

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

Six thriving and growing churches, making Christ known in our area of Milton Keynes.



June 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to the June edition of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Newsletter, (also see website at www.stantonbury.net).

Pastoral Messages

‘Pilgrimage’

‘Stand at the crossroads and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies, and walk in it, and find rest for your souls’

Jeremiah 6 v 16

We are looking forward now to a renewal of fellowship in the SEP, as we set out on a pilgrimage to journey around all 6 of our Partnership churches on a single day this summer – **Saturday 4th July**. I’m told that this has been a tradition in our Partnership, and I’m delighted we are revisiting it.



The idea of Pilgrimage is one that is held by all of the Abrahamic Religions, and indeed dates back as far as God’s call upon Abraham in Genesis 12; where he is told to leave his own country and journey to the new land God would show him. The people of Israel God established through him continued to own the journeying motif, through the Exodus and then particularly when the Temple became a reality in Jerusalem. Three times each year every Jewish male was required to be in Jerusalem for the festivals of Passover, Shavuot and Tabernacles. This was not necessarily followed as Christ came; who now broadens God’s presence and blessing ‘to all people, everywhere’. The New Testament then grew an understanding that Pilgrimage became a vision of our whole human lives on earth, that lead us through Christ, back to God. There is no doubt however that since then, and with the founding church fathers settling all across Europe – many additional holy pilgrimages to sacred sites have now gained traction, the routes marked and many pilgrims – Christian or not - travel each year. The official Catholic Church Pilgrimage website lists 206 official European pilgrim trails.

Our own Pilgrimage is not so prestigious, however I'm excited that we will have the chance to journey together around our 6 SEP Churches. This will not so much be about witness and mission; but to encourage and motivate each other, to champion the links between us and to see our unity together to serve our community. Even if you can only visit one or two of the churches on the day, I hope you will join us 'in pilgrimage'.

With every blessing

Rev Phil Dunning
SEP Baptist Minister and Vision Enabler
Acting Ministry team Leader

Holy Spirit: Flame for the Church, Fire for the World

At the Pentecost Sunday we recently marked one of the great feasts of the Church, the day when we remember the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples in Jerusalem. In the Acts of the Apostles, fearful followers become courageous witnesses; a waiting room becomes a sending place; and a small band of believers becomes the beginning of a worldwide Church.

The Church describes Pentecost as the moment the disciples were empowered to begin the work of making disciples of all nations, while as a Church we mark as the feast that celebrates the Spirit's gift and the Church's mission to the nations. For us all, Pentecost is not merely a memory of something long ago. It is a living reminder that the same Holy Spirit is given to the Church today, to renew our worship, strengthen our fellowship, and send us out in Christ's name, daily into our world.

Pentecost also teaches us something vital about church growth. When Peter, freshly emboldened by the Spirit, preached Christ crucified and risen, about three thousand people were added to the believers. Growth came not through clever presentation or human confidence, but through prayer, proclamation, and the gracious work of God. We note that Pentecost joins the gathered and scattered life of the Church: believers are filled together, then sent into the streets. That is still the pattern for us. Healthy church growth is never only about numbers, but numbers do matter because every number is a person loved by God.

A growing church is a church alive in prayer, rooted in Scripture, joyful in worship, and open-hearted in welcome. When the Holy Spirit is at work, congregations become communities where faith is nurtured, strangers are received, and Christ is made visible. Yet Pentecost is not only about what happens in church buildings. It is equally about what happens when Christian people go back into homes, workplaces, schools, and neighbourhoods. The Spirit was given to all the disciples, not only to a chosen few, and therefore witness belongs to every Christian believer. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is for "out there" as well as "in here," giving ordinary Christians boldness and clarity in daily life. Our witness may be public or quiet, verbal or practical: a conversation about faith, an act of kindness, a promise to pray, a refusal to join in bitterness, an invitation to church, or a steady example of hope in anxious times. Evangelism is not forcing religion upon others; it is bearing honest, gracious witness to Jesus Christ, trusting the Spirit to open hearts.

Hence during this post Pentecost period, the Church is called both to prayer and to courage. We pray for renewal in our parishes, for growth that is deep as well as broad, and for the confidence to speak of Christ in a hesitant age. We pray, too, for ourselves: that the Holy Spirit would set our hearts on fire with the love of God and make us faithful witnesses in the places where he has put us.

The world does not need a Church that is merely busy; it needs a Church that is Spirit-filled. And our communities do not need Christians who hide their faith; they need disciples whose words and lives point to Jesus.

Come, Holy Spirit, and renew your Church. Come, Holy Spirit, and send us out. Amen.

