

CANALSIDE NEWS

for SEPTEMBER 2026



PRAYER DAY

A day of prayer and contemplation

CENTRED ON THE
Beatitudes
(MATTHEW 5:1-11)



St George's Church
+
Semington

10.00 – 4.00

Saturday 12th September

ALL WELCOME

On Saturday 12th September, we are doing a Prayer Day at St George's Church, Semington. We did this last year and it turned out to be a really good opportunity for people to pause and take some time for stillness and contemplation. The day will be loosely focused on the Beatitudes, the sayings of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount about blessings, such as "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy."

Churches end up being a place of remarkable busyness, which does often seem to be true for many of us in our general lives. There are so many things going on, so many tasks to complete, so many things to do. When do we take the time not to do but to be? It is a significant question and one I think we frequently neglect (probably because there are too many things on our to-do-list for us to think about it).

There is a line from a song by the musician Newton Faulkner, in which he says, "You search for stillness on a rock that's spinning round and round, and you're surprised?" He means, our world is spinning round, there is always so much happening, there is always so much that shouts to grab our attention, so when we do try and find stillness or calm, it is almost impossible. How do we switch off when everything around us is telling us not to do that but to do more, see more, buy more and that if we're not constantly on the go, we're missing out on something. (In case anyone's wondering, the song is called To The Light; it's a good one, and also includes another of my favourite lines, "I feel like a muppet with a drunken puppeteer.")

When we talk about Jesus, we often focus on things he did and things he said but something what is very noticeable if you read through the stories in full is how often he is trying to do nothing. We are frequently told "Jesus withdrew to a quiet place," or "After this, he dismissed the crowds and went up the mountain to pray." One of my favourites is early in Mark's gospel when the disciples search for him because he has seemingly wandered off (I suspect this was quite common for the disciples and Jesus wandered off a lot — unsurprisingly, Mark tells us he had gone because "In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place and there he prayed.") They find him and tell him that everyone is searching for him but instead of doing what is expected, he tells them he's going in a totally different direction. Jesus isn't controlled by what everyone expects him to do or by their demands on him. He is sensible enough to get away and search for stillness, even on a rock that's spinning round and round.

On 12th September, St George's will be open (as it is every day, should you ever seek a quiet and isolated place for stillness), and there will be stations for reflection and a variety of things to help you if you want to come and join us in prayer. This is not loud prayer or a list of requests to God but time and space to listen to be open to God, to rest, to stop rushing around and to listen to what is happening inside ourselves. We all need that space to be and not to do, sometimes, regardless of our beliefs.

Ironically, planning a day like this takes a lot of work and a lot of doing. But I am really looking forward to the day itself, when I can stop rushing, be still, listen, and search for stillness. We'd love to see you there. Chris

Thankyou Martyn

At the beginning of September Martyn will be stepping down as Churchwarden for Hilpertton and Staverton so that he can concentrate on his ministry studies. He took over as Warden two years ago following Sandra's passing. Thankyou Martyn for all you have done in this role and we all wish you the very best with your studies. You are in our prayers.

Sherrie's Damsons

Sherrie Jones is selling Damsons from her garden once again this year in aid of church funds. If you would like to buy any there will be a supply in church at St Michael's on Sunday 6th September. £1 or a higher donation for each lb of Damsons. Quite a bargain. Thanks Sherrie.

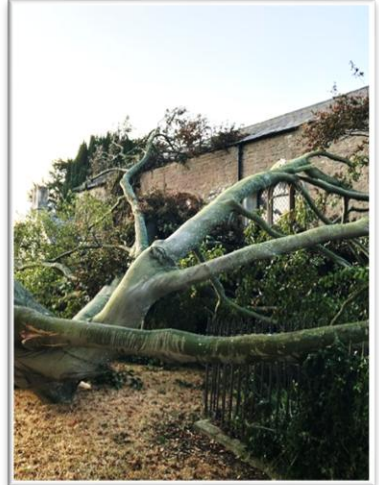


Used Postage Stamps

Don't forget to let us have all your used postage stamps. It would be great if you could save all your stamps and pass them on to Bill and Marilyn Stubbs who in turn pass them on to the Bible Society. Just pop them into the Storehouses boxes in the church porches and we will pass them on for you.

