

Wethersfield Parish Magazine

OCTOBER 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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Vicar

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

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jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

Reader

Mrs Sarah Pilgrim, Fieldside, Lombard Street, Finchingfield

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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.

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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 October 2026

Sunday 4 October – Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Cornish Hall End
9.30am Harvest Festival Service – Shalford
10.30am Family Eucharist Harvest Festival – Great Bardfield
11am Prayer & Pilgrimage (Celtic Morning Prayer) – Wethersfield

Sunday 11 October – Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

8am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Shalford
10am Harvest Festival Service – Finchingfield
10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield
11am Family Eucharist – Wethersfield
5pm Sung Evensong – Shalford

Sunday 18 October – St Luke the Evangelist

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

Sunday 25 October – Last Sunday after Trinity

9.30am Parish Communion – Shalford
10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield
11am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Wethersfield
4pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

*Also, there will be a time of prayer in Finchingfield Church **7-8pm on Thursday 15 October** as part of the 'Wave of Light' initiative to mark Baby Loss Awareness Week, the last 15 minutes of which will be a short service.*

Regular Services and Events during the week

Monday	8.45am Morning Prayer – Finchingfield 1.30pm 'Faithful Fiction' book club – 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 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

Keep In Touch!

To receive weekly email news about what's going on across our churches, please sign up to our mailing list by following this link:
<http://eepurl.com/ifMMHz> or using the QR Code:



From the Vicarage...

Around our villages, October marks the coming to an end of another cycle of the agricultural year, with final the final harvests coming in, and preparations for next year's growing season getting well under way. As we prepare to celebrate this with traditional harvest hymns and displays, the gulf between this slowly changing world and the fast-paced technological change dominating our news seems ever wider and deeper.

I offered a few thoughts on the significance of the emerging capabilities of Artificial Intelligence, or AI, in my magazine piece just over three years ago, but what has become clearer since then is that the warnings surrounding the development of AI are getting much more refined and specific. Instead of the general 'nightmare scenario' which almost always greets the emergence of a new technology, we have experts beginning to spell out the particular ways in which significant harm could result from allowing AI to be developed in an unrestricted way. And in my day-to-day conversations, anxiety about AI features largely in the lists of modern anxieties which people share with me.

All this places on the computer scientists, entrepreneurs and politicians who work at the forefront of AI and its regulation a huge responsibility; but we might be wondering how the rest of us should react. In answer to this challenge, I think there is one attitude of mind which we can learn from our farmers, whose harvest we are celebrating in this season: they appreciate most powerfully what difference it makes when they get to *know* the land they work. The connection which is forged by the time spent on and around the land, getting to know its rhythms and patterns, is something for which there are no short cuts or substitutes.

Our use of AI on the other hand, has the opposite effect: it separates us from the act of acquiring knowledge and wisdom; it keeps us apart, as we no longer feel the need to consult and discuss when such seemingly comprehensive answers are served up to us at the click of a button; and it removes our sense of dependence, as it exaggerates our view of our own capabilities. Indeed, one of the themes of our harvest prayers and hymns is how that most essential part of our lives – our supply of food – is ultimately dependent on many factors which are beyond our direct control (though often influenced by our actions). Renewing our commitment to remain connected to each other and to our world, and resisting the temptation to let technology do that for us, is a powerful way in which we can keep hold of what it means to be human – even what it means to be children of God.

Rev'd/Fr Alex

Thanksgiving, care, and farewell

We held our third annual Benefice Harvest Service in the wonderful surroundings of Great Bardfield Vineyard. A very large congregation gave thanks for the gifts of the land and for the people whose work sustains rural life. It was also an opportunity to express our warm appreciation to the Revd Canon Janet Nicholls, our Rural Dean, as she retires.

Janet has brought a keen interest in rural and agricultural life to her ministry, alongside a particular concern for the people whose lives and livelihoods are bound up with it. At Harvest, that concern feels especially fitting. Our food does not simply arrive on a shelf: it comes through the labour, skill, uncertainty, and perseverance of many people, working with the land and seasons.

Early in October, the Church remembers St Francis of Assisi. He is often pictured with birds and animals, but his faith was not simply a fondness for nature. He saw creation as God's gift, to be received with gratitude rather than taken for granted. That way of seeing also shaped his care for people, especially those overlooked or struggling.

Harvest invites us into the same attentive spirit. We give thanks for the beauty and bounty of creation, while remembering those who produce our food and those for whom times are difficult. We recognise that care for the land and care for one another belong together.

Janet will remain living in our benefice. Like her may we be encouraged to keep noticing the gifts around us, and to respond with practical kindness, generosity, and respect for the people and places entrusted to our care.

DS



Rev Canon Janet Nicholls preaching at the Benefice Harvest Service

Wethersfield Church

HARVEST FESTIVAL

18th October
11am

*Harvest service
with collection of harvest gifts for
The Braintree Food Bank*

*Fresh produce also welcome – proceeds from the sale of which will also be
given to the food bank*

ALL WELCOME



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.



SOUP AND A CHAT

is back again

Come and join us at the Wethersfield Village Hall
4th Tuesday of the month at mid-day for a bowl of homemade soup and bread roll.
Tea or coffee and homemade cakes.

Price £3.00 (No charge for the chat!)

2026

Tuesday, 27 October

Tuesday, 24 November

2027

Tuesday, 26 January

Tuesday, 23 February

Tuesday, 23 March

Contact: Susan 01371 850342

The next meeting of the **Wethersfield History Group**
will take place on **Thursday October 8th** at the Pavilion.

There will be a talk by **Ann Kemp** entitled

‘Wethersfield to Kamchatka’ .

