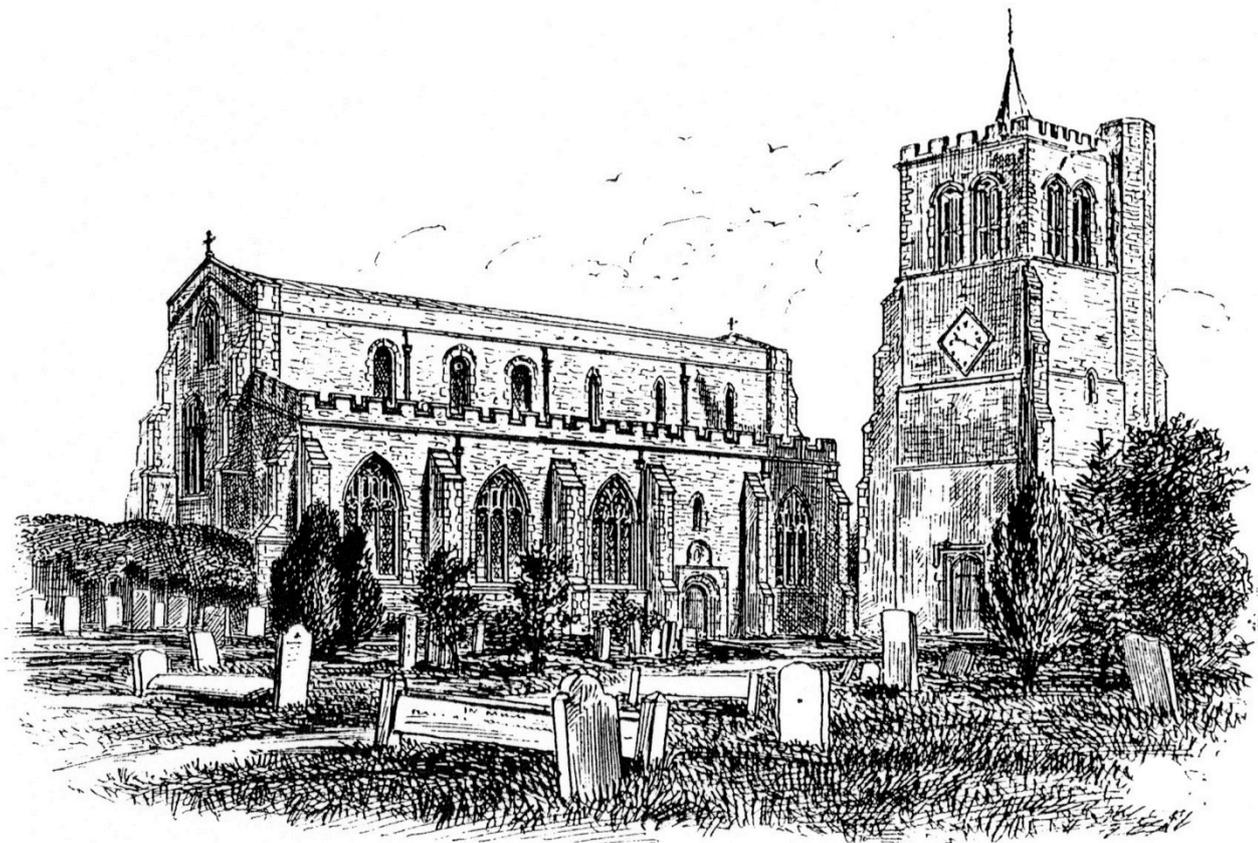


# ELSTOW ABBEY CHURCH

## MAGAZINE



*An historic church with a living pilgrim faith*

**JUNE – JULY 2018**

**70p**

# Church Contacts

## **Priest in Charge**

The Revd Paul Messam

Abbey Vicarage, Church End, Elstow, Bedford MK42 9XT

01234 261477

vicar@elstow-abbey.org.uk

## **Assistant Curate**

The Revd Kate Scott

07922 487705

curate@elstow-abbey.org.uk

## **Lay Minister** (Reader)

Mr John Hinson

## **Church Wardens**

Mr Stephen McDonald

Mrs Andrene Kerr-Robinson

## **Director of Music**

Mr David Ewbank

**Baptism & Wedding enquiries should be made in Church on any  
Saturday morning between 10.00am – 12 noon**

The Elstow Abbey Website can be found at  
[www.elstow-abbey.org.uk](http://www.elstow-abbey.org.uk)

