

FUTURE SERVICES

www.astwellparishes.org.uk

MARCH/APRIL 2026

Sunday 29th March – Palm Sunday

10.30am Syresham Palm Sunday Benefice
Holy Communion

Monday 30th March

7pm Whitfield Compline

Tuesday 31st March

5.30pm Syresham Compline

Wednesday 1st April

7pm Lois Weedon Compline

Maundy Thursday 2nd April

6.30pm Helmdon Passover Meal &
Holy Communion

Good Friday 3rd April

9.30am Lois Weedon Meditation
10.30am Syresham Procession Church to
Chapel (inc service)
11.15am Wappenham Meditation
2.30pm Helmdon Procession from War
Memorial
3.00pm Helmdon Good Friday Liturgy
in Church

Easter Saturday 4th April

9.00pm Plumpton Easter Vigil & First
Communion of Easter

Easter Sunday 5th April

6.15am Radstone Dawn Fire
9.00am Whitfield Holy Communion
9.30am Lois Weedon Holy Communion
10.15am Helmdon Holy Communion
& Baptism
11.15am Syresham Holy Communion
11.30am Wappenham Holy Communion

Wednesday 8th April

10am Helmdon Midweek Holy
Communion

(pls note that this replaces the service usually held on first Wed of the month)

Sunday 12th April – Second Sunday of Easter

9.00am Wappenham Breakfast Church
9.30am Lois Weedon Morning Prayer
10.30am Helmdon Holy Communion
11.15am Syresham Morning Prayer
2.00pm Lois Weedon Baptism

Sunday 19th April – Third Sunday of Easter

9.30am Lois Weedon Holy Communion
10.30am Helmdon Praise & Prayer
11.15am Syresham Holy Communion
11.15am Wappenham Praise & Prayer



PEWS NEWS

The Astwell Benefice

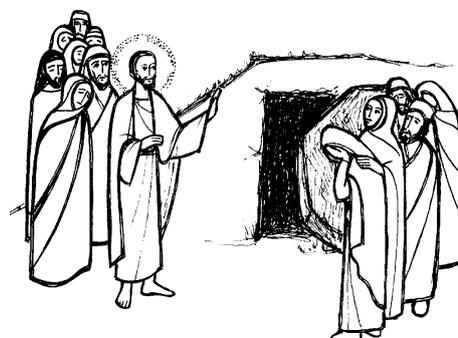
St Mary Magdalene Helmdon with Stuchbury & St Lawrence Radstone, St James the Great Syresham with St John the Evangelist Whitfield, St Mary & St Peter Lois Weedon with Weston & Plumpton, and St Mary the Virgin Wappenham.
www.astwellparishes.org.uk
<https://www.facebook.com/astwellbenefice>

Sunday 22nd March 2026

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Services in the Benefice:

9.30am Lois Weedon Matins
9.30am Whitfield Holy Communion
10.30am Helmdon Morning Prayer
11.15am Syresham Praise & Prayer
11.15am Wappenham Holy Communion



LENT SESSIONS

At this year's Lent sessions, we will be reading and discussing David Ford's

'Meeting God in John'

The sessions will run as follows:

at Helmdon Reading Room on Mondays from 23rd February till 30th March, at 11am

and

at Syresham Chapel Schoolroom on Tuesdays from 24th February until 24th March, at 7.40pm

BENEFICE CONTACTS

Reverend Hugh White (Rector):

Tel: 01869 347889

Email: rectorastwell@gmail.com

Please contact the Rector or your Churchwarden/Representative if you have queries about baptisms, weddings, or funerals.

Paul Stothard: Reader & Lay Chair

stothy@live.co.uk, Tel: 01295 760816

Alice Palmer: Benefice Treasurer

alice.palmer16@btinternet.com, Tel: 01280 850252

Fiona Mason: Benefice Safeguarding Officer

fomason@hotmail.com Tel: 01280 850439

Sheena Warren: Chair of Social & Fundraising

Committee sheena@bellplantation.co.uk,

Tel: 01327 860230

Wiggy Smith: Chair of Pastoral Care Committee

wiggysmith44@gmail.com, Tel: 01295 760953

Sarah Rudkin: Benefice Secretary & Pews News

Editor,

rectorastwellbenefice@aol.co.uk, Tel: 01327 830965

Churchwardens /Representatives (for individual church matters):

Helmdon: Cliff Netten, apnetten@hotmail.com

& Paul Stothard, stothy@live.co.uk

Lois Weedon & Weston: Frank Hunter

frank.hunter@btinternet.com

Radstone: Penny Bonner

penny.bonner@btconnect.com

Syresham: Alice Palmer

alice.palmer16@btinternet.com

Wappenham: Sheena Warren

sheena@bellplantation.co.uk

Whitfield: Claire Bonner cbonner00@gmail.com

Dates for your Diary

MARCH

Sat 28th *The Friends of St Mary Magdalene are holding a 'Music and Food' quiz at Helmdon Reading Room, 7:30pm*

MAY

Sat 16th *Notability Concert, Syresham Church, 7.30pm*

Regular Coffee Mornings

- **Helmdon** - Tuesdays, 10 am-12 noon in Reading Room
- **Whitfield** - first Tuesday of the month, 10am-12 noon, in Village Hall.
- **Wappenham** - first Wednesday of the month, 10 am-12 noon, in Village Hall.
- **Lois Weedon** - 10am until 12 noon, first Friday of the month, in Village Hall.

Benefice Bulletin – 22nd March 2026

On Monday next week Year One of Helmdon School will be coming to Helmdon Church to find out about how churches are decorated in Lent. Wrong season, really. They came towards Christmas last year on the same decoration quest – but at Christmas there was a bit more that we could offer decoration-wise than in no-flower Lent. Still, we will have a good time together talking about Holy Week and Easter and each child will get a palm cross (a bit of seasonal decoration, I suppose), so I don't think they'll feel short-changed. But maybe we should offer them a bit more.

This Sunday is Passion Sunday, the beginning of Passiontide, the two weeks leading up to Easter. A lot of the writing on Passiontide and its characteristics I've been looking at quickly slips into Holy Week, the second week of Passiontide, and into an account of what goes on in the Triduum – the great three days from Maundy Thursday evening to dawn at Easter. However, there are things that some Christian denominations, and some Anglican churches, do that happen – or don't happen - at the beginning of Passiontide.

As to the not happening: if you usually ring bells at the Mass, you might not do it in Passiontide; not very relevant in Astwell Communion services as they are (at the moment) and not helpful for the Helmdon School visit (or should I get out my liturgical bells?). It's also suggested that churches might turn the dial down on musical excitement in general; I think the most excitable, singing-wise, we might get in Astwell on Sunday is 'At the name of Jesus' and I feel no inclination to put this (with either possible tune) under an interdict.

But then there's something that happens positively in some churches on Passion Sunday: the veiling of the cross, something added, not withdrawn. That might be a decoration we could put before the Helmdon children (if decoration is the right word) and even before ourselves – fish about in your vestries and you might find a purple veil. The idea of that veiling in Passiontide comes from John's Gospel as it records the period between the raising of Lazarus (this Sunday's gospel) and Jesus' concealing himself before his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday: *Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.* For us, though, the unusualness of a veiled cross might give our attention to Jesus and his sacrifice for us a renewed freshness and intensity and reveal more of, rather than conceal, Jesus' love of us.

The Helmdon children will notice the veiled cross and ask about it.

But what about you, as individuals, in Passiontide? It's a time for focussing on Jesus' passion ahead of Holy Week. How are you going to do that?

With blessings,

Hugh