

The Parish of The Asterby Group Newsletter

January to February 2026

Season of Pause and Promise

January and February can feel like the quietest stretch of the year. The festivities have passed, the decorations are tucked away, and the pace of life slows as winter has really settled in now. The next bank holiday is a long way away, and the summer holidays are a distant dream. For some, this season feels refreshing – a clean slate, an invitation to begin again. For others, it can feel cold, dark and uncertain. Yet for all of us, these first months of the year do offer a gift: a pause.

In the Christian tradition, the weeks after Christmas lead us into the season of Epiphany, a time when light, literal and symbolic, takes centre stage. Epiphany recalls the story of the Magi – the wise men who travelled far, guided only by a star, to visit a child they did not yet fully understand. It is a story of seeking, questioning, and courage.

Many of us begin the year making resolutions, some bold and ambitious, others modest and practical. Perhaps winter invites us not only to change our habits and do new things, but also pay attention – to notice what brings warmth, meaning, and hope into our days. For some, this may be prayer, attending church, or immersing themselves in familiar stories of faith. For others, it might be walking a favourite footpath, listening to music, or ticking a few things off a list long neglected. Whatever shape it takes, the act of noticing and of seeking is at the heart of Epiphany.

February brings with it another moment of reflection as Lent approaches – a season often misunderstood as *only* sombre or restrictive. But Lent is also about preparation and celebration – preparation for a new beginning and celebration of something so wonderful that can be hard to comprehend. Traditionally, Christians mark it through fasting, charity, or a renewed commitment to prayer. But even for those who do not practise these rituals, the idea of creating room and preparing – emotionally, mentally, or physically – can be meaningful. In a world that feels increasingly crowded with information, responsibilities, and noise, the thought of carving out a little stillness ready for something mysterious but monumental, known or unknown, can be appealing.

This year, perhaps Lent can be an invitation to simplicity. Not necessarily giving something up, but uncovering what matters most. That might mean taking a weekly break from screens, choosing to support a local charity, or reconnecting with someone you haven't spoken to in a while. Or it may simply mean giving yourself permission to rest – something our culture is not always good at encouraging.

These early months of the year can also be challenging for many in our community. Loneliness can feel sharper in winter. Bills can feel heavier. Days are darker than we would like. The weather can keep us in our houses. But one of the great strengths of parish life – whether you are someone who regularly worships or someone who appreciates the church from a distance – is the sense of belonging it offers. A local church is not only a place of prayer and worship; it is a place where people look out for one another. If you find yourself in need of company, conversation, or support, please know you are welcome. And if you are in a position to offer kindness or companionship to someone else, this season is a perfect time to do so.

As the year begins, may these weeks of winter become for all of us a time of gentle seeking, preparation and discovery, whether you find meaning in faith, in community, in nature, or simply in the quiet routines of daily life.

Wardrobes and Rings – Through Lenten Lands with the Inklings

By Julia Golding, Malcolm Guite, and Simon Horobin, Canterbury Press

Drawing on the work of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, as well as friends of the Inklings such as Dorothy Sayers and T.S. Eliot, this book explores through their eyes a faith which is tinged with seriousness, creativity and joy. Using their fiction, poetry, and essays, the book offers daily readings and reflections on the cross and resurrection, helping you to rediscover Lent through the lens of imagination-infused faith.



A Big Thank You ...

We would just like to thank everyone who helps us produce and circulate the Astryby Parishes Newsletter. Especially to the distributors who give their time to deliver them, the residents, PCs and PCC for their support and contributions and all the local businesses who advertise. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Karl & Sue (the Editors)

Deadline for next Newsletter

All articles and adverts for inclusion in the **March to April 2026** edition to be with Sue, on **07826 772452** or email: **moomoski@btinternet.com** by **15th February 2026**. Please let me have your items written out, or, preferably emailed, as you would like them to appear, and as early as possible, **please don't wait until the deadline**. **To place an advert please contact Sue on the above number**. All items on behalf of the church have no charge. Any other events or adverts will have a minimal charge. This helps to maintain and develop your newsletter. Contact **Sue** by email here at **moomoski@btinternet.com**

Stamps, foreign coins, banknotes and postcards, used or new, are still being collected by Sue. All these items can be placed in the 'stamp collection boxes' in most of the churches or directly to me at Bramley House, Benniworth. **07826 772452**.

