

# St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

September 2025



## A Season of Ripening

This fine, dry summer has painted the hills in golden hues and filled the air with a warmth which seems to slow time itself. Walking amongst the vines at Gatcombe Estate, one cannot help but notice the ripening grapes—tight clusters hanging heavy on the vine, quietly promising a harvest soon to come. There's a sense of expectancy in the air, a stillness filled with purpose.

In Scripture, vineyards are often used to reveal truths about God's Kingdom and our relationship with Him. Jesus says in John 15:5, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit." As the grapes swell in the sun, nourished by their rooted connection, so too are we called to stay connected to Christ, drawing life and strength from Him.

Just as the vineyard workers prepare for harvest, we too are called to be ready—to tend our lives with care, to watch for God's timing, and to trust that the fruit we bear in Him will be used for His glory.

May the fruits of this summer be a time of deepening faith, quiet ripening, and joyful expectation. *Leonie Terry*



## A Grand Day Out at the Show!

A perfect summer's day. A glorious, traditional Village Show with amazing exhibits. Scrumptious cakes and teas. Fun and laughter. What more could one want to create a wonderful 'feel good' factor. Revd Chris Bradish - our Team Rector, based at The Minster - opened the Show and was truly delighted to experience it. A huge thanks to those who organise it.

St Olave's Church was pleased to be invited to play its small part with a repeat of the Wine and Water lottery. It never ceases to amaze us by how popular it is and the fun it generates. The anticipation on people's faces as they unwrap a bottle covered in newspaper... will it be wine or will it be water is nail biting! Anticipation heightens when one wonders whether the three clergy present *could* change water into wine.....no they couldn't! However, along with others, it was good natured disappointment and many did go away with wine

Thank you to all who donated the bottles (and wrapped them up!). That meant a welcome £200 was added to St Olave's funds for its upkeep.

*Hilary Jones*

**Glorious winners of the Tug o' War competition, the team from St Olave's, *With God on our Side!* included Revd Charlotte of the West Wight Benefice, and Revds Chris and Steve from Gatcombe.**



## In Your Prayers...

You know exactly what a mess we're making of the wonderful world you gave us at the moment, Lord.

We have wars and conflicts, displaced peoples, disease and famine. We are ruining our beautiful world and not appreciating all our blessings.

Please hear us when we pray to you for guidance and help us to listen, so we all try and live the amazing life you have given us, in peace, thoughtfulness and love. Amen Harriet Robinson



The Baptism of  
Elsie  
took place on  
Sunday August 24th  
at St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

The Baptism of  
Henry  
took place on  
Sunday August 31st  
at St Olave's Church, Gatcombe



## Services at St Olave's in September

Sunday 7 September	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 14 September	11am	Morning Worship <i>Please do stay afterwards for coffee and cake</i>
Sunday 21 September	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 28 September	<b>** NO SERVICE AT ST OLAVE'S</b>	

**\*\* There will be a 8am Holy Communion at St Mary's Church, Carisbrooke, and an 11am Jazz Eucharist at The Minster**

The Marriage of  
Grace Hill & Bruce Fitzpatrick  
took place on  
Saturday August 2nd  
at St Olave's Church, Gatcombe



## Strawberry Cream Tea

What a day! Donna, Carol, and I would like to thank everyone for attending our first foray into fund-raising for our church on Saturday 16th August.

To see St O's filled with a happy vibrant crowd of 65 enjoying a sumptuous strawberry cream tea, accompanied with cake, in a warm atmosphere to match the weather in a church filled with sunshine was a blessing to behold.

We would also like to thank all those that gave their time to help us in setting up and clearing away, especially Tim, and Julie for her tray bakes.

The afternoon, including the raffle and donations, raised £700 for church funds.

It was challenging work, but we enjoyed the experience and have plans for future events to bring the community together and encourage people into our beautiful church, so watch this space. Steve Denness





## Harvest Festival

**Please join us on Sunday October 12th at 11am to celebrate our Harvest Festival.**

**Your gifts of non-perishable foods would be very welcome and all donations will be divided between the IW Food Bank and RABI (Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute).**

## Ride+Stride for Churches 2025

Visit unique historic buildings, see beautiful countryside, get some exercise and have fun with the family!

Ride+Stride is a sponsored bike ride or walk in which people walk or cycle between churches. St Olave's will be open on Saturday 13th September to welcome walking and cycling visitors with refreshments and space to explore the building.

For more information and participating churches visit - <https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/events/2025/09/13/ride-stride-2025/>

## Coffee Morning for St O's

It seems ages ago but because of the summer break there hasn't been a news sheet for two months, so a very belated thank you to everyone who helped with the coffee morning we held in Chillerton Village Hall on Saturday July 5th.

