

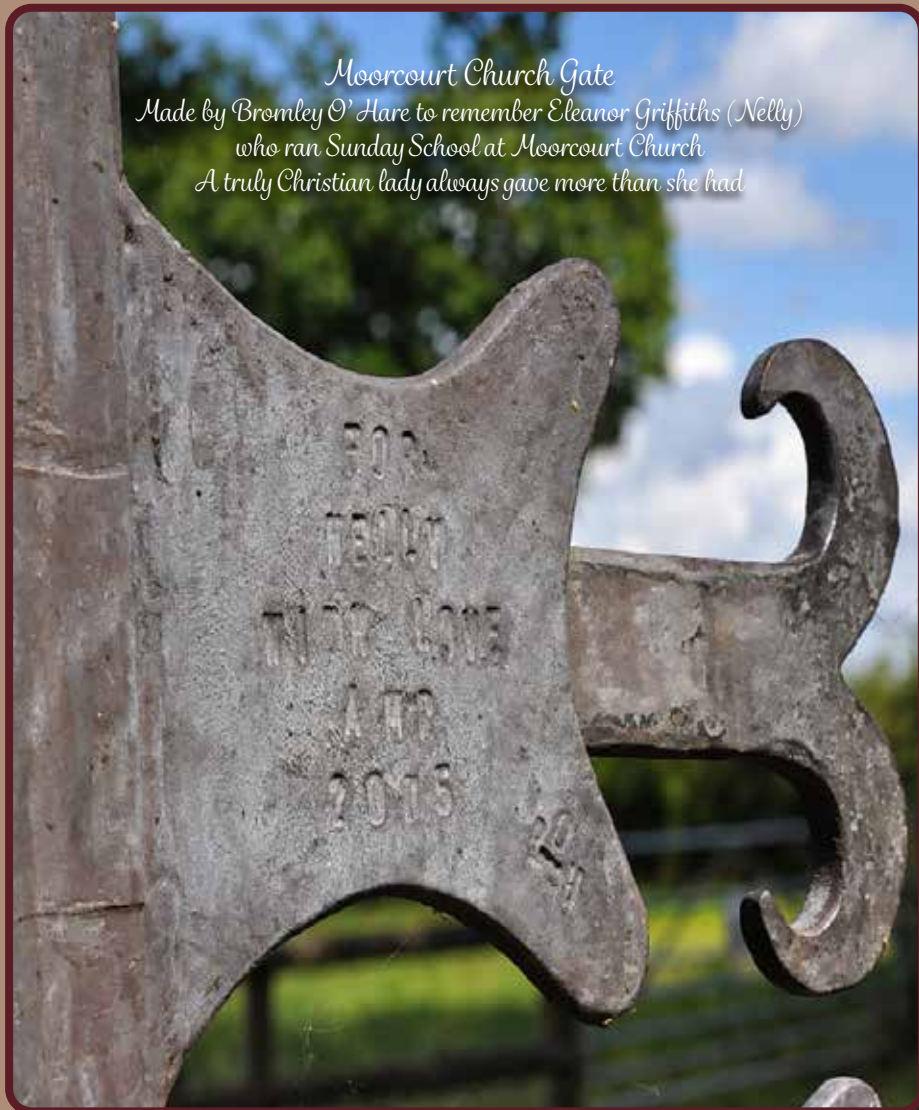
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OF PARISHES

messenger

October / Nov 2026



Service details and magazine content available on-line at
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COPY DATE

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

MESSENGER CONTACTS



Pembridge – Jacqui Thomas
Jacqui.pitfield@yahoo.co.uk

Lyonshall – Jane Burgoyne
burgoynejel@gmail.com

Byton – Margaret Edwards
margaret@edwardsbyton.co.uk

Staunton – Bex Hepworth
soavillagecommittee@gmail.com

Shobdon – Marcia Lynch-Staunton
marcialynchstaunton@gmail.com

Editor – jackedwardscontact@gmail.com

From The Registers

Pembridge Registers Marriage

Shannon Mobberley-Manns & Tiago De Sousa – 3rd August
Kerry Louise Vernalls & Connor Jordan Fletcher – 12th August
Caitlin Louise Barnett & Kyle Tyler Newman
– 17th September

