY

500 Club draw results:	**October 2026**
1st Prize	Neil Hutton
2nd Prize	Colin Grannell
3rd Prize	Trevor Stirling

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to everyone in the Club.

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