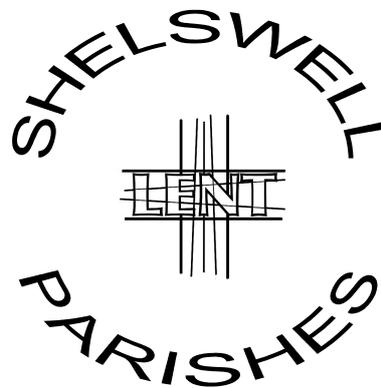


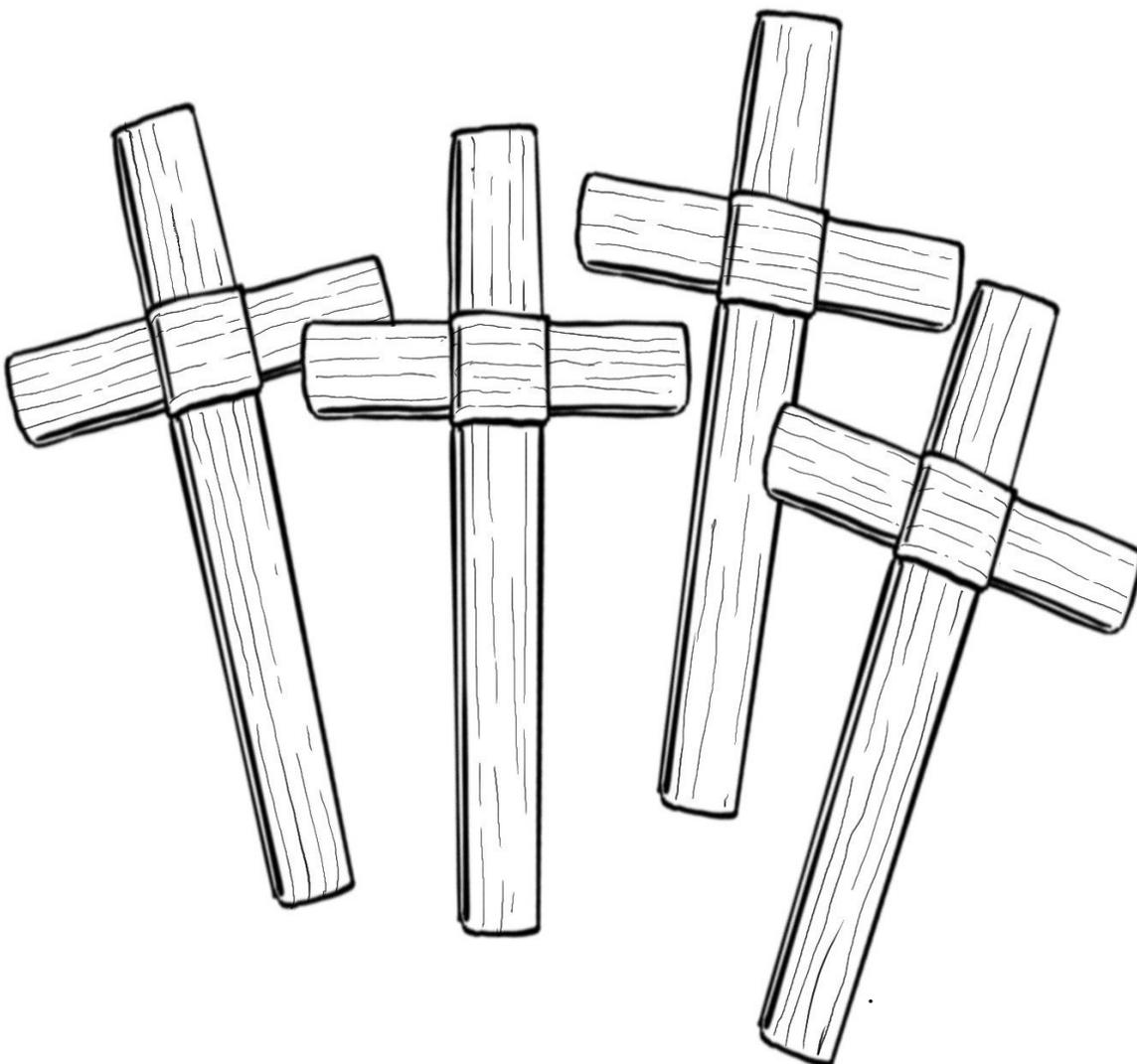
Shelswell News

The magazine of the Shelswell Group of Churches

Cottisford
Fringford
Hardwick
Mixbury
Stoke Lyne



Finmere
Godington
Hethe
Newton Purcell
Stratton Audley



*Lent continues,
Mothering Sunday
Palm Sunday
p. 6-7*

*Biblical sales surge in
2025!
p.3*

*The Whitton family of
Fringford Forge and
Post Office
p. 9*

*Can you sing?
Shelswell Group Choir
needs you!
p. 11*

March 2026

£1

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: Vacancy

BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR: Mrs Becky Adams, c/o The Shelswell Benefice Office, 6 Chinalls Close, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4BQ Tel: 07928 990569 Email admin@shelswellparishes.info Administrator's normal office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm

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

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BENEFICE TREASURER: Mr Philip Austin c/o The Shelswell Benefice Office, 6 Chinalls Close, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4BQ or email 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 Shelswell Benefice Office, 6 Chinalls Close, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4BQ Email admin@shelswellparishes.info

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Deadlines for the April edition of Shelswell News

To Magazine Correspondents: **Midday on Friday 13th March**

Correspondents to Editor: **Midday on Sunday 15th March** at 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

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 .

Surge in Sales of the Best Book

When sorting through my books recently I came across a slim volume called *The Young Church in Action*, translated by JB Phillips, and subtitled *The Acts of the Apostles in Modern English*. An inscription says that it was awarded to me by Maresfield Parish Church in 1962, although I forget what for. That was the first time I had come across a portion of the Bible in modern English, but I do remember that I found it an easy, compelling read.



Now I have several different translations of the Bible on my shelves plus access to dozens more versions online. Tucked away are other Bibles which have been handed down through the family, some of which are no longer in useable condition. Recently I was asked what could be done with Bibles which are old, frail and no longer of use to anyone, other than throwing them away.

Through an internet search I found that in Judaism, Torah scrolls beyond repair are buried in a Jewish cemetery. The Catholic custom for disposing of Bibles and other blessed items is either by burning or by burial in a place where no one is likely to walk over them. I don't know the Church of England's view.

Hopefully a falling-apart Bible is a sign of it having been much used. Sadly, many people have Bibles on their shelves which are rarely opened and so are in pristine condition. However, it seems the Bible is now increasingly in demand. In 2025 sales of the Bible in the UK showed the highest increase since records began. Various reasons for this have been proposed. Have Christian social media influencers pointed people to the Word of God by making Scripture feel more relevant and engaging? Have events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the mental health crisis made people look for deeper meaning in life? Evidently people in their teens and twenties are less likely to identify as atheists than their parents.



“The rebellious thing to do was to be an atheist and follow people like Richard Dawkins and the new atheism. Now, I think things are reversed. For the next generation it's more interesting to be a Christian. They're open to exploring that, rather than being automatically closed against it,” says the CEO of the publishing company SPCK (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge).

The owner of St Andrews Christian bookshop in Great Missenden has been surprised by a new clientele of young men coming into the shop. He says, “Almost out of the blue something's changed where people are turning to faith.” The upward surge in Bible sales in the UK is matched by growth in church attendance in England and Wales. A [report](#) published by the Bible Society in April 2025 indicates that the number of people attending church in England and Wales has risen by 50% since 2018. In 2018 only 4% of 18- to 24-year-olds said they attended church monthly, but in 2024 that number rose to 16%, the largest increase of any age group.

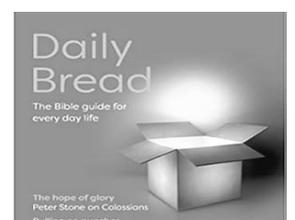
Why not join the trend? Dust off your Bible and get some notes*, in print or online, or join a study group to help you understand what is in it. Are the Bible's ancient words still relevant to life today in an era of rapid change? You'd be welcome at a Church service to find out more.

At Sunday School we sang a chorus, which still rings true today.

‘The best book to read is the Bible.
If you read it every day, it will help you all the way.
O, the best book to read is the Bible.’

Liz Welters, Associate Minister

*For Bible reading notes, see for example,
www.brfresources.org.uk/collections/our-notes
<https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/about-us/bible-reading>



BIBLE READINGS



Sunday 1 st March	2 nd Sunday of Lent	Genesis 12 v1-4a Romans 4 v1-5 and 13-17 John 3 v1-17
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Sunday 8 th March	3 rd Sunday of Lent	Exodus 17 v1-7 Romans 5 v1-11 John 4 v5-42
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Sunday 15 th March	4 th Sunday of Lent/ Mothering Sunday	1 Samuel 16 v1-13 Ephesians 5 v8-14 John Chapter 9
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Note that alternative readings may be used at Mothering Sunday services. Check with the minister taking the service.

Sunday 22 nd March	5 th Sunday of Lent	Ezekiel 37 v1-14 Romans 8 v6-11 John 11 v1-45
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Sunday 29 th March	Palm Sunday	Isaiah 50 v4-9a Philippians 2 v5-11 Matthew 21 v1-11
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JOINT APCM

The parishes of the Shelswell Benefice will be holding one Joint Annual Meeting again this year on Wednesday 15th April in Stratton Audley Parish Church starting at 7.30pm. The only exception to this is the parish of Cottisford and Hardwick which will be holding a separate Annual Meeting, provisionally on Thursday 23rd April.

