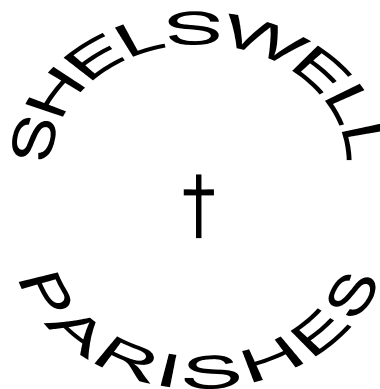


# Shelswell News

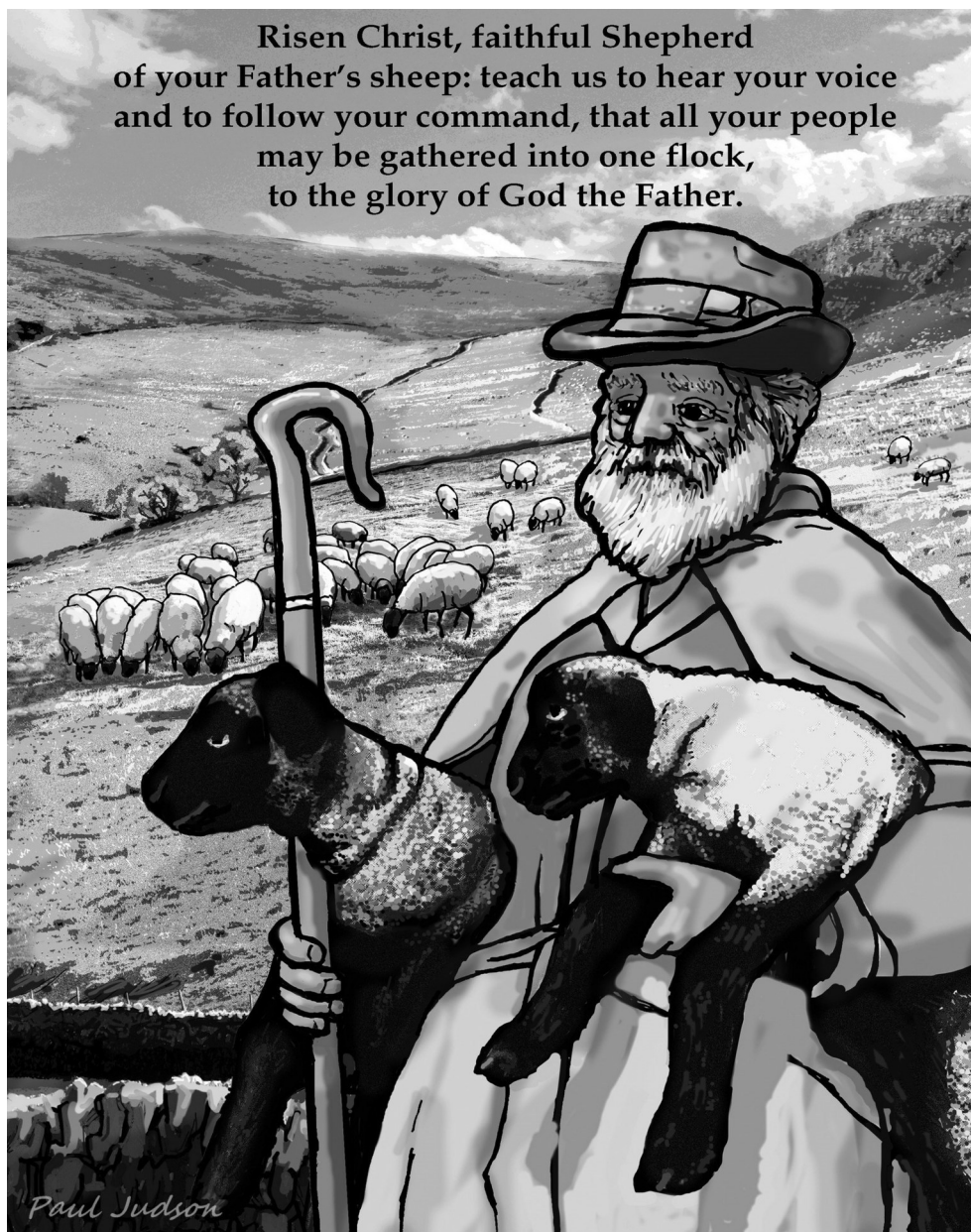
The magazine of the Shelswell Group of Churches

Cottisford  
Fringford  
Hardwick  
Mixbury  
Stoke Lyne



Finmere  
Godington  
Hethe  
Newton Purcell  
Stratton Audley

Risen Christ, faithful Shepherd  
of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice  
and to follow your command, that all your people  
may be gathered into one flock,  
to the glory of God the Father.



**May in Shelswell:**

*Hethe Village Fete*  
p5

*VE Day  
Commemorations  
in Finmere &  
Fringford*

*Fringford Open  
Gardens*  
p7

*Finmere Fair*  
p11

## SHELLOWELL BENEFICE MISSION STATEMENT

The Shelswell Family of Churches aims to bring people closer to God and to show the love of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to everyone.

### MINISTRY TEAM

**RECTOR:** The Reverend Alice Goodall, The Rectory, Water Stratford Road, Fimmere, Buckingham MK18 4AT  
Telephone: 01280 848192 Email [rector@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:rector@shelswellparishes.info) **(Normal day off – Friday)**

**BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR:** Mrs Becky Adams, c/o The Rectory (as above) Email [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)  
Administrator's normal office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm

**ASSOCIATE MINISTER:** The Reverend Alex Mahlava, 10c St Michael's Close, Fringford, Bicester OX27 8DW  
Telephone: 07957 905969 Email: [amahlava@gmail.com](mailto:amahlava@gmail.com)

**ASSOCIATE MINISTER:** The Reverend Liz Welters, 19 Scampton Close, Bicester OX26 4FF  
Telephone 01869 249481 Email [lizwelters@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lizwelters@yahoo.co.uk)

**LICENSED LAY MINISTER:** Mrs Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands Fringford, Bicester, Oxon. OX27 8DF  
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**BENEFICE TREASURER:** Mr Philip Austin c/o The Rectory or email [philandpenni@live.com](mailto:philandpenni@live.com)

**THE PARISHES ARE PART OF THE DEANERY OF BICESTER AND ISLIP AND THE DORCHESTER  
EPISCOPAL AREA OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD**

### **HOLY TRINITY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, HETHE,**

Mass: 4pm Saturday.

Weekday Mass: 9.30am Monday

Priest: Father Craig Davies, Henley House, 12 The Causeway, Bicester, OX26 6AW.

Telephone: 01869 253277

Website: <http://www.holytrinityheth.co.uk/>

### **SHELLOWELL NEWS**

Published monthly. To subscribe, contact Mrs Becky Adams, Benefice Administrator, The Rectory, Water Stratford Road, Fimmere, Buckingham MK18 4AT Tel 01280 848192 Email [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)

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**Deadlines** for the **June** edition of Shelswell News

To Magazine Correspondents: **Midday on Friday 16th May**

Correspondents to Editor: **Midday on Sunday 18th May** at [editor@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:editor@shelswellparishes.info)

**All articles must be submitted in WORD or LIBRE OFFICE in a format that can be COPIED AND PASTED  
PLEASE - Many thanks for your cooperation.**

**[www.shelswellparishes.info](http://www.shelswellparishes.info)**

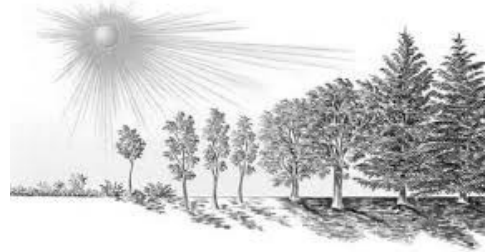
**SHELLOWELL NEWS ARCHIVE.** to look up previous issues of the Shelswell News. Please go to the Benefice website and look at the Archive. If the issue you want to refer to is not there please contact the Benefice office .

## Ministers Letter

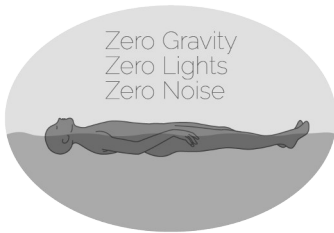
This article by **Lucy Hannah** was written in Summer but seems equally appropriate for the dry, sunny weather we experienced in March and early April.

### Searching for the Shade

As I write, summer has arrived with a wallop. Forgive me, dear reader, if it is lashing with rain where you are right now; here, my skies are an almost cloudless blue. The sun reigns uncontested in the sky. As an artist, I appreciate the value of light and shade; one without the other results in lack of depth. Shade is a veiling of light - a softening, so that the light we experience is not the full, relentless glare of the burning sun. As the earth turns on its daily cycle and the sun appears to 'move' across our skies, light and shade play with pattern and placement. Shadows can be mini works of art, the light painting a picture round the pieces it can't fully reach.



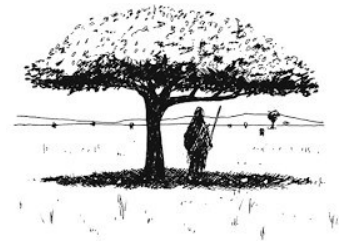
Often when we talk about light and dark, we cast darkness as the metaphorical villain. We use it to describe the difficult, the distressing, even the 'evil' in life. But at another level, shade and shadow are valuable. The heat at the height of a summer day can be scorching. To find a shady corner of a garden where the leaves soften the glare and protect us from heat can be a huge relief! I struggle to sleep when it is light and appreciate the nurturing blanket of darkness over my tired eyes and busy mind.



Darkness can be seen as hiddenness or even protection. The darkness of 'unknowing' can be frustrating, but sometimes acts as a subtle veiling of something too bright for our eyes. I recently had my first experience of a flotation tank - floating in a big 'bath' of magnesium-salted water. I could choose to have gentle light or darkness. In the end I chose the dark. It gave me a sense of privacy and peace. In the darkness, I became aware of all the tension I

was holding from past pain and present stress.

