

PARISH CHURCH NEWS

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

The Rev'd Mark Woodrow

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(Usual Rest Day: Saturday)

No. 457
May 2026



“Behold, the Handmaid of the Lord”

**“May is Mary’s month and I
Muse on that and wonder why
Her feasts follow reason,
dated due to season”**

**Gerard Manley Hopkins
(1844-1889)**

**Curate's Chronicles – May 2026
(Our Mother Tongue is Love)**



Painting by Edgardo De Guzman, Pentecost, 2014
*"in the last days I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh.
I will work wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below".*
(Acts 2.17 – 21)

Our Mother-tongue Is Love; A Sonnet for Pentecost

Malcolm Guite

Today we feel the wind beneath our wings
Today the hidden fountain flows and plays
Today the church draws breath at last and sings
As every flame becomes a Tongue of praise.
This is the feast of fire, air, and water
Poured out and breathed and kindled into earth.
The earth herself awakens to her maker
And is translated out of death to birth.
The right words come today in their right order
And every word spells freedom and release
Today the gospel crosses every border
All tongues are loosened by the Prince of Peace
Today the lost are found in His translation.
Whose mother tongue is Love in every nation

Dear Friends,

As we move through the beautiful month of May here in our Suffolk countryside, we find ourselves drawing closer to the great festival of Pentecost. It is a season where the earth feels fully awake, and in our church calendar, it is the moment we celebrate the "feast of fire, air, and water" being kindled into the very earth beneath our feet.

In his sonnet for Pentecost, drawn from 'Sounding the Seasons', sonnets for the Church Year Malcolm Guite writes: *"The earth herself awakens to her maker and is translated out of death to birth."*

Guite's poetry reminds us that the Holy Spirit is often revealed through the most dynamic elements of creation: the rushing wind (air), the river of life (water), and the tongues of flame (fire). You might wonder, as the poet did, where the fourth element – earth - fits into this divine story.

The answer is found in us. We are the "earth," the "Adam" shaped from the clay. We become fully alive only when the Holy Spirit, clothed in those other three elements, comes upon us and becomes part of who we are. At Pentecost, we don't just observe a miracle; we embody it.

The miracle of the first Pentecost was that every person heard the Good News in their own language. Today, that "translation" continues. As the sonnet beautifully concludes, we find ourselves found in the translation of a Prince of Peace: "The right words come today in their right order"; "The gospel crosses every border"; "Whose mother tongue is Love in every nation".

In the book of Acts, we are promised that in the last days, a portion of the Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh, bringing wonders to the heavens and signs to the earth. As we see the signs of spring flourishing in our own fields and gardens, let us also look for the "tongues of praise" in our community.

May we all find our tongues loosened by peace and our hearts speaking the universal language of love this season.

With every blessing,

The Revd Dr Karen Smith
Curate



**“Oh Dear, I think I’ve eaten too much!
at the Harvest Supper!”**

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

A summary

Our annual Meeting was held on 26 April in the church after Morning Prayer and was attended by sixteen members.

In brief we can report that churchwarden David was re-elected with the existing PCC continuing, as no members were due to retire this year. Meanwhile, Heide has now stepped down and was thanked for her involvement and contributions over the years. George Green was also re-elected as churchwarden with specific responsibility for Poslingford.

The annual accounts, along with the relevant reports on church activities, had been made available and were duly studied.

As a follow-up to recent PCC deliberations, it was reported that serious consideration is now being given to the installation of solar panels in the church roof, which will enable us to generate our own ‘power’. these will not be visible from the outside, unless you happen to be looking at the church from the Castle mound (which, we imagine, you probably won’t be).

Every effort is being made to reduce burdensome heating costs and consultation and expert advice is planned in the near future.

Thanks were paid by the Rector to those who organise the various events which the church holds throughout the year, and a further appeal was made for new choir members.

Lay Vice-chair, Treasurer and Secretary were duly re-appointed after the Meeting and the PCC will next meet on Friday, 10 July. If there are any matters which you would like discussed at such meetings, please inform a member of the Standing Committee (Mark, David, Andy or the Hon. Sec.).

