

PARISH CHURCH NEWS

**Ss. Peter & Paul, Clare
with St. Mary the Virgin, Poslingford**

The Rev'd Mark Woodrow

Vicar and Rector of the Stour Valley Benefice

(Tel: 01787 277515 Email: rector@stourvalley.org.uk)

(Usual Rest Day: Monday)

The Rev'd Dr. Karen Smith

Curate

(Tel: 01440 594036 Email: drkarensmith@me.com)

(Usual Rest Day: Saturday)

No. 448

August 2025



**The Transfiguration of the Lord
6 August**

Rector's Ramblings – August 2025 (A time for rest and renewal)

As August unfolds, the rhythm of our town and villages often shifts. School gates are closed, family cars are packed, and the air seems to hum with the quiet anticipation of adventures, near and far. For many, August means summer holidays, a precious time to step away from the routines and responsibilities that fill our days for the rest of the year.

And rightly so! We are created for work, yes, but also for rest. It's a divine rhythm embedded in the very fabric of creation, from the Sabbath day to the cycles of the seasons. Yet, in our bustling modern world, rest can often feel like a luxury, or even an indulgence, rather than a vital component of a healthy, God-honouring life.

This August, as you navigate your own version of "holiday" – whether it's a grand adventure abroad, a staycation exploring local delights, or simply a slower pace at home – I want to encourage you to truly embrace the concept of resting and recharging. It's not just about stopping; it's about renewing. It's about allowing our minds, bodies, and spirits to replenish.

Consider, for a moment, the ultimate example. Even Jesus, in the midst of his tireless ministry, understood the profound importance of rest. We read in the Gospels how he would often withdraw from the crowds, sometimes to pray, sometimes simply to be alone and, yes, even to sleep. Remember the storm on the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus was found asleep in the boat? (Mark 4:38). It wasn't a sign of indifference, but of a deep human need, one that even the Son of God embraced. If Jesus needed to rest, how much more do we?

Rest isn't idleness; it's an investment. It's about creating space for God to speak to us in the quiet moments, to rekindle our creativity, to strengthen our relationships, and to simply **be**. When we allow ourselves to truly rest, we return to our daily lives not just refreshed, but often with a renewed perspective and invigorated purpose.

Many of you will know that I am a big fan of the late Sir Terry Pratchett, who in his insightful way, captured this beautifully in his book, *A Hat Full of Sky*, when he asks: ***"Why do you go away? So that you can come back. So that you can see the place you came from with new eyes and extra colours. And the people there see you differently, too. Coming back to where you started is not the same as never leaving."***

This August, as you perhaps venture away, or simply step back from your usual routine, remember that you are doing so not just for enjoyment, but for renewal. You are creating the space to return with "new eyes and extra colours," ready to engage with our community, our church, and our God with a refreshed spirit.

Whether your August involves sandy beaches, mountain walks, or quiet moments in your own garden, I pray that you find true rest and replenishment. May you return, whenever that may be, feeling recharged, renewed, and ready to embrace the autumn with grateful hearts.

With every blessing,

Mark

The Rev'd Mark Woodrow (Rector)

FROM THE REGISTERS OF CLARE & POSLINGFORD

July 2025

Clare : Oliver McGarry (*Baptism in Parish Church*)

Clare : Rod Chamberlain (*Funeral in Parish Church*)



A reminder that the next concert in this very popular and successful series is scheduled for Saturday, 16th August, at which the soloist will be Noah Blyth on Trumpet & Cornet, accompanied by Christopher Moore. Coffee will be served from 11 a.m. with the concert beginning at 11.30am.



PCC NEWS

The newly elected (and much enlarged) PCC met in July and the following is a summary of the main items which were on the agenda and the outcome of discussions:

- The church's annual music copyright licence has been renewed.
- The lightning conductor has been tested and found to be satisfactory.
- The electricity meter is to be changed.
- With regard to the interior of the church it has been suggested that the present high-level lamps (the cost of changing which is very expensive) be replaced with LED's, the operation of which can be controlled from ground level. An earlier project for the installation of a chandelier-type lighting system has been abandoned by the Buildings Sub-Committee. Further research and discussion is needed on the question of heating and lighting.

