

St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

February 2026



Hello friends,

And although it's now February, let me wish you all a very Happy New Year! May 2026 bring you all, happiness and love and may the year be filled with special memories for the future.

As I write this piece, it's raining again. We've had a run of cold, wet weather recently which does nothing to help us get rid of those January blues does it? Brrr... those balmy sunny days of summer seem a long way off, don't they?!

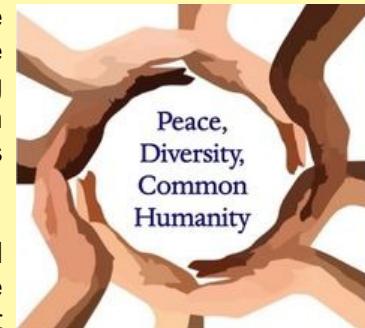
Amidst my obsession with all things weather related, I am reminded of a couple who I was talking to, many years ago when I worked in WH Smith, Newport. The couple, who lived in Gibraltar back then, came to England each year during February, because they missed the rain. For them, part of the UK's attraction were the changing seasons. Whereas in Gibraltar, I was told, the weather is generally settled all year round.

The couple helped me, whilst then in my youth, to think about how we all appreciate different things in life. How, under the umbrella of humanity, we are a uniquely and wonderfully diverse group of people. Who appreciate different things, act in different ways and think about things in a totally unique manner.

During the Christmas Carol Service at St Olave's Church, I was deeply moved as the almost capacity crowd of over 100 people, sang in unison that great carol 'O come all ye faithful.' As we sung, I was reminded of how I imagine heaven might be like. All the richness and diversity of humanity completely unified. In this respect singing together the great carol of praise and thanksgiving.

As we look towards 2026, with renewed hope for a more settled world and country, may we all reflect upon the beauty of our uniqueness. And may we, reflect upon the good that is in all people. A good that our Creator yearns for us to recognise and nurture.

Happy New Year! With love, Revd Steve xxxx



Coffee Morning Past!!

It seems a long time ago now but St Olave's held a Christmas Coffee Morning in Chillerton Village Hall in December.

This was too late to be included in the December/January news sheet but does, I think need to be mentioned and thank-yous given to all who helped.

It was the usual fun Christmas event with Christmas decorations on the tables, a sales table and raffle, cakes galore and the helpers in Christmas jumpers and headdresses.

The atmosphere was as usual, welcoming and the noise was of happy people chatting and enjoying the morning. An amazing £457 was raised for church funds.

A huge thank you to all the brilliant helpers who made the event such a success. Harriet Robinson

Jazz Evening!!

A fabulous evening of Jazz, Latin and Blues at St Olave's on Saturday 7th March at 7pm.

Sparks Duo will be entertaining you!

Enjoy cheese & biscuits and a glass of wine.

**Tickets cost £12 each.
Booking is essential - contact Donna on 07701 306729**

All proceeds help to support St Olave's.

In Your Prayers...

A Prayer for the New Year

Gracious God, as we step into the cold light of January, we lift our hearts to you in a world that often feels unstable and worrying. We pray earnestly for peace to settle upon troubled lands. Grant profound wisdom and a spirit of humility to our world leaders, that they might seek the path of reconciliation over conflict.



We ask for your protection and aid for all those caught up in violence; may they find refuge, hope, and the practical help they need. In the midst of global uncertainty, we give heartfelt thanks for the warmth of our own community and the steadfastness of our friends. *Amen.* Leonie Terry

**The Funeral of
Angela Mary (Jill) Brown
was held on
Monday 12th January 2026
at Gatcombe Church**



Services at St Olave's for February

Sunday 1 February	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 8 February	11am	Service of the Word <i>Please stay afterwards for coffee and cake</i>
Sunday 15 February	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 22 February	11am	Holy Communion

**There will be a service of
Holy Communion on Ash
Wednesday at The Minster on
Wednesday 18th
February, starting at 6.30pm.**



Angela Mary (Jill) Brown 12th January 1930 - 12th December 2025

The funeral of Jill Brown was held at St Olave's Church on Monday 12th January to remember and celebrate her long and full life. She was a regular worshipper at St Olave's over many decades and said that she first came as a young girl with her father.

Her funeral was attended by family and friends who were joined by many from the Island's farming community. Jill was an active member of many country pursuits. Her son, David wrote a beautiful Eulogy and the service ended with the familiar hymn, 'We Plough the Fields and Scatter.'

Your Church Matters!!

At our last Church Council meeting in January, Parish Council Chair, Julia Laursen attended to discuss the siting, near the church, of a new public notice board. It was reported that our own Church notice board now has the correct information and contact details on it.



