

May 2026

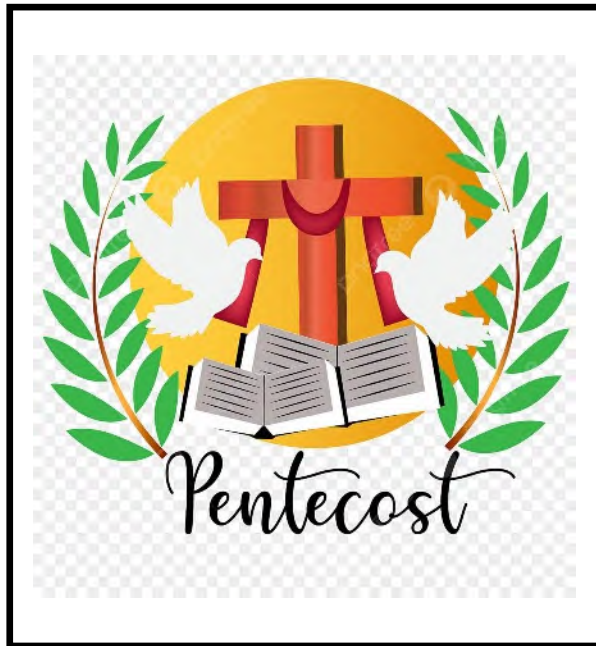
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The Benefice of Berrow

covering the Parishes of Berrow with Pendock,
Eldersfield, Hollybush and Birtsmorton

The Benefice of Longdon

covering the Parishes of Longdon, Bushley,
Castlemorton and Queenhill with Holdfast



Parish Magazine

**THE BENEFICES OF BERROW AND LONGDON
MINISTRY TEAM**

Rector Interregnum. There is no current full time stipendiary priest for these benefices. For general enquiries or to begin the process of arranging a baptism, wedding or funeral, please contact either the Benefice Administrator, Mrs Chris Glyde, or Rev Anthea Elston, contact details below

Associate Priest	The Rev Anthea Elston The Plough, Eight Oaks, Castlemorton WR13 6BU (Day Off – Friday)	01684 833278 revanth@eightoaks.com
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mr David Allen ALM Mr J Cox ALM Dr M Harper LLM Mrs T Mullins ALM	01531 650495 07966 130910 01684 830133 trishmullins@btinternet.com
Benefice Administrator	Mrs Chris Glyde The Parish Office, Berrow WR13 6JN Wed 9.30am-Noon email: admin@berrowlongdon.org.uk	01684 833866
Pastoral Visitor	POST VACANT	
Benefice Choir	Mrs Mel Roberts BERROW WITH PENDOCK	01531 650698 melroberts5554@gmail.com
Churchwarden & P.C.C. Secretary	Mrs E Rambridge	01531 650230
Treasurer	Mr A Rambridge	01531 650230
BIRTSMORTON AND HOLLYBUSH		
Churchwardens		
Birtsmorton	POST VACANT	
Hollybush	POST VACANT	
P.C.C. Secretary	POST VACANT	
Treasurer	Mrs S Williams	01531 650431
BUSHLEY		
Churchwarden	Mr Mark Taylor	markrtaylor1976@gmail.com
P.C.C. Secretary	POST VACANT	
Treasurer	Mr S Evans	01684 296380
CASTLEMORTON		
Churchwardens	Mr M Lister Mrs S Musgrave	01684 631503 01684 310330 / 07715 562311
P.C.C. Secretary	Mrs C Leake	01684 310409
Treasurer	Mr F Harris	01684 573032

ELDERSFIELD

Churchwardens	Mr A Holt	01452 780429
	Miss J Peters	01452 840211
P.C.C. Secretary	Mrs C Powell-Chandler	01531 635794
Treasurer	Mr D Braund	01684 830099
Tower Captain	Miss J Peters	01452 840211

LONGDON

Churchwarden	POST VACANT	
P.C.C. Secretary	Mrs T Mullins	trishmullins@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Rev'd G Moore	07961 505871

QUEENHILL WITH HOLDFAST

Churchwarden	Mr J Corbet-Milward	07796 983567
P.C.C. Secretary	Mrs N Inchbald	07785 280165
Treasurer	Mr L Kelly	07821 750855

BERROW VILLAGE HALL

Bookings	Caroline Samsonoff	07709 487883
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I write this from Barcelona airport at the end of a business trip, not out of smugness (hard to believe, I know) but because I've been overwhelmed by that most glorious element; sunshine. Three days of 25 degrees and permanently blue skies.

