

St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

June 2026



Hello friends,

As ever, I hope this edition of the St Olave's Newsletter finds you well and in good spirits.

Back on Easter Monday I ticked off one of my major life adventure boxes. Thanks to the generosity of my dear son and daughter, I went up in a Hot Air Balloon! It took me 4 ½ years to be able to do it. As I needed to have the perfect weather conditions (not always easy in Britain as we know!) and of course that needed to match the time when I was free. But when the day arrived and with it some decent weather, I could hardly believe it.

There was a high level of concern as I needed to book the ferry as it was filling up fast, in the hope that the flight would take place. And then get across to a little village called Dunsfold, which is between Godalming and Billingshurst near to the Surrey / Sussex border, within an hour and a half. The flight took off at around 5pm. Both I and the 16 other team members helped to prepare the balloon for take-off by opening up the nylon balloon and stretching it out. Then the pilot slowly filled the balloon up with air from two powerful fans. As the balloon filled with air, then the burners were turned on so that the balloon began to float upwards. It was an incredible sight to behold. As the balloon filled up, we all jumped into the basket and took off. Reaching heights of nearly 2000 feet!

Needless to say, the views were spectacular. Right across the North & South Downs stretching as far as Central London to the north and even to the Island and Brighton to the south. The burners needed to be fired on several occasions but otherwise there was a peaceful serenity around us as the sun slowly set.

We flew slowly over some stunning properties with significant landscaping enhancing the countryside with rivers and ponds scattered around, before coming down to land. It truly was a breathtakingly spiritual encounter.

I'll have to get my thinking cap on for my next adventure!

With my love, Revd Steve xxx



Please Come and Support Us..... As we support....

.....it's St Olave's turn to host the monthly
**Saturday Village Market and Coffee Morning on
Saturday 6th June at Chillerton Village Hall
from 10am until noon.**

Slightly later than Christian Aid Week itself (May 10 - May 16) but always eager to support such deserving charities, and so, with your help and generosity, we will be making a contribution to Christian Aid. Please come along to support us and Christian Aid.....and meet up with friends ...
....and eat huge amounts of delicious home-made cake!!

THANK YOU!!

In Your Prayers...

Let us give thanks for this beautiful environment where we live. Where we can feel the presence of God in all we see and hear. For birdsong, flowers, new life and all that nature provides.

But let us not forget those parts of the world which are ravaged by war.

Let us pray for all who are affected by conflict. For people who are losing their homes, their communities and the loss of loved ones.

May they soon experience stability and peace. *Amen*



Services at St Olave's in June

Sunday 7 June	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 14 June	11am	Service of the Word <i>Please stay afterwards for coffee and cake</i>
Sunday 21 June	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 28 June	11am	No Service at St Olave's.

Sunday 28th June

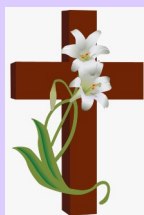
There will be a Joint Benefice Communion at The Minster at 11am.
We will celebrate Abbie's ordination as a priest and she will preside over communion for the first time.

There will be a Service of Welcome for the
Venerable Barry Dugmore, the new Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, at The Minster at 5pm.
Please add your name to the RSVP sheet at the back of the church.

The Wedding of
**Megan Rose Stevens
& Stuart Angus Robertson**
was held on
**Saturday May 23rd at
St Olave's Church, Gatcombe**



The Ashes of
Dorothy Compton
were interred on
**Friday May 22nd at
St Olave's Church,
Gatcombe**



Happy Scarecrow Days!!!

The church joined in the brilliant Chillerton and Gatcombe Scarecrow Festival by putting up a scarecrow outside the church and by running the tea rooms on the Tuesday of the festival. This time the church's scarecrow was Saint John the Baptist in the desert, one of hundred or so in Chillerton and Gatcombe. We put up an explanation of the bible passage on a placard beside the scarecrow and leave the bible open at the correct passage in the church. Who would have thought you could get a HUGE green fluffy locust online? I really pity John the Baptist having to eat them, although I understand they are a great delicacy dipped in chocolate today and full of protein, so perhaps he dipped them in the wild honey to enjoy....and we thank also Michael and Leonie Terry for supplying 'the wild honey' (inspired by their bees!) and for getting our scarecrow to the church...on time! (To see all of the scarecrows please go to www.gallybagger.org.uk)

We had a brilliant day running the Tea Room and, as always, a big **thank you** to all the cake-makers and servers, tea and coffee-makers, washer-uppers and table clearers - you know who you are and we are so so grateful. A thank you as well to Lyndon for counting all the money for us (he knows that I don't have a 'maths brain').