Depriving myself of external sight in some ways helped me 'see' more. The hidden places can hold for us great wonder; we can find those 'treasures of darkness' and encounter the God who sees in the dark. That's not to say it is easy, not one bit. However, sometimes darkness - in the sense of hiddenness, of shelter, of unknowing - can be the gentlest place for us to grapple with our personal traumas and pain in manageable doses, until we are ready to walk out into the light.



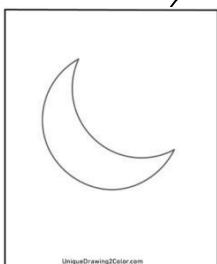
God is described as light in the Bible, but at other points as 'shade' – a personal, protective presence giving shelter from the heat and dazzle of uninterrupted light. Sometimes we cry, quite rightly, 'Lord, be my light'! I suggest it is equally valid to whisper, 'Lord, be my shade', when things are a little too bright for our weary, sensitive eyes.

*The article is reproduced, with permission, from The Sign.*

Lucy Hannah is a writer and artist: [www.lucyhannah.com](http://www.lucyhannah.com)

### Psalm 121.5-8

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.  
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.  
The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.  
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in  
from this time on and for evermore.



## BIBLE READINGS



Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> May	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter	Acts 9 v1-6 [7-20] Revelation 5 v11-end John 21 v1-19
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Acts 9 v36-end Revelation 7 v9-end John 10 v22-30
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Acts 11 v1-18 Revelation 21 v1-6 John 13 v31-35
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Acts 16 v9-15 Revelation 21 v10, 22 - 22 v5 John 14 v23-29 <i>or</i> John 5 v1-9
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Ascension Day	Acts 1 v1-11 Ephesians 1 v15-end Luke 24 v44-end

### MIDWEEK HOLY COMMUNION

### AND SOUP LUNCH

Thursday 1st May

12 noon

Newton Purcell Church - different venue!

If you would like a lift then please contact Alice on 01280 848192 or  
[rector@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:rector@shelswellparishes.info)



### Volunteer Role – Benefice Treasurer



We are looking for someone who might take on the role of Benefice Treasurer. Is this something you might be able to do, or do you know someone who might like to take it on?

Most of the transactions can be dealt with electronically and our current systems seem to be working smoothly so it should be fairly straightforward for someone new to step in and take over. Meetings of Benefice Council take place about four times a year and at other times liaison with the Rector and Benefice Administrator is mainly by email. For an informal chat about what would be involved, call Alice on 01280 848192.



# Hethe Village Fete

Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup>

at 2pm



Raffle for Church fundraising, Teas, Tombola and Bric-a-brac for Village Hall fundraising, Crafts, Plants and Boules for Darby & Joan fundraising and stalls from other local organisations.

Live music from Bicester Concert Band



## St Edmund & St George Church Mega Raffle at Hethe Village Fete on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May



Many fantastic prizes, including  
£100 in cash and a wine box



More prizes will be welcomed - to Flora or Mike or let us know  
what and bring it along on the day



## Message from the Rector

This message was emailed out to everyone on our Benefice email list at the beginning of April. For those of you that didn't get it and haven't yet heard through the grapevine it is reproduced here.

Dear All,

It was with very mixed feelings that I have informed the Joint Council that I will be retiring in August. Joe and I have, on the whole, enjoyed the time that we have spent here with you in the Shelswell Benefice, but increasingly I have felt tired and weary. I feel that I can no longer approach things with the energy that they need or give you the lead that you deserve. It is time for you to seek a new incumbent to travel with you into whatever lies ahead.

My last service, indeed my last working day, will be on **Sunday 10th August**, hopefully followed by a shared picnic in the sunshine for those that are able to stay - more details of this to follow, but it would be lovely if you are able to join us. In the month following, we will be moving up to Lichfield to begin this next phase in our lives. Whilst we are looking forward to this, we will very much miss you all and life in Shelswell. However, having said all that, you still have to put up with me for the next four months!!

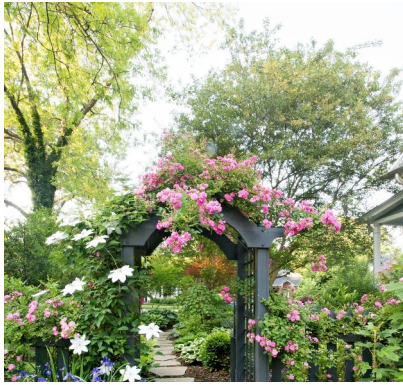
Alice

Thank you to everyone who replied with some lovely and affirming messages, which I really appreciated. Found these photos from 9 ½ years ago – not sure I can quite face all the boxes once again!!



## LITTLE LAMBS BABIES & TODDLER GROUP – HELPERS NEEDED

Two or three new volunteers needed in term time to help the Children and Families Worker at Little Lambs which is held in Stratton Audley Church - making refreshments, chatting to Mums and Carers, clearing up at the end. 9.45am to approximately 12 noon on Wednesdays. Usually no more than twice a term. You would need to have a DBS check, which we would arrange. Interested - please contact Penny on 01869-277310 or [penelope.wood@btopenworld.com](mailto:penelope.wood@btopenworld.com).



# Open Gardens

at **Fringford** OX27 8DY

**Sat 17<sup>th</sup> & Sun  
18<sup>th</sup> May,  
1-6pm**



At least 8 widely varying  
Gardens, Teas and Cakes, Paintings by local artists in the Church,  
Flower arrangements, Information about the history of Church & Village



**Cost**  
**£5.00**  
*Under  
16s free*

Tickets cover both days and are available on the day  
at the village green. Proceeds to St Michael's Church

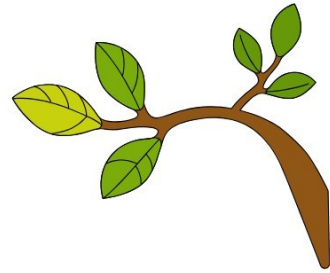


Connect with  
friends old and  
new

An informal service  
from 10.45, with  
breakfast at 11.30



No matter where you  
are on  
your journey, there is a  
place  
for you here.



**CONNECT**  
**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May**  
**10.45-12.00**

Enjoy breakfast  
from 11.30



St Peter's church, Stoke Lyne

Come and sing  
(or listen to others sing)



Come as you  
are, grow  
together





## Fringford School



## Launton Handbell Ringers



Launton Handbell Ringers play an ancient collection of handbells, some of which are over 300 years old. They play a wide variety of music, traditional and folk tunes, popular classics, music written especially for bells, carols and secular music. They give recitals of the music along with a history of handbell ringing.

They are now practicing in Bicester. During May they will be running a series of drop in taster sessions to share the fun and art of four in hand, handbell ringing in the hope of recruiting some new members. The sessions will be on Thursday evenings, 8-9pm on May 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th, at Kingsmere Community Centre, Whiteland Way, Bicester OX26 1EG

The sessions are free and open to anyone who would be interested. You don't have to be able to read music as they play from a numerical bell notation.

You can find more information on their new updated website. <https://launtonhandbellringers.org.uk/>  
They also have a youtube channel where you can hear some of their music:  
[www.youtube.com/@launtonhandbellringers](https://www.youtube.com/@launtonhandbellringers)



## Experience Easter

We were delighted to welcome children from Finmere and Fringford Primary Schools to Experience Easter once again. This year it was outside, and the weather was lovely on both days! Here are some photos of Finmere School as they visited Finmere Churchyard.



The children travelled around various 'stations' in the churchyard. We started off in the Garden of Gethsemane, where first we remembered how Jesus, knowing he was facing death, prayed in anguish to God the Father, and how an angel appeared and strengthened him. We each tied a ribbon to the branches of a tree and asked God to give us strength to face the things which challenged us.

Then we remembered how Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested, even though he had done nothing wrong. We each placed a stone in a circle as we remembered those around the world who are arrested and even killed for standing firm about their beliefs.

We moved on to the courtyard of the high

priest Caiaphas and heard about how Peter denied that he ever knew Jesus. We were each invited to pick up a twig as we remembered bad choices we had made, and as we threw it into the fire to remember how God forgives us for everything.

The trail continued to Golgotha where we heard about how Jesus was crucified. We were reminded that the symbol of the cross helps Christians remember that God is a loving God who forgives everyone who is truly sorry, and we each made a cross with some twigs.

And at last we came to the garden where there was an empty tomb. We remembered how surprised the women were when they went to the tomb three days after Jesus had died and found that it was empty. An angel told them that he had risen from the dead. We planted some seeds, knowing that even though they looked as if they were dead, new life would break from them.

And to finish, we were each given a chocolate Easter egg to take away – hollow to remind us of the empty tomb.

Big thanks to all the helpers: Mike and Sandra Kerford-Byrnes, Joe Goodall, Flora Skinner, Jan Shelley.





# SAVE THE DATE

## FINMERE SCHOOL & VILLAGE FAIR

Sunday 18 May, 2025

Finmere Village Hall & Playing Fields



12 – 5pm

Beer tent, raffle, dog show, performances, BBQ, tombolas, food stalls, kids' entertainer, pony rides, Bouncy castle, face painting, café, sports, games, Crafts, live music, karaoke, book stall, plant stall.

### Lighthouse



## Registration open!

<https://app.signmeup.org.uk/>

Places will be allocated on a 'first come – first served' basis. Please note: we have no more places for Lamplighters from years 7 and 8, although older teenagers can still apply.

## Holiday Club for 4 – 11s

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025

10 am – 3.30 pm

Finmere CE Primary School, Mere Road, Finmere, MK18 4AR

A Christian based holiday club  
welcoming children of all faiths and none.

Sport

Craft

Performing arts

music

for more info check out [www.lighthousecentral.org](http://www.lighthousecentral.org)

Recommended donation of £10 per day. Bursaries available.



