



All Saints, Little Casterton



St Peter & St Paul, Great Casterton

Four Churches



Together

All Saints, Pickworth



St Peter's Tickencote



**June
2026**

Church Diary – June 2026

Day	Time	Activity	Place
1	2.00pm	Book Club	Sue Stretton's
2			
3	10.00am	Celtic Prayers	Church Hall
4	9.00am 7.00pm	Parish Breakfast Home Group	Garden Centre Harvard
5	10.00am	Toddlers	Church Hall
6			
7	10.30am	Holy Communion No Service	Gt. Casterton Little Casterton
8			
9			
10	10.00am 10.30am	Celtic Prayers Community Coffee	Church Hall Church Hall
11			
12	10.00am	Toddlers	Church Hall
13			
14	10.30am	Café Church	Church Hall
15			
16			
17	10.00am 10.30am	Celtic Prayers Community Coffee	Church Hall Church Hall
18	7.00pm	Home Group	Harvard
19	10.00am	Toddlers	Church Hall
20	12.00am	Saturday Live	Great Casterton
21	10.30am 9.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion	Great Casterton Little Casterton
22			
23			
24	10.00am 10.30am	Celtic Prayers Community Coffee	Church Hall Church Hall
25			
26	10.00am	Toddlers	Church Hall
27	2.00pm	Family Fun Day	Church Hall
28	10.30am	Morning Praise	Church Hall
29	2.00pm	Book Club	Mary Sproson's
30	7.30pm	Parish (Parson's) Pints	The Crown

FOUR CHURCHES NEWS

Parishes of Great and Little Casterton, Pickworth and Tickencote

Embracing Change:

June 2026

After a period of stability, the churches in Great Casterton, Little Casterton and Pickworth are experiencing a period of change. Change is an inevitable part of life whether in our personal relationships, work places, church or society at large. While it can be daunting, embracing change opens the door to new experiences, and personal growth.

One of the key benefits of embracing change is the cultivation of resilience. When faced with uncertainty and expected shifts, resilient individuals find ways to adjust their mindset and behavior. This flexibility not only helps us manage challenges but also enables us to take advantage of chances that may otherwise pass us by.

But the time this edition of the Newsletter appears the Benefice Churchwardens will have met with the Archdeacon and wardens for Ryhall and Essendine to discuss and agree the best way forward for all of the churches. How our services and other activities happen may need to evolve but by welcoming new ideas and approaches we will be able to keep our churches growing and vibrant.

Of course, change is not always easy. It can bring discomfort and anxiety. However, by shifting our perspective from fear to curiosity, we can transform apprehension into excitement for what lies ahead. Seeking support from trusted friends, mentors or colleagues can also make transitions smoother.

Ultimately, embracing change is about recognizing that life's unpredictability is not a threat, but an invitation to grow. By accepting and adapting to change, we empower ourselves to shape our future and maximise our potential

Peter

**The Church of England Parish of Great Casterton
and Tickencote**

Church of St Peter and St Paul, Great Casterton

Following the retirement of the Rev. Don McGarrigle our parish is now in a period of 'vacancy' (also known as an interregnum). During this time, all the life and worship of the Church continues under the oversight of our Churchwardens and the Rural Dean.

Churchwardens:

Peter Bryan: 07507 299436

Geoffrey Archer: 07803 423010

They are working closely with the Diocese to begin the process of finding our new priest.

Please direct any enquiries about the Church or services:
Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals etc., directly to the Churchwardens.
Thank you.

All enquiries regarding
All Saints Little Casterton and All Saints Pickworth
during the vacancy should be directed to the Church Wardens

Little Casterton	Tony Dolby	01780 766897
Pickworth	Charles Gilman	01780 411017
	Goldie Barwell	01780 410272

Church Projects

Moving on from our heating project we are now fund raising to renew the church hall kitchen which needs updating to meet current standards. You can help by coming along to and supporting our social events where all monies raised will go towards church projects, or you can make a one off or regular donation by using our QR code.



We are very grateful for any support you can give us.

QUINGO

Approximately 40 people attended our Quingo Quiz evening on May 16th 2026.

