

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

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(Usual Rest Day: Monday)

The Rev'd Dr. Karen Smith

Assistant Curate

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(Usual Rest Day: Saturday)

The Rev'd Sarah Smith

Non-Stipendiary Assistant Curate (Deacon)

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(Usual Rest Days: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday)

No. 462

October 2026



St. Francis of Assisi
Feast Day: 4th October

Rector's Ramblings – October 2026 (Autumn Bangers)

As summer gradually gives way to a breathtaking tapestry of gold, amber, and russet, October arrives to quieten the rhythm of our parish lives.

Whenever autumn returns, my mind invariably drifts back to my primary school days and those morning assemblies filled with the energetic singing of "Autumn Days". Some of you will no doubt remember the nostalgic refrain: "Autumn days when the grass is jewelled, and the silk inside a chestnut shell..." It was always sung with such gusto by children who were delighted by the simple joys of the changing season and thanking God for his creation.

(If you want a reminder <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf5AfKdKFp4>)

Looking back, the hymn captures something wonderfully honest about this time of year. There is an unmistakable pleasure in the return of robust, hearty autumn meals. After months of light summer salads, there is immense comfort in bringing back proper winter dinners—a steaming homemade casserole bubbling on the stove, or a generous plate of sausage and mash with rich onion gravy. These are simple meals, yet they warm the body and nourish the soul as the chilly evening air sets in.

Outside, the natural world invites us to pause and appreciate its quiet splendour. For me, October brings my favourite time to head outdoors for walks through the woods. There is a playful, childlike delight in kicking through the crisp, fallen leaves, watching the sunlight filter through the fading canopy, and inhaling the earthy scent of the changing woodland (and if it is followed by a pint in a pub, even better!). But in those moments, surrounded by nature's quiet transition, it feels impossible not to sense the presence of something larger and infinitely gracious at work in our world.

Yet, autumn is fundamentally a season of twilight and preparation. The clocks will soon go back, drawing the dark nights around us a little earlier each evening. The brisk winds outside urge us to draw the curtains, settle in by the fire (or turn up the central heating), and embrace the quiet warmth of home. It becomes a time for peaceful evenings spent with a good book, enjoying the slow pace that winter's approach brings.

Scripture reminds us in Ecclesiastes that "to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." As the daylight shortens, October offers us a precious opportunity to slow down and reflect. Just as the earth prepares for its winter rest, we too are invited to look back on the busyness of the year gone by, to count our blessings, and to cultivate a quiet space within ourselves for prayer and contemplation.

As we move deeper into this season of twilight and gather around our tables, may we carry with us a spirit of gratitude for the harvest, for the warmth of our homes, and for the comforting fellowship of our community.

I wish you all a peaceful and blessed October.

Mark

The Revd Mark Woodrow (Rector)



Like many charities, the parish churches in our Benefice are facing a significant reduction in income and giving. While St Peter and St Paul is doing all that it can to mitigate expenses, these cannot be reduced entirely and so the Church is reliant on parishioners to continue to give generously.

Did you know? It costs more than £600/month in insurance and utilities alone?

One of the easiest and most efficient ways to donate is via the 'Parish Giving Scheme,' which allows individual donors to set up a regular gift (either monthly, quarterly, or annually) to the parish of their choice by Direct Debit.

The Parish Giving Scheme is designed to support churches to fund their mission and ministry. It reduces the burden of work on church volunteers and provides a simple and secure service to donors to give online, by phone, or by posting a giving form. Parish churches benefit from improved cash flow and a resilient and reliable funding system.

TIP #1: You can now do this quickly and efficiently (it normally takes around 15 minutes) simply by calling the following telephone number: 0333 002 1271

You will need to have the following information to hand:

- Personal bank account details
- The name of the parish you wish to donate to. The PGS code for **Clare, St Peter & St Paul** is **330633175**
- You will need to confirm if you want to increase your gift in line with inflation each year (if you can, please say 'Yes')
- Confirm if you are eligible for Gift Aid

Alternatively, you can also sign up online:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/clare-st-peter-st-paul-suffolk/>

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TIP #2: Donating through Gift Aid means the church can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you give. It does not cost any extra. Eligibility: Your donations qualify for Gift Aid as long as they're not more than four times the amount you've paid in tax in the tax year.

Leaving a Legacy

TIP #3: Leaving a gift in your Will is one of the most valuable and lasting ways you can continue to support the Church's mission and ministry in our community. A gift can be an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and can help keep our church alive and also transform its future.

FINAL TIP: Whether considering a legacy and regular gift: PLEASE DO NOT restrict your gift. The biggest challenge facing the church is not the maintenance of our beloved and historic 15th-century building, but our running costs and our need to pay the annual parish share of over £33,700! To support our parish clergy and lay ministers, train new clergy and lay ministers, provide central support function across the Diocese.

THANK YOU!

