

UPPER THAMES NEWS

22 May 2026

This week in Upper Thames News:

- **Pentecost Sunday**
- **Debbie retiring**
- **Msinga Children's Centre Update**
- **Siren Sisters at Holy Cross 26 June**
- **24 hours of Prayer at St Sampson's 18-19 July**
- **Ave Vocal Ensemble at St Sampson's 12 July**
- Reminders
 - **St Sampson's Tower Tour - TOMORROW, 23 May**
 - Choral Concert at St Sampson's on 27 June
 - Malmesbury & District Foodbank
- **May-June services**
- **Morning Prayers**

Pentecost Sunday

This coming Sunday is Pentecost Sunday, the day we celebrate the gift of God's Holy Spirit to us.

This seems like an appropriate moment to commission our **new healing team**, and that will happen during the 10am benefice at St Sampson's. During communion there will be **prayers for healing** available to anyone who would like to come forward – for yourself or for someone else. You simply receive communion and then carry on up to the High Altar where our healing team will be ready to pray for you. If you don't have communion please walk directly up to the High Altar to a member of the healing team. There will also be (as last year) **anointing** offered for everyone as a sign of renewal and dedication.

This Sunday we are also welcoming a visiting preacher, Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor, who is the head of the mission and Ministry Support Team. He oversees people discerning a call to ordination or to be an LLM, the discipleship team, and ministerial development for all licensed ministers. Simon also writes books and teaches widely. We welcome him in the name of Christ and look forward to him worshipping with us.

Pentecost Sunday Services

- St Sampson's
 - 10am Upper Thames Worship Together
Holy Communion *with anointing & prayers for healing*
- Holy Cross
 - 8.30am Holy Communion
- Readings:
 - [Acts 2:1-13](#)
 - [Genesis 2:4b-8](#)
 - [John 20:19-23](#)



Debbie retiring

We announced last Sunday that Debbie is going to retire, probably in the autumn. More details about dates and farewells as things are decided!

Msinga Children's Centre Update

Sarah Smith from E3 Initiative has asked us to share this update with you all. It can also be viewed as a pdf - [Msinga Update 2026](#)

Thank you for supporting Msinga Children's Centre



The best way to show you the impact of your support is through the words of the self-help group members...

"We never imagined we would have something this beautiful. As uneducated women from a disadvantaged community, we did not think this could happen for us, but thanks to Zimele Wethu, E3 and you, we now have a strong, beautiful building that helps us better ourselves. Even people in our community are amazed by what we have accomplished, especially since some used to look down on us, asking what could possibly be done with just R5 (23p), which was the contribution we all gave at the start."

"Zimele Wethu has given training to develop our skills in agriculture, business and running social projects. This has made a difference in our households and for our children and their learning." Learning in a lovely centre rather than sat on the floor under the trees creates dignity and blesses the ladies.

"This building will serve many purposes as well as earning us income by hosting birthday celebrations and other events."



The power of self-help groups

Zimele Wethu self-help groups:

- build community, give women courage and a voice
- equip them to set up small businesses and farm
- enable them to dream of social projects like building the children's centre and see that become a reality.

"In the past, we used to gather under the trees for our weekly savings meetings, sitting in the sun and getting burned, but things are different now because we finally have a shelter."

"Before joining the self-help group, I struggled alone. Now, I feel supported and confident to grow my farming business."

"Being part of a self-help group taught me that my voice matters, and together we can build a stronger future for our families."

"Through my self-help group, I have learned to save and invest and now have courage to share ideas and see real change in my community."

"My eyes have been opened to how we can achieve more than I ever thought possible by working together."

Group members are enjoying using the centre to provide:

- meals before and after school so children can concentrate
- help with homework so children can succeed at school
- Life Skills workshops so children make good choices in life
- self-help group meetings to save together and plan activities
- a preschool is also planned to enable young children to thrive.

"This building gives our children a quiet space to study, so they can improve themselves and have better opportunities than we had. We didn't get the chance to learn and grow like they can."

Thank you so much for helping build this amazing centre!



