



# MAGAZINE

September / October 2019

70p

## ***A Prayer from the Iona Community***

*We have heard about you, God of all power. You made the world out of kindness, creating order out of confusion; you made each one of us in your own image; your fingerprint is on every soul. So we praise you.*

*We praise and worship you.*

*We have heard about you, Jesus Christ; the carpenter who left his tools and trade; the poor man who made others rich; the healer who let himself be wounded; the criminal on whom the soldiers spat not knowing they were fouling the face of God; the savior who died and rose again. So we praise you.*

*We praise and worship you.*

*We have heard about you, Holy Spirit, You broke the bonds of every race and nation, to let God speak in every tongue; you made the disciples drunk with grace; you converted souls and emptied pockets; you showed how love made all things new and opened the doors to change and freedom. So we praise you.*

*We praise and worship you.*



# Church Contacts

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Miss Chris Woollard

## **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)**

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**[www.facebook.com/Elstow Abbey](http://www.facebook.com/Elstow_Abbey)**

and on Twitter  
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# Bouys and the Bible

I have just returned from the Parish Retreat to the Scottish island of Iona. To reach Iona you have to catch a ferry from Oban (the end of the train line) to Craignure and then travel through the Isle of Mull to Fionnphort and another boat to Iona. It is always a delightful and beautiful journey.

As we set off from Craignure to Oban on our return trip the sea was in sparkling form so I sat on the outside deck revelling in the sunshine and beauty of the scenery. And of course such times frequently lead me to muse on life and other matters.

While on Iona we had a series of little talks from the Rev'd Dr Rob Marshall on the importance of Celtic Spirituality and especially Saint Columba, who brought Christianity to these shores in about 568AD.

One of the things we learned about Columba was the importance of using the Bible (God's Word) in everyday life. Columba lived by it every moment of his life, right up to his final recorded words.

Such musings were going around in my head as I contemplated the route the captain of the ferry was taking as we crossed over to Oban. He was zig-zagging about the place – but with keen intent. You see, he had to stay within the confines of the bouys that marked out the safe passage from one island to the next. The route was marked by green and red bouys.

As long as the captain of the ferry stayed within the passage marked out by these bouys, we would be safe and reach our destination.

To steer outside of the bouys would be catastrophic.

There were all kinds of hazards around the ferry – some clearly visible and others totally hidden, submerged beneath the sparkling, innocuous water.

Some people think that reading and studying the Bible is for spiritual wimps. Or that what is contained within is irrelevant and / or mere stories no longer relevant for our times. Others totally reject everything in the Bible as being written by men for mankind.

As a follower of Jesus I believe the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God that contains truths every human being needs to know and to apply to his or her life. It contains teaching for life, about life and in life. In reading, studying and applying the truths within the Bible I gain understanding and

learn what is true – what is the plumb-line of truth, truth that is God-inspired and God-centred.

In studying and becoming familiar with God's Word, I become more fully equipped to face the challenges of life. I begin to be able to discern what is false and what is true. Above all, I begin to learn more about God's heart for my life. And I also learn how to stop striving for perfection but to seek holiness.

When my world becomes difficult (as it does to most of us) it is to God's Word that I turn. Sometimes it is a verse or a phrase or even a passage that speaks into my soul and reminds me that I am not alone, that God is with me and He will sustain me. God's Word will set me free – far from being restrictive and condemning, I find purpose, affirmation, encouragement, challenge and strength.

So now I deliberately and intentionally seek to read, study, meditate, reflect, mull over, memorise (even though I am useless at memorising) words from God's Word. To help me with this I have started to write out Bible verses / passages as I come across them – sometimes on the backs of receipts, or bits of paper, other times in a notebook, other times on an app on my phone. I slip these bits of paper into various books as book marks or my wallet – so they are a source of surprise and joy. I come back to the verses at random times, rediscovering the joys of the truths within.

So for me, it is a bit like being the captain in charge of the ferry, making sure I stay within the bouys that ensure safe passage – and whether the waters of life are sparkly and smooth or rough and unpredictable – my passage is safe and secure.



The prophet Isaiah wrote ' *This is what the Lord says – your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is good for you and leads you along the paths you should follow.*' (Isaiah 48:17)

My prayer after our time away with a happy band of pilgrims from the church, is that you too will 'delight' in God's Word – and find all you need within. Because it is there.

*Fr. Paul*

# Blame the Vicar *by Sir John Betjemen*

When things go wrong it's rather tame  
To find we are ourselves to blame,  
It gets the trouble over quicker  
To go and blame things on the Vicar.