Who's Who in the Group

Priest in charge

Our Oversight Minister is the Rural Dean.

Contact the South Wolds Group Administrator.

Lay Minister

Ann South, 01507 313792

Partnership Office

Debbie Knight, South Wolds Group Administrator, 01507 525600

Caroline Taylor, Safeguarding coordinator, 01507 343352

Group Parish PCC

Chair: Rotates amongst PCC members

Secretary: Caroline Taylor, 01507 343352 (for 2025/2026)

Treasurer: Sally Cosgrove, 01507 343788

Ministry Team Coordinator: Neil Walker, 07771861202

VCC Church Wardens, Treasurers and Secretaries

Asterby : Sally Cosgrove, 01507 343788

Benniworth : Acting Treasurer, Judith Johnson,
Acting Church Wardens, Bella Campbell and Gillian Stewart

Biscathorpe (closed) Church DAC at the Diocese of Lincoln

Burgh-on-Bain Judith Varley, 01507 313342 Beverlee Bird, 01507 313667
George Ward 01507 313419

Donington-on-Bain Graham & Lynne Parkinson, 01507 343500
Rosemary Parkinson, 01507 343242

Gayton John Needham, 01507 313265 Ann Needham, 01507 313628

Goulceby Caroline Taylor, 01507 343352 Sylvia Taylor-Reed, 01507 343342

Ranby Jonathan Booth (acting), 01507 343278
Russ Hibbins (acting) 01507 343581 - Di Eddington, 01507 343336

Scamblesby Derek Elmhirst, 01507 343631 Peter Myers, 01507 343680

Stenigot - TBA

Calling all Goulceby Gardeners !

Following on from two very successful events, The Friends of Goulceby Church are hoping to run another Open Gardens event in July, in aid of the Restoration Fund. If you're interested in opening your garden for this good cause, I'd be delighted to hear from you. For further details, my email is carolinetaylor@btinternet.com or Telephone 01507 343352

Four Seasons Breakfast Club at Goulceby Church

Join us for Breakfast between 9am and 11am on Saturday 24th January.
Pick up a map with details of a couple of Winter walks around our village which you can do either before or after you have eaten.

Suitable for all ages, walk is optional !
Interested ?

It would be helpful, for catering purposes, if you can let us know by contacting
Marcelle : marcellecoker59@btinternet.com or
Caroline : carolinetaylor@btinternet.com with name and likely numbers. Or just turn up!

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or call the helpline on 0300 330 5482



Newsletter December 2025

A full Parish Council Meeting was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 2nd December 2025

Meeting opened at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Karl Kay (Chair), Cllr Matthew Taylor, Cllr David Bellamy, Cllr Fred Beaney (from 8.05pm). In Attendance: Mrs V. Davies (Clerk), ELDC Cllr D. Simpson, along with 6 members of the public.

Open Forum : A former councillor spoke regarding his recent resignation. This was minuted and the chairman has offered to respond formally in due course.

Declarations of Interest. Cllr Bellamy. Invoices were submitted for grass cutting and hedge trimming.

The minutes of 4 November 2025 were approved and signed.

Playground & MUGA : The Council is awaiting delivery of new play equipment from EKM Ltd, including springers, wheelchair access roundabout, spinning bowl, see-saw and a Tri Ops mini pyramid. The new fencing specification will be redrafted and sealed bids invited.

Cemetery : An ongoing cemetery issue has now been resolved. No headstones will be moved. Future graves will have headstones positioned within their plot boundaries.