Find us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/Elstow Abbey](https://www.facebook.com/Elstow_Abbey)

and on Twitter  
[@Elstow\\_Abbey](https://twitter.com/Elstow_Abbey)

# A CHANGING CHURCH

No one likes change. Change frequently becomes a platform for anxiety in an individual's life. We all like routine. Knowing what to expect makes us feel safe and offers us the comfort of seeming stability. Yet, change is inevitable. We are changing creatures in a changing world. Things are either changing for the worst or for the better. Nothing remains static. Growth and progress necessitate change. This is no less true with regard to the growth and progress of a church as it is with regard to an individual's life. Change in the church is one of the most necessary but also one of the most unwelcomed guests. So, given the fact that change can be stressful and steal away an individual's sense of comfort, why do we change what we do in church?

In the Bible, “church” is always a reference to people, not a place. Church is not a building or a day. Church is the walking, talking embodiment of Christ to a world where so many are not fulfilled because they do not love Him.

The letters of St Paul often tell us about all the gifts the Church needs in order for it to do its work and to be itself. Everyone has something Jesus Christ has given them which has to be shared with the whole community. Among these gifts is a cluster of things that all have to do with taking some kind of responsibility for the Church's growth and the Church's direction - the apostle, the prophet, the teacher, and so on. And while all sorts of different people may exercise these gifts in various ways, the Church has always organized itself on the basis that it needs some visible focus for this kind of ministry. That's partly why I became a priest. But when it comes to the life of the Church here at Elstow Abbey, we are all in it together.

It's often said that Britain's church congregations are shrinking, but that doesn't come close to expressing the scale of the disaster now facing Christianity in this country. Every ten years the census spells out the situation in detail: between 2001 and 2011 the number of Christians born in Britain fell by 5.3 million – about 10,000 a week. If that rate of

decline continues, the mission of St Augustine to the English, together with that of the Irish saints to the Scots, will come to an end in 2067. That is the year in which the Christians who have inherited the faith of their British ancestors will become statistically invisible. Parish churches everywhere will have been adapted for secular use, demolished or abandoned.

It's not good enough to just keep on doing the same and watching a decline happen. We **MUST** do something. That is why the church has always changed, and continues to change to enable it to respond to the communities it serves.

Research has shown that people are much more likely to come to church and keep coming if they're invited. Invitation is at the heart of the gospel. When Jesus said: "*Follow me... come and see,*" he was offering an invitation. God says through Isaiah: "*Come all those who are thirsty and I will give you rest.*" I believe invitation is at the heart of God. The Bible says "*Don't be afraid*" quite a lot. It's staring us in the face – almost as if God is anticipating there's going to be a problem. It's true we are currently facing a financial challenge here and one I'm sure will continue for a few years. Ultimately the only real solution is to grow as a church.

I would challenge the current mind set that we are a welcoming Church. This might sound terrible, but I think we should be a transformational Church, but we have made ourselves as congregations so welcome, that the thought of change is beyond the pale. We need to keep on changing to keep on growing in faith.

If you have any suggestions for future change, or comments on the current changes that we are trying out, please do share them with me. I'm hopeful for the future of the church here at Elstow Abbey, because God is eternal. Whatever mess we make of our lives, God can see the beginning from the end, and will work everything out.

Fr. Paul.

# SHAKESPEARE IN THE RUINS 2018



## **HAMLET**

**5<sup>th</sup> June – 7.00pm**

Five actors, with all manner of musical instruments, present an inventive take on Shakespeare's most infamous and iconic play, Hamlet.

