

FUTURE SERVICES

www.astwellparishes.org.uk

MAY 2026

Saturday 23rd May

1pm Lois Weedon Wedding

Sunday 31st May – Trinity Sunday

10.30am Radstone Benefice Holy Communion

JUNE 2026

Wednesday 3rd June

10.00am Helmdon Quiet Holy Communion
(Let's Shine Festival)

Saturday 6th June

1pm Radstone Wedding

Sunday 7th June – First Sunday after Trinity

9.00am Wappenham Breakfast & Walk
(Let's Shine Festival)
10.30am Wappenham Benefice Holy Communion

Sunday 14th June - Second Sunday after Trinity

9.00am Wappenham Breakfast Church
9.30am Lois Weedon Morning Prayer
10.30am Helmdon Holy Communion
11.15am Syresham Morning Prayer

Sunday 21st June - Third Sunday after Trinity

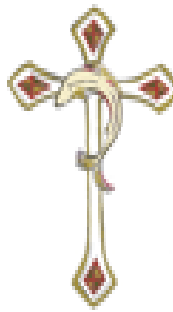
9.30am Lois Weedon Holy Communion
10.30am Helmdon Praise & Prayer
11.15am Syresham Holy Communion
11.15am Wappenham Praise & Prayer

Sunday 28th June – Fourth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am Lois Weedon Matins
9.30am Whitfield Holy Communion
10.30am Helmdon Morning Prayer
11.15am Syresham Morning Prayer
11.15am Wappenham Holy Communion

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 24th May 2026

Pentecost (Whit Sunday)

Services in the Benefice:

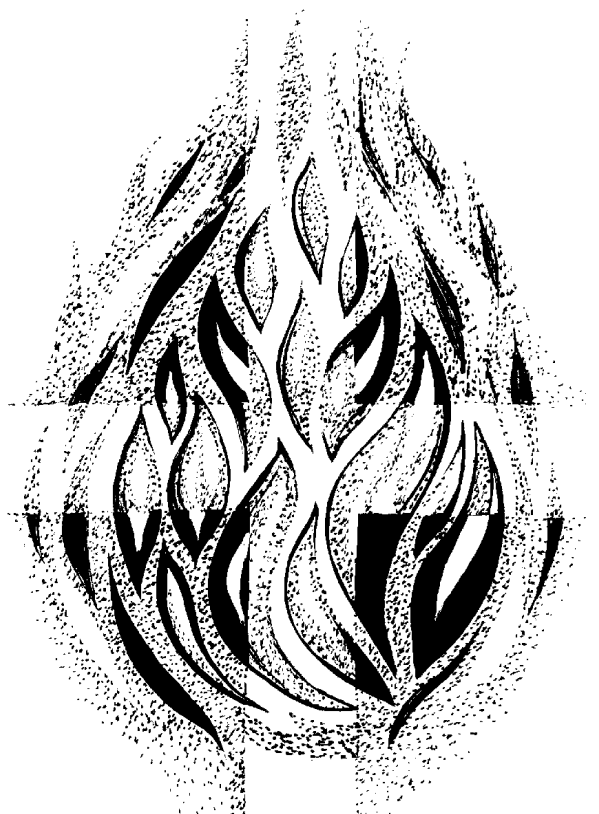
9.30am Lois Weedon Matins

9.30am Whitfield Holy Communion

10.30am Helmdon Morning Prayer

11.15am Syresham Praise & Prayer

11.15am Wappenham Holy Communion



Collects & Readings for Pentecost

Collect:

God, who as at this time
taught the hearts of your faithful people
by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit:
grant us by the same Spirit
to have a right judgement in all things
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

New Testament Reading: Acts 2:1-21

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' ¹³ But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

New Testament Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3-13

³ No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Gospel Reading: John 20:19-23

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

Post Communion Collect:

Faithful God,
who fulfilled the promises of Easter
by sending us your Holy Spirit
and opening to every race and nation
the way of life eternal:
open our lips by your Spirit,
that every tongue may tell of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intercessions for Pentecost

Mighty God, as we are gathered together here in hope and in faith, we ask you to minister to our needs. Send the Holy Spirit to fill the hearts of your faithful people and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Holy God, we pray for our church leaders, that they will be guided in their ministry by the influence of the Holy Spirit and that the Church, in the power of the Spirit, may make the Gospel understandable to people of every race, language, and culture. That the Holy Spirit of Peace may unite and reconcile the peoples and nations of the earth, bringing an end to war, hatred, and discrimination.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Faithful God, we pray for our Benefice communities, that each of us will be open to the opportunities to give of our individual talents enabling each church group to flourish as a witness to the "One Body" of the church. We pray that each baptized Christian may develop more fully his or her response to all the gifts which the Spirit bestows for the service of the Body of Christ,

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Father God, we pray for your world and its peoples with all their needs, questions and longings. So often we struggle to understand the reasons behind acts of terrorism; and yet we know that in the midst of such events your love is shown in the acts of bravery, selflessness and compassion which followed. We pray for all who suffer in such dreadful circumstances and for those who are tasked with rescue, providing the medical and community support and, eventually, in the long task of reconstruction.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Loving God, we pray for all those who are sick; guide them and strengthen them through their illness. We pray also for those who care for the sick, those engaged in the caring professions and for family members who look after loved ones and especially for children who care for parents.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Merciful God, pray for all those who have died: give them a place at your banquet in heaven. May the Holy Spirit, who purifies us of sin and raises the dead, bring all our departed loved ones into the fullness of your presence.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Everlasting God, on this Day of Pentecost, we rejoice in the wonderful gift of your Spirit. Send him again into our hearts, into our lives, and into our world. Merciful father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

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, Anna Mackaness and Clyde Burbidge.

