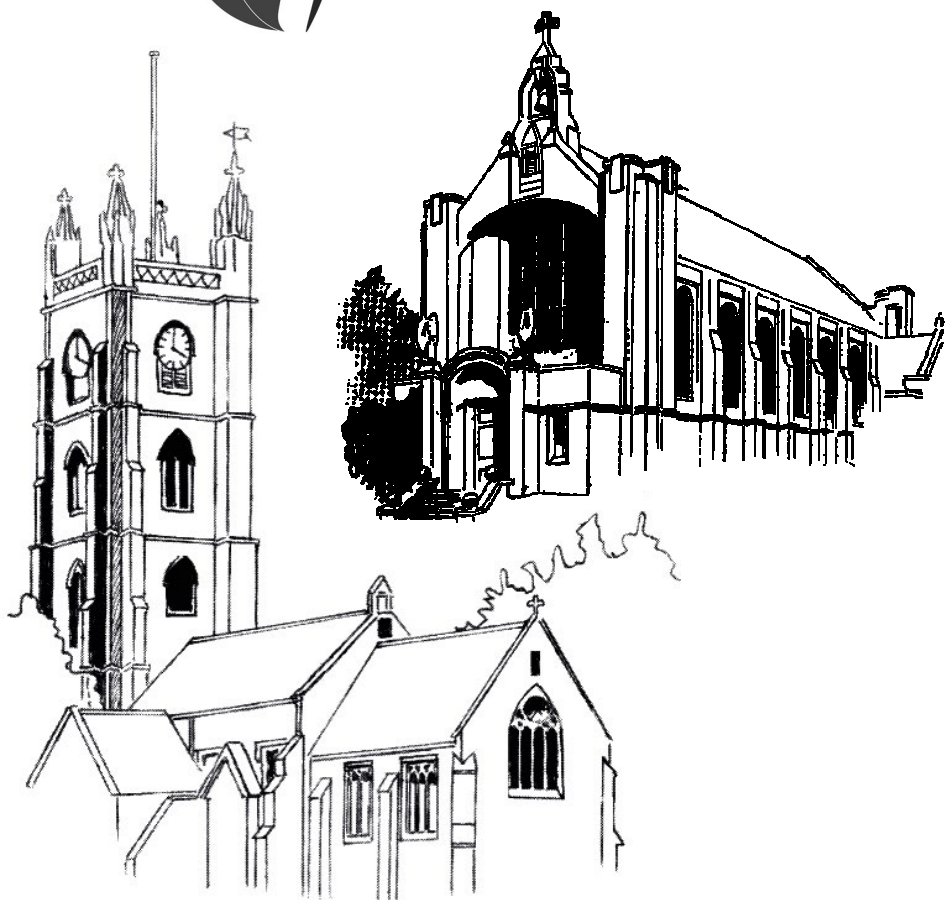


Portishead Parish Magazine




Portishead Church of England
Growing & Going in God's Love



July 2026

£1

Portishead Church of England · St Peter's & St Nicholas' Churches
in partnership with St Peter's C of E and Trinity Anglican-Methodist Schools

Team Rector	The Reverend Rob Eastwood Dewing 2 Brambling Lane, Portishead BS20 7NN 846592 · rector@portisheadparish.co.uk
Team Pastor	The Reverend Tonya Nixon 840016 · 07341 328682 pastorportishead@outlook.com
Team Pilgrim	The Reverend Mark Fuller 25 Lambourne Way, Portishead, BS20 7LQ 0776 631 0509 · pilgrim@portisheadparish.co.uk
Team Pioneer	The Reverend Lindsay Smith · 07483 932608 8 Clevedon Rd. North Weston BS20 6TA pioneer@portisheadparish.co.uk
Safeguarding	The Rector (contact details as above), Sarah Stevens and Linda Taylor safeguarding@portisheadparish.co.uk
Church Office	St Barnabas Centre, West Hill, BS20 6LN 846230 · office@portisheadparish.co.uk
Parish website	www.portisheadparish.co.uk  Portishead Church of England
Church Wardens	John Knightbridge · 843113 Kathryn Phillips · 07834 097595
PCC Secretary	Natanya Alder · 07872 047651
St Peter's School	Head Teacher: Catrin Battista · 843142 www.st-peters.n-somerset.sch.uk
Trinity School	Headteacher Claire Howell · 397710 www.trinityprimaryschool.co.uk

For initial enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings, Banns and other special services
please contact the Church Office.