Anyone from across our parishes is welcome to attend the joint meeting, but those on church electoral rolls are particularly encouraged to come along to hear about the work of the church over the last year and support the church officers. Only those on church electoral rolls are eligible to vote at the meeting. If you would like to join your church electoral roll then please contact Becky at the Benefice Office on 07928 990569 or email admin@shelswellparishes.info Applications will need to be made by early April so that the revised rolls can be published for the required period ahead of the meeting.

There will be other meetings locally to appoint Churchwardens. These will mostly be held in April, but note the meetings below in March:

Newton Purcell Sunday 1st March (following the 9.15am service)

Mixbury Sunday 15th March (following the 9.15am Mothering Sunday service)

Fringford Sunday 29th March (following the 10.45am Benefice Service)

All meetings will be duly advertised via notices in church porches.

***If you enjoyed the Christmas Party
Come and join us for Two Days of Leisure***

At The Old School, Newton Purcell

on Monday 2nd & Tuesday 3rd March at Shelswell 'By the Sea'

Enjoy ...



- Fun and Companionship
- Home cooked lunches and afternoon tea with waitress service!
- A choice of light-hearted and interesting activities, including:
jigsaws, papers to read, seated ball games, craft, board games, quizzes and puzzles, dominoes, plus a topical 'Thought for the Day'



Cost: £5 per day - Lifts can be provided

For a booking form, please contact Penny Wood,
01869 277310, penelope.wood@btopenworld.com

Booking forms also in churches



Volunteer applications for this year's holiday week have now started. We are currently looking at running two Lighthouses of fifteen children each. That will be half the number that we accommodated last year.

We would be grateful if you could consider helping with the event - there are a variety of roles from craft making to refreshments and sport and drama activities. It doesn't have to be the whole week, it could be for just half a day.

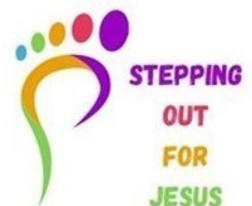
Please go to our web site and register to help or email us at the address below.

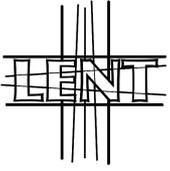
We also welcome any donations towards the cost of running the event.

Register on: <https://app.signmeup.org.uk/lighthouse-shelswell/50>

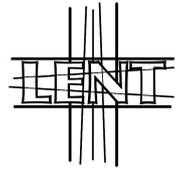
To donate: <https://goodhub.com/go/lighthouse-shelswell>

To email: shelswell@lighthousecentral.org.uk





LENT 2026



**MIDWEEK HOLY COMMUNION
AND SOUP LUNCH**

The next service will be on Thursday 5th March

12 noon

Stoke Lyne Church

If you would like a lift then please contact Becky on 07928 990569

Email admin@shelswellparishes.info



"Lent comes providentially to awaken us, to shake us from our lethargy."

Pope Francis



"Do you wish your prayer to fly toward God?"

Make for it two wings: fasting and almsgiving."

Saint Augustine

And the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."

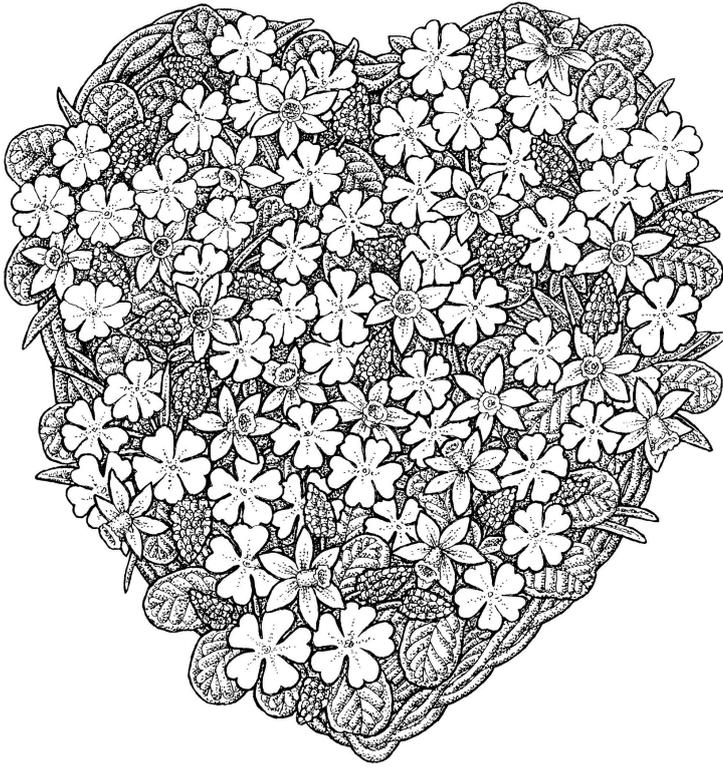
(Ezekiel 9:4)

"You could say that prayer without fasting is like boxing with one hand tied behind your back, and that fasting without prayer is, well, dieting." *Matt Fradd*

"Remember that Lent and Ash Wednesday are not just about putting away the bad things. It is also about creating good things and helping the poor and the needy, being kind to people, and much more."

Jacob Winters

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT 15th MARCH - MOTHERING SUNDAY



**9.15am Holy Communion (CW)
St Michael's Church, FINMERE**

**9.15 am Mixbury Half Hour for Mothering
Sunday
All Saints' Church, MIXBURY**

**10am 'Food for Thought'
St Peter's Church, STOKE LYNE**

**10.45am Holy Communion (BCP)
St Mary the Virgin, COTTISFORD**

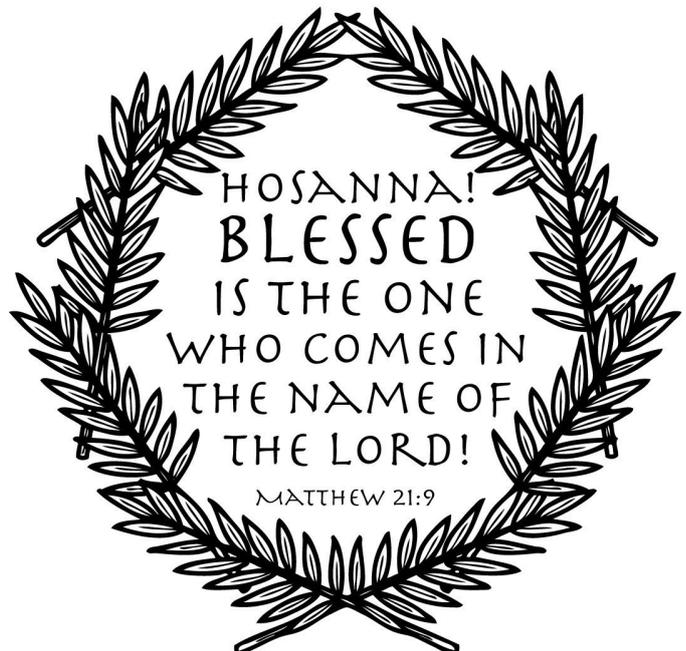
**10.45am Holy Communion (CW)
St Michael's Church, FRINGFORD**

29th MARCH - PALM SUNDAY

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, when the Church remembers how Jesus arrived at the gates of Jerusalem just a few days before the Passover was due to be held. He was the Messiah come to His own people in their capital city, and yet He came in humility, riding on a young donkey, not in triumph, riding on a war-horse.

As Jesus entered the city, the crowds gave Him a rapturous welcome, throwing palm fronds into His path. They knew His reputation as a healer, and welcomed Him. But sadly, the welcome was short-lived and shallow, for Jerusalem would soon reject her Messiah, and put Him to death. On this day churches worldwide will distribute little crosses made from palm fronds in memory of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.

**10.45am Benefice Service of Holy Communion
St Michael's Church, FRINGFORD**



HOLY WEEK SERVICES IN APRIL

Maundy Thursday (2nd April) 12 noon Holy Communion and Soup Lunch
Stoke Lyne Church

7 pm Holy Communion
Cottisford Church

Good Friday (3rd April) 12 noon Family Service following the Good Friday
Workshop
Fringford Church

6 pm Devotional Service with the Shelswell Group Choir
Hardwick Church



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The first Food for Thought Service in the new year was on Sunday 18th January at St Peter's in Stoke Lyne and was a good time for friends and neighbours to get together, enjoy breakfast and chat. Some of our regulars were in our thoughts and prayers as they may be going through some challenging times. We had a discussion around faith and who had been the person who invited us to join a church or a community group and how this had changed our lives in many ways.

Thank you to Harriet for providing the breakfast and to everyone for contributing. The next FFT service will be Sunday 15th March (10am) and if you fancy coming along for an informal service around the breakfast table, please get in touch (or just come along).

Kelly (kholdenwhite@icloud.com)

FLORA THOMPSON 150th ANNIVERSARY

Save the Date

Saturday 19th September "Flora Day"
Celebrate 150 years since the birth of
author

Flora Thompson 5th December 1876

Events in

Fringford Village Hall and Cottisford
Church

FLORA THOMPSON 150th ANNIVERSARY

Our series about Fringfordians of the 1890s by Martin Greenwood continues with Kezia Whitton, owner of Fringford Forge and Post Office and Flora's employer.



