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LYONSHALL  
SHORDON  
STAUNTON-ON-ARROW  
MOORCOURT  
PEMBRIDGE

# THE ARROWVALE GROUP

OF PARISHES

messenger

June / July 2026



*St Peter's Church, Staunton on Arrow*

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 July 2026.**  
For Advertising Email: malcolmwthompson@btinternet.com

*Thank You*

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## From The Registers

### Shobdon Registers Wedding

Samuel Davies and Rebecca Mainwaring  
– 16th May

### Lyonshall Registers Funeral

Pamela Lucas – 23rd April  
Edwina Mary Cooper – 15th May

### Pembridge Registers Burial

Deborah Jane Watson – 16th April  
Burial of Ashes  
Michael Winston Twyman – 24th April

## PARISH CONTACTS

### RECTOR - Rev. Anna Branston

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07777 692458 abranston2002@gmail.com

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Mr Steve Weaver 07971 260518

#### PEMBRIDGE

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Mrs Gill Smith 01544 388441

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#### LYONSHALL

Mrs Liz Avery 01544 340409

#### SHOBDON

Rev Anna Branston 07777 692458

#### STAUNTON-ON-ARROW

Mr Clive Edwards 07980 337508

## Rector's Letter

*"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." — Acts 2:17*

As we move from the vibrant celebrations of Pentecost in late May into the longer, warmer months of June and July, we enter the season of Trinity. This is a time to reflect on how the Holy Spirit continues to move through our lives, bringing fresh energy, visions, and dreams.

Recently, I have been spending a great deal of time studying the Beguines—a remarkable movement of medieval women who found incredible strength, spiritual depth, and independence simply by gathering together to form supportive communities. They lived out their faith not in isolation, but by working, praying, and caring for one another.

Looking at our own parishes, I see that same resilient community spirit. A wonderful example of this was the public meeting we held recently regarding the future of St Peter's in Staunton on Arrow. Seeing thirty-five of you from across the parishes gather to listen, share your concerns, and dream of new ways to keep the church alive was incredibly heartening. It is a powerful reminder that our churches are not just historic stone buildings; they are living, breathing communities sustained by the people who care for them. Thank you to everyone who attended and to those who continue to support all the churches in the Arrowvale Group.

There will be plenty of opportunities to gather across the group over the summer months, from our outdoor services to creative projects. I hope you will all find moments to pause, to listen to each other's stories, and to enjoy the deep sense of neighbourliness that makes our villages so special.

Please keep an eye on our website, Facebook pages, and the magazine's service schedule for all the news and updates throughout the summer. Please let me know if you would like to receive the weekly services update via email.

With prayers and good wishes,

*Anna*

## GIVING

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

### Electronic Transfer (BACS) should be made to

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**Should you wish to pay by cheque,  
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 Lisa Anderson on 07999 0280760 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:*

- Tinned food
- Dried food products
- Toiletries • Sanitary items

If you would like to donate there is a collection point in Pembridge church or at The Steppes, Pembridge.

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

Shortly after I became a Christian in 1978, I had to sit a university entrance paper. One of the questions in the general paper (and I still remember it clearly) was, "Discuss the problems raised by the statement: 'God answers prayer'". Before I became a follower of Jesus it would have held no interest for me whatever. However, since coming to faith I had given it a lot of thought. At the time I thought the presence of the question was evidence of the existence of God! I got in. However, the question does indeed raise several issues that go to the heart of divine providence. Some would argue that if there is a God then he is omnipotent, omniscient and knows our needs before we ask. On that basis asking for anything is pointless as he would do it anyway. Against this is the teaching in the Lord's prayer where we are indeed invited to ask for things when we pray, 'your kingdom come', and the extravagant claims in John 14 where Jesus promises to his disciples that he will do anything they ask for in his name. Taken at face value, this could be cue for a form of spiritual positive thinking. If only we can summon up enough faith, we can ask and God will do it. The flip side of this would be unanswered prayers for healing blamed on the lack of faith, either of the prayer – which is bad enough, or worse still of the person being prayed for, effectively blaming them for their condition. It could also become formulaic, as if God could only act if we use the right formula or wording. The pastoral fall out of such things could be so severe that we'd be tempted to abandon any form of intercessory or healing prayer altogether.

