MARDLE

DECEMBER 2026
/ JANUARY 2027

Mulbarton Benefice Newsletter

FOLLOWING JESUS
Sharing the journey
WITH THE VILLAGES OF MULBARTON, FLORDON, BRACON ASH AND HETHEL

Update on the recruitment of our new Rector

With Adrian leaving us at the end of March, after twelve years as Rector of Mulbarton Benefice (Mulbarton, Bracon Ash, Hethel and Flordon), we are now in "*vacancy*"/ "*interregnum*", or "*between Rectors*".

Our regular pattern of church services continues, with the ongoing kind assistance of local ministers in our network.

Representatives of the Parochial Church Councils [PCCs] and Churchwardens of each of the four Parishes met with Bishop Ian Bishop in May 2026, to formally start the process of seeking a new incumbent [Rector].

We have prepared *The Benefice Profile*, describing us as a Benefice, as Parishes, and whom we are seeking to lead us in the future. This was issued on the website of the Diocese in early October.

When the application window closed, we had received two applications. These two applicants will be interviewed on **Wednesday 2 December**.

Two representatives of each PCC are the group arranging the schedule and interviewing the applicants with Bishop Ian. The 8 of us already met Saturday 14 November, primarily to develop the schedule for the interview day and discuss and agree the questions that we will ask.

A time of prayer has been set aside at Harvest House, a few days before the interview day, to come together as a benefice, to pray for the person God wants to lead us in this next chapter of ministry and mission. All are welcome to join us for ***Prayer & Pastries*** on **28 November**.

Prayer & Pastries

Harvest House

Saturday 28 November

10 - 11am

Coffee/tea and pastries from 9:45am.

Trevor Hutley & Mulbarton PCC

Mardlers

Mulbarton *Mardlers* meet in the Social Club every fourth Tuesday afternoon, between 2 and 4pm.



Our remaining dates for 2026 are **24th November** and **15th December**. Our December meeting will have a Christmas theme. Then we will return in the new year, on **26th January**.

Please do join us, especially if you're on your own, for an afternoon of chat and delicious homemade refreshments!

NOTE - if you require transport, please contact Sue Mellows (07936 703124), or Tracey Salisbury (07708 228998), and a lift can be arranged for you

Tracey Salisbury

MULBARTON BENEFICE CHRISTMAS CARD.

For the past two years we have shared a Christmas Card around all the churches in our benefice giving us the opportunity to send greetings to all our friends without the need of sending individual cards. This year the card will be circulating again before Christmas and we can all read the special messages at the Benefice Communion Service on 27th December.

Please **sign the card** at any of these services:

22nd November	Church at Hanover – 10:30am
29th November	Mulbarton - 10am Meditative Service
6th December	Bracon Ash/ Hethel - 9am Morning Prayer
	Flordon 4pm - Benefice Christingle Service
20th December	Hanover 10:30am Carol Service
	Bracon Ash/ Hethel 4pm Carols by Candlelight

Please **enjoy reading the card** on

27th December	Mulbarton - 10am Benefice Communion Service

In lieu of the expense of sending individual cards may we invite you to make a donation to Embrace the Middle East. The Embrace 2026 Christmas Appeal asks us to help families facing another winter after conflict in the Middle East. Our support can provide basic items such as emergency survival packages, a stove, winter clothes and blankets. A collection box will be available at all the venues but if this is not convenient, please give your donation to another church member who will pass it on to the treasurer.

Thank you, ***Alice Lince & the Eco Church Team***

DECEMBER DIARY

Tue 1	9:45am	Mulbarton Church: Preschool Christmas Service
Wed 2	All day	Harvest House: Interviews for our new rector
Fri 4	9:45am	Mulbarton Church: Preschool Christmas Service
Sun 6	**9:00am**	**Bracon Ash Church: Morning Prayer**
	4:00pm	**Flordon Church: Benefice Christingle Service**
Mon 7	10.00am	Mulbarton Social Club: Community Hub
Thu 10	9:00am	Harvest House: Coffee and Prayer
	2:30pm	Hanover Gardens: Midweek Service
Sun 13	**6:00pm**	**Mulbarton Church: Carols by Candlelight**
Mon 14	10:00am	Mulbarton Social Club: Community Hub
Tue 15	2:00pm	Mulbarton Social Club: Christmas Mardlers
Thu 17	9:00am	Harvest House: Coffee and Prayer
Sun 20	**10:30am**	**Hanover Gardens: Carols@Hanover**
	4:00pm	**Bracon Ash Church: Carols by Candlelight**
	6:30pm	**Flordon Church: Carol Service**
Mon 21	10:00am	Mulbarton Social Club: Community Hub
Thu 24 ***Christmas Eve***	4:00pm	Mulbarton Church: Crib Service
	11:30pm	Mulbarton Church: Midnight Communion
Fri 25 ***Christmas Day***	10:00am	Mulbarton Church: All-age Celebration
	10:00am	Hethel Church: Christmas Day Communion
Sun 27	**10:00am**	**Mulbarton Church: Benefice Communion**
Mon 28	10:00am	NO COMMUNITY HUB

Please check all dates on our notice boards, website and regular emails for up-to-date information. If unsure contact one of your PCC members.