A lively and fun evening hosted by Joan and her friend, Dee. Some of the questions were a bit tricky but mostly easy and got us thinking!

The fun part is when the bingo numbers are called, so it doesn't matter if you knew all the answers, every person's card is different according to where the numbers were located in the grid.

A prize was given to the first person to fill a corner square of nine correct answers in each of the two games.

A well-stocked bar and raffle helped to raise £700 for our church funds before expenses.

Grateful thanks to all who came to support us and to those who organised the event.



Our next social event will be our

Summer Fun Fete on Saturday June 27th from 2.00-5.00pm

in the church hall and grounds. Lots of games, stalls, teas.

Please save the date in your diary for a great afternoon

Millstones

Millstones are mentioned in the bible at least eleven times. Their qualities are used as examples of issues that writers were talking about. There are some things we cannot explain in words such as trying to define the differences between red and green to a person born blind. In bible times everyone knew what millstones were. So they were used for several lessons. Mills had two stones. The bottom fixed one was very hard and flat. The top one could be a small hand held stone or a large round wheel that was often dragged about by a donkey or slave. In early bible times every household would have had some sort of a mill for grinding. Possession meant the difference between survival and starvation, life or death. Wheat and other cereal crops contain much of the nutrients we need for life, but they must be processed. That processing involves crushing or grinding and then cooking to make bread or similar. Grinding was done by rubbing the grains between the two flat stones until they became flour. To get the two stones with flat faces without iron or other tools available was difficult. Possession was so important that the Mosaic Law said that a millstone may not be taken in lieu of a debt. That could be equivalent to murder.

Hard. That bottom stone was very hard and did not wear away quickly or the flour was full of sand. In modern times we might say “as hard as iron”. But then Jeremiah talks about the enemy monster which has a heart as hard as a bottom millstone. That gave the immediate picture of someone who could not be persuaded by high level talks or similar “diplomacy”. Paul says in Galatians that if anyone preaches anything different to what he has said, let him be accursed. Anathema is the original word he used. That is strong. Jesus said to some church people “depart from me for I never knew you”. These are hard quotes and need thought.

Precious The Bible records an incident where an enemy invaded a city and the inhabitants took refuge in a tower. The attackers piled branches around the tower which, if ignited, would be the end of those inhabitants. We read that a woman, in desperation, grabbed her precious top millstone and dropped it on the head of the leader of the attackers which cracked his skull. The attackers were so upset they gave up and went away. That one woman was prepared to forfeit her life by hunger by sacrificing her precious millstone rather than all her fellow townsfolk being killed by the enemy. It was the only thing she had to hand. In the event the only one who died was the man with the cracked skull. However, in the Bible account, the cracked skull did not immediately kill that leader. But he was so ashamed that he might have been killed by a woman that he commanded his servant to stick a sword through him which proved to be terminal. Is pride precious?

Fatal. A millstone had to be heavy enough to grind the cereal grains but light enough for someone to push it round and then lift it off to sweep up the flour. Everyone knew what a millstone was like and Jesus used that knowledge when He says “If you give one of these simple childlike believers a hard time, bullying or taking advantage of their simple trust, you’ll soon wish you hadn’t. You’d be better off dropped in the middle of the lake



with a millstone draped around your neck". Fatal. Just like the woman on the roof of the tower treated the obvious attackers. Jesus follows this warning saying if your hand, foot or eye distract you, cut them off in Mark chapter 9. He is not saying that the things you might do or go to or even see are bad in themselves. It is when they cause distractions. Jesus did not say a millstone was bad. It could be used badly.

Conclusions. Words have limitations. Ezekiel says "I saw the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord". He was just lost for words. Millstones here are used to illustrate lessons which may not be otherwise defined. Jesus uses lots of parables in the gospels to illustrate points. Some of them must have been hilarious to the people then. Does the Christian faith have hard limits? Is the Nicean creed the basis of our belief? The dropped millstone is recorded in two of the bible books. Jesus' condemnation of inaccurate teaching is in each of the first three gospels. So these things must be important to avoid the millstone treatment. What is understood to be precious to people now, a computer, TV, mobile, front garden? Rowan Williams has said that the CofE could almost be idolatrous with its fixations on procedures and rituals and missing its millstone

Bob

Quote of the Month

Answer from last month - Mahatma Gandhi said "Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

This month's quote: Who said this? *"Be yourself, everyone else is taken"*.