The Whitton Family of Fringford Forge in the 1870s

In 1857, John and Kezia Whitton (*Dorcas Lane* in *Lark Rise*) moved from Stoke Lyne to Fringford to run the forge. Both of them were very large, John over 22 stone, Kezia over 18 stone. The Whitton name is on the church entrance gate.

By 1883, the Whittons had also taken on the new Sub-Post Office, Money Order Office & Savings Bank. They had four children who died at birth or shortly after in the years 1856-61, and only two survived infancy; George born in 1863 and Alexander born in 1866.

The two boys were among the first ten pupils at the new National School built in 1866 in Fringford. Afterwards, they went to the Free Grammar School at Courteenhall, near Northampton. It says much about the ambitions of Kezia that she sent the boys away to a Grammar School, where they must have been boarders. It is interesting that Frederick Mansfield, who had also been at Fringford School, joined Alexander at Courteenhall. He was a son of John and Mary Mansfield, who ran the grocer's shop in Mansfield Yard. This was a great age for private schools and many Victorian farmers and tradesmen were ambitious for their children to receive a better education.

John Whitton died on 23 August 1891, aged 61, just after Flora must have arrived. His death left Kezia to run the forge and the post office on her own, although she could rely to some extent on Freddie Plumb in the forge. She also stayed in close touch with her son George in Liverpool. She worries about the number

of staff, 'the more people I have about me the more difficult it is to get them to agree..as CKnibbs and Sarah (presumably Sarah Rennison) cant agree no better than Will and Albert could agree in the shop.'

Flora has left a colourful picture of Kezia: 'Had she lived a century earlier or half a century later, she would probably have been found in the forge with a sledge-hammer in her hand for she had an indomitable energy and a passion for making things.' Kezia's surviving letters show how involved and interested she was in everything going on in the village, but sadly none of them make any mention of Flora.

"Clever" was the general village description of her. 'She's a clever one, that Miss Lane, as sharp as vinegar, but not bad in her way' people would afterwards say to Laura. Only her two or three enemies said that 'if she had lived at one time she'd have been burned as a witch.' She was a powerful influence on Flora who was only 14 when she arrived at the Forge. She encouraged her to read a much wider range of books than she ever saw in Lark Rise. She also encouraged her to become a letter carrier which was a wonderful chance for Flora to see the countryside.

She also had a passion for local gossip. Just five days before she died aged 63 in 1898, she wrote a long chatty letter to her son, George: 'I struggled down to Manor Farm to see what was being done by the Chinnerys or as it is called now The Manor, and they say he is an excellent gentleman to do good.' 'I went down to Mr Simon's sale on Monday and it so knocked me up I could scarcely get back home going up and down stairs 2 or 3 times and trying to see as much of the old place it is in such a terrible dilapidated state now everything is took off the walls.'

Martin Greenwood

Note: An audio of my Fringford Trail (read by my son, Adrian) is now available on Guidl for those with a smart phone but not on the web; cost £4.99. Cottisford and Juniper Trails should also be available in the summer.

MIDWEEK HOLY COMMUNION ON THURSDAY 5th FEBRUARY

The Reverend Liz Welters welcomed all to the Communion Service and began with Prayers of Peace across the World, for our King Charles and Government and people in hardship, unwell or grieving or people known to us who are suffering, also in our Benefice.

The Old Testament reading was from Chronicles Chapter 1 verses 29-10 to 12. Liz began by asking what a self-made man or woman is? Does it mean a man or woman who has become successful and rich through their own efforts, especially if they started life without money, education or high social status? King David had humble beginnings, he was the eighth and youngest son of Jesse. David was dark and handsome and lived in Bethlehem, an obscure village looking after his father's sheep and goats. People used to look at David with surprise but David didn't look at the outward appearance, he looked at the heart and by the end of his life he had become the greatest king in Israel's history and had wealth beyond measure. His dying wish was to use some of his wealth to build a house for God. His example encouraged wealthy people to give some of their wealth to others, as it all comes from God, to help others.

Liz then prepared the communion table, gave a blessing and more prayers and invited people to come to the table for Communion, after which we moved to the tables set for a lunch of soup with rolls followed by pudding then tea/coffee. Thank you Liz for all that you do to keep this service going, also to the helpers who make and prepare food and clear up.

Rena Andrews

KNITTING FOR OTHERS

Marion Crowther in Fringford is no longer in a position to accept any knitting. She wishes to thank everyone who has contributed such wonderful knitting over the years. If anyone would like to take over collecting knitting and passing it on to a good cause please feel free to put an entry in next month's Shelswell News.

Once again a massive thank you to you all from Marion.

Alison Waters on behalf of Marion Crowther

SHELLOW GROUP CHOIR



The choir looking is for new members: all voices, but men particularly needed. We meet on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 8.30pm in Stoke Lyne. We practice to sing Evensong on the fourth Sunday of every month, and for special Benefice services as required. No audition required, just enthusiasm for singing. Interested? Contact Penny Wood on 01869-277310.

OUR FUTURE COUNCIL: OXFORD VOTERS TO INFLUENCE POLICY FOR SELLSWELL?

Local government in Oxfordshire is being reorganised. Three different plans have been suggested and Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council appear to be at loggerheads over which is the best one.

You can take part in a public consultation until Thursday 26th March. The result will affect all our council services, so please do have your say about what you think will be best for our area and Oxfordshire generally! The decision has not yet been made.

Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council will be abolished and replaced by one of three possible options:

A single council for the whole of Oxfordshire as well as the city of Oxford - unsurprisingly, the current Oxfordshire County Council favours this proposal!

More details at oneoxfordshire.org.uk

Two councils, one for northern Oxfordshire with Oxford and one for southern Oxfordshire with part of Berkshire. In this scenario, we would also be in the same council as the city of Oxford! Would Oxford city voters understand the needs of Banburyshire?

Find out more at www.twocouncils.org.

Three councils - one for northern Oxfordshire, one for the city of Oxford and one for south Oxfordshire with part of Berkshire.

Information on this plan at 3councils.org

You can find the consultation at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-oxfordshire> (Link: gov.uk. if you get the digital copy of the magazine).

There is a link to the consultation at cherwell.gov.uk - scroll down to where it says "Have your say on the future of council services". On oxfordshire.gov.uk home page, scroll down to "One Council for Oxfordshire" (they are very upfront about which option they prefer!) and click on "Find out more and have your say."

Sylvia List

Club News



SHELLOW WI



Having cancelled our first meeting of the year in January it was great to get together for our February meeting. Making a welcome return was our speaker Chris Bazeley. Chris's talk for the evening was 'A Year in the Life of a Northamptonshire Wood'. Chris's presentation followed the life of Whistley Wood through the seasons, supported with some fantastic photographs of both plants and wildlife. It definitely made us long for those longer slightly warmer and drier days when we can get out and see for ourselves. Also in February some of our members met for a walk around Graven Hill led by Lesley. Shelswell WI also collected items for the Bicester Hygiene Bank this month.

In March we will be having our AGM followed by refreshments and some fun activities. In April our speaker will be Bruce Wakeling - Tax, Care and the New Partner and in May we will be off for our annual walk.

Shelswell WI are a warm and welcoming group so if you would like to come and see what we are about, contact Sandra (details at the end). As well as the events that we provide we are also able to access events and activities provided by Oxfordshire WI and National. There visits, holidays, craft workshops and outline learning to name but a few.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in Fringford Village Hall. For more details contact Sandra Bickmore sandrambickmore@gmail.com

SHELLOW READING GROUP

The Shelswell 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 07770 220605.

Our next book club meetings are:

- Monday 9 March, 7.30 pm, Venue - 1/2 Hethe Cottages
- Wednesday 15th April, 7.30 pm, Venue TBC
- Wednesday 20th May, 7.30 pm, Venue TBC

Our next book is '**Atmosphere**' by **Taylor Jenkins Reid**.

Wuthering Heights (Emily Bronte) got mixed reviews. Many of us had read it years ago and were quite looking forward to reading it again. However, it proved too dark and dense for many. Whilst it is often described as a 'love story', we felt it was more about revenge! We did not feel that any of the characters were likeable.. Heathcliff was malevolent, Cathy spoilt and wilful, Nelly unreliable and annoying at times! There were interesting themes of class, darkness and lightness, and passion, and the writing was excellent, especially for such a young author. The description of the wild moors, the houses and the characters were compelling – however it was still a difficult read and some of us gave up... and watched the Laurence Olivier / Merle Oberon film! Interesting that all films only depict the first half of the book, whereas the second half, bringing together the children of Cathy, Heathcliff and Hindley, was well constructed and had a final scene of redemption.

We felt that as many of us had read it as a teenager, our judgement may have been swayed by the passionate love at the heart of the story, but reading as an adult, you see the violence, coercive control, the wilful / spoilt behaviour... And of course, the entire story is told from the perspective of Mr Lockwood and Nelly... both of which have biases. There was nothing about Heathcliff's past in Liverpool or how he came into his money, both of which may have helped illuminate his motivations and character. Overall, a well written and structured novel, with dark themes of revenge and class... and not really a love story!

The Correspondent by Virginia Evans was enjoyed by all, although some of us found Sybil rather irritating and unsympathetic. The epistolary nature of the novel worked for all of us, and we enjoyed the different format (long letters, emails, notes). It was described as a puzzle or a book that revealed layer after layer of Sybil's personality and past life. We were moved to tears at various points in the book and we enjoyed the fact that Sybil was not a "goody – goody" – she had her faults and secrets, and it was only towards the end of her life that she was able to open up and embrace life.