Burial

Isobel Joyce Williams – Marston Court – 4th September

Service followed by Cremation
Valerie Cherrington – 25th August

Shobdon Registers

Marriage

Ruth Alice Frances Smith & Luke Uvedale Corbett
– 1st August

Lyonshall Registers

Funeral

Keith Lloyd Morgan – 27th August

Internment of Ashes

Barbara Lloyd – 5th September

Marriage

Giles Smith & Rose Taylor – 29th August

PARISH CONTACTS

RECTOR - Rev. Anna Branston

The Rectory, Manley Crescent, Pembridge HR6 9EB
07777 692458 abranston2002@gmail.com

CHURCH WARDENS

BYTON

Mr Simon Edwards 07779 455357
Mr Steve Weaver 07971 260518

PEMBRIDGE

Mrs Jacqui Thomas 01544 388471
Mrs Gill Smith 01544 388441

CHURCH CONTACTS

LYONSHALL

Mrs Liz Avery 01544 340409

SHOBDON

Rev Anna Branston 07777 692458

STAUNTON-ON-ARROW

Mr Clive Edwards 07980 337508

Rector's Letter

Dear Friends,

I don't think any of us will forget this summer's weather in a hurry. After a spring when the rain simply stopped coming, we watched fields turn to dust, streams shrink to a trickle, and the hills around us catch fire. For those whose living depends on the land, this has been one of the hardest harvests in living memory. One farmer said it has been worse than Foot and Mouth in 2001. Many farmers have been feeding winter fodder to their animals through the growing season, and the corn harvest has come in at barely half of what it should be. Behind the statistics are real people with real problems: families who work long hours in all weathers, who care for their animals with devotion, and who feed us all.

So, this Harvest, I don't want us to pretend things are not difficult. The Bible is honest about years like this one, and so should we be. Our thanksgiving this year is not measured by abundance, but by faithfulness: the faithfulness of God, who promises that "seedtime and harvest shall not cease" for as long as the earth endures - and the faithfulness of our farmers and food producers, who keep going through drought, disease and hardship so that the rest of us can eat.

Which means the rest of us have a part to play too. Please support our local farmers and producers - use the farm shops, the village shops, the butchers and dairies that sell what our own countryside grows. Say thank you to a farming family; keep them in your prayers.

And Harvest Festival is for everyone. You do not have to be a regular churchgoer, or sure about what you believe, just come and show support for our farmers. Come and give thanks, and sing the old hymns and share a lunch together afterwards. The services are on the service schedule on the back.

You will be most welcome at all of them.

Every blessing.

*Anna Branston – Rector
Arrowvale Group of Parishes*

Prayers for our farming community

In Times of Distress in our Farming Community

Creator God,
in times of uncertainty and fear,
help us to be aware of those who really care for us as people,
our families and friends and many others.

As we search for answers to our dilemmas, grant a spirit of cooperation and trust.

To the officials and administrators, give genuine sensitivity and wisdom,
to act swiftly and with compassion to those most needy.

As we unravel the mistakes, may we learn the lessons, whatever they may be.

Above all, as we seek to support each other through this time,
may we simply rediscover how precious is our dependence on each other.
Amen.

by The Arthur Rank Centre

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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- Pembridge HSBC - 40.28.13 Acc. 71305085
- Staunton Lloyds - 30.94.99 Acc. 00114439
- Shobdon Santander - 09.01.52 Acc. 54109705
- Byton Lloyds - 30.94.99 Acc. 00509867

**Should you wish to pay by cheque,
please contact The Rector for advice.**

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.