Sam

Revd Dr Sam Muthuveloe -Minister

Cross & Stable Church Downs Barn and St Mary's Church Willen

Partnership wide events

Important AGM News

THE SEP AGM which was due to take place on 21st May had to be adjourned because the meeting was not quorate (a minimum of 56 members was required and only 44 attended). It will be reconvened on **Thursday 18th June at 7:30 pm at Christ Church.**

Partnership-wide services

Our next SEP-wide service will be held on at 11am on 30th August at 11am at Christ Church Stantonbury.

The annual SEP Tree Cathedral Service will be held at 3pm at the end of Heritage Week (20th September).

SEP MED Group – ‘Mission, Evangelism, Discipleship’

The latest notes for the last MED group meeting are available in all our churches and from Phil (please contact directly), and reflect the themes we discussed and prayed for on 18th May

These included:

- ‘Partnership Pilgrimage’ - Summer 2026
- Bishop Tony Porter, and evangelism
- ‘Being with’ - new discipleship course
- Summer initiatives

Next meeting - Monday 14th September – St James Church, New Bradwell.

LIVE and online.

‘Being With’ Course (Save the Dates)

We now have dates confirmed for the beginning of the new SEP Discipleship course, using the resources provided by friends from St Martin in the Fields Church.



It is very much designed to meet and greet enquirers and new converts to Christ, offering a chance to think and ponder the presence of God in the world, and call of Christ upon their lives. Initially the course will be offered ‘online’ only - with evening meetings on zoom at 7.30pm. Led by Peterson and Phil.

Thursday 17th September

Thursday 24th September

Thursday 1st October

Thursday 8th October

If you are interested in joining the course please contact our Administrator: phone 01908 382458, email sburyepadm@gmail.com .

Partnership News

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Council and new Partnership Leadership Team (PLT)

The last SEP Council meeting was held on 26th March 2026. The Council is being replaced by a new expanded Partnership Leadership Team. The new PLT will be Chaired by the Team Leader with an elected Co-Chair. The membership of the new PLT will consist of Church Wardens, unless a Church’s Leadership Team (CLT) nominates another member of their congregation to represent them in place of their Church Warden(s).

Following the AGM, the leadership cyclical structure will be; Trustees, Partnership Leadership Team, Congregation Leadership Team, Congregation Meetings. This much simpler format, with less repetitive meetings, will hopefully encourage more members of our partnership to join in the fun.

Administrative Support to the SEP

Helen’s SEP admin. phone number is 01908382458 and her email is sburyepadm@gmail.com. Our hope is that Helen will remove some of the burden of administrative tasks from the shoulders of our ministers and officers. We can all help with that **by contacting Helen with any admin or bookings, in the first instance, instead of our ministers and officers.** Helen will then feedback any bookings to our

Team Leader, Revd. Phil Dunning, who will be able to decide who best to Minister any service or office.

Organising Our Ministry

Thank you to Revd. Phil, who is determining what support we can obtain for our June to August 2026 worship rota for the whole partnership with wider support from the Anglican, Baptist and Methodist denominations, so he can ensure a fair coverage of worship and pastoral care across our six congregations. Phil is our Team Minister and determines worship in our Partnership. Please discuss worship needs at your regular Congregation meetings and feedback to Helen Eaton. Phil and Helen, our Admin Assistant, will contact our ecumenical leaders to help where needed. Only ministers on our list of licenced and safeguard trained ministers are able to lead our six congregations. Thank you to those many ministers who have sent me their details and would the few who have still to send them please help by doing so asap.

Drawing the Partnership Together & Partnership Events

Please support our drive to bring the six congregations closer together through social events over the year. Keep a check on your congregation news and visit the SEP website or Facebook page to keep up to date. Maybe start a WhatsApp group for your congregation members.

World Baking Day 2026 was Sunday 17 May and raised £40. Thank you to those who helped and this money will go towards SEP funds. Hopefully, next year we can tie Christian Aid Week and World Baking Day together. See photos on SEP Facebook group.

Other news from the SEP

We are pleased to report that the Vicarage in Great Linford has now been vacated and Peterson, Helen and their girls will move in on the 10th July.

Sharron,
Lay Chair of SEP CIO Council
Secchair22@gmail.com

Website EVENTS Diary

An Events Diary is now live on the Website. However, it's looking fairly sparse at the moment, so **please let Helen know of any events you wish to publicise**. For example. It would help our congregation members who maybe can't make the Bible Study group closest to them, but would like to go to one on a day or time better suited to them, if they could check on the website to see when and where other groups are being held.