June Around the World

June sees the Summer Solstice celebrated in the northern hemisphere on Sunday June 21st. June 5th is World Environment Day, June 8th is World Ocean's Day and June 11th sees the start of Football's World Cup being held in USA. London Tech week is from June 8th, and Wimbledon starts on June 29th. Further afield, the USA celebrates pride month for the whole of June, Festas Juninas is held across the whole of Brazil for the whole month to celebrate the harvest, and June is an excellent month for travel to places like Bali, Peru, Canada and Europe. June has 3 birthstones associated with it - Pearl, Moonstone, and Alexandrite. And there are 2 primary birth flowers for June - they are the Rose, and Honeysuckle

Word Challenge

How many words can you make of 3 letters or more from the word "Parsonages".

The New Bishop of Brixworth

The next Bishop of Brixworth will be The Venerable Dr Alex Hughes, currently Archdeacon of Cambridge in the Diocese of Ely, Downing Street has announced today.

On Friday 8th May Alex was welcomed To the Diocese starting at Bishop Stortford School in Kettering where students will interview Alex and discuss his hopes and aspirations for his new role. Following this, Alex will meet with clergy from Wellingborough and Kettering deaneries before visiting the Nine Bridges Benefice in Peterborough to hear about community engagement in a rural benefice on the edge of the city. The day will conclude with evensong at Peterborough Cathedral.

Alex brings a wide breadth of experience from across the Church of England, having served in parish ministry, diocesan leadership and episcopal support roles. He was ordained in the Diocese of Oxford in 2000 and served his curacy at Headington Quarry before becoming Chaplain to the Bishop of Portsmouth. From 2008 to 2014 he was parish priest of St Luke's and St Peter's in inner-city Portsmouth and since 2014 has served as Archdeacon of Cambridge.

As Bishop of Brixworth, Alex will hold responsibility for different ministry areas, including education, something that Alex describes as being 'in my DNA'. Both his parents were teachers, and he has held significant governance roles within church schools, including chairing governing bodies at both primary and secondary level and holding the role of Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education in Ely Diocese for 12 years.

Alongside his work in education, Alex has experience of both urban and rural ministry. As Archdeacon of Cambridge he has oversight of a large and diverse area, including the city and its rural surroundings. 'My favourite day of the week is Sunday' he says, 'I love being out among the parishes, whether it's a big service with hundreds of people or just a tiny little village church with 3 or 4 faithful worshippers and a cat.'

Throughout his life and ministry Alex has enjoyed the full range of church traditions, including visiting 3 different churches across the week whilst at university, which alongside his varied roles he describes as giving him 'an unusually wide appreciation of the Church of England'.

Welcoming Alex to his new role, Bishop Debbie said; 'I am delighted to welcome Alex to the Diocese and look forward to working closely with him, and welcoming Alex to his new role, Bishop Debbie said; 'I am delighted to welcome Alex to the Diocese and look forward to working closely with him. His deep sense of God's call was clear throughout the process, and I am grateful to everyone who prayed for us. It will be a joy to get to know him better and to discern together God's will for our life and mission.'

Alex is married to Sarah, a psychotherapist, and they have two sons, Thomas and Joseph. A keen musician, Alex finds joy in listening to live music in all its forms, from rock and roll to classical orchestral pieces. An enthusiastic runner, his other favourite mode of transport is his beloved motorbike. Alex will be consecrated in July and will take up his role in the Diocese in the autumn.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Priest in Charge	Vacancy	
Benefice Safeguarding Officer	Carol Maynard	01780 755687
Great Casterton Hall Bookings	Steve Cunningham	07810 404748
Newsletter	Mary Sproson	01780 762933
Church Wardens:		
Great Casterton	Peter Bryan	07507 299436
	Geoffrey Archer	07803 423010
Little Casterton	Tony Dolby	01780 766897
Pickworth	Charles Gilman	01780 411017
	Goldie Barwell	01780 410272

Have You Ever Visited? - Wimpole Estate in Cambridge ?

