

Wethersfield Parish Magazine

MARCH 2026



**Parish Church of
St. Mary Magdalene**

in the benefice of
*~Pant Valley
Churches~*

WETHERSFIELD PARISH CHURCH

St Mary Magdalene

Pant Valley Churches Benefice of
Finchingfield with Cornish Hall End, Wethersfield, Shalford, Gt. and Little Bardfield

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Parish Priest

The Reverend Alex Shannon

The Vicarage, Bardfield Road, Finchingfield, Braintree CM7 4JR

Tel: 01371 810309 / 07483 878659

rev.alex.shannon@gmail.com

Associate Minister

The Reverend Canon Janet Nicholls

Park House, Braintree Road, Shalford, Braintree CM7 5HQ

Tel: 01371 851317

jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

Reader

Mrs Sarah Pilgrim, Fieldside, Lombard Street, Finchingfield

Tel: 01371 850781

pilgrim511@btinternet.com

Churchwardens

Mr David Seacombe, Ivanhoe House, Wethersfield

Tel: 07801 868278

Mr Ben Walmsley, Wethersfield Hall, Wethersfield

Tel: 07939 030833

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Hon. Sec.

Mr Brian Muir, The Manse, Wethersfield

Tel: 07775 675701

hon.secretary@wethersfieldchurch.org.uk

Hon Treasurer

Mr Bob Harris, Top Shop, Wethersfield.

Tel: 07817 379099

hon.treasurer@wethersfieldchurch.org.uk

Ringing Master

Mr Roy Threadgold, Plumley, Braintree Road, Wethersfield

Tel: 01371 850481

roy@boydellsdairy.co.uk

Please contact the Parish Priest for Baptisms, Marriages and when you are in need of help.

He is very happy to bring Communion to the homes of the sick and housebound.

Would newcomers please make us aware of their presence.

Services for March 2026

Sunday 1 March – Second Sunday of Lent

9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Cornish Hall End

9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford

10.30am Sung Communion Service – Great Bardfield

11am Prayer & Pilgrimage (Celtic Morning Prayer) – Wethersfield

4pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

Sunday 8 March – Third Sunday of Lent

8am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Shalford

9.30am Morning Worship – Finchingfield

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

11am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Wethersfield

4pm Sung Evensong – Shalford

Sunday 15 March – Fourth Sunday of Lent (Mothering Sunday)

9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Finchingfield

9.30am Mothering Sunday Service – Shalford

10.30am Mothering Sunday Communion Service – Great Bardfield

11am Mothering Sunday Family Service – Wethersfield

Sunday 22 March – Fifth Sunday of Lent

8am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Great Bardfield

9.30am Parish Communion Service – Shalford

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

11am Family Communion Service – Wethersfield

Services for Holy Week

Sunday 29 March – Palm Sunday

Children's activities and breakfast refreshments in Wethersfield Church from 9am

9.45am Palm Procession sets off around the village – Wethersfield

10.30am Benefice Communion Service – Wethersfield

Monday 30, Tuesday 31 March & Wednesday 1 April

9am Eucharist – Finchingfield (Mon & Wed) / Great Bardfield (Tue)

8pm Compline – Shalford

Maundy Thursday (2 April)

6.30pm Communion Service commemorating the Last Supper –
Wethersfield

8pm Sung Eucharist followed by Vigil – Little Bardfield

Good Friday (3 April)

2pm Meditations on the Cross – Shalford

2pm Solemn Service of the Lord's Passion – Little Bardfield

9pm Tenebrae – Cornish Hall End

Holy Saturday (4 April)

8pm Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter – Little Bardfield

Service times on Easter Day (5 April)

Cornish Hall End: 9am

Shalford: 9.30am

Finchingfield: 10am

Great Bardfield: 10.30am

Wethersfield: 11am

Regular Services and Events during the week

Monday

8.45am Morning Prayer – Finchingfield

1.30pm 'Faithful Fiction' book club (1st weeks) – Between the Lines, Great Bardfield

Tuesday

8.45am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

10am Baby & Toddler Group – Great Bardfield

'St Mary's Munchkins' story & song time with refreshments

Thursday

8.45am Morning Prayer – Wethersfield

10am Prayer Group (1st, 3rd & 5th weeks)

Coffee Morning (2nd & 4th weeks) – Shalford

Coffee Morning (3rd week) – Cornish Hall End

10.30am Eucharist – Little Bardfield

Friday

8.45am Morning Prayer – Shalford

Saturday

10.30am (3rd weeks) Coffee Morning – Wethersfield

From the Vicarage...