But the healing ministry, not just of the emotions and the soul but of the body too have been part of the church's life ever since Pentecost. Prayers in Jesus' name by the Apostles in Acts led to lame people walking, and other sicknesses being cured. More recently the Wesleyan revival, the beginnings of the Pentecostal movement and charismatic renewal in mainstream denominations have been accompanied by too many stories of genuine healing to put it all down to suggestion or deception. At a Holy Week quiet day for the bishop's staff a few years ago Abbott Paul from Belmont Abbey shared some quite extraordinary stories of miraculous happenings in Peru during his time there. I have myself experienced people's healing in response to prayer. I wish it had been more frequent or that I had more recent stories to share.

What moves Christian prayer beyond mere wishful thinking is confidence in the person of Jesus.

Matthew's account of Jesus' Great Commission prior to his ascension contains the key phrase, "all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me". In John 14 in the final discourse the promise of answered prayer is predicated on the fact that Jesus and the Father indwell one another. He claims he is the way, the truth and the life and that no-one comes to the Father except through him. An extravagant claim but borne out by the evidence of his life, work, resurrection and ultimate ascension which vindicates everything he ever said and validates his absolute authority. To pray in the name of Jesus is to dive into this stream of divine love and participate in what the Holy Spirit is doing in the here and now to move forward the work of the Kingdom of God.

I'm recording this at the top of the Cathedral tower on Ascension Day. I don't believe I'm closer to God up here as our medieval forbears used to think. The whole point of the Ascension and Pentecost is that Jesus can now be encountered everywhere, unrestricted by time and space. But it does illustrate something of the perspective change that can occur as we grow closer to the Lord. Things that may have seemed insurmountable obstacles from ground level look insubstantial from up here. Things that may have seemed utterly essential for our wellbeing and the wellbeing of those we love and pray for may seem less so as we contemplate the reality of God's authoritative presence in our lives through the Holy Spirit. When we have spent time with Jesus our sense of what an outcome in the name of Jesus looks like may shift. Prayer for cure might become prayer for endurance. Conversely, prayer to endure suffering or opposition may develop a faithful fire in the belly to contend for the Kingdom in healing and wholeness.

We are holding a healing service this Sunday, May 17th at 6.00pm in the Cathedral to which all are invited. There will be communion and the opportunity to receive prayer and anointing for yourself or a loved one. This symbol of being marked with the sign of the cross in oil dedicated at our Chrism service in Holy Week is a traditional way of expressing faith and hope in the powerful action of the Holy Spirit today. Our trust in the ascended Jesus releases faith in his continued action. Whatever the outcome of our praying, I trust we can encounter him there and anywhere.

*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.*

## Staunton on Arrow Church

### Public Meeting

On Tuesday 21st April, Anna Branston, the Archdeacon Derek Chedzey and Sarah Girling the Diocesan Pastoral Secretary held a meeting that brought together 35 people from across the Arrowvale Benefice to listen to the concerns and difficulties facing St Peter's Church Staunton on Arrow.

Anna as Rector, has managed to continue to lead services and fulfil the duties of Churchwarden and PCC with the support of several volunteers since Staunton PCC resigned approximately two years ago. She would like to thank Marina Wichard and Nick Clarke for their help in covering services and Clive Edward's help in keeping the accounts and ensuring the church is available for services.

At the meeting Archdeacon Derek Chedzey spent time highlighting the challenges faced by many rural Herefordshire churches, including attracting new parishioners and retaining PCC members.

Initiatives such as re-purposing the church, setting up a Friend's group to run the church in place of the PCC, or having a Festival Church, were pointed out.

Such initiatives can bring both challenges and benefits to parishioners and to Hereford Diocese.

Parishioners at the meeting expressed concerns about service availability and dwindling congregation numbers. Everybody agreed that St Peter's is well used at notable events throughout the year, and seeing 35 people listening and partaking in discussion was reassuring about the future of Staunton on Arrow Parish Church

The Archdeacon pointed out that for that future to be assured there is a need for volunteers to work with Reverend Anna towards keeping St Peter's operational.

Since this public meeting, a brief survey has been generated independently, by a Staunton resident, and distributed to local households to measure community support for the future of St. Peter's.

