

St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

April 2026



Hello friends,

As we look towards Easter and the joy of Spring is now firmly back in our lives, isn't it uplifting to sense that air of optimism once again? The winter months are now firmly behind us. And with them, the gloom, the cold and the seemingly endless rain!

But without winter, we wouldn't appreciate spring. And without spring, we wouldn't appreciate summer... I'm sure you get my drift. To everything in life, there is a season.

In churches across the country, the season of Lent has just come to an end. Lent is a season when we reflect and look towards Easter. Often, when we journey through a time of reflection, things can feel a little gloomy. Yet they needn't be. For time in reflection can be healthy and can help us in our pilgrimage through life. And as Christians, the focus of the Easter message is a powerfully uplifting one. It is a message of resurrection, of transformation and of hope. Something which we all need in this chaotic world.

Reflecting through Lent helps to remind us of the joy and the stability that the Easter Message has for our lives. It is a message of unconditional love and with that, the assurance that through the teachings of Jesus Christ, together, we as a community can create a more harmonious society. One where all people have the opportunity to thrive, and as such, we all live happier lives.

By recognising the love that God has for us, a love that connects us all, a love that Jesus Christ gave his life showing us, we can find a sure foundation for our own lives. And that helps us to look at the world in a different way. A more stable and hopeful way.

My hope for you and for all our community, is that this Easter, you may recognise the love of God in your own hearts, a love that Christ died proving to us and through recognising it, may be inspired to search deeper.

With my love, Revd Steve xxx



Easter Services at St Olave's & Across the Parish

Maundy Thursday - April 2nd - No Service at St Olave's.

(There will be a Supper at 6pm followed by Holy Communion service at 7pm at The Minster)

Good Friday - April 3rd - No Service at St Olave's.

(Reflective Service at 10am at St Mary's, Carisbrooke. Stainer's Crucifixion at 7pm at St John's, Newport. Walk of Witness at noon and Hour at the Cross at 2pm, both services at The Minster)

Easter Sunday - April 5th - Dawn Service at 6am. Holy Communion Services at 11am.

St Mary's, Carisbrooke at 9.30am. St John's, Newport at 9.30am and The Minster at 11am.

In Your Prayers...

Dear Lord -

As we celebrate Easter and the resurrection of your son, Jesus Christ, and the hope of salvation that it brings, let us remember those who, in these challenging times, live in war and turmoil, and pray that you may one day bring peace and salvation to this troubled world.

Amen

Steve Denness



Services at St Olave's in April

Easter Day	6am	Dawn Service
Sunday 5 April	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 12 April	11am	Holy Communion <i>Please stay afterwards for coffee and cake</i>
Sunday 19 April	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 26 April	11am	Holy Communion

Annual Vestry Meeting (AVM) & Annual Parochial Church Council (APCM)

To be held on Sunday May 10th in the church following the 11am Holy Communion Service.

Nominations and elections of Church Officers will be taking place together with presentation of Annual Reports.

All are welcome to attend.

Christian Aid Week **May 10 - May 16**



All That Jazz!!



On Saturday 7th March, St Olave's was transformed, perhaps for the first time, into a lively jazz club. The venue resonated with the syncopated rhythms of the Sparkes Duo, creating an unforgettable atmosphere for nearly fifty music enthusiasts. Candlelight and the gentle glow from the heaters added warmth and ambience to the church, enhancing the overall experience.

The Sparkes Duo featured Steve (Sparks) Parks on keyboard and Pete Coe on drums. Both musicians also shared vocal duties, captivating the audience with their energetic performances throughout the evening.

During the interval, guests enjoyed cheese and wine, making the evening even more enjoyable. Thanks to the efforts of everyone involved, the event proved to be a great success, raising £247.00 for church funds.

Be sure to watch out for our upcoming "Pimms and Puddings" evening, featuring music from the Jim Thorn Trio on Saturday 18th July. More details will follow.

Steve Denness



Your Church Matters!!

On the agenda from our March meeting was the question of the Amalgamation of St Olave's with Newport and Carisbrooke Church Council. Currently we are 'in plurality with' but three years ago, it was suggested that we might amalgamate.

Revd Steve explained the differences. Amalgamation would mean that all decisions regarding St Olave's would be made by the new Combined PCC. St Olave's would become a DCC (District Church Council) with a 'seat at that table' but with reduced responsibilities. Gatcombe have decided not to pursue their application to be a part of the Newport and Carisbrooke Church Council. But rather remain as a separate parish within the Benefice.



