

FUTURE SERVICES

www.astwellparishes.org.uk

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sunday 27th September – Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am	Lois Weedon	Battle of Britain Matins
9.30am	Whitfield	Holy Communion
10.30am	Helmdon	Morning Prayer
11.15am	Wappenham	Holy Communion
3pm	Syresham	Harvest Festival (inc Messy Harvest), <i>followed by tea</i>
6.30pm	Plumpton	Evensong

OCTOBER 2026

Sunday 4th October – Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am	Syresham	Benefice Holy Communion
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Wednesday 7th October

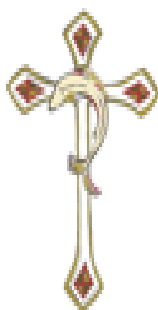
10am	Helmdon	Midweek Holy Communion
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Sunday 11th October – Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

9.00am	Wappenham	Breakfast Church
9.30am	Lois Weedon	Morning Prayer
10.30am	Helmdon	Holy Communion
11.15am	Syresham	Morning Prayer
5pm	Whitfield	Harvest Festival <i>followed by supper</i>

Regular Coffee Mornings

- **Helmdon** - Tuesdays, 10 am-12 noon in Reading Room
- **Whitfield** - first Tuesday of the month, 10am-12 noon, in Village Hall.
- **Wappenham** - first Wednesday of the month, 10 am-12 noon, in Village Hall.
- **Syresham Coffee Morning** is held each Thursday, 10 am-12 noon in the Village Hall.
- **Lois Weedon** - 10am until 12 noon, first Friday of the month, in Village Hall.



PEWS NEWS

The Astwell Benefice

St Mary Magdalene Helmdon with Stuchbury & St Lawrence Radstone, St James the Great Syresham, St John the Evangelist Whitfield, St Mary & St Peter Lois Weedon with Weston & Plumpton, and St Mary the Virgin Wappenham.
www.astwellparishes.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/astwellbenefice/>

Sunday 20th September 2026

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am Lois Weedon Holy Communion

10.30am Helmdon Praise & Prayer

11.15am Syresham Holy Communion

**11.15am Wappenham Praise & Prayer
Harvest
Celebration,
followed by Bring
& Share buffet
lunch**



Collects & Readings for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Collect:

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers
of your people who call upon you;
and grant that they may both perceive and know
what things they ought to do,
and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil
them;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Old Testament Reading: Jonah 3. 10-end of 4

3¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

4¹ But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, 'O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.' ⁴ And the Lord said, 'Is it right for you to be angry?' ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, 'It is better for me to die than to live.'

⁹ But God said to Jonah, 'Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?' And he said, 'Yes, angry enough to die.' ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, 'You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labour and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?'

New Testament Reading: Philippians 1. 21-end

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better;

²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 20:1-16

¹ 'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; ⁴ and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" ⁷ They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." ¹³ But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

Post Communion Collect:

Almighty God,
you have taught us through your Son
that love is the fulfilling of the law:
grant that we may love you with our whole heart
and our neighbours as ourselves;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intercessions for Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Everlasting God, you do everything possible for our spiritual growth and well-being, but yet we so often choose the path of hostility and rejection.

Let us pray trustfully to the God who has loved us into being and cherished us all our lives.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we pray for your Church; for Bishops, Priests and Deacons; for Readers and Lay Ministers; for Churchwardens and PCCs; that they will know how to strike the right balance between their work and family lives. We pray that You will give them courage when they need to resist being controlled by others, and will teach them to take control with understanding, always reflecting the love of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Creator God, refugees continue to flee from crisis throughout the world, and over half of them are children. Lord God, we pray for all those who have willingly invested their time and energy in serving the most vulnerable in the world, that they will find opportunities to rest, and will be strengthened for their work. We also remember aid workers throughout the rest of the world operating in places and situations that are no longer newsworthy; give them the encouragement to continue their invaluable work.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Father God, we pray for all those working on the farms in and around the Astwell Benefice. Help them in their labours especially in these times of climate change.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, we pray for abundant life for anyone we know who has recently been given bad news about their health or the health of a loved-one. Lord, help us know what to say and when to speak. May we always be ready to give practical help whenever we can and to ensure that those on their own are able to manage and cope with day-to-day life.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, when death separates from us those we love and we find it hard to live without them, take from us all bitterness and resentment and help us to remember that death has no power at all over the peace you give and the love we shared with the departed goes beyond the grave.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, as we prepare for the week to come, help us to know Christ and the power of his resurrection day by day and in the sharing of his sufferings to become more like him in his death.

Merciful Father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ**

TO HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

We bring before our loving heavenly Father those in our villages and others we know who are unwell, recovering from injury or illness and all those who need our prayers for any reason.

From Helmdon: Barbara Buxton, Diane Thorpe, and Joan Hadfield.

From Lois Weedon & Weston: Joan Jacobs, Lis Cockrell, Caroline Hunt, Margaret Seckington, and Anna Mackaness.

From Syresham: George Summers

From Wappenham: Judy King, Dorothy & David Nicholson, Edwin & Phyllis King, Charlotte & Arif Supple.