The Rector and the Rural Dean are happy to discuss the findings of the survey in the coming weeks and will be discussing a church led survey in the summer to gain a full picture of the needs of the church as a worshipping body as well as a community asset. Until we have a clear picture of what is realistically possible, we are not in a position to make any decisions.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Reverend Anna

**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

Diocese of Hereford

### MU Arrowvale Branch Report

The March meeting was held in the afternoon of the 24th and was hosted by Sarah. We started with prayers from our Mothers' Union Prayer Book, praying for world peace, all families, our meeting, and also a special prayer for Lady Day. The second Diocesan service to commemorate the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary was to be held at Much Wenlock the following day.

The theme of our meeting was "what's in a word or two?" We talked about the meaning of words, how they are used and also how they are said. This was prompted by St Peter's denial of Christ when he was asked by the woman at the gate of the Temple if he was a disciple.

We then had a report about the MU's involvement in the Pembridge School Easter Enrichment Programme. Sarah and Adele had been able to take part. Sarah had given a short talk at the school assembly about the MU, including the educational work it does in Africa. They then joined other members of the congregation in Church for the school service. We were pleased to have been invited to take part.

Members were notified about the MU Quiet Day in Leominster on the 23rd of April and a coffee morning on the 13th of May. Ideas for our future meetings were discussed and the meeting ended with the Grace.

Anthea had offered to host the next meeting on the 28th of April and this duly took place. After starting with prayer, Sarah led us in a discussion about the word "Blessings" and how it seems strange for us to say "Blessed be God". However, in biblical languages, the equivalent word may have different shades of meaning, thankfulness or praise for example. We had an interesting discussion about the use of "Blessings" and "Bless", both in ordinary conversation and prayer.

Sarah has sent a report of our 2025 MU meetings to the Diocesan AGM, and we look forward to June when we will have a talk about the work of the MU in the Diocese. We hope to visit the Water Gardens cafe for lunch in July.

The MU has enjoyed Royal Patronage since 1876 when the movement was founded. Since 2025 our Patron has been Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Edinburgh. We also enjoy the patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury so Dame Sarah Mullaly is also our Patron.

Arrowvale MU meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, usually at 2:30pm. New members are welcome, please contact Sarah Westaby for more information.

Email: [sfewestaby@gmail.com](mailto:sfewestaby@gmail.com) or 0771 1556497

Jenny Repath, Secretary.



**In aid of  
christian aid  
Christian Aid Week  
- Thank you**

A huge thank you to everyone who made our Christian Aid Week fundraising a great success. Thanks especially to the volunteers who delivered donation envelopes in Pembridge and surrounding areas and to all who helped at the Afternoon Tea, made cakes and savouries and donated raffle prizes, plants and items for the bring-and-buy stall. The event has so far raised over £850, including a generous donation of £100 from the Lyonshall Coffee Morning. Overall for Christian Aid Week we have raised just over £1,000, which is a tremendous achievement.

*A special thank you to the local business who donated raffle prizes:*

- o Moorcourt Farm
- o The Steppes village shop
- o Hugh's Garden
- o The Old Chapel Gallery
- o Westonbury Mill Water Gardens
- o Lyonshall Nurseries

**Support for Ukraine - Pembridge Coffee Morning - Saturday  
20th June 10.30-12.00**

The Coffee Morning at Pembridge Parish Hall on Saturday the 20th of June will be in aid of the Hereford Diocese's 'Support for Ukraine' Project which helps support Ukrainian refugees here in the UK, and also collects much needed items to send to Ukraine. Please come and show your support. There will be a short talk about the work of the project and we will be collecting the following items:

- Sudoku puzzles
- Notebooks, pens & pencils
- Plasters & other small first aid items
- Soaps, hand gels, lip salves etc.
- Empty biscuit / sweet tins / boxes to make up comfort packs
- Baby formula
- Old wax & candle stubs to make trench candles

**Strawberry Fayre - 1st August 2:30pm.**

Come and join us for our annual Strawberry Fayre with strawberry/cream teas, stalls, raffle and music by the Love 2 Sing Choir in the grounds of the church. It is always a special event and so we look forward to seeing you. If you would like to support by donating cakes for the teas, raffle prizes, bottles or items for the bric-a-brac, plants, please bring them on the morning or leave them in the church the previous evening.