Sunday Services See Church Calendar (middle pages)
or check the website calendar

We welcome contributions to our parish magazine.

Please submit items to **portisheadparishmageditors@gmail.com**
or hand in to the Church Office. Please mention the Parish Magazine when contacting any
of the advertisers.

Heatree 2026 – A Weekend of Community, Friendship and Joy

In May, 52 people from across our church community gathered together for a wonderful weekend away at Heatree Activity Centre on Dartmoor. What made the weekend so special was not simply the activities or the beautiful setting, but the sense of belonging, friendship, laughter, and welcome that grew throughout our time together. The group included people of all ages and stages of faith - children, teenagers, parents and grandparents - and one of the real joys of the weekend was seeing how naturally people mixed together across generations and backgrounds as meals were prepared and shared, stories exchanged, games played, washing up tackled together, and new friendships formed.

The activities were a huge highlight. 'Archery Tag' brought out everyone's competitive side (with some particularly enthusiastic attempts to target me!), while the younger children showed great courage and encouragement for one another on the obstacle courses. There was also plenty of time for relaxing, chatting, exploring Dartmoor, and simply enjoying being together. For many, one of the standout moments was the campfire sing-along. Traditional campfire songs were sung and there was even an unforgettable rendition of *Who Let the Dogs Out!*, which perfectly captured the joyful and relaxed spirit of the weekend. The atmosphere throughout the weekend was warm and inclusive with several people commenting on how welcoming it felt

for those who do not normally attend church. We were especially encouraged to see teenagers bonding together over the weekend, with friendships continuing beyond Heatree itself.

There was also a gentle rhythm of prayer and worship woven naturally into the weekend. Short prayer times helped shape the day without feeling overwhelming, and Sunday's Messy Church-style worship gathering created space to celebrate together. Of course, no Heatree weekend would be complete without mentioning the food! From delicious soups and spaghetti bolognese to endless cheese, fruit, salad, watermelon, and ice pops, everyone was well fed.

When asked what their favourite part of the weekend was, one of the children simply said: 'the people'! The weekend reminded us that community is built not only through services and programmes, but through shared experiences, conversations around tables, laughter around campfires, and simply making space to be together.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who helped organise, cook, lead activities, pray, transport equipment, and contribute in countless unseen ways. Heatree 2026 was a wonderful expression of community life, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who made it possible. Chat to one of the staff team, or anyone who went, if you would like to find out more.

Mark

From the Church Registers

- Weddings:** 25 July St Peter's Church - Jake Davidson and Sophie Harper
31 July St Peter's Church - Dominic Alcock and Anna Stevens
- Baptisms:** 19 July St Peter's Church - Toby Benjamin and Rhys Jones
-

Pastoral Care

Revd Tonya will be loitering most weeks in a café in Portishead. Should you have something pastoral you'd like to discuss or just to say hello, why not drop by.

Dates & time for July:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Wednesday 1 st | 10.15am - 11.45am |
| Wednesday 15 th | 10.15am - 11.45am |
| Wednesday 22 nd | 10.15am - 11.45am |
| Wednesday 29 th | 10.15am - 11.45am |

Venue: The Port, 3 The Precinct, Bristol BS20 6AH

Or you could contact her on: 01275 840016/07341328682
pastorportishead@outlook.com

Macular Support Group

The Portishead Macular Support Group meet on the last Thursday of the month in The Folk Hall from 2 - 4pm. The group is open to everyone who suffers from Macular Degeneration to enable them to be able to get together with others in the same position so they don't feel so alone and try to make life easier.

We make new members very welcome.

For further information please phone Hazel on 01275 845238.

Copy date for the August edition is Friday 17 July

Easy fundraising for St Peter's and St Nicholas' Churches

Help raise funds for our churches as you shop – at no extra cost to you! All is explained below. There are currently 43 subscribers who have to date raised £1625.17 just by using easyfundraising when they shop online! So far this year we have had 41 donations totalling £146. Every little helps!

Kathryn Phillips

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Re:Creation

We talk of hope, but what does it actually look like? In his article below, Chris Sperring, our very own local nature conservationist, broadcaster and naturalist, talks of the hope he found in an orchid growing in the shadows of St. Peter's Church.