The Copper Beech Tree in Staverton Churchyard

I am very sorry to report that, recently overnight, a huge branch from the great Copper Beech Tree in the churchyard at Staverton broke away from the main trunk. Unfortunately some of the branch fell onto the old church (now known as St Paul's Church House). Some of the tiles and guttering were damaged but fortunately no one was hurt. The tree has been a local landmark for many generations standing alongside the building looking down over the meadows and River Avon. I can remember my class, at Staverton School, being taken down, by Mrs Moody, to stand under the tree to look out at the floods during the 60s and 70s. There is a preservation order on the tree and in the coming days Wiltshire Council will need to decide if any of the remaining tree can be saved. In the meantime the Council has authorised the removal of 40% from the crown to ease some of the weight on the trunk. It is not clear whether the incident was caused by the drought, by disease, by the age of the tree or a bit of all three. Although the old church is a private dwelling the churchyard around it remains the responsibility of Hilperton and Staverton Parochial Church Council. This means that if our insurers refuse to pay for the damage to the building we will have to foot the cost of the repairs and for the work needed to the remaining tree. Michael



Sorry it's me again.....

As we now move into Autumn your Treasurer (Hilperton and Staverton) is concerned once again about what our finances will look like at the end of the year.

It is always difficult to give accurate forecasts because we have no way of knowing what one off donations will be made, what our fundraising total will be, nor what our costs will be from fallen trees, exploding radiators etc etc. But as things stand it looks like our income for the year will be around **£68,000** whilst our costs are likely to be in the region of **£96,000** – a shortfall of some **£28,000**.

This year just over 60% (£58,000) of our likely costs is the amount we are asked to pay to the Diocese – our Parish Share - to help fund ministry and mission across the Diocese of Salisbury, including clergy, housing, pensions and the services that support the parish. As you know last year we were unable to pay our full share and the Diocese wrote off the balance of £12,000. It now looks very likely that we will only be able to pay about 50% of our share for 2026 and I think the chances of the balance being written off are slim. That means the balance will be added to next year's share total.

I hate doing this every year but please review your giving to church and if your situation allows it would be wonderful if you could increase the monthly amount **or** make a one off donation **or** suggest ways we could reduce our costs/increase our income **or** even run a fundraiser. I am sure that anything we can do to reduce our likely deficit and to increase the total 2026 Parish Share we are able to pay will help in the long run.

As always thankyou for your support. Michael



The Children's Society

The Children's Society run many projects to support vulnerable children.

Many people hold collection boxes to support their work.

All amounts collected no matter how small are put to good use and as the saying goes 'every little helps'! You can find out more about their work at www.childrenssociety.org.uk.

**The
Children's
Society**

As the box coordinator for St Michael's and St Mary's I will be happy to supply a collection box to anyone who would like to support this worthy cause. The total amount sent this year from the box collection was £174.23. If you would like a box, contact Michael Gamble at church or on 07795400262 and he will pass your details on to me.

Many thanks for your support.

Shirley (Box Coordinator for the Children's Society in Hilperton Churches)



CHURCH *Coffee Morning*

SATURDAY

19th SEPTEMBER 2026

• 10am-Noon •

at
St Mary Magdalen's
Church Hall
in Horse Road, Hilperton



Proceeds to
Church Funds.

RAFFLE



LOTS OF
BOOKS



CAKES



AND OTHER
STALLS

£2

ADMISSION
includes your
COFFEE/TEA
and BISCUITS



Come and Join us - All Welcome



TO RUN THIS EVENT WE REALLY NEED YOUR HELP... SETTING UP
ON FRIDAY EVENING / SELLING RAFFLE TICKETS / HELPING IN THE
KITCHEN / HELPING ON THE STALLS / TAKING ADMISSION FEE ON
DOOR ETC. IF YOU CAN HELP PLEASE LET MICHAEL KNOW.
RAFFLE PRIZES ALSO MUCH APPRECIATED. THANKYOU

Prayer Requests

It is important that we pray for all who seek our support. Please let Michael know of anyone who particularly needs our prayers. Do ensure that you have their permission.