External Ecumenical News

News from the Oxford Diocese

Bishop Steven celebrates final Ascension Day

As Bishop Steven prepares to lay down his ministry as Bishop of Oxford later this year, this year's Ascension Day carries special significance.

Today, marking his final celebration of Jesus' ascension into heaven as Bishop of Oxford, Bishop Steven will attend the Annual Meeting of the College of Canons at Christ Church in Oxford.

Reflecting on what Ascension Day means, Bishop Steven said: "It is not only about Christ's departure, but about hope, calling and the continuing presence of God in the life of the Church and the world.

"Ascension reminds us that Christ reigns not far away from the world, but over the whole of creation in love. It calls the Church to lift its eyes beyond fear and anxiety and to live with hope, courage and compassion."

Bishop Steven's retirement – collection and links

It is now possible to contribute to a collection for a special gift for Bishop Steven to mark his retirement this summer.

If you wish to contribute to Bishop Steven's collection then please use the following account details, remembering to use the reference 'Bishop Gift':

- *Bank: NatWest*
- *Account name: Oxford Diocesan Finance Fund*
- *Sort code: 60-03-57*
- *Account number: 78826411*
- *Reference: Bishop Gift*

People wishing to leave a message for Bishop Steven over the next few weeks can do so [on this page](#).

Bishop Steven's retirement will be marked at a ceremony at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford on 31 May, starting at 5pm. You can [livestream the service here](#).

News from the Regional Central Baptist Union

Children, Young People and Families

From the very beginning when God recognised that it wasn't good for any of us to be alone – family has featured and humans have connected with God both 1:1 and as family. It seems in our current 21st century context that the Spirit is drawing our attention again to the value and sacredness of family life (all shapes of family including single person families, with or without children families, any stage of life families) - and in particular to the benefits and life (and growth) that come from being part of a multi-generational family.

Family is spelled b-e-l-o-n-g-i-n-g. To flourish as a human being or to put it biblically, to live life in all its fullness, we need family. It's where we begin learning what being and keeping safe is all about. It's where we begin to understand the importance of boundaries and how to make our own and understand others'. It's where we discern our calling, our significant place in the world and how we can contribute. Our "lived with" family is vital in this but so is our church family.

How can we nurture faith in children and young people, so that they have space to explore, experience and experiment in their lives with God? How might we adults be changed as we let them loose!?



It's old news that in our context families are often 3 or 4 generations distant from hearing the good news of a Saviour who loves them and is for them. It seems that the Spirit may already be at work planting new (messy) congregations, opening up prayer spaces in schools and forming pastors' teams, drawing us into mentoring young people especially with the decimation of local youth services. Is this the refreshing and reviving that we have been praying for?! Where, how can we join in with God and

connect with children, young people and families today? One new initiative is our CYF Round Table. Also visit our dedicated links and resources for this area, and view our dedicated resource - [The CYF Round Table Toolkit for churches, Joining the dots between church, home and school.](#)

News from the United Reformed Church – Synod Team on Tour

The East Midlands Synod's staff and officers warmly invite you to drop into **Newport Pagnell United Reformed Church** on **Tuesday 30 June** to meet, chat and tell us about your hopes, dreams and anxieties for your church.

Following well received visits around the East Midlands last year, our Synod Team on Tour are commencing this year in Milton Keynes with two further events in other areas of the Synod during 2026. The idea is simple: we base ourselves in one local church for the day, so that anyone from any church within reach can pop along and say hello, without having to make an appointment or go to the Synod Office. On this occasion we are grateful to Newport Pagnell URC for generously playing host.

We hope it will provide an informal setting to hear what you've got to say: an opportunity to share stories and air questions, to exchange ideas and make connections. It's for absolutely everyone linked with the URC in the East Midlands, not just elders or ministers, and we don't stand on ceremony. Anyone who'd like a friendly chat will be

welcome: just drop in whenever it suits you between the hours of 2.30pm and 6.30pm. We'll have a good cup of tea or coffee waiting for you, a quality biscuit or two – and a ready ear. If you require a later appointment with a particular member of the team please email admin@urc5.org.uk

News from Churches Together in England

LoveRural Conference 2026 : An invite to the ecumenical National Rural Mission Conference taking place on 19 and 20 October

Are you passionate about making disciples in rural areas and love working together with others across denominations?

Then don't miss the LoveRural Conference taking place on 19 and 20 October 2026 at Yarnfield Park, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL.

At the conference, you'll be able to hear the key learnings of inspiring disciple-makers in twenty-first century rural mission, connect with mission agencies to share wisdom and encouragement, and be inspired by the stories of what God is doing in small settlements and areas of low population.