I'm aware of many of the scientific benefits of appropriate amounts of sunshine; bone and muscle support, blood pressure and eye health, disease prevention and greater mental clarity. But far more immediate is that sense of elation in the moment twinned with romantic memories of distant summer days of childhood. It makes you feel fabulous.

The sun is a wonderful metaphor for the presence of God. Perhaps that's why Jesus said 'I am the light of the world'.

There are so many advantages to experiencing God's friendship; answers to prayer, relief from worry, strength in testing times and guidance in every circumstance. Yet along with all that, especially for those who persist in prayer, there is an utterly unique sense of warmth, encouragement, comfort and ultimately, divine love.

Whether or not we actually see the sun is arbitrarily governed by the vicissitudes of our capricious climate, more so in England than anywhere. God, however, has designed us for prayer and, through Jesus, opened the way that we may access this spiritual sunshine continually.

So, my prayer is that, as you enjoy the glorious, long English summer days of unbroken sunshine you may be reminded continually to enjoy and glory in the unbroken joy and delight of God's company.'

Jeremy Cox ALM

Mrs Elsie Keef

We are sad to report the death of Mrs Elsie Keef on Wednesday 15th April in Lincoln. For many years Elsie lived at Pendock, was a PCC member and stapled, collated and distributed the Parish magazine in the area. The funeral is on Wednesday 13th May at Lincoln Crematorium.

Recruitment of a New Incumbent – an Update!

Just because folk still ask me.....

No, we haven't been able to recruit a new incumbent yet

Yes we have advertised – three times – and received no applications at all

Yes, we do know what the problem is..... there are more posts advertised than vicars available, hence a group of 7 parishes with 9 churches can be problematic to recruit for – in spite of the churches being beautiful, the area being glorious and the people being warm and welcoming – and hard working!

So what happens next?

We've redrafted the advert and the parish profile. We've taken a pause in advertising the post and will now aim to advertise at the end of May/beginning of June and interview some applicants (please God!) on 30th July.

Please do keep the church wardens and all of our hard-pressed volunteers very much in your prayers, as we continue to work to cover the vacancy during this prolonged interregnum.

We are very grateful to still have support from Rev Julie to do weddings and baptisms, from Rev Geoffrey Moore and our sterling teams of lay worship leaders, from Rev Gary Crellin our Area Dean, Rev Mark Badger, the Archdeacon of Worcester and Rev Doug Chaplin in helping us out with Sunday services, and to clergy from Gloucester Diocese who have permission to officiate in our benefice.

God willing, we'll have a shiny new incumbent by Christmas.....just not entirely clear which Christmas!!!!

Rev Anthea Elston

**FROM
THE
REGISTERS**



Weddings

St John the Baptist, Eldersfield

26th March Mitchell Moore & Jade Louise Taylor

Baptisms

St John the Baptist, Eldersfield

26th March Navie-Joan Moore

Funerals

St Faith's, Berrow

10th April Cherry Griffiss



St. John the Baptist, Eldersfield

It was good to see over 60 people on Easter Day at Eldersfield Church for the service and afterwards taking part in the egg hunt and craft activity. The church looked beautiful, especially with the stunning floral displays and the children's Easter gardens which were bright and colourful. The hot chocolate drinks and mini kitkat eggs also went down well! There was lots of fun taking part in these extra activities Thank you to all those who helped, gave input into the service, to the bell-ringers and especially to Rev. Geoffrey and Trish for their inspirational and thought-provoking input.



The Children's Society

Each year I set myself a walking challenge to raise funds for The Children's Society (TCS) and generous people donate to a justgiving site to help children who are in difficulty – and to help me complete the task! **I'm aiming for w.b. 10th May.**

Last year I walked from the Severn Bridge to Gloucester, some 20+ miles (and lost 2 toenails!) ... so for some inexplicable reason this year I plan to walk up to three times as far, around **40 – 60 miles** along St. Kenelm's Way from the village at Kenelm in the Clent Hills, near Hagley to the town of Winchcombe. St. Kenelm's story is in last month's magazine (p.10)

This time, the walk will be in three stages which I hope to complete in three days walking from St. Kenelm's Church, Hagley to St. Kenelm's well which is near Sudeley Castle. The fundraising group of TCS in Winchcombe is well-known for raising the staggering sum of over £100,000 in the past 20 years, something of which they are rightly proud. It seems appropriate to end my walk there.

A few people have said they would like to join me in the final mile or so on Friday May 15th – please email if so and we can discuss timings.