- A recent inspection by our insurers found the vestry safe to be far from satisfactory and whilst it will still be used to store certain items, a new additional safe will be installed.
- The gates at the South Gate are to be shot-blasted and given a new coating in the same colour, with additional work being necessary on the brick pillars.
- A “no dog fouling” notice has now been displayed, as this has become an ongoing problem in the churchyard.
- Further repair work in the church is still required following the Quinquennial Survey.
- The South Aisle parclose is to be restored.
- Other financial matters were discussed and quotations accepted.
- Finally, the Vicarage Garden Party will be held this year on the Bank Holiday Monday (25 August). More details elsewhere in the Magazine.

N.B.: the above is only a summary of PCC business. A full copy of the Minutes is available from the Secretary, though please note that they do not become ‘official’ until adopted (with any amendments) at the next PCC meeting.



THE VICARAGE GARDEN PARTY

There being nothing quite so very English as tea and cakes on the Vicarage lawns on a Summer's afternoon, the PCC is happy to announce that this delightful occasion will be held this year on **Monday, 25 August from 2pm.**

We would normally have scheduled this event for the Bank Holiday Saturday, but on this particular occasion (and the previous weekend) the Rector has to be elsewhere and what would a C of E garden party be without the imposing presence of His Lordship?

The afternoon will feature the customary attractions, viz. Tombola Bottle Stall, Teas & Cakes, Books, Bric-à-Brac and Raffle and quite possibly others too. Doors open at 2 p.m. Jane Turner has very kindly agreed to act as ‘overall overseer’, so if you would like to help in any way or have items to contribute, please speak to her (jturner4md@yahoo.co.uk / 07931 691547). Thank you and see you there!

THE SCARECROW

All winter through I bow my head
 Beneath the driving rain;
The North wind powders me with snow
 And blows me black again;
At midnight in a maze of stars
 I flame with glittering rime,
And stand, above the stubble, stiff
 As mail at morning prime.
But when that child, called Spring, and all
 His host of children, come,
Scattering their buds and dew upon
 These acres of my home,
Some rapture in my rags awakes;
 I lift my eyes and scan
The skies for crows, those ravening foes
 Of my strange master, Man.
I watch him striding lank behind
 His clashing team, and know
Soon will the wheat swish body-high
 Where once lay sterile snow;
Soon shall I gaze across a sea
 Of sun-begotten grain,
Which my unflinching watch hath sealed
 For harvest once again.

Walter de la Mare (1873-1956)

And whilst on the subject of Scarecrows, they will be back in Poslingford!



All are invited to join in the Scarecrow Building on Saturday
9th August from 2pm in Poslingford Church.

This year's scarecrow theme is "Disney" so bring along old costumes, old tights (to be stuffed).

Straw and refreshments will be provided.

(Donations for the community Pantry in Clare gratefully received)

And now, as a special treat for all lovers of the poetic art ...

THE DUNDEE FLOWER SHOW

by

William McGonagall (1825-1902)
(a.k.a. the greatest of the bad poets)

't Was in the year of 1886 and on the 2nd day of September
Which the lovers of horticultural beauty will long remember,
Especially those that visited the Flower Show on the Magdalen Green, Dundee
Must confess it was really a most magnificent sight to see.

The Right Honourable Earl of Dalhousie, he was there
And delivered an eloquent opening address, I do declare
To the ladies and gentlemen that had come to see the show
Which was received with hearty pleasure by the high and low.

The 4th Hussars Band were there in grand military array,
Good looking soldiers all young and gay
And at the opening ceremony they played God Save The Queen
In the Grand Flower Show on the Magdalen Green.

The Industrial School Boys Band were there on Saturday
And played most eloquent music both plaintive and gay
Which met with the appreciation of the people there
And for the time being helped drive away dull care.

For beauty such plants and flowers here have been seen
That were displayed in the Flower show on the Magdalen Green
Especially plants in pots were most lovely to see
Belonging to W.P. Laird & Sinclair, Dundee.

And for beautiful plants they were there by the score,
And some belonging to William Alliance and Peter Balmore;
Also exotic ferns most charming to be seen
In the Grand Flower show on the Magdalen Green.

(can you take much more of this? Alas, there is more to come)

There potatoes, leeks and onions were to be seen
Likewise turnips and cabbage green;
Also two heads of parsley and two curled greens
Besides twenty five pods of full-grown broad beans.

Success to the undertakers of the grand Flower Show
And to those that helped make the beautiful flowers grow
That tended them most carefully and brought them to be seen
At the Grand Flower show on the Magdalen Green.