This summer The Three Inch Fools will embark on a three-month journey across the UK, performing at over 60 venues - from castles, cathedrals and gardens, to churches, village greens and many more places besides. With their bold new productions of A Midsummer Night's Dream and Hamlet, The Fools hit the road, touring their fresh and vibrant take on Britain's best loved playwright.

On 5 June you can catch The Three Inch Fools at Elstow Abbey to see their exciting new production of Hamlet. Bring a picnic along and enjoy the drama and revelry at Elstow Abbey. 7.00pm start time, picnics welcome from 6.00pm.

# The Hokey Pokey

Shakespearean Style

O proud left foot, that ventures quick within  
Then soon upon a backward journey lithe.  
Anon, once more the gesture, then begin;  
Command sinistral pedestal to writhe.  
Commence thou then the fervid Hokey-Poke.  
A mad gyration, hips in wanton swirl.  
To spin! A wilde release from heaven's yoke.  
Blessed dervish! Surely canst go, girl.  
The Hoke, the poke--banish now thy doubt  
Verily, I say, 'tis what it is all about.

## SHAKESPEARE IN THE RUINS 2018



### TWELVE NIGHT

9<sup>th</sup> July – 7.00pm

The University of Durham's Castle Theatre Company presents one of Shakespeare's greatest comedies: 'Twelfth Night'. This classic tale of love and confusion is enjoyed worldwide and is great entertainment on a sunny July evening.

# The Friends of Elstow Abbey

Presents

*An Illustrated Talk by  
David Fowler (Bedford Historian)*

**The BBC & Glenn Miller in WW2 Bedford**

On Saturday 9<sup>TH</sup> June 2018 at 7.00 pm  
in the church

Tickets £6.00 available in advance from  
The Friends Committee Members or [friends@elstow-abbey.org.uk](mailto:friends@elstow-abbey.org.uk)  
or available at the door

Refreshments will be served

All are welcome – please come and support us



**The Tea room with a difference - it's outside!**

**Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday - 10am to 4pm,  
From the 21st April to the end of September**

**Do come and visit us - we look forward to meeting you soon.**



## What Does the Bible Say about Wizards?

The Bible is against magic and witchcraft... but what about stories about magic and wizards?

I know the Bible speaks out against witchcraft and magic, but how does that translate to things today like stories about magic and wizards, magic tricks and fortune telling? What does the Bible mean?

Sorcery is condemned in the Bible (Leviticus 19:26), but I don't believe God is against card tricks, illusions, special effects, or the other elements of a magician's show. I also don't think there's anything wrong with reading fictional fantasy stories about boys and girls with superpowers or magic wands (*yes, you know who I mean*). After all, if you're going to avoid all depictions of magic, you'll have to avoid the Bible because it includes stories about people who practiced magic and sorcery. And in the Bible, not all magicians are viewed as evil.

Remember the three wise men of the Christmas story who brought gifts to baby Jesus? They were Magi. Historically, Magi weren't known for pulling rabbits out of hats, but they were a part of a long line of consultants to kings who worshiped various gods, practiced the occult, studied the stars, foretold the future, interpreted dreams, and probably experimented with spells, potions and elixirs. Then around 600 B.C., the Old Testament prophet Daniel was put in charge of the Magi of Babylon (Daniel 2:48). That's when there was a noticeable shift in how the Magi of Babylon worked. They operated more like a priestly order, became monotheistic (worshiped one God), and even sacrificed animals for their sin. Daniel no doubt turned them to depend upon God for their powers. So while sorcery is condemned by the Bible, not all the magicians in the Bible are "bad guys." The difference? The three wise men bowed before Jesus, and Daniel was clear that he could interpret dreams by God's power, not his.

What the Bible warns against is interacting with powers of the spirit world without God being a part of it.

God outright forbids worshiping other deities (goddess worship, animism), using divination (fortune-telling, psychics, tarot cards, numerology), interpreting omens (astrology, horoscopes), consulting mediums (channelling spirits, contacting the dead), and practicing witchcraft (spell-casting, shamanism).

