

## Parish Directory

Vicar	Fr Darren A'Court fr.darrenacourt@gmail.com (Usual day off is Friday)	02393 070921
Churchwardens	Miss Stella Wansborough Mrs Ann Murray	02392 642386 07716 408239
Hon Assistant priest	Fr John Strain	07834647744
Organist / Choirmaster	Mr Hugh Darnley-Smith	07930925595
Safeguarding	Alison Threlkeld	07900082509
Hall Bookings	Valerie & Rosemary England email address: v.England-halls@outlook.com	07762524781
Magazine Treasurer	Mr Peter Garner	02392 812448

## Services

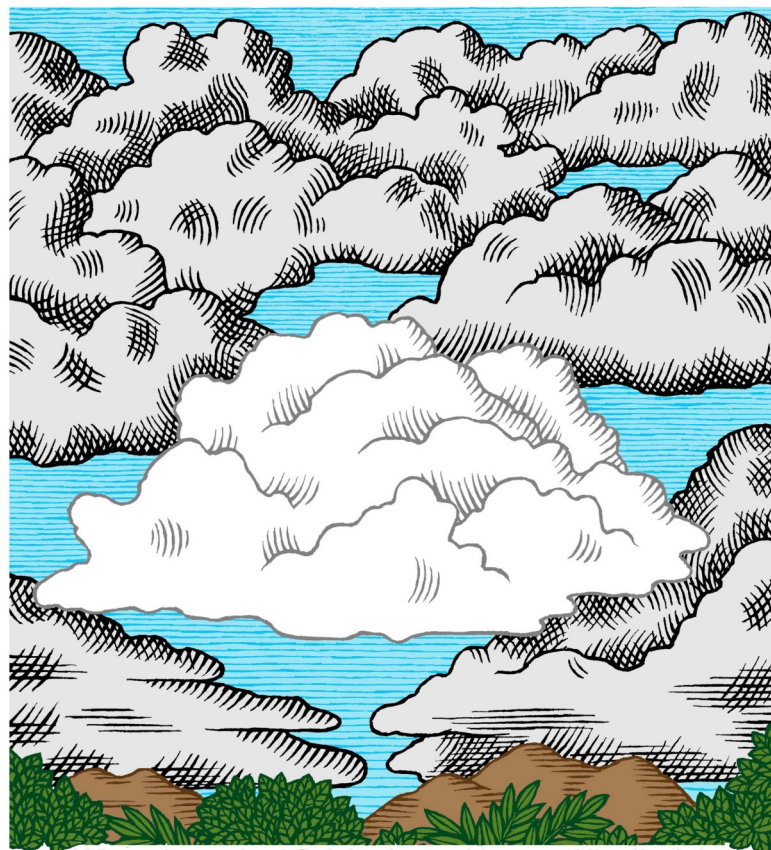
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Parish Mass 10:00 (church)</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Mass (said) 10:00 (church)</b>
<b>Online presence</b>	<a href="http://stjamesmilton.org.uk">http://stjamesmilton.org.uk</a> <a href="https://facebook.com/StJamesMiltonUK">https://facebook.com/StJamesMiltonUK</a>



St James'  
CHURCH

**MAY 2026**

**50p**



... When Jesus had finished speaking, as His disciples watched intently, He was taken up into heaven and a cloud hid Him from their sight. Acts 1:7-9

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Dear Friends

On 14 May the Church celebrates Ascension Day. Here at St James, there will be a Mass at 7pm that day to which we extend a warm welcome for everyone: I hope you will join us. Ascension Day marks Jesus' ascension into glory, after his resurrection from the dead on Easter Day. But Jesus' departure from his earthly life certainly does not signal God's departure from our world. At Pentecost we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit, God working within and among us to guide and sustain us. Moreover, the Incarnation, God taking human form in the birth of Jesus, shows us that God works through us as human beings. The sixteenth century Spanish nun and mystic, Sister Teresa d'Avila powerfully captured this in a well-known poem, often used as a prayer:

Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours. Amen.

During his time on earth, Jesus actively engaged in the stuff of human life, including illness and death, morality and yes, politics. He challenged corruption and the misuse of power. The Church is called to continue his ministry in the world. His Holiness Pope Leo XIV has recently spoken out about tyrannical leaders and the terror of war at a time of global conflict. Love finds expression in compassion and justice. Every community, global and local, shares the need to preserve and value human dignity for the good of us all.

