

St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

December 2025/
January 2026



Hello friends,

Ahh... it's good to be back in harness and writing to you lovely people. But, how can it be that we are already at the end of the year? The days do fly by, don't they? It only seems like two minutes ago we were enjoying a wonderful summer. A time of relaxation and fun for so many of us.

I thoroughly enjoyed my holiday in beautiful Italy, by train once more. I love taking the train, I must admit. Train travel through France and Italy is extremely reasonable in price, especially for solo travellers like me. It's also good for the environment and I get the opportunity to meet new people along the way. You know what I'm like... I love listening to people's life stories and chatting away is one of my life's pleasures. I'm always amazed, especially when I'm abroad, at just how similar we human beings are. We may well appreciate different cultures, but we are so incredibly similar with our needs and desires for life.



And at Christmas time for so many of us, right around the world, we experience afresh the love and hope that comes directly from the Christmas message. It is a message that unifies and binds us together and reminds us of the joy that life can bring.

For many people, this past year will be one that they wish to forget, it may have brought heartache and sadness. But at the darkest time of the year, we can create some light and appreciate the joy that the Christmas Message brings.

I regularly say to people, that in life, we frequently cannot control sadness. It often happens without any involvement from ourselves. But we can control happiness because we can create it. And many of us choose to create happiness at Christmas because the Christmas Message enables us to.

The hope that the Birth of Jesus Christ brings to this weary world is a powerful message for all people. But the only reason it is such a powerful message is because of his ministry that followed. By reminding us all of the infinite love that God has for us. Every single one of us.

The Christmas Message has the power to move me every year. Amidst the challenges of life, the adversities that so many of us endure throughout the year, the pain and sadness that exists around the world, the Christmas message breaks through all of that and enables us to celebrate.

So, my dear friends, in whatever capacity you can, please celebrate the gift of life, the gift of Jesus Christ, and the hope that he brings to you this Christmas. And may I, on behalf of the entire ministry team, wish you a Christmas that is filled with love and a New Year that is full of hope.

With love, Revd Steve xxxx



Please join us at
**St Olave's Church on
Sunday 21st December at 6.30pm for our
Nine Lessons & Carols Service....**

...and stay afterwards for mince pies and
non-alcoholic fruit punch

Our collection this year will be for The Salvation Army

In Your Prayers...

Lord, as we prepare and look forward to Christmas celebrations in church and at home with friends and family, may we be aware of those who might not be celebrating - the homeless, the bereaved and the sick.

Give us open eyes and hearts Lord.
Amen

Christine Heal



**The Baptism of
Loki
took place on
Sunday 9th November at
St Olave's Church, Gatcombe**



**The Baptism of
Noah
took place on
Sunday 16th November at
St Olave's Church, Gatcombe**

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation at the Remembrance Day Service, together with the generous donations for the hand made poppies, St Olave's was able to make a donation of £288 to the Royal British Legion.



Services at St Olave's for December & January

Sunday 7 December	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 14 December	11am	Service of the Word <i>Please stay afterwards for coffee and cake</i>
Sunday 21 December	6.30pm	Nine Lessons and Carols Service
Thursday 25 December	11am	Family Service of Carols, Prayers and Readings
Sunday 28 December		No Service at St Olave's **
Sunday 4 January	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 11 January	11am	Service of the Word <i>Please stay afterwards for coffee and cake</i>
Sunday 18 January	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 25 January	11am	Holy Communion

** Although there will be no service at St Olave's on Sunday 28th December, there will be a Holy Communion Service at St John's Church, Newport at 9.30am.

The Gift of Kindness



No shiny paper, ribbons or gift tags needed...some of the best gifts can't be wrapped.

We send our love and prayers to those who, for whatever reason, may not be looking forward to this Christmas.

Lest We Forget

St Olave's Remembrance Day Service was held on Sunday 9th November. The church was decorated with poppies and The Roll of Honour, listing the war dead of the two World Wars, was placed by the chancel steps.

The service was taken by Richard Smout. Louise Parsons read the first lesson for us and also rang the bell before and after the two minutes silence. Surgeon Commander, Michael Terry read out The Roll of Honour and Sir John Hobart read the Exhortation and the Kohima Epitaph.

As always at St Olave's we are very grateful to Lyndon Jones for his beautiful organ playing for the hymns and the *National Anthem* and his very special playing of *O Valiant Hearts*.

After the service coffee and cake were served to the congregation. A special thanks to Richard Morrison and his daughter for the delicious cakes.

Harriet Robinson



With All Best Wishes for the Future...



May 21st 1969 Brockenhurst

Following the Remembrance Day Service, Richard Smout gave a few words of thanks to Joanna Shepherd and her late husband, Roger for all their years of service and love for the church.

Joanna is moving to the mainland to be nearer her family and will be much missed by all of us. She was presented with a beautiful framed photograph of the Pre-Raphaelite window over the altar, flowers and a card with a picture of the church in the Spring, conveying our love and thanks.



May 21st 2019 Roslin

Christmas Market

What a splendid event this was. BUSTLING! BUSY! BRIGHT! BEAUTIFUL! BONHOMIE a-plenty! Utterly BRILLIANT!

Indeed, it was all of the above thanks largely to Liz and Harriet with their amazing organisational skills. Liz has worked tirelessly over many years now to contact and befriend the stall holders who consider this one of their favourite venues. Harriet, with her notebooks, jots everything down so that nothing is forgotten from advertising to sellotape and string, (she must have a mountain of notebooks).

Of course their wonderful team of helpers deserve applause too; furniture-removers, setter-uppers, cake makers, coffee shop servers, stall holders, washer-uppers, runners, providers (especially chocolate this year!) tidy-uppers. THANK YOU, GANG and to all those who supported the occasion.

It all ran like clockwork and was a huge success raising £375 for the Wight Cardiac Rehab Unit and £599.40 for St Olave's Church.

Hilary Jones



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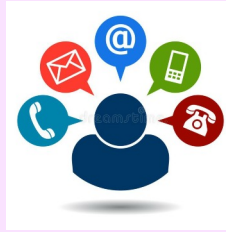
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Christmas Spruce-Up!

Can you spare an hour (or more!) on Monday 15th December between 9.30am and noon to help with our Big Church Clean Up? Or help with the Community Gardeners as they tidy up the churchyard before Christmas?

Please bring dusters, cleaning products and cloths or secateurs and trowels etc. There will be coffee and mince pies to keep everybody going!!



As usual, we are combining the December and January's News...we'll be back with you for February...



St O's Quiz!!

St Olave's organised the Chillerton and Gatcombe Village Quiz in November. It was so well supported that there was absolutely no more room at The Gallybagger Inn.

Nine church supporters and members of the church congregation set a round of ten questions each, depending on their area of expertise. This led to brilliant and different questions, including a music round and a very local picture round.

It was a close run thing, with four teams tying for The Wooden Spoon at the finish, and Divine Intervention, (the team from the four benefice churches, and including Revd Steve), coming from behind by playing their joker in the last round and winning by a whisker.

Everyone was very generous in giving prizes for the raffle and buying tickets for it, and a magnificent £240 was raised for church funds. Thank you to all who helped; it was such a happy event. We are hosting the quiz again in August next year.

Harriet Robinson



COMING EVENTS!!

Our final fund-raising event for 2025 is the monthly Village Market/Coffee Morning at **Chillerton Village Hall** on **Saturday 6th December** from **10am until noon**. Please join us for more homemade cake.... meet up with friends for a chat or make some lovely new ones!!

Can we just take this opportunity to thank everybody for their support for St Olave's throughout 2025