



# CHRISTMAS 24

LETTER FROM

REV LESLEY

I am reflecting with disbelief. I have already been with you all since May 2022; over two and a half years. How time flies when having fun.

And as we head towards another Christmas season with all the trimmings that come with this, I thought it would be good to cast our minds back on 2024 and maybe even shine a light of hope into 2025.

But first let me ask: what are your highlights? Can you set aside some time to review and reflect.

I am a forward-facing sort of person. If you ask me about the past year, I need to get the diary out and remind myself of those markers and key events. Here are a few.

Celebrating seven Confirmations for the Benefice at North Nibley back in June. The best bit for me was the preparation we accomplished together. The service itself was the icing on the cake.

We have had an amazing quantity of weddings across the benefice this year. North Nibley taking 50% of that number. Such a blessing. Meeting each of these couples has been so uplifting.

Equally, the number of funerals has been an eye opener. I do see these as a positive. Nationally there is a decrease in Christian funerals. I think it is a real blessing when families reach out to us in their time of grief.

There are a host of other activities and events I could mention, but my Christmas letter could become a short novel.

But how are we as Church Communities doing? Do you enjoy coming to church? Do you feel The Holy Spirit walking with you, empowering you? I am very blessed to be your Priest in Charge. You are my inspiration. I see God working through you all. So, make sure you are listening to God in 2025. He will have a plan for you. Let me encourage you to enter this Christmas season with Joy and expectation. Do not tarry around the darkness in our world, if we stare towards the negatives, they will suck us in; instead,

focus on the light, the light that shines in the darkness!!! Look for the positives within 2024, set your hopes for 2025; write them down, keep them safe and ask God to get involved.

I am very excited about our Alpha Course starting in Wotton on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Jan. An opportunity to re-focus on our faith, connect with Jesus and find out how The Holy Spirit can direct our future. There is a sign-up sheet in St. Mary's Church, and you can add your name to the list by contacting our administrator, Kate Cropper. You even get a lovely hot meal. If you feel a bit awkward about signing up, then why not invite a friend to join you. I encourage you in 2025, to think more deeply about your faith.

Every blessing

*Rev Lesley Hewish*

And remember. 'A vicar is not just for Christmas!!!' You can come and see me any time of the year 😊



# Christmas Party

*On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December*

*10am and 4pm*

*I am throwing a Christmas Party in my Parish Office at Wotton.*

*I would like to celebrate this special season and thank you for all you contribute to our church communities.*

*There will be festive refreshments so please come and join me.*

*Drop in when you can*

