

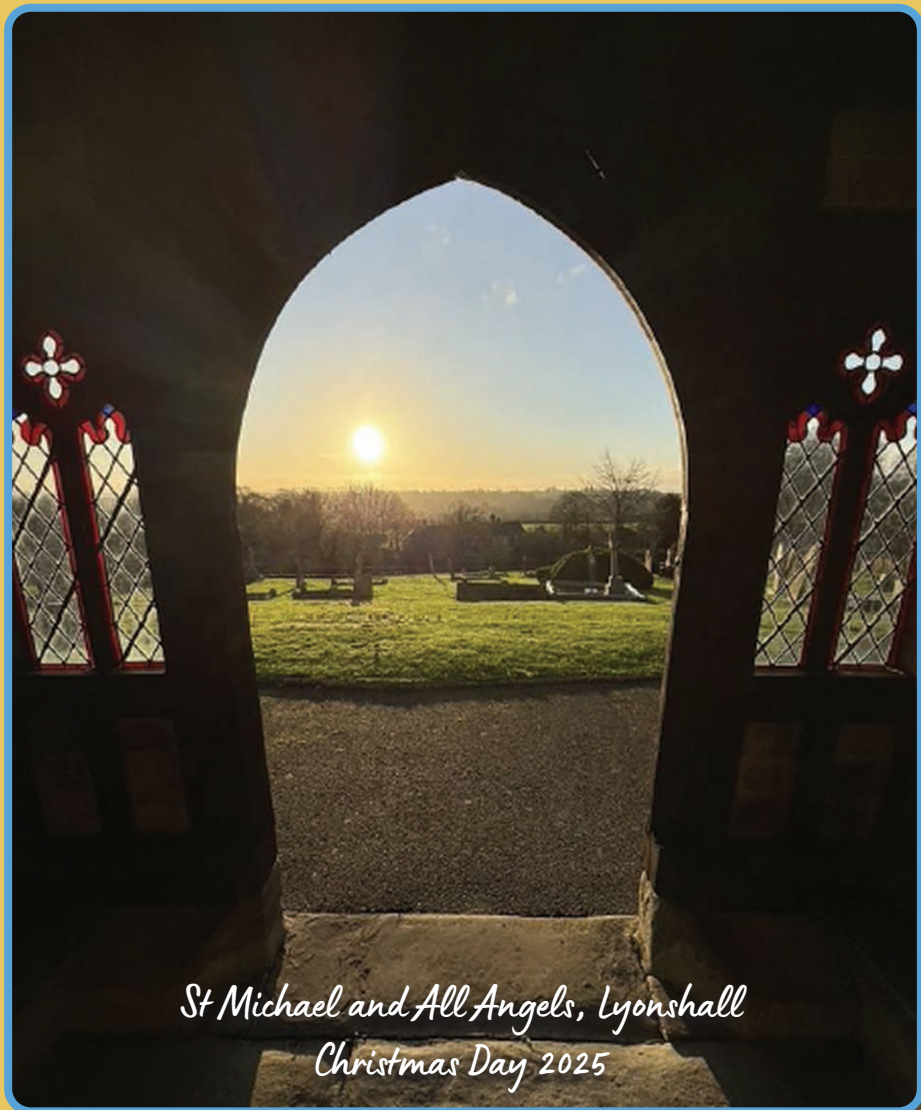
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# THE ARROWVALE GROUP

OF PARISHES

messenger

February / March 2026



*St Michael and All Angels, Lyonshall  
Christmas Day 2025*

Service details and magazine content available on-line at  
[www.arrowvalechurches.org.uk](http://www.arrowvalechurches.org.uk)

## COPY DATE

Please make sure that all copies for the next issue are with  
**Your Parish Contact By 16th March 2026.**  
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*Thank You*

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### From The Registers

#### Pembridge Registers

Burial of Ashes  
Marion Littler – January 19th

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**Rev Anna Branston** 07777 692458

#### STAUNTON-ON-ARROW

**Mr Clive Edwards** 07980 337508

## Rector's Letter

Welcome to 2026. I hope you had a lovely Christmas and New Year – it was good to see so many at our services across the Arrowvale group. I am happy to say that we had good numbers at all our services this Christmas, and would like to thank all those who worked hard to make them such a success – the excellent choir, beautifully decorated churches, delicious refreshments, and talented readers and leaders all combined to make it a memorable Christmas all round.

