

OCTAVO



The Voice of
The Stour Vale Benefice
£1 November 2025 Vol. 24 Issue 3

Stour Vale Benefice Newsletter

Are you receiving our weekly newsletter by email?

It gives details of our church services, news of our events happening across the Stour Vale parishes, plus prayers, reflections, encouragement and much more!



If you would like to receive a copy by email each week, just send your email address to: octavoeditorsvb@googlemail.com with the subject title "Newsletter"

Don't miss out!

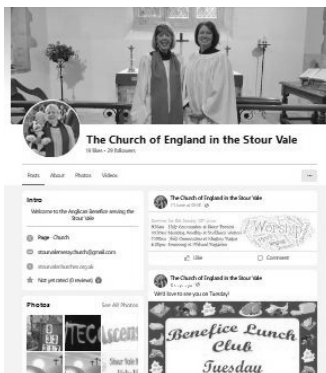
STOUR VALE BENEFICE FACEBOOK PAGE



Please search 'The Church of England in the Stour Vale' in Facebook or use/click on the link below to find us.

Or go via the Benefice Website—there's a link on the home page.

'Follow' us to keep up to date, and please do 'share' the good news!



www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089949903748

Stour Vale Prayer Group

We meet once a month for a short prayer meeting in which we bring our own concerns and the needs of the world in these troubled times.

Please join us on the Last Friday of the Month—
2pm at East Stour Church
All welcome!



Stour Vale Benefice

Annual Memorial Service
Sunday 2nd November at 4pm
Fifehead Magdalen Church

A Service of Thanksgiving for the lives of those who have passed from our sight, and to treasure before God the memories of all who meant much to us.

It will be a quiet service of prayer and recollection.

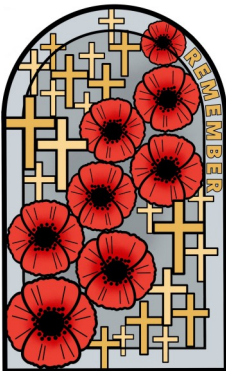
There will be an opportunity to light a candle and the names of those to be remembered will be read out.



Stour Vale Benefice

Remembrance Sunday
Sunday 9th November

Benefice Service
at Stour Provost 10:30am



Please note there will be a Said Communion
At Buckhorn Weston—9:00am

From the Vicar

Dear Friends

November always feels like a month for remembering, doesn't it? There's that rhyme we chanted as children: "Remember, remember the 5th November" recalling Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot". The clocks have gone back, the mornings are misty, the evenings come early, and the hedgerows are bright with the last colours of autumn. There's a sense of pause in the air — a time to look back, to give thanks, and to hold close the memories that mean the most.



At a recent choir practice, the Stour Vale Singers, of which I am a member, were rehearsing a lovely version of "*Autumn Leaves*", which some of you will know began life as the French song "*Les Feuilles Mortes*." It's one of those songs that stays with you — gentle, wistful, and full of feeling. The words speak of love and loss, and the ache of being separated from those we hold dear.

As I reflected, I found myself thinking of all the people we miss — family, friends, those whose voices and laughter we still hear in our minds. Yet the song isn't just sad. It also reminds us of gratitude — of happier times once shared, of the joy that love brings, even when time moves on. The seasons may change, but memories endure.

Watching the leaves drift down from the trees, it struck me how even as they fade, they remain part of God's creation — still with purpose and beauty. The colours shift, the form changes, but their falling enriches the earth for another season as we sweep them up to put in our compost bins. Nothing in creation is wasted, and I think that says something very comforting about life and death as well.

It brings to mind those words from Jeremiah:

"Blessed are those who trust in the Lord... they shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green." (Jeremiah 17:7–8)

Even when the surface seems bare and lifeless, the roots go deep. When we're grounded in God's love, life continues quietly beneath it all.

On Sunday 2nd November we mark the festival of All Saints remembering the faithful departed. Later on that day, as always, we'll gather for our **Annual Memorial Service of Thanksgiving** at 4pm at Fifehead Magdalen — a time to remember those we have loved and who have died. It's a service that means a great deal to many of us. We come with hearts that are tender, but also full of thanks for all that those people gave and shared.

