

CHURCH Magazine

St Hilary's Church, Killay • St Martin's Church, Duvant



Gower Ministry Area

50p

December 2025

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'Making Room for Others at Christmas'

by Peter Lewis

Embracing the spirit of Welcome

As the festive season draws near, our homes and maybe gardens too will be having a make-over as we make room for cards, decorations and possibly a Christmas tree and outdoor lights. To make room for all these, we often have to re-arrange furniture, items on the mantle-piece and re-think what plugs into our electrical sockets. However minimalistic our festal decorating might be, most of us will be making room. Have you ever stopped to consider how the very act of making room in our homes portrays one of the key Nativity themes?



This little article is being written whilst I'm on a provincial discernment panel in Gladstone's Library in North Wales – a time when people who considering a calling to being ordained are at the last stage of testing to see if this is the right time for them. As the temperatures plummet outside and snow begins to fall on nearby Dolgellau and Snowdon, this is a very Christmassy scene. Prime minister Gladstone and Charles Dickens were very much contemporaries and the whole setting here conjures up a Victorian scene of Christmas, reminding me of how the Dickensian character Mr Scrooge's life is transformed from a person who holds onto his private space to one who opens it all up and makes room for others at Christmas.

I was intrigued to discover that in 1841, Dickens visited a graveyard in Edinburgh where he saw a tombstone for Ebenezer Scroggie, who was described as a "meal man". It seems that Dickens saw the word play between "meal man" (someone who is a corn merchant) and "mean man" so that the infamous stingy character was devised. Interestingly, in Victorian times, "scrouge" meant to squeeze through a crowd in packed streets. The character of Scrouge is so embroiled in his own small, tight little world that he has restricted himself from any loving connections to others – he has become scrouged out.

And here comes the Christmas truth – Jesus is born - he squeezed into the world in a forgotten backwater of a Roman occupied territory, and as his life expands, he creates room for everyone in God's kingdom.

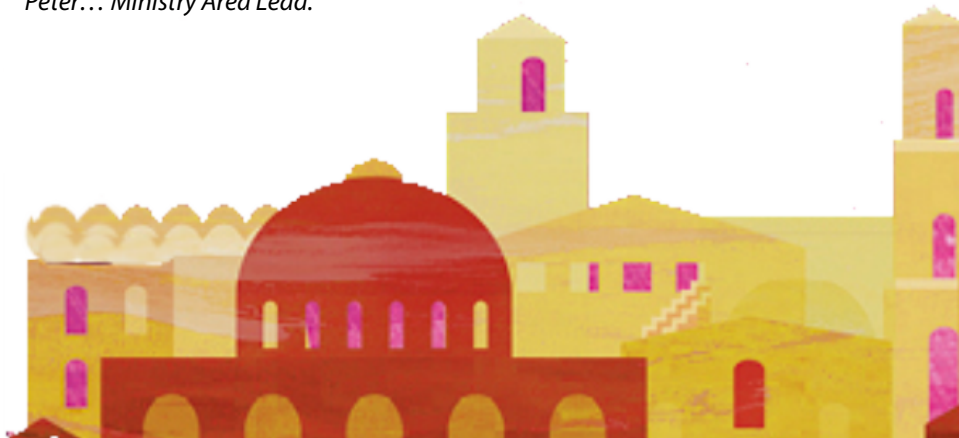
As Advent begins we start a new Lectionary year in our Sunday Bible readings - the accounts of Jesus' life in Matthew's Gospel, and both he and Luke give space to include the Nativity in their biographies. You might like to pause here and consider the ways in which the Christmas stories include the theme of 'making room'.

So many of our primary school Nativity plays and Christmas church readings will include the sense of NO ROOM at the inn, yet whoever that character was, baby Jesus managed to squeeze into the world and was born. We do live in a time when 'No Room at the inn, yet whoever that character was, baby Jesus managed to squeeze into the world and was born. We do live in a time when 'No Room in Britain' is a contentious issue, and as disciples, it is important to allow our perspectives to be informed by faith as well as politics. Is there something in the Christmas story that connects with issues facing our nation, and facing us in our response to people who are in need of our compassion? And is it the case, like decorating our houses for Christmas, that in order to make room for something, other things have to be packed away...

