



# TOGETHER IN FAITH



Diocese of  
Chelmsford

Serving the parishes of Clavering, Langley, Arkesden,  
Wicken Bonhunt, Manuden and Berden

Newsletter for the week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026 (16/26)



Welcome to our  
benefice newsletter.  
I am Reverend Gary  
Fleming, Vicar to the  
Clavering Benefice.  
A group of six,  
stunning rural  
parishes in the  
north-west of Essex.

## THE GREAT SHEPHERD

BY REVEREND GARY FLEMING

My sermon on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, a day when we reflect on Jesus the shepherd of the flock, focused on his role as gatekeeper. The one who lies at the entrance to the sheepfold, the one who protects those inside and is the judge and controller of all who may enter through the gate. Jesus, calls us as a member of His flock and the one from whom we hear a comforting and reassuring call to follow. However the reading from John 10:1-10 warns

of the risk of responding to those who lead us away from the leadership of Christ with promises or other forms of satisfaction and fulfilment. And reflecting on the call of Jesus to follow, whose way is gentle and reassuring and that we are called as we are, loved unconditionally. The other types of fulfilment might include and involve consumerism, addiction and falling into crime and darker patterns of life in which we are compared to an unachievable standard against which we measure our self. However we are reminded that Jesus only calls us to love, and accept that we are loved. This is the way and what we are measured against for entry into Christ sheepfold. Led by Christ the good shepherd who may simply ask, 'How well did you love'. Amen

## Services

### Week 4th May- 10<sup>th</sup> May

#### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May

9.30am - Holy Communion (GF)  
Manuden

9.30am - Morning Prayer (SE)  
Arkesden

11.00am - Holy Communion followed  
by APCM (GF) Clavering

11.00am - Holy Communion (PC)  
Langley

5.00pm - Sacred Space (GF) Wicken  
Bonhunt

#### Wednesday 6th May

9.00am - Holy Communion, Clavering  
(A Shorter said service of 25 minutes)

#### Thursday 7th May

9.00 am - Morning Prayer,  
Manuden

4.30 pm - Evening Prayer,  
Wicken Bonhunt

#### Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May

9.30am - Morning Worship (AA&RT)-  
Wicken Bonhunt

9.30am - Short Said Holy  
Communion (PC) Berden

11.00am - Messy Church (VB/GP)  
Manuden

11.00am - Morning Worship (DA)  
Clavering Christian Centre

## Readings

#### Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> May

Acts 7 55 - end

John 14 1-14

#### Sun 10<sup>th</sup> May

Acts 17 22-31

John 14 15-21

## Prayers

### Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Easter

O Lord, from whom all good things do come:  
Grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy  
holy inspiration we may think those things  
that be good, and by thy merciful guiding  
may perform the same; through our Lord  
Jesus Christ.

Amen

## Benefice Prayers

This week we pray for all in public office and  
for calm and responsible debate and  
discussion. We pray for all who shape our  
communities and that we may be able to  
listen to each other with a calm and loving  
posture.

We pray for all political candidate preparing  
for local elections and that they may be  
encouraged and give attention to the call of  
Christ to love those neighbour and care for  
the most vulnerable in our society. We pray  
for all staff at voting centres that they be  
respected and give thanks for public service.

We pray for candidates who may not be  
successful and that they are able to continue  
to focus their public spirited sense of service  
to continue to support their local  
communities. Amen



## **Stride by Stride Walking Fellowship Walk Report from 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

**Suffice to say that we had a lovely time on our walk on the 24<sup>th</sup> April. A group of us met at Poppies Barn Café in Langley. The weather was bright and sunny as we set off in an easterly direction towards Meesden.**

**Great conversation and company are the theme of the walks and we were pleased to welcome a new member as well. The group was a mix of abilities, so we moved at a leisurely pace to enjoy the day. Along the route, we were treated to a spectacular display of local wildlife. We saw a number of hares and birds of prey. We saw deer herds, including a white deer. The final treat was to see all the new lambs in the local fields.**



**The walk ended back at Poppies Barn where we enjoyed cake and coffee. A lovely time was had by all, having walked for 2 hours and covering 4 miles at a gentle pace. Walks are normally planned for the last Friday of each month. Our next series of walks are planned on the date below,**