The story explores themes of family, forgiveness, grief, memory, aging, guilt, and the power of communication, especially as Sybil struggles with encroaching blindness. As readers, we enjoyed her comments on many of the books we had read – and we felt the author had been extremely clever in pulling the story together through the correspondence. Her relationship with her daughter (and son) prompted a great deal of discussion and whilst we understood that her grief and unresolved guilt affected Sybil's approach to life, many of us felt she was not a good parent – or wife! Overall, it was a clever book, with some parallels with Olive Kitteridge (Sybil and Olive shared a similar personality!). It made us cry, smile and think – what more can you ask of a book!

Other books discussed were:

- Frozen River – Arile Lawhon
- The Names - Florence Knapp
- Norwegian Wood – Haruki Murakami
- The City and its uncertain walls – Haruki Murakami
- You are Here – David Nichols
- Starter for Ten – David Nichols
- Night People - Mark Ronson Memoir
- The Unwilding – Marina Kemp
- I Swear – John Davidson
- I am, I am, I am - Maggie O'Farrell
- Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo – Taylor Jenkins Reid
- Murder at Mount Fuji - Shizuko Natsuki
- Raising Hare – Chloe Dalton
- The Colour of Home - Sajid Javid
- Open - Andre Agassi
- The Girl – Edna O'Brien
- The Glorious Guinness Girls – Emily Horican
- Madame Cliquot – not sure which author?
- Exit West – Mohsin Hamid



Films discussed..

Wuthering Heights – both the old film with Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon and the new version

Ballad of Wallace Island

Emily. Biopic of Emily Bronte – available on BBC Iplayer

Seven Dials – BBC Iplayer

Why Didn't They ask Evans - ITVX

SHELWELL POETRY APPRECIATION GROUP

Our February session was based around the theme of Faraway Places – a good way of escaping for an hour or so from the miseries of the month.

The first poem we read was *Snake* by D H Lawrence (1885-1930). It is set in a hot day in Sicily and describes the poet's reaction to watching a snake in his garden and wrestling with conflicting emotions of fascination and horror.

Two poems which are about how one's reading opens out exotic experiences and locations are *Romance* by Walter J Turner (1889-1946) and *On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer* by John Keats (1795-1821). The faraway places dreamed up by the imagination included *Eldorado* by Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49), *Travel* by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94), *A Dream* by Aromal Mukundan (extant) and *The Joys of the Road* by William Bliss Carmen (1861-1929). Others in this genre are *Faraway Places* by songwriters Whitney and Alexander (published 1948), *Apricot Nails* by Rhegan Tu'akoi (extant) and *Faraway Places* by Audrey Heller (1925-85).

The longing for travel and new experiences is expressed by W E Henley (1849-1903) in *Over the Hills and Far Away*, and catered for by James Elroy Flecker (1884-1915) in *The Golden Road to Samarkand*, from his play Hassan.

Nostalgia for people and places from their past fills the poems *Where I Come From* by Elizabeth Brewster (extant), *They're Not My Kind Who Left the Land* by Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966), *Salut du Monde* by Walt Whitman (1819-92) and *Mandalay* by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936).

Although he is now seen as terribly politically incorrect, Rudyard Kipling wrote poems about empire and its maintenance which have some lessons for the world's leaders today. In *The White Man's Burden* he warned America about what conquering and administering the Philippine Islands would entail. In *Recessional* he reminded all powers with territorial ambitions that empires rise and fall, and that "All our pomp of yesterday/Is one with Ninevah and Tyre". The 'faraway places' are not always just food for our imagination, but real places with their own culture, problems and dangers.

For a rousing finale we have the one-time favourite concert piece *The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God* by James Milton Hayes (1884-1940). Exotic lands, theft, murder, love - they're all there!

Our next meeting is on Tuesday March 3rd and the theme is Imagination. If you would like to join us please contact me on 01869 811994 or at judith.harvey@live.co.uk

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

SERVICES

Sunday 1st March 9.15 am Holy Communion (CW)

Sunday 15th March (Mothering Sunday) 10.45 am Holy Communion (BCP)

COTTISFORD AND JUNIPER HILL SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Thank you to everyone who came along to Snowdrop Sunday at Cottisford Church on Sunday 8th February. It was a highly successful event and raised almost £600 for our church and village. A huge thank you to Swallows Nursery in Mixbury who stepped in at the very last minute to donate the beautiful plants. And thank you to all the helpers and cake makers, the tombola donators and those of you who rushed off to get more supplies and plants! I hope everyone enjoyed the day and we look forward to seeing you at our next event – Open Gardens on Sunday 14th June (2 – 5 pm).

As mentioned above Open Gardens will be our next event on Sunday 14 June, if you are able to help in anyway, opening your garden, making a cake, serving tea and coffee or manning the car park please let us know.

This year we are celebrating 150 years of Flora Thompson. There will be a display in the church about the life of Flora along with floral displays for our Open Gardens day in June. The history display will also be shown when Fringford hold their own celebration (Flora Day) on 19th September.

Finmere

St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: Barbara Cunningham, 'Woodlea' Finmere

TREASURER: Peter Goss, 6 Stable Close Finmere

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

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

Tel: 01280 847992

Tel: 07941 322 840

Tel: 01280 848364

Tel 01280 848268

CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 15th March (Mothering Sunday) 9.15 am Holy Communion

Sunday 22nd March 9.15 am Morning Service

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 booking enquiries, please visit www.myfinmere.com/villagehall.

Allotments



What can we say about this weather ? There have been days when allotments are completely under water but despite that , we can always find positives.

The rhubarb is showing and for now we must make do with that. Indoors, we can be chitting potatoes and waiting patiently for the ground to dry out- it will soon.

Why not come and join our lovely community. Details can be found here: www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot and select the 'enquiry' link.

Jean (Allotment correspondent)



Please come along to support Finmere's

"Tuesday Teas"

If you are at home in the day, please pop into the Village Hall for a cuppa & a catch-up...

Tuesday 10th March from 2 - 4 pm

Tea, coffee, cake & biscuits

All locals welcome, no charge

If you need transport, please contact Jo (07974 740312) or Katherine (07770 804025)

If anyone would like to help with "Tuesday Teas",
we need help serving refreshments, setting out tables, providing lifts and BAKING CAKES!
Your baking costs can be reimbursed; No need to volunteer every month; just help when you can...

Some Finmere related links:

Finmere facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/finmereandlittletingewick/>

Shelswell Parishes website at – www.shelswellparishes.info/finmere

Finmere Parish Council website at – www.finmerepc.org

Village hall news at – www.myfinmere.com

Finmere Poor's Plot – www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot

Old Finmere history website – www.myfinmere.com/history

Finmere on Wikipedia - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finmereipedia>

Finmere Primary School - www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk

FINMERE



POP UP PUB

FIRST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Come catch up with friends and neighbours. Families welcome!

**Licensed bar
and food van on site!**

**FINMERE VILLAGE HALL
6-10PM**

Light lunch

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



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

Fringford

St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: Max Todd 5, The Manor, Fringford
 TREASURER: Christina McCullagh, 5 Crosslands, Fringford
 PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Penny Wood ,as below
 MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands, Fringford
 VILLAGE HALL CORRESPONDENT: Christine Underwood
 WEBSITE www.fringford.info

Tel 07936 760684

Tel 07867 515207

Tel 01869 277310

Tel 01869 278949

ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, SERVICES & EVENTS

SERVICES

- Sunday 1 March – at 10.45am – Morning Service [Preacher – John Alderdice]
- Sunday 8 March – at 6.00pm – Evening Communion
- Sunday 15 March – Mothering Sunday - 10.45am – Holy Communion [Celebrant & Preacher - Revd. Preb. Jane Haslam]
- Sunday 29 March – Palm Sunday – Benefice service of Holy Communion in Fringford Church.

There is a variety of services available in the Benefice, if there is not one in Fringford Church. You will always be welcome in our other churches. For details of those services please see the back cover of this *Shelswell News*. And see the cover also for the services on Ash Wednesday.



If you would like to donate an Easter Lily in memory of a loved one (to be displayed over Easter in an arrangement in the font), the cost will be £5-00 a stem. Please contact Carol Reader on 277057 or carol.reader@btinternet.com

THANK YOU

To everyone who came carol singing before Christmas, to The Butcher's Arms who let us sing in the pub, and to residents who donated towards the charity we were supporting – The Hummingbird Centre. £158-70 was raised.

EVENTS

Looking Ahead

There will be another **History Talk** on Friday March 27th 2026., at 7.30pm. The topic will be: "After Flora - Fringford from 1900 to WW1." Refreshments will be available.

The **2026 Fringford Beer Festival** in aid of Fringford Church Restoration Fund will be held on Saturday 13 June.

And later in the year look out for "**Flora Day**" on Saturday 19th September when there will be events in Fringford Village Hall and Cottisford Church to mark 150 years since the birth of Flora Thompson.

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 1st prize £61, 2nd £37, 3rd £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 . [Volunteers always needed to help at Little Lambs – could you help?]

FRINGFORD VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING

Village Coffee Mornings usually take place on the third Monday of each month. In March we will meet on Monday 16th . Drop by for a coffee/tea and a chat any time between 10.30 am and 12 noon, in the Chinnery Room at the Village Hall. Contact Penny on 277310 if you want more information.