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

There is very little more stressful than disputes with the neighbours. Living next to someone who is obstructive, aggressive or socially unpleasant can feel like a violation from which there is nowhere to escape. My sister had cause for a free and frank exchange of views with one of the neighbours at the bottom of my mother's garden last year here in France. He knocked on my mother's door unannounced to say he had raised a formal complaint with the local town hall about plants overhanging his garden. All he needed to do was ask nicely and she would have been happy to sort it out. His approach left a nasty taste in the mouth. He seemed to go straight to punitive justice rather than the gentler reparative kind where errors are pointed out and willingly remedied.

We can read the prophetic writings of the Old Testament as portraying a God acting in a similar way to the neighbour: out of relationship, in a very bad mood, and reaching for punitive justice at every turn. Even great theologians have found them difficult to understand. Martin Luther said (and I paraphrase), "The prophets have an odd way of talking, like people who instead of proceeding in an orderly manner, ramble off from one thing to the next so that you cannot make head nor tail of them or see what they are getting at!" In part, this is explicable because they often spoke poetically, but as other scholars have said, the prophets give us an insight into the divine pathos. The God of the Bible feels as well as acts. Human beings are not biological computers making decisions on the basis of cold logic like Mr. Spock from Star Trek. Many of the decisions we make are quite irrational. Even rational decisions require an emotional driver if they are to be more than vague aspiration. As creatures made in the image of God, our own feelings are analogous to his, albeit much more selfishly driven and sometimes capricious.

Lest we slip into the heresy that sees the God portrayed in the Old and New Testaments as very different, we should see Jesus had an emotional life. He wept bitterly at the grave of Lazarus his friend. He denounced religious leaders whose practices kept people God loved from access to grace. He was especially angry at injustice and the accumulation of wealth at the expense of the poor. He was visibly upset

by the betrayal of those closest to him. Like the

God of the prophets, he had a concern for the orphan, the widow, the poor, and the refugee. His emotional responses were in each case appropriate and proportionate to the issue being addressed. There was never a hint at being grumpy or hangry or lashing out when hurt at being slighted. There was no emotional response driven by a spirit of entitlement.

Jesus gives us a truer picture of the emotion that lies behind the words of God in the prophetic writings. They are addressed to Israel, His covenant partner. The most exasperated and severe come at the end of long periods of moral decline when previous prophets have given dire warnings of consequences to a continued course of action. The previous warnings elicited no response. The word wrath occurs frequently, but it's not petulant anger. It's a concept describing God's settled displeasure against evil and injustice.

If the prophetic words are emotionally appropriate then it should be no surprise that they shift dramatically when the circumstances of those addressed have changed. The end of Isaiah written to the Israelites in exile is very different to the beginning when the mood is still one of dire warning. Once the predicted consequences have come about, God turns to comfort and a look to the future.

These words are delivered to a particular time, context and people. But that doesn't mean the themes and insights have no relevance to contemporary living. We can become so lost in our own little world that we become oblivious to the wider needs around us. There are systemic injustices in our culture around race, the environment and the economy that we easily ignore because they don't impinge on our own comfortable little world. Sometimes God needs to shout to wake us up to our responsibilities. The search for comfort can be as powerful an idolatry as the gods that led the Israelites astray. When we come across these severe writings, we would be better not just to write them off as ramblings for another time, but to ask where is this challenging me?

Hopefully and prayerfully, we will act accordingly.

Richard



Eco-Church – What is it?

Eco-Church is an award scheme to encourage and equip churches to care for creation. The Church of England has five Marks of Mission, one of which is “To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth”, so caring for creation is central to the life of our church communities.

The Eco-Church scheme is run by environmental charity A Rocha UK. Churches undertake a self-assessment audit that covers five areas:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings and energy
- Land and nature
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

Depending on the results of their audit a church is awarded bronze, silver or gold. In Hereford Diocese there are so far no churches or church buildings with gold but 20 have silver, including Hereford Cathedral and nearby St. Michael and All Angels, Kingsland and 23 more have bronze.