**Outdoor service at  
Evenley Wood Gardens  
(NN13 SSL)**

**11 am  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
Trinity Sunday**

**Come and celebrate God's wonderful  
creation with worship in the glorious  
setting of the gardens, and then enjoy  
lunch together!**

No charge, although donations invited  
towards the Primary School in Wulu.

Bring something to sit on, along with a  
plate, bowl and cutlery. Dress for the  
weather. And yes, there are toilets!



We will provide barbecued  
sausages / burgers, rolls and  
cold drinks. Hot drinks can be  
bought in the café.

Offers to bring a salad or  
pudding greatly appreciated –  
please contact Becky on  
[admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)  
/ 01280 848192



Bicester and Islip Deanery

# Pilgrim Paths

Bicester Foraging Circular Walk

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 3:00pm

Distance: 1 – 1.5 miles



You are warmly invited to join Bicester and Islip Deanery's first Pilgrim Paths foraging community walk.

This will be a Pilgrim Paths walk with a twist where we will be learning about the plants in our local area that God provides.

It will be a walk around the Bure Park Nature Reserve and some of the attached footpaths, stopping as we go to learn about some plants and their uses, as well as some more dangerous ones to look out for.

Meet at Emmanuel Church Bicester.

There will be tea and a period of reflection at the end of the walk.

Parking is available at the church

Further information from Nigel Walton:

[BicIslip.PilgrimPaths@gmail.com](mailto:BicIslip.PilgrimPaths@gmail.com)

FIND US ON FACEBOOK at [BICESTER AND ISLIP DEANERY PILGRIM PATHS](#)

## Being a child in 2025 is tough...

Pressures faced by teenagers include friendships, identity struggles, social media, and the growing influence of the world around them. These challenges don't appear overnight; they start in the tween years, as children between eight and thirteen begin seeking more independence.

As a parent, navigating this transition can be tough. One moment, your child wants your full attention; the next, they're pushing for more autonomy. How do you guide them through social pressures and bullying at school, online safety or social isolation? The Children's Society has produced *The Pocket Guide for Raising Tweens* – a resource designed to support you through these crucial years.

Interested? Visit <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/tweens> for more details.

## Club News



### SHELLOWELL WI



The members of the Shelswell WI gathered together in April for a talk by Julia Sorrell. The title of Julia's talk was Restoring A Home With Attitude. Julia and her husband had purchased a property shortly before the covid pandemic, the property needed a lot of work and they decided to as far as possible tackle this themselves. Julia has a very bubbly personality and the story of the renovation, accompanied by her PowerPoint was amazing. Julia's enthusiasm was certainly catching.

As is usual in May we are unable to use the village hall due to the local elections, so following on from last year's successful evening we will be returning to the Butchers Arms for an evening playing Aunt Sally. We will have slightly earlier start time of 7pm.

In June we will be celebrating 35 years of Shelswell WI, in July we have a talk Left a Bit, Right a Bit by Stuart Cummins and in August we have our Annual walk.

Outside of our monthly meeting we also have great opportunities for visits both local and further afield, the chance to broaden our knowledge on a variety of subjects and most importantly to meet new friends.

Our monthly meetings take place on the first Thursday of each month, usually in Fringford Village Hall at 7.30pm.

For more information contact Sandra Bickmore at [sandrabickmore@gmail.com](mailto:sandrabickmore@gmail.com)



### SHELLOWELL GARDEN CLUB



On **April 8<sup>th</sup>** Duncan Coombs presented a very lively talk entitled 'Colour and Texture in the Garden'. His talk began with consideration of the colour wheel. We looked at how harmonious colours could be used together and contrasting colours and the effect of both. It was also important to think about dominant colours (e.g. red poppies), seasonal colours (e.g. the purple border at Sissinghurst garden) and fleeting colours (e.g. peonies). Colours might be monochrome, hot or cool or variegated. Clearly nature provides us with a huge selection to choose from. Texture of plants or flowers also provide impact in the garden. They can provide different visual effects as well as tactile, (e.g. Stachys Byzantina: Lamb's Ear). There are plants with fine, medium and coarse features (e.g. the leaves of Gunnera). These may highlight plants or make them less prominent.

There was a great deal of audience participation and laughter. A very fitting meeting for the last Shelswell Garden Club meeting.

*As a new committee has not been formed the Club will now close.*

Members will gather for a party in May to celebrate the many glorious years of the Club.





## SHELLOWELL READING GROUP

The Shellsowell Reading group is a great opportunity to read a variety of books, from best sellers, to classics and everything in between. If you are not sure about joining, why not come along for a meeting to meet the group and see what we are about. No need to have read the book for that month - just come along and meet all of us and listen in. If you are interested, please let Jane Birnage know - [janebirnage@icloud.com](mailto:janebirnage@icloud.com) 07770 220605

Our March book was *Water for Flowers* by Valerie Perrin, which we all (nearly!) loved although some found the translation from French was clunky at times. It was lyrical, evocative, very original and had bags of charm. You really 'rooted' for the characters and we loved the rhythm of the book. It had pathos and never really felt clichéd or emotional, as the 'love' was balanced with the horrendous events. We felt it could only have been situated in France and loved the descriptions (the railway and cemetery houses, the food, the gardens). It had a lightness of touch and had a real plot, with reveals at every turn. We felt it was universally 'human' with a clarity of description of grief, love, solitude etc.

Our next date has changed to: Wednesday 7th May at Manor Grange, Cottisford, NN13 5SW at 7.30 pm and our two books are:

None of this is True  
The Shepherd's Life

Lisa Jewel  
James Rebanks

Our June date is : Tuesday 3rd June, venue TBC

Other books discussed were:

Tell Me Everything  
Covenant of Water  
The Testament  
The Vegetarian  
The Women

Elizabeth Strout  
Abraham Vergese  
Margaret Atwood  
Hang Kang  
Kristin Hannah

Please look after our Mother  
"One Day Everyone will have always been against this"  
What I Loved

Kyung-sook Shin  
Omar El Akkad  
Siri Hustvedt



## SHELLOWELL POETRY APPRECIATION GROUP

This month we are focusing on a single poem. You can access the text by going to The Poetry Foundation website. The poem is *Ode to a Nightingale* by John Keats, (1795-1821) and is a fitting poem for May as it describes the poet's reactions to hearing the song of a nightingale on an evening in May.

When Keats wrote the poem in May 1819 he was already exhibiting symptoms of tuberculosis, which was incurable in the early nineteenth century, and he was to die of it in 1821. He had already lost a brother to the disease in December 1818. He was in love with Fanny Brawne but, having given up Medicine to devote himself to poetry, could not offer a secure life to a wife, and their later engagement was kept a secret. The weariness and depression which forms the backdrop to the *Ode* is very evident at several points in the poem, notably in verses 1, 3 and 6. The Romantic poets, of which he was one, stressed personal emotions and situations, and can seem very self-obsessed, but Keats was not merely posing as an unhappy young man - he really was one!

Throughout the poem, Keats is juxtaposing his own mental landscape with the beauties of a May night and the song of a nightingale, which lifted his mood and offered temporary consolation, switching between such

*Shelswell Poetry Appreciation Group, continued*

lines as 'My heart aches'; 'the weariness, the fever and the fret' and 'but to think is to be full of sorrow', with those describing the fragrant night and the bird's song.

To him the bird's song is something to envy, for it symbolises carefree joy, something he wishes he could feel instead of his wish to die and leave a world that for him is full of suffering - his own and other people's. Death, if it came painlessly, would be a welcome release, but he sublimates his wish for extinction in writing a poem dedicated to the beauties of nature and a bird's song.

In the last verse he realises that his imagination cannot overcome the realities of life, and as the bird moves to 'the next valley-glades', its fading song leaves him wondering if he dreamed the experience. Even a real experience like that cannot last, and we feel, as the poem closes, that he is returning to the melancholy of verse 1.

*We will continue to meet as a group, but not every month. However, there will something on some aspect of poetry in this magazine on a regular basis. If you would like to join the group please contact me on 01869 811994 or at [judith.harvey@live.co.uk](mailto:judith.harvey@live.co.uk)*

Judith Harvey

## REPORTS FROM THE PARISHES

### Cottisford and Juniper Hill St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDEN: Charles Jackson, Cottisford House, Cottisford

Tel 01280 848247

TREASURER David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

Tel 01869 277690

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Flora Skinner

Tel: 01869 277366

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Sandra Bickmore, Thatch End, Juniper Hill ([sandrambickmore@gmail.com](mailto:sandrambickmore@gmail.com))

### SERVICES

Sunday 4th May 9.15 am Holy Communion (CW)

Sunday 18th May 10.45 am Holy Communion (BCP)

### COTTISFORD AND JUNIPER HILL SOCIAL COMMITTEE

At the time of writing this we have been enjoying several weeks of settled and sunny weather and we hope that everyone in the Parish has been able to get outside and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

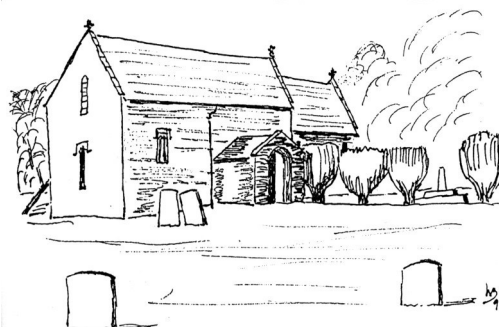
The Social Committee organised the purchase and delivery of plants to celebrate Mothering Sunday in our two villages, thank you to those involved. We received some lovely feed back.

Our next Pop up Pub will be on Saturday 17 May 7.30pm it will take place at Thatch End Juniper Hill. We look forward to seeing you there.

The Social Committee will also be holding a wine and nibbles evening at Cottisford Church on Friday 20 June. £5 per person, children free. Look out for further details soon.

We look forward to seeing everyone at our future events.

If you would like to help or have any ideas please contact Sandra Bickmore at [sandrambickmore@gmail.com](mailto:sandrambickmore@gmail.com).