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 style="text-align: center;">FS Dance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday (term time) After school classes BALLET • TAP • MODERN • STREET leah.fsd@gmail.com or 07885827592</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Village Coffee Morning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">Parish Council Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All villagers welcome Third Monday in the month 7.45pm Contact 01844 237766 or fringford.parishclerk@gmail.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Just Puppies</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Puppy Training Tuesday evening, Sunday afternoon – various classes Contact Kerri 07720 891489 www.justpuppies.training</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fringford Yoga</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday morning 9.30am – 11am Carolyn White 07763 817078</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Shelswell WI</p> <p style="text-align: center;">First Thursday of the month 7.30pm (Not December or August) Contact Sandra Bickmore 07961 828571</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Pilates</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday at 10.00am natashafloverspilates@gmail.com or 07545 525820</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fringford Sewcial</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sew and Chat! All welcome Monthly Wednesday from 7pm Or Sunday from 3pm Contact Irene at ireneethomas@btinternet.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Mindfulness Meditation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monthly Sunday 11am to 12.30pm janerainey17@gmail.com or 07971 008337</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Village Hall Team Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please contact for dates Open meetings – all welcome fringford.hall@gmail.com or 07936 879175</p>
<p>To book the hall for your own event, please go to www.fringford.info/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: fringford.hall@gmail.com</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

Sunday 22nd March 4pm Evensong with the Shelswell Group Choir

Hardwick Church will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 4pm

Private prayer and quiet contemplation

View the architecture, memorials and stained-glass windows

Please make use of this special space

During the winter months Evensong at Hardwick on the last Sunday of the month will start at 4 pm.

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

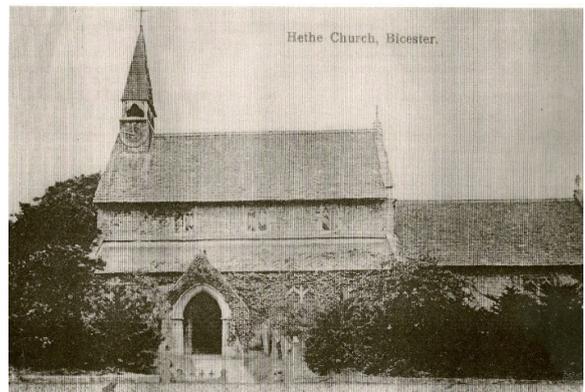
WEBSITE: www.hethe.org

If you have any news or a village event to publicise, please send the details to me, where possible with a photo, and if suitable I will add them to next month's news and include them on the village web site.

ST EDMUND & ST GEORGE CHURCH

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

“We are a small church in a quiet village. The church will be opening again for anyone who wishes to visit, pray or just enjoy some peace and quiet. Hethe is "off the beaten track", has some good traditional stone buildings and easy walks into the surrounding countryside.”



Church Services and Events

Watch out for free sweet pea plants outside the church on Mothering Sunday (15th March), thanks to Helen Pritchard.

If you can help, there will be a Spring clean of the church on Saturday 28th March in preparation for Easter Sunday when there will be flower displays in the church as we mark the official reopening of the building.

There are plenty of events being planned for this year. More details to come.

Remember that you will always be welcome at services in any of the other 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>.

100 Club. If you would like to join the 100 Club or request additional numbers, please contact Helen Pritchard.

A reminder that our church is cared for and managed by volunteers. We receive no government funding but rely on voluntary donations. A scheme to allow churches to reclaim the VAT on works is being ended by the Government this month, so we need to raise even more to allow works to take place.



Our QR Code if you wish to contribute to the costs of running and maintaining the church. Alternatively, there are copies of the new Parish Giving Scheme Gift Form in the church or go to the Parish Giving web site at <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/hethe-st-edmund-st-george-bicester/>.

HETHE COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Pop-up Pub. Friday 6th March in the Village Hall, from 7.00 to 10.00pm. Everyone welcome. Bring your own drinks of choice, snacks, and games!

Hethe Community Coffee Morning in the Village Hall

Monday 9th March 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

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

Membership £15 p.a.
New members welcome.

Contact: Sheila Heydon 07455 185201

Recycling. With effect from January, glass jars and bottles are being collected in the blue recycle bins. Also, since January everyone needs to book a time slot to visit one of the Oxfordshire Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). You can book thirty minutes before your visit (subject to availability) or up to two weeks in advance. To help Oxfordshire recycle even more you are also asked to sort recyclable items from other waste, either before you arrive (which will speed up your visit), or by using the sorting area on site. Customers are encouraged to make a booking online via the website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste. For customers who do not have access to the internet, they can call the customer service centre on 01865 519800.

Local 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.

For **Village Hall bookings**, please contact Flora, the Village Hall Booking Secretary, on 01869 277366 fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk.

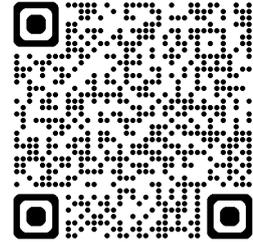
The Hardwick Road Allotments. The contact for the allotments is Yvonne Thomas, 3 Wilson Way, Caversfield, OX27 8FB, tel 243536 or 07773065890. The agents are Carter Jonas for the Oxford Diocese.

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/>



The Kingfisher News was a monthly newsletter produced and printed for many years by Hethe residents. It was replaced by the village web site, which I hope villagers can access and find useful. If you wish to see changes, please let Mike know.

Parish News

**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

Tel 07899 792552
 Tel 01280 848295
 Tel 01280 847769
 Tel 01280 848295
 Tel 01280 848002
pasgoodman551@gmail.com

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 or telephone: 01280 848002.

CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 15th March 9.15 am Mixbury Half Hour for Mothering Sunday

MIXBURY CHURCH FLOWER ROTA

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.

- March Emma Bray
- April Easter – Everyone
- 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



MIXBURY CHURCH CLEANING ROTA 2026

As ever, a big thank you to the team of cleaning volunteers who keep the church clean and tidy.

Having done this role for the greater part of 30 years, I have decided to resign from my position as church cleaning rota organiser and voluntary cleaner. This decision is based on both age and health grounds.

During these years I have brought up a family and held down a job.

I am appealing for someone new to step up and take on this necessary and important role.

This message goes out to the wider Mixbury community and not just those who currently give of their time.

It would be particularly appropriate if someone new to the village and / or from the younger generation were to volunteer.

Anyone prepared to take on this role, please let me know by email or phone. See details below.

Best wishes, Julie.

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

MARCH Giovanna Holdcroft and Tanya Howroyd

APRIL Emma Bray and Viv Williams

MAY Alison Bailey, Pam Burrill and Jules Channon

JUNE Nicola Adams and Anna Howard & Sue Boshier

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 Boshier

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 – markandtanya@yahoo.co.uk.

BOOK EXCHANGE

Looking for something to read during the spring – there is a large collection of second hand books in the church for villagers to borrow and replace with any book they may have read.

MIXBURY DROP IN TEA/COFFEE/CHAT

Courtesy of Anna at Swallows Nursery Mixbury Ladies can now meet every Tuesday in the coffee shop at the Nursery. 2-3.30pm (4pm when British Summer Time starts).

All welcome – and you don't have to knit or crochet, just come along and chat! You will find us next to the wood burner! Swallows not only sell lovely plants but coffee and cake too.....!

HAIR EXTENSIONS

Hello my name is Lucy and I moved to Mixbury in the last year; I am a self-employed Mobile Hair extension technician with over 25 years experience. I offer a bespoke service catering for all needs, whether long luscious locks or just adding a touch of volume, a little can make a big difference! Consultation/colour matching is free of charge and all methods of application available. Call for a booking. It would be a great way for me to meet more villagers! Lucy Kubiak 07760 468449

ARDLEY FIELDS HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE

(Brackley Road, Ardley, OX27 7PH)

From 14 January 2026, you must book in advance before visiting a household waste recycling centre. Please follow the link below for further information and how to book your visit. (Or visit Oxfordshire County Council's website).

Link: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/household-waste-recycling-centres/book-recycling-centre-visit>

The same applies to Farthinghoe recycling centre.

FLY-TIPPING

Fly-tipping seems to be increasing now people have to book slots for the Recycle Centres.

To have this waste removed please contact Cherwell District Council by either: Telephone 01295 227007, email: customer.service@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or by completing an on-line form from their web site and attaching a photograph if possible to help the Council locate the rubbish. Follow this link for the on-line form: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/7/environment/374/fly-tipping>

PAYABLE GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION

The subscription for the above from Cherwell is due for renewal or application if you use this service, please follow this link for more information.

<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/10/rubbish-and-recycling/872/payable-garden-waste-collection>

LITTER PICKING



A group of villagers met up on the 8th February 2026 to litter pick along the A421 and Mixbury grass verges whilst the A421 was closed.

Well done everyone who turned up and Alec and Anna for organising. Afterwards we were treated to a coffee at Swallows – thank you Mel.

LARK RISE BIKE RIDE 2026

We are proud to run the Lark Rise Bike Ride again, this year, on behalf of '*brainstrust*', the Meg Jones brain cancer charity.

Event date: Sunday 17th May 2026

Event venue: Castle Field, Mixbury

Please put the date in your diary!

The Lark Rise Bike Ride is a family- friendly, sponsored cycle ride for charity, mostly off-road, through the lovely countryside that formed the backdrop to Flora Thompson's Lark Rise to Candleford.

Riding through Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire, the route is for cyclists of all abilities, with a choice of 12.5 mile, 25-mile and 40-mile circuits. All ages are welcome and as we cycle on lanes, tracks and bridleways, the riding is safe and ideal for families.