We are waiting for the report from the recent Space for Nature walks to be available. It's anticipated that we can then have further discussions about future management to further enhance the beauty of the churchyard, - as shown in the lovely photos on the next page - and, in conjunction with some sympathetic re-wilding, to further encourage the natural flora and fauna. The forthcoming Biosphere Festival (June 27 - July 5) and input from Richard Smout and Gillian Belben will also be of great help.

Donna and Carol have passed their Level 2 Hygiene Course and their certificates are in the vestry. The recent Jazz Evening was a great success and had the added bonus of boosting church funds. The PCC has received a letter of thanks from Bishop Jonathan for meeting our Parish Share in 2025. Supporting the local and global communities are of vital importance though too, and following the success of our first Lend with Care project in December 2024, we have now re-invested the £250 in another worthy project.....

The Al-Anwar Group is made up of five male smallholder farmers from the Kasur district, aged between 21 and 43. Across their households, they support 18 children. Eight of these children are currently enrolled in education, while the others are seeking employment opportunities. All members of the group are married.

Muhammad Iqbal, 43 years old and married, is among the group's farmers. His family of four comprises himself, his wife, and two sons. One of them is in school and the other is still an infant. Muhammad Iqbal cultivates around five acres of agricultural land, alternating between wheat production in winter and rice cultivation in summer. His estimated annual farming profit stands at roughly £1,020. Obtaining tractor access, when necessary, represents one of his primary challenges.

Through Akhuwat Islamic Microfinance, Lendwithcare's local partner organisation in Pakistan, farmers gain access to interest-free loans alongside agricultural extension programs and community development initiatives designed to improve crop yields. Muhammad Iqbal's group has applied for a loan to buy a tractor.

Having their own tractor would enable the group to carry out farming activities without being subject to rental machinery availability, decrease their rental spending, and enhance the efficiency of transporting produce to market. This investment is anticipated to raise both productivity levels and the group's collective income.

YOU LEND → THEY GROW → THEY REPAY → YOU LEND AGAIN (lendwithcare.org)

Bishop Jonathan was delighted to announce the appointment of the Ven Barry Dugmore as the new Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight. Barry, who is currently Archdeacon Missioner in the Diocese of Coventry, used to work in a role that took him across the island and led worship in Locks Heath. He was ordained here, and then served as a priest in Cowplain and Whiteley. So he genuinely feels as though he is coming 'home'. He will become the most senior Anglican cleric on the island, supporting our parishes in ministry and mission. He will be licensed at Portsmouth Cathedral on May 31st.

His appointment will ease the workload on our parish's clergy, Chris, Steve, Emma and Abbie as Revd Chris has been Acting Archdeacon since the resignation last year of the Ven Steve Daugherty and unlike the former Archdeacon, the new Archdeacon will have no parish on the island.

Jill Webster (PCC Secretary)



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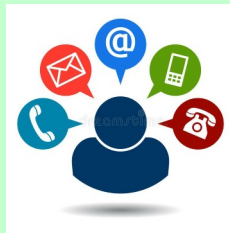
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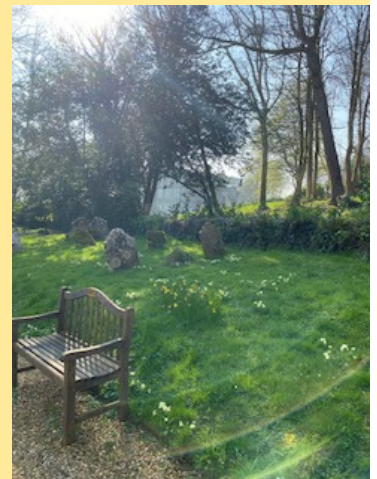
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Spring-time at St Olave's Church



With Thanks....

A special thank you to all the hard working volunteers who join us regularly to tidy the churchyard and clean the church. They worked hard before Easter so that the church gleamed and the churchyard looked tended before our Easter services.

Thank you also to all the flower arrangers who will decorate the church so beautifully for Easter too. After the days of Lent with no flowers in the church, it will be a joy, as Revd Steve would say, to see the explosion of colour with flowers on the altar and in all the windows. A thank you too, to Lyndon Jones for playing so beautifully our hymns for Lent and our wonderful Easter hymns.

A real celebration to greet our Risen Lord.
Harriet Robinson

Your Diary Dates

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