We are going to have a vibrant festive feel in all our churches this Christmas from Tycoch to the ends of Gower. We will be celebrating Good News in so many ways in our communities and with loved ones. What might 'Making Room for Others' really mean in our congregations and homes?

May your Christmas be blessed with hospitality, kindness, and the joy of welcome.
Bendithion y Tymor,

Peter... Ministry Area Lead.



St Hilary's & St Martin's - Who's Who

Priest:	Reverend Layfetta Masih The New Vicarage, 59a Victoria Road, Waunarlwydd, Swansea SA5 4SY ☎ 01792 410488 Mobile: 07414 268163 Email: LayfettaMasih@cinw.org.uk	
St Hilary's	St Hilary's Church & Church Hall 481a Gower Road, Killay, Swansea, SA2 7DZ	
Lay Worship Leaders:	Simon Davies, Mike Powell, Barbara Roberts.	
Eucharistic Assistants:	Roy Chapman, Alan Pickard, Mike Powell, Catherine Swain.	
Congregational Wardens:	Mike Powell	☎ 208955
	Marian Williams	☎ 204175
Assistant Wardens:	Sylvia Powell	☎ 208955
	Alun Bessette	☎ 699037
Treasurer:	Diane Holohan	☎ 296272
Sacristan:	Mike Powell	☎ 208955
Church Committee Secretary:	Marian Williams	☎ 204175
Hall Booking Secretary:	Diane Holohan	☎ 07770 788465 (texts preferred)
Envelopes/Gift Aid Scheme:	Geraldine Rees	☎ 207916
Organist:	Chris Samuel	
St Martin's	St Martin's Church Fairwood Road, Dunvant, Swansea SA2 7PE	
Eucharistic Assistant:	Susan Dimblebee	
Congregational Wardens:	Susan Dimblebee	☎ 299503
	Roger Draisey	☎ 515391
Organists:	Martin Draisey, Julia Lambert	
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Sidespersons

Dec Diane Holohan, Chris Regan
Jan Jan & Jim Proudfoot

Elements

7th Lay led
14th Gillian Hutchinson, Julie Dowzell-Thomas
21st Sue & Bob Mapp
24th Sylvia Powell, Marian Williams
28th Glenys & Lyndon Hall
Jan 4th Lay led

Readers

7th Lay led
14th Sue Davies
21st Angela Reed
24th Cath Swain
28th Sheila Betts
Jan 4th Lay led

Intercessions

7th Lay led
14th Sheila Betts
21st Marian Williams
28th tba
Jan 4th Lay led

Eucharist Assistants

7th Lay led
14th Roy Chapman
21st Mike Powell
24th Mike Powell
28th Roy Chapman

Jan 4th Lay led

Altar Flowers

7th Advent
14th Advent
21st Advent
28th tba
Jan 4th Lay led

Coffee

7th Sylvia Powell, Marian Williams
14th Anne Llewelyn, Jean Gwilym
21st Cath Swain, Nansi Evans
28th Val Beynon, Christine Williams
Jan 4th Sylvia Powell, Lisa Powell

St Martin's Church, Duvant

Sidespersons

7th Gareth Dimblebee
14th Sue Dimblebee
16th Roger Draisey
21st Ian Dimblebee
25th Gareth Dimblebee
28th Roger Draisey

Readers

7th Haulwen Lumsdaine
14th Margaret Draisey
21st Alun Bessette
25th Margaret Draisey
28th Haulwen Lumsdaine

Altar Flowers

7th Advent
14th Advent
21st Advent
25th Christine Dardecker

Holy Dusters Sue & Ian Dimblebee

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News



We pray for those who are ill at home, in hospital or nursing homes.