This year Easter is very early, April 5th, and it feels strange to emerge out of the Christmas season straight into preparations for Lent and Easter without much of a break! However early it might seem I would like to invite you cordially to join us for the various Lent and Easter services across the Arrowvale Group. All are welcome at our services and if you would like to help out in any way, please do talk to me or a member of the PCC.

Services are listed on the back page – if you would like to be kept informed weekly let me know, and I will send you a copy of the Pewsheet each week.

Wishing you all a lovely Spring.

*Rev'd Anna Branston*

### After the Winter

Some day, when trees have shed their leaves  
And against the morning's white  
The shivering birds beneath the eaves  
Have sheltered for the night,  
We'll turn our faces southward, love,  
Toward the summer isle  
Where bamboos spire the shafted grove  
And wide-mouthed orchids smile.

And we will seek the quiet hill  
Where towers the cotton tree,  
And leaps the laughing crystal rill,  
And works the droning bee.  
And we will build a cottage there  
Beside an open glade,  
With black-ribbed blue-bells blowing near,  
And ferns that never fade.

*Claude McKay*

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Thank you for any donations you are able to give. Donations can be given in the following ways;

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- *Byton Lloyds* - 30.94.99 Acc. 00509867

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please contact The Rector for advice.**

## SAFEGUARDING

If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact:

- Dr M Lias, Benefice Safeguarding Officer on 01544 340244 / 07815304318 or
- Anna Branston, Rector for Safeguarding, 07777 692458
- Jane Owen, Byton Parish 07964 271744 or
- The Safeguarding Officer at the Hereford Diocesan Office Carl Steventon on 07593817717 or for non-urgent matters contact The Diocesan Office on 01432 373000 and ask for the safeguarding team.

## Kington and District Food Bank

*are in need of the following items:*

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If you are in need or know of anybody who require food bank vouchers please contact Rev.

Anna Branston  
on 07777 692458

## Bishops / Arch-Deacon's News

Someone a little older than me told me the other day that they have instituted a new rule at dinner parties about the length of organ recitals. Observing my puzzlement that their house wasn't big enough for a pipe organ, and as far as I knew they had no musical friends, they explained further. By organ recital they meant the litany of complaints about each other's deteriorating health. They had agreed it was to be limited to 15 minutes each time! A few months previously I had had to stop myself in conversation with a friend on the phone when we realised we'd spent the previous half hour talking about our own ailments. I have recently passed one of the main markers of aging myself. I got a senior citizen's discount to visit the zoo with my grandchildren the other day. Frankly, I had expected a bit more than they were giving off the price of the ticket.

As we get older, the myth of control is increasingly exposed. Much in our culture seeks to persuade us that we have much more control over our life circumstances than in fact we do. Good diet and exercise can lengthen our health span, but it can't put off the inevitable for ever. Many of us will know people who died suddenly, apparently in the best of health, of conditions of which they were ignorant and over which they had no influence. They simply drew a bad genetic card. Wise financial stewardship can prepare us for retirement and give a buffer against financial shocks, but the interconnectedness of the global financial system mean that major financial shocks affect everyone, however prudent.

No one can rage against all this – many do, entering old age grumpy and full of resentment. Reinhold Niebuhr's serenity prayer, often paraphrased at AA meetings (and misattributed to St. Francis), is a good one to pray regularly to stave this off, "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference". Taken as it is, it's good pop psychology, the sort of thing you'd put on a Facebook post. However, the rest of the prayer is rarely quoted. "Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as the pathway to peace; taking as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to his will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life".

Contemporary society sees little value in suffering of any kind. Yet the way of Jesus embraces our interaction with life's disappointments and pain as a significant part of the way we are formed into Christ's likeness, as much if not more so than the familiar spiritual disciplines. Job's journey is a paradigm of this. From a place of success by every contemporary measure his life quickly descends into hell – quite literally. He suffers alone. Neither his wife nor friends can provide any rationale for his suffering much as they try, ending up blaming him for his lot in life, perhaps to deal with their own confusion. By Chapter 23, Job is spoiling for a fight with God himself. In verse 2 he says, "even today my complaint is bitter; his hand is heavy in spite of my groaning. If only I knew where to find him; if only I could go to his dwelling! I would state my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would find out what he would answer me and consider what he would say to me". Operating from a spirit of entitlement that a life of ease can easily inculcate, he effectively demands God should justify himself. Contemporary culture screams at us through every channel that the world should revolve around us. We are not well prepared for the challenges of declining health that accompany aging. The human demand that everything should go our way crashes against the rocks of biological reality.