From Syresham: George Summers and Suzanne Prestcott.

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 and Diane Snow.

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

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

MAY

Sat 30th 2026 Let's Shine Together Festival begins to www.letsshinetogether.co.uk or Tel: 07395 045800

JUNE

Sun 7th Let's Shine Together Festival ends
Mon 22nd Finance committee Mtg, 11am at Vine Cottage.

JULY

Thurs 9th Deanery Walk within the Benefice (more information to follow)

CRAFT FAIR

St Mary Magdalene Church, Helmdon
Saturday 30th May from 10-4pm
A wide variety of Crafts and Gifts
to enjoy and buy!
Refreshments available

Part of the Let's shine Festival events!

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: Reader & Lay Chair

stothy@live.co.uk, Tel: 01295 760816

Alice Palmer: Benefice Treasurer

alice.palmer16@btinternet.com, Tel: 01280 850252

Fiona Mason: Benefice Safeguarding Officer

fomason@hotmail.com Tel: 01280 850439

Wiggy Smith: Chair of Pastoral Care Committee

wiggysmith44@gmail.com, Tel: 01295 760953

Sarah Rudkin: Benefice Secretary & Pews News

Editor,

rectorastwellbenefice@aol.co.uk, Tel: 01327 830965

Churchwardens /Representatives (for individual church matters):

Helmdon: Cliff Netten, apnetten@hotmail.com

& Paul Stothard, stothy@live.co.uk

Lois Weedon & Weston: Frank Hunter

frank.hunter@btinternet.com

Radstone: Penny Bonner

penny.bonner@btconnect.com

Syresham: Alice Palmer

alice.palmer16@btinternet.com

Wappenham: Sheena Warren

sheena@bellplantation.co.uk

Whitfield: Claire Bonner cbonner00@gmail.com

Benefice Bulletin 24th May 2026

We held the Benefice's APCM on Monday. Thanks to all who attended and thanks to those who carry out specific tasks for the Benefice and were happy to put themselves forward again and so were duly re-elected. Some people unable to attend were also re-elected in their absence. In the hope that they will all accept their re-appointment, my thanks to them too.

Nevertheless, change is afoot. Alice Palmer will stand down as Benefice Treasurer after this year and Paul Stothard will do likewise in respect of the Lay Chairship. Of more immediate consequence is Paul's decision not to renew his Reader's licence which expires in September, which will mean a significant re-adjustment to our service pattern across the Benefice. There was some interest at the meeting in developing new kinds of service and each parish was asked to submit an idea for innovative worship.

These impending resignations are part of the general picture of a decline in numbers of those willing to take on leadership roles across the Church of England, a decline that looks as if it will seriously impact the viability particularly of rural churches. It's not only that lay people aren't coming forward to replace those who are retiring from particular responsibilities, but that the deficit in numbers of those offering themselves for ordination seems to be growing more acute.

With this decline taking place, it seems all the more important to try to engage with younger people in our communities. We do, in fact, have a decent number of young families attending our churches regularly and we have two Primary Schools in the Benefice. There is a case for appointing a person who will develop what we do in church for our younger people and also try to reach out to younger people in our villages currently outside our churches. Our Monday meeting recognised a particular issue regarding post-Primary School children.

Also put before the meeting was the idea of appointing a Parish Nurse, for which there was some enthusiasm and which we should investigate further.

Meanwhile, final preparations for the second Let's Shine Together Festival are in train. Do come to what you can. (*The Beloved Son* on 1st June and the Quiet Day led by Bishop John Stroyan on 5th June could do with some more takers.) I'm delighted that Astwell Benefice has brought this event and the associated Community Fund into being. This demonstrates clearly that rural churches can make a strong contribution to their communities beyond what is done in church, and that surely enhances the prospects of our churches surviving through difficult times.

Hugh



Festival events
free of charge

**Let's shine
FESTIVAL**

Building strong and kind communities

30 May - 7 June 2026

We are **delighted** to invite you to the Festival. From Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons tribute band, to drama, history, art & crafts, nature & sport. Over 9 days and 30 events the festival '**shines a light**' on what **connects** us and brings **joy** into our precious and beautifully diverse communities.

free of charge

2026

Please take a look at the **Festival** events and activities, the Grand Draw and inspiring Community Fund:
<https://www.letsshinetogether.co.uk/>

If you are not online please call: **07395 045800**

With over **30 events** to explore look, book and enjoy!

The Astwell Benefice - A group of six parishes, churches situated in South Northamptonshire, working as one, in mission and in ministry, to share the love of God

Let's shine