Clerk Recruitment : The Clerk, Viv Davies had tendered her resignation previously, with the 2nd December meeting being her final formal working day. Councillors thanked the outgoing clerk for her 6 years of service.

Allotments : No issues reported.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm

Date of Next Meeting : Monday 12 January 2025 at 7.30pm*

*Please note that this date may change should no clerk be appointed to post. Notice will be given on noticeboards. The post of Clerk to the Council has been advertised widely and the closing date for applications has been extended at time of writing.

Coffee, Cake and Chat

Donington on Bain Village Hall

First and Third Thursday of the month from 10.30am - all welcome !



CHINESE NEW YEAR



The Year of the Horse is the seventh animal in the 12-year Chinese zodiac cycle, symbolizing freedom, energy, and success, with recent years including 2014, Wood Horse and the upcoming one starting February 17, 2026, Fire Horse, until early 2027, followed by 2038.

People born in these years are often seen as adventurous, hardworking, and independent, with the Horse representing dynamism and ambition in Chinese culture

Coffee Cake and Chat Mornings in 2026.. you are all warmly invited All Saints Church, Goulceby



on Tuesday 6th January and Wednesday 4th February

10am to 12 noon - All welcome, Come along for coffee, cake and chat

Benniworth has formed a new Village Church Committee

A group of volunteers are also seeking funding for a new roof for St. Julian's Church, and next year will begin a series of social events at the church to help develop a more involved community.

First up will be Bacon Butties in the Church at 11am. on the 2nd Saturday of the month, the 10th of January being the first meeting.
Watch this space!



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JANUARY	
FRIDAY 9TH - SUNDAY 18TH - VARIOUS TIMES	PANTO - JACK & THE BEANSTALK
FEBRUARY	
FRIDAY 6TH 7PM	HERCULES: HANDEL'S TRAGIC MUSICAL DRAMA
SATURDAY 7TH 7:30PM	THE ROY ORBISON SONGBOOK
FRIDAY 13TH 7:30PM	THE ROD STEWART SONGBOOK
THURSDAY 19TH 7:30PM	ALL SEASONS
SATURDAY 21ST 7:30PM	OASIZ
FRIDAY 27TH 7:30PM	TEASE - THE ULTIMATE BURLESQUE & CABARET EXPERIENCE
SATURDAY 28TH 7:30PM	THE COPOLICE
MARCH	
TUESDAY 10TH - SATURDAY 14TH 7:30PM	KEEPING UP APPEARANCES
TUESDAY 17TH 7:30PM	AN EVENING OF CLAIRVOYANCE WITH STEVE HOLBROOK
SATURDAY 21ST 7:30PM	NOTHING BUT A GOOD TIME - THE ROCK ANTHEMS SHOW
FRIDAY 27TH 7:30PM	THE MANFREDS - GET YOUR KICKS ON TOUR '26



Tickets are available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Tickets can also be purchased by calling the Box Office

Open Monday to Saturday 10am -1pm or visiting www.louthriverheadtheatre.com

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT STAINFIELD, MAIN STREET

WEDNESDAY 15TH OCTOBER 2025

Present : Cllrs. Dyas (chair), Raynor, South, , Mann, Willoughby, Kerr, Olivant
Clerk – D Bailey

1. Apologies for absence - Cllr. MacAllister
2. Attendance by members of the public - No members of the public in attendance
3. To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and consider any requests for dispensations
No declarations were received

4. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th July 2025.

The minutes were accepted

Proposed – Cllr. Willoughby

Seconded – Cllr. Kerr

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

6. Clerk's report

Clerk stated that the Precept would need to be set soon as it is usually required by East Lindsey District Council in January.

It was suggested that the clerk together with the chair would calculate the Precept then circulate it to the other councillors for agreement.

The financial reports for July and October, together with the BBQ accounts were circulated.