Churches use the results of their audit to consider how to develop their care for creation and to improve their score and achieve the next award level. It is an ongoing journey and activities and actions have to be sustained, but there is lots of advice and support through A Rocha, and it can be a very constructive and rewarding experience.

It isn't all about wild churchyards or solar panels; a large proportion of the audit looks at how a church community engages with global events and local environmental issues, such as the impact of drought and flooding on our farmers and rivers.

St. Mary's Pembridge is embarking on this Eco-Church journey and our initial audit gives us a tentative bronze overall, with silver in 'Worship and Teaching' but more clarification needed on some of the 'Buildings and energy' questions.

One action we have committed to as part of 'Community and Global Engagement' is to communicate what we are doing: to share ideas, raise awareness and encourage others to engage. This, therefore, is the first of a series of articles about Eco-Church and creation care.

If any other churches in the Arrowvale benefice would be interested in Eco-Church we would be happy to help you get started.

Esther and Emma



MU Arrowvale Branch Report

On the fourth Tuesday in July Arrowvale MU members met at the Watermill Garden cafe. It was a lovely day and they had arranged a long table for us so that we could enjoy an informal meeting and a lovely lunch.

Our August meeting took place at Sarah's house. We began with prayer, including a prayer for peace based on the words of St Augustine of Hippo which we often use. Our discussions were around the theme of "Faith", and our first references were the writings of St Paul. From his first letter to the Romans, we took the phrase "the righteous will live by faith", and from his third letter to the Colossians we considered this quotation: "Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all."

The faith of Meister Eckhart, who lived from 1260 to 1328, led him to declare that God was present in every soul. This medieval theologian and philosopher was a Catholic priest and member of the Dominican order of monks. His teachings were seen by the Catholic hierarchy as approaching "Pantheism" and he was accused of heresy. Today he is viewed as a Christian Mystic. Charles Kingsley expressed similar ideas in the hymn "Teach me my God and King, in all things Thee to see." We also thought about a quote from John Donne, the poet and theologian. In his fifth sermon he wrote that he believed doubts about faith made you enquire further.

There were two reports from Sarah:

1) The special Celebratory Service at Colwall

Colwall was closely connected to Mary Sumner, who founded the Mothers' Union. From the age of four she lived on an Estate nearby and was married at Colwall Church on July 26th 1848, when she was nearly twenty. Her husband had trained as an Anglican Priest and became Rector of Old Arlesford, Hampshire, three years later. The birth of her first child made her very aware of the responsibilities of motherhood, and when her family were grown up and she became a grandparent, she began a fellowship of Christian mothers in the parish. Ten years later the Mothers' Union movement started to grow and spread beyond the Winchester Diocese.

To celebrate 150 years there were 84 members of the Mothers' Union at a special service at Colwall Church on the 9th of August. MU branches processed with their banners at the start for them to receive a blessing. The address reminded members of the present day work of the MU, trying to stop modern day slavery and domestic abuse, working in prisons, and providing holiday breaks for families in desperate need. Sarah represented Arrowvale at this service.

2) Arrowvale MU celebrating at Pembridge

We learnt about our own preparations for celebrating this 150th anniversary. On the 20th of September the Communion service at Pembridge will be led by representatives of our own MU for the readings and the address. The Rector, Revd Anna, will then preside over the Communion part of the Eucharist. Our September meeting will be Communion at Bearwood Chapel on Tuesday the 22nd of September. The meeting ended with The Grace and was followed by tea.

For information, please contact our Leader, Sarah Westaby.
Email: [sfwestaby@gmail.com](mailto:sfewestaby@gmail.com) or 07711556497
Jenny Repath, Secretary



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 October 9th and Friday the 13th of November.

Fundraising news...