Our thoughts are also with those who lovingly care for them by day and night. Julie Cole, Miriam Evans, Doll Lee, Diane Lewis (Hillside Nursing Home), Olwen Nicholas, Betty Nutt, Mary Osborne (Hillside Nursing Home), Rev'd Judith Phillips, Rita Trew, Gloria and Brian Wilkins, Eileen Wilson and all others known to Him who need our prayers.



Ken James R.I.P.

How sad we were to have the news that Ken had died shortly after his 96th birthday

More to follow in the next edition of the magazine

Congratulations from all at St. Hilary's to our dear friend **Ron Horsey** who celebrates his **100th birthday** on December 2nd. Ron stood proudly at the war graves at St. Hilary's on Remembrance Sunday.

Here he is with Layfetta after receiving his birthday card from the King!



EAST GOWER NEW YEAR LUNCH

PENNARD GOLF CLUB

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(12.30PM FOR 1PM)

£30 PER PERSON (INC. TIP)

SEE MENU AT THE BACK OF CHURCH



I would like to thank everyone that has contributed towards the giving of flowers throughout the year. A list will be placed at the back of the Church during December if you wish to place flowers on the Altar during 2026

Many thanks
Diolch yn Fawr
Anne

The 100 club draw was made at St. Hilary's Church Hall

1st prize	No. 28	Caroline Cook
2nd prize	No. 03	Sian Gwynn



Safeguarding Contact

Ministry Area Safeguarding officer Cath Swain
07854119359

CHURCH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many thanks to our readers and all of you who make our Church Magazine possible and to all who help in delivering door to door, it is very much appreciated. It is that time of year when the annual subscriptions for the Church Magazines delivered to you are due for payment in December.

For this year ending December 2025.
Twelve monthly magazines at 50p each - **£6** total

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or Mike Powell, *Mob:* 07849 156747
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Music Society



In our November meeting, we were pleased to welcome our friend Nabeel Masih. He told us the story of how he became a musician. He always had a passion for music and plays the guitar, the piano and is a composer.

When his family lived in Pakistan, Christians were persecuted. So, in 1992 his father went to work in the oil refinery in Abu Dhabi. Nabeel always enjoyed making music with his Dad. Their house

was a house full of faith. They were a family of six. In 1993 his father bought him a guitar and with a few formal lessons the guitar became a part of his life. 1993 was the year of the first Gulf War. He found that music was a way to talk to God and people and he would play anywhere. He was studying but music came first and he started looking at music more emotionally. Music and songs can take you back, bring back memories and change you. Being a

worshipper and a musician led him to so many things. In 1993 they came to the UK because of the Gulf War. It would have been difficult to go back to Pakistan so they applied for asylum and made many good friends. He said music makes people happy and can be part of worship.

He met David Biborough, a songwriter. Through him, Songs of Praise contacted Nabeel. After an interview he appeared on the programme. It was his breakthrough into the music industry.

Nabeel then sang "I'm a New Creation" and "Let me be yours and yours alone".

He met and married Layfetta, and they moved to St Peter's Church, Bolton. Every year they would hire a hall and he and his son, Malachi, played. His faith got stronger and he was involved with BBC Radio and still has connections.

His Dad and Mum died just before Covid. He was asked to go on YouTube and was teaching in Manchester University. He decided to use technology to enhance his faith.

He then sang "Heal our Nation".

During Covid their vicar asked him to do more online. He had formed a band but they could not meet so each person recorded their part, sent it to him and he

put the parts together. Then we saw a film of the group singing "Jesus, I Believe in You". Singing together and putting the music online was a help in Covid.

The group then sang "Waymaker".

Nabeel has now been producing worship music for many years.

He was made redundant after working for 15 years. He wondered what would happen as his identity was as a singer, songwriter and academic. It could all be taken away. Then he had a "light-bulb moment". God takes over, has a plan and we shouldn't worry. He now has work but it means that sometimes he can't play his music. Then on the screen we saw him singing "The Servant King".

He has played in the Greenbelt Festival in Derbyshire with Father Tim Ardouin. All his music equipment is in his garage! He likes to help people with singing and composing and has appeared in so many famous places, including the Royal Albert Hall.

Nabeel finished this interesting view into his life with "I Surrender".