Clerk has accessed on line banking for Lloyds Bank, but a higher level access is required in order to carry out further actions

Proposed – Cllr. Olivant - Seconded – Cllr. South

7. To consider the issue of cars idling at the bus stop

Noted that this is occurring on a regular basis. The Chair offered to speak to those concerned

8. To identify a “Village Welcome”

Due to time constraints this item has been shelved for the time being

9. To mark progress on laptop purchase

Noted that this has now been purchased, although it has not been possible to update it due to issues with Microsoft

10. Planning matters.

No further applications have been received

**11. Speeding in the village and on Caistor High Street – progress.**

It was agreed that as an electronic sign would cost £3680+VAT+fitting that the Chair should look into buying or making a “gate” at the village entrance as an experiment to judge its effect and local response

12. Update on defibrillators

Clerk in the process of arranging estimate for a new defibrillator on Main Road, the one on Silver Street to be left until next year

13. To discuss the condition of footpaths - Noted that the footpath up to the Church is overgrown. Owner to be approached to cut it back.

Cllr. Willoughby to arrange the removal of saplings etc on the path.

Fix My Street has been approached with regard to the overhanging trees and bushes at the bottom of Main Road, these have now been cut back

Meeting closed at 20.50

Next meeting - 7th January at Spring Bottom Farm

April meeting will be at Cllr. Olivant's

Mobile Library Service



Donington on Bain, Post Office : Arrives 10.00am - 10.30am

Benniworth, Tennyson Close : Arrives 10.45am - 11.15pm

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
29th	26th	26th	23rd	21st	18th	16th	13th	10th	8th	5th	3rd & 31st

For enquiries or renewals contact the customer service centre on 01522 782010

Please note there will be no library service between the 4th Dec 2025 and 29th Jan 2026, as it would fall on 1st Jan 2026. All books will have their loan expiry dates extended to cover this gap

SEASONS GREETINGS from SOS Biscathorpe

**Good news - A public inquiry has been granted
starting on 14th April at Kenwick Hotel**

**Do you need a Christmas gift idea
for someone who loves the countryside?**

How about a donation on their behalf to support our campaign?

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/SaveBiscathorpe>



**To learn more, please join us for tea and cake
at Donington on Bain Village Hall
on Sunday 22nd February from 1pm to 4pm**

Save Lincolnshire Wolds A.O.N.B. from Oil Drilling

**Good Friday Red Hill Service - Helpers Please !
3rd April 2026**



Would anyone willing to help in any way before or at the
outdoor service please contact me:
carolinetaylor@btinternet.com, 01507 343352

There will be a meeting for all those interested on Thursday 5th
February at 2pm, at The Plough, Main Road, Goulceby. LN11 9UT.

There will be cake !

Asterby Parish Services in January 2026

Date	Location	Service	Time
4th January	All Saints Church, Goulceby	Holy Communion for Epiphany	10am
11th January	St. Helen's Church Burgh on Bain	Morning Praise	10am
18th January	St. Andrew's Church, Donington on Bain	Holy Communion	10am
25th January	St Martin's Church, Scamblesby	Holy Communion	10am

Prayer Circle

During January and February, as we move into a new year, with its different challenges, through Epiphany to the prayerful time of Lent, the PRAYER CIRCLE will be praying especially for the community of GAYTON, lovingly maintaining its tiny, welcoming church: a peaceful sanctuary in the beauty of the surrounding Wolds countryside, as well as for the village of GOULCEBY, engaged in an exciting period of improvement and restoration to All Saints church which now offers a warm, comfortable welcome to worshippers at services, to walkers on the Viking Way and to everyone sharing community activities organised in the village. We pray for all in their exciting efforts.

We shall continue to pray for PEACE in those many parts of our world beset by continuous, violent conflict as well as for RECOVERY and RESTORATION to areas affected by devastating natural disasters.