A week before the Church celebrates Ascension Day, there will be elections for our local councillors. It is easy to become disillusioned with politics, especially at a national level, in the light of ongoing controversies. But politics is a complex enterprise and undoubtedly, at all levels, those who operate in that world must balance many competing demands while attempting to deliver improvements for the good of society. Personally, I don't envy them their task! Whatever their political affiliations, and whether or not they hold a faith, Christian or otherwise, all of our local candidates will be people of conviction and purpose. In their different ways, they will each have a vision of how best to serve their community and, I am sure,

will be dedicated to doing so using all of their God-given gifts. It honours their commitment to public service if we use our vote on 7 May. Whoever is elected, our local councillors will have taken on significant responsibilities in challenging times. May all that they do be for the common good.

Every blessing  
Fr Darren



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**Result of Draw No.639**  
drawn on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026

1 <sup>st</sup>	27	£15	Mrs Pauline Tallent
2 <sup>nd</sup>	3	£11	Mrs Sylvia Pearce
3 <sup>rd</sup>	172	£9	Mrs Betty Potter
4 <sup>th</sup>	6	£7	Mr Jeff Harvey

**Result of Draw No. 640**  
drawn on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026

1 <sup>st</sup>	183	£15	Mrs Ann Murray
2 <sup>nd</sup>	187	£11	Lorna Dore
3 <sup>rd</sup>	180	£9	Gail Wilkins
4 <sup>th</sup>	11	£7	Catriona Maton

**Result of Draw No. 641**  
drawn on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026

1 <sup>st</sup>	172	£15	Mrs Betty Potter
2 <sup>nd</sup>	150	£11	Mrs Valerie Lacey
3 <sup>rd</sup>	89	£9	Mrs Pat Wainwright
4 <sup>th</sup>	9	£7	Mrs Erica Peacock

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### You and a goldfish's attention span

How long can you concentrate on any one thing? According to the now infamous study by Microsoft (back in 2015), our digital lifestyles have had such a detrimental impact on our concentration levels that our average attention span has fallen to below that of a goldfish.

Humans now stay focused for just eight seconds, before being distracted by news alerts, social media and so on – while even a goldfish can concentrate for nine seconds.

And it is not just the endless stream of information that hits us, but the type of information that is so distracting. Violence and endless conflict can leave you distressed and unsettled. Medical experts recommend regular non-digital breaks such as a walk, a chat, or even just staring out the window.

Meanwhile, try these tips to calm your mind:

1. In the evening, reverse the settings on your device, so that you have white writing on a black background. This reduces the blue light that affects your brain's cyclic rhythm, disrupting your sleep/wake cycle.
2. Get moving. Exercise takes time, but it also sharpens your mind and increases your concentration. So, in the end you will get more done in less time.
3. Eat well. Avoid sugar and too much caffeine which make your mind busier.
4. Seek company. Anxiety levels rise after six hours, due to the changes in your brain hormones caused by social isolation. So, if you work from home, take your laptop to a coffee shop for an hour, or see a friend for coffee.
5. Fill the final half hour of your day with one simple task, rather than flitting from task to task.

## The Role of the PCC

What actually is the role of a church's Parochial Church Council (PCC)?

### Membership:

The PCC is a legal body (whose members are trustees) with membership made up of ex officio and elected members.

*Ex officio* - Incumbent, Churchwardens, other clergy holding the Bishop's licence, and any members of any Deanery, Diocesan or General Synod.