Lindsay

Signs of Hope: Nature's Quiet Return

There have been many signs of hope so far this year—small but powerful changes that feel like a long-awaited shift in how we see and care for the places where we live. Casting my thoughts back to 2019, I remember standing on the stage at Portishead's Folk Hall, speaking in front of a packed audience. There were town and district councillors there, alongside many local residents, and I shared an idea that at the time might have felt a little unusual: a different way of looking at our town.

For so long, the default view of a well-kept public space has been one of neatness—trimmed verges, closely mown grass, sharp, tidy edges everywhere you look. But on that day, I spoke about something else: the value of letting go, just a little. Not letting nature take over completely, nor letting it run wild in a way that causes problems, but simply giving it a foot in the door. What might happen, I asked, if we paused the constant cutting and tidying in some places, and allowed nature a chance to recover and thrive within our urban world?

Back then, it felt like a seed being planted—an idea waiting for the right conditions to grow. But this year, it feels as though not just the penny has dropped, but that idea has taken root and is beginning to show its true, wonderful impact.

Look at the Picture here: a piece of open ground that, until recently, would have been kept short and uniform like so many others. Now, its centre has been left uncut. The edges remain neat and maintained, so it does not interfere with anyone's enjoyment of the space—people can still walk, sit, and use the area as before. But within that quieter middle section, something extraordinary has emerged: a ray of hope in the most vivid form. Rising proudly from the longer grass is the magnificent Pyramid Orchid—*Anacamptis pyramidalis*—its distinctive cone-shaped bloom glowing pink



and purple against the green.

Now, the Pyramid Orchid is not classified as a rare species; it is widespread across much of the UK, often found on grasslands, roadside verges, and meadows. Yet that does not make it any less precious, nor any less vulnerable. Like all wild plants, it is deeply sensitive to change. Its survival depends on a delicate partnership—an ancient symbiosis—with the mycelium, the fine, thread-like networks of fungi that weave through healthy soil. These fungi strands act as a lifeline, not just with germinating the orchid's tiny seeds but also helping the orchid's tiny roots take up water and nutrients and, in return, the plant provides the fungi with sugars it produces through sunlight. This relationship is fragile. If soil becomes compacted—whether by heavy footfall, cars driving or parking on verges, or repeated heavy machinery use—the air pockets and structure that mycelium needs to survive are destroyed. The partnership breaks down, and the orchids can no longer grow.

This is why this small patch of uncut grass matters so much. It is not just about one flower; it is about creating the right conditions for life to flourish. By leaving the centre of this space untouched for now, we have allowed the soil structure to remain undisturbed, let the mycelium network thrive, and given seeds that have long lain dormant in the earth the chance to germinate and bloom. Of course, the area will likely be cut later in the season—once the orchids have flowered, set seed, and completed their annual cycle. But for now, let us wait. Let us enjoy this moment, and let nature finish its work.

This change is more than just a few wildflowers growing in a field. It is a change in perspective. We are learning that “well-kept” does not always mean “uniform.” It means balance: keeping the edges tidy for people, while leaving space in the middle for nature. It means understanding that a town can be welcoming and beautiful, and also rich in biodiversity.

That talk in 2019 was about imagining a different kind of urban landscape—one where nature is not seen as something to be controlled or pushed to the edges, but as a valued part of our community. Today, seeing that Pyramid Orchid standing tall in ground that was once closely mown, it feels like that vision is becoming reality. These are the signs of hope we need: not grand gestures, but small, thoughtful choices that let nature breathe. And as more spaces like this begin to appear across our towns, we are reminded that sometimes, the most powerful thing we can do is simply step back, give nature a little room, and watch what grows.

Well done to all, that made this happen. The future looks brighter.

Chris Sperring



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July

Time: 9.45



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Church Calendar

Please use this as a focus for prayer this month. Please note that the churches may be in use at other times so check the website and notice sheet for up-to-date details and changes.

Mon 29 th	7.15am	Monday Prayer - online
	9.00pm	Evening Prayer – online
Tues 30 th	9.00am	Refresh Parent, Baby and Toddler Group at St Peter’s Church
Weds 1 st	9.00am	Morning Prayer - online
Thurs 2 nd		‘Thought for the Day’ available from 8.00am via our website, YouTube and Facebook
	6.45am	Morning Prayer - online
	10.30am	Midweek Communion at St Peter’s Church
	10.40am	Midweek Church Coffee - online
	2.00pm	Lighthouse Café at St Nicholas’ Church