*Coffee Morning*

*Everyone Welcome*



*Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June*

*(support for Ukraine)*

*Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July*

*(support for PIPS)*

*10.30am*

*in Pembridge Parish Hall*

*Home-made cakes*

*Coffee/tea*

*Chat and friendship*

*meet up with the neighbours*

*Free but donations gratefully accepted*

**Cream Teas**

Our cream tea season will start on the 21st of June and run until the beginning of September. If you would like to support by helping to run one, providing cakes or scones, or help with the setting up and putting away, please can you contact Marguerite on 01544 388279.

**Pudding and Pimms  
Evening**



in Pembridge Church

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June

At 6.30pm

An evening with Gavin Plumley, cultural historian, writer, lecturer and broadcaster who will give a talk on "The Power of Storytelling"



Entry Adults £15- to include delicious puddings and a glass of Pimms. Children Free.

**Booking is essential -**

<https://buytickets.at/pembridgeparochialchurchcouncil/2220034>

Gill - [ianandgillian@googlemail.com](mailto:ianandgillian@googlemail.com) 01544 388441

Meryl - [merylgriffith@gmail.com](mailto:merylgriffith@gmail.com) 01544 329760

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in Pembridge Churchyard

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June

8.30-10:30pm

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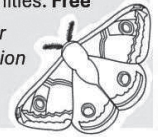


Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June

9:30-11am **Moth Morning**

with activities for families. **Free**

Join us afterwards for our Family Communion service, followed by refreshments



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## LYONSHALL NEWS



### 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 Friday the 12th of June and Friday the 10th of July.

### Fundraising news...

Our Coffee Mornings continue to be very generously supported.

In April we raised £300 for World Parkinson's day.

In May we raised £340, which was shared between two charities, donating £100 to Christian Aid week, and £240 to the FTD Brothers running 33 marathons in 33 days to raise funds for Alzheimer's.

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.

### 200 Club Draw Winners

Charlie Roper, Fred Oliver, Olive Williams, Arthur Hyde and Chris Smith.

### A Date for your Diaries

Harvest Festival will be held on October 11th at 11:00am with Lunch afterwards in the Memorial Hall.

### OPEN GARDEN AT RHODDS FARM LYONSHALL

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SUNDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2-5PM

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## BYTON NEWS



### Best Wishes:

The PCC would like to give our best wishes to two past members who have supported our church over the years. Both Sally Evans and Pam Williams have helped us a great deal, and we hope they both keep on improving in health.

## SHOBDON NEWS



### Shobdon Summer Showcase – 13th - 14th of June

*'A Weekend of Art in the  
Herefordshire Countryside'*

*'Local produce, artisan craft.  
All in one place.'*

*'Support Local.  
Shop independent.'*

*'Meet the makers  
in your community.'*

We're putting together a weekend of art at The Old Chapel, Shobdon, a newly opened village hall right in the heart of the village.

A small group of local artists will be exhibiting their work across the weekend.

There are still a few exhibition spaces available, so if you're a local artist and

would like to take part, do get in touch:

Email: [christy@hallyandchristyprints.com](mailto:christy@hallyandchristyprints.com)

Light refreshments will be available alongside a chance to view the work, and meet

the local artists, getting involved in your creative community.

### Shobdon Independents Day – 4th July

Shobdon Village is marking the 4th of July a little differently this year at The Old Chapel, celebrating the best independent makers, artisans and producers in the Shobdon community.

**WANTED:** We still have space for a few more stallholders. If you make it, grow it or produce it locally, we'd love to have you along.

A day for independents, by independents. Come along, shop local and support the makers on your doorstep.

**Saturday, 4th July, 10am–3pm**

The Old Chapel, Shobdon, HR6 9LX

Email: [christy@hallyandchristyprints.com](mailto:christy@hallyandchristyprints.com)

### Monthly Coffee Mornings

We are holding our monthly coffee mornings from 9:30am - 11am on the first Wednesday of every month at The Old Chapel!

**Dates for Diary:**

• June 3rd and July 1st

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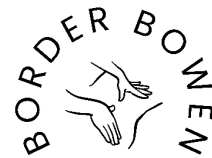
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## STAUNTON NEWS



### Staunton Summer Social

Everyone is welcome at our Summer social event on the 4th of July from 4pm at Staunton House. There will be a live band, BBQ, bar, skittles, and a raffle. It's a wonderful opportunity for the village to meet up and enjoy the summer evening. Due to the Summer Social, the monthly Staunton Coffee Spot will not be held on the 4th of July. But please come along instead to the Summer Social we would love to see you all there!