Alison Meader
Andrew Margetts
Audrey Sheppard
Barbara Tucker
Catherine

Den and Alison
Edward Fairclough
Eve Banks
Helen Thomas
Hilary and Mark
Heaton
Jeannette

Maureen Mitchell
Mike Aldridge
Richard Marshman
Roger Emes



- We pray for all those who are mourning the loss of a loved one at this time.
- We continue to pray for the people of Sudan at this time of conflict, including Archbishop Ezekiel as he leads the Anglican Church there.
- Please also hold in your prayers Miles Ethan Payne who will be baptised at St Michael's on 30th August and his Parents, Godparents, family and friends.

Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight this year is from Monday September 21st to Sunday, October 4th. The theme this year is "Do it Fair - for People, for Planet and for Fair Pay".

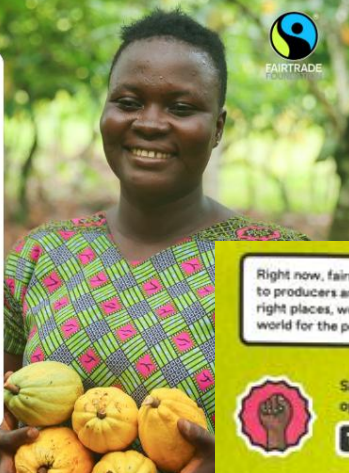


The core goals are: Highlighting trade justice, fair wages, and the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on farmers and workers in developing countries.

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"Supporting Fairtrade [producers] goes a long way to support...women in Africa, help reduce child labour, and help maintain the environment".

Dora Atiiga, Cocoa Farmer, mother, and founder of a school at Kukuom Union, Ghana



There will be a Fairtrade stall at the church coffee morning on September 19th at Saint Mary Magdalen's.

There will also be a chance during Fairtrade Fortnight to sign a petition asking the UK government to:

Hold businesses accountable for human rights abuses and climate damage behind their products. If you want any further information please speak to Rosemary

Right now, fairness isn't a given. But when we listen to producers and farmers, and put pressure in the right places, we have the power to create a fairer world for the people who grow the things we buy.

 Safe conditions. Equal opportunities. School not work.
THAT'S FAIR TO PEOPLE.

 Protecting people's livelihood and the products we love.
THAT'S FAIR ON THE PLANET.

 Earning enough to care for your family.
THAT'S FAIR PAY.

JOIN THE FAIRTRADE MOVEMENT   **DO IT FAIR**



Fruit and Veg and Herbs and Spices



£2
a copy

QUIZ SHEET

Proceeds to



Available now from Michael

Written by Val Sims

Toddlers @theTin



A fun, friendly group for
babies, pre-school children and
their parents/carers ♥



Toys



Crafts



Stories



Singing



Snacks



Every Friday
during Term Time

10:00am – 11:30am



St Mary Magdalen's Church Hall

Horse Road
Hilperton
BA14 7PD

Only
£2
per family!

Booking Advised ♥

To book or find out more,
please contact

The Parish Office



07795 400262



canalsideoffice@gmail.com



We look forward to welcoming you! ♥

RELAUNCH





MELKSHAM
foodbank



Storehouse

Together with many other Foodbanks across the country both Melksham and Trowbridge are desperate for more donations, as the demand is very high at present, so please give as generously as you are able.

If you can donate any food or hygiene items PLEASE, pop them in our trolleys or come on down and bring them to us. If you are a little flush; you can do online shopping with ASDA as they will deliver to us on your behalf. Please drop into the building as we now do a breakfast for the homeless so eggs are always needed plus cheese, butter bacon etc as we have a fridge freezer, and fridge. Fruit and vegetables are always welcome but do not put in a trolley. Please continue to donate to us so we can keep blessing the people of Trowbridge. Thank you all.

Please use the collection boxes in the porches of St Mary Magdalen's and St Michael's to drop off food donations etc. A BIG thankyou to Tony Roddis for taking on the collections for us from Bill Stubbs.

If you prefer you can make a one off financial donation or support Trowbridge Storehouse regularly, please follow the link below and select storehouse.

<https://westwiltsvineyard.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/zk54op3a>

Storehouse is always in need of carrier bags

Melksham Foodbank continue to need all items, especially tinned meats and vegetables. The demand for support is very high (please ensure all items are well within the best before date). They can also take large bags of rice, tea bags, sugar & pasta as these can be decanted into smaller bags for distribution. Please take your donations to the porch at St George's, Semington before 6pm on Wednesday.

