



September 2026

together in Wotton

*Christians worshipping and working together in Wotton
under Edge*

If you are quick! Two Bank Holiday Monday events



Also: not strictly a church event but -

Off to college at the end of the month? Need a saucepan?

Try the Dryleaze House Holiday Homeware Sale 11am, Monday 31 August.
Recent gifts from Residents and their families have contributed to this sale of -
curtains and cushions, clocks and kitchenware, china and more!
Great bargains. Come and browse and make your choice.



What Happens at Blue Coat During the Summer Holidays?

For many people, the start of the summer holidays signals six weeks of rest for schools. While the children enjoy a well-earned break, there is still a great deal happening behind the scenes at Blue Coat Primary School as we all prepare for the year ahead.

One of the key activities taking place this summer is recruitment. As the academic year comes to an end, some staffing changes naturally occur, creating opportunities for new colleagues to join our school community. Senior leaders have been busy interviewing candidates to ensure we appoint the very best staff to support our children in the coming year.

The leadership team has also been taking time to reflect on the school's successes and areas for further development. As part of this process, we have been evaluating the school against the Ofsted inspection framework. This self-evaluation is helping us to create a detailed action plan for the new academic year.

Meanwhile, teachers and teaching assistants are already beginning to plan for their new classes. Using assessment information from this academic year, they are considering how best to meet the needs of every child and how learning can be adapted to support progress from the first day back.

Teachers and teaching assistants are also spending time getting to know the children who will be joining their classes. This involves looking at assessment information, reviewing My Plans where appropriate, and reading handover information from previous teachers, including the interests of the children. These preparations help to ensure that every child experiences a smooth transition into the new school year.

Our classrooms are also being made ready for September. Staff are preparing new displays, organising resources and arranging equipment so that learning environments are engaging, welcoming and ready for children to start learning straight away.

Away from the classrooms, the office team continue to work hard throughout the holidays. They ensure that payroll is processed, orders are received and checked, and the many administrative tasks that keep a school running smoothly are completed behind the scenes.

There are also some exciting improvements taking place around the school site. During the holiday period, building work is underway to install new toi-

LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT'S IN YOUR HEAD?



PLACES TO TRY THIS SEPTEMBER /
OCTOBER 2026

MEN'S SHED: KEEPERS



Wednesday 9 September, 10am to 12 noon
Wednesday 14 October, 10am to 12 noon
www.thekeepers.org.uk

MEN'S BREAKFAST



Saturday 26 September, 8.30am
Saturday 31 October, 8.30am
Full English, All Welcome, Wotton Baptist Church
vince@wottonbaptist.org.uk

MIND INFO HELPLINE 0300 123 3393

UK.MOVEMBER.COM/MEN-S-HEALTH/SPOT-THE-SIGNS

SAMARITANS 24/7 116 123

Churches Together in Wotton
The Keepers



www.wottonbaptist.org.uk
www.wottonparishchurch.org.uk
www.thekeepers.org.uk

let facilities, helping to improve our school environment for the children and staff who use it every day.

Although the school may appear quieter during the summer holidays, the reality is that a great deal of planning, preparation and improvement work is taking place. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in September for another exciting year of learning at Blue Coat Primary School.

Glyn Jones, Head Teacher

The following also appeared in an August Special 'together in Wotton' but are repeated here, to reach a wider audience.



Bibles being presented to Blue Coat Yr 6 pupils with Mr Glyn Jones and Revd Jimmy Cullingford

(See overleaf)

Bibles for Schools- A Good News Gift

Bibles were presented to the Yr6 Leavers on 14 July (British School at the Baptist Church) and 17 July (Blue Coat School at St Mary's).

Blue Coat Teacher Jane Blaken writes: "Year 6 pupils gathered at St Mary's Church for their special leavers' service, led by Rev'd Jimmy, where each child was presented with a *Good News Bible*, generously donated by Churches Together.

"Our thanks to Churches Together for their generous gift and to everyone who helped make the service such a special occasion. We hope many of the Year 6 leavers will take up the invitation to explore the Good News together this summer."

Jane Blaken

Tucked inside each Bible was a flyer inviting the children to an afternoon session during August, with games, activities and Bible challenges, Rev'd Jimmy and the team hoped to help the children become familiar with their new Bibles while having fun together.

These 'How to Read Your Bible' sessions didn't quite have the desired effect, but have led us to ask how, in future, we can have more of a conversation with the young people and make the gift more meaningful.