If you would like more information, please speak with Jane Turner (recently appointed Parish Giving Receiver): jturner4md@yahoo.co.uk / 07931 691547

PCC MEETING



The Parochial Church Council (PCC) met in the church on 18 September and the following is a summary of the matters discussed:

We have paid £ 6,000 towards our Parish Share, which amounts to 17 % of the total owed. It was agreed that fundraising, including the appointment of a fundraiser, was now a priority. It was also felt that greater public involvement in this activity was needed.

The Suffolk Historic Churches recent *Ride and Stride* day had not seen many cyclists or walkers signing in at the church, possibly due to the indifferent weather. Various sources of regular church income (wall safe, Shop and Bookstall) were noted.

A splendid rose-coloured chasuble has been purchased.

The August Bank Holiday Monday Garden Party at the Vicarage had been blest with fine weather with good attendance and had raised the welcome sum of £ 520.

The church owns seven acres of land at Poslingford, some of which are farmed, while the use of the remaining ones is currently the subject of discussions with the Parish Council there. More news may be expected in further editions of the Magazine.

Recent repair work along the South nave wall has been completed, but more attention to eliminating a recently discovered damp problem needs to be carried out.

Preparations for the Christmas Fair are in hand. The Christmas Tree has been ordered. Church members will be needed to help man the refreshments for the event.

The *Light up a Life Baby Loss Awareness Week* will be marked by coloured ribbons on the church railings.

On Friday, 6 November there will be a concert in the church by the Military Wives Choir and the Long Melford Siver Band.

The Electoral Roll currently numbers seventy one people.

Next PCC meeting: 15 January 2027.

October

Robert Frost (1874-1963)

O hushed October morning mild,
Thy leaves have ripened to the fall;
Tomorrow's wind, if it be wild,
Should waste them all.

The crows above the forest call;
Tomorrow they may form and go.
O hushed October morning mild,
Begin the hours of this day slow.
Make the day seem to us less brief,
Hearts not averse to being beguiled,
Beguile us in the way you know.
Release one leaf at break of day;
At noon release another leaf;
One from our trees, one far away.
Retard the sun with gentle mist;
Enchant the land with amethyst,
Slow, slow!

For the grapes' sake, if they were all,
Whose leaves already are burnt with frost,
Whose clustered fruit must else be lost ---
For the grapes' sake along the wall.

FROM THE REGISTERS

September 2026



Memorial Service

Jean Hodson

Upcoming Events in Clare Church

COFFEE CONCERTS ST PETER & ST PAUL, CLARE

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



BONUS CONCERT

Saturday, 17th October: Stour Wind Decet, and ensemble of 10 local wind musicians

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



LONG MELFORD
SILVER BAND

with  WATTISHAM
MILITARY WIVES CHOIR

FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

An evening of music, remembrance and reflection

—  —

Friday 6 November 2026
7.30pm

St Peter & St Paul's Church
CLARE, SUFFOLK

*Featuring performances from
Long Melford Silver Band
and Wattisham Military Wives Choir*

Readings and moments of reflection
A traditional Drumhead Service
led by The Revd Mark Woodrow
with representatives from the Armed Forces



Tickets £10
Available from:
Harris & Harris Books | Humphreys Butchers
Online: www.longmelfordsilverband.co.uk

Remember • Honour • Together





Clare Christmas Fair

- **Fri, 27 Nov, 5–8pm**
- **Sat, 28 Nov, 10am–7pm**
(Lights switch-on at 6pm)

St Peter & St Paul Church
Clare Town Hall

Stour Valley Benefice - Services for October 2026

Saturday, 3rd October:

Wixoe: 18:30 Harvest Festival *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 4th October: Eighteenth 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 Sarah Smith*
Clare: 11:00 Holy Communion & Harvest Festival *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Cavendish: 14:00 Baptism – Charlie & George Tibbetts *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 11th October: Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Hundon: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith*
Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Morning Prayer *Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*
Cavendish: 10:30 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Clare: 16:00 Evensong *Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*

Sunday, 18th October: St Luke the Evangelist & Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Liz Paxton*
Cavendish: 10:30 Harvest Festival *Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*
Clare: 11:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Liz Paxton*
Poslingford: 16:00 Evening Prayer *Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith*

Saturday, 24th October:

Hundon: 14:00 Wedding – Snow & Wilson *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 25th October: Bible Sunday & Last Sunday after Trinity (*Clocks Go Back!*)

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Morning Prayer *Led by The Revd Liz Paxton*
Wixoe: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Cavendish: 10:30 Holy Communion & Air Cadets *Led by The Revd Jenny Ridley*
Clare: 11:00 Morning Prayer *Led by The Revd Liz Paxton*
Hundon: 13:00 Baptism – Lillia & Sonny Mace *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Hundon: 16:00 Evening Prayer *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 1st November: All Saints Sunday

Stoke by Clare: 09:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Cavendish: 10:30 Morning Prayer *Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith*
Clare: 11:00 Holy Communion *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Clare: 15:00 All Souls/Saints Remembering Service *Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

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