

St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

October 2026



Farewell and God Speed.

It seems a long time ago that Revd Steve came to St Olave's, after we had said goodbye to Revd Marcus.

The benefice was going through a difficult time with the huge refurbishment of the Minster and both Revd Steve and Revd Emma had an enormous job ahead of them both.

We have certainly lived through different events over the years from happiness to sadness with Revd Steve as the vicar with a special responsibility in the benefice for St Mary's and St Olave's. We have lost our beloved lay reader, Elizabeth Peace, and we have weathered the storm of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II but of course we have had happy times too. Fairly soon

after Revd Steve came to us he celebrated his 50th birthday and St O's threw a party for him. Echoing the Vicar of Dibley, the canapés were all labelled 'Chocolate and Sardine Eclairs' and 'Marshmallow and Cheese Profiteroles' and the bubbles flowed!!!



We have celebrated the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee with bubbles too and with Revd Steve cutting the cake, he has planted a tree for the Queen's Green Canopy (although he was hoping for an engraved silver spade and not a small blue bucket and spade!) and he has joined in all the mad fund-raising ideas, dressing as the ship's chaplain when we turned the church into a cruise ship for the evening..and of course, we wouldn't be without our Christmas Elf!!

He has supported the congregation both spiritually and with a love of life and laughter. As he would say himself 'It was a joy!!' and we wish him well as he starts on his new adventure.

Harriet Robinson



Please join us for our
Harvest Service
Sunday 4th October at 11am
and stay afterwards for tea,
coffee and cake.

The Collection will be donated to RABI (Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute) - gifts of non-perishable food would be very welcome and donated to the IW Foodbank.



In Your Prayers...

Dear Lord,

We give thanks for the food that we receive and we pray for all those whose care and labour ensure the harvest is brought in.

May the fruits of this earth nourish us as your love enriches us spiritually.
Amen.

Louise Parsons



Farewell, Steve.

So the day finally arrived for Revd Steve's last service at St Olave's, held jointly with Revd Emma who is also leaving the Benefice. As a filled church waited for Steve and Emma (who were ever so slightly late due to being waylaid at St Mary's as obviously everyone wanted to say their individual good-byes) a rousing round of applause greeted them on their arrival.

It was lovely to see the church full of not only the regular congregation, but many from Gatcombe, Chillerton and afar who gathered to show their appreciation to Steve for his five and a half years of service as our vicar to thank him for his love, kindness, support, fun and *joie de vivre* - he has brought us to his Ministry for which we are so grateful.

It was a moving service as expected; Emma's sermon was very fitting for occasion and Steve recounted his years with us, remembering the difficult times we have shared, the Covid pandemic when our faith was so important to us all, but also remembering the good times we have shared. Lyndon played his choice of hymns beautifully as always. As the service came to an end it was another long goodbye from everyone wishing Steve and Emma all the best for the future. Steve has played a very important part in St Olave's very long history which will not be forgotten, especially by those for whom he has brought God into or back into their lives.

So *Au Revoir* dear Steve, we wish you Godspeed and the very best of luck for your life's next great adventure. St Olave's loss is most definitely St Paul's, Hooton's gain.

We will miss him very much, thanks for all the memories Steve, it's been an absolute JOY.

Donna Dempsey (Churchwarden)



The Minster and all that Jazz!!

The Minster once again hosted part of the Isle of Wight Jazz Weekend, held from 16th to 20th September. Two concerts took place in the church, which underwent an amazing transformation: uplighters illuminated the columns of the nave and the East window, while a stage with a curtained backdrop was constructed in front of the Corporation pews.

The first concert featured Saturday night's headline act, the Jazz Dynamos. The jazz-pop fusion band filled the building with a wall of sound that was greatly enjoyed by a large audience.

By Sunday morning, the church had been returned to normal in time for the now-traditional Jazz Eucharist. This year was especially significant, as it was the final service in the benefice and diocese conducted by the Revd Emma Cooksey and the Revd Steve Sutcliffe. As expected, the Minster was packed with congregations from churches across the benefice, with St O's well represented. Friends and family of Emma and Steve also attended, alongside couples they had married, others whose lives they had touched, and jazz fans—some of whom listened from outside in the square.

This year's music was provided by a specially assembled band under the musical direction of Steve Parker, (the Minster organist), at the piano, with Dan Foster on saxophone, Jon Thorne on bass and Rupert Brown on drums, all accompanied by the Parish Choir. The music was a jazz arrangement of John Merecke's score from the 1549 Book of Common Prayer—the first attempt to provide a complete musical setting for the newly reformed English liturgy.



