

CANALSIDE NEWS

for MAY 2026



In Memory
of
Sandra



On a beautiful April Sunday morning, after our Morning Service, we gathered in St Michael's Churchyard to plant a Rowan Tree in loving memory of Sandra Harding – one of our Churchwardens and a dear friend. This was the second anniversary of Sandra's passing and just days after what would have been her 80th Birthday. Terry, Sandra's husband and Julie, her Sister, were able to join us for the planting. A big thankyou to Tim Davies who worked so hard to get the tree in place and to prepare the plot at such short notice for us.



RIP Sandra You are
greatly missed

Thought from the Rectory

One of the tasks that faces Church of England ministers in April and May is the important and noxious task of making sure everything is in place for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. By the time you read this, the meeting should already have happened at St Mary's and hopefully gone off without a hitch.

First off, it is worth mentioning just how grateful I am to have such a great team in our parish. No one is asking me to prepare the accounts and we are not desperately cornering people to talk them into being churchwarden, which is a great relief to me personally. It is also not something I take for granted, given some of the conversations I have around this time of year with some of my colleagues. The people who step up to make sure everything happens at church are wonderful and genuine, not just doing it because they have to but doing it with competence and grace. Which is great, given who is chairing the meeting. That guy doesn't know his subsidiary motions from his suspension privileges.

But that does actually bring me to a significant point. I'm not great at meetings. I'm not particularly brilliant at drafting reports and I'm even worse at submitting those reports on time. In fact, if we're going to be blunt about it, I'm pretty poor at administration as a whole.

I can't decide if I feel relieved at having written that last paragraph or just fearful that now everyone who reads it will consider me "not up to snuff". Unfortunately, that would be a view that plenty of people do take. The vicar is considered Administrator-in-Chief and has to do more paperwork than they know what to do with (this comment is meant literally: I often don't know what to do with paperwork I'm given but have got some lovely origami models spread around my office now).

The thing is, that really isn't what I signed up for. When I was ordained, I made some promises. Similar to a wedding service, there are declarations and vows, things like "Will you be diligent in prayer, in reading Holy Scripture?" "Will you faithfully minister the doctrine and sacraments of Christ?" "Will you, knowing yourself to be reconciled to God in Christ, strive to be an instrument of God's peace in the Church and in the world?"

To each question, I had to answer, “By the help of God, I will.” Even this response is carefully considered: it takes into account the fact that we will probably mess up, often and in myriad interesting ways, but recognises that we’re trying to keep to these aspirations by the help of God and not by ourselves

None of these vows says anything like, “Will you submit your reports in triplicate and acknowledge emails within two working days?” And thank goodness, as I might have become unstuck in front of a disapproving bishop at that moment.

We all have strengths, things we’re good at, particular talents. And we all have things we simply have to do even when it’s not particularly enjoyable. But the main thing is to try and free yourself to the things that you find fulfilling and life-giving. That’s why Jesus says, “I have come that you may have life, and life in all its fullness.” No one ever, on their deathbed, turned to a nurse or whoever else was nearby and whispered, “I wish I’d spent more time in the office.”

So while we submit another set of year end documents and think about all the things that *need* to be done, I hope you will stop and take the time for the things you enjoy or, indeed, the things you’re good at. They deserve more of your attention anyway.

Now if you’ll excuse me, I’ve got a report to write for the annual meeting.

Chris

MAY be time for a Change

Have you ever wondered about the chemicals that are released into the environment each time you use a cleaning product? Or felt concerned about all the plastic bottles you have to dispose of? There IS a better way.

The Green Company

(www.thegreencompany.online)



offers a range of eco-friendly cleaning products that come in tablet form. Re-use an old spray bottle or buy one of their attractive glass bottles & simply add tap water. No more single use plastics or unnecessary liquid being transported around the county.

The Green Company started as a simple school project and has grown into one of the UK's most trusted eco-friendly cleaning brands. Today, their sustainable cleaning products help thousands of households reduce waste, cut plastic, and clean their homes in a greener, smarter way. Why not give them a try?



Many thanks to those of you who have started using *easyfundraising* since the article in last month's newsletter – raising funds for St Michael's and St Mary Magdalen's – without costing you a single penny. For those of you who haven't yet signed up here's a reminder what it's all about...When you shop online with participating retailers, they'll donate part of what you spend to your chosen cause. Whether you shop on your phone, laptop or tablet, you can earn free cashback donations for your cause.

