

An Invitation to Discover Our Churches This Summer

All are welcome in our sacred spaces

As we continue to enjoy the warmth of summer, with some very hot days too, I find myself reflecting on the quiet treasures nestled at the heart of our communities here in the Axe Valley Mission Community — our churches. These buildings, with their ancient stones and beautiful stained glass windows, are so much more than relics of the past or venues for Sunday worship. They are sanctuaries of peace, full of history, and cool spaces waiting to be enjoyed by all.

This summer, I extend a heartfelt invitation: step inside. Whether you are a member of the local community, a curious visitor, a lover of history, or someone simply in need of a moment's rest, our churches are open—and they are yours to discover. We have eight beautiful churches in our team, based around The Minster in Axminster: Holy Cross, Membury, All Saints, Chardstock, Uplyme, Combyne and Axmouth.

Our churches have stood through centuries of change, sheltering all who seek solace within their walls. They are places to sit quietly, to reflect, to pray, or simply to marvel at the artistry and craftsmanship of those who built them. Why not make a day of it, a mini-pilgrimage around them all!

Our churches are alive not only in the present, but with the stories of all who have passed before us—stories etched into memorial plaques, illuminated in windows, or hidden above in the angels gazing down.

Summer is a time for celebration. Look out across our villages for fêtes, cafes, recitals and weddings all bringing people together. Why not check the church noticeboard for upcoming events, from flower festivals to organ concerts, from art exhibitions to open gardens? Many of these are free, and all are opportunities to enjoy the beauty of these remarkable places.

Why not enjoy a moment of stillness in the heart and heat of a busy day. Our churches belong to everyone. This summer, let's make the most of our beautiful churches. And who knows, perhaps we'll bump into some of you — with your walking sticks or cycling helmets, with your camera or your notepad, with your questions or your quiet prayers. The doors are open. The welcome is real.

With every blessing,

Rev Nicky