The Bible wouldn't warn against these things (Deuteronomy 18:10) if their dangers weren't real. So what's wrong with them? Two things.

First, contacting evil spirits places us under the influence of the Evil One. Remember, Lucifer is known as "the father of lies." This means he usually makes things look harmless or fun – for a while. And fortune-telling, curses and horoscopes can seem harmless at first. But the longer we dabble in Lucifer's laboratory, the more likely it will affect our faith and thinking.

Second, a deeper danger is your motivation for dabbling in such things. Doing magic tricks like "the disappearing coin" may be just a fun way to entertain your friends, but people who get into real sorcery do it to exercise power over other people, to influence them to do something they wouldn't do otherwise, or to get knowledge that isn't humanly available.

This is what God forbids. In fact, the Bible tells about one sorcerer named Simon, who was willing to pay cash to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:9-24). But the apostle Peter saw through to his motivation, and harshly condemned him for trying to use the good side of the spirit world to gain control over others.

Only God has the right to enter another person's heart and mind and soul. When a person tries to do that, it's another way of trying to become like God, which is the sin that got Lucifer kicked out of heaven in the first place.

# **The Friends of Elstow Abbey**

(Registered Charity No. 1044100)

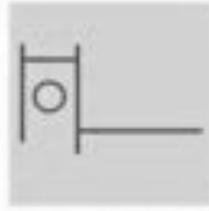
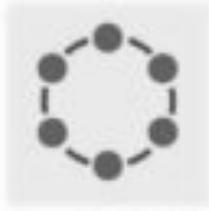
*This well-loved and historic church needs your support as a **Friend***

Membership details are available from Elstow Abbey or from the Treasurer:  
Patrick Luffman, West Lodge  
Carriage Drive, Clapham,  
Bedford  
MK41 6EX

Telephone 01234-345004



Email: [info@elstow-abbey.org.uk](mailto:info@elstow-abbey.org.uk)



## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

At Elstow Abbey we serve many people in many ways: giving the opportunity for worship to those attending our regular services; sharing the joy of a couple coming to be married or a family bringing their child for baptism; comforting the bereaved. To all these and many more we seek to be a channel of God's love to those looking to our church for help and encouragement.

Our impact is also felt well beyond the church building itself, sometimes to those who may not normally look to the church for help. Through our outreach into the community, often in partnership with others, we are constantly seeking to meet the needs of the marginalised and vulnerable in our society, aiming to be the salt and light in our communities that Jesus challenges us to be.

All this is possible because of the dedicated commitment of time, skills and energy which people bring to our church and also the financial support given week by week.

Like every household our church needs to keep up with the cost of living. While we are as careful as possible with our funds, expenses like heating, insurance, our clergy and many other day-to-day costs mount up. You may not realise that this comes to a staggering £1,483.00 each week. We receive some money from funeral and wedding fees and also from fundraising during the year, but the vast majority comes from regular church members giving faithfully each week.

Along with an increasing majority of churches in the country, we have decided to switch to the Parish Giving Scheme, all the details are found in packs at the back of church. Please do read through the literature and pray about how you can respond best.

# JUNE

Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 6.30pm BCP Evensong
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’ 7.00pm Shakespeare in the Ruins – ‘Hamlet’
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> June	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> June	9.30am Morning Prayer 7.00pm “Friends” Illustrated Talk
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 3.00pm Christening Service 4.30pm Friends AGM 6.30pm Evensong
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> June	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter 7.15pm WI meeting on Vestry
Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> June	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 11.30am Wedding Blessing 6.30pm Evensong
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter
Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	9.30am Morning Prayer 4.00pm ‘Pilgrims Praise’
<b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June</b>	9.00am Mattins (said) 10:00am All Age Worship with Baptism 3.00pm Christeneing Service 6:30pm BCP Holy Communion
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	9.30am Morning Prayer 1.00pm Wedding

