



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday 14th November
Town Church Christmas Fayre
10 am – 2 pm

October 2026, Issue 8

TOWN CHURCH NEWSLETTER



From the Leadership Team

And it's gone! The scaffolding is officially down and the window looks amazing! It was worth the wait! Thanks to Penny for the action photos!

Work continues apace. Christmas will soon be upon us but there is so much going on beforehand and another plea for your help. On Saturday 17th October, we will be moving the refreshment area and at the same time undertaking the second of two annual church cleans. If you have some time to spare, we would greatly appreciate your help between 10 am and 12 pm that morning. The church looked beautiful following the previous clean, you all did a fabulous job!

Penny has plans for Hallow E'en and will be looking for Soul Cake volunteers again and pumpkin carvers! The last time the church opened its doors for All Hallows Eve we welcomed in the region of 500 visitors. It was a very special evening. Don't forget to add any names you would like read out during the service to the list by the North door.

The Town Church Bonanza Christmas Fayre will take place in church on 14th November. All sorts of stocking fillers will be available as well as Christmas decorations and Christmas trees. This is going to be an important fund-raising event for Town Church, with lots of attractions planned. If you would like to get involved, please speak to Sarah. Read more overleaf.

As always, thank you all for all your contributions, large and small. Please know that we are genuinely grateful for everything you do to support us.

Going, going, GONE!



A Word From Penny

As we approach the season of Harvest, then onto All Saints and All Souls and the season of Remembrance, it's a salutary thought how fast the year is passing. There's lots going on at Town Church and all sorts of plans are being made for Advent and Christmas. Amidst all the rush and busyness, it is so important that we make time to make this a spiritual time as well.

If you are interested in the possibility of an Advent Quiet Morning or Day to reflect on the season, please let me know. If there are sufficient people, I will organise something.

I am delighted to be back amongst you and to have the privilege of taking up my work as parish priest again: I have missed being with you and am so glad to be back among you, sharing worship and community again.

Please make contact if you would like me to visit you or if there are ways I can support you.

Blessings Penny

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Hallowe'en

For some, Halloween is dismissed as a purely secular affair, a night tangled in superstition, shadowed by images of darkness, fear, and the occult. Others turn away from it on grounds of faith, either because their tradition does not recognise Purgatory or prayers for the dead, or because they do not observe the commemorations of All Saints and All Souls. Yet in truth, All Hallows E'en stands within a beautiful three-day arc of remembrance: a time when Christians pause to honour the saints and martyrs who have gone before us, and to pray for loved ones who have departed this life. Far from being a celebration of darkness, it is a moment shaped by hope, memory, and the quiet conviction that the bond of love endures beyond the grave.

Halloween's story begins long before carved pumpkins and plastic masks, deep in the late Bronze Age, when the Celtic festival of Samhain marked the turning of the year. For the Celts, 1st November wasn't just a date; it was the moment the world shifted. The harvest was gathered, the light retreated, and winter, cold, dark, and full of mystery, crept in.

On 31st October, the boundary between the living and the dead was believed to thin to a whisper. Ancestors could wander back across the veil, slipping through the night. To honour and appease these roaming spirits, the Celts lit towering bonfires that crackled against the chill, donned wild costumes stitched from animal skins, and left offerings of food to keep the ghosts content and themselves protected through the long winter ahead.

Leap forward a thousand years, and Samhain had mingled with Roman traditions. The Romans brought Feralia, a solemn late-October day to honour their dead, and the joyful festival of Pomona, goddess of fruit and orchards. Pomona's emblem was the apple, and from her celebration comes one of Halloween's most charming echoes: apple-bobbing, a playful remnant of ancient reverence.

In Middle English, All Saints' Day was called Alholowmesse, giving rise to All Hallows, and the night before, once the sacred night of Samhain, became All Hallows Eve, and eventually Halloween.

Today's Halloween customs; costumes, treats, glowing faces carved into pumpkins, are not modern inventions at all, but living threads of ancient British traditions. In the Middle Ages, the poor would go "souling", visiting wealthier neighbours to sing or recite rhymes in exchange for Soul Mass Cakes, offered in return for prayers for departed loved ones. This practice is the ancestor of modern trick-or-treating.

