

Wykeham Benefice News

August/September 2026

“But those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
They will run and not grow weary,
They will walk and not be faint.”
Isaiah 40: 31



A seagull soars on wings in the peaceful, blue sky of summer.

A thought from our Rector



Lately, I have been learning about bees! I recall a vicar I once met, who used to keep bees, and he told me how much we can learn from them. Today I was taught about the life cycle of a bee and it got me thinking about St Paul's image of the Church as one body with many parts.

A hive is much the same. No bee is idle, and no bee does everything. There are cleaners polishing the hive, nurse bees tending the larvae, guards at the entrance, builders shaping the wax comb, foragers gathering nectar and pollen, and the queen, whose whole purpose is the continuation of the colony. Did you know a bee's role is not fixed for life? As they grow and develop they take on new roles within the hive. Yet, as the hive's needs change, a bee can shift her role, adapting to where she is needed most.

I think that can be rather like us. Within our church family, some tend to our church buildings, some welcome visitors at the door, some help lead services, some organise flowers, some visit the ill and housebound. And like bees, our roles shift over the seasons of our lives which shape what we are able to contribute. Even if we might feel we can only give or help a small amount, it is the fact that we offer it wholeheartedly which matters.

A bee, over her whole lifetime, will only produce about a twelfth of a teaspoon of honey. Alone, that's not much at all. Yet a healthy, thriving hive can produce many pounds of honey because thousands of bees, each contributing their small, faithful share, add up to something rich and sustaining.

I think that is exactly how the Gospel spreads. None of us, alone, can change the world with a single kind word, a single act of patience, a single prayer offered. But when hundreds of us offer these small things faithfully, day after day, they accumulate into something as rich as honey – a community that nourishes and sustains all who taste it.

So may we each keep doing our part – whatever it looks like this season – trusting that God is gathering it all up into something sweet and sustaining.

Every blessing, *Emily*



Parish News



Swalcliffe St Peter's and St Pauls Church

Heritage lighting

Spotlighting on our recently conserved medieval wall paintings and seventeenth century family monuments has now been installed. The illuminations transform the viewer's experience of these nationally important interior features of Swalcliffe church. Please do go along at any time to see what's been done.

We are finalising the operation of the lights, but at present you'll see a stand with a sign and large red button on the left-hand side as you enter the church, just past the

tables. Press this button to activate all the spotlights, which will turn off automatically after a period (and can be reactivated with the button if more time is needed).

The wall paintings and monuments have information stands adjacent to them, giving an overview of each subject.

This project, which is the icing on the cake of our current phase of heritage improvement, was enabled by a kind grant by the Peter Boycott Memorial Trust and a generous legacy from the late Michael Salter, a longstanding and greatly missed member of Swalcliffe's congregation.

Calling all swifts!

We have installed two swift boxes high on the north outside wall of the church. Swifts find a south facing home too warm!

We hope to welcome residents in the next year or so. Swifts are renowned for taking their time in selecting accommodation and occupation is unlikely to be rapid, but we are confident some new swift families will be keen to make Swalcliffe churchyard their new home. We are grateful to Tim Huckvale of Sibford parish who has advised us on this project.

Churchyard

Thanks are due to our parish council for including the mowing of the front, roadside section of the churchyard in the scope of the village's grass cutting contractor's work. With the loss of some longstanding members of churchyard mowing team, this somewhat eases the workload for those continuing to be involved. The latter's commitment to ongoing care for the large areas of churchyard to the sides and rear of the church is much appreciated.

If you can, do take time out for a stroll around the churchyard for a moment of peaceful reflection and to appreciate the beautiful setting.

Harvest Supper

Swalcliffe Village Harvest Supper will take place on Saturday October 17th. See poster for details.

Matthew 13:23

"But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown."



Sibford Holy Trinity Church

Events past

At the Open Gardens event in June, teas in aid of Holy Trinity Church raised over £500.