The routes will start and finish at Castle Field, Mixbury. Please come along and raise as much as you can for '*brainstrust*' – you will be very welcome! We look forward to building on the successes of recent years, raising funds for this wonderful charity.

We are very grateful to Anna Allen of Swallows Nursery and Plant Centre, for hosting the event in recent years, however, please note the change of venue this year. By kind permission of the trustees, we are able to run this year's event in Castle Field. More details will be published in due course.

If anyone would like to help (you don't have to be into cycling!), please get in touch with James Tobin (No 21 Mixbury) Mob 07999 938669

In the meantime, if you can spare a moment, do visit the charity's website

<http://www.brainstrust.org.uk> to see the amazing work they do supporting those with a brain tumour diagnosis.

**SAVE THE DATE – THE BIG LUNCH WEEKEND 6TH/7TH JUNE 2026
FURTHER DETAILS TO FOLLOW.**

Newton Purcell

St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: Ann von Maltzahn, Home Farm Shelswell Park
 CHURCHWARDEN: Stuart Hinton
 TREASURER: Fai Li
 PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Flora Skinner
 MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Ann von Maltzahn

Tel 01280 848680
 Tel: 07593 784143
 Tel: 07725 009838
 Tel: 01869 277366
 Tel 01280 848680

Services:-

Sunday 1st March - 9.15 a.m. Holy Communion

APCM/Formally known as The Vestry Meeting:-

This will be held after our 9.15 a.m. service on the 1st of March. It is an important annual meeting when Churchwardens will be elected for the coming year. All those on the Church Electoral Roll of the parish are entitled to vote so please attend if you can.

Bonus Ball Lotto:-

Recent lucky winners have been Marian Golding and Aileen Rymer.

It's still not too late to join in, help our church and have a chance of a weekly cash prize! All details from either of the Churchwardens.

Churchyard Clear Up Day:-

We welcome anyone who has time to come along between 10.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon on **Saturday 28th March** to help us make the Churchyard look perfect for our Easter celebrations the following weekend. There will be hot drinks and bacon butties for all!!

Easter Sunday:-

We look forward to welcoming everyone who would like to join us for our

Easter Sunday Service with hymns
 on **Sunday 5th April** at 10.45 a.m.

This will be followed by an Easter Egg Hunt, Easter Raffle and refreshments, so perfect for all the family.



Stoke Lyne St Peter's

CHURCHWARDEN: Christopher Poole

CHURCHWARDEN: James Holden-White
TREASURER: Janey Poole

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Emma Brown
MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Rena Andrews

PARISH ROOM BOOKINGS : Kelly and James Holden-White

Tel 01869 346020
CTP@oxford-educational.co.uk
kholdenwhite@aol.com
Tel 07810 120457
janey@oxford-educational.co.uk
emmabrown911@gmail.com
Tel: 01869 346653
renaandrews820@gmail.com
Tel 01869 345211
kholdenwhite@aol.com

Submissions for the Magazine: If anyone has any items for the magazine please email them to magazine correspondent Rena (renaandrews820@gmail.com) copied to her assistant Brenda (brendahazel104@gmail.com) . The deadline is the second or third Friday of the month depending on the way the days fall – see inside the front cover of each issue.

St Peter's Church Stoke Lyne Services

Thursday 5th March 12 noon Holy Communion and Soup Lunch
Sunday 15th March 10 am Food for Thought
Sunday 22nd March 10.45 am Holy Communion

Flower Duty for March

Jane Webb

Stoke Lyne 100 Club – February Results

1 st Prize	Membership No 29	Hope Poole
2 nd Prize	Membership No 4	Pam Adams
3 rd Prize	Membership No 44	Adrian Taylor

Thank you all who subscribe to the Stoke Lyne 100 Club. Please contact me if anyone would like to join. It's only £3.00 per membership per month.

Janey Poole
Treasurer
St Peter's Church PCC

Village litter pick - Saturday 28th Feb (or whenever it suits you!)

I am borrowing litter pickers, high viz jackets and being given a stack of bin bags by Cherwell DC to support us with our annual village litter pick. We will meet outside the church wall at 10am on Saturday 28th Feb, but you can collect equipment from me at any time that suits you. The rubbish will be collected from the verges after Saturday 7th March.

Let's all work together to keep our local area tidy!

Kelly Holden-White

Spring Clean – Saturday 14th March - save the date!

Please come and help maintain St. Peter's Church and churchyard. We will have plenty of indoor and outdoor jobs and we need you!

We will meet in the church at 10am on Sat 14th March, with a break for bacon rolls at 11am.

Kelly Holden-White

A Look at the Peyton Memorials within the church – Part 9, Joan, wife of Algernon Thomas Peyton, 7th Baronet (1889-1962)



Joan was baptised Joan Stratford Dugdale on 19th June 1892 at the parish church of Honington in Warwickshire. "Stratford" was her middle name rather than being part of a double-barrelled surname. The first names of her parents were John Stratford and Alice and they gave their address as 29 Eaton Square S.W. John's occupation is recorded as "Q.C. M.P. Chancellor of the Diocese". Looking back on his life the Tamworth Herald in 1923 summarised his achievements thus "*Mr. John Stratford Dugdale, K.C., formerly Conservative member for the Nuneaton Division, Recorder of Birmingham, Chairman of Warwickshire County Council and Quarter Sessions, and Chancellor of the Dioceses of Coventry, Birmingham and Worcester.*" The same report describes Joan's mother, Alice as "*a daughter of the late General Carleton, C.B., a famous Artillery commander, who distinguished himself during the Indian Mutiny.*"

Joan's father grew up at Blyth Hall, in Shustoke, Warwickshire where on the 1891 census, the year before Joan was born, he and his wife Alice with his widowed mother and two siblings. On the 1901 census Joan and parents are at 29 Eaton Square in London. In 1911 she and her mother are visiting the home of Alexander and Ruth Pitt-Rivers at Rushmore near Salisbury, Wiltshire.

According to press reports of Joan's engagement to Algernon, she was an only child:

Oxford Times, 12th February 1916

FORTHCOMING MARRIAGE. – A marriage has been arranged between Captain Peyton, 11th Hussars, eldest son of Sir Algernon and Lady Peyton, of Swift's House, Bicester, and Joan, only child of Mr. and Mrs. John Stratford Dugdale.

The marriage received write-ups in various publications. The Lady's Pictorial included a photograph of the happy couple and began its report by listing all the titled personages who "*were among those present in St. Peter's Eaton-square, on the 3rd inst., at the wedding of Miss Joan Stratford Dugdale, only daughter of Mr.*

and Mrs. John Stratford Dugdale, with Captain Peyton, 11th Hussars, eldest son of Sir Algernon and Lady Peyton, of Swifts House, Bicester. Owing to the bridegroom's short leave of absence, the ceremony was rather hurriedly arranged, and there were neither bridesmaids nor pages. Mr. Dugdale gave away his daughter, who wore a charmeuse dress of a deep cream tinge, the front being almost entirely veiled in lovely old family lace, while the train was formed of flounces of the matchless lace, and her short tulle veil was fastened with a wreath of orange blossom. The Earl of Leven and Melville acted as best man. The music, which was very fine, included a solo by Miss Muriel Foster, and the playing of the march from "The Birds," by Parry."

Further photographs of Joan appeared in publications like "The Tatler" and "The Sketch" under the headings "The new Lady Peyton" "Wife of a new baronet" not long afterwards when her husband became the 7th baronet after the death of his father. In the 1920s she pops up in further photographs with her husband as attendees at various events such as the Oxford University Point to Point Steeplechases at Stratton Audley in 1921, 1922 and 1923. Also in February 1923 a full-page head and shoulders studio photograph of her appeared in The Tatler:

"LADY PEYTON. The wife of Sir Algernon Peyton, Bart., who was formerly a well-known officer of the 11th Hussars. Lady Peyton is the daughter of the late Mr. John Stratford Dugdale, K.C., who was at one time Recorder of Birmingham. Sir Algernon and Lady Peyton have a charming house in just about the centre of the Bicester country."

She gave birth to all three of her children in London: Delia and Elizabeth at 29 Eaton Square in 1916 and 1919 and John at 66 Oxford Terrace in 1923. Her entry in the 1924 "The Lady's Who's Who" stated:

"PEYTON, Lady, d. of John Stratford Dugdale, Esq., K.C., Recorder of Birmingham, and w. of Sir Algernon Thomas Peyton, 7th Bt.; m. 1916. Res.: Swift's House, Bicester."

Other than being injured in a car crash at the Barley Mow crossroads in a car driven by her husband in 1936 which was covered by the Banbury press I have been unable to find very much out about her life beyond the 1920s due to the local Bicester papers for the period not being online yet. In the 1939 Stoke Lyne "war book" she is listed as "W.R.V.S. representative".

Joan died on 23rd April 1970 aged 77. Her entry on the Stoke Lyne burials register reveals that she was living not at Swift's House but at "Swift's Cottage." Presumably she had moved out to make way for her eldest daughter Delia and her family. She was buried on 27th April in the same grave as her husband Algernon. Not one but three priests officiated: the Vicar, Revd John Goddard, his predecessor Revd Aubrey Corral, and the Bishop of Dorchester, David Goodwin Loveday.

When I began looking into Joan's life I initially mistook her for her cousin whose name cropped up in many newspapers in connection with the suffragist movement. It seems I was not the first to make this misidentification as Joan's father felt he had to put this in his local newspaper:

Leamington Spa Courier, 2nd December 1910

We are requested to state that the lady who was before Sir Albert de Rutzen at Bow Street Police Court, London, last Friday (in connection with the prosecution of suffragists) is Miss Joan Frances Tara Stratford Dugdale, and is not Miss Joan Stratford Dugdale, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Dugdale, of Blyth Hall, Warwickshire.

