



## The Parish of St. Martin's, Chipping Ongar with St. Peter's, Shelley

The Reverend Hazel Aucken  
The Rectory, Shakletons, Ongar  
CM5 9AT - Tel: 01277 362173  
hazel.aucken@outlook.com - Mobile: 07976 808959



## AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER

To be a growing church, God's gift to the community

### Letter from The Rectory ...

#### Release Hidden Potential – in others

This week I received a link to a blog by Matthew Porter, now Bishop of Bolton in the Diocese of Manchester. It summarises a book he recently read, *Hidden Potential* by Adam Grant, as follows:

At the heart of the book is the idea that there's latent potential in everyone. Yes, there's potential in ourselves, but also in *others*. Our job is to help release it and impact the world for good.



Isn't that a lovely thought! There are so many self-help books out there, but I love the focus on releasing the potential of others. It reminds me of 'chopsticks', aka parable of the long spoons, a story heard repeatedly from my headmistress by anyone who attended her daily assemblies (at Chelmsford County High School):

*One day a man said to God, "God, I would like to know what Heaven and Hell are like." In response, God showed the man two rooms.*

*Behind the first door was a huge banquet sat on a large table in the middle of a large room. It smelled delicious and made the man's mouth water, but the people sitting around the table were thin and sickly. They appeared to be famished. They were holding very long chopsticks so whilst they could use them to pick up morsels of food, could not get the food back into their mouths. The man shuddered at the sight of their misery and suffering. God said, "You have seen Hell."*

*Behind the second door, was an apparently identical large room. It too had a large table loaded with food that made the man's mouth water. The people in this room were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking. "Let me guess." said the man. "Normal-length chopsticks!" "No." said God, "The chopsticks are exactly the same length in both*

*rooms, but these people have learned the difference that love makes. They have learned to share and feed one another, whilst the unloving only think of themselves...”*

This idea of investing in others is one of four things that Matthew Porter lists as having particularly struck him from his reading of Adam Grant's book. They resonate with me as well, so I thought I'd share the other three with you plus my own reflections on each one:

### **Prioritise your Reading**

Reading is one of my favourite occupations so being told to prioritise it is wonderful news, at least for me! However, since this is all in the context of helping others realise their hidden potential, I did a bit of online searching and learned that the benefits of reading include:

strengthening your brain, increasing your ability to empathize, reducing stress, and building your vocabulary. Reading books benefits both your physical and mental health, and those benefits can last a lifetime.

A list of tips to ensure you read more included setting realistic targets as even 5 minutes is beneficial. Five minutes! That would be torture for me as I'd find it impossible to stop. I'd have no problem reading for 5 hours given half a chance! However, I'm well aware that would be considered too much of a good thing since other studies have shown that sitting stationary for too long is very bad for your health.

My online searching also revealed that reading is key to growth, so helping a child to enjoy reading is one the best gifts we can give them. Whether adult or child, reading is clearly going to help us become the people God created us to be, realising our full potential. It should go without saying that Bible should definitely be on your daily reading list – even if it is only for five minutes. 😊

### **Value the Joy**

This piece of advice clearly links directly to our 2025 memory verse: rejoice always. I have a friend who is a natural joy-bearer. Even going through a lengthy and hugely stressful period coping (not always well) with her husband's creeping physical disability and dementia and eventual death didn't stop a room lighting up whenever she walked into it. We are not all like that of course, and the Bible does tell us to mourn with those who mourn, as well as laugh with those who laugh. But we forget at our peril that it is the joy of the Lord that is our strength. We need to do all we can to enable everyone to discover what brings joy and introduce it into our ordinary everyday lives, not just save it for high days and holidays.

### **Grow in Character**

Isn't it interesting that we grow in character yet engage in character-building activities? The former suggests an organic, naturally-occurring process whilst the latter a much more active, dynamic, intentional approach. No doubt, as with so many things, both are necessary. It's certainly true that someone's character is crucial to the way they fit into and get on in the world. You may have brilliant engineering or athletic abilities, but if you are unreliable, if you lie and cheat, if you're selfish and rude, no-one is really going to want you around. And of course you will be limited in your ability to bring out the hidden potential in others, unless perhaps that potential is patience!

Of course, we Christians have a massive advantage here for we have free access to the Holy Spirit who is the best ever character-builder on or off the planet. We normally use the organic metaphor of growing for his work in developing His fruit within us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, humility and self-control.