The retailer just needs to know you are an easyfundraiser to give a donation,

A promotional graphic for easyfundraising. At the top, it says "8,000+ online retailers will give us a free donation when you shop with them at no extra cost to you". Below this is a grid of 12 retailer logos: Booking.com, ebay, M&S, Dunelm, Argos, TUI, currys, JOHN LEWIS, Apple, Etsy, TESCO, computer warehouse, and JUST EAT. At the bottom, there is a teal banner with the text "Download the easyfundraising App" and icons for Google Play and the App Store.

and they know this if you visit them from the *easyfundraising* website, app or Donation Reminder.

Hilperton and Staverton Churches are now registered

as a cause with *easyfundraising* so you now have the option to shop online and to raise funds for

the Parish at no additional cost to you. There are over 8,000 retailers in the scheme including Tesco, Sainsburys, Amazon, M&S, ebay, Argos and John Lewis. I have tested it out on my own phone and laptop and have already starting raising funds for our churches. Only a small amount is raised per transaction but as one major store puts it "Every Little Helps". It is quite easy to set up but if you get stuck please give me a shout and I will try to help. Michael

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW

19
← E
PENTER
and
HUNTER
QUIZZES
Present

Quiz Night

An Evening of

Fun, Facts and Firsts

Friday 8th May 2026

at St Mary Magdalen's
in Horse Road Hilperton

7.30pm prompt start

Tickets £5 each available now from
Michael 07795400262 /
canalsideoffice@gmail.com

Teams of 4

Bring your own nibbles/supper

Teas/Coffees will be available ~ Raffle ~

Proceeds to Church Funds

Coming up on Saturday 6th June we have a very special event for you at St Mary Magdalen's in Horse Road – *MUSIC FOR A SUMMER EVENING* an evening of calming and joyful music from several musical eras to celebrate the midsummer season. Lots of familiar faces, mostly local, some from further afield and a few surprises. **COME AND JOIN US**



**MUSIC for a
SUMMER EVENING**

at St Mary Magdalen's
Horse Road, Hilperton
7pm on Saturday 6th June
Come and join us for
some local home
grown entertainment

*Tickets available now from Michael
£10 each includes light refreshments
(£5 for under 16s)
canalsideoffice@gmail.com
07795400262*

HILPERTON VILLAGE FETE

FUN STARTS AT 1PM
SATURDAY 13TH JUNE

HILPERTON VILLAGE HALL
WHADDON LANE BA14 7RN

BAR-BBQ-LIVE MUSIC

ARCHERY-CRAFTS-WELLY THROW
COCONUT SHY-FACE PAINTING-
TOMBOLA-AFTERNOON TEAS-
CROCKERY SMASH-TREBUCHET-
MARSHMALLOW TOASTING...
AND MUCH MORE

SUPPORTED BY
HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Hilpertown
theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

HILPERTON VILLAGE HALL

Girlguiding

LIMITED PARKING
ON SITE PLEASE
WALK TO THE EVENT
IF POSSIBLE

PEOPLE ATTENDING THE FETE DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK.
CHILDREN MUST BE SUPERVISED BY A RESPONSIBLE ADULT AT ALL TIMES.

As you will see from this poster this year's village Fete is being held on Saturday 13th June at the Village Hall and Playing Field from 1pm. As in previous years St Michael's and St Mary Magdalen's will be running the Teas at the Fete and any proceeds from sales will go to church funds. Last year we managed to raise £1,028. Let's try and equal that total or even higher this year. To do that we need as many **PEOPLE** as possible to help. We need **PEOPLE** to make and bake cakes and biscuits for sale, **PEOPLE** to help on the day making teas/coffees, **PEOPLE** selling cakes and biscuits, **PEOPLE** in the kitchen washing up and clearing up. There is now a list in church where you can write your name and let us know how you can help at this year's Fete. Thankyou.

Used Postage Stamps

Don't forget to let us have all your used postage stamps. It would be great if you could save all your stamps and pass them on to Bill and Marilyn Stubbs who in turn pass them on to the Bible Society. Just pop them into the Storehouses boxes in the church porches and we will pass them on for you.