If you would like to donate to my justgiving site below that would be great and will make a real difference to children's lives in the UK, living through abuse and pain.

www.justgiving.com/page/andrew-holt-5

(Sorry it's so long and needs rewriting in the search bar)

(Scroll down to the end of the justgiving page and enter £0.00 to avoid giving a 5% donation to the justgiving website.)

I can take cash/cheques if you prefer. Anything you can give will help so many young people to keep happy & safe and escape from a life of fear.

Thank you. Andy Holt. awholt36@gmail.com

Berrow and Pendock Village Hall **'Heat our Hall'**

It is very exciting to update you on the total success of the 'Heat our Hall' project and the most sincere thanks go to Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC) for awarding a grant under - 'the Community Facility Legacy Grant Scheme that is committed to supporting communities to become healthier, safer and stronger by protecting and enhancing where people live for current and future generations. The commitment will be achieved by enhancing the current network of community facility provision across the district. Ensuring communities have access to high-quality, sustainable and accessible public open spaces and community facilities, that foster improved health and well-being and connected communities.'

As you read those formal words of the grant agreement, I am sure you will start to translate them into the reality of what has happened in the recent years to refurbish the Village Hall and to look at the provision.

It is the case that a whole range of 'thank you's' are due – indeed starting with all those who have served in earlier years trying to promote the facility against the backdrop of a quickly changing world with its emphasis on virtual rather than actual reality.

A warm thank you must go to Jennie Watkins, our local District Councillor who alerted us to the scheme; thanks too to Mark Hammond of MHDC who gave us such practical help, with quick email responses.

Large organisations such as the National Trust have designated professionals to fund-raise and grant-seek. It's a very different matter for volunteers who bring life and career experience, but not necessarily knowledge of this area. It is absolutely right that clear assurances should be given to achieve public funding but there is no doubt that the language and the questions in grant application are very intimidating.

So, what made the difference? Well, as in all things – the people count. We are incredibly fortunate to have in our midst volunteers of energy, determination and commitment; and with that final – sometimes the most elusive – quality that they work together incredibly well.

The first stage was to submit an expression of interest. Once it was confirmed that the project would qualify, Emily Harris, Pendock Parish Councillor and Deputy Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee led on the application with the firm support of Caroline Samsonoff, Berrow Parish Councillor, for a grant that would fund the installation of solar panels and an air to air heat pump. In the application, it was explained that the existing heating compromised the comfort in particular of those seeking to do creative activities – such as craft, sewing and art, as well as the general comfort of being in the hall for social activities and meetings. Jan Kennedy, another Berrow Councillor, brings the strong experience of her time as the Parish Clerk and in the difficult Covid-years when she secured grants, and brings important financial acumen.

Events organised such as the wonderful Pumpkin Festival and the super Quiz nights meant the match funding required was contributed from the Hall's own funds; many thanks for all that support too.

It seemed that each stage moved on very quickly and that is where we are so lucky to have such an efficient team, with John Dudfield leading as the Chair of the Committee. News of the grant was received by November 2025 and the work had to be completed in a short time-frame. Sincere thanks are due to 'Sustain Heating' for achieving this, well ahead of the deadline of March 2026; and the project came in at the estimated cost, another really good outcome.

As you read this, I do hope you will see that one of the ways you can help is by promoting the Village Hall as an excellent local venue. It is very known that all the marketing and advertising one can do is never as successful as 'word of mouth.

There will be a plaque to commemorate this generous grant from MHDC placed in the hall, and there is a warm (ha!) invitation to all readers from the Committee with further details in this magazine. We look forward very much to welcoming you.

Elisabeth Rambridge, Churchwarden



Community Invitation

Join Us for the Heating Launch at Berrow and Pendock Village Hall

You're Invited!

We're delighted to invite you and all members of the local community to a special event at the Hall celebrating the installation of our brand new heating system. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together, meet the company who installed the system, and enjoy a warm and welcoming space.

Event Details

Date: 21st May

Time: 5:30pm – 7pm

Location: Berrow and Pendock Village Hall, Berrow WR13 6JN

What's On Offer

Meet and chat with the team who installed the heating

Share a glass of wine and enjoy nibbles

Connect with friends, neighbours and the wider community

Explore the newly heated Hall and see what's possible

Whether you're a regular visitor or someone who's never stepped inside, we'd love for you to join us. Bring your friends, neighbours, and family along—everyone is welcome!

Let's celebrate the comfort and warmth of our community together.

Please RSVP Caroline on 07709487883 or email berrowvillagehallmalvern@gmail.com if possible, so we know how many to expect.





3rd Berrow and Pendock Pumpkin Festival

Saturday 17th October 2026

12 p.m. ~ 3 p.m.