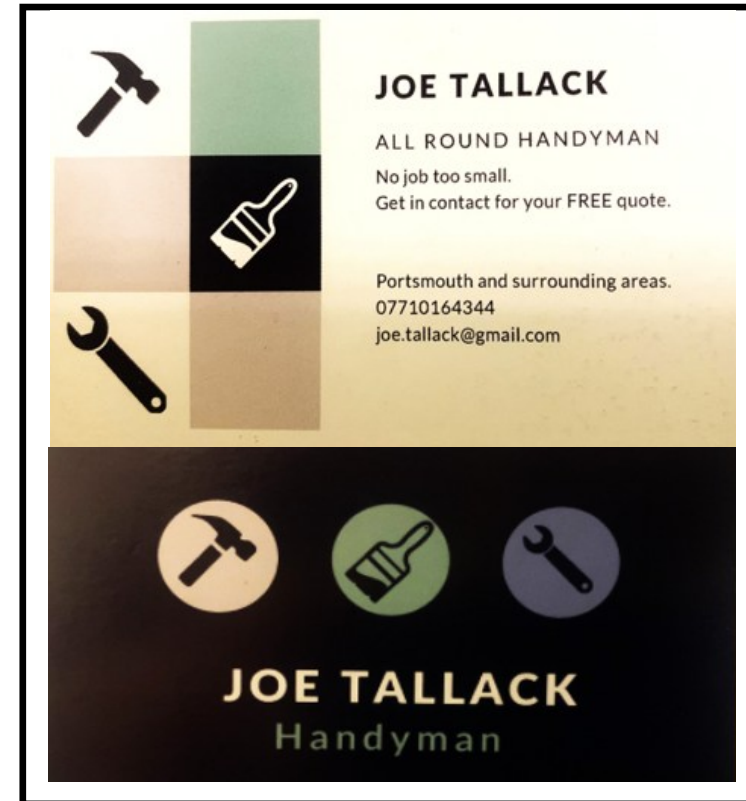
Readers are *ex officio*.

The Chairperson is the Incumbent; a lay person is appointed Vice-chair.

The Incumbent can vacate the chair to someone else only if s/he is present. If s/he is absent, the Vice-chair chairs the meeting.

The Quorum of a PCC meeting is one third of its members. The number of elected members must take into account the number on the Electoral Roll and is decided by the APCM.

- The Chairperson has the casting vote.
- The PCC must meet not less than four times a year.
- The PCC can co-opt a Secretary. The Treasurer must be appointed from among the members.
- The Independent Auditor cannot be appointed from among PCC members, but must be known to members.
- The Incumbent can convene a meeting at any time.
- The Standing Committee of the PCC has power to transact business between PCC meetings. It must consist of at least five members, made up as follows: *ex officio* Incumbent and Churchwardens plus two others appointed by PCC.



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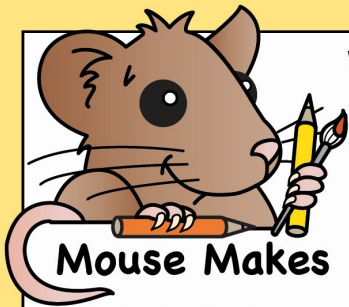
### IS EVERYBODY LISTENING

Eventually Rebecca approached the bishop she was tightly holding a mobile phone. She greeted the mornings service special cleric with a smile before speaking " I should like to apologise for the interruption which took place during the service" She continued " I listened to your homily and would like to say the Holy Spirit is encountered in unexpected ways" Then after a short pause she added "don't you agree your grace I must go now" and was gone. Did the bishop think Rebecca was the culprit! As she walked down the church path her mobile phone rang. The bishops' senses sprang into action as he heard the ringtone was Rebecca the culprit? The bishop was now totally confused, his fallibility had been brought to his attention yet again. The ringtone was from a sixties hit parade number - God only knows.

The bishop knew Rebecca was not the culprit, so who was the unknown recipient of the telephone call, someone somewhere must know.

...to be continued

Peter Garner



WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit of  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Genesis 1:2

The  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 of the Father.  
 Acts 1:4

What  
 happened when  
 the Holy Spirit  
 came at Pentecost?

read  
 Acts 2:1-41  
 How many believers  
 were baptised  
 that day?

The Spirit of  
 A \_\_\_\_\_  
 Romans 8:15

H \_\_\_\_\_  
 John 14:26

The Spirit of  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 John 16:13

The Spirit of  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Acts 16:7

The Fruit of the Spirit  
 Galatians 5:22-23

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D G C O M F O R T E R L C  
 K E O N P P E A C E G O D  
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 S E L F C O N T R O L J O  
 S N O P E P T E A C H E R  
 J S R J O T R U T H F S Y  
 R S P I R I T I L U I U K  
 K P P R O M I S E R S R  
 I D W I N D D O V E W

Look up the Bible verses and fill in the  
 missing words. Look for them in the  
 word search then look for these words below.