**May 22<sup>nd</sup> (Not the last Friday) - Starting from St Nicholas' Church, Berden**

**June 26<sup>th</sup> - Starting from St Mary's Church, Arkesden.**

**July 31st - Starting from St Mary's Church, Manuden**

**PLEASE NOTE NO WALK IN AUGUST**

# **Reverend Gary Fleming appointed as Area Dean for the Saffron Walden Deanery**

**Bishop Guli has this week announced that I have been appointed as the Area Dean for the Saffron Walden Deanery.**

**I was pleased to be able to accept the position to support the benefice, the deanery and the diocese. In doing so we give that for the previous post holder Reverend Jeremy Trew, and for all that he did for the deanery over his 5-year tenure in the post.**

**As I enter into this role there will be a commissioning service which will be held at 4pm on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, at St Nicholas Church Berden starting at 4pm.**

**This will be a service of evening prayer with the commissioning of the Area Dean.**

**I do hope you can join us for this occasion in the life of the benefice and the deanery.**

**With blessings,  
Reverend Gary Fleming**



## Bible Study Group

There will be no Bible Study group on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.

We continue on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May as we journey through the Gospel according to Mark. If you would like to find out more about studying the Bible, or have a discussion about faith, please do contact Reverend Gary Fleming whose details are at the bottom of this newsletter.

## OPEN DOOR YOUTH CLUB

The youth club has been a joy to get started, and we are constantly revising our offering to the community. In response to feedback, we are pleased to announce that we will be running two youth club nights. Starting in May 2026, the second Wednesday of the month will be for children in school years 4, 5, 6. The fourth Wednesday of the month will be for school years 7 - 11. If you would like to volunteer. Please do get in touch with me, Reverend Gary Fleming

## How to get in touch

If you would like to receive this weekly notice sheet by email or have your event publicised in it, please send details to the benefice office email which is [ClaveringBenefice@outlook.com](mailto:ClaveringBenefice@outlook.com).

Office admin asst: Jane Cowley working from home.

For pastoral or service related matters, please contact Reverend Gary Fleming on 07491 402273 or email on [revdgaryfleming@outlook.com](mailto:revdgaryfleming@outlook.com) (Vicar does not work Mondays)

## What's on

5<sup>th</sup> May - 7.00pm Talk by Mark Trapmore  
Maps of Berden St Nicholas Berden.

Refreshments available

Donations to Berden Church

6<sup>th</sup> May - 10.00am Crafts and Chat Clavering  
Community centre

10<sup>th</sup> May - 10.00am Beat the Bounds walk  
from St Nicholas Berden. All welcome. Please  
bring a packed lunch

16<sup>th</sup> May - Church Fete, St Mary's Manuden  
1pm - 3 pm

**Langley Lunches** - are held every month on  
the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month.

Please contact Liz Cable to book on:

Phone: 01763258043 or 07519741774

Email: [langleychurch@gmail.com](mailto:langleychurch@gmail.com)

**Mondays. 9-10.30 am** - Mums and Chums,  
held every Monday in term time in the church  
in Manuden



Have you held long unanswered  
questions about faith?

Are you curious about faith  
matters?

## Would you like to find out more?

Starting in September, we will be running a series  
of evening meetings to explore faith through  
conversation. Supported by well-produced and  
good-quality materials through the Alpha  
program. To find out more, please do contact me,  
Reverend Gary Fleming.

# HERITAGE CAFE

## “LET’S TALK!”

Come and meet up with old friends, make new ones, share stories of living in Berden and learn more about your community

**First FRIDAY of the month**

**10.30am -12pm**

**Starting Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May, and on  
5th June, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 7<sup>th</sup> Aug, 4<sup>th</sup> Sept  
at St. Nicholas Church, Berden**



To find out more

E: [natalie.trapmore@outlook.com](mailto:natalie.trapmore@outlook.com) T: 07876 478717  
or turn up on the day...