## Finmere St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: Barbara Cunningham, 'Woodlea' Finmere,

TREASURER: Emma Brennan

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Katherine Grimston, The Old Rectory, Finmere

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Paul Nash Email: paan63@yahoo.co.uk

Tel: 01280 847992

emma\_mary@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 01280 848364

Tel 01280 848268

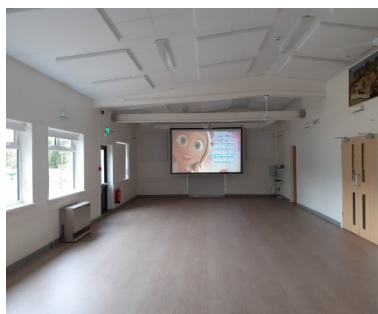
### Church Services

Sunday 18th May 9.15 am Holy Communion (CW)

Sunday 25th May 9.15 am Morning Service

Sunday 1st June 10.45 am Connect Informal Worship, Finmere Village Hall

### Village Hall



The village hall is available for hire. Facilities include AV system with a new projector and larger screen, plus sound system. Fitted kitchen, Meeting room, Patio doors onto the children's play area and enlarged storage spaces for regular users. WiFi facilities are available. For all hall bookings enquiries, please visit [www.myfinmere.com/villagehall](http://www.myfinmere.com/villagehall).



### Allotments




We have been blessed with warm dry days and cold nights this Spring. Though we have had to be cautious about putting out tender plants, we are well underway with onions, broad beans and peas. Conservatories and kitchen windows are full of seedlings and the ground is ready to receive them.

Now is the time to rent an allotment and you will soon be growing your own food for the Summer. There are friends ready to help.

Interested, visit [www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot](http://www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot) and select the 'enquiry' link.

*Jean (Allotment correspondent)*

 <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">VE DAY®</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">SAVE THE DATE!</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Finmere never misses an opportunity to host celebrations of a momentous event!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We're planning a party to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. There'll be food and there'll be dancing, just as in 1945!</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Finmere Village Hall</b> <b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Come celebrate with us. Visit <a href="https://alliesve80.com">https://alliesve80.com</a> for more info</p>
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## Victory in Europe 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025

The AlliesVE80 celebration dinner and dancing party is now in full swing with tickets on sale. To purchase your ticket, use the QR code on the many posters or visit the website [www.alliesVE80.com](http://www.alliesVE80.com). It will be a wonderful community event full of fun and entertainment. Come and enjoy a very special party. Remember to bring and share your food and join with others on your table of ten. Don't worry if you are not a party, the organisers will include you on a table.

It is planned for the exhibition of World War 2 memorabilia to be open from 2-5 pm in the Village Hall and will be free during this period. So bring your family to see this wonderful collection of guns, Willeys Jeeps and a unique colour film of the war. An opportunity not to be missed.



# VE Afternoon Tea

80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory in Europe

Please join us for a light tea and entertainment  
on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2025  
Finnmere Church 3-5 pm

All welcome, especially those who cannot attend the party on 10<sup>th</sup> May  
at the Village Hall

Donations in aid of Help for Heroes and Finnmere Church

It would be helpful to know approximate numbers and any dietary requirements in advance.  
Message/telephone Jo on 07974 740312

If anyone can help prepare food, please let Jo know  
Costs will be reimbursed

The VE Afternoon Tea is instead of the usual Tuesday Tea on 13<sup>th</sup> May



# Light lunch

**Finmere Village Hall**  
**4th Tuesday of the month**  
 No charge but donations appreciated



**TO BOOK YOUR PLACE**  
**PLEASE RING DEBBIE**  
**07765 874090**

**POP-UP  
PUB**

**Friday May 24th**  
**7-10pm**  
**Finmere Church**

Join us for an evening of good company and cheer

Provided ... punch (alcoholic and non-alcoholic)  
 Hot snacks and nibbles  
 Glasses

Please bring ... any other drinks you'd like!

Donations towards heating and refreshments  
 gratefully received (card or cash)

## SAVE THE DATE

# FINMERE SCHOOL & VILLAGE FAIR

**Sunday 18 May, 2025**

**Finmere Village Hall & Playing Fields**





# BUYING THE RED LION, LITTLE TINGEWICK- BECOME AN INVESTOR!

**We are fundraising to buy  
The Red Lion at Little Tingewick  
as a community-owned, professionally-run pub  
AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

- **Look at our Business Plan & Share Offer to find out how you can be part of this exciting opportunity**  
[www.redlionlittletingewick.co.uk](http://www.redlionlittletingewick.co.uk)
- **Become a Member of the Red Lion Community Group (a community business society set up to manage the purchase) by buying shares in the pub (from £250)**
- **Join the mailing list to be sent updates on how the campaign is going**
- **Let us know if you have experience that may be useful (building, industry etc)**

For more information please contact  
Debbie Bloomfield (Secretary RLCG Limited)  
M: 07765 874090  
E: [debbie.bloomfield1@gmail.com](mailto:debbie.bloomfield1@gmail.com)



## Some Finmere related links:

Finmere facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/finmereandlittletingewick/>  
Shelswell Parishes website at – [www.shelswellparishes.info/finmere](http://www.shelswellparishes.info/finmere)  
Finmere Parish Council website at – [www.finmerepc.org](http://www.finmerepc.org)  
Village hall news at – [www.myfinmere.com](http://www.myfinmere.com)  
Finmere Poor's Plot – [www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot](http://www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot)  
Old Finmere history website – [www.myfinmere.com/history](http://www.myfinmere.com/history)  
Finmere on Wikipedia - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finmereipedia>  
Finmere Primary School - [www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk)

## Fringford

### St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN:	John Mayo, 10 Church Close, Fringford	Tel 01869 278873
TREASURER:	Christina McCullagh, 5 Crosslands, Fringford	Tel 07867 515207
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	Penny Wood ,as below	
MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT:	Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands, Fringford	Tel 01869 277310
VILLAGE HALL CORRESPONDENT:	Christine Underwood	Tel 01869 278949
WEBSITE	www.fringford.info	

### ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, SERVICES & EVENTS

#### Services

- Sunday 4 May – at 10.45am - Morning Service
- Sunday 11 May – at 6.00pm – Evening Holy Communion
- Sunday 18 May – at 10.45am – Holy Communion
- Sunday 25 May – at 6.00pm - Evensong **in Hardwick Church**

There is a variety of services available in the Benefice. For details of those services please see the back cover of this *Shelswell News*.

#### EVENTS

##### Churchyard Clear up

There was a fantastic turn out on 12 April to help tidying up the churchyard. The photo shows the group at the end of their efforts, but there were another 7 people who had left before the photo was taken, or who were photo-shy. Thanks to Adrian who got us all organised and who said afterwards: “The team made an impressive effort with plenty of ivy removed, grass cut, and general tidying up of the graves. Thank you to everyone who turned up, and also to Alison for providing coffee and cake which was greatly appreciated by all”.



##### Open Gardens

The PCC is holding Open Gardens on the weekend of 17 and 18 May (See advert on page 7!). Teas will be available so if anyone can donate a cake it would be much appreciated. We'd be very glad of help serving teas, or welcoming visitors and selling the programme. Contact Penny if you can give an hour and a half. Ring 277310, or email [penelope.wood@btopenworld.com](mailto:penelope.wood@btopenworld.com).

##### Greetings Cards

Packs of greeting cards (6 cards for £3) available for purchase. They feature 6 photographs of the church both in and outside. Ring Christina McCullagh on 07867 515207.

### **Fringford Church 100 Club**

Numbers cost £3 a month (£36 annually) Payment by BACS, cheque or cash. Draw each month for 50% of the income divided amongst 3 winners: at the moment 1<sup>st</sup> prize £61, 2<sup>nd</sup> £37, 3<sup>rd</sup> £25. You can still sign up to the 100 Club. Contact Christina McCullagh to register - **07867 515207**. The draw takes place monthly at the Village Coffee Morning.

### **Little Lambs Babies & Toddler Group**

Every Wednesday during term time in Stratton Audley Church. Times are: from 10.00am to 11.30am. [Not during holidays and half term.] Just come along. If you need information in the meantime, email [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)

### **FRINGFORD VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING**

Village Coffee Mornings usually take place on the third Monday of each month. In May we will meet on Monday 19 May. Drop by for a coffee/tea and a chat any time between 10.30am and 12 noon. It is in the Chinnery Room at the Village Hall. Contact Penny on 277310 if you want more information.

### **COME & JOIN US AT 'SEWCIAL'**



We enjoy any type of craft and a natter getting together to relax and enjoy each other's company. Some of us knit, crochet, embroider, quilt, sew or create craft items/albums.

We get together once a month,  
either on a Wednesday evening at 7 – 9pm  
or Sunday afternoon at 3 – 5pm

We meet in the Chinnery Room at Fringford Village Hall.

### **Our next sessions for 2025 are:**

<b>May</b>	<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>June</b>	<b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>July</b>	<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>August</b>	<b>No meeting</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup></b>

Sessions are £2.00 drop in

No need to book – just come and join us!

If you would like information, please email Irene [ireneethomas@btinternet.com](mailto:ireneethomas@btinternet.com)



## **Fringford Village VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**A Shared Moment of Celebration**

**Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

 **Bells ring out – St. Michael's & All Angels Church 6.30 pm**

 **Village Hall bar open for refreshments from 6.30 pm**

 **Howes Fish & Chips van at the Village Hall from 7.00 – 8.30 pm**

 **Wartime vehicles in the Village Hall car park**

 **The Tribute of Remembrance 9.30 pm**

 **Lighting of the Beacon 9.30 pm**

 **The Nation Sings 'I Vow to Thee My Country' – accompanied by the Fairground Organ from 9.30 pm**

 **Wartime songs singalong - accompanied by the Fairground Organ and some special effects!**  







**Certificate 15**

**Showing in**

**Fringford Village Hall**

**Saturday May 3rd starting at 7.30pm**

**Doors open 7 o'clock**

**Introduction by Tom Wood (Co Producer)**

**Small licenced bar and snacks available**

**Adults £5**



Follow hapless heroine Agnes (Alice Lowe) through time as she repeatedly falls for the wrong guy, dies a grim death, and is reincarnated a century later, before meeting him again and starting the cycle anew. It is one story told over many periods, all with the messy thrills and spills that come with daring to follow your heart. Or maybe your loins.