J.S.

Fire and Ice

Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Some say the world will end in fire;

Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fire.

But if I had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that, for destruction, ice
Is also great and would suffice.

(Some say it might end with an inconclusive PCC meeting. We shall see.)

FROM THE REGISTERS

April 2026



Funeral

Jane Bone



BAPTISM

Clementine Rhind-Tutt

Some upcoming events across the Benefice

COFFEE CONCERTS

ST PETER & ST PAUL, CLARE

Coffee is served from 11.00; concerts start at 11.30 and run for approximately 45 minutes



Saturday, **18 April**: talented teenage musician **JAMES BARKER** plays popular music on piano and organ



Saturday, **16 May**: local organist **CHRISTOPHER MOORE** presents a programme of music for organ

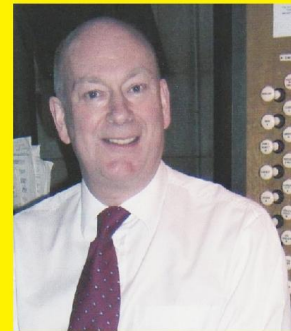
Saturday, **20 June**: London-based flautist **ANDREW MORRIS** – a varied programme of music for flute and piano



Saturday, **18 July**: the **ASADI PIANO QUINTET** presents the magnificent Quintet for piano and strings in A major by Dvořák

Saturday, **15 August**: professional pianist **JILL CROSSLAND** gives a concert of fine music for piano

Saturday, **19 September**: music for clarinet and piano played by husband and wife team, **KOREN WILMER** and **ANDREW PARNELL** from Ely



*Admission is **free**, with a retiring collection. After expenses, remaining funds will support the work and fabric of St Peter and Paul Church, Clare.*



Plant & Seed Swap - Saturday 9th May 2026 from 2pm until 3.30pm

All are welcome to come along to St Mary the Virgin Church in Poslingford for a Plant and Seed Swap.

Swap your excess plants and seeds, enjoy a cup of tea, coffee, or hot chocolate. As always, you are encouraged to bring a tin/jar/packet for the Community Pantry.



5th Sunday – Sunday 31st May 2026 at 7pm – Stoke by Clare

Join us for a very special reflective service with live Taize Music and Ignatian Reflection – a wonderful way to end a busy month.



Beer and Quiz - Saturday 13th June 2026 from 2pm until 3.30pm

All are welcome to come along to St Mary the Virgin Church in Poslingford for a fun afternoon. Bring your own beer (or soft drink) and a donation for the Community Pantry and enjoy a fun quiz!



Pimm's & Hymns - Sunday 26th July 2026 from 4pm until 6pm

All are welcome to come along to All Saints' Church in Hundon for an afternoon of singing your favourite hymns, all washed down with a cup or two of Pimm's (non-Alcoholic options will also be available). Donations towards the work and restoration of the church will be appreciated.

Stour Valley Benefice - Services for May 2026

Sunday, 3rd May – Fifth Sunday of Easter

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 Mark Woodrow</i>
Clare:	11:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Liz Paxton</i>
Cathedral:	15:30	Baptism & Confirmation	<i>Led by Bishop Joanne</i>

Sunday, 10th May – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Hundon:	09:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by Mrs Sarah Smith (Ordinand)</i>
Cavendish:	10:30	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Clare:	16:00	Evensong	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>

Thursday, 14th May – Ascension Day

Clare:	19:00	Holy Communion	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
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Sunday, 17th May – Seventh Sunday of Easter

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	Evening Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith</i>

Sunday, 24th May – Pentecost

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 Dr Karen Smith</i>
Clare:	11:00	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Hundon:	18:00	Evening Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>

Thursday, 28th May

Hundon:	14:00	Wedding (Hetherston & Langridge)	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
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Saturday, 30th May

Clare:	11:00	Baptism (Austin Maddison-Ball)	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
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Sunday, 31st May – Trinity Sunday

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Morning Prayer	<i>Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow</i>
Stoke by Clare:	19:00	5th Benefice Taize & Ignatian Reflection	<i>Led by Mrs Sarah Smith (Ordinand)</i>

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