“LET THERE BE PEACE OF EARTH AND LET IT BEGIN WITH ME;
LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH ... LET THIS BE THE MOMENT NOW.” Matthew 5:9

Prayer requests for the Prayer Circle, as always in confidence, to Ann on 01507 313792.

Asterby Parish Services January to early February 2026

Date	Location	Service	Time
1st February	All Saints Church, Goulceby	Morning Praise	10am
8th February	St. Helen's Church Burgh on Bain	Holy Communion	10am
15th February	St. Andrew's Church, Donington on Bain	Holy Communion	10am
18th February	St Mary's Church, Horncastle	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion with Ashing	9.30am*
18th February	St Mary's Church, Horncastle	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion with Ashing	7pm*
22nd February	St Martin's Church, Scamblesby	Morning Praise	10am

*please note different times

Date	Location	Service	Time
1st March	St. Julian's Church, Benniworth	Holy Communion	10am

Parish Registers

Funeral: 7th November 2025, Rowland Smith Funeral at St Martin's, Scamblesby.

The Asterby Group of parishes has a web site, which is now kept up to date with details of contacts, services and events in the group. You can find it here > www.asterbygroup.org. Please let us have any suggestions for additional content

We also have a Facebook page, where we post last minute changes and where you can interact with the rest of the Asterby Group community.

You can find it here > www.facebook.com/groups/asterbygroup



The last meeting of the Council took place on 10th December at All Saints, Goulceby, which was also attended by the District and County Councillors and five other local village residents.

At the previous meeting the Council agreed to look into external funding for 'village gates' at the entrances to both villages. A number of grant funders had been contacted but to date no funding offers had been received. The quest for some sort of grant funding will however continue.

The County and District Councillors presented an update on matters of interest to the Council, particularly around the reform of Lincolnshire boundaries and authorities.

2026/27 Precept.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) firstly advised that the Council expenditure forecast was within the planned budget for the year. A debate took place around the level of precept to be levied on properties in the villages for the 2026/2027 year. No representations had been received from anyone in the village on the matter. The proposed budget was presented by the RFO and after due consideration it was decided to leave the precept the same as the current year, a total sum of £4,079 across the two villages (0% increase).

Planning application

The Council noted that an application had been made for a three property development on Ford Way, Goulceby. It was also noted that a previous application in 2019 for a similar development had been rejected and also dismissed on appeal. The Council had received many comments from residents, mainly against the development for a number of reasons. One village resident spoke about residents' concerns about a number of issues. These and others were discussed at the meeting including the impact on highways, flooding and drainage, light pollution, loss of an important rural feel at that end of the village, loss of open fields. Taking these matters into consideration, and the views of residents, the Council resolved to put in a formal objection to the development, detailing the reasons why.

Illegal Fishing

The Council had received a report of crayfish trapping in the Goulceby village beck which, without a permit is illegal. The Environment Agency were informed and the trap was removed. Notices have been put up by the Agency advising that illegal fishing/trapping is an offence. If anyone spots an illegal trap (ie: it is not tagged by the Environment Agency) it can be reported directly to the Agency.

Parish Council resilience

A debate took place around the ongoing issue of Parish Councillor vacancies as with only three out of six positions filled, the Council remains only just quorate and able to function. The Council plays an important role in representing Asterby and Goulceby. For example, it is a statutory consultee on all local proposed developments, like the one mentioned above. This helps ensure that local interests are considered in planning decisions. The direct links that the Parish Council has with the County and District Councillors are also important as the voices of local residents are more effectively conveyed. The Council is also the first point of contact in the village for other bodies wanting to canvass opinions on other matters eg: siting of benches, bins, road markings etc. The next formal Parish Council elections aren't until May 2027 but in the meantime the Council is very keen to welcome more residents to join the Parish Council and represent the two villages.

Asterby and Goulceby Parish Council

<http://asterby-goulceby.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk>

SOS Biscathorpe

A representative from 'SOS Biscathorpe' attended the meeting asking for the Council's continued support in opposing the nearby drilling proposal in Biscathorpe. As part of the ongoing awareness campaign there is to be a Tea and Cake event at Donington on Bain Village Hall on 22nd February between 1-4 pm.