Our Coffee Mornings continue to be very generously supported. We raised £400 in August and were delighted to sponsor Ray Richards entering the Great North Run, raising funds for Anthony Nolan. September was our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning, and donations were amazing as always, raising £510 for Macmillan Cancer Support. 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.

Harvest Festival

This service will be held in Lyonshall church on October 11th at 11:00 am. The service will be followed by Harvest Lunch at the Memorial Hall at 12:30pm. Tickets £15. Everyone is welcome to come to enjoy good food and fellowship with us.

Remembrance Sunday Service

Please join us on Sunday November 8th for our annual Service of Remembrance. The Roll of Honour will be read just before the two minutes silence at 11:00am followed by the service.

Christmas Dates for your diaries:

Christmas Concert – 9th of December at 7pm.

We are pleased to welcome Titley Ladies Choir back to Lyonshall church this Christmas time for an evening of Christmas music.

There will be mulled wine and canapes during the interval and a raffle for a Christmas hamper. Tickets £10. Date: Wednesday 9th december.

Christmas Services

The Carol Service is on Sunday the 20th of December in church at 6:00pm with mulled wine and mince pies.

Christmas Eve Holy Communion will be at 9:30pm.

Christmas Morning Service will be at 10:00 am.

Please come along and join us for all or any of the above. You will be most welcome.

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SHOBDON NEWS

Monthly Coffee Mornings

Please join us on the first Wednesday of each month for our Shobdon Coffee Morning! Enjoy hot beverages and a catch up with locals over coffee and cake, or tea and biscuits as the days start to get a little colder!

Thank you!

The PCC would like to thank everyone for the ongoing work in the cemetery. It is looking wonderful. In particular, thank you Bill Stokes, who has set up, galvanised and organised the work.

BYTON NEWS

August Service

Thanks to Nick for leading the 'Crossing the River' service and for the people who took part. Thanks also to the PCC members who provided the tea that followed.

Harvest Festival

This will take place in the church at 11am on Sunday November 1st. Rev Alan Bolton has kindly agreed to take the service. Further details of a lunch will be available nearer the time.

STAUNTON NEWS

Staunton on Arrow WI

In August, on the eve of the partial eclipse of the sun, some of us ventured out onto the tump to get a glimpse of the spectacle, before returning to the village hall in time for Ruth Stott our speaker to start her presentation. This was on 'The National Survey of Health and Development' a scheme she has been involved with since her birth in 1946 when the survey was started.

Developed to investigate the reasons behind the low birth rate at the time it also provided information for use in the design of the all-new NHS. Our September meeting—due to a last-minute cancellation—was a very amusing games night where some of the members showed a very competitive spirit!

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
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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 12pm. 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, and have raised money for lots of different causes. We have recently raised money for some fantastic causes including £111 for FND Hope, a charity supporting people impacted by Functional Neurological Disorder.

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

Staunton On Arrow Supper Quiz Night

Date: Friday 2nd of October 2026 at 7:30pm

Teams: 4 people per team (£7.50/person)

Food: Beef Chilli Con Carne or a veg option.

Join us at the Staunton on Arrow Village Hall for an evening of fun, trivia, and friendly competition at our Quiz Night. Gather your team of four and put your knowledge to the test across a range of topics.

A tasty chilli con carne beef or veg option will be served to keep you fuelled throughout the night. Coffee and tea will also be available.

Prizes for the winning team and a great atmosphere guaranteed.

Christmas Tree Light switch on

Join us at the Village Hall from 6:30pm on Sunday the 6th of December for our Christmas tree light switch on. It is a wonderful evening filled with food, drink and good company to see in the start of the festive period.

Our Christmas Tree sale

At the end of November / start of December we will be holding our annual Christmas tree sale from the Village Hall. We order them from a local provider allowing us to sell high-quality trees at a reduced price.

Keep an eye out on our Facebook page, or in our Village WhatsApp group for when to order and sale date.