A glance at the list of services for this month will tell you that things start to get busy towards the end of March. Every year, throughout December, people engaging me in conversation will mention how it's my 'busy time' as a Vicar. And while Advent and Christmas do tend to give me a full diary, Easter is, if anything, rather more all-consuming. With much of what goes on in church packed into the narrow window of the week leading up to Easter, the services trace dramatically what happened to Jesus between his arrival in Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday and his subsequent crucifixion and the revealing of the empty tomb.

It's a sequence of events which has captivated artists of every kind throughout the ages, with music, drama and visual art all being produced to re-tell the story of Jesus' Passion. For me, it has always been music which has been at the forefront of how I have encountered the power of these events, the culmination of Jesus' earthly life. This Lent, I'm giving a couple of talks to share my thoughts on two very different musical portrayals of the Passion (possibly drawing on parts of a few others as well):

Thursday 12 March, 7.30pm at the Great Bardfield Quaker Meeting House: J.S. Bach's *St John Passion*

Thursday 26 March, 7.30pm at the Great Bardfield Quaker Meeting House: Andrew Lloyd Webber & Tim Rice's *Jesus Christ Superstar*

Just as the composers and lyricists for these two works had different views on the religious significance of the events they were depicting in words and music, so these talks are intended for anyone, whatever your own personal views or faith convictions. I hope, though, that for everyone who comes, it will be a good opportunity to discover at a deeper level what it is that makes Easter so significant a celebration for Christians. The two talks will operate independently of one another, so that either can be enjoyed on its own, or both together. And if they give you something to think about, why not try some of the services which will be taking place in our churches during Holy Week – and if you're someone who tends to come to church on Easter anyway, it's good to discover how following the thread through Good Friday and all that comes before makes a difference to how significant that Easter morning feels.

Rev'd/Fr Alex

Jesus Christ Superstar is being staged by Witham Amateur Operatic Society 20th – 25th April at Witham Public Hall, Collingwood Road, Witham, CM8 2DY. Performances nightly at 7:30pm, Saturday matinee 2:30pm, with our own Jessie Tabor (Threadgold) as Musical Director.

For details and booking: www.waos.org/box-office

Churchwarden Update

We are now in the season of Lent, a sacred season in the Christian calendar, inviting believers to reflect, repent, and renew their faith. Marking the forty days before Easter, it echoes Jesus' time in the wilderness and calls Christians to prayer, self-discipline, and acts of generosity. Lent encourages a deeper awareness of God's presence, preparing hearts to fully embrace the hope and joy of the Resurrection.

Some dates for your diary: Our annual plant sharing event will take place in Church on Saturday 25 April, in the morning (1030am-1230pm). Imagine the pews full of young plants, just ready for you to choose and plant on in your own garden. They are there because people like you are kind enough to bring extra seedlings, cuttings, runners etc that are beyond what you need.

We look forward to the upcoming Wethersfield Chamber Concerts season; this year the concerts are being held in Church on 12 & 25 April, and 10 May (along with our annual Art Exhibition).

DS

A Quiet Gift We Have Forgotten

For many centuries the Church of England has offered this country more than worship. It has provided a moral framework that helped people of many different beliefs live together in peace. Even those who rarely entered a church benefited from the culture it shaped. The habits of patience, restraint and neighbourliness that once marked English life did not appear by chance. They grew from the steady presence of the parish church and the values it taught.

One of the most striking features of our national story is the way people of minority faiths have been able to flourish here. This became possible because the church helped create a public space where conscience was respected and violence was restrained. A confident and settled Christian tradition made room for others. It did not demand uniformity. It simply offered a moral centre that held the nation together.

Today the church finds itself in a changing landscape. Many voices compete for attention, and public life often feels unsettled. In such a moment it is natural that the church should reflect carefully on how best to speak into the life of the nation. Yet this period of reflection also brings an opportunity. The

values that shaped our civic character remain as needed as ever. People still look for guidance, for reassurance and for a sense of shared purpose.

A society cannot sustain genuine pluralism without a shared moral horizon. Diversity needs a centre. When that centre is steady and confident, people of all backgrounds feel more secure. The Church of England has long offered that steadiness, not through force but through example. Its presence has helped anchor the nation's imagination and given shape to our common life.

The church does not need to reclaim political power. It needs only to continue its vocation with confidence. It has always been at its best when it speaks gently but clearly about the virtues that make communal life possible. Kindness joined with truth. Mercy joined with justice. A belief in the dignity of every person. A willingness to forgive. A commitment to the common good.

These are not only Christian virtues. They are the foundations of a healthy society. Many who are secular in outlook recognise this and feel gratitude for it.