Back in early March, the One Big Family team invited those present to choose the three fruits they needed more of in their lives and then to hang them on the vine that represents Jesus. They did so as an invitation to God to step up his gardening work and to provide just the right conditions for those particular fruit to grow. The vine is still there, with the plate of extra fruit, so if you haven't yet chosen yours, or you'd like to renew that prayer, please visit St. Martin's one day next week and do so. (Or ask a close friend to do so on your behalf if you are house-bound or live too far away.) And if you have already selected some fruit, then take a moment or few this month to reflect on how God has begun to answer your prayer...

God bless and may your summer reading fill you with joy and build your character as well as help you release the hidden potential in all you meet, even if only with a smile!



**Revd. Hazel**

---



*Morning Prayer each  
Wednesday at 9 am in St.  
Martin's Church*

---

**STREETS TO BE PRAYER FOR:**

27 <sup>th</sup> July - 2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Barons Close
3 <sup>rd</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> August	Battle Court
10 <sup>th</sup> - 16 <sup>th</sup> August	Benjeman Way
17 <sup>th</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup> August	Bowes Drive and Bowes House
24 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup> August	Brookfields
31 <sup>st</sup> August - 6 <sup>th</sup> September	Bushey Lea

**FROM THE REGISTERS:**

*Baptisms:* Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July in St. Martin's    Chloe Starbrook (adult)  
   Hunter Hedges  
   Evie Hedges  
   Rory Kilner

*Confirmations:*

*Weddings / Renewal of Weddings Vows:*

*Funerals / Internment of Ashes / Memorial Services / Cremations:*



## CALENDAR FOR AUGUST 2025

**All Services are in St. Martin's unless otherwise stated**

Sun	3	8.00 am	Communion
		10.30 am	One Big Family Service
		11.00 am	<i>Church@Home</i> Service of Morning Prayer*
Wed	6	<b>9.00 am</b>	Morning Prayer
		10.00 am	Communion in the Chancel
Thu	7	11.00 am	Funeral of Dave Green in St. Martin's
Sat	9	10.00 am	to 4 pm Summer Fair <b>at St. Peter's, Shelley</b>
Sun	10	10.30 am	Communion with hymns
			<i>Church@Home</i> Service of Morning Prayer*
Wed	13	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
		10.00 am	Communion in the Chancel
Thu	14	2.00 pm	Julian Meeting in <b>St. Peter's, Shelley</b>
Sun	17	8.00 am	Communion
		10.30 am	One Big Family Service
		11.00 am	<i>Church@Home</i> Service of Morning Prayer*
Tue	19	8.30 pm	Tuesday Club meets at <b>The Cock</b>
Wed	20	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
		10.00 am	Communion in the Chancel
Sun	24	10.30 am	Communion with hymns
		11.00 am	<i>Church@Home</i> Service of Morning Prayer*
Wed	27	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
		10.00 am	Communion in the Chancel
Sun	31	10.00 am	Communion with hymns and Healing Service
		11.00 am	<i>Church@Home</i> Service of Morning Prayer*

**Other events during August in the Ongar Mission & Ministry Unit which you might enjoy**

Sun	17	3.00 pm	Walkers and Cyclists Service at All Saints, Norton Mandeville
Sun	31	3.00 pm	to 5 pm Cream Teas at St. Mary's, High Ongar

*\*If you haven't attended Church@Home before and would like to attend, please contact Shirley Dudeney ([shirleydudeney@btinternet.com](mailto:shirleydudeney@btinternet.com)) for the necessary link*

*Are you holding an event? If you don't tell Peter Dudeney it won't appear in the Calendar. His contact details are email [peterdudeney@btinternet.com](mailto:peterdudeney@btinternet.com) - Phone: 01277 364143*



Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for *St. Martin's Church, Chipping Ongar with St. Peter's Church, Shelley* with *easyfundraising*?

There are over 8,000 retailers on board ready to make a donation – including Amazon, eBay, Argos, John Lewis, Booking.com, M&S, Sainsbury's Groceries and Tesco Groceries – and it won't cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds.

All you need to do is:

1. Go to website **St. Martin's Chipping Ongar – A Church Near You** and select *easyfundraising* in the menu and this will provide you with the link to join as a supporter of our parish then
2. Every time you shop online, go to *easyfundraising* first to find the site you want and start shopping.
3. After you've checked out, the retailer will make a donation to *St. Martin's Church, Chipping Ongar with St. Peter's Church, Shelley* at no extra cost to you whatsoever!

