

WELCOME TO OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY



If this is your first newsletter, **welcome!** If you have any questions about the church family, the Christian faith, or about our children's work, please do not hesitate to get in touch. This notice sheet covers the next two weeks and combines:

- Notices
- The church diary (including livestream & Zoom joining instructions)
- Prayers and readings for the morning services on Sunday 22nd Feb & 1st March 2026

Reflection - Let there be light?

A visitor to the UK recently commented to a member of my family that there must be corruption at the highest level ... because we are such a rich country and yet nothing seems to work! I suspect that I dismissed this comment too lightly, but have since been reminded about it recently following the revelations about Jeffrey Epstein and the behaviour of many powerful Western leaders in politics, business, science and the arts. I do not think I am alone at being appalled. I was particularly disgusted how Epstein advised people how to discredit those who had been abused when they sought justice in court.

I am conscious that these revelations have affected people within our parishes - probably not directly relating to Epstein, but with respect to other people abusing power. This has been weighing particularly heavily on my heart this week and I have been praying for any in our villages who have been affected that you would not feel alone, and that you would have trusted people to share with and to support you.

It can feel that we are so weak against the powerful, and yet I have been reminded that God will not tolerate injustice forever. Yes of course I have faith that at the end of this age justice will be restored to all the earth. But I am also praying that God will shine his light on corruption right now - and that of course includes any corruption or abuse in the church. Psalm 94 starts like this:

¹ The LORD is a God who avenges. O God who avenges, shine forth.

² Rise up, Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve.

³ How long, LORD, will the wicked, how long will the wicked be jubilant?

But the psalm ends like this:

²¹ The wicked band together against the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.

²² But the LORD has become my fortress, and my God the rock in whom I take refuge.

*²³ He will repay them for their sins and destroy them for their wickedness;
the Lord our God will destroy them.*

So I pray, Lord, Let there be light! And let us pray that justice and mercy will be held in right balance.

(Late addendum - I am very concerned to have just heard news about an allegation leading to a Bishop being suspended - I am glad it is being taken seriously).

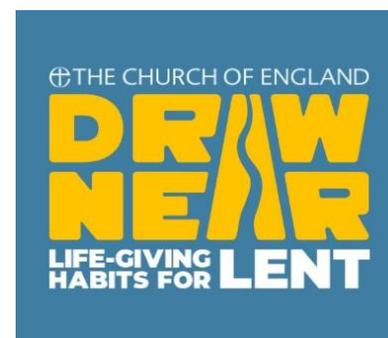
Rest in Peace Henry

It is with great sadness that we announce that Revd Henry Heath died peacefully at home recently. Our thoughts and prayers are particularly with Linda and the family. Henry's funeral will be at Holy Trinity Long Melford at 12.00pm, on the 27th Feb. There is a book of condolence at the back of church in Holy Trinity. **Please be aware that parking will be possible on the Lower Green, at Melford Hall car park & the Old School car park.**



Reflections for Lent

This year the Church of England's theme for Lent and Easter is 'Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent'. This year's theme is 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter. Booklets can be found at the back of Holy Trinity and will be brought to other services. Please help yourself.



Lent Lunches

We will be holding Lent Lunches at St Catherine's on the following Fridays - March 6, 13, 20 and 27th March, and the Maundy Thursday Supper will be in Holy Trinity on Thursday April 2. The lunches will be served from 12.30pm - soup, bread and cheese followed by tea or coffee and a short reflection. More information on the Maundy Thursday Supper will be available in due course. If you would like to help with the lunches or the supper please contact Denise - 07546 442946 and carpediem2@hotmail.co.uk.



Please note that the Lent Lunch on 27th February has been cancelled due to Henry's funeral

Posy Preparation

On Mothering Sunday we remember all mothers, past and present, physical and spiritual. Each year we try to honour mothers by handing out posies, and indeed we often have some left to bless friends and neighbours with – a simple and effective form of outreach. If you would like to join Rev Judith for a fun session preparing the posies Saturday afternoon, 14 March, please contact judithrev3@gmail.com or 01787 315689/mobile 07817 329 550.

Any donations of greenery would be welcome



FaithChat Please note that the date of the next meeting is 28th February - 10.30am at the home of David & Susie Tweed. If you would like to find out more about this discussion group on matters of faith please contact Malcolm or Judith on 01787 315689.

Are you feeling useless - be inspired!