The Vicar, after all, is paid  
To keep us bright and undismayed.  
The Vicar is more virtuous too  
Than lay folks such as me and you.  
He never swears, he never drinks,  
He never should say what he thinks.  
His collar is the wrong way round,  
And that is why he's simply bound  
To be the sort of person who  
Has nothing very much to do  
But take the blame for what goes wrong  
And sing in tune at Evensong.

For what's a Vicar really for  
Except to cheer us up? What's more,  
He shouldn't ever, ever tell  
If there is such a place as Hell,  
For if there is it's certain he  
Will go to it as well as we.

The Vicar should be all pretence  
And never, never give offence.  
To preach on Sunday is his task  
And lend his mower when we ask  
And organize our village fetes  
And sing at Christmas with the waits  
And in his car to give us lifts  
And when we quarrel, heal the rifts.

To keep his family alive  
He should industriously strive  
In that enormous house he gets,  
And he should always pay his debts,  
For he has quite six pounds a week,  
And when we're rude he should be meek  
And always turn the other cheek.  
He should be neat and nicely dressed  
With polished shoes and trousers pressed,

For we look up to him as higher  
Than anyone, except the Squire.

Dear People, who have read so far,  
I know how really kind you are,  
I hope that you are always seeing  
Your Vicar as a human being,  
Making allowances when he  
Does things with which you don't agree.  
But there are lots of people who  
Are not so kind to him as you.  
So in conclusion you shall hear  
About a parish somewhat near,  
Perhaps your own or maybe not,  
And of the Vicars that it got.

One parson came and people said,  
Alas! Our former Vicar's dead!  
And this new man is far more 'Low'  
Than dear old Reverend so-and-so,  
And far too earnest in his preaching,  
We do not really like his teaching,  
He seems to think we're simply fools  
Who've never been to Sunday Schools."  
That Vicar left, and by and by

A new one came, "He's much too 'High',"  
The people said, "too like a saint,  
His incense makes our Mavis faint."  
So now he's left and they're alone  
Without a Vicar of their own.  
The living's been amalgamated  
With one next door they've always hated.

Dear readers, from this rhyme take warning,  
And if you heard the bell this morning  
Your Vicar went to pray for you,  
A task the Prayer Book bids him do.  
"Highness" or "Lowness" do not matter,  
You are the Church and must not scatter,  
Cling to the Sacraments and pray  
And God be with you every day.

# Hillersden Hall

In Volume III of 'The Victoria County History for Bedfordshire' that was published in 1912, contained a description of the two manors which existed in Elstow. Elstow Manor was also described in the Domesday Book of 1086. It has held by Countess Judith, niece of William the Conqueror (1066-1087) who founded Elstow Abbey. It comes as no surprise that the nuns of the abbey held the manor from her.

Countess Judith's lands later formed part of the 'Honour of Huntingdon' and the Abbey held Elstow from the honour, which was the overlord. The Abbey continued to hold the manor until it was dissolved by King Henry VIII in 1539 at which time it was valued at £30/17/3½. It was immediately attached to the newly created Honour of Ampthill and remained in Royal hands until the reign of King Edward VI (1547-1553). The site of Elstow Abbey and its immediate lands, called the demesne lands, was granted to Edmund Harvey in 1541. His daughter married Sir Humphrey Radcliffe (younger brother of the Earl of Sussex) and he was granted the manor in 1553 at a rent of £85/17/10 per annum. He lived at the Abbey until his death and has a memorial in the church above the altar.

