Wimbish Church Newsletter



August/September 2026

WIMBISH CHURCH

Wimbish and Debden Parish Churches
Church Services and Events in August/ September 2026
Services subject to change:
please check websites
www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19645/
www.achurchnearyou.com/church/6275/

ST MARY THE VIRGIN & ALL SAINTS DEBDEN

All Saints, Wimbish

Sunday 2nd August: Trinity 9
9.30 am Lammas Service followed by refreshments
Sunday 16th August: Trinity 11
10.30 am Holy Communion
Sunday 6h September: Trinity 14
9.30 am Village Worship followed by refreshments
Sunday 20th September: Trinity 16
10.30 am Holy Communion

St Mary The Virgin, Debden

Sunday 9th August: Trinity 10
9.00 am Holy Communion
Sunday 23rd August: Trinity 12
3.00 pm Pet Service
Sunday 13th September: Trinity 15
9.00 am Holy Communion
Sunday 27th September: Trinity 17
9.00 am Parish Praise

St Mary's Saffron Walden

Sunday 30th August: Trinity 13
10.30 am Team Service

Wimbish Parish Church, Off Maple Lane, CB10 2XG
St Paul's Mission Hall, Wimbish Tye Green, CB10 2XE (next to Wimbish School)
Debden Parish Church, Church Lane, CB11 3LD

The copy deadline for the October/November newsletter is 10th September 2026.
wimbishparishmagazine@gmail.com

The views and opinions expressed in articles published in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial committee or of the Wimbish Parochial Church Council (PCC). Editor's decision is final.

Letter From The Rectory

Over recent weeks, the news has been full of stories about the dangers — especially for children — of spending hours glued to social media, soon to be banned for under sixteens. Adults, too, have found themselves under scrutiny: not only for their own dependence on screens, but for the unsettling realisation that many feel genuinely unable to wean themselves off the constant compulsion to check and scroll.

One radio discussion particularly struck me. It turned the whole issue on its head by asking what we are missing when our noses are pressed to a screen — the changing seasons, the colours around us, the sky above, the quiet insistence of nature calling out to be noticed. How desperately sad that so many of us have drifted into this way of living.

At our recent *Church Mice* session, despite the intense heat, we spent a lovely morning with Ducklings Class from Debden Primary School and were joined by insect specialist Fiona Hutchings from Wimbish. Together we helped the children search deep into the hedgerows and grass to discover the hidden world of bugs. Fiona used an upturned umbrella to shake insects from the bushes so the children could see them — and what a collection it was. They were mesmerised.

It was a joy to watch five year olds concentrate so patiently, peering closely at the life beneath their feet in the small patches of grass that we adults stride across without a second thought. Their enthusiasm was infectious. Encouraging children at this age to appreciate the created world that lies just a heartbeat away truly pays dividends. Who knows — perhaps one of them will become the next generation's Chris Packham.

One of my favourite poems, *Leisure* by the Welsh poet W. H. Davies, captures this beautifully in its opening lines:

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

This poem has featured twice in our recent afternoon services in both Debden and Wimbish — and little wonder. It has the power to stop us in our tracks and make us think. Davies, who lived a turbulent life and travelled widely as a vagrant in both the UK and the USA, had an extraordinary gift for observing nature with a sharp, perceptive eye. Through his words he articulated the beauty of God's creation with rare clarity.

It is all too easy to take for granted the beauty of where we live: to trample past the ecosystem beneath the turf, to overlook the wonders of the heavens, to let birdsong fade into the background as we automatically turn on the TV or radio. And yet it is all there, waiting.

After our session, the children returned to their classroom brimming with stories to share with their families, teachers and friends. No phones, no screens — just the natural world inviting them to stop and stare. May I encourage you to do the same. It costs nothing, and yet it means the world.