Continued

From the Vicar—continued

It's good to have a space where we can name them, remember them, and place them once again into God's loving hands. And we do so in the sure confidence that, as St Paul wrote, *"Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

That love holds us all — those who have gone before us, and those who walk on still. It's a truth that gently anchors us, especially when the days grow darker and memories stir.

At choir we have also been practising *"The Last Rose of Summer,"* another song that captures that feeling of tenderness and remembrance. The lyrics tell of the writer scattering the petals of the final rose over the spot where its companions have fallen. It made me think of the falling poppy petals at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall — such a powerful image of collective memory and love poured out in sacrifice.

We'll mark our own **Remembrance Services** in the Benefice soon:

Sunday 9th November at 10.30am – *St Michael and All Angels, Stour Provost*

Tuesday 11th November 10.30am– *Service at the War Memorial in Kington Magna*

These services always bring our communities together. We remember those who served and gave their lives, and we also pray for peace — in our world, and in our own hearts and homes. The familiar hymns, the silence, the sight of poppies against grey stone — all remind us that love and courage endure, just as faith does.

And then, as the month comes to its close, we find ourselves turning a corner towards Advent. It's one of my favourite seasons — a time of waiting and hope. Advent invites us to look back at the great story of God's people in the Old Testament: the matriarchs and patriarchs, the prophets and promises. We remember their longing for the coming of the Messiah.

But Advent is also about looking forward. As we prepare for Christmas — and no doubt begin baking, making lists, sorting decorations, and planning family gatherings — the Church invites us to prepare our hearts as well. We look not only to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem long ago, but to his promise to return one day and make all things new.

So as the leaves fall and the days shorten, may this month be a time to remember with gratitude — for loved ones, for the beauty of creation, for the faith that sustains us through every season. Let's hold on to those memories that warm the heart, and trust that in God's great love, nothing is ever truly lost.

With love and every blessing,

Clare

Thought for the Month

Although, for most people, Advent is the 24 days in December that lead up to Christmas Day, in the church calendar Advent starts four Sundays before Christmas, so this year that will be the 30th November.



Advent is a time of preparation for Christmas. That includes buying and wrapping presents, writing cards, planning menus, and all the other things that go into the fellowship and hospitality that are such an important part of our Christmas celebrations. It also involves preparing our hearts, and our lives, for the coming of the Christ child. Every year, Christmas is a chance for a new start, to press the 'reset' button and consider how we can improve our relationship with God and focus our lives more on Christ.

Perhaps this year we could all spend more time with God, on a daily basis, during Advent? Prayer is a great way to draw closer to God, so if you have no other plans, why not pray this prayer by David Adam as you get up each day?

With Love, Fiona

Prayer for November

Glory to God on earth peace
Let this song never cease.
As I arise this morn
Christ in me be born.
When I wash my face
Bless me with your grace.
When I comb my hair
Keep me from despair.
When I put on my clothes
Your presence Lord disclose.
This is the day that you are born
Let every day be a Christmas morn.
Glory to God on earth peace
Let this song never cease.



David Adam

Stour Vale Benefice

Mid-Week Services / Benefice events November 2025

Every Tuesday

Said Morning Prayer 9:30am West Stour Church

Every Wednesday

Holy Communion 10:30am East Stour Church

Monday 17th

Knit and Natter Group—2:30pm East Stour Village Hall

Tuesday 18th

Benefice Lunch 12:30pm—Udder Farm Shop

Please remember to pre-book your food

Friday 28th

Stour Vale Prayer Group 2pm East Stour Church

Prayer Walks

This Autumn I am hoping to continue the prayer walks that we began last year. It is important to show a spiritual presence in all the Benefice villages and help to demonstrate our concern for those who live and work in each village community.

Prayer walking is rooted in centuries old Christian spiritual traditions such as “Beating the Bounds” and the practice of Pilgrimage. It offers an opportunity to bless people, places, businesses and animals, intercede for the concerns of villagers, and affirm the life and unity of the community especially in acknowledging those places which are key to village life.

Prayer walking can be an opportunity for spiritual renewal, providing a time for reflection, meditation, and connection with God in the created world. It is a shared experience as we walk and pray together, telling stories of village life past and present.

Why not join us? Look out for dates in Octavo under the parish entries or in the newsletter.