A Message from Mike Townley

My very grateful thanks for the card - with so many signatures - delivered after the Service last Sunday. We had entertained 50+ friends down in Batheaston's new Village Hall, and we served 25 family to Sunday Lunch - so a little busy (and stressed). I had a superb Birthday - I was born on the 100th

day of the year, when we had 3 kings on the UK throne - and it was a good Friday. The next Good Friday - on my birthday - is in 2090. I don't think I'll make it. Regards. Mike

Theology Club

Theology Club will return this month on Sunday 17th May at 3pm at St Mary Magdalen's – ALL WELCOME.

Annual Meetings and Electoral Roll Review

We are now halfway through the season of our Annual Parish Meetings (APCM). Next up is Semington's meeting which will be held after Breakfast Church on Sunday 10th May at St George's Church. Please join us if you can. Following Hilperton and Staverton's Meeting on 26th April the following appointments were approved :

CHURCHWARDENS	James Newton Martyn Carpenter
DEPUTY CHAIR	James Newton
SECRETARY/SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	Stella Wilkes
TREASURER	Michael Gamble
DEPUTY WARDENS	Valerie Legg and Michael Gamble
DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES	<i>Vacant</i>
OTHER PCC MEMBERS	Geoff State / Debra Richards / Jonathan Richards

During the meeting thanks were recorded to Darren Shellum as he stood down as PCC Member and to Valerie and Colin Legg as they stand down as Deanery Synod Representatives.

If you are not already on the Electoral Roll for either of our Parishes and would like to be or you would like to know more about it please contact Michael as soon as possible.

Prayer Requests



It is important that we pray for all who seek our support. Please let Michael know of anyone who particularly needs our prayers. Do ensure that you have their permission.

This month we pray for..

+ Alison Meader

+ Amelia-Lily and family

+ Andrew Margetts

+ Audrey Sheppard

+ Barbara Tucker

+ Bob Cradock

+ Catherine

+ Cathy and Ian

+ Chloe Stevens

+ Colin

+ Colin Jackson

+ Collette Miyagawa

+ Colston Carpenter

+ Dave, Rosemary, Matthew & Family

+ Den and Alison

+ Eve Banks

+ Hannah, Ash, Oliver & baby Leo

+ Heather

+ Helen Thomas

+ Hilary & Mark Heaton

+ Irene Hicks

+ Isabelle & Family

+ Jeannette

+ Joanna Martin

+ Laurence & Family

+ Maggie & Family

+ Mark Johnson

+ Maureen Mitchell

+ Michelle

+ Mike Aldridge

+ Mitchel and Divine

+ Richard Marshman

+ Roger Emes

+ Rosa Light

+ Shirley Epps

+ Tanya

+ Val, Phil and family

+ Viv and Jan



- We pray for all those who are mourning the loss of a loved one at this time and in particular the family and friends of Jim Banks, Gladys Lampard, Andrew Manning and Nick Ford.
- We continue to pray for the people of Sudan at this time of conflict, including Archbishop Ezekiel as he leads the Anglican Church there.

Rogation Walk

Sunday 10th May is Rogation Sunday. We will be doing a Rogation walk with prayers for the Benefice, as we did last year. As the service that day is at St Mary's, we will start from there and walk up to St Michael's before going along Whaddon Lane to the canal. We will then walk along the canal path into Staverton and stop at the Rectory for refreshments, before the final leg of the walk completes the circuit back to St Mary's.



Together with many other Foodbanks across the country both Melksham and Trowbridge are desperate for more donations, as the demand is very high at present, so please give as generously as you are able.

If you can donate any food or hygiene items PLEASE, pop them in our trolleys or come on down and bring them to us. If you are a little flush; you can do online shopping with ASDA as they will deliver to us on your behalf. Please drop into the building as we now do a breakfast for the homeless so eggs are always needed plus cheese, butter bacon etc as we have a fridge freezer, and fridge. Fruit and vegetables are always welcome but do not put in a trolley. Please continue to donate to us so we can keep blessing the people of Trowbridge. Thank you all.

Please use the collection boxes in the porches of St Mary Magdalen's and St Michael's to drop off food donations etc. A BIG thankyou to Tony Roddis for taking on the collections for us from Bill Stubbs.