Berrow and Pendock Village Hall, WR13 6JN

We're back!!!

SAVE THE DATE!

Get your seeds ready for planting!

Once again, due to the huge success of the last two years, we will be hosting pumpkin growing competitions, art & crafts competitions and photography. There will also be teas, homemade soup, sausage rolls & cakes in the village hall. Many fun stalls in the church yard.

Grow your own pumpkins and squash and enter our competitions

For information or details on competition classes please contact us at:

BerrowVillageHallMalvern@gmail.com

Or message us on our Facebook page

www.facebook.com/BerrowAndPendockVillageHall



CaCoffany!

**St Gregory's Church, Castlemorton
WR13 6BQ**

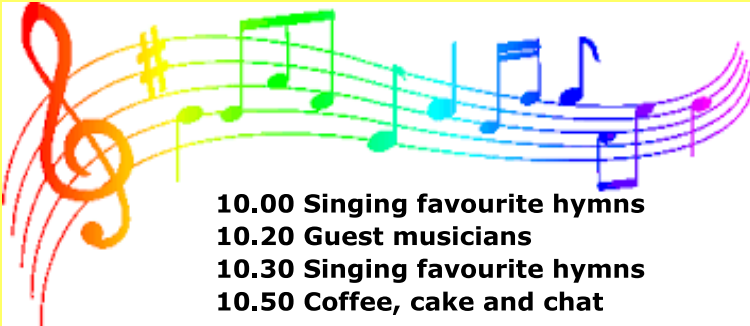
Saturdays 10.00-11.30am

2026 Dates

**9 May, 6 June, 4 July
5 September, 3 October, 7 November,
5 December (Christmas Special)**

A monthly coffee morning
with the chance to sing uplifting hymns and listen to guest musicians

No singing experience needed – just come and sing
or simply enjoy the coffee and delicious cakes!



**10.00 Singing favourite hymns
10.20 Guest musicians
10.30 Singing favourite hymns
10.50 Coffee, cake and chat**

**Email Sarah with your requests for the programme
sjmusgrave33@gmail.com**

*No admission charge
Proceeds from Bring and Buy stall support maintenance of our lovely church
Donations appreciated*



All Welcome!



Kaleidoscope

at St Gregory's Church, Castlemorton

6.30pm on the Second Sunday of each month



A lay-led, relaxed and informal service featuring a variety of worship music, bible readings, prayer and a short address

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,
Who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive our trespasses
As we forgive those who
trespass against us
And lead us not in to temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the Kingdom
The Power and the Glory
Forever and ever
Amen

Throughout 2026 we shall examine in greater depth a phrase of The Lord's Prayer each month.

10 May	Thy will be done
14 Jun	On Earth as it is in heaven
1 Jul	Give us this day our daily bread
9 Aug	Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us
13 Sep	Lead us not into temptation
11 Oct	But deliver us from evil
13 Dec	For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, AMEN

To give you an idea of the hymns and songs we use, the music which supported January's theme was

Pater Noster (before the service)
How Deep the Father's Love for Us
And He Shall Give his Angels charge Over Thee – from Mendessohn's *Elijah*
Father, I place into Your Hands the things I cannot do
Our Father – Don Moen
Great is Thy Faithfulness
A Clare Benediction – John Rutter

All are very welcome - do come along and join us!
Sherry and non-alcoholic alternatives are served after all Kaleidoscope services.

Crafts, Coffee, Cake and a Chat

**(and maybe some crockery and a
few plants too.....)**

on

Saturday 9th May

at

All Saints,

Hollybush

11am – 1pm

All Welcome

Pentecost Word Search



JERUSALEM
HOLY-SPIRIT
FIRE
WIND
TOGETHER
BELIEVERS
REPENT
BAPTISED
LANGUAGE
GOSPEL



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The Swifts of St Faith's Church 2026

It was probably the photo of the unmistakable 'sickle-shape' that caught my eye on a poster in the depth of winter and I was very pleased to attend a talk by Simon Evans of the local Malvern and Worcester RSPB group with an update on his work installing swift boxes as part of conservation efforts locally.

Perhaps you have thought I have said all there is to say about these wonderful creatures, but of course no, and I'd like to have a little meander around 2 themes from his talk. One was that swifts are really hard to help. I felt myself bristling a little. What these noble intelligent birds? He explained that the loyalty swifts show returning to the same site faithfully puts them at risk if that site – as so often happens now - is no longer available, they simply don't know what to do or where to go. I suppose the outcome is that for that year there will be no nest, no chicks, and thus succession is compromised and it's this that is a factor in the dreadful decline in numbers.

