



TEWKESBURY & APPERLEY METHODIST CHURCH NOTICES

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Tewkesbury Methodist Church: Registered Charity no. 11179000



A Prayer for New Beginnings

Consult not your fears, but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern not yourself with what you tried and failed in, but what it is still possible to do. Now is the time to put aside past and present setbacks and failures and look with confidence to the new day called tomorrow.

—Pope John XXIII

We send love and blessings to those amongst our church family and beyond who are suffering illness, loss or loneliness at this time. Our prayers are with you.

Love and warm greetings to all our friends who are unable to get to church – you are still very much part of our church family.

Sunday 11th January

Tewkesbury

10.30am Commissioning Service and

Welcome – Revd Jayne Webb

Apperley

11am - John Kime

Sunday 18th January

9.15am – Praise and Worship

10.30am – Philip Hyne

Our Prayer group might not be meeting in person at present but will still be praying for those both in the church family and the community about whom they have been notified. Please write any special requests for prayer in the book in the vestibule, but please have the recipient's permission to do so.

DIARY DATES AT TEWKESBURY

Friday 16th January at Holy Trinity – 2pm –

Preparation meeting for World Day of Prayer

(6th March) – please see Jean or Dorothy if you are interested in being involved.

Saturday 17th January –

6pm – Tewkesbury Players' Social (Church)

Sunday 18th January –

12.30pm – Festive lunch served in the hall.

Sunday 18th January - 6pm – Tewkesbury Churches Together United evening Service at Holy Trinity for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Wednesday 21st January –

10.30am – Mid-week Holy Communion (with Revd Jayne Webb)

Sunday 25th January –

10.30am – Locally arranged service for Leprosy Mission.

Saturday 7th February –

Da Capo Quartet concert – AFTERNOON CONCERT - 2.30pm

FESTIVE LUNCH SUNDAY 18th JANUARY 2026

Today is the last day to get your tickets for our festive lunch next Sunday 18th January 2026. Please see Gill Shelley if you would like to come. Your Catering Team

PLANNING DATES – stewards are meeting with Jayne next week to discuss events in our church for 2026. We hope to include the usual happenings but if you would like to suggest other events, gatherings or special services please let a steward know. This is your church and your involvement is appreciated.

FROM WENDY ALLEN – please can she halt jam jar collection for a while? She is inundated at the moment and will request more when she has used these up! Thank you.

PTO

COFFEE ROTAS – Saturday and Sunday

Rotas are now up including dates into the summer (now there's a nice thought!) so if you are able to cover a Saturday coffee morning please sign the rota in the vestibule. Likewise if you can assist with serving coffee after our Sunday service, please sign the appropriate rota. There are only a few regulars doing this now, so your support would be appreciated.

ECO TIPS – A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips Calendar for 2026

January – the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch (Friday 23rd - Sunday 25 January) is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Last year, nearly 600,000 people took part and over nine million birds were counted. We've lost a staggering 3 million birds from UK skies in the last 60 years. With birds facing so many challenges, it's more important than ever to get involved in the Birdwatch. To take part, spend one hour counting the birds you see in one location – your garden, from your window or a local park. Submit your findings to the RSPB. You can download a free guide and ID chart to help you identify the birds you spot on the RSPB website. Find out more at rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch

PASTORAL – please let me know of any of our church family who are unwell or are in need of some support. Our outreach worker, Jan, will be working in maintaining contact with all our church family. Jean Davies

LARGE PRINT – if you are unable to read the words on the screen and the large print hymn books are not suitable for you, please see one of the stewards so we can ensure large print copies are available.

NOTICES FOR JANUARY will be prepared by Jean Davies – jed0606@yahoo.com or 01684 772178. The deadline is 4.30pm on Thursday.

JANUARY 11TH – SAINT'S DAY FOR MARY SLESSOR

Courage, vision and leadership are found in the most unlikely of places.

Mary Slessor was born in December 1848 into a wretchedly poor family. Her father was an alcoholic who lost his job as a shoemaker. Mary was the second of seven children, and in 1859 they moved from Aberdeen into the fetid slums of Dundee. Her father and mother worked in the mills, and Mary joined them there when she turned 11.

When Mary's father and both brothers died of pneumonia, Mary's mother struggled on to keep Mary

and her two sisters alive. By the time Mary was 14 she was doing a 12-hour day as a jute maker.

But life was not all drudgery. Mary's mother was a devout Christian who read the family Bible to her daughters, and also the *Missionary Record*, a monthly publication from the United Presbyterian Church. The stories of the missionaries captivated Mary. When she heard that David Livingstone, the great missionary explorer, had died, she decided that she would follow in his footsteps. She wanted to devote her life to taking the gospel to Africa. She was 25.

In August 1876 the Presbyterians sent her out to Calabar, Nigeria, an area where no European had ever yet set foot. With her red hair and blue eyes, Mary grabbed attention wherever she went, but despite recurring illness and constant danger, Mary settled happily among the tribes. She learned their traditions, quickly becoming fluent in their language, Efik. Soon she won the confidence of their tribal leaders. She taught their children and was soon determined to put an end to some of their barbaric practices, such as the killing of twins (whom they thought were evil).

Over the years Mary put an end to many witchcraft practices, and she adopted every twin child she found abandoned. And she talked endlessly about Jesus Christ, the passion of her life.

Mary was tough – she made long trips through the jungles and took canoes up remote rivers. When her shoes gave out, she went barefoot. Her great passion was to go to 'the regions beyond' with the Gospel. She thrived in places and among people who would have terrified most women in her day.

It has been written of her: "Practically single-handed she tamed and transformed three pagan communities in succession. It is a question if the career of any other woman missionary has been marked by so many strange adventures, daring feats, signal providences, and wonderful achievements." (Dr Robert H. Glover, *The Progress of World-Wide Missions*.)

When in 1901 Southern Nigeria became a British Protectorate, Mary was appointed the first ever female Magistrate in the British Empire. She became a skilful diplomatic emissary.

She was known for saying: "It is not Mary Slessor, but God and our united prayers that have brought the blessings to Calabar. Christ shall have all the honour and glory for the multitudes saved."

When she finally died of fever in January 1915 the native Christian girls and women wept bitterly: "Our mother is dead. Everybody's mother has left us."

Mary Slessor once wrote to a friend who had long prayed for her: "I have always said that I have no idea how or why God has carried me over so many funny and hard places, and made these hordes of people submit to me, or why the Government should have given me the privilege of a Magistrate among them, except in answer to prayer made at home for me. It is all beyond my comprehension."