However, in this challenge, as with any other that life throws at us, we are comforted by the promise of the Lord's constant accompanying presence. We never suffer alone. All our life experience takes place within the envelope of hope. "In all things God is working for good in those who love him", says Paul in Roman's 8. The greatest good is to be prepared to know God and enjoy him for ever. This is where ultimate fulfilment and joy is to be found. A spirit of entitlement is just another manifestation of pride – the root of all sin. As Dr. Larry Crabb said in the title of his masterful book on Ruth, *Shattered Dreams* – the unexpected path to joy, serenity and peace may require a dealing with reality as it is, not as we demand or even wish it should be.

*Richard*

## Lyonshall FOOD BANK collection point

*St. Michael and All Angels church at Lyonshall now has a collection box to receive items of food and toiletries for the local Kington Food Bank. In these days of uncertainty, the food bank is very much in need to help those who find themselves in difficult situations. All donations of non-perishable food with good use-by dates can be placed in the collection box inside the church, all items would be very much appreciated and gratefully received with thanks.*

## Welcome to the New Archbishop of Canterbury!



Bishop Sarah Mullally has been confirmed as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury. We welcome her appointment, and pray for strength and wisdom for her in her forthcoming ministry.

She will be installed on Wednesday March 25th 2026. The installation marks the symbolic start of the Archbishop's public ministry, where she will be installed on both the Cathedral Chair as Diocesan Bishop, and the Chair of St Augustine as Primate of All England.

If you would like to watch the ceremony which involves a procession, oaths of obedience, and the symbolic enthronement in the Archbishop's chair at the high altar signifying her authority over the diocese and Church of England, it will be livestreamed on the official Canterbury Cathedral YouTube channel, and there will also be BBC coverage.

Details about the service will be finalized and shared by the Archbishop of Canterbury's office in the lead-up to the event.

Please keep Bishop Mullally in your prayers as she prepares for the installation and for her forthcoming ministry.

Pray also for our churches, for strength and grace in challenging times, and that we support our new Archbishop in her ministry to us.

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### MU Arrowvale Branch Report

In November our meeting was hosted by Anthea and members enjoyed the fellowship of a lunch of soup and cake. We were reminded that our subscriptions are due in January and will have added value if they can be gift aided. The financial report was given and it was agreed to donate equal amounts to Hereford Diocesan MU and the national Big Give campaign. We had already made a donation towards bibles for Pembridge primary school. This would leave us with adequate funds in the bank. The Rector was present and asked if MU members could take part in the Primary school's Nativity play in Pembridge Church on 10th December at 6pm.

We were reminded that from 25th November to 10th December MU midday prayers will focus on women and girls during the 16 days of United Nations activism against gender based violence. The RISE UP campaign is central to our prayers at this time.

Our next meeting was on the 9th December, when we enjoyed lunch at the Corners Inn in Kingsland, meeting at 12.15pm. It was a very wet day, with flooding in places, but members were able to meet up as planned for a lunch of their choosing.

We hope to hold the Pancake Cafe again on Shrove Tuesday, with a choice of soups, pancakes and a sales table. Please look out for posters nearer the time. Offers of help would be much appreciated.

Fellowship is a big part of membership of the MU and it forms part of the social life of the Church. Recently members took part in the school Nativity play and previously helped when the children came to Church in different year groups to learn about Pentecost. In the Diocese the MU carries out supportive work with families with the Crisis Intervention Fund and "away from it all" holiday help.

The national Big Give campaign between 2nd and 9th December helped the MU expand their savings groups in Uganda into four new dioceses. Donations made during this time were doubled and Arrowvale gave a group donation. Members could also make individual donations if they wished.

There are many areas where the MU is involved, locally, nationally and internationally. The year 2026 will hold celebrations for the 150th anniversary of our founding. Mary Sumner might well be amazed if she could see what she started!

