

Cherwell Valley Catch-up

JUNE 2026

St Mary - **Ardley with Fewcott**

St Olave - **Fritwell**

The Chapel - **Heyford Park**

St Mary - **Lower Heyford & Caulcott**

St James - **Somerton**

The Annunciation - **Souldern**

St Mary - **Upper Heyford**



June – A month of beginnings and endings

June is a special month in our family – my mum's name was June (even though she was born in August!) and Hannah our daughter was born in June. My mum was a remarkable person and a huge influence on me. She was born in 1935 into a large working-class family in the East End of London, aged 5 she was evacuated to Wales for the duration of the 2nd world war. After returning to London she left school at 14 to go to work, and subsequently married my dad, Harry. They travelled to Nigeria for his job as an engineer, then after several years settled in Essex bringing-up 4 children (I'm the youngest!), caring for many others in church and community, particularly through times of bereavement. She had an amazing encounter with Jesus which brought many changes and much joy. So she decided to go to college studying O-levels, A-levels and finally training as a social worker reaching her goal of working in a hospice

I've been thinking about my mum a lot lately, and about the way that beginnings and endings so often arrive together. Our daughter Hannah was born in June. She arrived very quickly so was born at home with just Phil & mum there and that mattered deeply, because Mum had as a young person wanted to be a midwife. Here she was, in her sixties, holding her granddaughter into the world. A beginning, right in the middle of her own ending — because she had cancer. Four years later mum died on Hannah's birthday, she was just 67. For my dad, in the pain of loss and grief he found this to be a completeness. I wasn't too sure but over the years it was always so special to have dad with us sharing in the celebration of Hannah's birthday and remembering mum together - an ending woven into a beginning so tightly you almost couldn't tell them apart.

I find myself standing in that same kind of moment right now. After two years here in Cherwell Valley Benefice— two years that have held more than most — Phil and I will be moving. I've been appointed as Vicar of Holy Trinity Formby and St Michael and All Angels, Altcar, in the Diocese of Liverpool. Our last Sunday with you will be 30th August. This is a beginning but also an ending – Phil & I are so thankful for all the love, kindness, joy & laughter we have experienced here. We have learnt such a lot — through an interregnum, through growth, through grief, through all the ordinary holiness of parish life. And here is the thing: we are not leaving Cherwell Valley in an ending. We are leaving it in a beginning. Rob Gilbert arrived as the new Team Rector earlier this year, and as I wrote in the March *Catch-up* there are many signs of new life and hope. God is clearly doing something significant in this benefice — new connections, fresh energy, a community finding its feet again after a season of waiting. There is so much to be hopeful about.

Last Sunday, news of my appointment was announced both here and in the churches in Formby & Altcar – there were tears here – mostly mine! It is strange and wonderful to be held in prayer by two communities at once — one sending, one receiving. The pilgrimage along Hope Street in Liverpool last Sunday to celebrate Pentecost, from the Roman

Catholic Cathedral to the Anglican Cathedral, felt like a sign of the times: two great churches, one road, one hope. I'll finish with my mum's favourite Bible verse. She came back to it again and again:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

That is our prayer for you, Cherwell Valley, as we go. And it is my prayer for Phil & I, as we begin in Formby.

Kath

AROUND THE BENEFICE

Fritwell

On Monday 4 May, as part of the Open Tower event organised by the Bicester branch of the ODGB, both Fritwell and Souldern church bells were rung by visiting bellringers. Some intrepid folk (including one valiant local ringer) rang at all seventeen towers, starting with Bicester in the morning and ending with Fritwell (16) and Souldern (17) later in the day. Bellringers of all ages came from as far afield as Herefordshire and Cambridgeshire as well some from nearby Buckinghamshire, and west Oxfordshire.

Dates for your diary at St Olave's:

Find out about our proposed repair plans – come to our open meeting on **Sunday 14 June**. See flyer for details.

'Fritwell in Flowers' floral event on the weekend of **11 & 12 July** – details to follow.

CHILDRENS WORSHIP AROUND THE BENEFICE

Souldern

Wild Worship – 1st Sunday & Family Church – 4th Sunday both at 10:30am

Fritwell

Wild Worship -3rd Sunday of the month at 10:30am

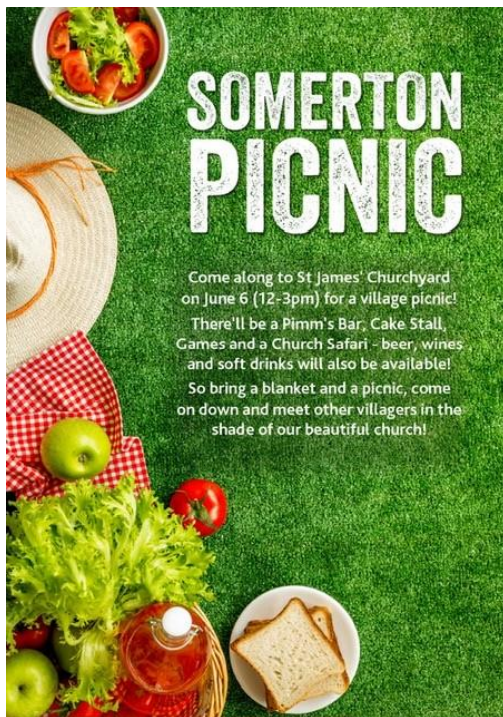
Somerton

Sunday Club –2nd Sunday of the month at 9:30am

Prayer Space with Fritwell School in St Olave's is going to be on Mon June 29th, Tues June 30th & Weds July 1st. BeSpace are helping us to run it. Could it please be mentioned in Pew Sheet or Catch-up - we need people to help and everyone to be praying. More details attached of what a prayer space is & what BeSpace is. I'll include you in my next email for possible volunteers - but no pressure to help as I realise you all have lots going on - it is generally good fun! (It was agreed with Fritwell PCC it would happen)

Family of Hope - Uganda

For the first 2 weeks of June Rev Kath is visiting 'Family of Hope' - a residential school in rural Eastern Uganda enabling children with special educational needs and those in extreme poverty to have an education and a future. It's a special community which really embodies their vision strapline 'Loving Uniqueness.' Fritwell School are developing a partnership with Family of Hope too. If you'd like to find out more explore their website: <https://familyofhope.co.uk/> Prayers appreciated too.