You may have followed this debate in the press. To be honest I got a bit confused with it all. I expect you may have read about the eco-campaigner Hannah Bourne-Taylor who in a tour de force that involved marching clad only in painted feathers has campaigned – shall we say very imaginatively - to make 'swift-bricks' compulsory for new housing. I am never completely sure of the expression 'no-brainer' but I think this was the argument for taking this important step to promote the survival chances of the swift which is on the endangered species list. First supported by the government, that support was withdrawn and it then was picked up in the Lords – and this is really where I'm not certain whether it found approval or not.

One illustration given in the talk was of a houseowner who had had swifts nesting in the eaves of her house, but she wasn't completely sure about having these feathered co-residents, so she did apply for a swift-box to be affixed. It duly was, but investigations showed no sign of the nest-box being used. Further exploration showed that somehow the swifts had eased – or maybe squeezed - their way behind the nest box into their original nesting site! Well, I never.

There was also some description of a project in a church tower to install boxes and I kept my head down because after a lot of work by the conservator team, the project stumbled due to opposition from the church architect. To mitigate this, of course I put up my hand and described the amazing colony at St Faith's and was offered more boxes. But that got me thinking and I decided that the reason the site is so special is because it is completely non-interventionist. Yes, I pray that they will return each year, but I don't have to do anything for them – I don't have to clear any mess they have left behind. The only sign physically of their presence is some whiteness of their droppings below where they enter the eaves. Very occasionally I find the sadness on the French drain gravel below of a little embryo skeleton, one year I had to remove a beautiful fledged bird that somehow hadn't made it but there really is no debris. That is what is so remarkable and adds to the despair that we have made it so hard for them to live amongst us.

The other aspect that I have started to think about more deeply is the young fledgling. I've always talked and written blithely about the extraordinary feat that the young fly continuously for 2 years until the cycle starts and they begin their own families. When I've looked up and tried to count the birds I've worked on the principle there are probably 6 nests, 6 pairs so 12 birds. But I've often felt there were a few more. I knew not to count the 'new' swiftlets because once they fledge, they set off on their great expedition. So as I look up maybe some of the birds are these amazing continually-in-flight youngsters. What was said made me wonder too, do the young return also to try and nest in a familiar spot, maybe, oh dear – to urge their parents to downsize?

CARING FOR GOD'S ACRE <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/> is a splendid organisation – do google them, I think their logo is delightful. A summer week, this year **from 6 to 14 June** celebrates a special focus and it's 'Swifts' this year. **My plan is to share some insights into the glorious Swifts of St Faith's, with a talk at the Berrow and Pendock Village Hall beforehand – full details will be rolled out for the next magazine.**

As ever Cherish what there is on our doorstep and in the sky above us!

Elisabeth Rambridge, Churchwarden

Rumbledethumps

(all one word!)

Wow! 'Call my Bluff' words have made their way into the monthly recipe. Read on!

Ingredients

- 2 lbs potatoes (Maris Piper are good)
- 14 oz turnip (orange inside always) although you may call it swede!
- 1 Savoy cabbage or 9oz any cabbage (but not purple!)
- 75g butter + extra
- dash of milk
- 2 smallish onions
- 100g grated cheddar cheese
- salt & pepper

Method

1. preheat oven 180⁰ (depending on your oven, 200⁰ may be preferred)
2. peel & chop potatoes & turnip into cubes ready for mashing
3. either cook together in pan the potatoes & turnip or cook separately – turnip generally takes a little longer
4. finely slice cabbage, either fry with some butter or cook in water
5. fry onions & add to dash of milk (so the onions flavour the milk)
6. mash potatoes & turnip together, add the cabbage & turn through potatoes & turnip
7. add onions with the dash of milk (so not too much just enough to make mash nice and smooth)
8. butter pie dish & place the potato, turnip, cabbage & onion into buttered pie dish
9. cover with grated cheese
10. bake till crispy 25-30 minutes

This can all be made with ready leftover mash and cabbage which makes it all very easy!