Stour Vale Benefice **BREAKFAST CHURCH**

SUNDAY 16TH NOVEMBER

Breakfast served from 8.45am
Worship 9.00am - 9.30am

Buckhorn Weston Village Hall (SP8 5HF)



Scan the QR code for more information,
Or contact Fiona Hedges: fjhedges1@gmail.com; 01747 838 942

Knit and Natter

Whether you'd just like some company and to knit some simple squares, or would like to learn how to make anything from beautiful baby clothes to creative jumpers, then come along to Knit and Natter on the 3rd Monday of the month.

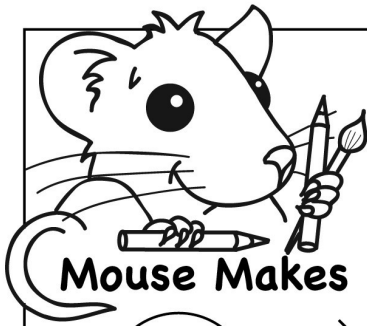


The next meeting is on **Monday 17th November**
2:30-4:30pm in East Stour village hall.

Stour Vale Singers:

Stour Vale Singers choir meet weekly on Tuesday afternoons (2 o'clock for 2.30 until 4 o'clock), in West Stour Village Hall. Whilst some music reading skills are desirable this is by no means essential, enthusiasm and commitment (but not obligation) being far more important. All are welcome. if you are interested, do contact me for more information: (dagrierson@hotmail.com)

David

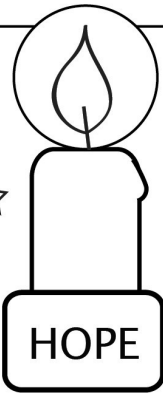


LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November.

ADVENT is a time to celebrate the ARRIVAL of Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour.

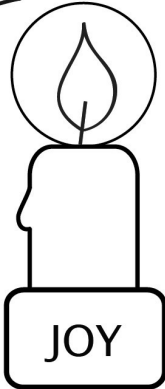
We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



Read:

Isaiah 40:5

What shall be revealed?



Read:

LUKE 2:10-11

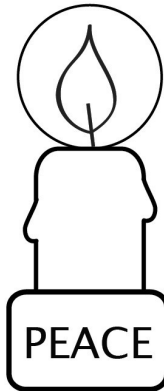
Who is 'God's news of great joy' for?



Read:

John 3:16

How did God show He loves us?



Read:

Romans 5:1-2

Through who do we have peace with God?

L G L O R Y E M P R O M I S E
S O K J Y A A R R I V A L W F
A D V E N T G O O D N E W S O
V P L S V L I R P S V P C A R
I E I U I O F C H R I S T H T
O A G S U V T M E S S A G E O
U C H O P E O P C A N D L E L
R E T U R N J O Y T W D B E D

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT



Stour Valz Benefice Benefice Lunches

Please note: we need to pre-order food, so let us know your choice when you book your place—see their website for menus.

Tuesday 18th November—12:30pm

at **Udder Farm East Stour**—do join us for a relaxed chat over a meal in pleasant surroundings. For bookings: please contact Revd Clare or Jill by Tuesday 16th October.



The Udder Farm Shop
Manor Farm, Front Street, East Stour
SP8 5LQ

[https://www.theudderfarmshop.co.uk/
restaurant/restaurant-menus/](https://www.theudderfarmshop.co.uk/restaurant/restaurant-menus/)

Stour Valz Benefice Sunday 30th November 5th Sunday Services

**First Sunday of Advent
Benefice Service**

10:30am Kington Magna



Patronal Service for St Andrew
3pm Todber

All are welcome to join us for any of these services.

Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show 2025

CHURCH TENT

We have now finalised our Show Report for 2025. The full Report and the Income and Expenditure account are available on request from jo.churchill@enmoregreen.co.uk

Our focus this year was on the Farming Community and outside activities run by our churches in Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Stour Vale. There was a special diocesan course for Agricultural and Rural Chaplains and passes for the Show were sent to each individual as well as including the Chaplains in the donations.

Although we had not applied for funds this year, the Diocesan Aldhem Fund awarded The Church Tent £250.00 for three years, starting in 2025. We received a very supportive note from Bishop Steven and Bishop Karen from Sherborne came to visit and chat to everyone.