If you prefer you can make a one off financial donation or support Trowbridge Storehouse regularly, please follow the link below and select storehouse.

<https://westwiltsvineyard.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/zk54op3a>

Storehouse is always in need of carrier bags

Melksham Foodbank continue to need all items, especially tinned meats and vegetables. The demand for support is very high (please ensure all items are well within the best before date). They can also take large bags of rice, tea bags, sugar & pasta as these can be decanted into smaller bags for distribution. Thanks to the support of everyone, Melksham foodbank was able to distribute 7991 food parcels in 2025! Please take your donations to the porch at St George's, Semington before 6pm on Wednesday.

Our continued support of Melksham FoodBank and Trowbridge StoreHouse is vital, and a part of our response to God's generosity to us.

CANALSIDE DIARY

Please pray for all events taking place in the next few weeks

Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location
M A Y 2 0 2 6				
Su	3 rd	THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER		
		1030	Holy Communion	St Michael's
		1500	Service of BCP Holy Communion	St Mary the Virgin
		1800	Reflective Service	St Mary Magdalen's
M	4 th	BANK HOLIDAY		
Tu	5 th	0930	Hilperon/Staverton Morning Prayer https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IKy2vBYNviwibNcoWUpqTtf4hpwQTA.1	Online
		1450	Collective Worship	St George's School
W	6 th	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
		1430	Collective Worship	Hilperon School
Th	7 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBqqYKytMMRbVvZJZFNm.1	Online
		1445	Collective Worship	Staverton School
F	8 th	1930	Quiz Night (see poster)	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	10 th	THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER / ROGATION DAY		
		0915	Breakfast Church followed by Semington's APCM	St George's Church
		1030	Service of Holy Communion followed by our Rogation Walk around the Benefice	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	12 th	0930	Hilperon/Staverton Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1450	Collective Worship	St George's School
W	13 th	1000	Midweek Morning Worship	St Michael's
		1430	Collective Worship	Hilperon School
Th	14 th	ASCENSION DAY		
		0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1030	Holy Communion	Staverton House
		1430	Friendship Group	St Mary Magdalen's
		1445	Collective Worship	Staverton School

		1930	Holy Communion for Ascension Day	St Michael's
Sa	16 th	1000	Semington Slog	St George's School
		1200	Interment of ashes	St Paul's Churchyard
Su	17 th	SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION		
		0915	Service of Holy Communion	St George's Church
		1030	Service of Holy Communion	St Michael's
		1230	Baptism of Jesse Dana Davies and James Jonathan Davies	St Michael's
		1500	Theology Club	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	19 th	0930	Hilpertion/Staverton Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1450	Collective Worship	St George's School
W	20 th	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
		1430	Collective Worship	Hilpertion School
Th	21 st	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1000 1200	Community Café	St Mary Magdalen's
		1445	Collective Worship	Staverton School
Su	24 th	PENTECOST		
		1030	'Explore' Service	St Mary Magdalen's
		1600	Tea@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
M	25 th	BANK HOLIDAY		
Tu	26 th	0930	Hilpertion/Staverton Morning Prayer (NOT online – IN PERSON)	St Michael's
W	27 th	1000	Midweek Morning Worship	St Michael's
		1430	Open the Book	Hilpertion School
Th	28 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1140	Open the Book	St George's School
		1445	Open the Book	Staverton School
Su	31 st	TRINITY SUNDAY		
		1030	Benefice Holy Communion	St Mary Magdalen's
		1230	Baptism of Arthur Edward Wilkins	St Michael's
JUNE 2026				
Tu	2 nd	0930	Hilpertion/Staverton Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1450	Collective Worship	St George's School
		1000	Midweek Communion/Morning	St Michael's

W	3 rd		Worship	
		1430	Collective Worship	Hilperton School
Th	4 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1445	Collective Worship	Staverton School
Sa	6 th	1900	Music for a Summer Evening (see poster)	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	7 th	THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY		
		1030	Holy Communion	St Michael's
		1500	Service of BCP Holy Communion	St Mary the Virgin
		1800	Reflective Service	St Mary Magdalen's



BENEFICE DATES FOR DIARIES

Details of some events are yet to be confirmed but for now make a note in your diaries and we will keep you posted if and when those details change