*With good wishes from **Rosey**,*

*in Upper Pendock, and sharing this recipe from Northumbria: **Enjoy!***

Birtsmorton Parish Council

Monday 11 May 2026

Armitage Room in

Castlemorton Parish Hall 7pm

Annual Parish Meeting

To be followed by

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

Website for details

<https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/>

Parish Councillors

Mike Barnes
Vance Withers
Julie Moore
Mark Henderson

Simon Yates
Michael Licqurish-Coleman
Karen Hood

Clerk: Christina Leake 01684 310409

Email: Birtsmortonpc@gmail.com



The poster features a dark, textured background with a central image of a church tower. The text is arranged in a formal, centered layout. At the top is the Tewkesbury Choral Society logo. Below it, the title 'GIUSEPPE VERDI REQUIEM' is written in large, gold, serif capital letters. The performing group 'TEWKESBURY CHORAL SOCIETY' is listed in white, followed by 'WITH REGENCY SINFONIA AND SOLOISTS: Hannah Davey, Rachel Roper, Alex Aldren and Thomas Humphreys.' The conductor 'DIRECTED BY JOHN HOLLOWAY' is also in white. The venue and date 'TEWKESBURY ABBEY SATURDAY 16TH MAY 2026, 7:30 PM' are in gold. Ticket information 'TICKETS £20 (CARERS & CHILDREN FREE; STUDENTS £10)' is in white. A 'BUY FROM:' section lists four options in white. A QR code is on the right. At the bottom, it says 'Registered Charity 250311'.

**GIUSEPPE VERDI
REQUIEM**

TEWKESBURY CHORAL SOCIETY
WITH REGENCY SINFONIA AND SOLOISTS:
Hannah Davey, Rachel Roper,
Alex Aldren and Thomas Humphreys.

DIRECTED BY JOHN HOLLOWAY

**TEWKESBURY ABBEY
SATURDAY 16TH MAY 2026, 7:30 PM**

TICKETS £20 (CARERS & CHILDREN FREE; STUDENTS £10)

BUY FROM:

- members of the Society
- The Abbey Shop (01684 858148)
- online: www.ticketsource.co.uk/t-c-s
- at the door on the evening

Registered Charity 250311

Saturday 16th May at 7:15pm

The Innocent

(15-2022-99mins-subtitles)

A supper special, advance booking essential.

A highly acclaimed French romantic heist-comedy directed by and starring Louis Garrel.

An enjoyably caper featuring a charming blend of farce, romance, and tension, driven by excellent performances from Garrel, Noémie Merlant, and Roschdy Zem.

Film including a light meal £12.

For advance booking call Beth 01531 631503 or Malcolm 01684 833297 or email mortonmajestic@gmail.com.

Licensed Bar / Refreshments / Ice creams

The Morton Majestic is at Castlemorton Parish Hall WR13 6BE

www.castlemortoncinema.co.uk

Reptomania

Coming to Corse and Staunton Village Hall on

Saturday 11th July from 1.00pm to 4.00pm

Entrance £3 per person. Family of 4 £10

Opportunity to handle reptiles

Other activities will be taking place

Refreshments available

Eldersfield Cricket Club

Sad to have to report that Eldersfield Cricket Club will not be playing League Cricket this season. The Club is hoping to play Sunday Friendlies instead. So if you are interested in playing Village Cricket please contact James Bullock on 07544-694637. YOUR VILLAGE TEAM NEEDS YOU!!!!

From the Cricket Archives

Many thanks to David Hartland for this Eldersfield Cricket Club 1951 Fixture List. Some well-known teams in this list who are still playing cricket!

			EVENINGS & SUNDAYS		
Date	Opponents	G'd	Date	Opponents	Gr'd
Apl.28	Gloucester Wagon Works	h	My 21	(Mon) Forthampton	a
May 5	Cheltenham Meat Traders	h	29	<i>Tues</i> Cheltenham Meat Traders	a
12	Cheltenham Gas Co.	a	30	(Wed) Newent	a
14	(Mon.)		31	(Thurs) Forthampton	h
19	St. Stephens	h	<i>June 5</i>	<i>Tues</i> Flatcloughs	h
26	Old Patesians	h	Jun. 7	(Thurs) Parkend	h
Jun. 2	Cheltenham Conservatives	h	20	(Thurs) Berrow	a
9	Redmarley	a	11	(Mon) Staunton	a
16			13	(Wed) Newent	h
23	St. Stephens	a	17	(Sun) Old Cryptians	a
30	Longdon	a	20	<i>wed</i> Cheltenham Meat Traders	h
July 7	Corse Lawn	a	July 2	(Mon) Staunton	h
14	Cheltenham Meat Traders	a	<i>July 5</i>	<i>Thurs</i> Woodpeckers	h
21	Old Patesians	a	29	(Sun) Old Cryptians	h
28	Redmarley	h			
Aug 4	Corse Lawn	h	My 14	(Whit Mon)	
Aug 6			Aug 6	(Aug. Mon)	
11	Longdon	h			
18	Chelt. Conservative Club	h			
25	Cheltenham Gas Co.	h			
Sep 15	Gloucester Wagon Works	a			

Radio 4: *Any Questions?*

J L Gabbott

I listened recently to *Any Questions?* on Radio 4¹ and was greatly perturbed by some of the things I heard.