We had new volunteers this year as well as our happy band of returners which helps to build a stable Team for the future. Supported also by members of the clergy from the three Benefices.

The Photo board had an upgrade with a jolly Farming theme and was once again very popular. We did receive one complaint: 'The Tent was too full and all the tables were occupied'.

We have donated the following funds to our chosen charities:

Dorset Historic Churches Trust £550.00

The Student Fund (G & S Show) £550.00

Rural Chaplains £200.00

Shaftesbury Carnival received £210.00 for all their help with logistics.

Jo Churchill

Church Tent Administrator



Remembrance

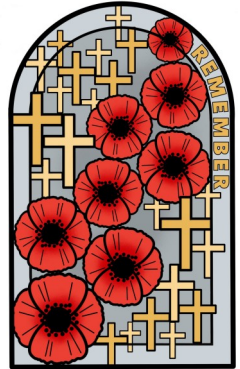
In November we come to remember
How war tore our country apart,
From village and town and all around
Men and boys left home and hearth.

Mothers and wives and sisters all
Saw their brave young men go away,
For some it meant the ultimate price
As they gave their tomorrows for our today.

Another Man left His home above
To rescue this world from sin,
It cost Him His life which He freely gave
So new life could enter in.

In this world there will always be war,
But the time will surely be
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

By Megan Carter



Parish Pump

Confessions of a Churchwarden's Assistant

(not to be confused with Assistant Churchwarden)

Lucky Dip Hymns

I just thought it'd liven things up a bit. You know, we go through the three-year cycle with set readings and the usual old hymns.

Our organist did rise to the occasion very well and the kids all said they'd come back next week if we had hymns like that again.

No, I agree that Ding Dong Merrily on High isn't the ideal Communion Hymn but look how everyone enjoyed it and who knew there is a hymn about worms?

I promise I won't shuffle the hymn numbers again.

Richard King

Services for the Stour Vale Benefice November 2025



Sunday	2 nd November All Saints Day	9 th November Remembrance Sunday	16 th November 2 nd Sunday before Advent	23 rd November Christ the King
Buckhorn Weston		9:00am Said Communion	8:45am Breakfast Church In the Village Hall	10:30am Morning Worship CW
East Stour	11:00am Parish Communion	10:30am Benefice Remembrance Service	10:30am Morning Worship	
Fifehead Magdalen	4:00pm Annual Memorial Service			6:30pm Evensong BCP
Kington Magna				11:00am Parish Communion
Stour Provost				9:15am Parish Communion
Todber	9:15am Parish Communion		10:00am Family Service	
West Stour	10:00am Morning Worship CW		10:30am* Parish Communion	

CW – Common Worship

BCP = Book of Common Prayer

Services in November

Breakfast Church is open to the whole Benefice – more details from Fiona

***16th – West Stour's Communion time changing to 10:30am**

Readings for November 2025

2nd November

Daniel 7.1–3, 15–18

Ephesians 1.11–end

All Saints' Day (Principal Feast)

Psalm 149

Luke 6.20–31

9th November

Job 19.23–27a

2 Thessalonians 2.1–5, 13–end

Remembrance Sunday

Psalm 17.1–9

Luke 20.27–38

16th November

Malachi 4.1–2a

2 Thessalonians 3.6–13

2nd Sunday before Advent (Red/Green)

Psalm 98

Luke 21.5–19

23rd November

Jeremiah 23.1–6

Colossians 1.11–20

Christ the King (Red/White)

Psalm 46

Luke 23.33–43

30th November

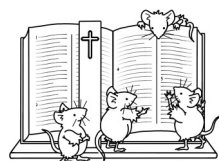
Isaiah 2:1–5

Romans 13:11–to end

First Sunday of Advent

Psalm 122

Matthew 24:36–44



Services in November

Annual memorial service 2nd November

4:00pm Fifehead Magdalen

Remembrance Sunday 9th November

Said Communion 9am at Buckhorn Weston

Remembrance service 10:30 at Stour Provost

Sunday 30th November

5th Sunday service – First Sunday of Advent 10:30am at Kington Magna

Patronal Service for St Andrew's Day 3pm at Todber