Revd Lynda Sebbage, Debden Rectory

A view from the fly on the church wall

For the July 'Tea and Chat', we were invited to 'Meadowfield' by Deryck and Fran Johnson to sit in their lovely garden. Although the weather was very hot, there was plenty of shade from the various fruit trees. The sound of the bees buzzing around the pond, and the birdsong emitting from the trees brought a wonderful feeling of tranquillity. Even though the busy main road was just the other side of the house, sitting in their garden was like being in the countryside away from the noise and trouble of everyday life. Deryck delighted us with a tour of their garden and wood, pointing out various trees and flowers.

Well-kept as it was, there were signs that global warming and the current heat wave were making a difference to the flora and fauna. Certain plants with stunted growth, fruit being smaller than normal, (although an apricot tree was fruiting prolifically). In answer to the question, "why are there so many bees congregating around the pond, are they drinking?", Deryck told us they were indeed drinking. Not just for themselves, but they were taking it into the hives and using it as air-conditioning to keep the hive cool. Normally there would be enough moisture in the nectar, which, as they fanned it to ripen it into honey would reduce the hive temperature.

I didn't know this, and it got me thinking about how fragile the countryside and wildlife is. How any one small thing can affect the balance, like a heatwave, causing something to go awry. As I write this, a hosepipe ban has just been implemented.

My grateful thanks for Deryck and Fran's gracious hospitality in making the 'Tea and Chat' crowd so very welcome. Sitting in that beautiful garden on a glorious summer's day, I thought if this was lost, if our countryside wasn't flourishing, but struggling, would we miss it? I know I would. How much poorer would our life be without God's nature around us? It's up to us to try and preserve it.

Peter
Churchwarden

Worship and Word Prayer Group, St Paul's, Wimbish

This is a short informal time of prayer and reflection around the daily office service of Evening Prayer. We include prayer for each other, the life of the churches, the needs of those from around the world, and of course for those we hold dear. You are welcome to join us, with no expectation to pray aloud.

No services in August 5.00 - 5.45 pm on Wednesday, 2nd and 16th September,

For prayer requests please contact Peter Gray 07901 946440

Wimbish Coffee Mornings

St Paul's Mission Hall



8th August, 12th September **10 to 11.30am**

Coffee, tea, soft drinks plus delicious home-made cakes and bakes.

Cake Stall, Produce and Preserves for sale.

We also have a selection of pre-loved items for sale and great prizes in our raffle.

All Welcome!

TEA AND CHAT AT ST PAUL'S



Meets the first Monday afternoon of the month 2 - 4 pm
Come along to the warm and friendly environment of St Paul's Mission Room for chat, games, puzzles and activities
Refreshments provided.

Monday 3rd August - Fiona Hutchings will talk about the Nature Reserve on the Carver Barracks
Monday 7th September.

TEA & TISSUES!

Wednesday, 3rd September at 0845 at Debden School

Starting school? Join us for a gentle beginning.

If you're dropping your child off for their very first day, we'd love to welcome you with refreshments, friendly faces, and a chance to connect. Debden Church and the school community invite you to enjoy coffee, tea, and homemade cake—and meet other parents and carers taking this step together.

For further information contact Revd Lynda on 01799 796193

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Can you play the Piano or Organ?

.
Can You Help with Music at Wimbish Church?

If you play the piano or organ, we would love to hear from you.

Our much-loved organist, Pat, is beginning to find playing more difficult due to arthritis in her right hand. She has faithfully accompanied our services for many years, and we are now looking for people who might be willing to help from time to time.

We usually hold two services each month, and the church has both an organ and a piano, so either instrument would be very welcome for accompanying the congregation. Even helping out every now and then would be most welcome.

If you've always fancied having a go but have never played for church before, don't worry! Pat would be delighted to offer free lessons to anyone who would like to learn, it's exactly how she got started herself.

If you think you could help, or would simply like to find out more, please don't hesitate to get in touch with:

Pat Rust
Mobile: 07929 943 054

Your support would be greatly appreciated.