Our continued support of Melksham FoodBank and Trowbridge StoreHouse is vital, and a part of our response to God's generosity to us.

CANALSIDE DIARY

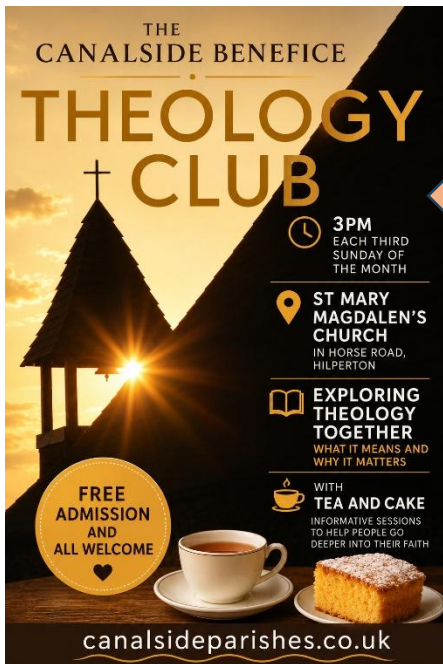
Please pray for all events taking place in the next few weeks

Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location
AUGUST 2026				
Su	30 th	THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY		
		0915	Benefice Holy Communion	St George's
		1215	Baptism: Miles Ethan Payne	St Michael's
M	31 st	BANK HOLIDAY		
SEPTEMBER 2026				
Tu	1 st	0930	Hilpertont/Staverton Morning Prayer https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IkY2vBYNviwibNcoWUpqTtf4hpwQTA.1	Online
W	2 nd	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
Th	3 rd	0900	Semington Morning Prayer https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBqqYKytMMRbYvZ5JZFZnm.1	Online
F	4 th	1000	Relaunch of Toddlers@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	6 th	THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY and CREATIONTIDE		
		1030	Holy Communion	St Michael's
		1500	Service of BCP Holy Communion	St Mary the Virgin
		1800	Reflective Service	St Mary Magdalen's
M	7 th	1000	Safeguarding Training For those that have been notified by Stella	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	8 th	0930	Hilpertont/Staverton Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
W	9 th	1000	Midweek Morning Worship	St Michael's
		1430	Open the Book Rehearsal	St Michael's Room
Th	10 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1430	Friendship Group	St Mary Magdalen's
F	11 th	1000	Toddlers@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
Sa	12 th	1000-1600	Benefice Prayer Day	St George's
Su	13 th	THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY and CREATIONTIDE		
		0915	Breakfast Church	St George's Church
		1030	Holy Communion	St Mary Magdalen's

Tu	15 th	0930	Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
W	16 th	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
		1430	Open the Book	Hilperton School
Th	17 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
		1000 1200	Community Café	St Mary Magdalen's
		1140	Open the Book	St George's School
		1445	Open the Book	Staverton School
F	18 th	1000	Toddlers@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
Sa	19 th	1000-1200	Church Coffee Morning	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	20 th	THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY and CREATIONTIDE		
		0915	Holy Communion	St George's Church
		1030	Holy Communion	St Michael's
		1500	Theology Club	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	22 nd	0930	Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer See link above	Online
W	23 rd	1000	Midweek Morning Worship	St Michael's
		1130	Hilperton and Staverton Fabric Group	St Michael's Room
Th	24 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
F	25 th	1000	Toddlers@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
Su	27 th	THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY and HARVEST		
		1030	'Explore' Service	St Mary Magdalen's
		1600	Tea@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
Tu	29 th	0930	Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer See link above	Online
W	30 th	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
OCTOBER 2026				
Th	1 st	0900	Semington Morning Prayer Use link above	Online
F	2 nd	1000	Toddlers@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
		TBC	Hilperton and Staverton's Harvest Supper (details to follow)	St Mary Magdalen's
Sa	3 rd	1145	Visiting Bellringers from Catherington	St Michael's
Su	4 th	THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY and MICHAELMAS		
		1030	Holy Communion	St Michael's
		1500	Service of BCP Holy Communion	St Mary the Virgin
		1800	Reflective Service	St Mary Magdalen's