New members are welcome, please contact Sarah Westaby for more information.

Email: [sfwestaby@gmail.com](mailto:sfewestaby@gmail.com) or 07711556497

Jenny Repath, Secretary.



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## Staunton Coffee Spot

Join us on the first Saturday of every month at the Staunton Village Hall for our Coffee morning from 10am until 12. There is freshly brewed tea and coffee, and lots of wonderful homemade cakes!

Each month our amazing volunteers host the Coffee Spot and the money raised through donations helps us to keep our wonderful Village Hall open.

As well as the funds we raise to support our Village Hall, we often provide a raffle and thanks to everyone we have raised money for lots of different causes. Some of our causes include the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, Village Clock maintenance, Stroke Association, and the HART wildlife rescue.

We are always looking for new volunteers to host, so if you're interested, please let us know when you attend.

### Staunton Village Hall

We have created a new Facebook page where we will post event updates, information, and our village lottery results. If you would like to follow us, please search for Staunton On Arrow Village Hall on Facebook.

### Staunton Summer Social - a date for your calendar!

Everyone is welcome at our Summer Social event on the 4th July. It's a wonderful opportunity for the village to meet up and enjoy the summer evening.

## Staunton on Arrow WI

We are well into 2026 and for our January meeting there was a change to the original programme and we invited Helen Boley, a local pilates instructor, to give our members a talk focussing on pelvic health.

We were shown several simple exercise options to consider and I think we all felt the benefit of really small changes in our posture and breathing during the session. It was a very informative evening with lots of laughs along the way.

Our annual post Christmas lunch is arranged for February 1st at the Cider Barn where family and friends join us for a relaxed event to celebrate another successful year with the WI. Some of our members are hosting the March Coffee Spot so if you would like to find out more about our small friendly group then we'd love to chat to you.

We are always pleased to see new faces, so if you would like to come along as a visitor with a view to joining us as a full member, you would be most welcome to any of our meetings, we just ask for a small donation for refreshments of £5. We meet at Staunton on Arrow village hall on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm.

For more information see our website.

www.stauntononarrowwi.weebly.com  
Wendy Williams  
Secretary  
07990 748897



## Palm Sunday

This Palm Sunday we will once again perform a dramatic reading of the Passion Gospel out in the streets of Pembridge.

As I write no planning has been done at all, but last year there was drama! there was music! (courtesy of the tireless Safi), there were lights! (well, just the one actually, the sun shone on us), and it was all splendid.

Do join us this year. Best of all, take part. Just contact Nick or Anna.

Nick - njnclarke@aol.com  
Anna - 07777 692458

## Love 2 Sing Family "Sing Christmas"

Thank you to the Love 2 Sing Choir, Pembridge, Love 2 Sing Choir Birchpole, and the Love 2 Sing Junior choir for joining together under the directorship of Hayley Osborne and putting on a wonderful concert for the Christmas season. It was very much enjoyed by those who attended and those who took part. A total of £450 was raised for church funds after expenses.

## Thank you

As we start the new year, we would like to thank everyone who supported Pembridge Church in any way in 2025. The church needs support in a vast number of ways to enable us to keep being able to offer worship, maintain the buildings, and look after the graveyards and outside spaces, offering support to those that need it.

Thank you to those who contribute financially, those who help us put on events, maintain outside spaces, and are on the many rotas, all supporting in a variety of different ways. It is always very much appreciated.

Jacqui & Gill

## Coffee Morning

Everyone Welcome



Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February &

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March

10.30am

in Pembridge Parish Hall

Home-made cakes

Coffee/tea

Chat and friendship  
meet up with the neighbours

Free but donations gratefully  
accepted

Hosted by  
Love to Sing Choir  
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## Easter Lillies

We will again be decorating the church with white lilies for our Easter services. If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of lilies in memory of a loved one, could you please let me have donations as soon as possible.

Gill

## Annual Quiz Evening

Look out for the posters advertising our annual quiz evening, during March or April.