Sunday 5th July – Trinity 5

Genesis 24.34-38, 42-49, 58-end Romans 7.15-25 Matthew 11.16-19, 25-end

8am Holy Communion (BCP) at St Peter’s Church

9.30am Morning Worship at St Nicholas’ Church

9.45am *The 9.45* at St Peter’s Church

11.30am Parish Eucharist at St Peter’s Church

Mon 6 th	7.15am	Monday Prayer - online
	9.15am	Lighthouse Cafe Prayers - St Nicholas
	10.00am	Prayers - Looking to the Future - St Peter’s Church
	9.00pm	Evening Prayer – online
Tues 7 th	9.00am	Refresh Parent, Baby and Toddler Group at St Peter’s Church
Weds 8 th	9.00am	Morning Prayer - online
Thurs 9 th		‘Thought for the Day’ available from 8.00am via our website, YouTube and Facebook
	6.45am	Morning Prayer - online
	10.30am	Midweek Communion at St Peter’s Church
	10.40am	Midweek Church Coffee - online
	2.00pm	Lighthouse Café at St Nicholas’ Church
Sat 11 th	10.00am	St Peter’s Church Tidy Up
	10.30am	LLADS at St Barnabas Centre
	7.30pm	Posset Singers Concert at St Peter’s Church

Sunday 12th July – Trinity 6

Genesis 25.19-end Romans 8.1-11 Matthew 13.1-9, 18-23

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St Nicholas’ Church

9.45am *The 9.45* with Communion at St Peter’s Church

11.30am Morning Worship at St Peter’s Church

3.00pm Mothers Union - Songs of Praise - St Peter’s church

Mon 13 th	7.15am	Monday Prayer - online
	9.00pm	Evening Prayer - online
Tues 14 th	9.00am	Refresh Parent, Baby and Toddler Group at St Peter’s Church – Last Refresh of the Term
	2.30pm	Bereavement Support Group at St Nicholas’ Church

Weds 15 th	9.00am	Morning Prayer - online
Thurs 16 th		'Thought for the Day' available from 8.00am via our website, YouTube and Facebook
	6.45am	Morning Prayer - online
	10.30am	Midweek Communion at St Peter's Church
	10.40am	Midweek Church Coffee - online
	2.00pm	Lighthouse Café at St Nicholas' Church

Sunday 19th July – Trinity 7

Genesis 28.10-19 Romans 8.12-25 Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43

8am Holy Communion at St Peter's Church
9.15 for 9.30am Café Church in the Lighthouse at St Nicholas' Church
9.45am The 9.45 Special at St Peter's Church
11.30am Parish Eucharist at St Peter's Church
6.00pm Evensong at St Peter's Church
 Psalm 67 1 Kings 2.10-12; 3.16-end Acts 4.1-22

Mon 20 th	7.15am	Monday Prayer - online
	9.00pm	Evening Prayer - online
Weds 22 nd	9.00am	Morning Prayer - online
Thurs 23 rd		'Thought for the Day' available from 8.00am via our website, YouTube and Facebook
	6.45am	Morning Prayer - online
	10.30am	Midweek Communion (MU) at St Peter's Church
	10.40am	Midweek Church Coffee - online
	2.00pm	Lighthouse Café at St Nicholas' Church
Sat 25 th	7.00pm or 9.00pm	An Abba Candlelight Concert at St Nicholas' Church

Sunday 26th July – Trinity 8

Genesis 29.15-28 Romans 8.26-end Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52

9.30am Parish Eucharist at St Nicholas' Church
10.30 Summer Sunday Worship with Communion at St Peter's Church

Mon 27 th	7.15am	Monday Prayer - online
	9.00pm	Evening Prayer - online
Weds 29 th	9.00am	Morning Prayer - online
Thurs 30 th		'Thought for the Day' available from 8.00am via our website, YouTube and Facebook
	6.45am	Morning Prayer - online
	10.30am	Midweek Communion (MU) at St Peter's Church
	10.40am	Midweek Church Coffee - online
	2.00pm	Lighthouse Café at St Nicholas' Church

