

# OCTAVO



The Voice of  
The Stour Vale Benefice



£1 July/August 2026 Vol. 24 Issue 10

Stour Vale Benefice  
**BREAKFAST  
CHURCH**

**SUNDAY 19TH JULY & 16TH AUGUST**

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](mailto:fjhedges1@gmail.com); 01747 838 942

Coming up this summer



**Benefice Pet Service  
Sunday 23rd August**

3pm in Todber Church Yard  
Pet and Family Friendly service  
to bless our pets from across the  
Benefice.

**Benefice Songs of Praise  
Sunday 30th August**

We will be having a Songs of Praise service for our  
5th Sunday Service in August.

*Send in your favourite hymns via your  
Churchwarden, or Jill Perry, by 2nd August.*



*Please Note:* There will also be a Holy Communion Service at  
9:15am at Todber on Sunday 30th August.

## From the Rural Dean

Reverend Clare invited me to fill her spot in this issue of the magazine as it meant one less thing for her to do before getting away on a well-earned holiday. My name is Canon Tim and I'm the Rural Dean of Blackmore Vale. It's a pleasure to accept her invitation as I'm only too aware how hard Clare works, and I know we all wish her and Mike a very happy, restful and restorative time in Paxos.



Animals are on my mind at the moment. The public are being asked to give their views on a selection of wildlife, native to the UK, that will appear on the next series of banknotes. Working with a panel of wildlife experts from across the UK, the Bank of England has produced a shortlist of animals that could become the central image on the £5, £10, £20 and £50 notes. Each banknote will feature a different animal, making them easily recognisable to the public. You can have your say but do be quick – the consultation closes at midnight on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

This idea of putting animals on our banknotes has met with some public outcry. I've seen a video clip of Ed Davey, leader of the Liberal Democrats, voicing his outrage about Winston Churchill, currently on the £5 note, being replaced by a badger – even though the badger is not one of the shortlisted animals! However, I happen to think it's an excellent idea because I feel we all need to get much closer to the natural world and start appreciating the real importance of all God's wonderful creatures with whom we share this planet.

One of the great delusions of our age is that humankind is the very centre or purpose of the universe, the most important thing in all existence. It's certainly true that God has given human beings a very significant place in the world, but we inhabit it alongside many other creatures to whom God has also given a place. As a species we have devastated the natural world, thinking that the planet is here purely for our enjoyment and fulfilment, but as the earth moves towards an uncertain future we must urgently try to reconnect to the very thing we are destroying. I feel that the banknotes initiative will help with that.

I read only last month that some EU member states have called for new measures to allow the culling of cormorants, a bird that has protected status in the EU's Birds Directive. The reason? Because they're eating too many fish! This is putting pressure on fish stocks, they say, reducing the amount available for human consumption. Of course, the cormorant is simply being scapegoated here for human pressure on fish stocks. It's a classic example of polarising humans and animals, which is always quite wrong because we are animals ourselves. We must live *as part* of the animal kingdom not *apart* from it. Why should we get all the fish?

*Continued page 8*

## From the Rural Dean—Continued

The world is much bigger than humanity and all of it matters to God. Perhaps you have to view the earth from a great distance to get the proper perspective, from where you can see the blue of its oceans, the white of its mountain ranges and polar regions, the green of its jungles and the brown of its deserts. Hardly any humans live in these parts yet life abounds. In 1968, the crew of Apollo 8 found it hard to describe the grandeur and complexity of what they saw. “They should have sent poets,” Bill Anders later said. In their Christmas Eve televised broadcast from space the crew read Genesis 1:1-10 from the King James Bible.

As humanity has migrated from rural to urban environments we have erected barriers between us and the natural world, convincing ourselves that we can exist separately from nature. We cannot. We can only live interdependently, not independently. When God asked Job the question, “Do you know when the mountain goats give birth?” (Job 39:1) – and a host of other searching questions – the unspoken answer is No, Job doesn’t, but God does. Because God knows, it means God cares. God is concerned about the mountain goats every bit as much as he is for the hapless Job. God made them and loves them and so must we.