## JULY

<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 3.00pm Christening Service 6.30pm Evensong
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30am Morning Prayer 2.00pm Wedding 5.00pm Wedding
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 6.30pm Evensong
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> July	7.00pm Shakespear in the Ruins – Twelve Night
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> July	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’ 7.00pm Churches Together AGM
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> July	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter 7.15pm WI Meeting
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 6.30pm Evensong
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	10:00 – 11:30am ‘Little Pilgrims’
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30 – 12:30 Soup and Natter
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	7.30pm PCC meeting
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	9.30am Morning Prayer 12.30pm Wedding 3.00pm Wedding
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	9.00am BCP Holy Communion (said) 10:00am All Age Worship with Baptisms 3.00pm Christening Service 6:30pm Evensong
<b>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July Children’s Holiday Club</b>	
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July</b>	9.00am Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 6.30pm Taizé Worship



Elstow Abbey Holiday Club 2018

# Treasure Island

10am – 12 noon  
Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018

BBQ / Island party  
**For all of God's shipmates and their families**  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July from 6pm  
**Including**  
**Prize giving and celebration**

**Treasure Island** is a five day holiday club which will be held in Elstow Church and Garden. Each day there will be crafts, songs, games, stories, competitions and prizes, along with Bible teaching as we begin our voyage with Paul to find the real treasure!

**Treasure Island** is **FREE** and **OPEN** to ALL (5 – 12 years old). If you want to join us and take part in **Treasure Island** please complete the registration form and send it back before the start of the club. If older children would like to join in as young leaders please call 01234 406061

Places are limited and will be allocated on receipt of the fully completed registration form and consent form. If you do not hear from us, please assume that you have been allocated a place. If the club is full we will contact you and put you on the reserve list.

Please send the form, marked as "Holiday Club" to  
**Abbey Vicarage, Church End, Elstow MK42 9XT**

# Treasure Island Registration and Consent Form



(please use a separate form for each child extra copies available in church)

**Treasure Island** will take place from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
10am - 12 noon at Elstow Abbey Church

Child's full Name		Gender	M/F
Date of Birth	School		
Current age	School year just ended		
Parent/Guardian full name			
Address			
Phone number			
e-mail address			
Emergency contact 1 Name		Phone Number	
Relationship to child			
Emergency contact 2 Name		Phone Number	
Relationship to child			
GP Name		GP phone Number	
Any known Allergies, illness or condition			
<p>Please register my child for <b>Treasure Island</b> I give permission for my child to be photographed and the photos used within the church magazine and publicity. In an emergency, and if I cannot be contacted, I give permission for my child to be given hospital treatment (including anaesthetic) as deemed necessary by health care professionals. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible. I give permission for the church to hold my details and to send notification of other events/activities by e-mail. I give permission for my child's name to be entered onto the church database for the administration of the holiday club. Any other person or organisation will <b>not</b> use this information. We may send you details of other events and activities.</p>			
Signature		Date	

## **OUR WORSHIP TIMES**

Elstow Abbey welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds and provides traditional Anglican services as well as those with a modern style of worship.

### **SUNDAY SERVICES**

#### **9.00am BCP Mattins**

*The traditional Prayer Book service with sung responses and two hymns. The service lasts about 30 minutes.*

#### **10.00am Holy Communion with Sunday School**

*A Common Worship service with hymns, choir and a sermon. The service lasts about 60 minutes.*

#### **6.30pm BCP Evensong**

*The traditional Prayer Book service with sung responses, hymns and a sermon. The service lasts about 45 minutes.*

### **SERVICES FOR THE 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF THE MONTH**

#### **9.00am BCP Holy Communion (said)**

*The traditional Prayer Book Communion service. The service lasts about 30 minutes.*

#### **10.00am All-Age Contemporary Worship**

*with a worship band, short talk and involvement for all ages. The service lasts about 45 minutes*

#### **6.30pm BCP Evensong**

*The traditional Prayer Book service with sung responses, hymns and a sermon. The service lasts about 45 minutes.*

### **WEDNESDAYS**

#### **11.00am Holy Communion (said)**

*A simple said service with a short talk lasts about 30 minutes*