So, do you think McGonagall actually imagined that his 'poetry' would outlive him, standing the test of time and making his name famous long after he had gone? Well, one hundred and twenty three years after his demise he is assuredly not forgotten and has his secure place among the immortals for all the wrong reasons.

But did he really believe that he had a vocation as a poet?

Or was he just a fraud conning the public? Either way he seems to have succeeded.

Next month (if you haven't by then asked to be taken off the Mag mailing list):

"The Burial of Mr. Gladstone"

WANTED!

BOTTLES AND BOOKS

First of all, the bottles. These are needed for the Tombola Bottle Stall at the August Vicarage Garden Party. Donations of any bottles (whatever their contents) would be most welcome. If you are able to contribute, please *only* bring them to the church when there is a service. They should not be left at or anywhere near the Community Pantry, as they may be mistaken for Pantry items, nor (especially those containing alcohol) anywhere else in the church when it is unattended, as there is a danger that they may disappear! Many thanks.

Now the books: We shall be running the usual second-hand book stall at the Garden Party, not a huge selection, but enough, we hope, to tempt the bookworms, and would be most grateful for any volumes in good condition that you wish to dispose of. We also still need books for the permanent church bookstall, so again, if you are clearing your shelves, please get in touch and we will be more than happy to take them off you. Many thanks.

Mary and James (01787 277134)

MUSICIANS

Do you play a musical instrument? Used you to play one, but haven't had it out of its case since Covid? Would you be interested in making music FOR FUN with a group of people? Light Classical/folk songs/nothing too modern - though willing to give it a try.

Requirements:

- Be able to read music
- Enthusiasm
- Available – evenings or day time ?
- Grade 4 or equivalent or above, but beginners and restarters welcome

Contact Jayne Drinkwater 01787 278941, drinkersj@hotmail.com giving your name, contact details, instrument(s) and level at which you've played in the past and availability (daytime, evenings, which days?).

Another Great Exhibition at Gainsborough House, Sudbury

By Nicholas Turner

One of the greatest portraits by Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788), *Mary, Countess Howe*, in the permanent collection at Kenwood House, London, is now on loan to Gainsborough's House in Sudbury, just a few miles down the road. Painted c. 1764, it is one of his masterpieces, and well worth a visit. Countess Howe (1732–1800) wears a long pink gown of shimmering silk, covered at the front by a semi-transparent apron, while on her head is a wide-brimmed straw hat. With unaffected lifelikeness, she steps towards the viewer with a firm gaze.



The directness of demeanour is echoed in a fleeting personal comment about her reported some 20 years after the portrait had been painted, as having 'a store of good humour and talkativeness'. Although executed more than two-and-a-half centuries ago and showing the Countess dressed in lavish contemporary costume, she has the fetching looks and spontaneity of expression of today's 'beauties,' with perhaps more openness to her looks. Adding to the picture's presence is the Gainsborough's dazzling brushwork, seen to maximum effect in the sitter's drapery. The lightness and variety in handling anticipate aspects of French painting a century later.



Countess Howe is the star of the current exhibition at Gainsborough's House, *Masterpieces from Kenwood: The Splendours of British & French Painting*, on show until 19 October, so there is plenty of time still for you to see it before it closes. As a reminder, Kenwood House is on the northern edge of Hampstead Heath in London, a beautiful Neoclassical mansion extensively remodelled by Robert Adam (1728–1792). It was bought in 1925 by Edward Guinness (1847–1927), 1st Earl of Iveagh, who made his fortune from his family's the company of Guinness brewery established in Dublin. With great acumen Lord Iveagh greatly increased the family's fortune, becoming one of the wealthiest members of the aristocracy of his day. In the short two-year period before his death, he formed a world-class collection of pictures, which with remarkable generosity he bequeathed to the nation, together with Kenwood House and its parkland, now administered by Historic England.



The Kenwood exhibition is the ideal moment to study Gainsborough's portraits—there are six others in the show, two attributed to him—alongside excellent examples by portraitists who were his rivals or near contemporaries. First and foremost is Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792), by whom there are also six pictures in the exhibition; George Romney (1734–1802); Henry Raeburn (1756–1823); and Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), represented by the beautiful *Miss Murray*, painted in 1825–27. Thanks to the viewer-friendly hang, which allows the works to be examined at close quarters, the differences in style between these exponents of British portraiture can be readily understood. Even the most objective visitor will surely agree that Gainsborough is the greatest painter of them all.