This is the story of a lad from land locked Wethersfield
who captained the escort ship HMS Discovery
for Captain Cooks famous voyage of exploration
on his ship HMS Resolution.

Please join us as usual at 8pm.

£3 on the door and all are welcome.

We look forward to seeing you.

THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER 7.30 FOR 8.00 PM

WETHERSFIELD CLUB HOSTS RSPCA DANAHER

FOR THEIR REGULAR



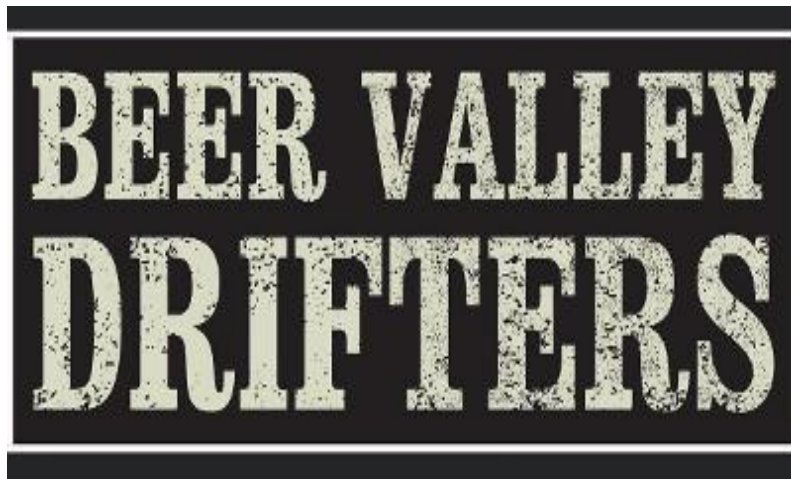
TABLES OF 6, £5 PER PERSON

Raffle on the night, all
proceeds to Danaher

WETHERSFIELD CLUB

SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 2026

AN EVENING WITH OUR GOOD FRIENDS



PLAYING LIVE FOR US AGAIN FROM 8.00 PM

JOIN US FOR A GREAT MUSIC NIGHT!

SAVE
the date!

★ WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE ★

**Christmas Lights
SWITCH ON!**

★ SATURDAY ★
28TH NOVEMBER

Followed by
LIVE MUSIC
AT
WETHERSFIELD CLUB
FROM 8PM

*Come along and
kick off the festive
season together!*

FAMILY FUN ★ FESTIVE SPIRIT ★ COMMUNITY TOGETHER

★ WETHERSFIELD CLUB ★

DATE
for your
DIARY!

The awesome vocals of

IAN LANEY LANE

ALL GENRES
OF MUSIC COVERS

SATURDAY
3RD
OCTOBER

7.30PM
til late

Come and grab a table and a drink!

 **Felsted Choral Society**

Saturday, 21 November, 7pm

Bach
Magnificat
— and —
Zelenka
Missa Divi
Xaverii

Holy Cross Church,
Station Road, Felsted
CM6 3DG

What3Words location:
///northward.legend.best

Musical Director:
Thomas Duchan conducting
Felsted Choral Society and full
orchestra

Soloists
Soprano: Erin Alexander
Mezzo-Soprano: Emma Roberts
Tenor: Adam West
Bass: Tim Alexander

TICKETS

£22.50 Includes
programme and
complimentary drink

Under 18s FREE

Booking fee included: ticketsource.com/felstedchoralsociety

Scan for Tickets



Facebook.com/felstedchoralsociety
felstedchoralsociety@gmail.com

Publicity: Tony Baker 07799 413191
Registered Charity No. 297351

A free ticket to this concert
awaits the first person to phone
07799 413191, mentioning this
magazine.

I found this poem when searching the web – it seems rather depressing but does highlight that we each need to do *something*, - *anything*, to steward this planet that our Creator has given us. It is too precious to take for granted.

Letter to Noah's Wife

Maya C. Popa

You are never mentioned on Ararat
or elsewhere, but I know a woman's hand
in salvation when I see it. Lately,
I'm torn between despair and ignorance.
I'm not a vegetarian, shop plastic,
use an air conditioner. Is this what happens
before it all goes fluvial? Do the selfish
grow self-conscious by the withering
begonias? Lately, I worry every black dress
will have to be worn to a funeral.
New York a bouillon, eroded filigree.
Anything but illness, I beg the plagues,
but shiny crows or nuclear rain.
Not a drop in London May through June.
I bask in the wilt by golden hour light.
Lately, only lately, it is late. Tucking
our families into the safeties of the past.
My children, will they exist by the time
it's irreversible? Will they live
astonished at the thought of ice
not pulled from the mouth of a machine?
Which parent will be the one to break
the myth; the Arctic wasn't Sisyphus's
snowy hill. Noah's wife, I am wringing
my hands not knowing how to know
and move forward. Was it you
who gathered flowers once the earth
had dried? How did you explain the light
to all the animals?

Copyright © 2019 by Maya C. Popa. Originally published in Poem-a-Day on September 30, 2019, by the Academy of American Poets.

P.J.



HARVEST



Activities for 3–11-year-olds
Sunday 11th October, 3pm – 4pm

in Wethersfield Church
ALL WELCOME

Come along and help make the harvest loaf and enjoy some crafts, stories and songs for HARVEST

Enquiries to Sarah Pilgrim. Tel: 07788411360

Email: pilgrim511@btinternet.com



St. Mary Magdalene Church, Wethersfield

COFFEE AND CHAT 2026

10.30am – 12 noon

Saturday, 17th OCTOBER



Meet up with old friends, make some new.

ALL WELCOME

We welcome contributions to this magazine from village clubs and societies. Please consider sending us your news to roy@boydellsdairy.co.uk .

Deadline is 23rd of month preceding publication.