As an expression of the creative will of God, existing only through the generosity of the Creator’s love, every living thing gives glory to God. Psalm 148 calls on all creation to praise the Lord, “wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!” (Psalm 148:10). So, whatever we’re doing this summer, whether at home or on holiday, let’s try to remember that God’s world is not only about us. May God bless you and all his wonderful creation. And do vote on the banknotes if you can – I’ve chosen the brown hare, European hedgehog, great spotted woodpecker, Atlantic puffin, common frog and buff-tailed bumblebee!

*The Revd Canon Tim Heaton*

*Voting closes Friday 3rd July— go to:*

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/help-us-design-our-next-series-of-banknotes>



## Prayer for July & August

**Confession** [www.operationnoah.org/day\\_of\\_prayer](http://www.operationnoah.org/day_of_prayer)

When we are unkind to people,  
and forget they are God's children,  
When we are careless with the beasts,  
and forget they are God's creation,  
When we ill-treat the land,  
and forget the splendour of God,  
Forgive us, O God of love,  
and reconcile us to yourself,  
to one another and to the Creation.

Teach us that the earth and all its fullness is yours,  
the world and all who dwell in it.

Remind us that your Son too enjoyed the fruits of the harvest in Galilee and joins  
us now as we celebrate your good gifts together.

Call us again to safeguard the gift of life, now and forever.



Amen

*From The Church of England Environment Programme – Creation Care Prayers*

### **Regular Mid-Week Services / Benefice events July & August**

#### **Every Wednesday**

Holy Communion 10:30am East Stour Church

*Healing Communion service 2nd Wednesday of the month*

#### **Monday 20th July & 17th August**

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

#### **Tuesday 28th July**

Benefice Lunch at Lakeside Kitchen Todber 12:30pm

*(no lunch in August)*

#### **Friday 31st July & 28th August**

Stour Vale Prayer Group 2pm East Stour Church

## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month.



The next meeting is on **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July & 17<sup>th</sup> August**  
**2:30-4:30pm in East Stour village hall.**

## GILLINGHAM & SHAFTESBURY AGRICULTURAL SHOW 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> August 2026

### THE CHURCH TENT

#### Update from Jo Churchill:

Preparations are now underway for our annual trip to the Show. We come together with the Gillingham and Stour Vale Benefices to offer a Big Church Welcome to visitors to the Turnpike Showground.

We bring in two marquees, 14 tables, 56 chairs, two water boilers, two coffee machines, 2000 disposable cups plus catering ingredients for the two days of the Show. AND the speciality of the Church Tent..... CAKES.

Over many years, the Church Tent has been known for the excellence and wide variety of cakes supplied by all our churches. Last year, because of the possible onslaught of wasps, we asked for non-creamy cakes but their absence was noted! So, ALL cakes are welcome, easy to cut particularly so, and any cake tins clearly marked so they can be returned. List of ingredients also please.

#### Update from Jenny Sledge:

As usual, Jenny would be most grateful for offers of loaf cakes, tray bakes or cupcakes, for the Church Tea Tent. She will be collecting on Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>.

*Please note Jenny needs to deliver them to Jo by 3pm that day.*

## Keeping in Touch

### To Receive our weekly newsletter by email

Contact Jill: [adminsrb@gmail.com](mailto:adminsrb@gmail.com) with the subject title "Newsletter"

### Or follow us on Facebook

search 'The Church of England in the Stour Vale', or use this link  
[www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089949903748](http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089949903748)

Or visit the website: <https://stourvalebenefice.org.uk/>

It's church, but not as you know it!  
Join us for a drink, a chat and a chance  
to spend some time with God.

# Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July

## Open from 11am for an 11:15 start

Tea and coffee will be provided, and the  
licensed bar will be open throughout for  
those who would like to buy a drink.

After the service, feel free to leave or stay  
for a drink. If anyone would like to stay and  
have lunch, we would advise you to reserve  
a table in the usual way.

*Stour Vale Benefice  
Service  
in the  
Pub*



**The Ship Inn, West Stour, SP8 5RP**

For more details, please contact Fiona Hedges on  
01747 838942 or [stourvalemessychurch@gmail.com](mailto:stourvalemessychurch@gmail.com)

### **Benefice Lunch Tuesday 28th July—12:30pm**

at **Lakeside Kitchen Todber Manor**—do join us for a relaxed chat over  
a meal in pleasant surroundings. For bookings: please contact Jill by  
Tuesday 21st July.