JANUARY DIARY

Sun 3	**9:00am**	**Bracon Ash Church: Holy Communion**
	10:00am	**Mulbarton Church: Wild Church**
Mon 4	10:00am	Mulbarton Social Club: Community Hub
Thu 7	9:00am	Harvest House: Coffee and Prayer
Sun 10	**10:00am**	**Mulbarton Church: Morning Worship**
	3:30pm	**Flordon: Evening Prayer**
Mon 11	10:00am	Mulbarton Social Club: Community Hub
Thu 14	9:00am	Harvest House: Coffee and Prayer
	2:30pm	Hanover Gardens: Midweek Communion
Sun 17	**9:00am**	**Hethel Church: Morning Prayer**
	10:00am	**Mulbarton Church: Holy Communion**
	DEADLINE for February/March Mardle	
Mon 18	10:00am	Mulbarton Social Club: Community Hub
Thu 21	9:00am	Harvest House: Coffee and Prayer
	10:30am	Flordon Church: Midweek Communion
Sun 24	**10:30am**	**Hanover Gardens: Church@Hanover**
	6:00pm	**Harvest House: Together Meal**
	7:00pm	**Mulbarton Church: Together Service**
Tues 26	2:00pm	Mulbarton Social Club: Mardlers
Sun 31	**10:00am**	**Mulbarton Church: Meditative Service**

MISSION & MINISTRY LINKS – a summary of Jill Wright's talk in church on Sunday 18th Oct.

PEOPLE: We have been a sending church….

From our congregation:

- 5 people have been ordained - **Dawn Davidson**; **Sam Theobald**; **Fiona Munn**; **Simon Faulks**; **Chris Dodgson**.
- 2 have gone overseas as missionaries (and married missionaries) – **Katrina Taylor** m. Dan Harpur, in Nepal; **Ellie Stubenbord** m. Alex Hawke and served in Cambodia (Alex is now UK Director of SIM = Serving In Mission)

This church has been linked to Bukavu Diocese, in the east DR Congo (on the Rwanda border) for almost 40 years, when my sister-in-law, **Louise Wright**, went there as a CMS Mission Partner. She was keen to link us with individuals rather than an organisation. We still have links with **Bernard Masambuko** and his wife **Ntkwinja**, who runs the Awake Mother project to enable women acquire skills to earn their own living, and with **Rev. Jean Paul**, several Congolese bishops have visited us in Mulbarton.

When Louise retired, we were asked to support another CMS partner, **Ram Prasad Shrestha**, a Nepalese pastor currently in England as a missionary, working in Rochdale (see last Mardle).

We have much to be thankful for with our mission links, BUT although we may SEND and RECEIVE as a church, do we really SUPPORT?

PRAYER: Our partners in Congo and Nepal pray for us…. do we pray for them? Maybe we blame the lack of news, but Paul prayed regularly for his churches and workers when any news was very slow and erratic!

Here is the latest from Rev. Jean Paul in Bukavu, sent early October:

> *These days there is no shooting in town, only in the villages. Food is short and expensive so there is a lot of hunger. Every*

day people die in fires [from increased wood-burning]. *Last Friday* [2nd October] *there was trouble in the school which my wife, Chrstine, leads. A neighbouring house was on fire, the school children* [more than 1500] *ran out of their classrooms and trampled on each other. 17 were badly injured and others died. We need your prayers.*

POUNDS: The PCC sends £800 a year to help support the administration of **Bukavu Diocese**. Rachel Burchell has organised some fund-raisers for ***Awake Mother***. We also send an annual donation to **National Mission Commission Nepal** (and Ram is returning to work with them in December), and we have had special appeals, such as for the **Nepal flood relief.** Individual church members give financial support to Ram and to Katrina Harpur. Could we do more? Mission needs financial support – Paul thanked the Philippians for their generous support, and urged the Corinthians to keep up the collection they had started but let slip.

Maybe it is time for us as a church to take stock on how we can best support the PEOPLE and organisations with whom we have links through PRAYER and through giving our POUNDS. Your suggestions welcome!

Jill Wright

Deadline for the February/March Mardle

Sunday,17th January

Please send all articles to Chris Carter, via admin@mulbchurch.org.uk

From the Registers

Baptisms

9 Aug 2026 Ottilie WORTHINGTON

23 Aug 2026 Boudicca O'CONNOR-GRAY (Hethel)

Weddings

15 Sep 2026 Molly EDEVANE and Aaron MARSHALL (Wedding at Aylsham Parish Church, banns read at Mulbarton)

Funerals

26 Aug 2026 Pauline TOOKE

Burial of Ashes

18 Sep 2026 Gillian FREEMAN

27 Oct 2026 Carole BLACKBURN

1 Nov 2026 Jack & Jean AMES

Heather Wells

Church website: www.mulbchurch.org.uk

This month's editor: Julie Wilkins

Articles included in Mardle do not necessarily reflect the views of the church leadership