Wimpole hall is a historic National Trust property about 7 miles outside of Cambridge. The Wimpole Estate offers some very pleasant walks around the parkland, including up to a folly tower which is well preserved. Nice cafe's and places to grab a coffee on the go. An extensive second hand bookshop which has become a feature at many National Trust properties recently. And as well as the interior of the house which, as you would expect from the national trust is beautifully kept and curated, there is a working farm area with play park for the children and animals to see and pet. Last time I visited - there were a couple of magnificent shire horses. This time, although we did not get as far as the animals, we heard from many excited children as they passed by, that there were lambs, piglets and chicks to see and hold. By car down the A1 and then the A14, it takes about 55 minutes to get there. Car parking is well organised - as it needs to be, there were an enormous number of visitors on the day we were there. National Trust cards give free entry while for those paying it would cost £22 for an adult and £11 for a child (£55 for a family) . Tickets covering just the gardens and parkland are available for lower prices (approx. £12 per adult), and under 5s are free.

Saturday Lunchtime Live update

On Saturday 10th May Anna Love Taylor joined join us to sing Contemporary Christian music to an audience of about 20 people.

With enthusiasm, joy and her own inimitable style, Anna sang beautifully and with passion for just over an hour. Explaining why she had chosen the songs she was able to tell us about her spirituality and faith.

Starting with *'Come, Jesus, Come'* we enjoyed listening to stories about the reasons for her choices - in the hard times she sang about the *'Goodness of God'* and *'Rescue'* and in the happy times she sang about the *'Mighty name of Jesus'* and *'I'll Abide With You'*.

Finishing with one of her own compositions she sang for her daughter Eva, who had joined her in recording the backing music.



An amazing and uplifting performance of Christian music. Many thanks for the support of family and friends helping us to raise over £100.

**Our next Saturday Live will be June 20th - Geoff and friends.
Please come.**

Do you remember?

..... frantically inching down a searingly hot slide as your legs stuck to the metal and squeaked the whole way down?

Those were some GOOD TIMES!

Flowers of the Meadow

June really is the loveliest month for meadow flowers. We have been allowing the churchyard grass to grow long and cutting it twice a year for a number of years. In the south churchyard this has resulted in an explosion in the number of Snowdrops, Primroses and Cuckoo



flower and hidden away at the back of the graveyard there are some bluebells.

Progress in the northern churchyard has been slower and the flowering plants less obvious to a casual glance. One of the showiest flowers in a meadow is the Oxeye Daisy, also called Moon Daisy and Moonpenny; the large white petals drawing pollinators into the bright yellow centre. You will see one or two appearing in the graveyard this year and more will follow in time.

Hidden in the grass we have Ribwort Plantain, Ground Ivy, and Geraniums. Also, Ragwort which is a food plant for the Cinnabar moth. Their caterpillars are bright yellow and black striped, feeding heavily on the plant in summer, often leaving only bare stems. They use the plant's toxins for protection, becoming poisonous themselves. Ragwort supports more than 40 other insect species and is a very important source of nectar.

In time we may find a variety of vetches, members of the pea family. You may find Tufted Vetch – look out for 6-spot burnet moths on this one. Bush Vetch and Common Vetch are too, and a great many churchyards contain Bird's-foot-trefoil also known as Eggs and Bacon because of the mix of yellow and orange on the flowers. Richard Mabey, in his fantastic book *Flora Britannica* lists many names for Bird's-foot-trefoil including Hen and Chickens, Tom Thumb, Granny's Toenails, Cuckoo's Stocking and Dutchman's Clogs.

Our Churchyard meadow acts as a pit stop or cafe for insects and can buzz with life. We have plenty of spiders and Ladybirds. There are also some rather large red ant hills which are best avoided!! On a larger scale the number of Vole holes is increasing.

Try and spend a little time enjoying the churchyards and seeing which pollinators and other wildlife are using them.