Our country still needs a church that is present, rooted and willing to guide. A church that knows its own story and is unafraid to share it. If it continues to do so, it will go on sheltering all who live here, just as it has done for so long.

DS



Plant Share
& Coffee Morning
Saturday 25th April 10.30am – 12.30am
Wethersfield Parish Church

Want to pick up some new plants?
Want to share your love of gardening, and can spare some surplus plants, seedlings etc with our community?

Like a cuppa and a slice of cake?
Don't really want to drive to an overpriced garden centre?
Want to help our grade 1 listed church?

Then this event really is for YOU!!

Please bring any of the following:
Yourself, plants, donation money

Icons: flower, strawberry, pumpkin, slice of cake, plant, money, credit card, coffee cup.

WETHERSFIELD ANNUAL FINE & AFFORDABLE ART EXHIBITION

Saturday 9th May 5-7pm drinks

Sunday 10th May 10-3pm

Free entry St Mary Magdalene Church CM7 4BY



PROUD SPONSOR

JACKSON-STOPS

The aconites and snowdrops look glorious in the Churchyard



WETHERSFIELD CHAMBER CONCERTS

www.wethersfieldchamberconcerts.org.uk



Sunday 12 April 2026, 3pm

KAMMERPHILHARMONIE EUROPA

Corelli, Rachmaninov, Ponchielli, Bach, Faure, Mozart

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Sunday 26 April 2026, 4pm

MAXIM CALVER – cello

JAMS COLEMAN – piano

Debussy, Beethoven, Schumann, Boulanger, Shostakovich

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Sunday 10 May 2026, 4pm

JACKY ZHANG - piano (BBC Young Musician of the Year finalist)

Chopin, Ligeti, Brahms

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Ticket price: £20 (concessions £18)

Season ticket: £54 (concessions £48)

Children under 16: free

All seats unreserved

Complimentary refreshments during interval
and after concert

VENUE: WETHERSFIELD CHURCH

Further information:

www.wethersfieldchamberconcerts.org.uk



News from the Club

Coming up at the Club we have our next Open Mic Night on Thursday 19 March, come down and play, sing or just listen to those that do.

Then Elvis is in the Building on Saturday night, 28 March, a night not to be missed!

Memberships are due for renewal from now, you can join/rejoin at the Club and that will take you through until 30 April 2027. We hope you can continue to support the Club by renewing your membership or joining for the first time. Couple/family membership is £40, adults are £25, concession members are £15, and junior memberships (16-18) are £10.

We hope to see you soon.

Make a note in your diaries - the big event of the Summer in the Village to mark the Summer Solstice, taking place on **Saturday 20 June**. Details as shown.

We are having a car/bike show so if you have a vintage, classic or just a vehicle of interest and would like to show it on the day then please do get in touch. £2.00 per vehicle. Also there will be a dog show, so if you have a canine friend you would like to bring along that would be great, dogs will be allowed on the field for that one day only.

There will be stalls, bbq, bar, cream teas, live music and much more so we are hoping for a great Village day with some summer sunshine. If you would like to get involved in anyway please contact Julia at broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk, or by calling 0771 267 4929.

An event not to be missed!

The Big Plastic Count 9-15 March 2026

Have you heard of it? If so are you taking part? If you do have not a clue - this is what it is all about!

Back in 2017, Everyday Plastic founder Daniel Webb decided to see how much plastic he threw away. For one year, he collected and counted every single piece of his plastic waste – and there were 4,490 items in total. Working with a scientific researcher, Daniel came up with a way to work out his plastic profile. It revealed how much of his waste was recycled, burned, buried, or shipped abroad. His experiment started a national conversation that inspired The Big Plastic Count. It gives everyone in the UK the chance to see what happens to their plastic waste once it leaves their home.

THE STORY SO FAR

The Big Plastic Count was launched in 2022 by Greenpeace and Everyday Plastic. It is the UK's biggest people-powered investigation into household plastic waste. Since then, almost half a million people have taken part. Over 11 million pieces of plastic have been counted. The results have been impossible to ignore: most of our plastic isn't recycled. The majority is burned in the UK, while the rest is sent overseas or to landfill. Together, we found out the truth behind the UK's big plastic problem. We took our findings straight to Parliament, where school pupils asked MPs to take action.

WHERE WE'RE GOING

In 2025, The Big Plastic Count started a new chapter which will run until 2028, thanks to The National Lottery Community Fund. We're focused on deepening the story, and broadening who gets to tell it. The conversation around plastic needs to change. It needs to be clearer, more inclusive, and based on real-life experiences. Over the next few years, we'll bring new voices to the front of our work. We'll explore how plastic affects our climate and our communities. And we'll look at the whole plastic lifecycle – from how it's made to what happens when it's thrown away.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Maybe you, like me, get increasingly frustrated about the amount of single use plastic the world produces, how very difficult it is to avoid buying products without plastic and have concerns about what happens to our used plastic and the damage it causes our environment – then The Big Plastic Count might be for you.