Next Parish Council meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held in All Saints Church, Goulceby on Wednesday 18th March at 6.30pm. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting.

All Saints Church Goulceby

The autumn saw the Harvest Festival Service held in the beautifully decorated church, and continuation of the monthly coffee mornings. A survey of the type of events villagers would like to attend was held, providing useful ideas for 2026. The harmonium, thought to be about 120 years old, has been lovingly restored and is now back in action. It was ready for the candlelit Carol service held in December. The next coffee mornings will be on Tuesday 6th January and Wednesday 4th February. Thank you all for your support of our church and community space.

Parish Council Vacancies

As previously reported, there are still three vacancies on the Parish Council, and should anyone be interested in becoming a Parish Councillor they should contact the Parish Clerk, Diane De Halle, by emailing Diane at agparishcouncil@gmail.com

The current councillors are:

Jon Mold (Chair) - Sycamore Lodge, Goulceby

Ian Taylor - Lavoir, Goulceby

Graham Johnson - Lindores, Goulceby

Contact details are on the Council's website which can be found at:

<https://asterby-goulceby.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

The Results are Out for the Friends of Goulceby Church Events Survey

Our thanks to all those who completed the Events Survey for the Goulceby and Asterby communities. In order of interest in the event, the most popular were

History/Art/Nature talk (82% of respondents)

Gardening Club (71%)

Music Evening/Film Night (65%)

Table Top Sale/swap (62%)

Yoga/Pilates Aerobics/Dance (59%)

Quiz Night and Craft Session (both 56%)

Question Time and Themed Meal Night (both 47%)

Breakfast Club (44%)

Some of these activities will need a little rearrangement of the church furniture, whilst others we will be able to run in the coming year.

Watch this Space for forthcoming events !



Middle Cottage Diaries

Now I am the first to admit, that I don't know the Latin name for every plant, nor the courting rituals of our feathered friends, my observations are that of a Benniworth villager, who simply loves the natural world around us and may just prompt others to remark "yes I've noticed that" or "I'll look out for that next time I'm out".

We all notice different aspects of nature, both in our gardens and the wider countryside in this beautiful area we call home. Our gardens reflect this, whether neat as a pin and colour coordinated, or a jumble of different shrubs and flowers, some may not even be "proper" blooms at all, but pretty, dare we say weeds? Charismatic but mischievous as they overrun our plots.

A few years ago, Alan Titchmarsh urged us to plant drought-loving plants ready for climate change, I did so, and two wet summers later they were all dead, yet they would have thrived in the summer's we have had recently, though not perhaps in Autumn downpours!

Christmas is a busy time, and perhaps our gardens get forgotten, but I still have a couple of roses in late November and cheerful Fever Few to brighten things up. Sparrows and Pigeons now have the lions share of bird seed and scraps, well almost and I have left my wild patch to go to seed to help them, and insects too.

Now here are a couple of brain teasers for you. No consulting your mobiles! Storm Cock and Snowflake are old names for which birds seen in the UK during winter? Answer at the bottom of page.

I'll leave you with my warmest wishes for 2026 and a verse from the times of good queen Bess, the first one that is. It has a similar ring to the much-loved carol, but the wording is a bit different.

"Holly hath berries as red as any rose,

The forester and hunter keep them for the does.

Ivy has berries as black as any sloe.

Then comes the owl and eats up as she goes".

Keep cosy, Olwyn Metcalf.

Answer to question is. Storm Cock is another name for Mistle Thrush.

Snowflake is Snow Bunting a winter visitor.