The Revd Chris Bradish led a traditional Eucharist, with the Confession, Gloria, parts of the Eucharistic Prayer and Agnus Dei set to music. The Revd Steve preached and the Revd Emma presided. The Revd Chris thanked Emma and Steve for their service over the past five and a half years. After the service, many members of the congregation stayed for light refreshments and took the opportunity to offer Emma and Steve their personal best wishes. Steve also had the opportunity to sing one last time with the community choir. The churchwardens from across the benefice then made presentations. Emma received a framed "Available Light" print of Shalfleet Quay, a favourite place for family walks, together with a gift voucher for a local "Busy Bee"-style garden centre



in their new parish. Steve received a canvas print of the Bowcombe Valley from the Shepherd's Trail, recalling the weekly dash from St Mary's to St Olave's, as well as a John Lewis voucher and membership of a botanical garden near his new home. A big thank you to all those who contributed to the Benefice wide collection for Steve and Emma. Through your generosity, and that of the congregations at The Minster, St. John's and St. Mary's, £900.00 was raised, allowing the gifts to be presented after the Jazz Eucharist.

To round off a very busy and memorable weekend in the Minster's history, the church was transformed once more into a jazz venue for one of the highlights of the weekend: a scintillating performance by the Liane Carroll Trio, which received a standing ovation.

The weekend showed how the wonderful space of the Minster can be at the heart of the Island—both God's house and a place for the whole community. *Steve Denness (Churchwarden)*

Following our September PCC Meeting there was the chance to share a few personal moments with Revd Steve when we could reflect on the journey we have all taken together over the last five and half years. There were undoubtedly some challenging times, but guided by Steve, we have emerged stronger in faith and deed. We presented him with a small gift of a very nice bottle of whisky and a card by way of heartfelt thanks...not a dry eye in the house...as you might imagine!!

**The Baptism of
Sebastian**
took place on
**Saturday August 22nd at
St Olave's Church, Gatcombe**



If you are on Facebook, check out Steve's new parish and church, St Paul's, Hooton.

**Steve's Licensing will be held on
Tuesday October 20th at 7pm.**

**The Wedding of
Daryl White & Eddie Taylor**
took place on
**Friday September 4th at
St Olave's Church, Gatcombe**



**The Wedding of
Susan Butcher & Allan Todd**
took place on
**Saturday September 19th at
St Olave's Church, Gatcombe**



Services at St Olave's in October

Sunday 4 October	11am	Harvest Festival <i>Please stay for refreshments afterwards.</i>
Sunday 11 October	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 18 October	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 25 October	11am	Holy Communion

Safety in the Churchyard

Wight Stonemasonry have just completed work on three headstones that were in danger of toppling. All of the other headstones were checked and now all are safe once more.

As you can imagine, this came at a cost - £936. Fortunately we can draw on a Custodial Fund for Graveyard Care held by St O's and this will cover the cost of the work.



As I reported in the last issue, I planned to take part in this year's Ride and Stride event in aid of the Hampshire and the

Island's Historic Churches Trust by making my own pilgrimage.

On a warm, sunny morning, I began at the Minster with a moment of prayer before setting off for St John's and St Mary's, where I paused for prayer and meditation.

Leaving St Mary's as the weather became windy and overcast, I continued to St Olave's via Spring Lane and the Shrubbery footpath, passing the Priory before following Dark Alley and the Shepherd's Trail. As Gatcombe came into view, the sun broke through the clouds and bathed the village in warm light—a deeply spiritual moment as I completed my trek. On arriving at St Olave's, I took time to pray and give thanks for the beauty of God's creation that surrounds us.

My grateful thanks go to everyone who sponsored my efforts. Through your generosity, I raised £311.00, the vast majority of which was Gift Aid eligible. Half of the total will be returned to St Olave's church funds.

St Olave's Church was open in support of the event, and simple refreshments were provided. However, this year we welcomed only one other participating couple.

Steve Denness (Churchwarden)

Lots of coffee, cake and chat as St Olave's hosts the

**Saturday Village Market on Saturday
3rd October at Chillerton Village Hall
from 10am until noon.**

Last minute books or bric-a-brac to donate? Please ring Harriet on
07833 311674

**We can also take your gifts of
non-perishable food to be donated to
the IW Foodbank. Thank you.**

**Gardening in the Community
St Olave's Churchyard**

Friday 30th October at 9.30am

Please bring secateurs, gloves, trowels etc. There will be chat, coffee and cake... as always!!

**Newchurch Male Voice Choir
Saturday 17th October at 4pm**

Light refreshments will be served.

No ticket price for this event but there will be a retiring collection on behalf of church funds.

**Christmas Craft Market
Saturday 7th November
from 10am till 3pm.**

Lots of new ...and your favourite... Artisan stalls to browse.

St O's Coffee Shop will be selling tea, coffee and cake.

Donations of prizes for the raffle would be appreciated. Please give to Steve, Donna, Harriet or Hilary. Thank you.

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 8th November at 10.55am

Please note the earlier time to be ready to observe the two minute silence.

**Team Rector:-
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St Olave's Website

<https://stolaves.church/>