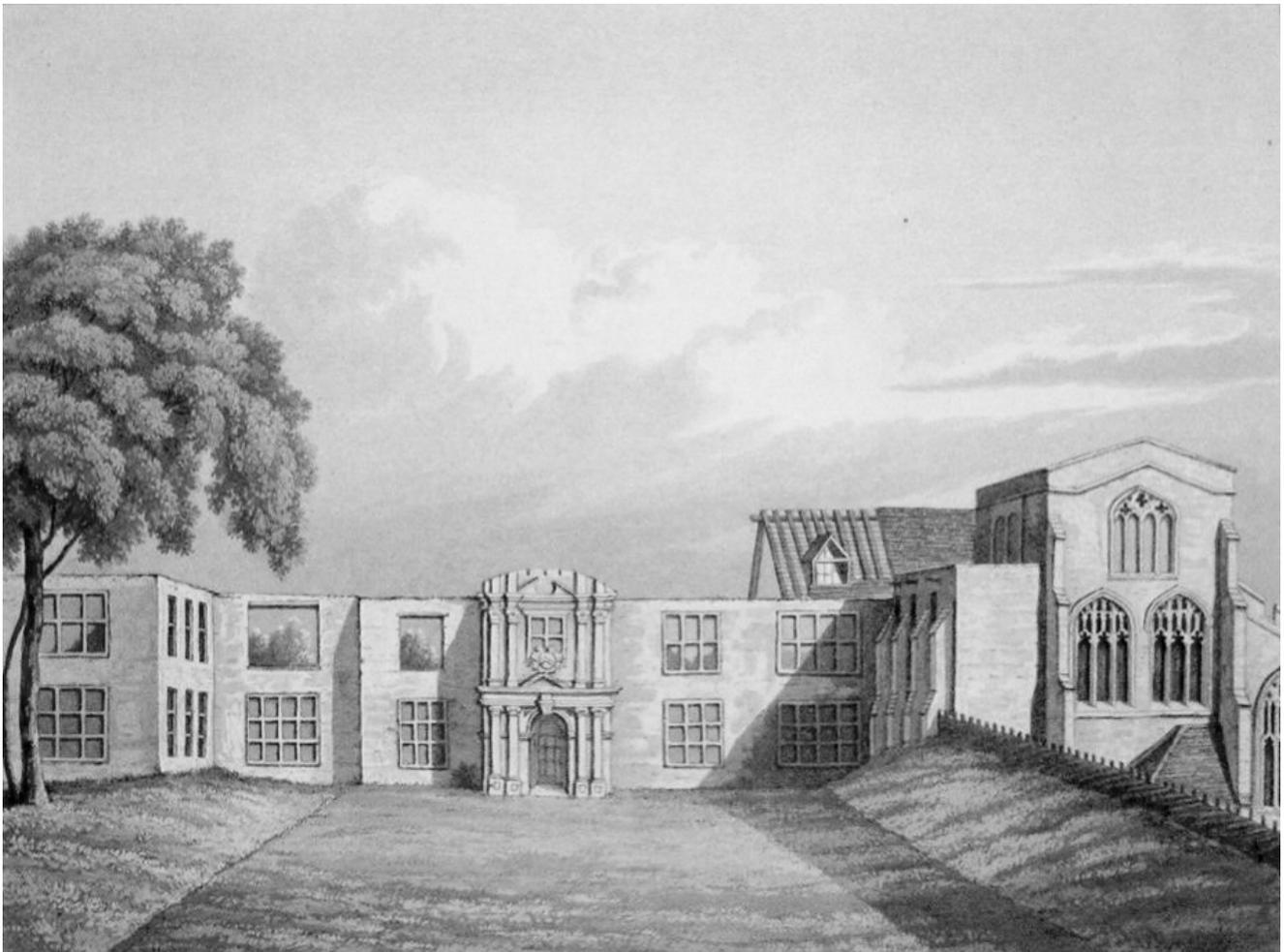
The Hillersden Mansion next to the Abbey Church is a Grade I listed building, the highest category. It was listed by the former Ministry of Works in 1952. The listing states that the house was built between 1620 and 1630 (this is not entirely accurate) for Thomas Hillersdon and incorporated parts of the 14th century west and south cloisters of Elstow Abbey, which had been dissolved in 1539. The walls are coursed rubble and red brick with ashlar facings and the porch is faced with Totternhoe clunch and is otherwise red brick. The house originally joined the church. The ruins of the building is now also a scheduled ancient monument.

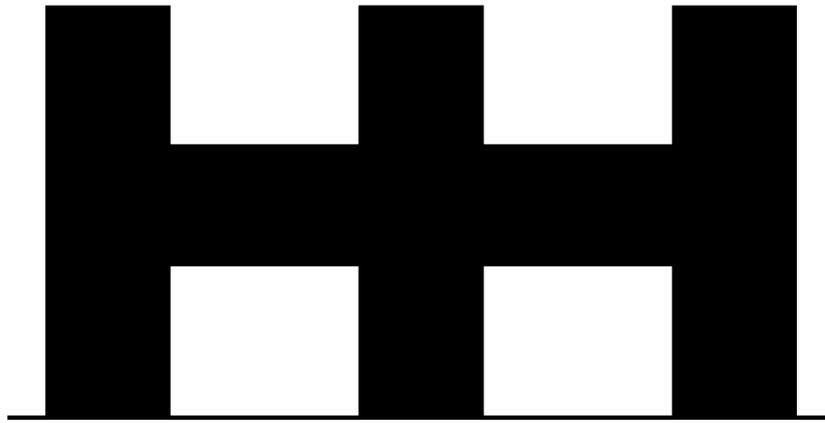
In 1616 Sir Thomas Hillersdon bought Elstow Manor from Edward Radcliffe and Thomas Cheeke for £700. Hillersdon obviously thought he needed an imposing Manor House to go with his new status as Lord of the Manor and began building the mansion accordingly. Volume V produced by Bedfordshire Historical Record Society in 1919 includes a transcription of the will of Sir Thomas Hillersdon's son, also Thomas, dating from 28th August 1632 and made just before he died as the will was proved just a fortnight later. He was only 21 at the time of his death. He wanted to be

buried in the chancel of the church next to his father and he bequeathed £500 to his wife Margaret to finish building the Mansion.