Harvest Festival Service

All Saints Church **Wimbish**

Sunday 4th October - 11 am

A celebration and Thanksgiving Service. Everyone Welcome!

Followed by lunch

Please contact Tracey if you would like to stay for lunch

All bookings for lunch must be confirmed by Monday 21st September.

Food donations to go to Uttlesford Food Bank

Tracey-Thurgood Buss: traceyttb@icloud.com



Loose Gravestones in the Churchyard

Over time, a number of gravestones in the churchyard have become unstable as a result of their age and weathering. To help ensure the safety of everyone visiting the churchyard, we are looking to address this issue with care and sensitivity.

If you are a relative or representative of any of those commemorated by the gravestones listed below, we would be very grateful if you could contact Reverend Lynda to discuss the most appropriate way forward. We appreciate your understanding and assistance as we work to preserve the churchyard while ensuring it remains a safe place for all visitors.

Carlton George Lucas	d. 17/10/1989
George Swann	d. 1988
Cyril Kenneth Taylor	d. 6/2/1975
Wife Betty	d. 18/2/2020
Beatrice Mary Ridgewell	d. 26/11/1972
Lily May Ridgewell	d. 19/2/1981
Bertie Norman Robert Taylor	d. 16/3/1987
Reg J Swan	d. 24/8/1981
Son Fred	d. 7/8/1987

PICNIC FUNDAY

Monday 17th August 12 - 3pm

All Saints Church, Maple Lane, Wimbish, CB10 2XG

All Welcome! Bring your own food and picnic blankets. Drinks provided, games, storytelling and bug hunting. Fun eco activities for all ages, exploring our lovely grounds



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A Day In The Life Of Our Vicar: Revered Lynda Sebbage

When I began thinking about how to describe my ministry here in Wimbish and Debden, it struck me that a “day in the life” approach might be the easiest way to capture what a typical week looks like. Being a vicar is never confined to a couple of services on a Sunday; the work stretches across the week, and well beyond it.

Although I am technically contracted on a part time basis — two days plus Sundays — the reality is quite different. As part of the Saffron Walden team of 12 churches, I am frequently away from my own parishes, covering holidays or stepping in to help with the high number of funerals and weddings that come through the team. There is a considerable amount of administration too, much of which the parish office kindly supports, but most enquiries arrive directly in my inbox: people searching for a loved one’s grave, couples planning weddings years ahead, families arranging baptisms. Each baptism requires careful preparation; meeting the family, shaping the service, and having a short run through beforehand. Weddings are similarly time intensive, with meetings, planning, rehearsals, and of course the big day itself.

Funerals come with very little notice, and my diary often has to shift to accommodate them. Supporting families through the dark days of loss is one of the key aspects of ministry, and despite the grief of families it is also very moving and meaningful. It is at these moments that a Christian presence matters deeply.

Pastoral visiting is another central strand of my work, and it's always a privilege. Sometimes it's taking home communion to someone housebound, visiting the sick at home or in hospital, or calling on someone newly arrived in the village. I cannot always know who needs support, so I rely on the community: pastoral visits are a vital part of a priest’s duty, and if you know someone who might welcome a visit, please do ask them whether they would like to be in touch with me.

As the vicar of Debden and Wimbish when time permits I like to take part in village life. In Debden I serve as a Governor at the Church or England Primary school and take ‘Church Mice’ which is a monthly session with Reception Class, also ‘Open the Book’ with the whole school which enacts Bible Stories with a small team drawn from Wimbish, Debden and the Chesterfords in a way that brings them alive! Hopefully, we may be able to offer these programmes to Wimbish school sometime soon.

I also serve as a trustee of the Bathurst Charity, which oversees the almshouses in Debden.

In Wimbish there are the monthly coffee mornings held on the second Saturday of each month at St Paul's Mission Hall and Tea and Chat gatherings held on the first Monday afternoon of the month.. Not forgetting the Worship and Word evenings on alternative Wednesdays.