And long before pumpkins arrived from America, Celts carved turnips and other root vegetables into grotesque, protective faces, placing them by doors and paths to frighten away wandering spirits. Dressing as animals or the dead was not just fun, it was a shield. If a ghost returned on Samhain night, a disguised human might pass unnoticed, safe from mischief or harm.

Although today's Halloween may seem like a light-hearted, secular celebration of costumes, sweets, and spooky fun, its roots run deep into the Christian traditions of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. As Christianity spread through Celtic lands, the ancient rhythms of Samhain were woven into the Church's own commemorations of the faithful departed; bonfires, prayers, processions, and the practice of remembering loved ones who had died. The modern customs of dressing up, carving lanterns, and visiting neighbours echo these centuries-old rituals of honouring the dead, offering prayers, and seeking protection. In celebrating All Hallows Eve, we are still participating in a long, layered heritage where Christian remembrance and ancient seasonal rites meet, reminding us that even our most playful traditions carry echoes of sacred history.



All Saints & All Souls Weekend at Town Church

All Hallows Eve

Saturday 31st October – 5.30 pm

The church will be open to visitors. We will be offering soul cakes once again and decorating with lit pumpkins. We will also be encouraging people to explore the church and find out a bit about our traditions. This is a great event for children especially. We will be forming a group to organise this evening. If you would like to be involved, please speak to Penny.

All Saints Day

Sunday 1st November - 11 am

All Saints' Day is a time when we thank God for the men and women whose lives have shown His grace in a special way. It's a chance to celebrate how God can shape an ordinary life into something beautiful, and to be encouraged by the example of those who have gone before us. The saints remind us that holiness can grow quietly in everyday moments, as well as in the big challenges of life.

All Souls Day (2nd November)

Sunday 1st November – 6.30 pm

Officially known as the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed, in this special service we remember loved ones and friends who have died and give thanks for their lives. Their names will be read as part of the service. If you would like your loved ones remembered in this way, a sign-up list will appear in church at the beginning of October.



We're heading into one of the busiest, and most joyful, times of the year, and you can really see it in the flurry of activities planned at church as we journey toward Christmas. As ever, we'll be leaning on your kindness, your energy, and your wonderful willingness to pitch in. Truly, we couldn't do any of this without you. It's impossible to overstate how grateful we are for everyone who gets involved: whether you're pouring tea and coffee with a smile, tackling the heavy lifting, or heroically brandishing a feather duster like a festive warrior! Every bit of help makes a difference, and every one of you is appreciated more than you know.

If you're able to help on any of the dates listed below, please email or tel. Sarah. We especially need volunteers to make cakes and mince pies.

Saturday 17th October - The Great Church Clean v.2 10 am – 12 pm

Can you spare a couple of hours on a Saturday morning for the 2nd deep clean of the church for 2026. Tea and coffee on tap!

Saturday 31st October – All Hallows Eve 5 pm onwards.

We need some friendly faces from 4.30 pm to set up, serve refreshments and welcome families. If you can make some soul cakes for the event, that would be greatly appreciated.

Saturday 14th November - Town Church Christmas Fayre 10 am – 12 pm

The Shop will be having a 'sale extraordinaire'. Stock up on stocking fillers and enjoy a mince pie or two at our main fundraiser of the year! We have plans for additional attractions. All offers of help to set up and on the day, gratefully received.

Thursday 3rd, 10th, 17th December – Late Night Christmas Shopping in Town.

The church will stay open later on these evenings, offering tea and coffee and shopping opportunities. Please let Sarah know if you can help, even if it's just for one evening. Join us on the 10th from 6 pm, to celebrate the season with a glass of mulled wine and some Christmas cheer. Yes, there will certainly be mince pies!