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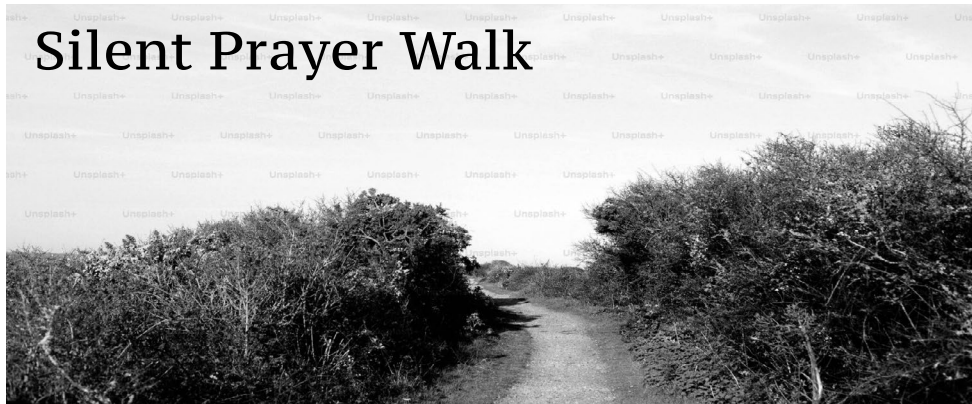
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Please note new address for Portishead

Silent Prayer Walk



Revd Tonya will be undertaking a gentle silent prayer walk around the marina.

Why don't you join her?

When: Monday 20th July
 Time: 10am
 Start point: Outside Hall & Woodhouse
 Length of walk: 40-50 minute with pauses
Followed by optional Coffee at H&W

The J. John and Tom Wright Podcast

The J. John and Tom Wright Podcast is an easy to listen to conversation of about 20 minutes a session between the evangelist J. John and Bible scholar/theologian Tom Wright who have been friends for over 40 years. All episodes are available on YouTube and the podcast is now on its 3rd series. It takes the form of J. John interviewing Tom and reveals their easy relationship and deep respect for each other and we learn how each uses their different and complementary gifts.

They meet in Tom Wright's study in Oxford and cover a wide variety of subjects such as Paul's letters to the early church or 'Icons and alcohol: do they help or hinder' and 'What is the Bible?' We learn about Tom's early life and what led him to his studies; that he has written over 80 books from deeply intellectual academic tomes to the hugely popular New Testament for Everyone series that many of us find so helpful and that he reads the Bible in Hebrew and Greek every day.

It's hugely informative and the episodes are clearly labelled so you can pick and choose the ones that might appeal.

Is there a book, podcast or programme that you would like to recommend and review? The editors would like to hear from you.

Jennie McDuff



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Cruse Bereavement Support Meetings 2026

Cruse Bereavement Support

The 'Walk and Talk' meeting starts outside Waitrose on Thursday 9 July at 10am for one hour's guided walk in Portishead. Please contact cruseclevelandnyvette@gmail.com with your contact details, if wishing to join for the first time.

This month's 'Drop in' meeting is on Thursday 30 July at the Methodist Church Community Hub from 10am to 12 noon. Many people find meeting up with others who are facing similar situations very supportive. Trained Bereavement Volunteers are available and refreshments are provided.

**Contributions to the magazine
can be emailed to
portisheadparishmageditors@gmail.com**

An Old Friend

Jeffrey Archer was a year older than I in The Willows house at Wellington School. We first became aware of each other when he was undergoing athletics training and I was doing exercises for flat feet under the P.E. master at the back of the 'san'.

Jeff was busy developing into a very strong athlete and his powerful running found him invited to several championships countrywide. Oddly, he never had the right kind of sports bag to carry his kit and I was always happy to lend him mine, which was regularly returned with a spare running lace between the leather handles. That year I was full back in the Wellington First XV and Jeff was on the wing: if he got the ball, no-one could touch him!

We were both in The Loft dormitory. I spent an hour listening to jazz programmes (AFN Stuttgart) on a friend's radio, while Jeff was instantly 'doggo' and missed the best of 'Muggsy Spanier and his Ragtime Band' and 'Sharkey and his Kings of Dixieland'. When asked what he would like to become, he suggested that he wouldn't mind being Archbishop of Canterbury or Sir Laurence Olivier, but also commended the actor Rod Steiger.

He always aimed high but then I lost sight of him – having left Wellington, Jeff spent two years at university in Berkeley, California. I caught up with him again while I was at Pembroke College, Oxford and he was at Brasenose, where he ran for the University. We both attended the College of Education in Northern Gardens, gaining our Dip.Ed. in 1964 – I to teach and Jeffrey to further his career in different directions.