I first realised I was on the wrong track when I saw a photograph of the "other" Joan with her sister, Una and of course as stated above "our" Joan was an only child. (Incidentally, Una was an even more famous

suffragist and hit the headlines for refusing to say “Obey” in her marriage vows. She has her own Wikipedia entry https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Una_Duval. While I was researching this article I happened to watch an old episode of “The Repair Shop” at which Una’s writing desk was brought in for restoration by two of her descendants. It can be seen at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001q27b/the-repair-shop-series-11-episode-26>)

Brenda Hazel

Stoke Lyne on the internet:

Stoke Lyne Village Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/StokeLyneVillage>
 Stoke Lyne Parish Council: <https://stokelyne.org/>
 Stoke Lyne Stories: <https://stokelynestories.webador.co.uk/>
 Victoria County History: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol6/pp312-323>

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CHURCHWARDEN: Penny Oakey, Grange Farm, Godington

TREASURER: Fai Li

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Maxine Ling

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Vacant (Stratton Audley)

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Sylvia List (Godington)

Tel 07941 273145

Tel 01869 278778

Tel 07725 009838

editor@shelswellparishes.info

CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 1st March 6.00 pm Compline at Stratton Audley

Sunday 8th March 10.45 am Morning Service at Stratton Audley

Sunday 22nd March 9.15 am Holy Communion at Stratton Audley

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The Last Word

*"Had the worst day ever. I paid a joiner to build me a double bed and he's done a bunk.
It's just one thing on top of another."*

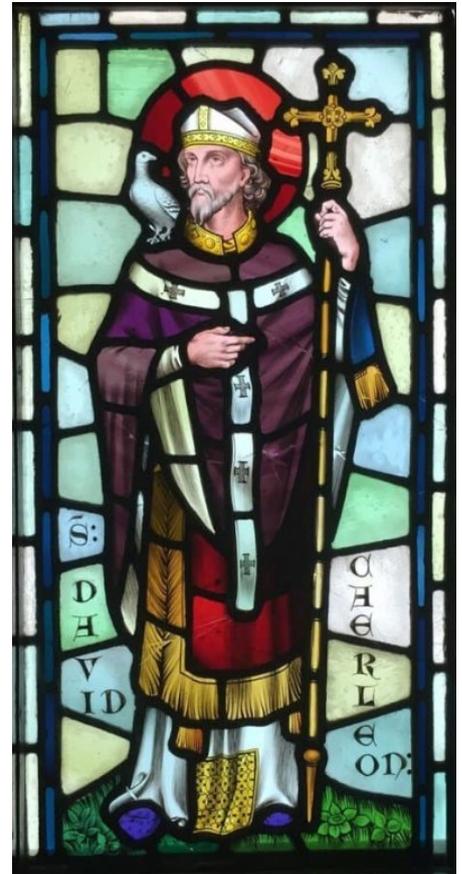
1st MARCH - SAINT DAVID

St David's Day, and it's time for the Welsh proudly to wear a leek or daffodil.

According to some sources, the wearing of leeks may be based on a legend that Welsh archers fought bravely at the Battle of Crecy in a field of leeks and, as a reminder of their bravery and loyalty, the Welsh began to wear a leek in their caps every St David's Day. The legend, true or not, could be a source of the 'honourable respect' which the Welsh had for their valorous archers.

We do know that David – or Dafydd – of Pembrokeshire was a monk and bishop of the 6th century. In the 12th century he was made patron of Wales, and he has the honour of being the only Welsh saint to be canonised and culted in the Western Church. Tradition has it that he was austere with himself, and generous with others – living on water and vegetables (leeks, perhaps?!) and devoting himself to works of mercy. He was much loved.

In art, St David is usually depicted in Episcopal vestments, standing on a mound with a dove at his shoulder, in memory of his share at an important Synod for the Welsh Church, the Synod of Brevi.



POINTS TO PONDER...



"But what can I do, I am just one person" said 7 billion people..

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Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday

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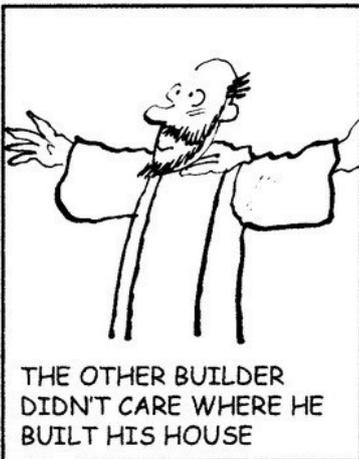


THE FIRST BUILDER SEARCHED HIGH AND LOW FOR A GOOD SOLID ROCK ON WHICH TO BUILD HIS HIS HOME.

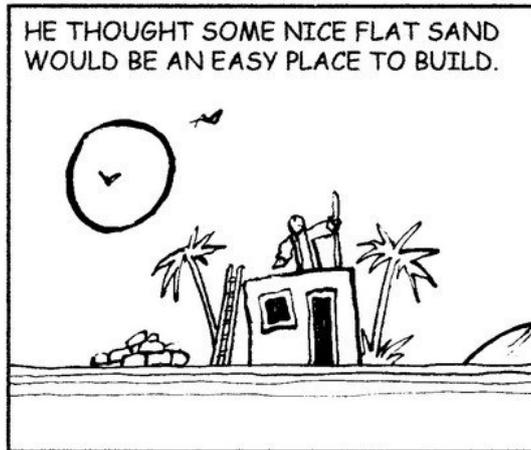
AT LONG, LONG LAST HE FOUND THE IDEAL SPOT.



SO HE BEGAN TO BUILD.



THE OTHER BUILDER DIDN'T CARE WHERE HE BUILT HIS HOUSE



HE THOUGHT SOME NICE FLAT SAND WOULD BE AN EASY PLACE TO BUILD.



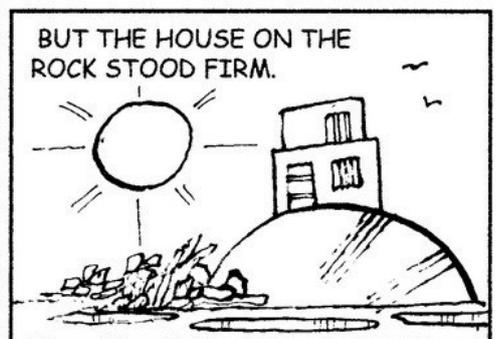
BUT ONE DAY THE STORM CAME...



...AND THE WIND BLEW...AND THE RAIN FELL...



...AND THE HOUSE ON THE SAND COLLAPSED!



BUT THE HOUSE ON THE ROCK STOOD FIRM.

JESUS EXPLAINED - IT'S IMPORTANT OUR LIVES HAVE A FIRM FOUNDATION.

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS: ANGER

'Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one.' (Benjamin Franklin).

Who or what makes you angry? In the third of our 7 Deadly Sins, we are looking at *anger* (or *wrath*).

It describes uncontrolled feelings of hatred and resentment, and it can lead to resentment and grudges, quarrelling and damaged relationships. Jesus warns us about the consequence of anger: *'I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment.'* (Matt 5:22).

Jesus Himself got angry, notably when He saw the Temple being exploited by the money changers (Matt 21:12-13). Such *righteous anger* is a measured response to injustice or evil, motivated by love not vengeance.

However, it is important for us to deal with unrighteous anger in our lives:

'In your anger do not sin: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.' (Ephesians 4:26,27).

What practical steps can we take to do this?

Acknowledge your anger: What are the root causes of our anger? Does it come from deeper feelings, like fear, inadequacy or the desire to control? Is it an irrational outburst of emotion that seems to come from nowhere?

Control your anger: Stepping back before reacting can prevent anger from controlling us: *'everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry'* (James 1:19,20).

Seek to forgive: Practising forgiveness, not seeking revenge or holding grudges, will enable us to

overcoming anger: *'Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.'* (Colossians 3:12,13). Christ died to take the wrath of God we deserve, that we might know God's forgiveness.

Canon Paul Hardingham

THE REAL EASTER EGG



Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

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The 2026 Real Easter Egg is not available in supermarkets, but the full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or by calling 01925 877004.

MARIE CURIE DAFFODIL APPEAL

Throughout the month of March, the end-of-life charity Marie Curie will be holding its annual flagship fundraiser, the Great Daffodil Appeal.

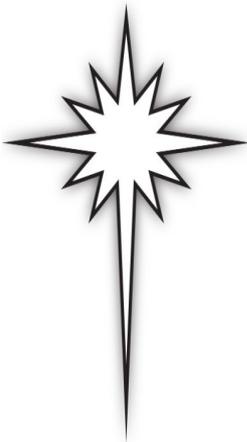


There's only one chance to give someone the best possible end of life, and Marie Curie tries to give that gift to as many people with incurable conditions as possible.

Now in its 40th year, the Daffodil appeal raises vital funds to help Marie Curie provide end of life care and support in homes, hospitals and hospices across the UK. By donating and wearing your daffodil this March, you can help Marie Curie Nurses bring expert end of life care when there's no cure, whatever the illness.