For one week in March households are being asked to collect and count every piece of plastic that they will have to throw away either in a rubbish bin or in a recycling container. When you sign up to the Big Plastic Count you are supplied with all the information you need to carry out this task. Once the week's up, it's time to submit your count online by Sunday 22 March. After you've submitted, you'll receive your own plastic profile which will reveal how much you threw away and what happened to it.

Thank you for taking part – every single count helps to reveal what really happens to our plastic waste. Your information is collected and counted along with all other Big Plastic Count participants. This provides data for concerned citizens to lobby parliament and force a serious conversation about the future of our planet and its relation with single use plastic.

www.thebigplasticcount.com

Penny James
Church Eco Champion

Wethersfield Village Hall CIO
The Green
Wethersfield
CM7 4BS

Notice is hereby given that the 9th Annual General Meeting of Wethersfield Village Hall CIO (Charity number 117017) will be held at the Village Hall on Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 7.30pm. The Trustees extend an invitation to all members of the parish of Wethersfield to attend.

**The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held at Midday on
Sunday, 26th April, in the church.**

WETHERSFIELD CLUB
OPEN MIC NIGHT



THURSDAY
19 MARCH 2026
FROM 7.30 PM
PLAY, SING OR JUST LISTEN
TO THOSE WHO DO!!

St. Mary Magdalene Church, Wethersfield

COFFEE AND CHAT 2026
10.30am – 12 noon on Saturdays
21st MARCH and 18th APRIL



Meet up with old friends, make some
new.
ALL WELCOME

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL
FRIDAY NIGHT CINEMA**



Friday 27th March
(please note change of date)

Doors open 6.30pm

Film starts 7pm

Tickets £5 cash or card

Raffle £1

Enquiries 07304360410

The image is a poster for a 'Summer Solstice Event'. At the top, there is a banner of colorful triangular flags in shades of blue, yellow, and pink. Below the banner, the title 'Summer Solstice Event' is written in a large, bold, orange font with a slight shadow effect. Underneath the title, the text reads: 'Join the village fun at the Pavilion, Wethersfield, on Saturday 20th June from 1pm until late'. Below this, a list of activities is provided: 'Live music - food - stalls - cream teas - licenced bar - classic cars - games - bouncy castle - ice creams - fete games - fire engine - tractors - raffle'. At the bottom, it says 'More details to come' and 'If you would like a stall or get involved contact: broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk'. The entire poster is enclosed in a thin red border.

2026 Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal

Thank you so much for all your donations in 2025 which brought so much joy to those who would not otherwise have had much at all at Christmas.

Our shoeboxes go to the poorest areas of Eastern Europe and are made up of both practical and gift items for all ages, both families and elderly couples living alone.

This year we hope you are able to donate once more! We start our collection in Spring so as to allow plenty of time to collect together all the required items. You can leave your donations in the box provided in church or you can leave them in the house porch of 1, West Drive, Wethersfield CM7 4BT.

In March we are particularly looking for winter items to provide warmth and light. Winters in Eastern Europe can be bitter with temperatures well below freezing.

Suggested items include:

Gloves	Scarves	Hats
Socks	Tights	Hot water bottles
Candles	Candle holders	Solar powered torches.

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The next meeting of the **Wethersfield History Group** will be on Thursday 12th March at 8.00pm in the Pavilion. We have a very special speaker arranged for this meeting when well known author, **Clare Mulley**, will talk about her latest book "**Agent Zo**". This tells the incredible story of Agent Zo, the WW2 Polish resistance fighter, secretly trained by British Special Forces, and the only woman to be parachuted back behind enemy lines. £3 at the door (including tea/ coffee and biscuits) and all are welcome.



Felsted Choral Society

Handel Messiah

Saturday, 28 March, 7pm

Soloists: Jessica Edom-Carey, Alto soloist tbc,
Adam West and Theo Perry

Music Director: Thomas Duchan
Conducting Felsted Choral Society and Orchestra

Tickets £20 – programme & interval drink included
Under 18s Free ticketsource.co.uk/felstedchoralsociety
(No Booking Fee)

Venue: Holy Cross Church, Station Road, Felsted
CM6 3DG

[What3Words///northward.legend.best](https://www.what3words.com/northward.legend.best)

[Facebook.com/felstedchoralsociety](https://www.facebook.com/felstedchoralsociety)

felstedchoralsociety@gmail.com

Publicity: Tony Baker 07799 413191



Registered Charity No. 297351

There is a FREE TICKET to this performance for the first of our readers who contacts, Tony Baker 07799 413191 who will send this 'Free Ticket' to them personally.