With his writing career beginning with some well-received short stories, for example, 'A Quiver Full of Arrows', I next caught up with him at my local Country Cricket festival at Clarence Park, Weston, when this strong figure bounded up the stand to greet me. I was glad to see Jeff again and was able to compliment his success with 'Not a Penny More', and to explain that I had to turn down an offer to print my 'Passenger Steamers of the Bristol Channel'. He was adamant: "Accept; despite school work – you'll never get another chance!" How right he was! The book sold well and so did 'White Funnel Magic' and 'Striding Boldly' for Clevedon Pier.

My next meeting with Jeffrey was at his Royal Hotel, Bristol signing session for 'The Clifton Chronicles'. I was working on MV Balmoral, preparing for the next season and our Polish bo'sun, an articulate reader, asked me if I would get his autograph, which I did.

Little is known about Jeffrey's considerable generosity, which I discovered

quite by accident. For many years I gave slide shows to help finance the Waverley and Balmoral. One week I was engaged to give a talk to a club in Uphill, on Weston's outskirts, called the Notables. On entry, the hall was a hive of activity, with about fifty knitters, artists and gamers, and the penny dropped. Geoff Bailey, a great friend of Jeffrey's, had succumbed to multiple sclerosis and this was the Archer legacy out of kindness.

My most recent letter was to heartily commend his 'Letters from Prison', a brilliant piece of journalism, in which Jeffrey describes his unvarnished tales of fellow prisoners who gave him their friendship and trust. He wrote back to thank me and simply said: "It's getting harder to believe I shall live long enough to see Somerset win the County Championship". Best wishes, Jeffrey!

Nigel Coombes

The following article featured in the May 1919 issue of a publication entitled 'The Dawn of Day' and was reprinted in the Portishead Parish Magazine of that month. Through its account of just one incident, it vividly illustrates the dangers to which folk in the mission field were sometimes exposed.

Hardship in the Field

Some idea of the dangers and discomforts of the missionary's life may be gathered from the following extracts from the Bishop of Willochra's delightful book '*Thirty Years in Tropical Australia*': -

One day I went with the captain in the dinghy up the North Mitchell. On our return we took a wrong channel, and found our way blocked by a sandbank. We had to get out and walk in the water nearly up to the waist to get the boat off again. As we were in the water we saw the fin of a shark rapidly approaching.

The skipper offered to get into the boat and shoot him with his revolver. He got in accordingly, while I and the two men waited in the water. As the shark came close he looked uncomfortably big, and we were relieved when the skipper fired and he sheered off. "Just as well," remarked the skipper. "I forgot to say that my revolver always jams after the first shot, and if I had missed him I could not have fired again."

My Woodland Home (Beech Tree)

Here I sway amongst my own,
Deep in the quiet woods

Wild garlic grows at my feet,
Birds chuckle on my branches.

I glow a brilliant green in spring,
Later burning bright mauve and ochre.

My leaves fall on the forest floor
Helping my insect friends to flourish.

Owls hoot in the evening air,
Foxes patrol through the crisp leaves.

Squirrels sometimes bite my bark
And scramble up and down my trunk.

When the north wind blows amongst bare branches
I'm glad my fellow trees protect me.

We whisper when we see the sunset,
Leaves tinkling in the breeze.

We sing lullabies to each other
Under the silver moonlight.

Sometimes my friends join branches
And we sway together under soft rain drops.

When I grow bigger I shall be able to see the fields
Behind our wood, the cows and flowers.

For now I am content to look at the vast sky
And feel my place in this, my leafy world.

Andrea Renwick

Giving to Portishead Church of England

Our churches of St Peter's and St Nicholas' are in good heart. Many people contribute towards the ongoing life of the Church and its work, reaching out with God's love into the local community in Portishead. We are very grateful for this generous support.

Money can be a difficult subject, and we never want anyone to feel under pressure. But we invite you to consider how you can contribute to the Church's work in our parish.

Giving is an important part of discipleship and enables us to be actively involved in supporting the local community, helping us all to grow and go in God's love. We will not be able to continue to do what we do without the generous donations from the whole people of God.

If you are a UK taxpayer, Portishead Church of England can reclaim a further 25% of the value of your gift.

How can I support the work of Portishead parish?

The Parish Giving Scheme

The easiest way for you to give regularly is to do so through the Parish Giving Scheme. This is a convenient option for those who want their giving to be regular and consistent. It also reduces admin costs and helps with budgeting. Giving a regular donation to the church in this way also means that we do not have to do anything to claim back Gift Aid on your donation. It is a brilliant way to support our mission and ministry in Portishead.



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