HOLY • SPIRIT • COUNSELLOR • COMFORTER  
 ADVOCATE • TEACHER • LORD • PROMISE  
 GLORY • GRACE • FAITH • DOVE • FIRE • WIND

**Powers:**

The PCC oversees the financial affairs of the parish, frames an annual budget and (with the incumbent) agrees to the disposal of monies collected.

The PCC advises Deanery and Diocesan Synods as required.

- The PCC is responsible for the care, maintenance and fabric of the church, its goods, ornaments; and the care and maintenance of the churchyard.
- The PCC can acquire, manage and administer property for ecclesiastical purposes.
- The PCC must be party to any agreement on sharing of buildings.
- The PCC can make representation to the Bishop or his representative (Archdeacon) with regard to any matter affecting the welfare of the parish.
- The PCC has a voice on decisions concerning the use of forms of service authorised by the Church of England.

This year our APCM is being held on **Sunday 10th May**. We are always looking for PCC members. If you feel you would like to contribute to the work of St James and would like to enrol you can speak to Fr Darren, the Churchwardens or any of current PCC members to find out more.

**Small plates are better**

How large are your dinner plates? If you replace 12” plates with 10” plates you could end up eating between 16 and 22 per cent less food. That could mean a loss of two stone over a year. The study at Cambridge University concluded: “Helping people to avoid ‘over-serving’ themselves or others with larger portions of food or drink is likely to ...help reduce their risk of overeating.”

## Abraham: the man who made the biggest leap of faith in history

If we need to get somewhere by public transport, we look at the route and trust the driver knows the way. By faith, we accept that he or she will get us safely to where we want to go.

It was very different for Abraham. God told him to leave his homeland and begin a journey, physically (and spiritually) to an unknown destination. He didn't even understand why God wanted him to move, but he trusted God anyway.

Abraham was born in a country far from Israel, now modern Iraq. His story covers hundreds of miles along with various events and incidents. Although he encountered numerous difficulties and challenges, Abraham lived in close fellowship with God.

We might like stability in our lives, but Abraham was unable to settle permanently anywhere. He lived a temporary existence. Slowly, gradually, God revealed to Abraham what he had to do. He was not perfect. In fact, he made several mistakes but God's plans for Abraham were not thwarted. God showed patience. Despite this man's failings, at times, God revealed His purposes.

God often calls people without giving them all the details! If we knew everything, we would not need faith. God does not always explain to us His ways – neither completely nor in one go. Abraham discovered aspects about God as time went on. It was a journey of faith; a life lived one step at a time.

We may look at Abraham's life and think we cannot have faith like him. If we were put to severe testing, we know we would fail. Our journey with God is different from his, but by his example we can rely on God's promises.

Abraham's life challenges us to believe in a great God and to obey Him. Like Abraham, at the end of *our* journey of faith, we have an eternal destination waiting for us.

## High Days and Holy Days

### Sundays of the Month

3 <sup>rd</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter
10 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter
17 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter
24 <sup>th</sup>	Day of Pentecost – Whit Sunday
1	May Day
1	Philip the Apostle/James the Less
2	Athanasius
8	Julian of Norwich
9	Pachomius
10	Comgall
10	Rogation Sunday (last Sunday before Ascension)
14	Ascension Day
14	Matthias the Apostle – called by lots
16	Caroline Chisholm
19	Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury
20	Alcuin of York, Abbot of Tours
21	Helena, Protector of the Holy Places
24	Pentecost
24	John and Charles Wesley
25	The Venerable Bede
25	Aldhelm, unconventional Bishop of Sherborne
26	Augustine – first Archbishop of Canterbury
26	John Calvin, Reformer
28	Gizur of Iceland
30	Joan of Arc
30	Josephine Butler, social reformer 1906
31	Trinity Sunday



## The power of Pentecost

The celebration of Pentecost this month could be described as a birthday party for the church, when we remember the gift of the Holy Spirit to the first disciples (Acts 2:1-13). What are we celebrating?

*God's Promise:*

The disciples obeyed Jesus' instructions as they gathered in the Upper Room: *'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised'* (1:4). They met expectantly in prayer for God's promised gift. Just as we look forward to birthday presents, how eager are we to receive more of the Spirit in our lives?