Nabeel was thanked by the Chairman for sharing his life story with us.



Christmas Trees at St Hilary's Church

This year it has been decided by Layfetta and wardens that we will not be having the usual two large trees, one in the sanctuary and one outdoors. Over the past few years the outside tree has blown over in the heavy gales we are experiencing, causing damage to tree and lights several times.



Also it was agreed that we would not have a large tree in the sanctuary, but donate the cost of both to the Jamaica Appeal along with the bucket collection. It is felt that people without a roof over their heads are more in need than we are for two large Christmas trees. It's really all about the "Have and the Have Nots" We will still have the memorial tree in church, which is important to many.

Sylvia & Mike Powell

ST HILARY'S CHURCH CENTENARY - AUGUST 2026

As many of you will know, St. Hilary's Church will be 100 years old next year. We intend to celebrate this occasion in a number of ways but need your help. If you, your families, friends and neighbours have or have had any connection with St. Hilary's over the years, please can you look for any photographs or possible orders of service from weddings, funerals, baptisms or confirmations.

We need photographs and memories of church organisations, church fayres, youth clubs, pram group, luncheon club, sporting activities, garden club trips and celebratory events of any kind at all. Anything you have will be appreciated and returned to you.

Any ideas will be welcomed, please don't be afraid to think outside the box.

Thank you,
Marian Williams and Mike Powell
Congregational Wardens.

Mothers' Union

For the meeting on November 18th we welcomed Felicity Padley who gave a talk about the Irish potato famine, 1845-52, and its repercussions. The potato is of South American origin, related to the tomato and nightshade. It was introduced to Europe in the second half of the 16th century. It is an important food source - boiled potatoes can provide a balanced diet. They are grown from tubers underground where they can be attacked by fungi and bacteria, causing disease when eaten.

At the time of the famine, the Irish were poor, partly due to English landlords; the climate too was no help to the potato crop. Millions died from the diseased crop, from starvation and bacterias; scurvy was rife. The mortality rate was high. Many hundreds of Irish emigrated to other countries for a better life but also took their diseases with them worldwide.

There were two subsequent smaller famines in later years and the Irish population still does not grow at the rate of other countries.

Felicity was thanked by Fran, Branch Leader, for her interesting talk.



The next meeting will be on December 16th at 2:30pm in the lower hall with a 'Bring and Share' Tea.



Wonder of Wellbeing Wild Church Llanrhidian to Wernffrwd

The weather had definitely decided to add an extra touch to the 'wild' aspect of the morning. However, undeterred by the rain, 18 enthusiastic walkers and four dogs, all suited and booted in waterproof coats, trousers and boots arrived at Sts. Rhidian and Illtyd's Church raring to go. After a welcome from Dan and Pete, brief introductions and register completed, we were ready to go. This time we were given an I Spy sheet with noticeable features of the church, churchyard, landscape and livestock on the marsh highlighted.



We found the large gravestone in the porch with carved pictures of people and animals which is thought to originate from the Vikings. Unless you look closely, it is easy to miss the inscription on the gateposts. One says Llanelen, KBMB 13??, the other Henry Lucas, Llanelen. Llanelen was a village, with a church which existed in this area some 700 years ago. It is believed that a



ship landed here and the sailors went ashore in search of food. However they carried the plague to the village which caused the death of all the villagers. An earlier Gower version of Eyam perhaps. The remains of the church can still be visited near 'The Purple Badger,' on the main road to Penclawdd. Leaving the church, we passed the whipping stone where locals were punished in public for their misdemeanours, some of us breathing a huge sigh of relief that this no longer happens!

We followed part of the Gower Pilgrimage Way to the marsh road which was flooded in parts due to the rain water running off the fields rather than the tide. The mist towards the estuary prevented us from seeing the marsh in its full glory, obscuring the colours, though we tried to imagine the seasonal change in the landscape and the colours which would feature. The birdsong was clear, though it was more difficult to spot the birds themselves.