Recently I read about the the background of a famous hymn - one which we often sing at church and was even used by the evangelist Billy Graham during his crusades. Thy hymn is **“Just as I am without one plea”**. The text was written in 1835 by Charlotte Elliott, an English poet and hymn writer. Elliott had struggled for years with chronic illness and feelings of spiritual inadequacy. During a visit from Swiss evangelist César Malan, she was encouraged to come to Christ “just as she was,” and wrote the hymn as an expression of simple, trusting faith. So an ill, frustrated, and often bedbound person ... was able to do something amazing simply by offering her ‘little’. What can you offer ... just as you are?



Rest in Peace Revd Julia Perkins

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Julia Perkins who fought with grace and courage against the horrible disease of cancer. Julia served in Glemsford as a self-supporting minister, and attended services in our benefice regularly. Julia was an inspiration to us all and will be dearly missed.

Suggestions for prayer include:

- We pray that God would use this season of Lent to open our hearts once again to his presence, and to prepare us to respond to the Good News of Easter.
- We pray for God’s light to shine on areas of corruption and injustice.
- We pray for world leaders that they would remain humble, seek peace, and be open to the Spirit of God.
- We remember before God those who have recently died including Maria Ablitt, William Hammond, Henry Heath, and Julia Perkins, and we pray for those friends & family who mourn
- We pray for those in need of God’s presence or his healing touch including 4-year old Alia, Barbara Brady, Anne Bush, David Bremer, Elizabeth Clarke, Phillip Cole, Christopher Freeman, Robert Hawkins, William Hawkins, Judith Mills, and Mary Tuffen.

Diary

Sun 22 nd	10.30am	Communion at Holy Trinity *
	6.30pm	Communion at Lawshall
Mon 23 rd	9.30am	Connect Baby & Toddler Group at St Catherine's
Tues 24 th	9.00am	Morning Prayer #
	7.30pm	A&S Home Group
Thurs 26 th	10.00am	Coffee Caravan at Shimpling Village Hall
	2.00pm	Funeral at Holy Trinity – Maria Ablitt
	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Fri 27 th	12.00pm	Funeral at Holy Trinity – Henry Heath
Sat 28 th	10.30am	FaithChat
Sun 1 st March	9.00am	Communion at Alpheton
	10.30am	Communion at Holy Trinity *
	4.00pm	'Sing Lawshall'
Mon 2 nd	7.30pm	Lawshall Home group
Tues 3 rd	9.00am	Morning Prayer #
Thurs 5 th	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Fri 6 th	12.30pm	Lent Lunch at St Catherine's
Sun 8 th	10.30am	Communion at Holy Trinity *
	4.00pm	Pub Social, Bush Inn, Shimpling

*** Livestream Joining Instructions for services at Holy Trinity**

- Google the five words "Holy Trinity Long Melford Facebook" or [click here](#) to open the church's Facebook page (scroll down a bit to see the feed).
- Please note that you do not need a Facebook account yourself in order to watch the livestream.

Morning Prayer Zoom Meeting ID: 816 5338 9796, Passcode: 289895, or click [here](#).

[Readings for the 22nd February 2026 – Lent 1](#)**Collect (prayer for the day)**

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; 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**

Reading**Romans 5:12-19**

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned –

¹³To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. ¹⁴Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

¹⁵But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: the judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

¹⁸Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Old Testament Reading**Genesis 2:15-17,3:1-7**

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.'

3 Now the snake was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden"?'

²The woman said to the snake, 'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die."'

⁴'You will not certainly die,' the snake said to the woman. ⁵'For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Gospel Reading**Matthew 4:1-11**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.'

⁴ Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."'

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

⁷ Jesus answered him, 'It is also written: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. ⁹ 'All this I will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me.'

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You O Christ

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven; by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope, and strengthen our love: teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

*Readings for the 1st March 2026 – Lent 2***Collect** (*prayer for the day*)

Almighty God, by the prayer and discipline of Lent may we enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings, and by following in his Way come to share in his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

First Reading**Romans 4:1-5**

It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring – not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written: 'I have made you a father of many nations.' He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed – the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Old Testament Reading**Genesis 12:1-4a**

The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

² 'I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you;

I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

³ 'I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran.

Gospel Reading**John 3:1-7**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

Glory to you, O Lord

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.'

³ Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.'

⁴ 'How can someone be born when they are old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!'

⁵ Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'

⁹ 'How can this be?' Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰ 'You are Israel's teacher,' said Jesus, 'and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our

testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.'

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You O Christ

(Bible readings courtesy of Bible Gateway New International Version - UK (NIVUK))

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**