Keep up to Date with Events in the Village

Join our Facebook page group - Staunton on Arrow Village Hall or come along to a coffee spot and speak to one of the organisers to join our Village WhatsApp group.



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PEMBRIDGE NEWS



Woodcock Fayre

A warm welcome to our Annual Woodcock Craft Fayre which is taking place in St Mary's Church, Pembridge (HR6 9EA) on Saturday the 21st of November between 10am and 4pm.

Join us in the beautiful surroundings of our ancient church where you can purchase an array of products directly from over 30 local independent crafters.

Why not shop sustainably for your Christmas gifts?

You'll also have a chance to try your luck at the Raffle!

Refreshments will be available. We will be serving tea and coffee with cake throughout the day.

Why not come at lunchtime and enjoy some delicious homemade soup?

All fundraising proceeds will go to Pembridge Church.

During the Middle Ages, the Woodcock Fayre was a hiring fair held in November in Pembridge Market Hall and was an important place for agricultural labourers across the county to seek work from landowners.

This practice carried on through the 19th and into the 20th Century and only ceased after The First World War. Our modern-day Woodcock Fayre was reintroduced in 2016 and has grown since then.

It is an opportunity to showcase the amazing wealth of crafts and crafts people in our local area, together with the opportunity to trade – the foundation of our village of Pembridge.

**Woodcock
Craft Fayre**
Saturday, 21st November
10am to 4pm
Pembridge Church

Join us in the beautiful surroundings of
our ancient church where you can purchase
an array of products directly from
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Proceeds to Pembridge Church

Joyce Williams Marston Court, Pembridge

On Friday the 4th of September, Pembridge Church overflowed with people from all walks of life, coming to pay their respects and a final goodbye to Joyce. The church was decorated by her daughter Jo to acknowledge Joyce's love of flowers, farming and baking.

Joyce was born at Marston Court, went to Pembridge School and later Brampton Bryan School for Girls before returning home to work in the farm. She joined Kington Young Farmer's Club during its heyday as the top club in the county. As a member she enjoyed public speaking, debating and judging and finding her lifelong passion in floral art and baking.

Joyce was a very generous person; anyone who was having a difficult time would be visited regularly with a cake or a flower arrangement. Her floral interest took her into gardening and she became a keen plantswoman with borders brimming with colour.

She was a member of the Pembridge Show Committee for many years and eventually became President. Joyce organised numerous fund-raising events for the church, especially church fetes, where the cake stall was always loaded with her various bakes. She was proud to have worked on organising flower festivals to help church funds.

Her passing leaves a huge void in the lives of her family and numerous friends.

R.I.P Joyce

Strawberry Fayre – 1st August

Another successful day, raising nearly £1500 towards church funds. Many thanks to all who attended, the helpers, the entertainers, the marquee erectors and anyone who helped in anyway. As one of our main fundraisers we appreciate all the support we are given to enable this to go ahead.

Open Gardens at Westonbury Water Gardens - 6th September

Thank you to Mark & Debbie Constable for opening their gardens, with proceeds going to Pembridge Church. Also thank you to those of you who visited the gardens on this day. It is a lovely place to visit.

Annual Autumn Supper – Saturday 24th October

Please join us once again for our Autumn Supper on Saturday 24th of October at Pembridge Parish Hall at 6:45pm for 7pm. You will be served a delicious hot supper before enjoying musical entertainment from Andy Davies, singing his own Harvest songs. Andy wrote the music and words for the wonderful Pembridge Tapestries songs.

Tickets are £15, with booking essential for catering purposes.

Bookings available at Ye Olde Steppes or at Bloom and Grind or with Gill (01544 388441 ianandgillian@gmail.com) or Meryl (01544329760 merylgriffith@gmail.com)

Date for the Diary..