## Regular Activities held in Fringford Village Hall

To find out more or book a place, please contact the hirer direct.	
Weekly Activities	Monthly Activities
<p>FS Dance Monday &amp; Wednesday (term time) After school classes BALLET • TAP • MODERN • STREET leah.fsd@gmail.com or 07885827592</p>	<p>Village Coffee Morning All ages welcome Third Monday in the month - Chinnery Room Drop in anytime between 10.30 am and noon Penny Wood 01869 277310</p>
<p>Puppy Stars Dog Training Tuesday evening – various classes Contact Nick 07542 131400 <a href="http://www.puppystars.co.uk">www.puppystars.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Parish Council Meeting All villagers welcome Third Monday in the month 7.45pm Contact 01844 237766 or <a href="mailto:fringford.parishclerk@gmail.com">fringford.parishclerk@gmail.com</a></p>
<p>Fringford Yoga Wednesday (term time) 9.30am – 11am Carolyn White 07763 817078</p>	<p>Bicester Meditation Space &amp; Sound Bath First Sunday of the month from 6 -9 pm Sonia - <a href="mailto:contact@holisticaxis.com">contact@holisticaxis.com</a> Please text - 07709634847</p>
<p>Just Puppies Puppy Training Wednesday evening – various classes Contact Kerri 07720 891489 <a href="http://www.justpuppies.training">www.justpuppies.training</a></p>	<p>Shelswell WI First Thursday of the month 7.30pm (Not December or August) Contact Sandra Bickmore 07961 828571</p>
<p>Pilates Thursday at 10.00am <a href="mailto:natashaflowerspilates@gmail.com">natashaflowerspilates@gmail.com</a> or 07545 525820</p>	<p>Mindfulness Meditation Monthly Sunday 11am to 12.30pm <a href="mailto:janerainey17@gmail.com">janerainey17@gmail.com</a> or 07971 008337</p>
<p>My Baby Spa Monday mornings Spa experience for babies and toddlers 1 – 4 years <a href="http://www.mybabyspa.co.uk">www.mybabyspa.co.uk</a> contact Danielle at <a href="mailto:contact@mybabyspa.co.uk">contact@mybabyspa.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Fringford Sewcial Sew and Chat! Monthly Wednesday from 7pm Or Sunday from 3pm Contact Irene at <a href="mailto:ireneethomas@btinternet.com">ireneethomas@btinternet.com</a></p>
<p>Village Hall Team Meeting Please contact for dates Open meetings – all welcome <a href="mailto:fringford.hall@gmail.com">fringford.hall@gmail.com</a> or 07936 879175</p>	
<p>To book the hall for your own event, please go to <a href="http://fringford.info">fringford.info</a>, village hall, how to book Here you will find all the information you will need to book on-line. For any other queries please phone or text 07936 879175 or email: <a href="mailto:fringford.hall@gmail.com">fringford.hall@gmail.com</a></p>	

## Hardwick St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDEN: David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick  
 TREASURER: David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick  
 PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Flora Skinner  
 MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Veronica Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick  
 WEBSITE: <http://hardwickvillage.btck.co.uk>

Tel 01869 277690  
 Tel 01869 277690  
 Tel: 01869 277366  
 Tel 01869 277690

### Church Services at Hardwick Church

Sunday 25th May 6.00 pm Evensong with the Shelswell Group Choir  
 Sunday 1st June 9.15 am Holy Communion



**Hardwick Church will be open every day from 10am to 4pm.**

Private prayer and quiet contemplation

View the architecture, memorials and stained-glass windows

Please make use of this special space

### Pilgrim Pathways

Why not walk the Hethe to Hardwick to Cottisford to Hethe "Pilgrim Pathway". This 4-mile circular route takes in the C of E churches of each of these villages as well as Holy Trinity, Hethe's RC church. You can start and end your walk at any point on the route, which takes in some glorious North Oxfordshire countryside. Pick up a free brochure outlining the route from any of the churches or contact David Barnes (01869 277690), who can send you one.

### Hardwick Church guidebook

The guidebook for Hardwick church and the parish of Hardwick with Tusmore is available to collect from the church or contact David Barnes (01869 277690), who can send one to you. This 44-page booklet has over 20 colour photos and provides a fascinating insight into the features and history of Hardwick church, the village and the Tusmore Estate. We ask that you make a minimum donation of £5 to church funds.



# Hethe

## St Edmund and St George

CHURCHWARDEN: Flora Skinner, Fox Hollow, 2 Hardwick Road, Hethe

Tel 01869 277366

TREASURER: Mike Green, Greenhill Cottage, Main Street, Hethe

Tel 01869 278166

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Flora Skinner as above

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Mike Green as above

Tel 01869 278166

WEBSITE: [www.hethe.org](http://www.hethe.org)

### ST EDMUND & ST GEORGE CHURCH



**“All churches need friends,  
and they are out there ready to be made”**

### Church Services and Events

See the back page for details. Remember that you will always be welcome at services in any of our churches in the benefice, or if you are away from the village, you can find a nearby service through the web site <https://www.achurchnearyou.com>. Please note the open village meeting to be held in June to discuss the future of the church (details below).

The church is currently open every day for visits and private prayer but may be closed if the funding is found for internal repairs.

At the time of writing we are having a very busy April, with a service on Palm Sunday, celebrations planned for Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday as well as our lay led service on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the month. Many thanks to the volunteers who prepared the church for these services and also spring cleaned the church and tidied up the churchyard.

### Finances

We are truly thankful for a very generous donation in April to the church finances as well as to those people who continue to give regularly to the church or who have increased what they give. We are currently solvent again!

Last year, we spent £18,532 and received £15,732. Our main source of dependable income is regular giving – last year this totalled £5,031. We need to increase this amount if we are to secure the future of the church. Our accounts for 2024 are available on the village web site and in the church.

*continued overleaf*



We have received a quote for the first of the urgent works required to the church building, to remove and replace failed plaster at high-level within the Nave (above the Chancel Arch) and install box gutters over the tiles of the Aisle roofs at the east end, to better manage the water coming off the high roofs. The total cost is £13,076. We have applied for a grant, but it is unlikely to fully cover the cost.

If you can contribute to the costs of running the church, or give a one-off payment to help to pay for the repairs, please see Regular Giving below. Also, please support our raffle for church funds at the village fete this month (details below).

**Our church is cared for and managed by volunteers (with input from our Rector). We receive no government funding and rely on voluntary donations to meet our day-to-day running costs. It is the responsibility of each parish to fund the running of their Church.**

### Regular Giving

We would be grateful if you could consider giving a regular donation to the church to help keep the doors open. It needn't be too much – current donors give between £10 and £70 a month. There is a simple means of setting up a regular donation to the church through the Parish Giving Scheme – you decide how much, how often, when and whether you can allow gift aid to be claimed. Simply follow this link <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/home/>, enter Hethe and select St Edmund & St George Church; then select donate and follow the instructions on the screen. Alternatively, you can access the church page through this QR Code or phone the team who are responsible for the scheme on 0333 002 1271. **This link can also be used to give a one-off donation.**



**Note that a facility from the National Churches Trust, called “The House of Good: Local”, has calculated an annual value for our church of £44,593 based on the support it provides for local people.**

## St Edmund & St George Church Mega Raffle at Hethe Village Fete on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May

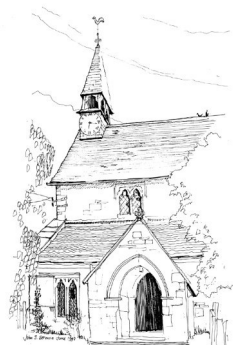


Many fantastic prizes, including  
£100 in cash and a wine box



More prizes will be welcomed - to Flora or Mike or let us know  
what and bring it along on the day

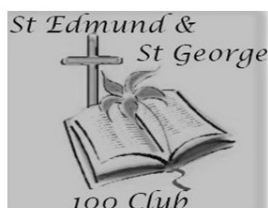




The future of your church is in  
is in your hands :

Community Meeting at the Village  
Hall on Tuesday June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Watch for an invitation coming  
through your post box in the next  
couple of weeks ...



## St Edmund & St George 100 Club

Results of the 75<sup>th</sup> draw held  
on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2025

1<sup>st</sup> Prize No 42 Jane Mansfield

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize No 57 Frazer Morgan

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize No 35 Robert Mansfield

Many thanks to our members  
Hethe PCC

The next regular PCC meeting is to be held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June.

### HETHE COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

## Hethe Village Fete

Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup>

at 2pm



Raffle for Church fundraising, Teas, Tombola and Bric-a-brac for Village  
Hall fundraising, Crafts, Plants and Boules for Darby & Joan fundraising  
and stalls from other local organisations.

Live music from Bicester Concert Band



## Hethe Community Coffee Morning in the Village Hall

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May from 10.00am to 12.00pm**

***Friends, neighbours, dog walkers, pram pushers:  
an opportunity to meet during the daytime – there's great  
cake too!***



## Hethe and District Darby & Joan Club Bingo

at Hethe Village Hall on the third Saturday of the month,  
our next Bingo night is on **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May**,  
after the Village Fete.  
**Eyes down at 7.30pm.**

BINGO				
12	25	41	51	63
3	30	37	54	66
7	21	FREE	56	74
1	26	35	50	69
10	17	45	47	64

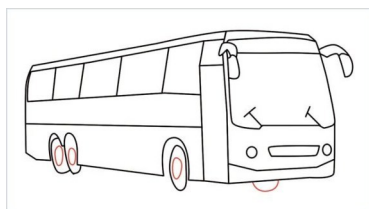
## Hethe and District Darby & Joan Club

meeting at Hethe Village Hall on the third Tuesday of the month, 2-4pm  
and

holding a Bingo Night at Hethe Village Hall every third Saturday of the month, 7.30pm

## SUMMER EVENTS

April 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting at Hethe Village Hall  
May 17<sup>th</sup> Stalls at Hethe Village Fete, 2pm  
May 20<sup>th</sup> Coach to Webbs Wychbold  
June 17<sup>th</sup> Coach to Welwyn garden city  
July 15<sup>th</sup> Coach Mystery Tour  
August 19<sup>th</sup> Coach to Eastbourne  
September 16<sup>th</sup> Coach to Worcester



October 21<sup>st</sup> Hethe Village Hall 2pm AGM  
November TBC Coach Moreton in Marsh & Broadway  
December 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas Party members only.