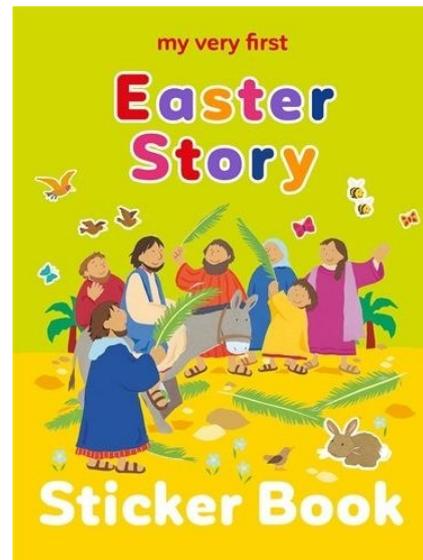
Money raised also funds the charity's free support line and webchat which is available to anyone with an illness they're likely to die from and those close to them. It offers practical and emotional support on everything from managing symptoms and navigating care to financial information, including how to get help with energy bills and bereavement support.

For information or to donate visit: Mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil



Mysteries are not dark shadows, before which we must shut our eyes and be silent. On the contrary, they are dazzling splendours, with which we ought to sate our gaze. (A Carthusian)

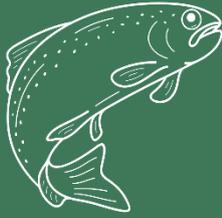
BOOK REVIEW



My Very First Easter Story Sticker Book
By Lois Rock, SPCK, £5.99

A story book to retelling of the Easter story, with spaces left for children to fill with the appropriate sticker to complete the story. There are also extra activities about what can be found on the page – counting, naming, identifying – for which extra stickers are supplied.

This title is part of the much loved My Very First Series from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, illustrated by Alex Ayliffe. Founded in 1698, SPCK today publishes a range of Christian books for children and adults. More information at spckpublishing.co.uk.



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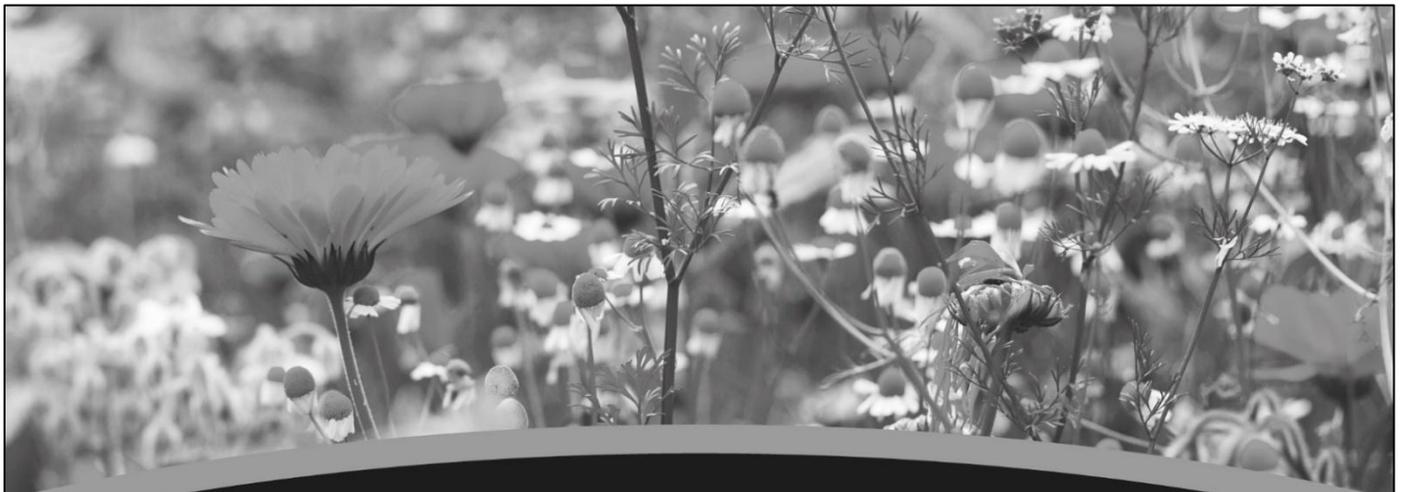
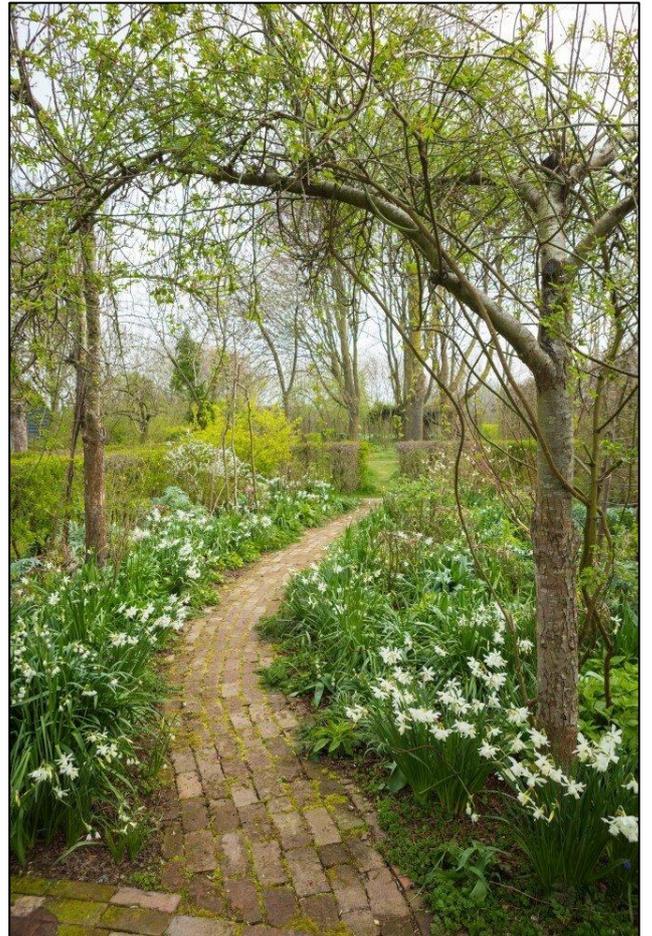
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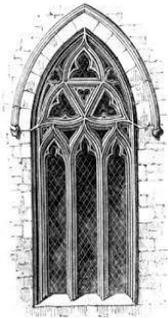
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**SHELLEWELL GROUP SERVICES: MARCH 2025**

CW: 'Common Worship' modern language service      BCP: 'Book of Common Prayer' traditional language service

|                 |                                                                          |                                                                                              |                                                                     |                                                                       |                                                                           |                                                   |                                                                |                                                                            |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DATE</b>     | <b>1<sup>st</sup> March<br/>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>            | <b>Thursday 5th March (12 noon)<br/>Midweek Holy Communion and Soup Lunch<br/>STOKE LYNE</b> |                                                                     |                                                                       | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> March<br/>8<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>             | <b>15<sup>th</sup> March<br/>Mothering Sunday</b> | <b>22<sup>nd</sup> March<br/>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> | <b>29<sup>th</sup> March<br/>Palm Sunday</b>                               |
| <b>ALTAR</b>    | Purple                                                                   |                                                                                              |                                                                     |                                                                       | Purple                                                                    | Purple                                            | Purple                                                         |                                                                            |
| <b>8.00 am</b>  | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>COTTISFORD</b><br>AM/John Alderdice | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>NEWTON PURCELL</b><br>LW                                | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>FINMERE</b><br>AM              | Mixbury Half Hour for Mothering Sunday<br><b>MIXBURY</b><br>PW        | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>CO            | Holy Communion (BCP)<br><b>HETHE</b> AM           |                                                                |                                                                            |
| <b>9.15 am</b>  | Holy Communion with hymns (BCP)<br><b>NEWTON PURCELL</b><br>LW           | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>HETHE</b><br>AM                                         | 9.15am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>FINMERE</b><br>AM    | 10am<br>'Food for Thought'<br><b>STOKE LYNE</b><br>Lay-led            | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>CO            | Holy Communion (BCP)<br><b>HETHE</b> AM           |                                                                |                                                                            |
| <b>10.45 am</b> | 10.45am<br>'Connect' Informal Worship<br><b>HETHE VILLAGE HALL</b><br>AM | Morning Service<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>PW                                              | 10am<br>'Food for Thought'<br><b>STOKE LYNE</b><br>Lay-led          | 10.45am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (BCP)<br><b>COTTISFORD</b><br>AM | Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>AM            | Holy Communion (BCP)<br><b>HETHE</b> AM           |                                                                | 10.45am<br>Benefice Service of Holy Communion<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>LW/AM |
| <b>10.45 am</b> | 10.45am<br>Morning Service<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>PW/John Alderdice      | Morning Service<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>PW                                              | 10.45am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>JH | 10.45am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>JH   | 10.45am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>AM | Holy Communion (BCP)<br><b>HETHE</b> AM           |                                                                |                                                                            |
| <b>6.00 pm</b>  | Compline<br><b>STRATTON AUDLEY</b><br>PW                                 | Evening Communion<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>AM                                                  | 10.45am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>JH | 10.45am<br>Holy Communion with hymns (CW)<br><b>FRINGFORD</b><br>JH   | 4pm<br>Evensong with the Shelswell Group Choir<br><b>HARDWICK</b><br>PW   | Holy Communion (BCP)<br><b>HETHE</b> AM           |                                                                |                                                                            |

JH: Revd Preb Jane Haslam

AM: Revd Alex Mahlava

CO: Revd Carolyn Oley

LW: Revd Liz Welters

PW: Mrs Penny Wood (LLM)