Future events

From August the lay led service on second Sunday of the month will be at 9.30am. September starts with the annual Ride & Stride for Churches, organised by Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, on 12th September, 10am – 6pm. This is open for anyone to do. Sponsor forms will be available and money raised goes half to OHCT and half to Holy Trinity Church. Drinks for riders will be available in the church.

Wednesday 16th September

There will be a pop up coffee shop at church from 9.30 am. Everyone will be very welcome so please do come, and tell your friends.

Sunday 27th September

The Harvest Festival service at 11am will celebrate the gathering in of the harvest. We welcome everyone to this service whatever their faith, or none. Following the service there will be a bring & share lunch in the village hall to which we would welcome all to come, even if not attending the service, to make this a real community event. Collections will be given to the Farming Community Network. This charity supports farmers, their families and others affiliated to farming, giving support for many conditions and help with all the new regulations that come. They also work in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support.

Please bring donations of food which will be distributed to Polly who feeds the homeless in Banbury every day of the year, ideally tins and packets.

We look forward to seeing many of you.

Shutford News St Martin's Church

Thank you to all donors who helped raise £425 for the Christian Aid Appeal, and with Gift Aid of £76, we reached our target of £500.

We continue to hold our All-Age Family Service on 2nd Sunday monthly at 4.00pm, in the hope that families with children will join us.

The one on 14th June celebrated the biodiversity in our churchyard at the end of the nature count week. The services are informal with refreshments.

Our Benefice Churchwardens were admitted at a Visitation Service in Chipping Norton Church on 16th June. The Associate Archdeacon, Revd Prebendary Jane Haslam officiated.

Shutford Village Fete was held on 20th June with a church team baking and serving cakes and tea during the afternoon. It was good that Revd Emily was able to join us, after a wedding in Broughton, and draw the raffle winning tickets. The church and BYHP will receive a donation from the fete profit.

Our Harvest Thanksgiving will be on 27th September in church with a Supper and Sale of Produce in the village hall at 7.30pm on 28th September, raising funds for Katharine House Hospice.

The PCC has agreed to purchase new pew cushions and altar rail kneelers. Although no major concerns were highlighted during a recent building inspection, there is a need to investigate the state of the tower masonry, stabilise some medieval wall paintings and repair the tower hatch. The porch roof also needs repair, and other restoration work will follow.

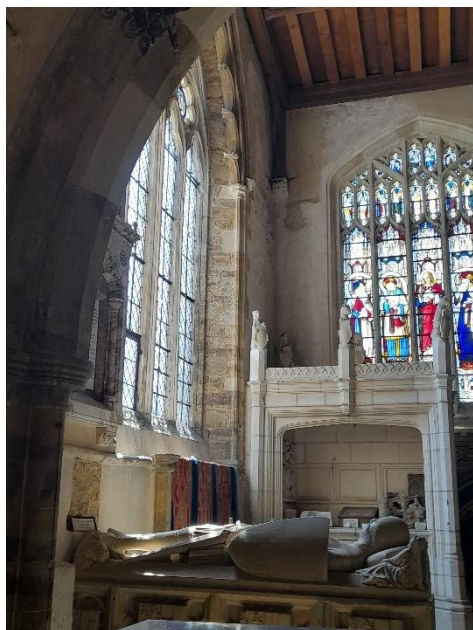
Broughton with North Newington St. Mary's Church

We were delighted to host the Benefice Eucharist at St Marys on 7th June; thank you to Ron and Penny for providing the refreshments after the service.

Thank you also to the Benefice choir who sang so beautifully at our Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Choral Evensong services in June and July.

As school holidays commence, we pray for the teachers and children of Bishop Carpenter School in North Newington. We hope they have an enjoyable summer with rest and recovery and look forward to the new term starting in September.

The Football Camp at Bishop Carpenter School will have taken place by the time this issue is published, but the Bloxham Baptist Church also have a Football Camp following the same format from 18th - 20th August at the Warriner School, 9.30 - 3.00pm. More info about this Camp can be found at: www.bloxhambaptist.org



On Sunday 27th September at 4pm, we host our Harvest Festival; a service of thanksgiving followed by a bring and share tea. Should you wish to donate any food items, these will be shared between the hospice and homeless charity in Banbury.