Seeing the marsh stretching out to sea towards Llanelli, it was difficult to imagine the treacherous nature of the landscape, with so many deep channels of water. Eventually we were able to spot the lighthouse on Whitford Sands. Of course this location makes sense when we think of the shipping which used to come into Penclawdd and the rail links to the village in the past. The former Hermon Chapel, on the hill behind Penclawdd was painted white as a beacon to incoming ships.



Being outside in nature is beautiful and we need to appreciate God's creation in all its glory. The isolation and solitude can be an opportunity to free ourselves from all the pressures of everyday life. It was clear that we are all reliant upon other people and that this reliance continues today. We felt the isolation which could occur if we try to be independent and the importance of working together and supporting one another is crucial. The sheep and the ponies on the marsh looked so far away, yet they too come in to the villages seeking food and shelter.

We were delighted to arrive at St. David's Church in Wernffrwd, for the hospitality offered and the hot drinks and refreshments, plus the added benefit of a toilet! We brought our walk to a close by playing a game called OUISI or YesYes. Each of us was given 3 cards showing flora and fauna from various parts of the world and our task was to make connections. This really had us scratching our heads – I certainly didn't recognise the close-up of an Arboreal Termite nest on one of my cards. Once again, a really thought-provoking, enjoyable walk with good company. Thanks to Dan and Pete for another great Saturday morning in North Gower.

Marian Williams

Parish of Killay Magazine, 50 years ago - December 1975

Bishop's Visit

On Tuesday, 13th January, St Hilary's Day, the Bishop of the diocese will be visiting the parish to preach at a special Eucharist service at 7:30pm. This service will mark the beginning of our jubilee celebrations. The building of St Hilary's church was completed in 1926 and, during the next few months, we hope to mark the 50th anniversary with a series of special events culminating at the Harvest Festival services in 1976. We hope all parishioners will make a very special effort to note this date and attend this service which will inaugurate our celebrations.

Vicar's Installation at Brecon Cathedral

There were about 70 parishioners from Killay and Dunvant present in the large congregation at the cathedral in Brecon on Friday, 31st October, to witness the collation and installation of the vicar (Rev Hywel Hughes) as one of the two new Canons of the Cathedral.

The Bishop performed the service of collation and presented the new Canons with their mandates. The Dean of Brecon installed them in their seats in the choir. The vicar takes the stall of West Gower and the other Canon, Rev I R Luther Thomas, vicar of Knighton, the stall of Buihth. Also, during the service, Canon Owain Jones was installed as Precentor of the Cathedral.

The cathedral choir took part in the service and the sermon was preached by the Bishop. Afterwards, refreshments were served by the lady members of the Friends of the Cathedral in the refectory.

News in Brief

Members of St Martin's and St Hilary's combined, on 2nd November, for the service of Evensong which was broadcast on Radio City for the Swansea hospitals.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Baptism

16th November

Philip David Helliwell, 91 Goetre Fawr Road

Marcus Huw De La Mare, 9 Hen Park Avenue



Sale of Apples ...by Margaret Thomas 2025

Margaret is seen presenting a cheque for £40, the proceeds of the annual apple sale, to Rev Peter Phillips.

Margaret would like to thank the members of the church, friends and neighbours who helped her by buying the apples in the summer months.




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The deadline for articles for January 2026 magazine is Tuesday 23 December

East Cluster Christmas Services and Events

St. Hilary's Gifts to be returned for Mr.X appeal

Sunday Dec 7th at 11:00am service

St. Hilary's Gwalia Singers' Concert

Friday December 13th at 7:00pm

St. Hilary's Coffee and mince pies plus raffle draw

Sunday Dec 14th after the service

St. Hilary's Carol Service with live nativity

Sunday December 21st at 5:00pm

St. Hilary's First Eucharist of Christmas

Wednesday December 24th 11:00pm **Carols with Eucharist** at 11:30pm

St. Martin's Candle-light Carol Service

Sunday December 14th at 6:00pm

St. Martin's Christmas Day at 9.30am

St. Martin's December 31st **Midnight Eucharist** at 11:30pm

All Souls Christingle Service

Friday December 19th at 6pm

All Souls Christmas Eve

4:00pm **Live Nativity and Carols, followed by Eucharist**

No mid-week services for two weeks during weeks beginning December 22nd and 29th

Mid-week services resume on the 7th and 8th of January

Have you got something you would like to say?