E3 Initiative | Cornerstone | Fyfield Wick | Abingdon | OX13 5NB
| info@e3initiative.org | Charity No. 1092574 | e3initiative.org

 FUNDRAISING REGULATORY

Siren Sisters at Holy Cross on Friday 26 June



“Sing & Tonic”

*A harmonious musical evening
at The Holy Cross Church*



We are delighted to be organising an Ashton Keynes Festival fundraising event, with all proceeds going to the Holy Cross Church, Ashton Keynes.

Come along and enjoy an evening of musical entertainment; songs performed by an all-female group, the Siren Sisters, accompanied by pianist, Richard Sutcliffe.

Doors Open at 7.00pm (starts 7.30pm) Friday June 26th, 2026, at the Holy Cross Church, Ashton Keynes, SN6 6QR.

A bar will be available, serving alcohol and soft drinks throughout the evening.

Tickets £5.00 per person.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.ashtonkeynesfestival.net
Or at the Ashton Keynes Village Hall every Tuesday morning between 10am and 12.00 noon. Or ask any member of the Siren Sisters

www.ashtonkeynesfestival.net

24 hours of prayer at St Sampson’s Church, Cricklade

- **Saturday 18 at 11am until Sunday 19 July at 11am**

Talk and listen to God through prayer activities for ourselves, family and friends, local community and the wider world.

- A 24-7 prayer space
- Come and spend time with God
- Open to anyone
- Explore different prayer zones around the Church, using words, art, music, activities, silence and more to talk and listen to God.



You are invited to sign up for one hour slots (you can do as many as you like!) so we can cover the whole time in prayer. We also invite people to pop into church when they like. Note: the slots between 10pm and 7am will be in your own home.

- **Sign up for a slot at** <https://pray.24-7prayer.com/signup/4c1882>

Here are some comments from those who took part in previous prayer events ...


"I loved the prayer time. It was so well done with all the different activities. It was so nice and calm. I felt really connected with God."

"I usually find staying quiet and focussing on God very difficult, but this was a place to go for that specific purpose, which was really helpful. I found the time too short."

"It was a very special prayer and quiet time over the weekend. It was so good to put away the busyness, accept the chance to rest and pray and rekindle a still centre with God."

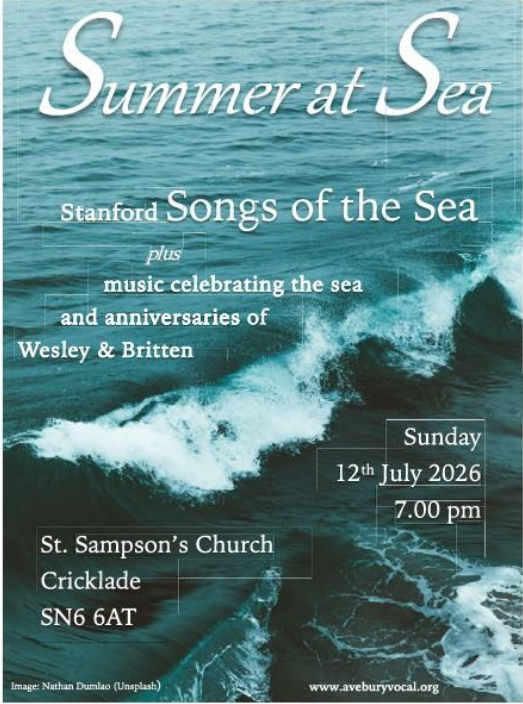
Find out more from Matt and Sarah Smith, Laura Brierley and Hannah Dowson.

AVE Vocal Ensemble concert in July at St Sampson's



Avebury Vocal
ENSEMBLE

Conductor: Peter Tims
Organist: Simon Dinsdale




Summer at Sea

Stanford Songs of the Sea
plus
music celebrating the sea
and anniversaries of
Wesley & Britten

Sunday
12th July 2026
7.00 pm

St. Sampson's Church
Cricklade
SN6 6AT



Tickets £12
on the door
& online
under 18s free

Image: Nathan Dumlao (Unsplash) www.aveburyvocal.org

Reminders:

St Sampson's Tower Tour TOMORROW 23 May



St Sampson's Church
Tower Open
Saturday
23 May, 6 June, 5 Sept
2pm-4pm

Enjoy the wonderful views of
Cricklade and beyond

Please make a donation in aid of the refurbishment
Drinks and cakes available.