Environmental work has taken up a great deal of time recently. Our Bee Corridor initiative in Debden has been wonderfully successful, strengthening the bond between church and community. I work closely on environmental projects with the diocese, such as the swift awareness scheme, and now serve on a Church of England environment group, where I hope to represent the needs of rural communities. Our next project is fitting swift boxes at Wimbish Church.

And then there are the meetings — PCCs, Standing Committees, deanery, team council, governor meetings, and many others. Running a church is not unlike running a business, and I am grateful for my previous career in management, which has proved invaluable. Yet above all, people remain the centre of my ministry: their welfare, their wellbeing, and their spiritual needs. I will never be too busy to stand alongside those who need me.

The most challenging aspect of any vicar's ministry is the constant struggle with limited funds – and that is certainly true for us. Every church must raise enough money, day by day, simply to survive: to sustain its life now, and to ensure its future, so that the vital work it undertakes can continue. People are often quick to raise concerns – overgrown churchyards being a frequent example – yet with such restricted resources, it becomes incredibly difficult to balance the books. The time and energy required to seek additional funding, and to find people willing to help, inevitably draws me away from the heart of ministry: being present in the community and fulfilling the calling God placed upon me so long ago.

And while we are immensely grateful to those who do volunteer, a few extra pairs of hands, and a little more financial support, would make an immeasurable difference. It would be a true blessing!

Note from the Editor: We are immensely grateful for everything Reverend Lynda does for Wimbish. Many people may not realise that she serves entirely on a voluntary basis and receives no payment for the time, care, and dedication she gives to our community.

Weddings

If you are dreaming of a wedding that feels personal, prayerful, and rooted in community, the churches of Wimbish and Debden offer a timeless setting for your special day. Surrounded by countryside, history, and the warmth of village life, our churches are places where love is celebrated and blessed.

Why choose a church wedding here?

- A sacred place where your vows are held before God
- Clergy who take time to get to know you and shape a service that reflects your story
- Beautiful, peaceful buildings perfect for photographs and quiet moments
- Music, readings, and traditions that make your ceremony truly yours.
- A welcoming community ready to support you as you begin married life.

To discuss your wedding plans please contact Revd Lynda on 01799 7996193.



In and Around Wimbish

WIMBISH WALKERS
Meets on the second Sunday of the month. Walks in Wimbish, or exploring the surrounding villages. Join us for a walk around some of the local footpaths.
Contact: Penny Browne pennybrowne@hotmail.com
https://www.wimbish.org.uk/wimbish-walkers.html

WIMBISH PARISH COUNCIL
Meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall
https://www.wimbish.org.uk/wimbish-parish-council-contacts.html

WIMBISH CHURCH WEBSITE
https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19645/

WIMBISH VILLAGE HALL
Capacity is 120 standing or 80 seated. Cost of Hire: £15.00 per hour, or £75 per day.
Contact: Edward Browne 07974704138.

RADWINTER W.I.
Meets the last Wednesday of the month
Contact: Wendy Rowley 01799 599753

TEA AND CHAT AT ST PAUL'S
Come along to the warm and friendly environment of St Paul's for chat, games, puzzles, activities. **Refreshments provided.**
Meets the first Monday afternoon of the month at St Paul's Mission Hall 2 - 4 pm. All Welcome.

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This final half term of the academic year has certainly been action packed! Here are a few highlights...

Assessment week: We are very proud of all of the children with their hard work and determination- especially during assessment week! Year 1 and 2 have shown resilience and confidence as they have read their sounds, blended words and developed their reading skills when completing the Phonics Checks. Progress has also been seen in Year 4 as they have completed their Multiplication Checks-this is a statutory, on-screen assessment for all Year 4 pupils. Its purpose is to ensure children can fluently recall their times tables up to 12 x 12 by the end of Year 4, which is a foundational skill for future maths success. Year 6 have had their end of Key Stage 2 SATs for Reading, Grammar, Spelling and Maths. The rest of the school have also been completing reading checks; spelling checks and maths checks and it has been so pleasing to see the progress all children have made since September.