By happy coincidence. Kenwood House had to vacate much of its gallery space in order to display its loan exhibition *Heiress: Sargent's American Portraits*, which opened on 16 May and closes on 5 October, for roughly the same duration as the present loan exhibition of Kenwood pictures at Gainsborough's House. Through the unrivalled portraits of the ex-patriate American portrait painter John Singer Sargent (1856–1925), *Heiress: Sargent's American Portraits* illustrates the stories behind the American women (the 'heiresses' of the title) who crossed the Atlantic to marry British aristocrats to 'swop' American money for British titles. Had not the idea of lending this magnificent group of Kenwood pictures to Gainsborough's House been realized, they would have been placed in storage at a considerable cost in insurance. As a loan to Gainsborough's House, they are covered by Government Indemnity at no expense to either institution and we residents of Suffolk and nearby have the privilege of seeing them in ideal conditions.

Gainsborough's *Countess Howe* was originally paired with the artist's portrait of her husband, *Richard, 1st Earl Howe (1726–1799)*, which is not in the exhibition and remains in the possession of his descendants. The Earl's portrait was painted in the summer of 1763, a year before that of his wife. He stands facing the spectator dressed in naval costume, resting his right elbow on a rock. In the background is an estuary seen in sunlight, with trees lining one of its banks, while dark storm clouds gather overhead. When the two portraits were still together, *Countess Howe* would have hung to the left of that of her husband the Earl. Seen in this rapport, she moves forwards towards him as he stands, with one leg crossed over the other, as if waiting for her, but with his head gazing off in the opposite direction.



Well, here we are again – getting ready for the next Ride and Stride event on **13th September**. As you probably know, the Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride is a fundraiser for the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, which helps churches with vital repairs and projects. Here in Clare, some of us, by participating and gaining sponsorship, have helped raise money, half of which goes to SHCT and half to our own church funds.

If you are able to help in any way – cycling or walking from church to church, 'church sitting' on the day (welcoming and signing forms for riders, striders and vintage car drivers), please do let me know. I shall be leaving out sponsor forms and a church sitting rota in due course. And don't forget to sponsor someone if possible!

If you need further details, please see me. Mary Owen



Like many charities, the parish churches in our Benefice are facing a significant reduction in income and giving. While St Peter and St Paul is doing all that it can to mitigate expenses, these cannot be reduced entirely and so the Church is reliant on parishioners to continue to give generously.

Did you know? It costs more than £600/month in insurance and utilities alone?

One of the easiest and most efficient ways to donate is via the 'Parish Giving Scheme,' which allows individual donors to set up a regular gift to the parish of their choice by Direct Debit.

The Parish Giving Scheme is designed to support churches to fund their mission and ministry. It reduces the burden of work on church volunteers and provides a simple and secure service to donors to give online, by phone, or by posting a giving form. Parish churches benefit from improved cash flow and a resilient and reliable funding system.

TIP #1: You can now do this quickly and efficiently (it normally takes around 15 minutes) simply by calling the following telephone number: 0333 002 1271

You will need to have the following information to hand:

- Personal bank account details
- The name of the parish you wish to donate to. The PGS code for **Clare, St Peter & St Paul** is **330633175**
- You will need to confirm if you want to increase your gift in line with inflation each year (if you can, please say 'Yes')
- Confirm if you are eligible for Gift Aid

Alternatively, you can also sign up online:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/clare-st-peter-st-paul-suffolk/>

giftaid it

TIP #2: Donating through Gift Aid means the church can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you give. It does not cost any extra. Eligibility: Your donations qualify for Gift Aid as long as they're not more than four times the amount you've paid in tax in the tax year.

Leaving a Legacy

TIP #3: Leaving a gift in your Will is one of the most valuable and lasting ways you can continue to support the Church's mission and ministry in our community. A gift can be an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and can help keep our church alive and also transform its future.

FINAL TIP: Whether considering a legacy and regular gift: PLEASE DO NOT restrict your gift. The biggest challenge facing the church is not the maintenance of our beloved and historic 15th-century building, but our running costs and our need to pay the annual parish share of over £35,000! To support our parish clergy and lay ministers, train new clergy and lay ministers, provide central support function across the Diocese.

THANK YOU!

If you would like more information, please speak with Jane Turner (recently appointed Parish Giving Receiver): jturner4md@yahoo.co.uk / 07931 691547

National Safeguarding Audit

The independent safeguarding audit programme for the Church of England was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council and is overseen by the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team (NST). Led by the INEQE Safeguarding Group and working to a consistent framework, the audits test the sufficiency of safeguarding arrangements within CofE dioceses and cathedrals.