*God's Power:*

*'All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit'* (4). The disciples needed the power of the Spirit to be different: not fearfully gathered behind locked doors, but instead energised to make Christ known. The Spirit can transform our lives into the likeness of Jesus and give gifts to equip our witness. Although the disciples' experience of this power was overwhelming, it was essentially an encounter with God's love. For us, this can be equally emotional or quiet, but *all* of us are included, and nobody is excluded from this experience.

*God's Purpose:*

The disciples *'began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.'* (4). The Spirit empowered their witness, so that everyone heard them speaking in their own *'native language'* (lit: *dialect*, v8). We all have a story to tell of God's activity in our lives, and the Spirit will translate our words and actions into a language that those around can understand! At Pentecost, 3000 people were added to the Church in one day! What do we expect of the Spirit in our day?

*'Let the church return to Pentecost, and Pentecost will return to her. The Spirit of God cannot take possession of believers beyond their capacity of receiving Him'* (Andrew Murray).

Canon Paul Hardingham

## From the Registers

**We led funerals for those who now rest with God:**

Mabel Kidney, Matilda Ullah



**We welcome into the Church family at Baptism:**

Chloe Jean Garner, Anthony James Bridgeford

### Helping people caught in crisis in the Middle East

At Pentecost, we think back to that morning in Jerusalem when the Church was born. So this month, as we celebrate Pentecost, it is good to know that many Christian agencies are working hard out there in the Middle East now, to help the suffering people of Gaza, Lebanon, Israel, the West Bank.... Not to mention all the other countries where bombs are falling and people are running for their lives.

Many of the Christian agencies work through local partners to provide essential supplies like food, water, and hygiene kits, alongside psychosocial support. If you would like to help to support this work, you could send funds through various key organisations:

Caritas Jerusalem; Christian Aid; Embrace the Middle East; Friends of the Holy Land; Help the Persecuted; Medair; Mosaic Middle East; Samaritan's Purse; and Tearfund.

### LADIES GUILD

Why not come along on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May to Ladies Guild and hear Irene Knowles talk to us about her Talking Glasses!!

And on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June our own Barbara Wilson will tell us about 'Working as a Mediator'

## Christian Aid Week - 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May

It's that time of year again – when Christians across the country raise funds for Christian Aid's programmes, which help those suffering poverty and injustice worldwide.

Since 1957, Christian Aid Week has brought faith and action together to help families survive poverty and violence, and communities rebuild after crisis.

It says: "This is all thanks to the amazing support of churches, communities and individuals who choose to walk, run, bake, dance, make, and do whatever it takes to help make lasting change.

"Through our locally led work with partners around the world who are rooted in their communities to lead change, your valuable support will help communities ravaged by poverty and the effects of the climate crisis.

Christian Aid welcomes anyone who would like to be involved this year in raising support. And there are various ways to take part:

- Give online or through collections.
- Fundraise with friends, family, colleagues or your community.
- Take part through your church with worship, prayer and events.
- Volunteer locally to support Christian Aid Week activities.



## Smiles Lines

### Seize the day

Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts.

### Windy

Three elderly ministers, all hard of hearing, were playing golf one sunny spring morning.

The Methodist minister observed, "Windy, isn't it?" "No", the Baptist pastor said, "It's Thursday." The Anglican vicar agreed: "So am I! Let's go and get a pint."

### Breakable

There was a very gracious lady who was posting an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

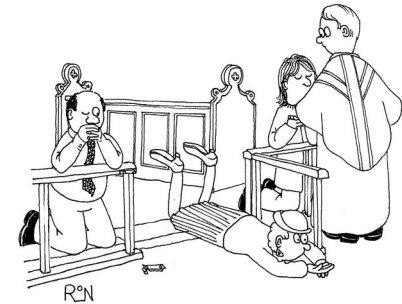
"Only the Ten Commandments," answered the lady.

### Money

There is the story of a minister who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building programme. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."

### I know

I'm not bossy. I just know what you should be doing.



Terry made a note to fix the bolt



"Whilst I appreciate the thought, would whoever it is please stop tweeting, 'So far, so good...!'"

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren

So, you are beginning to plan your first Summer Fete in your new parish. That you appear to be looking forward to it shows how little you know about them.