Other maintenance issues were also discussed. As you might imagine, a building which is over 800 years old requires a lot of maintenance! In recent weeks a broken finial has been repaired; minor electrical issues have been checked; a leaking standpipe has been repaired; the stretch of laurel hedging has been cut back as required before the end of February; a leak in the vestry roof was rectified; several large areas of flaking plaster on the interior walls do need some urgent repairs, and as St Olave's will be holding eleven weddings in 2026, we agreed that our beautiful church should be looking its best! Looking ahead we have the Quinquennial Inspection (a five yearly report on the fabric of the building) and the Electrical Inspection is due too this year.

Of course all of this, along with our Parish Share payment which supports the work of Clergy and the Diocese, costs a considerable amount of money. Our fund-raisers work tirelessly to support all elements of St Olave's responsibilities. Thus preserving the mission of St Olave's Church across the parish for a great many years to come. To this end, this newsletter is now circulated via YPM, so that the wider community has an increased awareness of this mission. *Jill Webster (PCC Secretary)*

Christmas Services at St Olave's

A Night of Light and Song: Nine Lessons and Carols

On the evening of 21st December, St Olave's Church was the destination for our traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols. It was a joy to see the church packed to the rafters, with over 100 people gathered to hear the timeless story of the Nativity.

Led by Revd Steve, the service moved through the familiar sequence of scripture and carols, tracing the journey from the first shadows of the fall to the bright hope of the manger. The atmosphere was one of reflection with voices filling the ancient building with enthusiastic singing.

The warmth continued long after the final blessing, as everyone stayed to enjoy mince pies and plenty of warming mulled drinks. It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up with neighbours and friends old and new. Thank you to everyone who helped with the catering and to all who came to make it such a vibrant celebration



A Joyful Christmas Morning at St Olave's

There was a tangible sense of warmth and wonder at St Olave's Church this Christmas morning as our community gathered to celebrate the birth of Christ. The service, led with characteristic heart and energy by Revd Emma Cooksey, was a beautiful reminder of the joy at the centre of the season.

With no organ or choir, the responsibility for the music fell entirely to those in the pews. The congregation sang every carol a cappella, allowing the familiar words of 'Go Tell it on the Mountain' and 'O Come All Ye Faithful' to resonate round the church.

The spirit of participation continued as Revd Emma engaged everyone with a creative 'pass the parcel' sermon. As the music played and the layers of wrapping were peeled away, each revealed a different symbol of the Christmas story, inviting us to unwrap the meaning of the incarnation for ourselves.

Of course, Christmas is a time for sweetness, and there was plenty of chocolate to go around! It was a service defined by laughter, song, and a profound sense of togetherness. A huge thank you to Revd Emma and to everyone who lent their voice to such a memorable morning. Leonie Terry

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A List of the Fund Raising events for St Olave's coming up this year. Put them in your diary now as you don't want to miss any.

All too soon ...on Saturday February 7th St Olave's is hosting the Coffee Morning at Chillerton Village Hall from 10am till noon. As always great cake and great company!!!

A special evening of Jazz, Latin and Blues at St Olave's Saturday 7th March at 7pm.
Tickets cost £12 each. Booking is essential - contact Donna on 07701 306729
A new and exciting event. Don't miss this one!

Chillerton and Gatcombe are holding their brilliant Scarecrow Festival again this year over the May Bank Holiday half term. St Olave's will as usual put up a scarecrow outside the church which will be one of a hundred in the parish, and will be running the Aunt Sally's Tea Room at the village hall on Tuesday 26th May. 11am to 4pm. Please support us and the whole parish in this event.

Saturday 6th June see us holding the Coffee Morning in Chillerton Village Hall again from 10am till noon.
Time for homemade cake and chat with friends.

Don't forget the Chillerton and Gatcombe Village Show on Chillerton Green on Saturday 25th of July.
We will be having our *Guess if it's Water or Wine* Stall. Come and see if you can be lucky, and enjoy a traditional village show.

On Friday 14th of August we will be hosting the Quiz at the Gallybagger at 7.30pm.
So get a team together and come and join us for a fun evening.

Saturday 22nd of August will be the amazing Summer Cream Tea at the church.
Details of tickets and times in later news sheets, but put the date in your diary ready.

October 3rd sees our last Coffee Morning of the Year at Chillerton Village Hall 10am till noon as usual. Cake and conversation.

Finally the amazing Merry Christmas Craft Market will be held in the church on Saturday 7th of November for all your early Christmas shopping.

What a lot of dates and exciting things to come. Fill them all in on the calendar or in the diary so you don't miss any and see further details in future news sheets.

Happy 2026!!

