

Wethersfield Parish Magazine

APRIL 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

Ringling 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 April 2026

Services for Holy Week

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

Sunday 12 April – Second Sunday of Easter

8am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Shalford
10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield
11am Family Eucharist – Wethersfield
11am Pet Service – Shalford
5pm Sung Evensong – Shalford

Sunday 19 April – Third Sunday of Easter

9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Finchingfield
9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford
10.30am Sung Eucharist – Great Bardfield
11am Family Service – Wethersfield

Sunday 26 April – Fourth Sunday of Easter

9.30am Parish Communion – Shalford
10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield
11am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Wethersfield
11am Scouts' Service for St George's Day – Finchingfield
5pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

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...

As I come to put down my thoughts for this month's village magazines, what feels like yet another source of uncertainty and anxiety has appeared on the world stage. The intensified conflict in the middle east is the kind of situation which we might normally expect to stand out as unique at a particular moment in its scope and impact, but I'm sure I'm not alone in feeling that circumstances like these – with unimaginable devastation for those caught up in the midst of things, and significant ripples being felt even in places far distant – are no longer quite as singular as we are used to them being.

In a month which begins with the celebration of Easter, many of us may not feel quite ready to hear a message of hope and new life. Even before considering the effect of world events on our thoughts, I call to mind so many examples of individuals and families bearing the weight of incredibly heavy burdens. We may, though, draw some comfort from the fact that those who witnessed the first Easter were also not at all ready to take in what had happened. Jesus' disciples were wholly unprepared for the empty tomb and his reappearance among them, and their initial reaction was not joyful, but confused, anxious and fearful.

To come and celebrate Easter together doesn't mean, therefore, that we need to feel that all is right with the world. In fact, perhaps the opposite is true, because a world in which all was well would not need the kind of dramatic intervention which we proclaim at this great festival. Crucifixion and resurrection are not just about celebrating the arrival of spring, but are medicine for a world in need of healing, whose echoes can then be found in the returning beauty of this season of nature.

So if you're feeling like throwing up your arms in despair and frustration about the state of things, whether close by around you, or on a global scale, or anything in between, then come and find yourself in good company in church this Easter. You will hear of people who came feeling as you do, whose lives were transformed by a new hope – not one that pretends that all is well with the world, but which refuses to accept that its troubles will be the last word.

Rev'd/Fr Alex

Churchwarden Update

A reminder that our annual plant sharing event will take place 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.

The donation plate and contactless payment machine will be ready for your contribution. This much-loved event is a great way to swap what you don't need for plants that you would love to have, or just to save yourself a trip to the garden centre and their inflated costs.

We look forward to the 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). 12 April sees the return of the 8-piece Kammerphilharmonie Europe. Their last visit was in 2024 and by popular demand they are back with a fantastically mixed repertoire. On 26 April we host Maxim Calver, cello with Jâms Coleman, piano. Max played for us in 2019 after he was a finalist in the BBC Young Musician Competition in 2018.

DS

Hamlet, Hamnet, and the Hope of Easter

As Easter approaches, many of us find ourselves thinking about loss and renewal, sorrow and hope; the very themes that sit at the heart of both Shakespeare's Hamlet and Maggie O'Farrell's modern novel Hamnet. Though written four centuries apart, these two works speak to the same deep human ache: how do we live faithfully in a world marked by grief, and where do we find hope when the shadows lengthen?

In Hamlet, the young prince is plunged into mourning after the death of his father. His world feels disordered, morally uncertain, and spiritually unsettling. Much of the play follows Hamlet's struggle to discern what is right in the midst of confusion. He longs for truth, justice, and meaning; yet he finds himself wrestling with doubt, fear, and the weight of responsibility. His grief becomes a kind of exile, a place where he must confront the hardest questions of the human heart.

O'Farrell's Hamnet turns the lens the other way. Instead of a son grieving a father, we meet parents grieving a child. The novel - and the recent film - imagines the death of Shakespeare's own son, Hamnet, and the quiet devastation that follows. O'Farrell writes with tenderness about a family trying to carry on when the centre of their world has been torn away. The grief is intimate, domestic, and recognisable to anyone who has ever loved deeply and lost.

Yet both works, in their own way, point beyond despair. In Hamnet, the child's life is honoured through the creation of the play Hamlet; a transformation of sorrow into something that speaks across centuries. In Hamlet, the prince's final plea is that his story be told truthfully, as though truth itself has the power to heal what violence has broken.

For Christians, these longings find their fulfilment in the Easter story. The resurrection of Jesus does not deny the reality of suffering; it transforms it. The cross shows us that God enters fully into human grief. The empty tomb shows us that grief is not the end. Love endures. Hope rises. Death does not have the final word.

Both Hamlet and Hamnet remind us that sorrow is part of our shared humanity. Easter reminds us that sorrow is not our destiny. In Christ's rising, we discover the promise that every story - even the most broken - can be gathered up, redeemed, and made new.