You can look forward to hearing about:

- cross-denominational and multigenerational ministry
- how small can be beautiful
- young people and families
- discoveries from church-planting and other new initiatives

This event is hosted by Churches Together in England and partners from Rural Missions, The Arthur Rank Centre, Rural Ministries, The Church of England and The Methodist Church.

Follow the LoveRural Conference on Facebook and on Instagram

For questions on the conference programme, contact Canon Sally

Gaze: sally@loverural.org.uk; or for bookings for Yarnfield contact Bob

Goody: bob@ruralmissions.org.uk

Download a flyer for the conference via this link: [Find out more and book your place.](#)

A happy and blessed Midsummer Day to you on 24 June Midsummer Day

The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (Midsummer Day)



Artemisia Gentileschi, *Nativity of Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1635, Museum of the Prado, Madrid.

Collect

Almighty God, by whose providence your servant John the Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of your Son our Savior by preaching repentance: Make us so to follow his teaching and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and, following his example, constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke

vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sharron,
Lay Chair of SEP CIO Council
Secchair22@gmail.com

Our Church Services and Events in June

Bradwell Church, St Lawrence

Sunday 7th at 10.30am

Led by Revd Phil Dunning

All-age Worship

Sunday 14th at 10.30am

Led by Revd J Boxwell

Morning Worship

Sunday 21st May at 10.30am

Led by Revd Steve Barnes

Morning Worship

Sunday 28th at 10.30am

Led by Revd Peterson Feital

Holy Communion



Most services are live streamed to You Tube. The You Tube link is @BradwellChurch MiltonKeynes. Simply go to You Tube, search for this and click the red live button just before the service begins.

Gardening Club is now active and meets on Wednesdays 10am to 12pm.

Bell Ringing practice every Wednesday at 19:45.

There is a **coffee morning** the first Saturday each month from 10am to 12pm.

Christ Church, Stantonbury

Sunday 7th at 10:30am **All Age Worship**

Led by Revds Jenny and John Boxwell

Sunday 14th at 10.30am **All Age Worship**

Led by Revd Phil Dunning

Sunday 21st at 10.30am **All Age Worship**

Led by Revd David Nash

Sunday 28th at 10.30am **Holy Communion**

Led by Revd Chris Howden



All our Sunday services are live-streamed to Christ Church's Facebook page, using the link below. You don't need to belong to Facebook in order to follow the service. Streaming starts from 10.25: <https://www.facebook.com/christchurchmk/>

We also have a Christ Church website at www.christchurchmk.org.uk which has the service details on it, and which is updated each week

Wednesday Morning Drop-In every week 10.00 – 11.30am. Meets at Church, refreshments and a quiz are available. All welcome.

Under 5's meet every Thursday in **Term time only** from 10:00 to 11:30 in the Hall. For more details, please contact Susan Gander on 01908 312162

Coffee and cake morning – 20th June 2026. On the 3rd Saturday of each month, we hold a coffee and cake morning this runs from 9.30 to 11.30, all donations received go to our coffee money charity. All are welcome to join us for a coffee and a chat.

Cross and Stable, Downs Barn

Sunday 7th at 11am **Signed Holy Communion**

Led by Revd Peter Green

Sunday 14th at 11am **Holy Communion**

Led by Revd Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 21st at 11am Holy Communion

Led by Revd Phil Dunning

Sunday 28th May at 10am **Family Breakfast Club**

(followed by a short Service of the Word for adults at 11am)

Led by Revd Sam Muthuveloe



Services are live-streamed on Zoom at
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85922248518?pwd=Vm4vd00wancwVnk52cCtqNm5tMWRZdz09> Meeting ID: 859 2224 8518 Passcode: 830413

Bell Ringing practice every Friday at 19:30.

Friday at 2:00 pm - Prayer time & Bible reflection on Zoom

This lasts around 45 mins - do join us from wherever you are on Zoom!
Please contact Sue Baines for the Link on suejbaines@gmail.com

Chatterbox MK every Wednesday from 10:30 to 12:30. All Welcome - tea - coffee - cakes - meet and chat. Come and meet others.

Please pray for the **Care Homes in Neath Hill & Downs Barn** as we conduct a Church Service and Holy Communion on **Sunday 24th at 3.00pm and 4.00pm** respectively. Remember the frail, elderly, the caring staff & the concerned families as we minister God's love and grace.

