

PARISH CHURCH NEWS

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

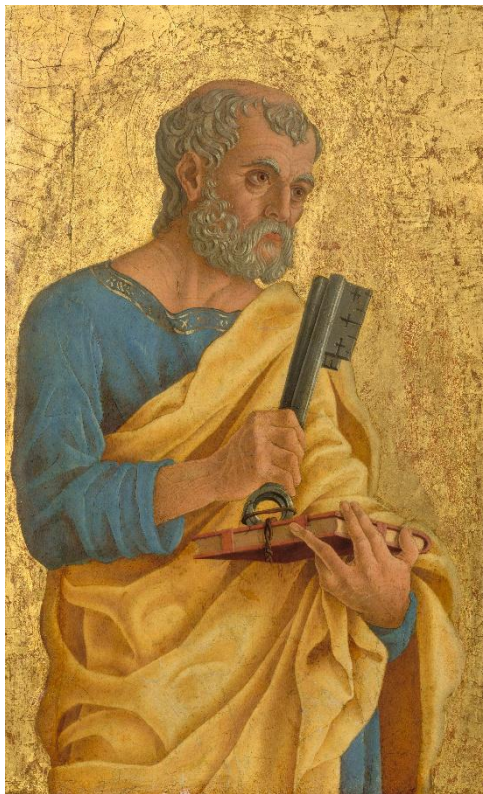
The Rev'd Mark Woodrow

Vicar and Rector of the Stour Valley Benefice
(Tel: 01787 277515 Email: rector@stourvalley.org.uk)
(Usual Rest Day: Monday)

The Rev'd Dr. Karen Smith

Assistant Curate
(Tel: 01440 594036 Email: drkarensmith@me.com)
(Usual Rest Day: Saturday)

No. 458
June 2026



**"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock
I will build my church."
(Matthew 16:17)**

Rector's Ramblings – June 2026 (God's Call to Serve)

As the hedgerows burst into full bloom and the long, golden evenings of June settle over our beautiful Suffolk countryside, there is a palpable sense of life in all its fullness.

In the Church's calendar, June is traditionally a month of profound significance - a season known as Petertide, named for St Peter the Apostle whose feast day is the 29th June, it is a time when many dioceses across the country and around the world gather to ordain new deacons and priests.

Petertide is a time of "yeses". It is a time when individuals, having wrestled with that quiet, persistent "still small voice", finally step forward to offer their lives entirely to God's service. This year, our celebrations carry a particular weight of joy and anticipation for our own community.

Responding to God's call is rarely a straightforward path. In the modern world, we are often told that our value is defined by our career ladder, our salary, or our personal brand. Yet, God frequently calls us to a different kind of accounting. I was one of those who turned away from a successful career to follow God's call, and I am always moved by those who have the courage to change course mid-life too - those who leave behind established professions because they have found a deeper hope that they simply must share.

Offering one's life to God isn't about escaping the world; it is about diving deeper into it with a new perspective. It is about finding hope in the future, even when the news headlines suggest reasons for despair. When someone chooses to be ordained, or become a licensed lay minister, they are making a public statement that God is active, that grace is real, and that the future belongs to the Kingdom of Heaven.

We are thrilled to announce that Sarah Smith, from our own benefice, will be ordained Deacon at the St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds on the 27th June. Following her ordination, Sarah will join us as our new Curate. We look forward to welcoming her into our church family as she begins this sacred chapter of her ministry.

Sarah's journey to the Cathedral steps is a testament to the fact that God never stops calling people. Whether it is a call to ordained ministry, like Sarah's, or a call to be a more prayerful neighbour, a more honest worker, or a more compassionate friend, we are all invited to participate in God's work of renewal.

As we mark the anniversary of many priests and deacons ordained in Petertides past, let us use this month to look for God in the unexpected places. If you feel a nudge to change direction, or if you find yourself searching for a hope that the



world cannot give, do not be afraid. The same God who sustains the stars in the sky is interested in the smallest details of your life.

Please keep Sarah in your prayers this month as she prepares for her big day in Bury St Edmunds. Please also pray for Revd Karen as she comes to the end of her Curacy with us and prepares to respond to God's call and takes up her first incumbency. May their time amongst us be a reminder to us all that the future is bright when we walk it with the Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Mark

The Rev'd Mark Woodrow (Rector)

FROM THE REGISTERS

May 2026



Funeral

Michael Flack

Patricia Grimsley



BAPTISM

Austin Maddison-Ball



BAPTISM & CONFIRMATION

David White

NEWS FROM POSLINGFORD



Spring Sunshine and Shared Gardening Wisdom

May is often seen as the true height of spring, with gardens bursting into colour and warmer days encouraging everyone outdoors. This month's Plant & Seed Swap was the perfect way for villagers to celebrate the season together.