Come along to St James' Churchyard on June 6 (12-3pm) for a village picnic!

There'll be a Pimm's Bar, Cake Stall, Games and a Church Safari - beer, wines and soft drinks will also be available!

So bring a blanket and a picnic, come on down and meet other villagers in the shade of our beautiful church!

HYMNS & PIMM'S

St Mary's Church, Ardley
Sunday 14th June, 6pm

Join us to celebrate the British summer with strawberries, cream and Pimm's, accompanied by hymns...chosen by you!

Please send any special requests to Revd Rob Gilbert:
rob.gilbert@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk

June Sunday Services

Sunday Worship	7 th June	14 th June	21 st June	28 th June
Ardley w Fewcott	9.30am BCP Holy Communion (1662)	9:30am Family Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Family Service
Fritwell		8:30am 1662 HC	9.30am Family Communion 10:30am Wild Worship	6pm Evensong
Lower Heyford and Caulcott	11am BCP Holy Communion (1662)	11am MP	11am Family Worship	11am Morning Prayer
Somerton	6pm Evensong	9:30am Sunday Club	11am Matins with BCP Holy Communion (1662)	9.30am Family Service with Communion
Souldern	10.30am Wild Worship	11am Sung Communion		10.30am Family Church
Upper Heyford	9.30am Family Communion			9.30am BCP Holy Communion (1662)
Heyford Park Chapel	Mid-Week Holy Communion Services Wednesday 10th (venue tbc) & 24th June @ HPC			

Children's Church Around the Benefice



Fritwell Wild Worship

3rd Sunday of the month at 10:30am

Outside (*weather permitting*)

Crafts for the children

*Coffee and a chat
for the adults*

Souldern

Wild Worship (*Outside*) – 1st Sunday

Family Church – 4th Sunday

both at 10:30am

Crafts for the children

*Coffee and a chat
for the adults*



Somerton Sunday Club

2nd Sunday of the month at 9:30am

Short Family Friendly Service

Followed by

Crafts for the children

*Coffee and a chat
for the adults*

St Mary's Church,
Upper Heyford

Sunday 31st May,
4.00pm to 4.45pm

Doors open 3.30
Free Tea & Cake at 3.30pm

WOODS and MUSIC!

Choros Consort
Director Janet Lincé

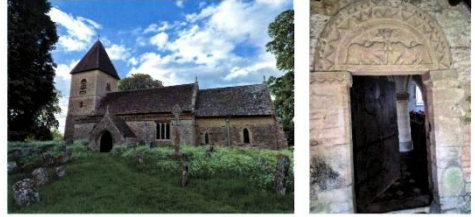
Free concert of classical and popular
choral songs on a woodland theme, including:

- ✦ The Teddy Bears' Picnic
- ✦ Autumn Leaves
- ✦ Orpheus with his lute
- ✦ Over hill, over dale
- ✦ My love dwelt in a northern land

FREE
tea and cake

Donations invited towards church upkeep.

St Olave's Church, Fritwell



Come and learn about plans to repair the parish church, which has stood at the heart of the village community for nearly 1000 years, and which needs saving for the future.



Sunday 14th June, 4.30pm-5.30pm

Free tea/coffee and cakes

Everyone welcome!

Benefice Church

Choir

All you need to join is
a **passion for singing!**

*(We rehearse most Wednesdays at
7:30pm in Souldern Church)*

Interested?

Contact either

Clive Smith :

clive.r.smith@icloud.com

Philip Boxall:

philipb013@outlook.com

Daily Morning Prayer Services

Monday 1st & Thursday 4th June

9am at St James Somerton

Details for the rest of June can be
found in the weekly Pew Sheet

*(If you are not on our regular
emailing list please contact)*

barbara.mcgarra@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk



**Mid Week
Services in Church**

Wednesday
COMMUNION

(Fortnightly)
10:00am

Wednesday 10th & 24th June
(Venue tbc while the Chapel is
being used for GCSE exams)

Recorded Services

Tuesdays

MORNING PRAYER

to receive the link email
barbara.mcgarra@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk

The Cherwell Valley Benefice in the Diocese of Oxford

Rev Rob Gilbert	01869 222625	rob.gilbert@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk
Rev Kath Cooke	01869 872242	kath.cooke@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk
Rev Andrew Foran	07753 677 470	andrew.foran@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk
Administrator	01869 233687	barbara.mcgarra@cherwellvalleychurch.org.uk

Parish Churchwardens & Contacts

Ardley	Rebecca Bazeley	07931 698 046
Fritwell	Jane White	01869 345396
Heyford Park	Cath Mullineux	01869 225764
Lower Heyford & Caulcott	Philip Boxall Diana Boxall	07721 556 199 07792 390 755
Somerton		
Souldern	Clive Smith	07783 367 258
Upper Heyford	Sally Anne Mildenhall	07778 431 165