Membership £15 p.a.  
- New members welcome.

**Parish Council.** The Annual Meeting Of The Parish Council will take place on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May, starting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

**Pop-up Pub.** Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May in the Village Hall, from 7.00 to 10.00pm. Everyone welcome. Bring your own drinks of choice, snacks and games!

## New Bus Service



Monday to Saturday - pick up at Hethe War Memorial at 07.39, 10.54, 13.42 and 15.42. Last bus departs Bicester at 17.50 to arrive in Hethe at 18.12. Note that this service does not operate on Bank Holidays.



**Shelswell Lift Share WhatsApp Group** – Contact Flora to join

For **Village Hall bookings**, please contact Flora, the Village Hall Booking Secretary, on 01869 277366 [fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk).

**The Hardwick Road Allotments.** The contact for the allotments is Yvonne Thomas, 3 Wilson Way, Caversfield, OX27 8FB, tel 243536 or 07773065890. The agents are Carter Jonas for the Oxford Diocese.

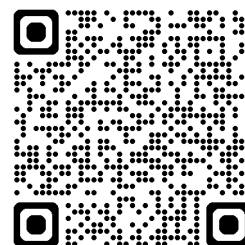
**Keep up to date with what is happening in the village through:**

Our village web site (courtesy of the Parish Council): <https://www.hethe.org/>

Facebook Pages:

Community Spirit of the Hethens  
Hethe Community  
Hethe Allotments

The Next Door App - <https://nextdoor.co.uk/>



## Mixbury All Saints

CHURCHWARDENS: Martin Ayres, Northwell Farm, Finmere

Alec Howard, Middlestead, Mixbury

TREASURER: David Mitchell. 2 Town Farm, Mixbury

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Anna Howard

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Sue Goodman [pasgoodman551@gmail.com](mailto:pasgoodman551@gmail.com)

Tel 07899 792552

Tel 01280 848295

Tel 01280 847769

Tel 01280 848295

Tel 01280 848002

If you have any news articles for the Parish Magazine please do not forget to let your Magazine Correspondent know in good time – deadline dates are normally found on the inside cover of the Shelswell News. Sue Goodman; email: [pasgoodman551@gmail.com](mailto:pasgoodman551@gmail.com) or telephone: 01280 848002.

### CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 11th May 9.15 am Mixbury Half Hour

### MIXBURY CHURCH FLOWER ROTA 2025

May	Jane Marshall
June	Kate Darby
July	Sue Goodman
August	Helen Backon
September	Philippa Brown
	Harvest festival – everyone
October	Morag Westworth
November	Fi Bairstow
December	Carol service and Christmas - everyone
Reserve	Sam Lockwood

Thank you to everyone for doing church flowers. It's much appreciated.

If anyone wishes to be added or removed from the list, please get in touch with Eryl on 07840 464541.



### **MIXBURY CHURCH CLEANING ROTA 2025**

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to go on this rota in order to clean and to help maintain the church throughout the year. Your hard work is very much appreciated.

MAY Alison Bailey, Pam Burrill and Jules Channon  
 JUNE Nicola Adams and Anna Howard & Sue Bosher  
 JULY Julie Mitchell and Helen Backon  
 AUGUST Rebecca Ayres and Eryl Tobin  
 SEPTEMBER Giovanna Holdcroft and Tanya Howroyd  
 OCTOBER Emma Bray and Viv Williams  
 NOVEMBER Alison Bailey, Pam Burrill and Jules Channon  
 DECEMBER Gail Bellingham, Mel Soar & Sue Bosher

If anyone else would like to help with cleaning, we would be very grateful for extra volunteers. This would help to lighten the load on otherwise busy people. The job only requires a couple of hours simple cleaning in your allotted month, and if you can find a partner or join a group of two to make groups of three, it can be a pleasant way to involve yourself in the village and familiarise yourself with our beautiful church. For more information please contact - Julie Mitchell on 01280 – 847769

### **MIXBURY POP UP PUB NIGHTS**

The Mixbury Pop Up Pub has been a tradition in the village for many years now and is a lovely way to socialise and make friends. The hosts provide the venue, glasses and a few nibbles and the guests arrive with their own drinks. If you are interested in hosting a pub night please contact Tanya – email: [markandtanya@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:markandtanya@yahoo.co.uk).

### **LARK RISE BIKE RIDE SUNDAY 1ST JUNE 2025**

Once again we are pleased to be running this ride, in aid of Brainstrust, a vital support network for those with a brain tumour diagnosis, and their families.

The ride will be based at Swallows Nursery and Plant Centre, in Mixbury.  
 There are three circuits, all with the first drinks stop in common:- 14 miles for those with young children, 25 miles for the more adventurous and 40 miles for the fitter riders who like a bit of a challenge

We stick to quiet lanes, tracks and bridleways to make for safer cycling, while taking in the gorgeous countryside of Oxon, Bucks and Northants. There is traffic calming at strategic points, along with full waymarking for riders. You can also download a gpx file for navigating.

Drinks at intervals en route and a BBQ (inc vegan food) on return to the nursery.

Do please join us by exploring [brainstrust.org.uk](http://brainstrust.org.uk) or directly: [brainstrust.org.uk/lark-rise-bike-ride-2024/](http://brainstrust.org.uk/lark-rise-bike-ride-2024/) Hope to see you there! The Lark Rise Team

Chris, James, Jon, Steve, Jez, Lynn and Charles

PS If you don't want to ride but could help on the day we would love to hear from you.

Tel Chris on 07913 973180, or James on 07999 938669 for more information.

## **ATTRACTING SWIFTS TO YOUR NEST BOX**

It's that time of year again when the Swifts are returning and if you had a Swift Box put up in the last couple of years, you may be lucky to get them nesting this year. If you are extremely lucky and Swifts are already nesting nearby, your box may be used within a few years. But often it will take much longer – possibly many years.

It will greatly improve your chances of attracting Swifts if you can play Swifts' calls from the box itself or from nearby.

There are several ways of doing this.

1. You can buy a cd of Swift calls and play it from a window near the box.
2. You can download Swift calls on to an MP3 player and do the same.
3. You can also buy all the equipment you need - amplifier, the calls on a USB or SD card and a microphone. The microphone can be hung from a nearby window or attached to the box itself.

### **Sources of Swift calls**

Swift Conservation sells recordings of calls on CD or MP3 if you have your own equipment to play them: [www.swift-conservation.org](http://www.swift-conservation.org)

Sources of calls equipment:

- Action for Swifts [www.actionforswifts.blogspot.com](http://www.actionforswifts.blogspot.com)
- Peak Boxes [www.peakboxes.co.uk](http://www.peakboxes.co.uk)
- Swift Conservation also has a link to Andrew Porter, who makes and sells Swift callers on a not-for-profit basis: [swiftcallboxes@gmail.com](mailto:swiftcallboxes@gmail.com)

### **Playing the calls**

1. Try to play the calls as much as you can between the beginning of May and the beginning of August
2. You don't need to play them all day. The best times are early morning (say 6 am until 9) and evening (say 6pm until 9). The middle of the day around noon can also be effective. You can buy a timer quite cheaply.
3. Finally please be considerate when playing the calls. Your neighbours may put up a nest box if you are successful and you haven't turned them off! Swifts have very good hearing.

## **MIXBURY KNIT AND NATTER**

Courtesy of Anna at Swallows Nursery Mixbury Knit and Natter now meets fortnightly in the coffee shop at the Nursery. 2-4pm. Next date: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> May then 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025. All welcome – and you don't have to knit or crochet, just come along and chat! Swallows not only sell lovely plants but coffee and cake too.....!

## **LITTER PICKING**

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who have recently been out along the A421 making our environment a much nicer place, visually and for wildlife.

## **DOG WASTE – CASTLE FIELD**

If you walk your dog around our lovely new field please clean up after it. There is a dog poo bin inside the gateway – in fact there are four around the village so there is no excuse.



**BOTTLE BANK**

The bottle bank has recently been overflowing – if you find it full **please** take your bottles home until it is emptied again. It does look very unsightly and bad on the village seeing lots of empty bottles scattered around – it is also dangerous for wildlife and children.

**You Are Invited on  
8<sup>th</sup> June 2025  
The Big Lunch Picnic  
Castle Field  
More details to follow!**

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St Michael and All Angels**

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TREASURER: Fai Li

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MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Ann von Maltzahn

Tel 01280 848680

Tel: 07593 784143

Tel: 07725 009838

Tel: 01869 277366

Tel 01280 848680

**Services:-**

Sunday 4th May - 9.15 a.m. Holy Communion

**Churchyard Clear Up:-**

Our grateful thanks to all of you who came along to help and to Jackie for the delicious refreshments!