As always, it was very well attended and everyone had a brilliant time with cake, coffee and chat. We raised nearly £300 for church funds.

A huge thank you to the table movers, the cake makers and servers, the washer uppers, the sales table crew, the raffle supremo and raffle prize givers and all who rolled up their sleeves to help. Gold stars and thanks to all.

Harriet Robinson

## Biosphere Festival at St Olave's

St Olave's was part of the 2025 Biosphere Festival in the form of a 50 minute guided visit to the church and churchyard led by Richard Smout. The Isle of Wight was designated by UNESCO as a Biosphere Reserve in 2019 for its ecological and its cultural diversity. It is therefore the interaction between human residents and the environment in which they live which is being celebrated in the festival. The visit was given the title "St Olave's: a witness to change."

A total of twenty people attended the two walks that were offered. As the title implies, the aim was to give visitors a greater understanding of the church and its history, but also see how the natural world in which St Olave's sits, and our attitude to it, has changed over the years.

The weather was fine and hot, although less oppressive than it had been the previous day. It did mean that the bulk of the event was held inside the church where it was cooler and there was shade. In addition to a traditional introduction to the church building and the many delights that it possesses, we looked at how Gatcombe Parish had been carved out of the Anglo-Saxon parish of Carisbrooke, and spent a little time on place names: Gatcombe meaning "goat valley" and Ramsdown being likely to refer to wild garlic, or ramsons, rather than sheep being grazed on the local downland.

We looked at how the ability to choose the next rector, the advowson, had at one stage been acquired by the local landowners, and how in the early 19th century the Campbells at Gatcombe House had redesigned the local roads to push back the Carisbrooke to Chillerton road further from their home, and give them more privacy.

Churchwardens had been responsible for the control of what were regarded as pests, and in Gatcombe moles, stoats, and in particular sparrows (and other seed-eating birds) were taken, sometimes in huge numbers. Other species have been introduced, such as foxes in 1845. Badgers were re-introduced in the 1920s, having died out on the Island at the end of the nineteenth century. Outside in the churchyard a number of the species that we take for granted are in fact introductions from the Mediterranean from the 16th and 17th century, including ivy-leaved toadflax, red valerian, and (from a little later) the tiny plant called "mind-your-own-business." Other plants were regarded as of being of medicinal value. A single foxglove was in flower, while herb, bennett was St Benedict's Herb, believed to have been used in a cordial to ward off the plague and bad breath. The churchyard is well provided with ferns, a group of plants much sought after by collectors in the 19th century.

Many thanks to everyone who came and supported this event. It was very clear how fond people across the Island are of St Olave's church and churchyard in the feedback given after the event. Richard Smout



## Big Butterfly Count

Following on from the count of butterflies at St Olave's last year, the exercise was repeated in 2025.

The same number of species was seen in both years, although there were many fewer individual butterflies seen this time. This may have been due to slightly fresher temperatures but also to the fact that last year's count was eight days earlier, on 29th July, rather than 6th August, and a number of the species seen in 2024 are now past their peak. Food plants like brambles are starting to fruit whereas last year there were lots of flowers, particularly in the churchyard extension, which were a source of nectar.

No examples of Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper or Small White were observed, although all of these were around this year in July. Numbers of Meadow Brown have dropped dramatically between the two counts, but numbers of this species were also strong earlier in the year. Three new species were found: Red Admiral, Large White and Comma, and it was good to see that the most numerous species was Green-Veined White, about which there has been concern after a particularly poor year in 2024.



The results have been submitted to the Big Butterfly Count website, and may help to identify long-term trends in butterfly populations. *Richard Smout*

**STOP PRESS - Gardening in the Community at St Olave's - Monday September 1st - 9.30am to noon. THANK YOU.**

## Dates for 2025!!

### **Sorry to Mention the C - Word!**

Yes, Christmas is coming. We are holding our **Merry Christmas Market** in the church on the Saturday 1st November.



The wonderful artisan crafters are all booked to sell their amazing gifts. St Olave's stall for church funds is going to be A Chocolate Tombola. It's not too early to start handing in donations of anything chocolatey. Boxes, bags, bars would all be wonderful. Harriet, Leonie and Hilary will all be collecting the donations and they can, of course, be brought into church on a Sunday. If anyone could help on the day or make cakes for St Olave's Coffee Shop please contact Harriet 07833311674.

Also in November, St Olave's is running the Chillerton Village Quiz on Friday 14th November in the Gallybagger Inn at 7.30pm. Please make up a team and come along to support us.

**All funds raised from both of these events will help to support St Olave's Church**

## Contact Us

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