The audit for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich has begun with evidence gathering from the last 12 months. This must be submitted to INEQE by 6 August 2025. INEQE will then visit the Diocese in the autumn to carry out in-person interviews. Can you help us with the audit?

As part of the collection of evidence INEQE has requested that we ask people to complete a survey with their views on safeguarding in the Diocese. The surveys are anonymous and will only be seen by the auditors. A summary of findings will be included in the final report. There are several surveys to represent the diverse groups of people across the Diocese. Please complete any which you feel are applicable to you, the link below will take you to the surveys, where you can choose the one(s) relevant to you. All surveys need to be submitted by 6 August 2025.

Survey link: <https://ineqe.com/churchofengland/edmundsbury-and-ipswich/>

Some upcoming events across the Benefice



Cavendish Sale Trail

Saturday 2nd August from 10am

Join us for this Tabletop sale, held across the village in individual garages, drives or gardens.

FIND A BARGAIN OR A TREASURE!!

Refreshments and Maps available in St Mary's Church, Cavendish



One Day = 2 FREE Events for Children!

Wednesday 20th August sees two of our churches host special events for children.

In the morning from **10am until Noon** in **Stoke by Clare Church**, we have a very watery themed activity morning **"Water Babies and Children"** (*wear clothing that you can get wet in!*) and prepare to enjoy games, crafts, stories and more!

And then in the afternoon from **2.30pm until 4.30pm** join the team in **Hundon Church** for **All Saints Adventures** with even more crafts, singing, story telling and game.

Both morning and afternoon activities are aimed at pre-school and primary aged children – under 5's must be accompanied by an adult.



Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st August

Flower Festival in Hundon Church

Refreshments will be available



HARVEST APPEAL 2025

**PROTECT LIVES,
CULTURE & CREATION
IN THE AMAZON**

Support the powerful, faith-led work of the Anglican Diocese of the Amazon in partnership with USPG, empowering Indigenous communities to lead the call for climate justice and stand **together for creation.**

Find out more today at
harvest.uspg.org.uk



USPG⁺ PARTNERS IN
GLOBAL MISSION

  
@USPG GLOBAL

Registered Charity No : 234518



THIS HARVEST, WE ARE STANDING WITH COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE AMAZON

Climate justice begins with listening to the Indigenous communities who care for and live in harmony with the land. In the face of deforestation, polluted rivers, and cultural erasure, they are not backing down. They are defending creation **because it is home.**

Find out more today at
harvest.uspg.org.uk

YOUR GIFT CAN MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

£12

can fund educational materials for attending a climate justice workshop.

£26

Can support travel for a local leader to teach climate-smart and environmental techniques.

£75

can help an Indigenous leader travel to COP30 and speak out for creation.

   **@USPG GLOBAL**

Registered Charity No : 234518

Stour Valley Benefice - Services for August 2025

Sunday, 3rd August

Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Cavendish:	10:30	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
Clare:	11:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>

Sunday, 10th August

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
Hundon:	09:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Cavendish:	10:30	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
Clare:	16:00	Evensong	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>

Thursday, 14th August

Cavendish:	11:00	Wedding	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
------------	-------	---------	---------------------------------------

Saturday, 16th August

Cavendish:	13:00	Wedding	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
------------	-------	---------	-------------------------------------

Sunday, 17th August

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Liz Paxton</i>
Cavendish:	10:30	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
Clare:	11:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Liz Paxton</i>
Poslingford:	16:00	Evensong	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>

Saturday, 23rd August

Hundon:	14:00	Wedding	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
---------	-------	---------	-------------------------------------

Sunday, 24th August

Tenth Sunday after Trinity (Feast of St Bartholomew the Apostle)

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Wixoe	09:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
Cavendish:	10:30	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Clare:	11:00	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>
Cavendish	14:00	Baptism	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Hundon:	18:00	Evening Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>

Sunday, 31st August

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
-----------------	-------	----------------	-------------------------------------

Benefice Service venue and time to be confirmed *Led by The Revd Liz Paxton & Sarah Smith*

Parish Church News editor: J. Standen, 33 Callis Street, Clare CO10 8PX

Tel.: 01787 277134 / e-mail: admin@stanwo.co.uk

**The closing date for contributions to the Magazine is now the 25th of the month
(for inclusion in the next month's issue)**