# A Smallholders Life & Times



The crisp dry weather at the start of this year was a great opportunity to go for a longish circular walk with my friend Jo and our two dogs. I chose Walk 22 from "Walks and More" by A Johnston & S Punter, with this particular walk beginning from Kyre Park near Tenbury Wells. It included views across the fields to Clee hill, and we passed several large lakes enroute, the fresh air certainly blew the Christmas cobwebs away! It was also lovely to join so many likeminded people of all ages at The New Inn for the traditional Hunt Meet. I have happy memories as a child of being allowed out of lessons at Titley school, so that we could all go and see the Radnor and West Hunt meet, at the war memorial in the village. It was so exciting to see the horses, hounds, and Miss Dunne high up on her horse, resplendent in her side saddle habit. To ban trial hunting would be a such a sad loss to so many for so many reasons.

My cats have been patrolling the apple store keeping predators at bay and so far, I have been able to use the apples that are still in good condition, mostly to give to the horses and the butternut squash to make soup for myself.

Another oak branch has blown down in the far field which will keep me busy sawing the wood in Rayburn size lengths for when we have a frosty day. I still have a plentiful supply from the previous oak branch that blew down last year (narrowly missing the fence). I hope that this will last until warmer weather arrives.

Walking around the garden after the recent snowfall; what a lovely surprise. There they were: the first snowdrops peeping out where the hens have been scratching, and I can now make out the outlines of my sheep in the early morning, instead of tripping over them with the feed bucket. It is lovely to see small signs of life all around, once again, Spring is on its way.



Marion Williams

Email: marion.williams06@yahoo.com

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[www.awhughesandson.co.uk](http://www.awhughesandson.co.uk)

## LYONSHALL NEWS



### Fundraising News...

Our Coffee Mornings continue to be very generously supported. In December we raised £390 which was donated to The Salvation Army.

In January we raised £360 and were delighted to support We are Farming Minds, helping to raise mental health awareness within Herefordshire's agricultural community.

Come along to our monthly Coffee Mornings and meet old friends and new.

Enjoy refreshments, stalls and good company in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and support a good cause at the same time.

For further details, contact Kathy Thompson on 01544 340386. Everyone welcome.

### Lyonshall Coffee Mornings

Coffee Mornings are held at Lyonshall Memorial Hall every second Friday between 10 and 12 noon.

The next two dates for your diaries are our Friday 13th February and Friday 13th March Meetings.

### Christmas 2025

Thank you to everyone who decorated Lyonshall church so beautifully and a special thank you to Lyonshall Nurseries who once again gave us a beautiful Christmas tree and to Martin and Suzanne Hughes who took the tree to the church and decorated it.

We had a very enjoyable evening in church on December 10th when the Titled Ladies Choir entertained us with Christmas music and readings, a real treat. Everyone enjoyed the mulled wine and canapes and Carol Morris, a choir member, won the splendid Christmas Hamper. Thanks to Liz Avery and the ladies who provided the refreshments and to all who gave prizes for the hamper and to Marie for putting it together.

The Carol Service on December 21st was attended by approximately 90 people, so the singing was magnificent and much helped by the Arrowvale choir. Our thanks to Marina for putting the service together and leading it for us, and to all the readers.

### Lyonshall 200 Club Draw Winners

**1st Mike Davies 2nd Charlotte Lias**

**3rd Lorraine Richards 4th Jonnie Daniel**

**5th Elaine Wood**

## Lyonshall PCC

Lyonshall PCC have paid a total of £560 to these 7 charities from their 2025 fundraising activities and from the service collections following Midnight Mass and Christmas Day services.

We extend our thanks to everyone that have helped Lyonshall PCC during 2025 and look forward to your support in 2026.



**The Children's Society**



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## SHOBDON NEWS



### Thank you for Christmas at Shobdon! Carol Service

The Carol Service in Shobdon was a truly wonderful one for 2025! The Church was filled, and Tim and his choir raised the spirits of the festivities, as well as the roof! The collection taken was a record and £187 has been sent to We Are Farming Minds. Thank you to all those involved, and we hope to see you all again next year.

### Christmas Service & Thank you to John Repath

On Christmas Day, our service was taken by The Rev'd John Repath, in his last service here. We would like to thank him very much for all the services he has taken here in Shobdon over the last few years, and send him and Jenny our best wishes.

## BYTON NEWS



**Carol Service:** Thanks to everyone who attended our carol service and made this such a success, especially Tim and his choir, Mel Bodhingle on his guitar, and the Segrotts, who did so much with the decorating and mulled wine.