OPAL Update: We launched OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) back in September during the Opening Evening/Bedtime Story session. One of the many reasons was to improve playtimes and improve opportunities for socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment for your child. Mrs Harriss and Mrs Dear have now taken on OPAL and they are doing a fantastic job! They are full of enthusiasm for this project and are constantly thinking of ways to improve playtimes for all children. On Tuesday, Mrs Dear visited The Meadow Primary School (where I also work) to see OPAL in action as The Meadow launched OPAL 18 months ago and are further along their OPAL journey. Mrs Dear returned with lots of ideas that she is keen to action- particularly sledges! If you do have any plastic sledges that you no longer require, Mrs Dear (and the children) would love them for playtimes! Each week, there is a Play Assembly where they introduce some new equipment to all the children and discuss how they can use it safely and come up with rules as to how to use it. Children are also awarded with 'The Golden Welly' if they have been spotted showing creativity when playing outside.

Sports Day 2026: It aimed to engage all the children in a variety of different athletic based skills encompassing the school games values of determination, passion, respect, honesty, self-belief, and teamwork and it certainly did that!

Area 1: Teamwork and Determination Zones: The children participated in four different activities that emphasised teamwork, determination, and the importance of working together to collect points for their respective house teams. Children cheered and shouted their teammates throughout the 5 minutes of activity for each zone.

Area 2: Competitive Races: The races focused on individual athleticism, respect, and self-belief. The children participated in a variety of races, where points were awarded to those who came in 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place.

However, every single child who took part in Sports Day was a winner!

And how could we forget the teachers' race?! I am still smiling about it now! The children absolutely loved it!

Nicky Butcher
Interim Executive Head



Wimbish Monthly Coffee Mornings

A big 'thank you' to those who support the church coffee mornings. There is always a good atmosphere with lively discussion and much laughter and the opportunity to get together is very much appreciated by the local community.

We also thank those who serve and provide the cakes, scones and sausage rolls.

There is always a cake stall where you can buy lovely cakes, a produce stall for jams, chutneys and home grown excesses of fruit and vegetables. There are good prizes to be won in the raffle. Everyone is so generous.

For those of you who have not been to a coffee morning or perhaps are new to the village coming to a coffee morning is a great way to get to know the local community and to find out what is going on.

The coffee mornings are held in St Paul's Mission on the corner of Maple Lane and Top Road in Tye Green, usually on the second Saturday of the month from 10.00-11.30. There are always delicious refreshments including sweet and savoury and gluten free treats.

We have a 'pre-loved' table with a variety of items including books for which we ask for a small donation. There are also some village notelets and tea towels at reasonable prices.

So far this year we have raised nearly £1500 and nearly £50 on the 'pre-loved' table. These are much needed funds to cover the upkeep of the church and St Pauls. You may be interested to know that I have just paid just over £2500 for the insurance for both the church and St Pauls.

Fran Johnson

PETER'S MUSINGS

The Great Rectory Robbery

I must have done something rather special to be promised a Beef Wellington for dinner. Having prepared the vegetables and the meat, I opened a rather special Barolo to breathe. Feeling pleased with myself, I retired to my study for a moment of idle browsing when Lynda called up, "Where's the beef?"

Rather than shout back, I popped downstairs to the kitchen and simply showed her the carving board on the kitchen worktop. To my astonishment, the once proud joint had vanished, leaving only a bare wooden surface. "Lynda," I said, with all the gravity of a man facing tragedy, "this is clearly a case for Hercule Poirot. Quick—email him before he boards the Orient Express."

Then I glanced over to the window sofa. There sat Peggy, looking the picture of innocence while delicately licking her lips, having consumed eight ounces of prime sirloin. If only dogs could grin.

Of course, it was entirely my fault. Border Collies can reach seemingly impossible heights when steak is within nose range.

