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: Monday)

The Rev'd Dr. Karen Smith
Assistant Curate
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(Usual Rest Day: Saturday)

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(Usual Rest Days: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday)

No. 463
November 2026



Solemnity of All Saints
1st November

Rector's Ramblings – November 2026
(Waiting and Remembering)

As the last leaves fall from our churchyard trees and the twilight settles earlier each evening, November enters with its own distinct atmosphere of quiet reflection. It is a month that invites us to slow our steps, to look back with gratitude, and to look forward with hope.

Within the rhythm of the Church year, November brings together three profound seasons: the commemoration of All Saints and All Souls, the solemnity of Remembrance-tide, and the expectant beginning of Advent.

We begin the month in the company of the holy ones and those we have loved and lost. At All Saints' Day, we celebrate the vast cloud of witnesses whose lives radiated the light of Christ, reminding us of the extraordinary calling shared by every ordinary believer. Yet, the following day, All Souls' Day, often speaks most intimately to our hearts. In the stillness of our parish churches, candles are often lit and names read aloud, we hold our personal griefs in the gentle presence of God. We are reminded that love does not end with death, and that those who have gone before us remain forever safe in the divine mercy.

This spirit of remembrance broadens as we enter Remembrance-tide. Standing together at our local war memorials, accompanied by the muffled silence and the stark red of poppies, we pay tribute to those who sacrificed their lives in conflicts past and present. In a world that still knows the deep agony of war and division, our act of remembering is more than an exercise in history. It is a solemn pledge to continue to seek and work for peace, to foster reconciliation within our communities, and to pray for wisdom among those who lead the nations. We honour the fallen best when we actively build a world rooted in justice and compassion.

As November draws to a close, the mood subtly shifts once more. On the final Sunday of the month, we cross the threshold into Advent—the start of a new liturgical year. After weeks of looking back and remembering, Advent invites us to turn our faces towards the future. In the gathering darkness, we light the first candle on our Advent wreaths. Whilst each candle offers a modest flame, yet it speaks of an unshakeable promise: the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Advent calls us out of the rushing bustle of seasonal preparations and into a holy watchfulness. It asks us to make space in our hearts for the coming of Christ—not merely as a child in a manger long ago, but as a living presence in our lives today and as the ultimate hope of our world.

May this November be a time of deep blessing for you and your families. As we navigate the movement from memory to hope, may we find comfort in God's unfailing love and strength in the light that no darkness can extinguish.

With every blessing,

Mark
The Revd Mark Woodrow (Rector)

"That ye may be the children of Your Father which is in Heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
Matthew 5:45



© Charles Schulz

The rain, it raineth on the just
And also on the unjust fella,
But chiefly on the just, because
The unjust steals the just's umbrella.

His Honour Judge Charles Bowen (1835-1894)
(attributed)

Clare goes to Clare!

On 23rd October. Some 20 or so members of Clare Parish Church, invited by Clare College, attended a service of Evensong, followed by drinks and supper.



This was part of the college's celebration of its founding in 1326 (known then as University Hall); as we know, it later was re-founded by (our) Lady Elizabeth de Clare as Clare Hall in 1338, eventually becoming known as Clare college in 1856.

Before the service we were treated to a vocal recital by a very proficient bass (a member of the chapel choir) and an equally proficient accompanist. The programme comprised a variety of pieces, often poignant, in memory of a friend.

Evensong was, for those present, an uplifting experience, both musically and spiritually. Sung by the well-known, excellent choir of Clare college and directed by Graham Ross, the music included Responses by Ayleward, Canticles by Kenneth Leighton, with a beautiful introit – Ave Maria by Icelandic composer Ragnarsson. The moving anthem was by Estonian Arvo Pärt, 'The woman with the Alabaster Box'. The lessons and prayers, of course, were beautifully delivered, and a thought-provoking sermon was given. Thankfully, we knew the hymns so could add our voices to the surprisingly large congregation in the chapel.



After Evensong we enjoyed drinks with everyone in the congregation, and then shared supper with students, staff and other guests. Supper was tasty and substantial and conversation with each other and with college people was interesting – always stimulating to encounter different perspectives from our own.

Our thanks for the invitation go to Alan Attlesey, Revd Mark and the college for arranging this enjoyable event. Hopefully, we will continue contact with Clare college in some way or another.

Mary Owen

Autumn Fires



In the other gardens
And all up in the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over,
And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
The grey smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall.

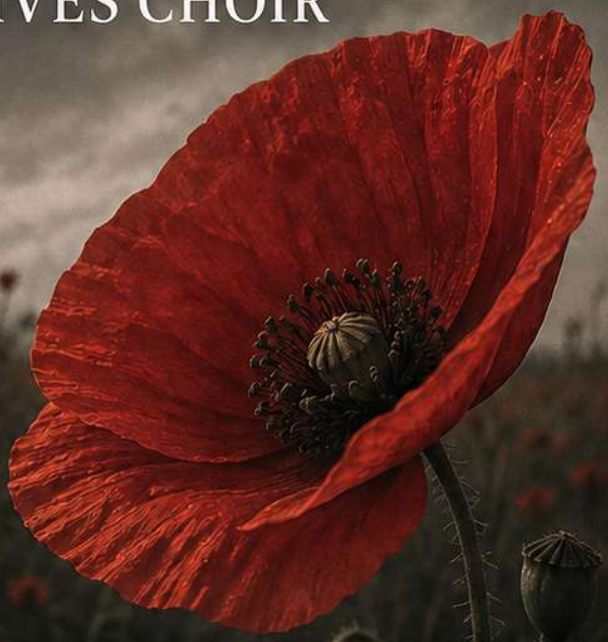
Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

LONG MELFORD SILVER BAND

&

WATTISHAM MILITARY WIVES CHOIR



FRIDAY
6TH NOVEMBER

7.30PM

ST PETER & ST PAULS CHURCH
CLARE

TICKETS £10

AVAILABLE FROM
HARRIS & HARRIS BOOKS,
HUMPHREYS BUTCHERS
OR ONLINE AT
www.longmelfordsilverband.co.uk

SUPPORTING
THE ROYAL
BRITISH LEGION

MILITARY WIVES
CHOIR CHARITY
NUMBER 1148302


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 November 2026

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*

Sunday, 8th November: Remembrance Sunday *(all at war memorials)*

Stoke by Clare:	10:00	Act of Remembrance	*Led by The Revd Liz Paxton*
Cavendish:	10:45	Act of Remembrance	*Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*
Hundon:	11:00	Act of Remembrance	*Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Poslingford:	12:00	Act of Remembrance	*Led by The Revd Dr Karen Smith*
Clare:	15:00	Act of Remembrance	*Led by The Revd Mrk Woodrow*

Wednesday, 11th November: Armistice Day *(all at war memorials)*

Cavendish:	11:00	Act of Remembrance	*with The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Clare:	11:00	Act of Remembrance	*with The Revd Sarah Smith & The Revd Dr Karen Smith*

Sunday, 15th November: Second Sunday before Advent

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

Sunday, 22nd November: The Feast of Christ the King

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 Karen Smith*
Clare:	11:00	Morning Prayer	*Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*
Hundon:	16:00	Evening Prayer	*Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*

Sunday, 29th November: First Sunday of Advent

Stoke by Clare:	09:00	Holy Communion	*Led by The Revd Mark Woodrow*
Hundon:	11:00	Benefice 5th Sunday Service	*Led by The Revd Sarah Smith*

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