St Olave's Church has an A1 team. We made £304.04. Amazing. Harriet Robinson

Locally produced honey, courtesy of Michael and Leonie's bees, is available inside the church for £6 per jar with proceeds going to St O's church funds.

Your Church Matters!!

Following 30 months with the vacancy, at the Annual Vestry Meeting on Sunday 10th May it was our great pleasure to wholeheartedly receive the nominations of Donna Dempsey and Steve Denness to take upon the roles of Churchwardens. They join (already established in their roles) Sue Hardy (Treasurer), Louise Parsons (Deanery Synod Rep and Safeguarding Officer) and myself, Jill Webster (PCC Secretary). The Annual Parochial Meeting followed and comprehensive reports were received from all Officers. Church Electoral Roll Officer, Carolyn Hoyle has resigned leaving that role vacant. Revd Steve thanked all Officers, PCC Members, Sidespeople, Fund-Raisers and everybody who supports St Olave's.

At The PCC Meeting on May 7th Safeguarding was discussed at some length. Shortly all PCC Members will undertake the training required for their roles and Safeguarding information will be held in the church ensuring that Gatcombe is fully compliant.

The Isle of Wight Rifles Flag, belonging to Gatcombe Church and currently in their safe keeping in the Carisbrooke Castle Museum, will be formally gifted to the Museum rather than remain 'on loan.' Displaying it in the church would be difficult and detrimental to the historically valuable flag due to its size and the damp conditions whereas in the museum it will be displayed in carefully controlled conditions.

Concerns over the safety of some leaning gravestones were raised and have already been addressed with measures to be taken to secure them.

Following the publication and recommendations of the Space for Nature Report the lower half of the Graveyard Extension will be re-wilded under advice and supervision. Also suggested in the Report, an Evening Bat Walk will be organized in the near future.

Jill Webster (PCC Secretary)



St Olave's Church Dog, Poppy (2011 - 2026)



Many of you who come to St Olave's to help with cleaning the church, doing flowers, gardening in the church yard or just visiting the church will know Poppy, the little shy and nervous Jack Russell who was really our church dog.

Poppy has had a bit of an up-and-down life, full of tragedy, and death.

She started off having a happy puppyhood with an elderly couple, but was attacked by a large, black dog who picked her up and shook her like a rat and nearly killed her - this, understandably, made her very, very nervous. Then, her lady- owner had a stroke and was in a wheelchair being looked after by her husband, and so there wasn't much time for Poppy. Unexpectedly the husband died so Poppy had to be re-homed through Friends of the Animals.

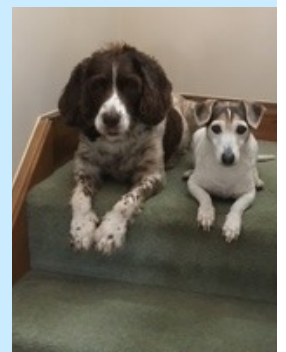
Our lovely, and very much missed, lay reader at St Olave's adopted her and Poppy was just settling down to a happy life with Elizabeth when Elizabeth's health deteriorated and she was rushed into hospital. Poppy came to stay with me for a week or two while Elizabeth was in hospital, but sadly Elizabeth then died and so Poppy came to live with me permanently.

My Springer spaniel, Safi realised Poppy was a damaged soul and looked after her, making sure she wasn't frightened by other dogs on walks. Sadly, a short time later Poppy lost a friend again when Safi died.

I had just lost my husband before Poppy came to me and I feel that 'Him upstairs' (as my Irish friends call God), looked down and realised that I needed Poppy as much as Poppy needed me.

Poppy died last Tuesday. She was nearly blind and deaf and had gone a little senile. I am missing her so much. My darling little lovely four-legged friend.

Thanks to Kate Hobart for the beautifully drawn portrait of Poppy.



Contact Us

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St Olave's

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St Olave's Website
<https://stolaves.church/>



PIMMS, PUDDINGS AND JAZZ AT ST O'S!!
SATURDAY 18TH JULY AT 7PM
FABULOUS MUSIC FROM THE JIM THORNE QUARTET,
WITH LAUREN THORNE ON VOCALS.
TICKETS - £15 EACH. CONTACT DONNA (BOOKING IS
ESSENTIAL) ON 07701 306729

Can You Help...?

Looking ahead to the Chillerton and Gatcombe Village Show on Saturday 25th July, St O's will be once more part of this fabulous annual event.

We will be having our very popular and successful *Guess if it's Water or Wine* stall again this year and while we have plenty of 'empties' to fill with water (boo hiss!!) we'd be very grateful for all donations of bottles of wine.

Please leave with Harriet, Leonie, Donna, Steve D, Carol or Hilary...
.....thank you.



... and a little further ahead...



On Friday 14th 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 15th 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.
(NB Change of date to previously advertised)