**Bonus Ball Lotto:-**

Recent lucky winners have been David Francis and Jen Beaumont

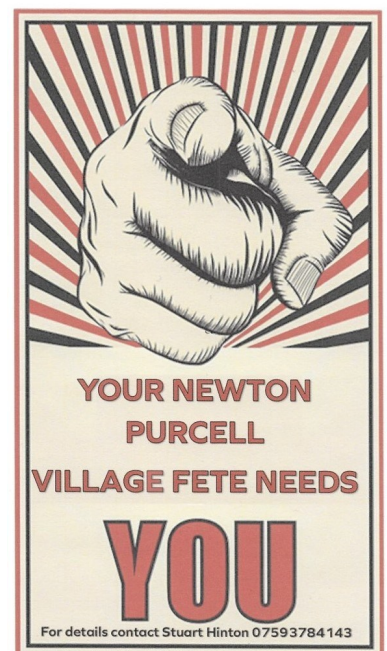
**Hall to Let:-**

Our recently refurbished Hall is now available for hire at competitive rates. Please contact Jackie Le Fevre on 07544 985117 or [jackielefevre@btinternet.com](mailto:jackielefevre@btinternet.com) for details and to make your booking.

**The Summer Fete:-**

All our plans for this years Fete on the 7th June are coming together and it promises to be better than ever so we look forward to welcoming you, your family and friends on the day!

We still need some help to run the stalls and various attractions so please don't hesitate to contact Stuart and be part of this great day.



JOIN US FOR OUR

# Summer Fete

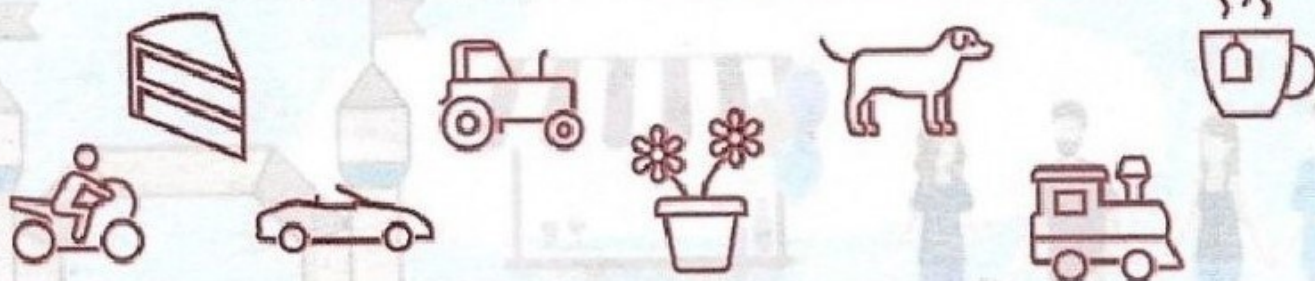
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Alison Miller [alisonjanemiller@icloud.com](mailto:alisonjanemiller@icloud.com)

TREASURER: Janey Poole [janey@oxford-educational.co.uk](mailto:janey@oxford-educational.co.uk)

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Emma Brown [emmabrown911@gmail.com](mailto:emmabrown911@gmail.com)

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Rena Andrews [renaandrews820@gmail.com](mailto:renaandrews820@gmail.com)

PARISH ROOM BOOKINGS : Kelly and James Holden-White [kholdenwhite@aol.com](mailto:kholdenwhite@aol.com)

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Tel 07762 719198

Tel 07810 120457

Tel: 01869 346653

Tel 01869 345211

### St Peter's Church Stoke Lyne Services

Please see back page for details

### Flower Duty for May

Pippa Elliot

### Stoke Lyne Annual Litter Pick – Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 10 am

Thank you to everyone who helped with the litter pick, so many to mention.... Faye, Julie, Dexter, Hugo, Chris, Janey, Sharon, Lisa, Richard, Karen, Vanessa, Nikki, Brenda and James. All of the verges look clear and the bags will be collected over the next few days. Some motorists even stopped to say 'thank you'.

Kelly Holden-White

### Spring in Stoke Lyne



*Ornamental Cherry Blossom above and left,  
Forsythia and Cherry*





When I look around the hedgerows and see the hedges starting to green up, and the wonderful show of the white blackthorn, I remember someone telling me years ago about the saying "beware the blackthorn winter" which warns that we still may get a spell of snowy or frosty weather while the blackthorn is out. I think Spring has finally arrived now with all the lovely daffodils and spring flowers, blossoms on the trees etc. The birds are really busy as well, it is a joy to watch them foraging in freshly mown grass. When we get into May the bluebells will start to bloom. The last few days the weather has got a lot warmer, long may it continue.

Rena Andrews



*Primroses in Stoke Lyne*

## **A Look at the Listed Gravestones in St Peter's Churchyard**

St Peter's churchyard has two listed gravestones. One is easy to identify and the other less so.

First of all the easy one. The listing for it on the Historic England website reads:

*Category: Grade II, List entry number 1046401, Date First Listed: 30 Oct 1988, List Entry Name: Headstone dated 16?? Approximately 14 metres south east of tower, church of St Peter. National Grid Reference: SP56634 28330, Description: Headstone. Ironstone. Dated 16??. Boldly carved with heart, hour-glass and wreath of flowers.*

The oldest image I've found of it is on Oxfordshire County Council's Heritage Search website at <https://heritagesearch.oxfordshire.gov.uk/images/POX0422287>

The catalogue entry indicates that the image was taken 1987-89. As you can see it was being encroached by ivy even then. Alistair Nisbet uploaded a photo of it to the Historic England website on 26 July 2001: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1046401>

*continued overleaf*

The photo below is my own taken in April 2011.



You can clearly see the heart, the two hour-glasses and the wreath of flowers. If you zoom in you can also see some of the inscription. I think the top line reads: “*In memory of*” and then “*Elizabeth late Wife*” and on the third “*of Richard*” is easily readable. But what is that surname? It looks like “*Ston*”. The fourth line reads “*died January*” and the day could be “*19<sup>th</sup>*”. The next line probably contains the year which looks like “*171*” (not the 16?? on the official listing heading) and then “*Aged 37*” with “*years*” partially obliterated at the very bottom. Transcriptions of Oxfordshire parish registers made by the Oxfordshire Family History Society are available on the FindMyPast website and they have a burial for an Elizabeth Stone in 1713 which matches the above. I also searched on Richard Stone, and there was indeed a gent of that name in the village. He was buried in 1732.

I have subsequently found the scanned image of his burial record on Ancestry. It reads “*Richard Stone of this parish was buried May 20<sup>th</sup> 1732*”. I cannot find the burial for Elizabeth as the images on Ancestry jump from the year 1711 to 1715 as if whoever did the scanning turned over two pages at once.

The second listed grave is more of a challenge to identify. Here is the listing:

*Category: Grade II, List Entry Number 1193262, Date first listed: 03 Oct 1988, List Entry Name: headstone dated 1699, approximately 15 metres south east of tower, church of St Peter, National Grid reference: SP56628 28325. Description: Headstone. Dated 1699. Lugged architrave design.*

According to Google “A “*lugged architrave*” or “*eared architrave*” refers to a type of architrave (the decorative molding around a door or window opening) where the top horizontal piece extends beyond the vertical sides, resembling “*ears*” or “*lugs*”.”

The oldest image available online once again is on OCC’s Heritage Search website. The reference to it on the website is:

<https://heritagesearch.oxfordshire.gov.uk/images/POX0422288>

The date of the image is the same as for the other gravestone.

Assuming that this is an image of the correct gravestone, then both Alistair Nisbet and I have subsequently uploaded images of the wrong gravestones to the Historic England and British Listed Buildings websites.

Alistair’s can be found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1193262> and it is looking down on a gravestone which appears to be standing immediately in front/behind another one. The photo is dated 26 July 2001. However, if you look carefully at the Heritage Search image you can see the wall behind it ie it is not backed up against another gravestone.



My incorrect one is at <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101193262-headstone-dated-1699-approximately-15-metres-south-east-of-tower-church-of-st-peter-stoke-lyne/photos/11409> (beware the annoying pop ups if you click on this link).

In my case it would appear that I was concentrating on the description “*lugged architrave*” (there are three gravestones in the same row which could be described as having these) rather than paying proper attention to the OS map coordinates which would imply that the two gravestones are further apart than the one I selected.

This is a photograph of what I now think is the correct gravestone, taken in March this year after the churchyard cleanup, which I have cropped so that you can see it matches the Heritage Search image.



Unfortunately I cannot work out any of the detail on it. The FindMyPast website does not contain any burial transcriptions for 1699. I have looked at the images of the register on the Ancestry website and it is extremely difficult to work out the year prior to 1701 as the vicar was in the habit of writing the year in a hand drawn margin on the right hand side of each page and the person scanning has not opened the register volume wide enough to show it on the left hand side page (presumably to avoid damage to the spine) and with age and use the year entries on the edge of the right hand page have faded/been torn off. So for the moment this one remains a mystery.

Brenda Hazel

## **Stratton Audley and Godington St Mary and St Edburga; Holy Trinity**

CHURCHWARDENS: Sarah Noujaim, 15 Cavendish Place, Stratton Audley  
Penny Oakey, Grange Farm, Godington

Tel 07941 273145

Tel 01869 278778

TREASURER: Fai Li

Tel 07725 009838

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Maxine Ling

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Vacant (Stratton Audley); Sylvia List (Godington) [editor@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:editor@shelswellparishes.info)

### **CHURCH SERVICES**

Sunday 4th May 6.00 pm Compline at Godington

Sunday 11th May 10.45 am Morning Service at Stratton Audley - Pet Service

Sunday 25th May 9.15 Holy Communion at Stratton Audley

Sunday 1st June 6.00 pm Compline at Stratton Audley

*continued overleaf*

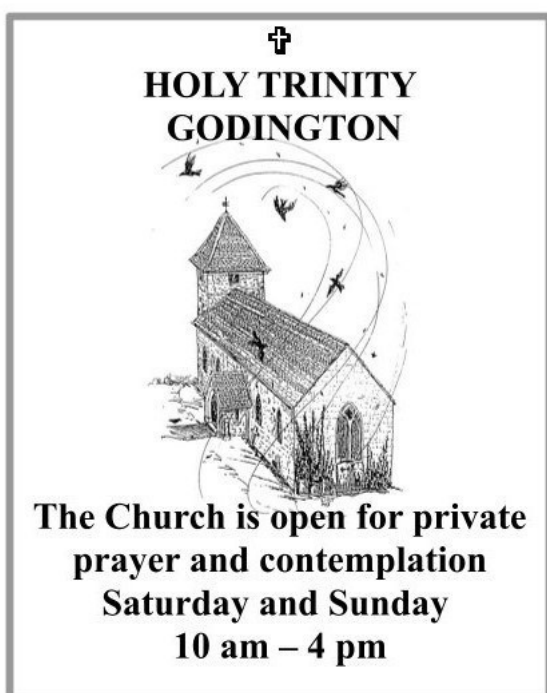


## PET SERVICE



## FOODBANK

Please don't forget the foodbank donation point in the church porch in Stratton Audley, supporting Bicester Foodbank! Thank you to everyone who donates. Particularly appreciated are tinned fruit, veg, soup and fish also coffee and hot chocolate. The Rector, Alice Goodall is a 'Local Referrer' and can refer anyone who is in need to the Bicester Foodbank. Contact: Alice Goodall, The Rectory, Finmere 01280 848192 [alicegoodall313@gmail.com](mailto:alicegoodall313@gmail.com)