Peter

FOUR CHURCHES TOGETHER NEWSLETTER

There has been a change at HQ for the newsletter and I would just like to take this opportunity to thank Rev Jo Saunders for all her help in pulling it all together since Suzi Wheatley died at the beginning of last year. The newsletter was something that we had done together for many years and I was totally thrown by her loss. Fortunately, Rev Jo stepped in and has been collating and setting it all out since February last year, despite already having a great deal on her own plate, especially in this last few months.

From now on can you please send all copy, articles, etc., to me at the email address below: As always the last date for contributions is the 18th of the month. Any queries regarding advertising or distribution should still be directed to me. Many thanks

Mary Sproson stpeter.stpaul@outlook.com 01780 762933

I am sure you will all join me in a great big “Woo Hoo” for Rev Jo !

PRAYER BOARD IN CHURCH

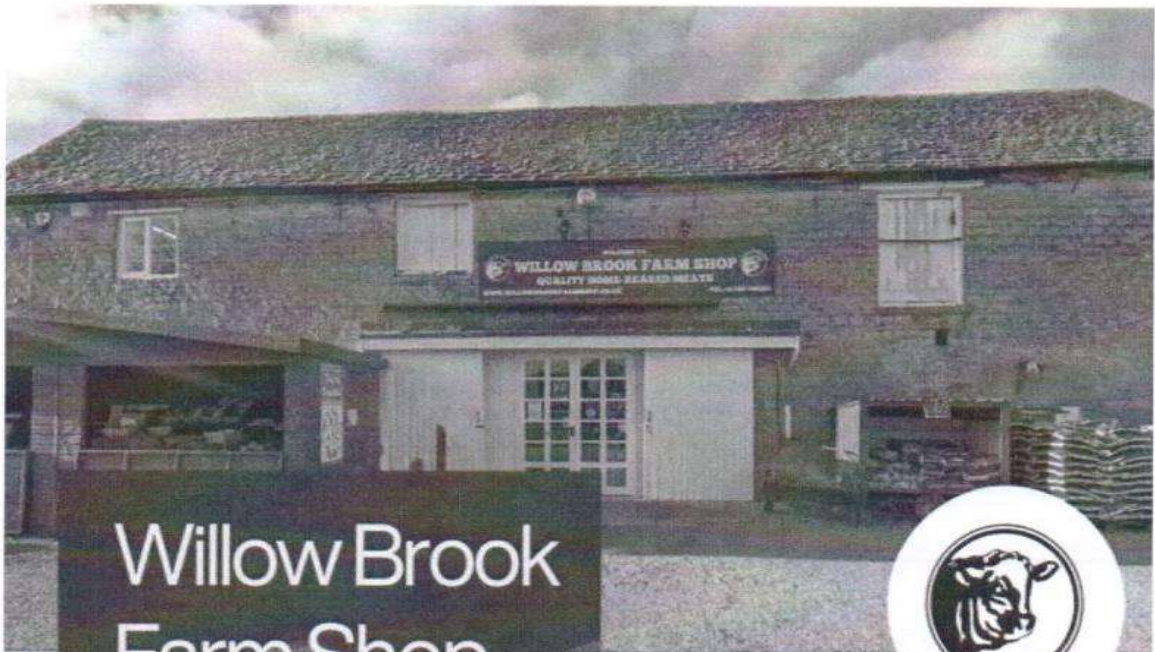
Did you know that every week the names that have been pinned on our Prayer Board in church are prayed out loud on Wednesday Morning Celtic Prayers? Please date each prayer you place on the board to help the Team keep up with how recent they were placed there. Thank you





The computer swallowed grandma,
Yes, honestly it's true.
She pressed "control" and "enter"
And disappeared from view.
It devoured her completely,
The thought just makes me squirm.
She must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.
I've searched through the recycle bin
and files of every kind:
I've even used the Internet,
but nothing did I find.
In desperation, I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found "online".
So, if inside your "Inbox",
My Grandma you should see,
Please "Copy", "Scan" and "Paste" her
And send her back to me!





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FOR HIRE

Great Casterton church hall is available for hire for children's parties and/or other events. For more details contact Steve Cunningham

Email: stephenmichaelcunningham@gmail.com

Phone: 07810 404748



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