***Please note: we need to pre-order food—see website for menus***

Lakeside Kitchen, Manor Farm, Todber, DT10 1JB

<https://www.lakesidekitchen.co.uk/>

### **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!



# Readings for July and August 2026

## 5<sup>th</sup> July

Zechariah 9.9-12  
Romans 7.15-25

*Trinity 5 (Green)*  
Psalm 145.8-15  
Matthew 11.16-19, 25-end

## 12<sup>th</sup> July

Isaiah 55.10-13  
Romans 8.1-11

*Trinity 6 (Green)*  
Psalm 65  
Matthew 13.1-9, 18-23

## 19<sup>th</sup> July

Isaiah 44.6-8  
Romans 8.12-25

*Trinity 7 (Green)*  
Psalm 86.11-end  
Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43

## 26<sup>th</sup> July

1 Kings 3.5-12  
Romans 8.26-end

*Trinity 8 (Green)*  
Psalm 119.129-136  
Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52

## 2<sup>nd</sup> August

Isaiah 55.1-5  
Romans 9.1-5

*Trinity 9 (Green)*  
Psalm 145.8-9, 15-end  
Matthew 14.13-21

## 9<sup>th</sup> August

1 Kings 19.9-18  
Romans 10.5-15

*Trinity 10 (Green)*  
Psalm 85.8-13  
Matthew 14.22-33

## 16<sup>th</sup> August

Isaiah 56.1, 6-8  
Romans 11.1-2a, 29-32

*Trinity 11 (Green)*  
Psalm 67  
Matthew 15.10-28

## 23<sup>rd</sup> August

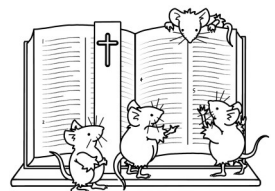
Isaiah 51.1-6  
Romans 12.1-8

*Trinity 12 (Green)*  
Psalm 138  
Matthew 16.13-20

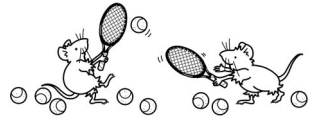
## 30<sup>th</sup> August

Jeremiah 15.15-21  
Romans 12.9-end

*Trinity 13 (Green)*  
Psalm 26.1-8  
Matthew 16.21-end



Services for the  
Stour Vale Benefice  
July 2026



Sunday	5 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 5	12 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 6	19 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 7	26 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 8
Buckhorn Weston		9:30am Parish Communion	8:45am Breakfast Church In the Village Hall	10:30am Morning Worship CW
East Stour	11:00am Parish Communion		6:00pm Evensong BCP	
Fifehead Magdalen		6:30pm Parish Communion		6:30pm Songs of Praise
Kington Magna		11:00am Morning Worship CW		11:00am Parish Communion
Stour Provost		10:30am Morning Worship CW		9:15am Parish Communion
Todber	9:15am Parish Communion		10:00am Morning Prayer BCP	
West Stour	10:00am Morning Worship CW		10:30am Parish Communion	

CW – Common Worship

BCP = Book of Common Prayer

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

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July**

11:00am for an 11:15am start – At The Ship Inn, West Stour, SP8 5RP

Services for the  
Stour Vale Benefice  
August 2026



Sunday	2 <sup>nd</sup> August Trinity 9	9 <sup>th</sup> August Trinity 10	16 <sup>th</sup> August Trinity 11	23 <sup>rd</sup> August Trinity 12
Buckhorn Weston		9:30am Parish Communion	8:45am Breakfast Church In the Village Hall	10:30am Morning Worship CW
East Stour	11:00am Communion for Lammas		6:00pm Evensong BCP	
Fifehead Magdalen		6:30pm Parish Communion		6:30pm Evensong BCP
Kington Magna		11:00am Morning Worship CW		11:00am Parish Communion
Stour Provost		10:30am Morning Worship CW		9:15am Parish Communion
Todber	9:15am Communion for Lammas		10:00am Family Service	3pm Benefice Pet Service
West Stour	10:00am Morning Worship CW		10:30am Parish Communion	

**Benefice Pet Service – Sunday 23rd August**

3pm in Todber Church Yard – Pet and Family Friendly service

**Fifth Sunday Services for Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August**

9:15am Communion service at Todber

**11am Benefice Songs of Praise at West Stour**