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location
MAY	Fri	8 th	1930	QUIZ NIGHT (see poster)	St Mary Magdalen's
JUN	Sat	6 th	1900	MUSIC FOR A SUMMER EVENING (see poster)	St Mary Magdalen's
	Sat	13 th	1300	HILPERTON VILLAGE FETE	Hilperton Village Hall
	Sat	27 th	1400	SEMINGTON VILLAGE FETE	Brook House, High Street and Village Hall
JUL	TBD	TBD	TBD	POSSIBLE FUNDRAISING/SPONSORSHIP EVENT	TBD
AUG	Sun	23 rd	1200	BARBECUE AFTER MORNING SERVICE	St Mary Magdalen's
SEP	Sat	12 th	TBC	SEMINGTON PRAYER DAY	St George's Church
	Sat	19 th	1000-1200	COFFEE MORNING	St Mary Magdalen's
OCT	Fri	2 nd	1900	HARVEST SUPPER	St Mary Magdalen's
NOV	Sat	21 st	1000-1200	CHRISTMAS FESTIVE FAYRE	St Mary's Magdalen's
	Fri	27 th	1900	QUIZ NIGHT	St Mary Magdalen's

CANALSIDE CONTACTS

Rector	Rev. Chris Hunter	07396875236 01225 975510	rector.canalside@gmail.com
Associate Priest	Rev. Joy Albone	07931638524	revjoyalbone@gmail.com
Office	Michael Gamble	07795400262	canalsideoffice@gmail.com
Churchwardens			
Semington	David Wildsmith	c/o 01380 870784	c/o jackbev.woodward@gmail.com
Hilperton and Staverton	James Newton	07803904947	jnewton@churchmouse.org.uk
	Martyn Carpenter	07831309377	martyncarpenter55@gmail.com
Website	canalsideparishes.co.uk		
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/canalsideparishes		



Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed: kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Ebonite Clarinet Ensemble

Many thanks to Claire King and to all involved with the recent Concert given by the Ebonite Clarinet Ensemble at St Mary Magdalen's. This wonderful afternoon of music raised an amazing £550 which was split equally between Church funds and the Bone Cancer Research Trust

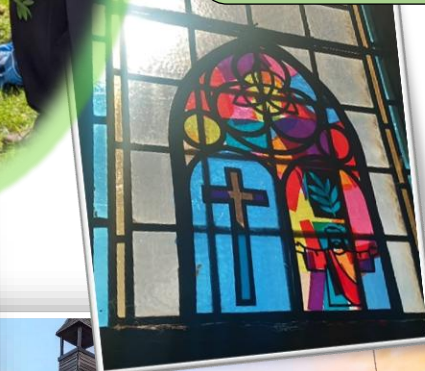




Meet Winston. Barbara Tucker's new PA – bought at Church Coffee Morning



A "stained glass" creation by Dawn Charman's Granddaughter



Easter Dawn at St Mary Magdalen's

CHURCH SERVICES *in* The CANALSIDE PARISHES *during* MAY



	HILPERTON <i>St Michael's</i>	HILPERTON <i>St Mary Magdalen's</i>	SEMINGTON <i>St George's</i>	WHADDON <i>St Mary the Virgin</i>
3 rd May Fifth Sunday of Easter	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION	6pm SERVICE of REFLECTION		3pm BCP HOLY COMMUNION
Wednesday 6 th May	10am MIDWEEK COMMUNION			
10 th May Sixth Sunday of Easter / Rogation		10.30am HOLY COMMUNION for ROGATION SUNDAY followed by a walk around the Benefice	9.15am BREAKFAST CHURCH	
Wednesday 13 th May	10am MIDWEEK MORNING WORSHIP			
Thursday 14 th May Ascension Day	7.30pm HOLY COMMUNION for ASCENSION DAY			
17 th May Sunday after Ascension	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION		9.15am HOLY COMMUNION	
Wednesday 20 th May	10am MIDWEEK COMMUNION			
24 th May Pentecost		10.30am EXPLORE SERVICE		
		4pm TEA@theTIN		
Tuesday 26 th May	9.30am MORNING PRAYER			
Wednesday 27 th May	10am MIDWEEK MORNING WORSHIP			

Full details of all our Services and Events can
be found on our new Benefice Website
canalsideparishes.co.uk.