**Love 2 Sing
Christmas Concert
- 19th December
Pembridge Church**

Coffee Morning

Everyone Welcome



Saturday 17th October
Saturday 21st November
10.30am
in Pembridge Parish Hall

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A Smallholders Life & Times

The trilling of robins in the blackberry laden hedges is a welcome sound after a long silent summer. I am glad that my scorched lawn and semi-withered plants have been transformed back to life after the recent spell of rain, and hopefully the worry about wildfires has now gone.



I am back in action, after deciding that it was just too hot to do much of anything apart from the necessary! However, some of my garden crops loved the hot weather. I have counted fourteen butternut squash in the polytunnel, plus an abundant amount of tomatoes ready to go in the freezer.

Outside I am just about keeping up with picking the courgettes; there were lots of onions and beetroot. We picked the eating apples before the sheep ate them but my runner beans did not thrive probably—from lack of water. For the winter months I am looking forward to picking two types of kale, leeks, and swiss chard, and making soup with the tomatoes, courgettes, and squash.

I recently attended an interesting talk from a BHS representative on bridleways or the lack of off-road riding in our lovely county. Locally there is only the Bearwood byway to safely ride along, instead of on the hazardous narrow lanes. How lovely it would be if local landowners were to allow horse riders on field margins, perhaps for a small fee, or maybe footpaths could be adapted with horse friendly gates, just a dream perhaps for the future.

I am going to be a spectator at Kington show tomorrow after taking horses and produce for several years. It will be interesting to have a wander around, catch up with friends, and enjoy everything that is on offer! Kington is usually the last Agricultural show of the season marking the beginning of Autumn; wishing everyone a good and abundant harvest!



Marion Williams

Email: marion.williams06@yahoo.com



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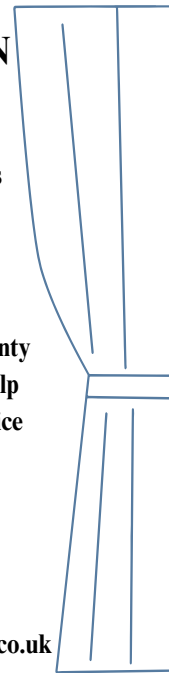
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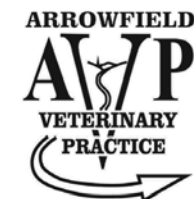


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September 27th	Shobdon Matins	9:30
Week 4	Moorcourt Holy Communion	9:30
	Lyonsall Holy Communion	11:00
October 1st	Moorcourt Prayer Group	9:30
	(Quiet Prayer)	10:00
October 4th	Byton Holy Communion	9:30
	Pembridge Holy Communion	11:00
	Staunton EP	6:00
October 11th	Lyonsall Harvest HC	11:00
	(Followed by lunch at the Memorial Hall)	
	Shobdon Harvest Festival	11:00
	Pembridge 3Cs	11:00
October 18th	Pembridge Harvest HC	11:00
	(Followed by Soup & Roll Harvest Lunch)	
October 25th	Shobdon Matins	9:30
	Lyonsall Holy Communion	11:00
November 1st	Byton Harvest	11:00
	Pembridge Holy Communion	11:00
November 5th	Moorcourt Prayer Group	9:30
	(Quiet Prayer)	10:00
November 8th	Staunton	9:30
Remembrance Sunday	Pembridge	10:45
	Lyonsall	11:00
November 15th	Pembridge Holy Communion	11:00
November 22nd	Moorcourt Holy Communion	9:30
	Lyonsall Holy Communion	11:00
November 29th	Moorcourt Holy Communion	11:00
	Shobdon Service of Lights	2:30
December 3rd	Moorcourt Prayer Group	9:30
	(Quiet Prayer)	10:00
December 6th	Byton Holy Communion.	9:30
	Staunton EP	6:00

While offering reasonable guidance, this schedule is subject to change and clergy availability. Please check the Pewsheets and Arrowvale Churches website (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

Service details and magazine content available on-line at

www.arrowvalechurches.org.uk