The Victoria County History for Bedfordshire states that the house was still standing in 1759 when it was described as attached to the church and as having a large window "in the body of it". A survey of 1767 for Dennis Farrer Hillersdon states that the house was leased by a man named Wells and that Mansion and gardens together extended over 10 acres.

A survey for the new Lord of the Manor, Samuel Whitbread, in 1781 does not mention the Mansion clearly implying that it was no longer fit for habitation and in the Bedfordshire pages of his Magna Britannia Lysons in 1806 says the house was "now in ruins, the greater part of it having been pulled down a few years ago". This all suggests that the dismantling took place between 1767 and 1781. In 1978 the ruins were stabilised and partially restored, and then again extensive work was carried out to the ruins in 2011 in preparation for the building of a new multi-purpose hall.





# HILLERSDEN HALL

HERITAGE. COMMUNITY. EDUCATION.

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A new name and new logo for our new Hall.

After deciding to name our new hall 'Hillersden Hall' we were left with the dilemma as to the correct spelling. So we asked the County Archeologist David Baker for help. He told us that the spelling had to be 'Hillersden'. That is what is used throughout Wigram's history, in the History of Parliament, in the Victoria County History and on the Bedfordshire Archives web-site and indexes.

However on the memorials within the Abbey Church, it's Thomas Hillersdon 1656 and John Hillersdon 1684. All 11 of Wigram's entries are however Hillersden; the Bedfordshire Archives use both, probably because others do. The respected first curator of Bedford Museum and local historian FW Kuhlicke useden. Historic England (English Heritage) useson.

So it's a muddle, though 'o' does seem to be better grounded than 'e'. The quaintness of history.

So why the renewed interest in the Hall Project, after all you've been talking about it and raising money for what seems like ages! We are pleased to say that we have now secured enough funding to be able to make a start.

**Yes we really are going to start building a new hall!**

We hope that next Autumn contractors will move onto the site and start the delicate process of building the foundations for the new hall.

Hillersden Hall will be built in four phases. The first phase is already complete. The renovation and structural work done to the ruins of Hillersden Manor were completed in 2011. Phase two will see the ground works taking place with further archaeological investigations and a concrete base that sits above the ground. Phase three will be installing the building shell on top of the base with phase four being the internal fittings.

To help explain this further we are holding a re-launch weekend on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> & Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September. For that weekend we will have a giant marquee where the Hall will be built showing plans, drawings and images of the new hall along with a fascinating display of photo's from the major archaeological dig that took place between 1965-1972.

From 10.00am – 4.00pm on the Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September the marquee will be open, with a 'Pop-up' café. Then on Sunday morning we will hold our morning All Age Worship in the tent followed by a bring and share lunch.

If you are able to help in anyway over the weekend we would be really appreciative. We need cakes for the 'Pop-up' café and food for the Sunday lunch. But most importantly we need **YOU!** We need volunteers to help run the 'pop-up' café and to meet and greet.

Hillersden Hall is not just a church hall. As our logo proudly says it is about our Heritage, Education and Community. Do come and support the weekend, and why not bring your neighbours too!

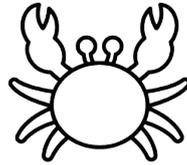




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# Little Pilgrims

**For Babies, Toddlers and Pre-school children  
with their Carers – All Welcome**

**Tuesday Mornings 10:00am – 11:30am  
Elstow Abbey Church**

*Story & song time, messy play, toys  
and refreshments*

# Space Station Elstow!

Every year, as one holiday club ends, we plan the theme for the following year. In July 2018, after prayerful consideration, we made the decision to hold a space themed holiday club in 2019. The dates weren't set, the material didn't exist – but Elstow Abbey would become a space station for a week.

Fast forward 12 months to the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> July (just as the schools broke up for summer). The team moved in to create our spaceship, complete with suspended planets and flashing lights. We were amazed to learn that the weekend marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Moon landing – a real “God-incidence” and a sign for us all to recognise God's hand in our endeavours.