EVENTS FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY

CHILDRENS ACTIVITY MORNING

Saturday 14th March

10.30am – 12 noon

for 3-11 year olds in Wethersfield Parish Church
Special activities with things to make and do for Mothering Sunday.
No charge.

For further details contact Sarah Pilgrim. Tel: 07788411360

Email: pilgrim511@btinternet.com



MOTHERING SUNDAY FAMILY SERVICE

Sunday 15th March at 11am
in Wethersfield Parish Church

A special service for Mothering Sunday.

During this service we will celebrate and thank God for our mothers and present them with flowers.

ALL WELCOME



Elvis is in the building

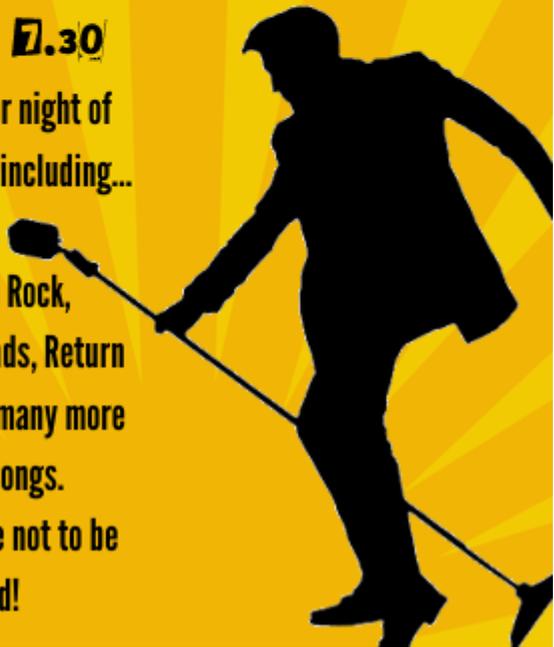
SATURDAY 28th MARCH

FROM 7.30

Come down for night of
continous hits, including...

Jailhouse Rock,
Suspicious Minds, Return
to Sender and many more
fabulous songs.

A performance not to be
missed!



One Big Thank You

Our **One Big Thank You** this month goes to our Bell Ringers. Before our services in St Mary Magdalene church and across the Benefice a trusty team of Bellringers call us to worship in the age-old tradition of ringing the church bells. They turn out in rain, flood, snow or sunshine without fail. Church towers can be cold and draughty places, but our ringers are not daunted – made of strong stuff! They also ring for special days of celebration throughout the year or in memory of a loved one.

Bellringing as a hobby has waxed and waned in popularity over the years but seems to be in a period of resurgence as I sometimes notice queues of ringers waiting their turn to ring! Our wonderful and very experienced Tower Captain, Roy Threadgold, is a natural at teaching and enthusing our young folk to get involved. Only today, I saw a young lad standing on a wooden box to bring him to a height where he could safely reach the ‘sally’ (the bell rope) and I could hear his chimes across the village. Well done that boy!

Our church services would not be the same without the sound of the bells welcoming us to come together before God. So, thank you to all of our bellringers. Keep up the good work.

Penny James

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

can be found parked in the High Street or at the Village Hall
on **MONDAY mornings 10.40am to 11.10am**

Next visit date: - MONDAY 16th MARCH 2026

Wethersfield Village Community Shop New Opening Hours

MONDAY 10.00 AM – 4.00 PM

TUESDAY 10.00 AM – 4.00 PM 6.00 – 8.00 PM

WEDNESDAY CLOSED

THURSDAY 10.00 AM – 4.00 PM (POST OFFICE 2.00 – 4.00PM)

FRIDAY 10.00 AM – 4.00 PM

SATURDAY 10.00 AM – 1.00 PM

SUNDAY 10.00 AM – 11.00 AM

Every Thursday we take fresh deliveries of fresh bread, rolls and pies from **Mersea Bakery**.

Fresh meat, bacon and ham every week from **Priors Hall**.

Sliced Hovis is continually stocked and fresh Milk is delivered 3 times a week.

Fresh fruit and vegetables available and full range of frozen foods, including meals.

Volunteers are needed, if you can, please pop your contact details into the shop to join the team.



STAMPS for Farleigh Hospice



Thank you to all those who have been saving their used postage stamps and popping them in the tub on the table in Wethersfield church. *Old and new styles welcome as are those from all countries.*

PLEASE KEEP COLLECTING!

Thank you