Ignite Club's Ark Adventure!

The children from Blue Coat School's Ignite Club enjoyed a wonderful end-of-year treat at The Ark Café, kindly organised by Val with Alan and Alison on hand serving refreshments.

It was especially lovely to welcome members of the Open the Book Team, and we were delighted to treat them to coffee and cake as a small thank you for all they do to help our children discover the Bible. Their enthusiasm, energy and wonderful storytelling have a remarkable way of bringing Bible stories to life, making each visit something the children look forward to.

The children certainly didn't miss out on the refreshments! They happily tucked into a beaker of squash accompanied by one of The Ark's legendary rabbit biscuits – famous far and wide and every bit as delicious as their reputation suggests. There were plenty of happy faces and very few crumbs left behind!

As if delicious refreshments weren't enough excitement for one afternoon, we also found ourselves captivated by The Ark's wonderful collection of greeting cards. Everyone was invited to choose a favourite and explain why it had caught their eye, who they would send it to, and the message it conveyed. It was fascinating to hear the stories behind each choice and discover the different messages that resonated with everyone. Choosing just one favourite card proved to be quite a challenge, sparking plenty of smiles, laughter and conversation.

A huge thank you to Val for organising such a lovely afternoon, to Alan and Alison for their warm hospitality, and to the Open the Book Team for the joy, time and dedication they so generously share with the children of Blue Coat School. It was a fitting way to celebrate another fantastic year together.

Jane Blaken



The Ark is our wonderful Christian cafe on Wotton's main shopping street. Coffee, rabbit biscuits, Advent calendars, greetings cards and so much more!



Advance Notice – from The Ark

Meaningful Chocolate Advent Calendars, price £6, will be **pre-order only** this time

Payment on delivery

There will be a notice shortly in The Ark and/or contact Val Smith 07729885457.



From Holy Cross Catholic Church:

Nothing specific for Holy Cross Church, WUE for this month but a reminder that our Mass Times are 9.15am on Thursday mornings and 5pm on Saturday evenings. On the first Saturday of the month, please join us in praying the Holy Rosary at 4.40pm before the 5pm Mass. We also organise Teas and Coffees after the 5pm Mass on the second Saturday of the month. The next date to pray the Holy Rosary will be Saturday 5 September; the next date for Teas and Coffees after Mass will be Saturday 12 September.

Also, if any readers should know of anyone who is a Catholic in the Wotton area who is either sick at home or a care home and may wish to be visited to receive Holy Communion, or in an emergency, please ask them to contact the Parish Office in Thornbury (Tel. 01454 412223) or via email at thornbury.christtheking@cliftondiocese.com

Finally, Monday 14 September is the Feast Day of the Exultation of the Holy Cross so we offer our prayers to all Holy Cross Parishioners on this day. (In addition to praying for the Quaker meeting in this month of September).

Dryleaze Saturday Club

The Club celebrated its 28th Birthday in July 2026.

*A special party was held in the Lounge at Dryleaze House
on Saturday 11 July to mark the event*

The afternoon began with a resume of the history of the Club, its social and Christian background and the hopes of those who inaugurated it. It was originally held in the Dryleaze Court building but when this closed it was transferred to Dryleaze House. It continues to be a welcome monthly gathering looked forward to by residents and visitors alike. Every month is different but equally enjoyable.

An opening prayer and hymn followed, giving thanks and praise for God's gifts.

Members were then pleased to welcome a Ukulele Group from the local U3A who entertained with a selection of well remembered popular songs. Books of words were provided and everyone encouraged to sing along. It proved a lively afternoon. On being invited to look closely at some of the Group's instruments members were surprised to find that the ukulele had only four strings.

Birthday style refreshments then appeared. The cakes, scones, cheese sticks etc. were much appreciated as were the dishes of trifle and fruit and cream that followed. A real celebration spread. Some members went outside onto the patio under the shelter of the awning to enjoy their food, including band members who had stayed to join the party. The fountain in the pool had a welcome cooling effect. Others stayed indoors out of the very hot sun. This group was further entertained with some quiz questions - all on the subject of Birthdays. A little bit of community head scratching soon produced the answers.

Thoughts and prayers were offered for family and friends, especially those unwell or who had, sadly, recently left the community. An August Birthday was remembered with the customary cake, candle and vocal birthday greeting. Special thanks were given to the ladies who masterminded the afternoon and those who provided the refreshments. Also to the Ukulele Group and Libby for all the music.