The weather was fantastic (all seven gazebos remained standing for the whole week); the children were incredibly well-behaved and polite, and entered into our mission with enthusiasm; and the adult helpers, team leaders and young leaders were truly amazing as we set off across the cosmos on our journey to discover why our creator God, who made such an awesome universe should care for each one of us.

Special mentions for Cyrus, Hannah and Bethany who stepped up to help with the presentations each day, to Michelle for organising the physical activities and to the ladies who supplied the coffee and biscuits. We are so grateful to **everyone** who came along, helped and encouraged – we couldn't do it without you!

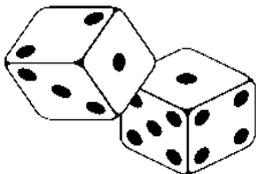
More than seventy children participated in “Space Pilgrims” this year and we welcomed 150 to the family BBQ on Friday evening; some new faces and some who return year after year. Over the past 12 holiday clubs I have reached the conclusion that our Holiday club is not really about filling pews on Sundays, but it is allowing God to sow seeds in the lives of those who come, so that sometime in the future they will bear fruit. We hold all of our “Space Pilgrims”, their families and our amazing holiday club team in our prayers. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year and welcoming many more as we (spoiler alert) “BUILD” on this outreach.

*Tracey Hinson*



**Elstow Abbey**  
Church of St Mary & St Helena

**Beetle** 



**Drive**

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 7.00pm,  
£10 (includes Fish 'n' Chip supper)  
at **Wixams Retirement Village**  
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT EITHER CHURCH  
OR THE RETIREMENT VILLAGE



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Sunday, Monday*  
10.00am – 4.00pm  
(weather permitting)

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# SEPTEMBER

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September

9.00am BCP Sung Mattins

10:00am Holy Communion

6.30pm BCP Evensong

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September

11:00am Holy Communion (said)

11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter

7.15pm WI meeting on Vestry

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September

7.00pm – 8.30pm Take a deep breath choir

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September

9.30am Iona Morning Prayer

1.30pm Wedding

## Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September

9.00am BCP Sung Mattins

10:00am Holy Communion

12noon Christening Service

6.30pm BCP Evensong

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September

10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September

11:00am Holy Communion (said)

11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September

7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September

9.30am Iona Morning Prayer

12noon Wedding

## Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September

9.00am BCP Sung Mattins

10:00am Holy Communion

6.30pm BCP Evensong

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September

10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'

7.30pm PCC meeting

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September

11:00am Holy Communion (said)

11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September

7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September

9.30am Iona Morning Prayer

10.00am – 4.00pm Hillersden Hall Exhibition & Café

4.00pm Pilgrims Praise

6.00pm – 7.30pm Hillersden Hall Drinks Reception

## Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

9:00am Holy Communion (said)

10.00am All Age Tent Worship in Hillersden Hall

3.00pm Christening Service

6.30pm BCP Holy Communion

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September

10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September

11:00am Holy Communion (said)

11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September

7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September

6.15pm – Wixams Cubs Bellringing

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September

9.30am Iona Morning Prayer

2.00pm Wedding

## Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September

9.00am BCP Sung Mattins

10:00am Holy Communion

6.30pm Taizé Worship

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September

7.30pm 'Friends' of Elstow Abbey meeting

# OCTOBER

Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> October	10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> October	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter 7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October	9.30am Iona Morning Prayer
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> October	9.00am BCP Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 12noon Christening Service 6.30pm BCP Evensong
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October</b>	10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> October	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> October	7.15pm WI meeting on Vestry 7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	6.00pm Wixams Beavers bellringing
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	9.30am Iona Morning Prayer
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> October	9.00am BCP Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 6.30pm BCP Evensong
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October</b>	10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> October	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> October	7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> October	9.30am Iona Morning Prayer
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	9.00am BCP Sung Mattins 10:00am Holy Communion 3.00pm Christening Service 6.30pm BCP Evensong
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	10:00am – 11:30am 'Little Pilgrims'
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October	7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> October	9.30am Iona Morning Prayer
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> October	4.00pm Pilgrims Praise
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	9:00am Holy Communion (said) 10.00am All Age Worship 6.30pm BCP Holy Communion
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> October	11:00am Holy Communion (said) 11:30am – 12:30pm Soup and Natter
Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> October	7.00pm – 8.30pm Take A Deep Breath Choir

## **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 Holy Communion (said)**

*A simple said service lasts about 25 minutes*

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

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

#### **6.30pm BCP Holy Communion**

*The traditional Prayer Book Communion service with 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*

### **EVENING SERVICE WHEN THERE IS A 5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF THE MONTH**

#### **6.30pm Taizé Worship**

*A service of prayer, song and contemplation*