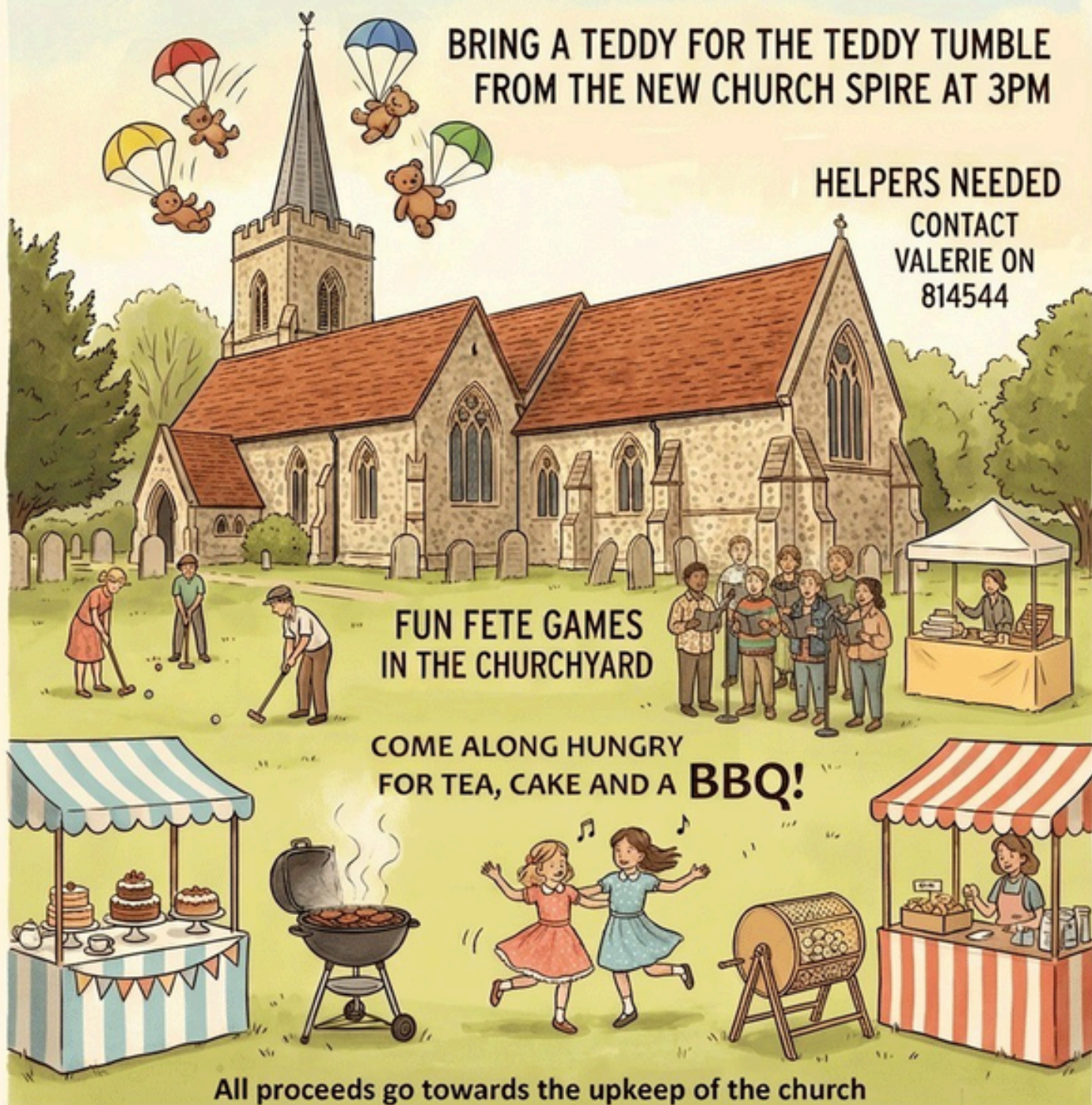


# ST MARY'S MANUDEN CHURCH FETE

SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 12-3PM

BRING A TEDDY FOR THE TEDDY TUMBLE  
FROM THE NEW CHURCH SPIRE AT 3PM

HELPERS NEEDED  
CONTACT  
VALERIE ON  
814544



FUN FETE GAMES  
IN THE CHURCHYARD

COME ALONG HUNGRY  
FOR TEA, CAKE AND A **BBQ!**

All proceeds go towards the upkeep of the church