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South Willingham Parish and Village Hall Activities

January 2026

Wednesday 7th – Coffee and chat + Willingham Winner draw 10.30 to noon

Wednesday 7th – Art & crafts group 2 to 4 pm . Cecilia 07799 156118

Wednesday 7th 21st – Ballroom Dance group 6.50pm. Paul 01507 313601

Thursdays 8th, 15th, 19th & 29th – Tai Chi 11:00 to 12:10 then Qigong 12.10 to 13.10

Carol 07592 071523

Tuesday 13th – Reel Issues FILM night 7pm. Roland 07946 259053

Wednesday 21st – Coffee and chat 10.30 to noon

Friday 23rd – RACE game evening 6.30 for 7pm £5 admission, prizes with nibbles and raffle Look out for posters and fliers. Contact Jan on 07834 598703

February

Wednesday 4th - Coffee & chat (free) & Willingham Draw 10:30 – noon

Wednesday 4th - Art & crafts group 2 to 4 pm . Cecilia 07799 156118

Wednesday 4th & 18th - Ballroom Dance group 6.50pm. Paul 01507 313601)

Thursday 5th , 12th , 19th & 26th – Tai Chi 11:00 to 12:10 then Qigong 12.10 to 13.10

Carol 07592 071523

Tuesday 10th - Reel Issues FILM night 7pm Roland 07946 259053

Wednesday 18th - Coffee and chat (free) 10:30 to noon

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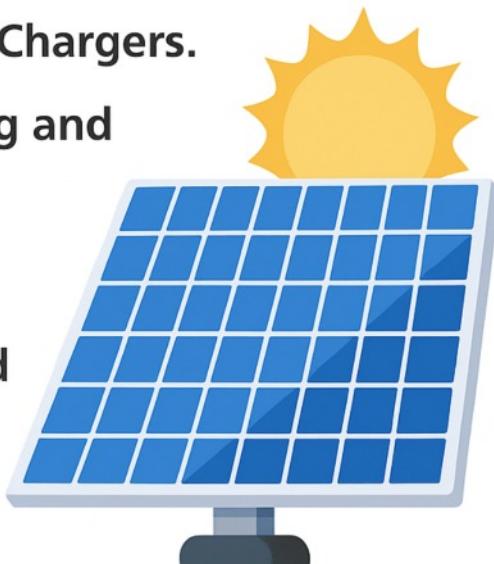
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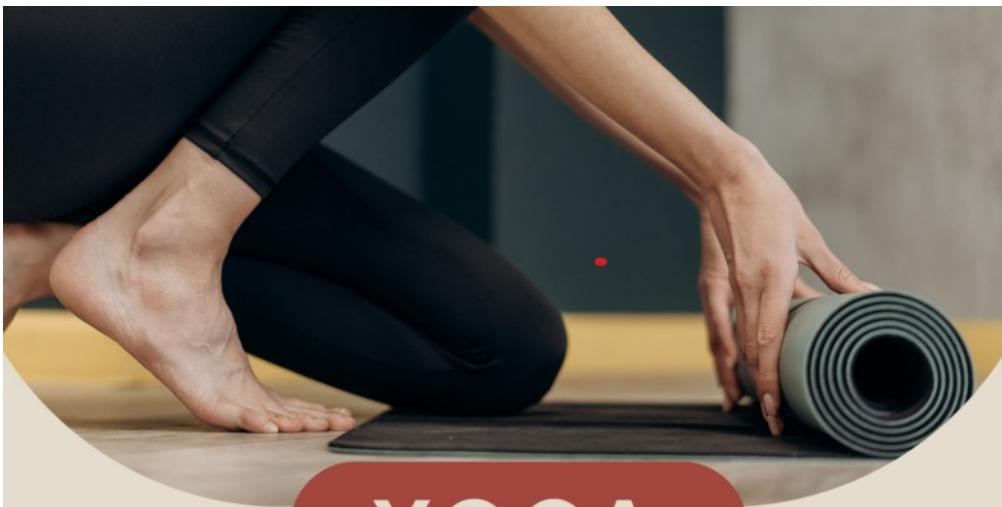
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