Read a good book? Seen a good film or play? Had a good holiday? Recommend a recipe? Gardening tips? Something interesting or funny happened to you? Tell us about it.



You can either hand in your contribution to Geraldine or myself or e-mail to rogerrees134@gmail.com and we will share them in the magazine.

Articles for the magazine can be submitted by the date printed in the magazine to enable publication the following month.

Thank you

Roger

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DILHARMONIC
SWANSEA PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

HANDEL MESSIAH

BRITISH SINFONIETTA / SINFONIETTA PRYDAIN
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MEINIR WYN ROBERTS, LEAH-MARIAN JONES,
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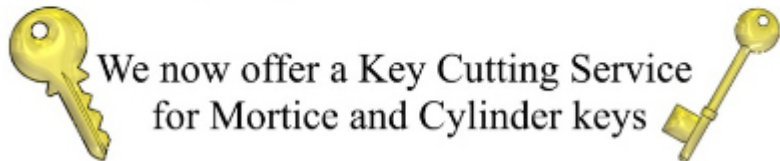


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St Paul's Parish Centre, Sketty:	Tues	7:00pm	Ladies
	Thurs	10:00am	Ladies

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St James the Least of All

The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'



The Rectory, St James the Least of All

Your first parish

My dear Nephew Darren

And so, the old year draws to a close, and you are packing to move to your own first parish in January. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1st January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, shovel snow, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill – preferably the day before. In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons - in seven minutes flat, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. You will be their new disappointment. Be assured that whatever you do, you will always disappoint someone.

Be prepared for phone calls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go turn and it off? You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer. I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent.

Expect that each Sunday morning, as you prepare for the service, there will be a straggling queue of people who want to tell you an astonishing variety of things: there is a large cobweb 30 feet up over the pulpit, they don't like the second hymn on the board, the flowers look rough this week, there may be a bat in the vestry, some child has left a shoe in the back porch, and the car park has broken glass in it.

You may find this a distraction as you prepare for a worship service. But remember that at least they have bothered to come to church at all. In my experience, congregations are always irritating, but at least they do take up a lot of space, and that looks good in the pews. The church would look empty without them.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

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Dunvant
SA2 7PE

*Everyone is welcome to our
services, full details of which
are on the back page*

The deadline for articles for the January 2026
magazine is on **Tuesday 23 December 2025.**

The magazine is printed and published by St Hilary
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Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, Church in Wales.

The views in the articles reflect the views of the
individuals contributing the items and are not
intended to represent the official views of the
Ministry Area or the Church in Wales.

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*If you have any news or photos you would care to share
please contact Roger Rees*



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Remembrance Service at war graves
St Hilary, Killay. November 2025.

Below - Remembrance Service at St
Martin's Church



Thanks to Noreen Shapton for this retro photo of Ladies Guild

Church Services: *St Hilary's & St Martin's*

DECEMBER	ST HILARY'S KILLAY	ST MARTIN'S DUNVANT
4 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
7 Second Sunday of Advent	9.30am Bubble Church 11.00am Lay led Service <i>Followed by coffee</i>	11.00am Eucharist
11 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
14 Third Sunday of Advent	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	10.00am Lay led Service 6.00pm Candle-light Carols
18 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
21 Fourth Sunday of Advent	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i> 5.00pm Carol Service, Nativity	9.00am Eucharist
24 First Eucharist of Christmas	11.00pm Carols with Eucharist at 11.30pm	
25 Nativity of our Lord Christmas Day		9.30am Eucharist
28 First Sunday of Christmas	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>
31 New Year's Eve	<i>Please see p.24 for all Christmas Services and Events in the East Cluster</i>	11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

*The magazine of St Hilary & St Martin churches
in the Gower Ministry Area, Diocese of Swansea and Brecon.*

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