**Bridge Drive:** Wednesday 4th March at Kinsham Village Hall. 2pm start.

### A Snapshot of Byton Part 3: Before the Rice Family; The Making of a Rectory and Home

The Rectory stood well before Elizabeth and her husband arrived in the late 1930's. In this Snapshot we explore this building, with this collection being chronological from left to right. The Rectory is an Edwardian building built in 1907, with the first image of the front door dated all the way back to just after 1910 when the First World War was starting. The dating of the middle image is uncertain, but is likely between the build and 1937, meaning that the man we see standing on the drive is almost certainly not Elizabeth's husband, but one of the old Rectors who came before, each performing a six-year stint. The visible old barns of David Edwards' farm behind the Rectory serve as the literal agricultural background the Rice's would thankfully find themselves in during the the Second World War. And finally, the rightmost picture was taken by Bridget Adams herself in 2004, returning to Byton to see—through the top right window—the room where, in 1940, she was born, and where life began for all of them as a family.



## Afternoon of Bridge

Wednesday 4th March  
2pm followed by afternoon tea.  
The Arkwright Hall, Kinsham, LD8 2HN

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For more information, contact  
Mrs Margaret Edwards  
07890920958  
margaret@edwardsbyton.co.uk

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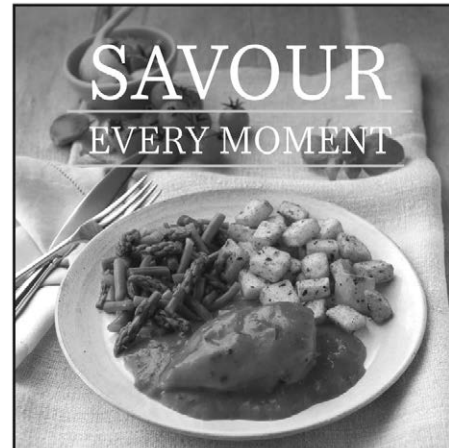
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OF PARISHES

## messenger

February / March 2026

February 1st Candlemas Week 1	Byton HC Pembridge HC Staunton EP	9:30 11:00 6:00
February 5th	Moorcourt Prayer group (Quiet Prayer)	9:30 10:00
February 8th Week 2	Lyonshall HC Shobdon HC Pembridge 3Cs	9:30 11:00 11:00
February 15th Week 3	Pembridge HC	11:00
February 18th Ash Wednesday	Pembridge Imposition of Ashes	6:00
February 22nd (Lent 1) Week 4	Shobdon Matins Moorcourt HC Lyonshall HC	9:30 9:30 11:00
March 1st (Lent 2) Week 1	Byton HC Pembridge HC Staunton EP	9:30 11:00 6:00
March 5th	Moorcourt Prayer group (Quiet Prayer)	9:30 10:00
March 8th (Lent 3) Week 2	Lyonshall HC Shobdon HC Pembridge 3Cs	9:30 11:00 11:00
March 15th (Lent 4) Week 3 Mothering Sunday	Pembridge HC	11:00
March 22nd (Lent 5) Week 4	Shobdon Matins Moorcourt HC Lyonshall HC	9:30 9:30 11:00
March 29th Palm Sunday	5th Sunday Pembridge Village: Palm Gospel Pembridge Church: Holy Communion	10:30 11:00
April 2nd Maundy Thursday	Moorcourt Prayer group (Quiet Prayer) Pembridge: Stripping the Altar	9:30 10:00 6:00
April 3rd Good Friday	Byton - Walking the Cross Moorcourt - Preaching the Cross	10:00 12:00
Easter Day	Pembridge Dawn Service Pembridge Morning service Staunton Morning Service Shobdon Holy Communion Byton Morning Service Lyonshall Holy Communion	5:30 11:00 9:30 9:30 9:30 11:00

While offering reasonable guidance, this schedule is subject to change and clergy availability. Please check the Pewsheet and Arrowvale Churches website ([arrowvalechurches.org.uk](http://arrowvalechurches.org.uk)) for updated times and dates closer to the time.

**Morning Prayer – Monday Pembridge School 9.00**  
**Prayer Group Moorcourt every 1st Thursday 9.30, and Quiet Prayer at 10.00**  
**All Are Welcome**