Residents arrived carrying an impressive collection of plants and seedlings — from trays and baskets to boxes and even a wheelbarrow full of greenery. There was a wonderful variety on offer, including several thoughtful donations left before the event, which were very much appreciated.

The sunny weather made the gathering even more enjoyable, as people relaxed with cups of tea, exchanged gardening advice and caught up with neighbours. It was lovely to see experienced gardeners sharing their knowledge with others.

As Marjah commented, "Learning lots from the master gardeners in the village."



The event also saw another fantastic show of support for the Community Pantry. Revd Mark will distribute the generous donations, and sincere thanks go to everyone who contributed.

After villagers had chosen the plants they wished to take home, the remaining plants were kindly donated to the Stansfield Plant Sale, ensuring they will continue to be enjoyed elsewhere in the community.

An enormous thank-you to everyone, for their support. Heather



Chiara goes East!

'Chiara' started in 2013 when a small number of friends from choirs in the East Midlands got together to sing church services. The group has since gone from strength to strength and now women from all over the country come to take part. We've sung in many churches and Cathedrals including St Paul's, Westminster Abbey and St George's Chapel, Windsor.

We meet a few times a year to explore the varied repertoire written for women's voices and love singing together! We're coming to Suffolk/Essex for a weekend in the summer and will be singing the following services:

Friday 19 June at 8 p.m. Compline Clare Priory Chapel

Sunday 21 June at 4 p.m. Evensong Holy Trinity, Long Melford

It would be lovely to see you at one of the services - do hope you can join us!

Philippa Bristow

JUNE

Rise up, and do begin the day's adorning;
The Summer dark is but the dawn of day.
The last of sunset fades into the morning,
The morning calls you from the dark away.
The holy mist, the white mist of the morning,
Was wreathing upward on my lonely way.
The way was waiting for your own adorning
That should complete the broad adorned day.

Rise up, and do begin the day's adorning;
The little eastern clouds are dapple grey:
There will be wind among the leaves today;
It is the very promise of the morning,
Lux Tua Via Mea: your light's my way –
Then do rise up and make it perfect day.

Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953)



**“Who’s a pretty boy then?”
“I am!”**

VICARAGE GARDEN PARTY

As it is never too early to announce forthcoming events, please note that our annual Garden Party will be held in the Vicarage garden on the afternoon of **Monday, 31st August**. This is one of the jolliest get-together social events in the calendar, so do be sure to come along and enjoy this very English occasion. Although it is not possible at the moment to say exactly what stalls there will be, it is probably safe to predict that most of the usual ones will be there. Further details, including appeals for contributions and helpers, and an indication of times, will be in the July edition of the Magazine. And the weather, like Goldilock’s porridge, will be perfect (“not too hot, not too cold, just right”). That’s a promise!

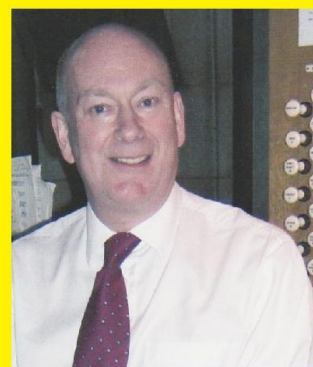
COFFEE CONCERTS

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.

Stour Valley Benefice - Services for June 2026

Saturday, 6th June

Clare: 13:00 Baptism (Albie Porter) *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 7th June: First Sunday after Trinity

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Cavendish: 10:30 Morning Prayer *Led by The Revd Liz Paxton*

Clare: 11:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Saturday, 13th June

Cavendish 15:00 Baptism (Else Lacey) *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 14th June: Second Sunday after Trinity

Hundon: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Morning Prayer *Led by Mrs Sarah Smith*

Cavendish: 10:30 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Clare: 16:00 Evensong *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 21st June: Third Sunday after Trinity (Father's Day)

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith*

Cavendish: 10:30 Morning Prayer *Led by Mrs Barbara Hill*

Clare: 11:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Poslingford: 16:00 Evening Prayer *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Wednesday, 24th June: Feast of St. John the Baptist

Stoke by Clare: 19:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith*

Saturday, 27th June: Ordination of Deacons and Priests

Cathedral: 11:00 Ordination of Deacons *inc. Sarah Smith* *Led by Bishop Joanne*

Cathedral: 14:30 Ordination of Priests *inc. Edmund Smith* *Led by Bishop Joanne*

Sunday, 28th June: Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul (Transferred)

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Morning Prayer *Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*

Wixoe: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Cavendish: 10:30 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Dr Simon Hill*

Clare: 11:00 Holy Communion for Patronal Festival *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Hundon: 18:00 Evening Prayer *Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*

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