St. Andrews', Great Linford

Sunday 7th at 10am

Lay led service

Open Door

Wednesday 3rd 10am

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Holy Communion

Sunday 14th at 10am

Led by Revd Peterson Feital

Holy Communion

Sunday 21st at 10am

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Holy Communion

Sunday 28th at 10am

Led by Revd Charles Dixon

Holy Communion



Morning Services are live-streamed on Facebook using this link:

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

Bell Ringing practice every Tuesday at 19:30.

St Andrews 1st Wednesday Seminar Group

You would be most welcome to join us on the first Wednesday of each month and participate in the discussion, which usually starts at about 11am. Please email greatlinford@gmail.com if you would like information on the current study topic.

John Beazley.

5WAYS CAFÉ at St. Andrew's Church 11.00am to 1.00pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month.

Join us to enjoy good company, refreshments, a selection of board games, Pete on the piano and, for those wanting a bit of exercise, an accompanied walk in the Great Linford Manor Park is available on request. We also have free participation in the 'Coffee & Craft' sessions, with local artist Jane Charles, held on the 4th Tuesday of the month. All are welcome to 5Ways - we aim to be dementia friendly.

St. James', New Bradwell

Sunday 7th at 9.30am <i>Led by Revd Peterson Feital</i>	Holy Communion
Sunday 14th at 9.30am <i>Lay led</i>	Open Door
Sunday 21st at 9.30am <i>Led by Revd Peterson Feital</i>	Holy Communion
Sunday 28th at 9.30am <i>Led by Revd Kofi Tekyi-Ansah</i>	Holy Communion



Services are live-streamed most weeks to St James' Facebook page at [St James Church NB | Facebook](#)

Coffee morning: held every Saturday from 10:00 to 12:00 and Wednesday from 09:30 to 11:30.

Visit St James' website at www.stjamesnewbradwell.org.uk for more information.

St. Mary Magdalene, Willen

Sunday 7th at 9:30am <i>Led by Margaret Moakes, LLM</i>	All Age Morning Worship
Sunday 14th at 9:30am <i>Led by Revd. Dr. Sam Muthuveloe</i>	Holy Communion
Sunday 21st at 9:30am <i>Led by Revd Phil Dunning</i>	Holy Communion
Sunday 28th at 9:30am <i>Led by Revd Phil Dunning</i>	Holy Communion



The monthly communion service at **Oaktree Court**, Portland Drive will be at **2.15 pm on 4th June**. Anyone who would like to join us, would be welcome. Please contact Margaret Moakes.

T.T.T.T Concert (Third Tuesday at Twelve Thirty)

Come along to St Mary Magdalene Church Willen and be entertained by Webster & Fergyson on Tuesday June 16th, 12.30 - 1.15. Pop in during your lunch break walking the dog or just passing by, stay for a while or the whole 45 minutes. Complimentary cake and coffee. Donations to Church Restoration & Hooke Heritage Project.

Volunteer Gardening

The volunteer gardening group has started their weekly Saturday morning 10am-12pm work in the Garden of Remembrance. Please come along. No special skills needed. Please contact Sharron if you would like to join the Gardening Group WhatsApp.

News from the Partnership Green Champions

Eco Tip for June 2026

The Great Big Green Week 6th – 14th June



“Together for good, we can make our neighbourhoods better places to live, protect the natural world we love and show politicians and decision makers that people across the UK want positive change.”

The plans for churches in Milton Keynes so far include the following:

- **Friday 5th June** is World Environment Day and Churches Together in MK will be organising a prayer vigil in MK Rose at the World Environment Day pillar
- **Saturday 6th to Monday 15th June** there will be an Exhibition of Eco Crafts in the cloisters at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone between 11am- 6pm daily
- **Saturday 6th to Sunday 14th June** at Church of Christ the Cornerstone it is hoped to have a display of A4 posters outlining achievements made by Eco Churches in Milton Keynes.

- **Sunday 7th June** at 2.30 – 4.30pm Andy Atkins, Chief Executive of A Rocha, will be speaking at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone to mark 10 years of the Eco Church movement. **Sign up for free tickets here:**
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/mk-eco-church-network-78271722403>

Other local events are on this webpage: <https://www.transitiontownmk.org/gbgw26-events/>

This and future Newsletters

I hope that you have found this and previous newsletters interesting and useful. If there is anything else you think would make it better or find any glaring omissions, please let your congregation's newsletter editor, Sharron or me know.

The deadline for information to go into **July's** issue is **Wednesday 17th June**. This may be earlier than the deadline for previous Newsletters, but I'm a 'newbie' at compiling the newsletter and also have to juggle its production with my other admin duties. Please bear with me!

Helen

Helen Eaton
SEP Administrator
sburyepadm@gmail.com