For those known to us:

Margaret Reardon, Pauline Collis, Evelyn Johnson, Ollie Dotterill, Francis Potsoni, Mary Coates, Emily Barthelamy, May Oliver, Lily & Theo Wright, Christobel Grant, Diane Snow and Jennifer Broadley.

Please pray for those bereaved, and the family & friends of:

Clyde Burbidge, Andrew Jackson, Alan Jones, Linda and Will Adams, Ailsa Williams, Jonathan Sayers, Joan McCann, Maralynn Hunter, Ann Smith, John Thorne and Eileen Watson.

Also, please pray for the work of the Beacon Centre, the Wolverton Mission, the Hope Centre, Katharine House Hospice, Northampton Women's Aid and The Women's Refuge. We also continue to pray for refugees fleeing persecution and all victims of hatred, terrorism, and war.

Dates for your Diary

SEPTEMBER

Mon 21st Syresham Church Council Meeting, 6.30pm at Vine Cottage

Tues 22nd BPCC Finance Committee Meeting, 3pm, Vine Cottage

OCTOBER

Mon 5th BPCC Meeting, 7pm, Wappenham V Hall

Fri 9th 'Scarecrow' Folk Band, 7pm, St Mary's Church, Wappenham. Doors and Bar open at 6.15pm. Tickets £10, (kids free)

NOVEMBER

Fri 6th Peal will be rung to honour ringer Gunner Alfred George Humphrey & other serviceman buried at Helmdon (3 hours)

DECEMBER

Sat 19th Culworth Branch Bell ringers practice, 3-5pm, Helmdon

BENEFICE CONTACTS

Reverend Hugh White (Rector):

Tel: 01869 347889

Email: rectorastwell@gmail.com

*Please contact the Rector or your
Churchwarden/Representative if you have queries
about baptisms, weddings, or funerals.*

Paul Stothard: Lay Chair

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Alice Palmer: Benefice Treasurer

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**Sarah Rudkin: Benefice Secretary & Pews News
Editor,**

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**Churchwardens /Representatives (for individual
church matters):**

Helmdon: Cliff Netten, apnetten@hotmail.com

& Paul Stothard, stothy@live.co.uk

Lois Weedon & Weston: Frank Hunter

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Wappenham: Sheena Warren

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Whitfield: Claire Bonner cbonner00@gmail.com

HARVEST FESTIVAL

WHERE?

Syresham Church

WHEN?

September 27th 3pm



WHAT?

HARVEST FESTIVAL

*With traditional hymns anthems & readings
and Prayerful Messy Activities*

Sale & tea proceeds to DEC Appeal

*All welcome – please bring produce for sale or money for the
sale – or both!*



Benefice Bulletin 20th September 2026

The Cornerstone workshop on Tuesday at St Peter's, Brackley was rather a low-key affair. Numbers were not high. There were two presenters, five members of the clergy representing four of the Brackley Deanery's seven benefices and two lay parishioners, both from Astwell. I think Astwell people also provided the majority of responses (fifteen) to the Generosity Review questionnaire. Many thanks to those who made the Astwell contributions to the occasion

I felt there was a general lack of excitement, enthusiasm and expectation: here was another initiative from on high. Attendees were polite enough but the meeting came alive when one of my clergy colleagues eloquently expressed scepticism as to whether Cornerstone would work in rural parishes with elderly churchgoers whose capacity to manage modern technology could be rather low and whose opinion of 'the Diocese' was often lower still. The suggestion that Cornerstone could be marketed better to the person in the pew were it to be presented as an initiative of the Church of England rather than 'the Diocese' seemed unpersuasive. Other sceptical notes were sounded. The affable presenters took the objections in their stride; they had heard it all before, they said – in various ways a discouraging response.

Nevertheless, there was some profit to be had from the occasion once one accepted that Cornerstone is very much about getting churchgoers to give their churches more money, rather than encouraging church people to be generally generous. 'The whole thing seems to be about getting information for devising a way to play on people's consciences to extract money from them,' said one sceptical Astwell responder to the Generosity Review, who continued, 'It's all about money. There was nothing about generosity in the giving of time or about helping individuals.' I think the responder is essentially right on the Generosity Review. There is, however, another strand to Cornerstone, as mentioned last week, which is about getting information to extract money from other people than church members by way of the use of Cornerstone's Grants Database – if you can get the Database to function well, which we couldn't on Tuesday.

For what it's worth, the Astwell churches that submitted Generosity Review questionnaire returns scored from 20 to 26 out of a possible 48 (I think – the printouts are a little indistinct). The Diocesan average for a parish is 27. Three areas of deficit have been suggested for each church to work on, in all six areas out of the eight surveyed in the Review. It might be worthwhile to take these questionnaire findings to Church Councils for further exploration. That might prove productive in the longer term in extracting more money from ourselves and others, but we have already proved our generosity in making sure our Diocesan share is paid, in giving money to charitable purposes and in creating the Let's shine Festival and Community Fund.

Putting in place a Young Persons' Worker, if we decide we want to do that, would be (another) seriously generous and serious costly undertaking but we are a seriously generous Benefice, something the Cornerstone Generosity Review isn't actually set up to review, measure and acknowledge.

Blessings,

Hugh