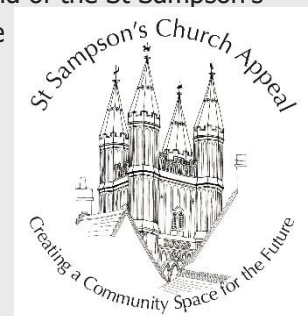
Note: weather dependent. There are 120 steps.
Proper shoes required. Minimum age: 8.



Choral concert on Saturday 27 June 5pm at St Sampson's

This concert comes at the end of our Come & Sing day. Both are in aid of the St Sampson's Church Appeal. The singers will be accompanied by organ, cello, flute and oboe. Book tickets on the Ticketsource website or buy on the door. Please join us.

<https://www.ticketsource.com/whats-on/cricklade/st-sampsons-church/concert-requiem-john-rutter-plus-cantique-de-jean-racine-gabriel-faure/2026-06-27/17:00/t-aaaxyaj>



Beautiful choral music with instrumental accompaniment in the atmospheric setting of
St Sampson's Church

**Rutter's
Requiem**

Plus
**Fauré's
Cantique de Jean Racine**

Directed by Mark Lee, Director of Music at Bristol Cathedral

27th June 2026 at 5pm
St Sampson's Church, Cricklade

Tickets available on the door or by scanning the QR code

£12 (to include a glass of wine/soft drink)



Malmesbury & District Foodbank

Click on the **link** above for a pdf with more information on where you can drop off food in Cricklade, Ashton Keynes and Latton. Click on the **logo** for the Foodbank homepage.



May-June services

- **Sunday 31 May**
 - 10am Worship Together at **All Saints, Leigh**

- **Sunday 7 June - Trinity**
 - St Sampson's
 - 8am Holy Communion
 - 10am Morning Worship *with the music group*
 - 6.30pm Evensong
 - Holy Cross
 - 10am Holy Communion
 - St John the Baptist
 - 10am Morning Worship

- **Sunday 14 June**
 - 10am Upper Thames Worship Together at St Sampson's

- **Sunday 21 June**
 - St Sampson's
 - 8am Holy Communion *followed by breakfast*
 - 10am Morning Worship *with the music group*
 - 6.30pm Evensong
 - Holy Cross
 - 10am Around the Table
 - 6pm Evensong
 - St John the Baptist
 - 10am Holy Communion

- **Sunday 28 June**
 - St Sampson's
 - 10am Holy Communion
 - Holy Cross
 - 8.30am Holy Communion

Morning Prayers

- **Monday Morning Prayers at 9am on Zoom - all welcome**

We are a small group who meet on Zoom for 40 minutes at 9am on Monday mornings to read, pray and socialise following a Wild Goose Wee Worship format. New members would be very welcome.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77713838432?pwd=AzDJt5p8Rs3WxmbjI3sSFVEEMFpAuF.1>

Meeting ID: [777 1383 8432](#)

Passcode: 1FLvt0

- **Thursday Morning Prayers in the Lady Chapel in St Sampson's**

Everyone is welcome and we'd love new people to join us. There are usually about 7 - 10 of us in number and we meet at 8.30am to enjoy coffee and the Iona Community's 'Wee Worship Book', and finish by 9.30am.

Church opening times

- **St Sampson's:** every day, 9am – 3pm
- **Holy Cross:** Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 10am - 4pm
- **St John the Baptist Latton:** Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, 10am - 4pm

What3Words locations for our churches *(for use on the What3Words app)*

- St Sampson's: `unopposed.remotest.raft`
- Holy Cross (entrance to car park): `ideals.conga.flushes`
- St John the Baptist: `roadways.handwriting.trample`
- All Saints: `powers.party.zinc`
- Waterhay (Old Chancel): `leaky.refrained.marketing`





Upper
Thames
Churches

Overflowing with God's Love

St Sampson's, Cricklade

Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes

St John the Baptist, Latton

All Saints, Leigh

Parish Office, Jenner Hall, Bath Road, Cricklade, Wiltshire, SN6 6AX

Usual office opening hours:

9.30am - 12pm

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday

admin@upperthames.org.uk

website - www.upperthames.org.uk