Our organ requires a full restoration which will cost in the region of £100,000. We will need to start an organ fund and will be researching possible sources of grant funding as well as arranging fundraising activities. Watch this space...

And finally, we pray for our wedding couples who are getting married this summer as they make arrangements for their wedding days and prepare for their married lives together.

Tadmarton St. Nicholas Church

We are now fully into summer and although the heat is more welcome than rain spare a thought for the farmers who are trying to produce food for our tables in drought conditions. Added to this there is the constant threat of crop fires.

Rolf and Lindsey Smith held a successful tea party at the end of May and raised £402 of which half went to the church and half to Katherine House. Thank you to all those who helped make this a great afternoon.

We have recently waved goodbye to Jim and Joyce Millar who have moved up North to be nearer to family. Jim used to play the bagpipes on Remembrance Sunday and read the lessons and prayers beautifully on numerous Sundays. We will miss him although he does join us via Zoom some Sundays.

Interestingly the church is normally a cool haven in hot weather but with the long succession of hot weather the heat has been soaked up by the stone and worked through to the inside. Now when you walk in it feels warmer than outside!.

On a slightly mundane note we had the church roof repaired and the roofer noticed a nasty split in one of the corner pinnacles. We have had to rope off the area below in case it falls and hits anyone. I have been a bit nervous in the recent high winds!

We are currently awaiting a report from the architects on how this can be repaired or replaced.



*A split pinnacle on the roof of St. Nicholas Churches due for repair. N.B.
The area below has been roped off.*

Epwell St. Anne's Church

Lay led services of reflection, 2nd Sunday of the month, 10a.m.

Thank you to everyone who came and supported the Father's day service in June and thanks to Alasdair and Susie for hosting in their garden. This was a Lay led service. Alasdair and Carolyn have now started studying The Lords Prayer in our Lay led service. We are taking it a line at a time with moments for open discussion and reflective prayer, often with music. Our next Lay led services for August and September will be **Sunday, 9th August at 10a.m.** – “Hallowed by Thy name”.
Sunday, 13th September 10a.m. – “Thy Kingdom come”.

Making the most of the beautiful weather in July, Carolyn and Peter kindly hosted a Slightly Mad Hatter's cream tea in the beautiful fragrant lavender field with funds of £636 raised towards the necessary maintenance of the church tower. Many thanks to all those who helped set up, clear away and bake cakes and special thanks to Phil who played beautiful classical music which enhanced the chilled ambience.

In addition to Sunday services, Morning prayers take place on Mondays 9 - 9.30am in the beautiful side chapel. Holy communion takes place on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 10.00am. Please check in the weekly pewsheets in the church, or on the notice board at the church gate, for up to date news on all services.

Evensong followed by Drinks, 2nd August, 6p.m, Yarn Hill Cottage's Lavender field:

We are holding Evensong in the Lavender field on the 2nd August at 6p.m. followed by Drinks. It would be lovely to see as many of you as possible. Rev'd Emily has kindly offered to take this service which means fitting in an extra service for her on that day.

Harvest Festival Breakfast and Service, Sunday, 11th October 10a.m.

Lay led, “Give us this day our daily bread”. We will go back to the lines of The Lords Prayer we have skipped for this harvest service!



The altar in Alasdair and Susie Lowe's garden set up for Father's Day's Lay led service.

Services in August

List of bracketed abbreviations are at the bottom of the back page.

Services for August

August	Parish	Time	Service	Liturgical Colour
Sunday 2 nd Trinity 9 Green	Shutford	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist (ES)	
Sunday 9 th Trinity 10 Green	Sibford Swalcliffe Epwell Sibford Broughton Tadmarton Shutford	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 10.00am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	Holy Communion BCP (ES) Holy Communion (ES) Family Service (Lay led) Family Service (Lay led) Holy Communion (JT) Holy Communion (ES) Family Service (lay led)	
Sunday 16 th Trinity 11 Green	Sibford Shutford Epwell Tadmarton Broughton Swalcliffe	9.30am 9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion (BF) Holy Communion BCP (JT) Holy Communion (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Holy Communion (ES) Evensong BCP (ES)	
Sunday 23 rd Trinity 12 Green	Shutford Sibford Swalcliffe Epwell Broughton Tadmarton	9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (GE) Holy Communion (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Holy Communion (GA?) Family Service (JT) Village Service (ES)	
Sunday 30 th Trinity 13 Green	Sibford Epwell Broughton Tadmarton Shutford	9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Holy Communion (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Evensong BCP (ES)	