The Panel - of four politicians - was asked about drilling for oil in the North Sea. As so often, they answered the question they wanted, not the one they were asked, but even so their comments displayed misunderstandings and ignorance.

Now all of you will be concerned by the large increase in prices caused by geo-political events over which we have no control and some of you will think that we should drill and others not, but if there is to be any sort of rational discussion it would be helpful if it were to be restricted to relevant facts, and indeed to only those facts which are material.

One Panellist told the audience that drilling should not be permitted because any additional oil produced would be sold on the international market and go to the highest bidder and therefore be of no benefit to us in the UK, whereas another Panellist contended that it would be used in the our domestic market and thereby reduce prices.

Both are right, and both are wrong.

Just as in a street market the more apples there are for sale, the lower the price, so it is for oil. However, the market for oil is international and the price is universal (albeit with variations for quality and availability). It follows that increased production would reduce the price. But is it material? The world demand for oil and gas is 270 million barrels of oil equivalent per day ('mboe/d'). The UK produces 1.0 mboe/d and the proposed additional drilling might increase that to 1.1 mboe/d. That increase represents 0.04% of world supply and is so small that it will be invisible, with an equally invisible effect on the price. And where the oil is used is irrelevant.

But that does not mean that we should not produce it. When we produce oil (or cars, or steel, or financial services) and sell them we provide work for our people and tax for our government, and we make the world a better and richer place by giving people what they want and value. This was ignored.

One reason given for not permitting drilling was that the oil is a 'finite resource' from a 'declining basin' and would 'only last until 2040'.

¹ For reasons of space references are not given here but are available on request

All resources are finite but that is not used as an argument for not mining copper or rare earths. Similarly, all basins (of oil, copper or rare earths) are 'declining' from the moment extraction starts, and, again, that is not a reason for not exploiting them. Quite why the 15 year life of the field was thought a hurdle is unclear. My guess is that oil companies are better at judging the viability of a potential investment than a government department.

Two of the Panellists talked about 'energy independence' and gave the strong impression that this would come from renewables. *'The way to get energy security,'* said one, to considerable approval from the audience, *'is to fast track investment in renewables'*.

Renewables on their own are not a route to self-sufficiency because they contribute nothing at night or when the wind does not blow. That inconvenience was not discussed. The fact is that this gap is filled largely by gas, and if we do not use our own gas from the North Sea then we must import it, which we now do, and largely in the form of liquefied natural gas brought from half way across the world. The cost of this – both financial and in terms of emissions – is high. An alternative is to produce our own gas from a few miles offshore in the North Sea and pipe it ashore: lower costs, lower emissions. This, although not a panacea, would be a useful contribution to lower bills and a cleaner environment. It was not discussed. And if energy security really is important to us then we should consider developing our frackable gas but, unfortunately, local residents are 'concerned'ⁱⁱⁱ by possible problems and that option is not politically acceptable. We have decided to subordinate national energy security to local concerns.

There was an assumption permeating the discussion that renewable energy was cheaper than that from fossil fuels, perhaps because the air and sun are free. That may perhaps be true of its generation but transporting that energy to where it will be used will require the construction of tens of thousands of miles of new or upgraded cables and the costs of installing this will be massive. There will be other costs as well. The constantly whirring blades, the acres of solar farms and the endless cables will destroy property values and blight people's lives. Whether this is acceptable remains to be seen.

Some of our gas-fired electricity generating stations are ageing rapidly and all but one of our nuclear plants will be closed by the early 2030s. How the electricity they produce will be replaced was ignored.

In summary, we had a group of Panellists who thought that we should insulate ourselves from swings in energy prices by becoming energy independent, that we should use mainly, or even only, green energy, and that all this should be accompanied by low bills.

What they had no answer to was how we do it.

ⁱ on 28th March 2026

ⁱⁱ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9v73r1lj10o>

Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms

Although both benefices are in interregnum (ie without a full-time paid priest) at the moment, we are still able to be there for our communities to help with the milestone moments of life.

Our Churches are wonderful sacred spaces in which to celebrate a marriage or the birth and baptism of a child. We can provide all the help, guidance and expertise you need to plan out a service which works for you and your family. Our church buildings also provide the time and space to grieve – and to remember and give thanks for the life of a loved one who is no longer with us.