Soul Cakes

Ingredients

- 175g Butter softened
- 175g Golden Caster Sugar
- 3 egg yolks
- 420g Plain Flour
- 1½ teaspoon Mixed Spice
- ¼ teaspoon Allspice
- 2 tablespoon Milk
- 50g Raisins (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180° C (160° fan / Gas 4 / 350° F) and line 2 large baking sheets with baking paper.
2. Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
3. Beat in the egg yolks.
4. Stir in the flour, mixed spice, allspice and raisins, if using.
5. Add just enough milk to bring the dough together by hand. Add 1tbsp at a time, you want the dough to come together easily with your hands but not be too soft or sticky.
6. Roll the dough out on a floured surface to the thickness of 2 £1 coins and use a 5cm cookie cutter to stamp out the rounds. Carefully place the biscuits on the lined baking trays and mark a cross on each with a knife.
7. Bake in the oven for 13-15 minutes until lightly golden. Leave to cool for 5 minutes before removing to a wire rack.



Desk Needed

We are looking to replace the very tired desk in the vestry. We are limited for size and ideally are looking for one no more that 160cm long and 80cm wide. If you have or know of anybody that is looking to dispose of a desk, please contact Martin.

Choral Scholarship Trust

We are thrilled to announce that the recent recital at the Town Church successfully raised £425.73 for our Choral Scholarship Trust. To help this wonderful initiative go even further, we are asking members of our congregation to consider matching this amount, either in full or through a partial contribution. Your generosity will directly support our young singers and ensure that our rich musical tradition continues to flourish. Anyone interested in matching these funds or learning more can contact the church wardens directly.

'Congratulations' and 'Thank you'!

You may have noticed the beautiful floral pedestal that appeared by the lectern on the weekend of the 4th. It was kindly donated by a couple who were married in Town Church in 1966 and are celebrating their Diamond wedding this year. They wish to remain anonymous, but I am sure you will join me in congratulating them on their 60th wedding anniversary and wishing them many more years of love, memories and togetherness.



The Christmas Raffle

We need wicker baskets and hampers, plus donations of non-perishable seasonal food items to make up Christmas Hampers for the raffle. We are also hoping to add meal vouchers to the hampers as prizes. If you can help, please bring your items into church or contact Sarah.



Town Church Bonanza Christmas Fayre 14th November 10 am – 12 pm

Get ready - our Bonanza Christmas Fayre is returning on 14th November, and this year we're going all out! As our biggest fund-raiser of the year, we're turning the church into a sparkling, bustling festive marketplace packed with colour, cheer, and Christmas magic.

Expect stalls bursting with gifts for all ages, twinkling decorations and lights, and - in a moment of great excitement - we'll be selling off the many artificial Christmas trees we've collected over the years. There'll be raffle tickets on sale for our fabulous Christmas Hamper Raffle, drawn on the final night of Late-Night Shopping. Add to that a tombola, a couple of fun competitions and face-painting for children, and you've got a morning full of festive delight.

We'd love your help to make this wonderful event happen. There are lots of ways to get involved:

- collecting hampers and baskets for the raffle
- gathering donations of raffle prizes
- making up the hampers
- selling raffle tickets
- setting up and clearing away
- running stalls
- serving refreshments
- welcoming visitors
- baking cakes and mince pies



If you enjoy Christmas, community, or simply being part of something joyful, this is your moment. Let's make this Fayre sparkle.

Dates for the Diary

OCTOBER

Friday 16th **5.30 pm** Elizabeth College Sings Evensong

Sat 17th **10 am** The Great Church Clean

Sat 24th **12 pm** Chinese Cookery Demonstration

Sat 31st **5.30 pm** Hallowe'en Event

NOVEMBER

Sunday 1st **6.30 pm** All Souls Service

Sunday 8th **11 am** Remembrance Sunday Service

Sat 14th **10 am – 2 pm** Town Church Bonanza Christmas Fayre

Friday 20th **6.30 pm** St Cecilia's Feast Day Concert

CI Pride 2026

Town Church was delighted to welcome the Pride Parade on Saturday 12th September as it wound its way through the streets of St Peter Port. The atmosphere was absolutely electric, full of energy, colour, music, and a vibrant celebration of diversity and inclusion. It was one of those moments where joy felt contagious and the whole town seemed to shine a little brighter. We were proud to stand alongside so many people and organisations who value openness, welcome, and community. Being part of such a lively, loving, and inclusive gathering was a privilege, and a reminder of how much stronger we are when we celebrate one another.