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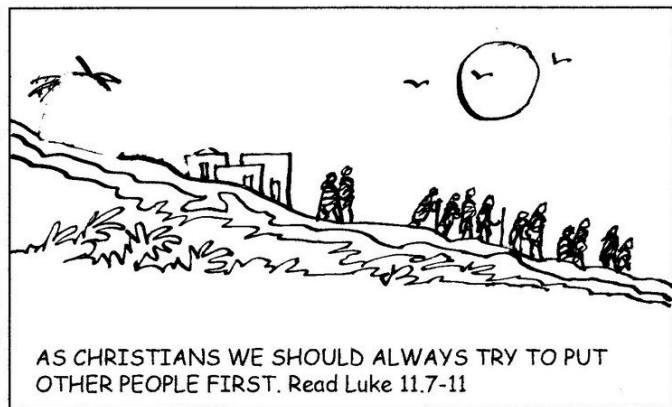
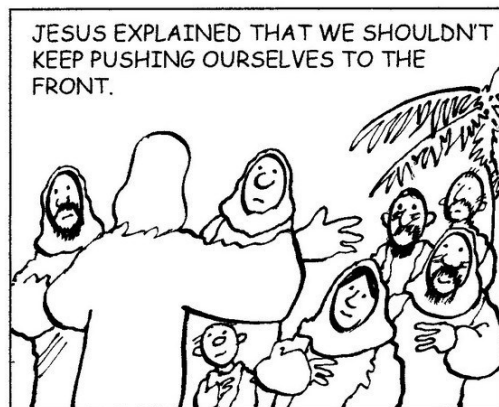
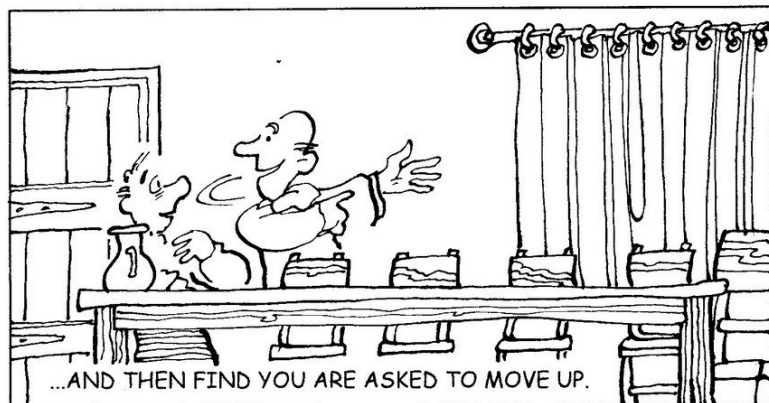
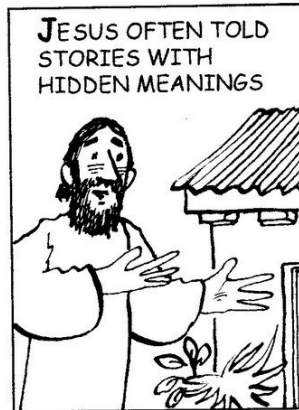
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# The Last Word

For young and young at heart Readers!

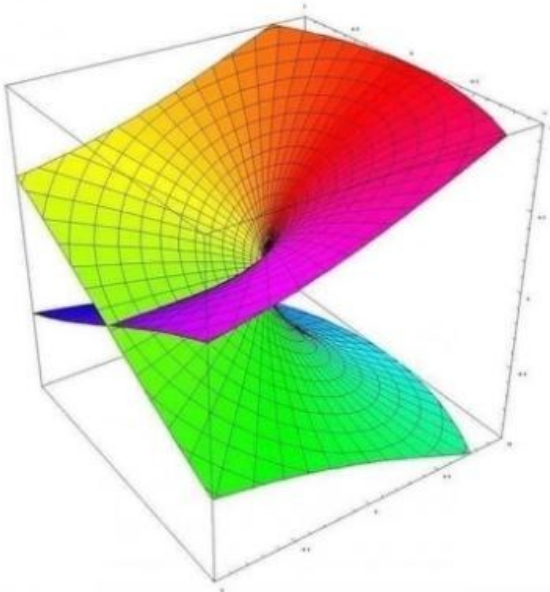




"Don't judge each day by the harvest that you reap but by the seeds that you plant"

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

My blanket when I try to  
find the long side at 3 am



I said to the  
baker,  
"How come all  
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one's £1?"

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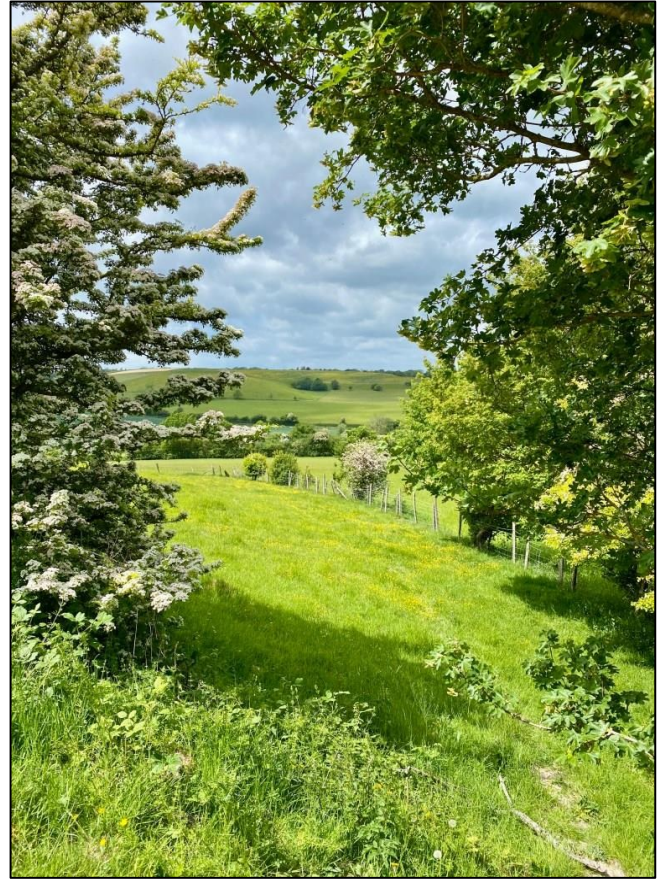
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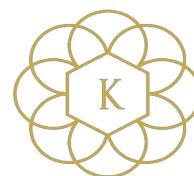


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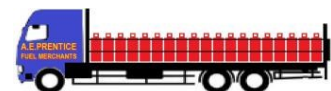
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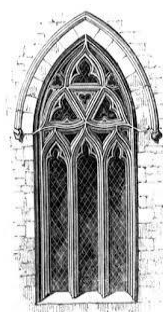
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| <p align="center"><b>SHELSWELL GROUP SERVICES: MAY - JUNE 2025</b></p> <p align="center">CW: 'Common Worship' modern language service      BCP: 'Book of Common Prayer' traditional language service</p> |                                                                                                         |                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DATE                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                                       |
| ALTAR                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter<br>4 <sup>th</sup> May                                                 | 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter<br>1 <sup>st</sup> May            | 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter<br>18 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                                                                              | 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter<br>25 <sup>th</sup> May                              | 7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter<br>1 <sup>st</sup> June                                              |
| 8.00 am                                                                                                                                                                                                  | White                                                                                                   | White                                                              | White                                                                                                                                                                                 | White<br>Holy Communion (BCP)<br>HETHE AG                                             | White                                                                                                 |
| 9.15 am                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>COTTISFORD AM<br>Holy Communion with hymns (BCP)<br>NEWTON PURCELL AG | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>HETHE AM<br>Mixbury Half Hour PW | 9.15am Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>FINMERE AG/John Alderdice                                                                                                                    | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>STRATTON AUDLEY AM<br>Morning Service<br>FINMERE PW | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>HARDWICK AM<br>Holy Communion with hymns (BCP)<br>NEWTON PURCELL AG |
| 10.45 am                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 'Connect' Informal Worship<br>STOKE LYNE CHURCH AM<br>Morning Service<br>FRINGFORD PW                   | Pet Service<br>STRATTON AUDLEY AG                                  | 10am<br>'Food for Thought'<br>STOKE LYNE Lay-led<br>10.45am Holy Communion with hymns (BCP)<br>COTTISFORD LW<br>10.45am Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>FRINGFORD AM/John Alderdice | 10.45am Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br>STOKE LYNE AG                               | 'Connect' Informal Worship<br>FINMERE VILLAGE HALL AM<br>Morning Service<br>FRINGFORD PW              |
| 6.00 pm                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Compline<br>GODINGTON AG                                                                                | Evening Communion<br>FRINGFORD AG                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                       | Evensong with the Shelswell Group Choir<br>HARDWICK PW                                | Compline<br>STRATTON AUDLEY PW                                                                        |

AG: Revd Alice Goodall    AM: Revd Alex Mahlava    LW: Revd Liz Welters    PW: Mrs Penny Wood (LLM)