The whole episode reminded me of a moment in Victor Hugo's Les Misérables. The ex-convict Jean Valjean is given shelter by Bishop Myriel of Digne. Valjean repays this kindness by stealing the Bishop's silverware. When he is caught and brought back in disgrace, the Bishop does something extraordinary. "But no," he insists to the police, "I gave him the silverware—and in fact, he forgot these two candlesticks." That act of radical forgiveness transforms Valjean's life, setting him on a path of redemption that shapes the whole story.

I suspect that many who have seen the stage production have felt their own priorities quietly rearranged, recognising the disruptive, healing power of forgiveness.

Needless to say, I didn't raise the subject with Peggy. Nor did I threaten to steal her chewies! Some lessons are best learned in silence.

Peter Sebbage

Mobile Post Office Van - Carver Barracks Stop

The Finchingfield Mobile Post Office van calls at Broad Oakes Close, Carver Barracks, CB10 2YJ every Tuesday. 11.00am -11.30pm.

Wimbish Bus Information

https://bustimes.org/localities/wimbish

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1stdebdenbrownies@gmail.com

23rd AUGUST 2026
AT 3PM
DEBDEN CHURCH

PET PRAISE!

A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING FOR OUR PETS

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WEDNESDAY
19 AUGUST | 10:00 am

CAFE CORNELL
SMALLBRIDGE ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN
(Please park across the road at Tesco)

FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND TO INDICATE YOUR INTEREST,
PLEASE CONTACT EITHER:

Judith Hasler
St Mary's Church
team@stmaryssaffronwalden.org
01799 525041

Jazmine Woodhouse
Peasgood & Skeates
jazmine.woodhouse@peasgoodandskeates.co.uk
01799 523314

District Councillor's Report

I am still working from home so if you need please get in touch via phone 07974188395 or email CllrLuck@uttlesford.gov.uk
This was a notable event last month and comes at a time of change due to the adoption of our Local Plan and its implications.

Uttlesford District Council's Planning Service has received outstanding national recognition, winning *Local Authority Planning Team of the Year*, the *Planning Officers' Society Cup*, and the prestigious *Editor's Award at the 2026 Planning Awards*. The awards mark the culmination of several years of hard work by both planning officers **and councillors** to improve the Council's planning performance. Uttlesford was designated as an underperforming planning authority in 2022, but through determined effort, stronger decision-making and improved processes, it regained its full planning powers in 2025. The Council has also adopted a new Local Plan, replacing one that had been in place for around 20 years.

In presenting the awards, judges described the transformation as "truly impressive" and praised Uttlesford for "proactively shaping sustainable, community-focused growth". The Editor's Award, presented to the most outstanding winner across all categories, recognised the Council's journey from a struggling authority to one now helping other councils improve their own planning services. The achievement reflects the professionalism of officers, the commitment of councillors, and a shared determination to deliver a planning service that serves residents effectively and responsibly.

Best wishes
Stewart Luck

RIDE+STRIDE for Churches

12th September 2026 - Wimbish Church Open 9am - 5pm

On the 2nd Saturday in September each year 30 counties across the UK take part in Ride and Stride to raise money to preserve and improve our historic church buildings.

Source sponsorship from friends and family - explore villages and parish churches by bike or on foot - enjoy the exercise, meet new people and raise much needed funds.

For more information www.friendsofessexchurches.org.uk/ride-stride

Wimbish Church and **St Paul's Mission Room** are happy to offer refreshments to all participants.

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A DAY OF GENTLENESS & DISCOVERY

CLARE PRIORY
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2026
FROM 10AM TO 4PM

A day to sense a deeper discovery of God or a renewed sense of clarity alongside quietness and peace. Participants can join in simple, disciple-led activities designed to nurture reflection, prayer & spirirtual growth

This day includes all refreshments and a 2-course lunch and is gifted free of charge.
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Led by Revds Susan Sayers, Paula Griffiths & Lynda Sebbage

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