### Staunton on Arrow WI

In April we invited Lee Telfer to come and talk to us about energy efficiency for older buildings which many of us found very interesting, and picked up a few handy tips along the way. Our May talk was given by Jill Salmon entitled Carnival Around the World, she had some fascinating stories to tell and brought along a small collection of her wonderful face masks and puppets gathered on her travels around the world.

The rest of the summer promises to be a varied selection of subjects, from yoga for the voice to finding a cure for dementia. We finish every meeting with a social bring and share supper, and our speaker invariably joins us so we can carry on a lively discussion with them.

We are always pleased to see new faces, so if you would like to come along as a visitor with a view towards 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](http://www.stauntononarrowwi.weebly.com)

Wendy Williams

Secretary

07990 748897

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# A Smallholders Life & Times

Thus far May has been an "unkind " month. In other words, it has been colder than usual, though the swallows don't seem to mind. They arrived in April and a pair of them have been very busy reconstructing last years nest high up in the stables.

At seven o'clock this morning - 13th May - I heard in the distance, at last, the welcome sound of the cuckoo. April the 19th used to be the cuckoo's traditional arrival time, but for some reason they seem to be arriving later each year. Pembrokeshire was my holiday destination this time. It was interesting trying to pronounce names, such as Elgwyswrw, Maenclochog, and Felindre Farchog, a village near where we stayed in the north of the county. The weather was "kind" during our stay. This corner of Wales is such a lovely unspoilt area with wooded valleys, interesting coastal paths to walk, secluded beaches, and views of the Preseli hills in the distance.



Of course after my holiday everything needed doing in the garden: two rows of new potatoes, Jazzy and Charlotte were planted and a row of Broad beans. I had to buy a selection of sweet peas, I think that the mice took the seeds, Shirley tomato failed to germinate, and I also had to buy these as plants. Three rows of onion sets have been set out and as always, a cunning creature pulls them out of the soil and I have to push them back in until they form roots to anchor them. The soil has taken a long time to warm up enough to sow seeds directly, but I have taken a chance with some Swiss chard and Boltardy beetroot. Hopefully with some light rain and warmer night temperatures these will germinate.

Bluebells, red campion, and white stitchwort have made the grass verges along the lanes and Byway a spectacular sight, enjoyable to look down on while out and about on horseback.

Hopefully this summer we will have just the right amount of rain and sunshine to produce more than one big hay bale from my far field, and some dry weather at harvest time, fingers crossed.

*Marion Williams*

Email: marion.williams06@yahoo.com



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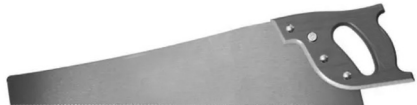
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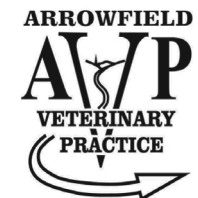


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May 31st	Staunton Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
5th Sunday	Byton Joint service . . . . .	4:00
Trinity Sunday		
June 7th	Byton Holy Communion . . . . .	9:30
Week 1	Pembridge Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
Trinity 1	Staunton Evening Prayer . . . . .	6:00
June 14th	Lyonshall Holy Communion . . . . .	9:30
Week 2	Shobdon Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
Trinity 2	Pembridge 3Cs . . . . .	11:00
	Pembridge Baptism . . . . .	2:00
June 21st	Pembridge Holy Communion (Sung) . . . . .	11:00
Week 3		
Trinity 3		
June 28th	Shobdon Matins . . . . .	9:30
Week 4	Moorcourt Holy Communion . . . . .	9:30
Trinity 4	Lyonshall Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
July 5th	Byton Holy Communion . . . . .	9:30
Week 1	Pembridge Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
Trinity 5	Staunton Evening Prayer . . . . .	6:00
July 12th	Lyonshall Holy Communion . . . . .	9:30
Week 2	Shobdon Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
	Pembridge 3Cs 11:00	
July 19th	Pembridge Holy Communion (Sung) . . . . .	11:00
Week 3		
July 26th	Shobdon Matins . . . . .	9:30
Week 4	Moorcourt Holy Communion . . . . .	9:30
	Lyonshall Holy Communion . . . . .	11:00
August 2nd	Holy Communion Staunton . . . . .	11:00
	Joint Service Pembridge Café Church . . . . .	10:00

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**