Your first point of contact to organize a wedding or baptism would be Rev Anthea Elston, contact details at the front of this magazine. For funerals, you will be working with your preferred funeral director who will get in touch with Rev Anthea to agree a suitable date and time.

Our medieval and more modern buildings are, first and foremost, places of worship, but they are also community spaces, where we would love to be able to help you to celebrate your times of joy and provide comfort and support in times of sadness. Please do be in touch with Rev Anthea or with your local church warden if we can help in any way.

Rev Anthea Elston

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Services in the Benefices of Berrow and Longdon

Would readers and intercessors themselves please arrange an appropriate replacement if they are unable to be present on the dates shown.

Date	Venue	Time	Service	Reading	Reader	Intercessor
7 th June 1 st Sunday after Trinity	Queenhill Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Hosea 5:15 – 6:6 Romans 4:13-end	TBA	TBA
	Hollybush Church	5pm	Evensong	1 Samuel 18:1-16 Luke 8:14-end	Grenville Simons	Liz Lean
	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Start the Week BCP Holy Communion	TBA	TBA	TBA
14 th June 2 nd Sunday after Trinity	Bushley Church	8.30am	Holy Communion	Exodus 19:2-8a Romans 5:1-8	TBA	—
	Birtsmorton Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Exodus 19:2-8a Romans 5:1-8	Elisabeth Rambridge	Cathy Powell-Chandler
	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Kaleidoscope	TBA	TBA	TBA
21 st June 3 rd Sunday after Trinity	Castlemorton Church	10.30am	Family Communion	Jeremiah 20:7-13 Romans 6:1b-11	TBA	TBA
	Eldersfield Church	10.30am	All Age Worship	TBA	TBA	TBA
	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Start the Week	TBA	TBA	TBA
28 th June 4 th Sunday after Trinity	Berrow Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Jeremiah 28:5-9 Romans 6:12 - end	Ros Willder	Doug Braund
	Longdon Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Jeremiah 28:5-9 Romans 6:12 - end	TBA	TBA
	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Start the Week	TBA	TBA	TBA

Please Note: Compline will be held on Zoom Every Friday at 7.00 pm
 Details of how to join Zoom services are published on the Berrow and Longdon Benefices website
<https://berrowlongdon.org.uk/resources>

Services in the Benefices of Berrow and Longdon

Would readers and intercessors themselves please arrange an appropriate replacement if they are unable to be present on the dates shown.

31 st May Trinity Sunday	Eldersfield Church	8.30am	BCP Holy Communion	Isaiah 40:12-17, 27 to end 2 Corinthians 13:11 to end	Janet Peters	N/A
	Bushley Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Isaiah 40:12-17, 27 to end 2 Corinthians 13:11 to end	TBA	TBA

Please Note: Compline will be held on Zoom Every Friday at 7.00 pm

Details of how to join Zoom services are published on the Berrow and Longdon Benefices website
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Services in the Benefices of Berron and Longdon

Would readers and intercessors themselves please arrange an appropriate replacement if they are unable to be present on the dates shown.

Date	Venue	Time	Service	Reading	Reader	Intercessor
3rd May 5th Sunday of Easter	Queenhill Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Acts 7:55 - end 1 Peter 2:2-10	TBA	TBA
	Hollybush Church Castlemorton Church	5pm	Evensong	Zechariah 4:1-10 Revelation 21:1-14	Liz Lean	Cellia Greatwood
		6.30pm	Start the Week BCP Holy Communion	TBA Acts 17:22-31 1 Peter 3:13-end	TBA	TBA
10th May 6th Sunday of Easter	Bushley Church	8.30am	Holy Communion	Acts 17:22-31 1 Peter 3:13-end	TBA	—
	Birtsmorton Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Acts 17:22-31 1 Peter 3:13-end	Mel Roberts	Doug Braund
	Queenhill – on a farm!	4pm	Rogation	TBA	TBA	TBA
17th May 7th Sunday of Easter	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Kaleidoscope	TBA	TBA	TBA
	Castlemorton Church	10.30am	Family Communion	Acts 1:6-14 1 Peter 4:12-14 and 5:6-11	TBA	TBA
	Pendock Cross Church	10.30am	All Age Worship	TBA	TBA	TBA
	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Start the Week	TBA	TBA	TBA
24th May Pentecost	Longdon Church	10.30am	Holy Communion	Acts 2:1-21 1 Corinthians 12:3 - 13	TBA	TBA
	Castlemorton Church	6.30pm	Start the Week	TBA	TBA	TBA



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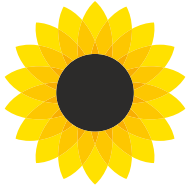
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