This is the hope we carry into Easter: that God brings life out of death, light out of darkness, and meaning out of even our deepest losses.

DS

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

=0=

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

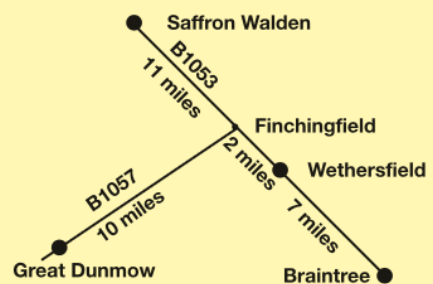
All seats unreserved

Complimentary refreshments during interval
and after concert

VENUE: WETHERSFIELD CHURCH

Further information:

www.wethersfieldchamberconcerts.org.uk



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









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





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

Wethersfield History Group

The next meeting of the group is on **Thursday, April 9th in the Pavilion at 8pm** . This month there is a local theme and a local speaker,



Nearly everyone associates hops with Kent but in the 17th & 18th century hops were more widely grown. Essex rivalled Kent in production. Castle Hedingham and the surrounding parishes were the centre of hop growing in Essex. Lyn West who lives in the Old Brewery in Wethersfield will explore the evidence for this and consider why production declined eventually ceasing towards the end of the 19th century.

£3 on the door with tea, coffee and biscuits. Everyone welcome.

The Big Plastic Count Results

Some of you, like myself, may have taken part last month in the Big Plastic Count. This is a yearly survey to see how much single use plastic individual households use in one week. The results are collected and sorted into categories in order to campaign government to bring in legislation to reduce the production and waste of single use plastic for household use.

I collected every piece of plastic we threw away in our household for one week in March and entered the numbers under categories which included single use plastic used in:

food and drink wrapping

cleaning and toiletries

everything else e.g. parcel wrapping, bubble wrap.

I felt happy that I used no plastic in my cleaning products and toiletries and only 16% was in the 'everything else' category. However, I was horrified that 84% was on food and drink wrapping.

Additionally, only 26% was hard plastic which is easier to recycle. 74% was soft plastic which is difficult to recycle and often ends up being burnt, dispersing tiny plastic particles into the atmosphere.

Sadly, in the UK only 16% of our total plastic is recycled in this country; 16% is sent abroad to be recycled, 9% sent to landfill and 59 % is incinerated.

My household, in one week, used an astonishing 57 pieces of single use plastic. This is equivalent to 2,964 pieces over one year! Can you imagine how much single use plastic is thrown away nationally over one year?

This is so very damaging to our environment and the planet. God has given the human race the privilege of stewarding the earth to His glory and for the benefit of all the created order.

Can we, therefore, try and reduce our plastic waste a little? One way I do this is by using a refill shop for many of my household items. It is much harder when it comes to food shopping as we feel we have little sway over big supermarkets. However, if we each can buy at least one item loose or in a paper or cardboard wrapping, we are making a difference. Even small changes count if everyone does it.

Penny J

COFFEE AND CHAT



10.30am – 12 noon

Saturdays: 18th APRIL and 16th MAY

Meet up with old friends, make some new.

ALL WELCOME

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

Next visit date: - MONDAY 27th APRIL 2026

MONDAY 18th MAY 2026

10.40am to 11.10am

It can be found parked in the High Street or at the Village Hall

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.

Link to Hope Shoebox calendar

Last month we asked you to collect items to keep people warm and to light their homes. Please do keep collecting those items but this month we would like to add to that some more fun items such as-

Hair accessories

Jewellery

Small bags or purses

Sunglasses and

Umbrellas for those not so sunny days!

Items are need for all ages as we make up gift shoeboxes for families and elderly folk.

You can leave your items in the designated box in church or leave in the porch of 1 West Drive, Wethersfield. Thank you for your generosity. It means so much to those who receive the boxes at Christmas.



Don't forget the big Wethersfield Summer Solstice Celebration on Saturday 20 June at the Playing Field, raising funds for the Village Organisations.

We will have the bar, bbq, a food truck, popcorn and candyfloss, ice creams, games for the kids and adults, and whole range of stalls to browse round. There will be a dog show and Danaher will be joining us on the day to help with that. We have our own town crier to help get things underway, and Bardfield Brass Band will be joining us as well.

We are having a car show, so if you have a classic car or bike, then do let us know so that we can have them displayed on the Field. We'll also be joined by a Fire Engine from Wethersfield, Police Cars and tractors amongst others.

There will be live music during the afternoon from some of our open mic entertainers, including Vic and Marion from Shalford, and we have the fabulous LoranS performing for us in the evening from 7pm.

Come and join the celebrations, finishing off with the lighting of the Wethersfield Beacon at 10.00 pm.

For more information, or if you would like to get involved, please contact Julia by e-mail on broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk

**Magazine contributions welcome from village organisations and clubs.
Please e-mail to roy@boydellsdairy.co.uk by 23rd of preceding month.**