CANALSIDE CONTACTS

Rector	Rev. Chris Hunter	07396875236 01225 975510	rector.canalside@gmail.com
Associate Priest	Rev. Joy Albone	07931638524	revjoyalbone@gmail.com
Office	Michael Gamble	07795400262	canalsideoffice@gmail.com
Churchwardens			
Semington	David Wildsmith	c/o 01380 870784	c/o jackbev.woodward@gmail.com
Hilperton and Staverton	James Newton	07803904947	jnewton@churchmouse.org.uk
Website	canalsideparishes.co.uk		
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/canalsideparishes		



THE CANALSIDE BENEFICE

THEOLOGY CLUB

3PM
EACH THIRD
SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH

ST MARY
MAGDALEN'S
CHURCH
IN HORSE ROAD,
HILPERTON

EXPLORING
THEOLOGY
TOGETHER
WHAT IT MEANS AND
WHY IT MATTERS

WITH
TEA AND CAKE
INFORMATIVE SESSIONS
TO HELP PEOPLE GO
DEEPER INTO THEIR FAITH

FREE
ADMISSION
AND
ALL WELCOME

canalsideparishes.co.uk

**Sunday
20th
September**



Tea @the Tin

Informal All Age Worship with Cake !

St Mary Magdalen's Church,
Horse Road, Hilperton
4pm on the Fourth Sunday of Each Month

» All Welcome «
canalsideparishes.co.uk

**Sunday
27th
September**

ST MARY MAGDALEN'S CHURCH HALL
HORSE ROAD

Friendship Group

Every
Second
Thursday
of the Month
2.30 – 4pm



An informal, friendly gathering where people can have a chat with friends old and new, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, bring their knitting or crochet, play board games or other activities.



Free Admission

All are welcome!
Come along, make new friends and enjoy good company!




Contact the Parish Office for more details
07795400262 canalsideoffice@gmail.com

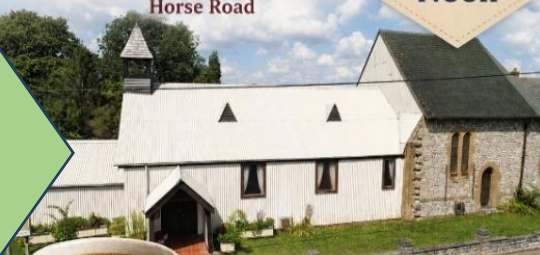
**Thursday
10th
September**

**Thursday
17th
September**

Community Café

at St Mary Magdalen's Church
Horse Road

Every
Third
Thursday
of the month
from
10am-
Noon




COFFEE TEA BISCUITS GOOD COMPANY AND CHAT

Free Admission

ALL WELCOME

CHURCH SERVICES *in* SEPTEMBER



	HILPERTON <i>St Michael's</i>	HILPERTON <i>St Mary Magdalen's</i>	SEMINGTON <i>St George's</i>	WHADDON <i>St Mary the Virgin</i>
Wednesday 2 nd September	10am MIDWEEK COMMUNION			
Sunday 6 th Sept 14 th Sunday after Trinity / Creationtide	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION	6pm A SERVICE OF REFLECTION		3pm BCP HOLY COMMUNION
Wednesday 9 th September	10am MIDWEEK MORNING WORSHIP			
Sunday 13 th Sept 15 th Sunday after Trinity / Creationtide		10.30am HOLY COMMUNION	9.15am BREAKFAST CHURCH	
Wednesday 16 th September	10am MIDWEEK COMMUNION			
Sunday 20 th Sept 16 th Sunday after Trinity / Creationtide	10.30am HOLY COMMUNION	3pm THEOLOGY CLUB	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION	
Wednesday 23 rd September	10am MIDWEEK MORNING WORSHIP			
Sunday 27 th Sept 17 th Sunday after Trinity / Harvest		10.30am EXPLORE SERVICE for HARVEST		
		4pm TEA@theTIN		
Tuesday 29 th September				
Wednesday 30 th September	10am MIDWEEK COMMUNION			

Full details of all our Services and Events can be found on our Benefice Website: canalsideparishes.co.uk.