Parishes hold Summer Fetes so that their clergy can preach more meaningfully on purgatory. Their ostensible purpose is to raise money for the church – which is wholly illogical. The parish could double the money raised if the Fete were dropped, none of the endless preparations made, if everyone spent a pleasant afternoon in their own gardens and each person simply donated £20 to the church instead. But we still feel obliged to go to endless trouble, making ourselves miserable so we can show each other what a good time we are having. That it generally pours seems to make the entire event even more grimly satisfying.

No, the real reasons for a Summer Fete are twofold. First, it gives the entire parish the chance to inspect the Rector's garden. Whatever state it is in, it will cause disapproval. If it is poorly kept, then I am clearly being ungrateful for having three acres of lawn to enjoy. Mowing it each week should be one of my delights; what else would I do with a whole day off each week anyway? The hand mower, kindly given by Colonel French is assumed to be quite adequate – and rumour has it that I need to lose weight anyway. The mower was presented to me when the Colonel bought his own gardener a sit-on motor mower – which is of a size and opulence that makes me assume it has a drinks cabinet and satellite navigation.

The second reason for a Fete comes as a special perk for the organisers. It gives them a chance to inspect the inside of the Rectory. Under the pretence of looking for a little more sugar, they can systematically inspect all the kitchen cupboards and comment on their contents. By the end of the day, the whole parish will know what marmalade I spread on my toast, that I use unnecessarily expensive washing powder, and where I have unsuccessfully tried to hide the gin.

The details of what then happens while the Fete is in progress must wait until my next letter, when we will have had our own. It is now time for Evensong, drinks with Major Mallet and his wife, and then a quiet evening with a good book, while I toy with other possible hiding places for the gin this year.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

## WEEKLY DIARY OF EVENTS IN ST. JAMES' CHURCH HALLS

Day	Time	Activity
<b>Monday</b>	6.30 - 9.30pm	Scouts
<b>Tuesday</b>	10.00 - 12.15pm	Seven Stars Tai Chi
	4.30 - 5.30pm	Rainbows
<b>1st</b>	2.00 - 4.00pm	Ladies Guild
<b>3rd</b>	2.00 - 4.00pm	Craft Club
	6.00 - 7.30pm	Brownies
	7.00 - 10.00pm	Victory Model Railway Club
<b>Wednesday</b>	10.30 - 2.30pm	Highbury
	5.30 - 7.45pm	AG Martial Arts
	6.45 - 8.15pm	Yoga with Erika Nagy
<b>Thursday</b>	10.00 - 12noon	Jiggy Wrighlers
	3.00 - 7.00pm	Slimming World
	5.15 - 6.45pm	Yoga with Erica Nagy
	7.30 - 8.30pm	Yoga with Maz
<b>Friday</b>	10.00 - 11.00am	Seven Stars Tai Chi
	7.00 - 9.30pm	Milton Glee Choir
	7.30 - 9.00pm	B Fit with Billie (Ad hoc)
<b>Saturday</b>	7.00 - 11.30am	Slimming World
	9.45 - 11.15am	Yoga with Erika Nagy

If you require a Booking at any other time, please contact our Hall Letting Secretary Valerie England. Tel. No. 07762 524781.

**Deadline for next edition : 20th May contributes to Ruth Baber**  
Email: [sjiltonreview@gmail.com](mailto:sjiltonreview@gmail.com)

# SOCIAL EVENTS FOR 2026



## May 2026

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm

## June 2026

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> Summer Fete 10.30am - 1.00pm  
(please note change of date)  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm

## July 2026

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> Cheese and Wine Evening with a Quiz. 7pm.  
Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm  
Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> St James Day with Bar-B-Que



## August 2026

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Bingo Evening 7.00pm

## Craft Club



## September 2026

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> Ladies Guild  
Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> Table Top Sale  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> Craft Club

## October 2026

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm

## November 2026

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Christmas Bazaar 10.30am - 1pm

## December 2026

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> Table Top Sale 10am - 12.00noon  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> Craft Club 2pm - 4pm  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Carol Service 6pm  
(Followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies)  
Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> Christingle Service  
(Time to be advised)



## January 2027

No Guild this month  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> - Craft Club 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> - Bingo Evening 7pm

## February 2027

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February - Ladies Guild 2pm - 4pm  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> - Craft Club 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> - Quiz Night 7pm