Readings for August

August	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel	Liturgical colour
Sunday 2 nd Trinity 9 Green	Isaiah 55.1-5	Romans 9. 1-5	Matthew 14. 13-21	
Sunday 9 th Trinity 10 Green	1 Kings 19. 9 – 8	Romans 10. 5-15	Matthew 14. 22-33	
Sunday 16 th Trinity 11 Green	Isaiah 56. 1, 6-8	Romans 11. 1-2a, 29-32	Matthew 15. 21-28	
Sunday 23 rd Trinity 12 Green	Isaiah 51. 1-6	Romans 12. 1-8	Matthew 16. 13-20	
Sunday 30 th Trinity 13 Green	Jeremiah 15. 15-21	Romans 12. 9-end	Matthew 16. 21-end	

Services in September

September	Parish	Time	Service	Liturgical Colour
Sunday 6 th Trinity 14 Green	Sibford	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist (ES)	
Sunday 13 th Trinity 15 Green	Sibford Swalcliffe Epwell Sibford Broughton Tadmarton Shutford	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 10.00am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	Holy Communion BCP (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Family Service (Lay led) Family Service (Lay led) Holy Communion (JT) Holy Communion (ES) Family Service (ES)	
Sunday 20 th (ES away) Trinity 16 Green	Sibford Shutford Epwell Broughton Tadmarton Swalcliffe	9.30am 9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion (JT) Holy Communion BCP Holy Communion (GE) Holy Communion (BF) Holy Communion (JT) Harvest Festival (JT)	
Sunday 27 th Trinity 17 Green	Swalcliffe Epwell Sibford Tadmarton Broughton Shutford	9.30am 9.45am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm 6.00pm	Holy Communion (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Harvest Festival (ES) Holy Communion (JT) Harvest Festival (ES) Harvest Festival (ES)	

Readings for September

September	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel	Liturgical colour
Sunday 6 th Trinity 14 Green	Ezekiel 33.7-11	Romans 13. 8-end	Matthew 18. 15-20	
Sunday 13 th Trinity 15 Green	Genesis 50. 15-21	Romans 14. 1-12	Matthew 18. 21-35	
Sunday 20 th (ES away) Trinity 16 Green	Jonah 3. 10-end	Philippians 1. 21-end	Matthew 20. 1-16	
Sunday 27 th Trinity 17 Green	Ezekiel 18. 1-4, 25-end	Philippians 2. 1-13	Matthew 21. 23-33	

Jesus says. "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly".

John 10 verse 10



Thoughts and reflections

It is a glorious time of the year to feel the richness and abundance of life. Even an early morning walk can wake up all our senses to the incredible beauty God has provided for us. Let us spend the rest of the summer with grateful hearts, praising and thanking God for all His good grace, especially for the small details and the ordinary things. This appreciation can bring new meaning to their importance and joy to our hearts.

Psalm 23:3 – “*He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake...*”

Articles for October/November 2026 to be sent in by 7th September
to carolyn.kdeg@zen.co.uk. Thank you.

Bracketed abbreviations of initials for priests for the service tables.

Rector: The Rev’d Emily Robottom-Scott (ES) **Associate Minister:** The Rev’d Canon John Tattersall (JT)

Assisting Priests:

The Rev’d Brian Fairbank (BF); The Rev’d Canon Glyn Evans (GE), The Rev’d Graeme Arthur (GA), The Rev’d Hazel Scarr (HS), The Rev’d John Smith (JS), The Rev’d Prebendary Olwen Smith (OS)