There are no catches or hidden charges and our Parish will be really grateful for your donations.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to ask.

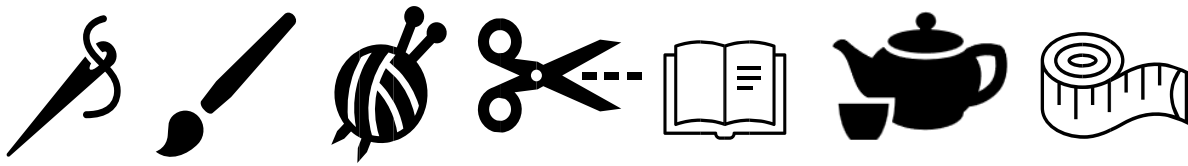
**Thank you for your support.**

**Peter Dudeney**



**Reverend Canon Sam Brazier-Gibbs with the Mayor of Ipswich following her Collation as Archdeacon of Ipswich and Director of Inspiring Ipswich at Ipswich Minister on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025**





## SMARTYCRAFT FOR AUGUST

Join us at our Smartycraft session in the Church Rooms on **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August** from **1 pm until 3 pm.**

Please come and relax with our craft project, tea and a chat. Jill will provide a short bible reflection for you to ponder on and Rita will provide refreshments.

**Please save your loo roll cardboard middles so that we can use them to make Christmas crackers for the Advent Fair.**

Hope to see you there ... **Jill and Rita**

---

### Ongar & Shelley Ladies' Thursday Group

Because we had our annual outing in July there is no report but our next club meeting will be on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August at the URC. Entry at 2 pm for 2.30 start.

**Jan Turnbull - June 2025**

---



### St. Peter's Church, Shelley

#### What's happening at St. Peter's

We held a fruitful working party on 19<sup>th</sup> July - we managed to achieve a lot despite the inclement weather!

Please make sure you have **Saturday 9th August** firmly in your diaries! We are holding our celebrated Summer Fair from 10 am to 4 pm in our beautiful churchyard. There will be a proliferation of craft stalls, games, a lucky dip and a raffle and, of course, our delicious refreshments - ploughman's lunches and cream teas with home-baked scones. Come one, come all!

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August – Julian Meeting at 2 pm.

Also an advance notice for our **Harvest Festival Songs of Praise** service on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September**. We will have a bring and share lunch at 1 pm followed by the service at 2.30 pm.



For any queries about our events or about St. Peter's, please contact Monica Richardson on 07717-877575.

**Monica Richardson**

**Unable to get to church?**

*Well why not go to?*

**A Church @ Home**



*Want to know more?*

**Well, contact Shirley Dudeney**

**[shirleydudeney@btinternet.com](mailto:shirleydudeney@btinternet.com)**

**for more information  
and the Zoom Link**

**HOME COMMUNION** ... Is there anyone who, for one reason or another, cannot be in Church as they used to be? For those of you who would like it, we can offer home communions. If this is something you would like, please contact either myself, Sue on 01277 362723 or Shirley on 01277 364143, and we can arrange a convenient time to bring the sacrament to you.



# **ST. MARTIN'S, CHIPPING ONGAR**

## **Times for Services & Private Prayer**



### **Sunday Services**

**First & Third Sundays - 8 am - Holy Communion**

**First & Third Sundays - 10.30 am - One Big Family for All**  
(non-Communion)

**Second, Fourth & Fifth Sunday - 10.30 am - Holy**  
**Communion**

### **Wednesday**

**9 am - Morning Prayer**

**10 am - Holy Communion**

**St. Martin's Church is usually open for Private Prayer each day between 9.30 am and 5 pm or until dusk whichever is the earliest (12 noon on Saturdays).**

**Please adhere to any notices displayed**  
**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU!**

Please do remember to visit us on the 'A Church Near You' website <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>



## OUR 2025 TEXT TO REMEMBER



Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



**THE TUESDAY CLUB**



... meets at ...

**The Cock**  
on the

**Third** Tuesday of the month at 8.30 pm

Come along and enjoy good conversation and banter

**ALL WELCOME !**

### PARISH VISION

**To be a growing Church, God's gift to the community.**

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

**In the light of God's call and our situation here, our mission is:**

**to be a more evident presence in our community, witnessing to God's love for all;**

**to be God's hands and feet within the Church and beyond through  
worship and prayer;  
listening and serving;  
acceptance and welcome;**

**to be a people who are growing towards a closer relationship with God,  
creation and each other.**