The meeting closed with a prayer for the future of the Club coupled with gratitude to all those who had contributed in so many different ways over the years to its continuing existence. Long may it continue. *Mary George*

Saturday Club on 12 September at 2.30pm will be a Celebration of the Harvest. Donations of fresh, tinned or packets of food will be collected for Keepers and the Food Bank.

Holy Communion. There will be a service of prayers, music and readings at 11am in the Lounge on Wednesday 16 September. Open to everyone. Holy Communion will be offered if you wish to receive it.



Saturday 12 September is St. Mary's Organ Weekend – 300 years of having the magnificent Schrider instrument at St. Mary's,

NAOPV National Association of Official Prison Visitors

BRINGING THE OUTSIDE IN

"As an OPV you are not a part of the closed prison community but a representative of the outside world, whose outlook, attitudes and interests can be refreshingly different and who demonstrates that the prisoner has not been forgotten." *



Time to Listen
Time to Share
Time to Care
Could **you** be a Prison Visitor?

OPVs come from all sections of the community

- They are male and female
- They are ordinary people from all walks of life
- They are of every race, religion and colour
- They are unpaid volunteers
- The Official Prison Visiting Scheme is not faith-based.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?
SCAN ME



Patron
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS ROYAL

Visit: www.naopv.com
E-mail: info@naopv.com
Telephone:
General Secretary on 01422 376132
Or write to:
The Liaison Officer for Prison Visiting
at the prison in your preferred area

Registered Charity No. 1092041



Praying for the Churches

In September as we remember the Quakers we revisit prison visiting (see above). Wendy Barber has been an Official Prison Visitor at HMP Eastwood Park for 10 years and knows how much it is appreciated by the women there (but also finds it very rewarding). Although organised by the Chaplaincy, the scheme is not faith based. OPVs offer time, interest and conversation to women who for whatever reason would not otherwise have social visits. Visiting is for an hour at a time every week or two. There are always more women wanting a visit than available OPVs.

She would be happy to discuss further with anyone interested.

wendybarber5@yahoo.co.uk

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Tyndale
Benefice



Ageing Gracefully

Led By Dr Ian Donald

(A recently retired Consultant in Old Age Medicine)

A six-week course for Christians who wish to explore some of the theological issues raised by an ageing society

Mondays from 5 October

The United Church, Wotton-under-Edge

Ageing gracefully: a practical theology of later life

Description

We all like to pretend that ageing only happens to others and not us. "Ageing gracefully" is a course for those who are ready to face up to this reality. Through biblical themes we will try to understand God's purposes in a long life. Together we will explore how Christians might respond to the challenges we often face towards the end of our earthly life – both in ourselves and in caring for those we love. What might it mean to remain fresh and green still bearing fruit into old age? And two things the course is NOT about: it is not top tips for retirement; secondly, although it will include medical perspectives on the issues raised, it is not primarily a guide on how to stay healthy in old age.

Overview

A six week course for Christians who wish to explore some of the theological issues raised by an ageing society.

Outline

5 Oct	Session 1	What do I mean by ageing?
12 Oct	Session 2	God's purpose on ageing – biblical themes
19 Oct	Session 3	Finding Healing in the Fourth Age
2 Nov	Session 4	Giving and receiving Care
9 Nov	Session 5	Dementia and personhood

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Time: 2pm for 2.15pm start. The sessions should last approximately 1.5 hours.

Facilitator

Dr Ian Donald is a Consultant in Old Age Medicine, recently retired from Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

Sign Up

Let Kate in the parish office know if you would like to attend –
office@tyndalebenefice.co.uk or 01453 842175



Another kind of Service

St. Mary's are looking for any serving military or retired military who live in Wotton to be involved in the Remembrance Service at the Church on Sunday 8 November. Please contact Kate Cropper in the Parish Office on 01453 842175 or office@tyndalebenefice.co.uk

Churches together in Wotton meeting at St. Mary's.

Tuesday 22 September at 7pm
Time for a recap, and the chance to discuss Christmas! All welcome.



'Together in Wotton' is produced ten times a year on behalf of all the Churches of and Christians in Wotton.

Articles, diary items and anything of interest can be sent to
judy.mills@live.co.uk and for the October edition, should arrive by **5pm on Monday 21 September**