

PARISH

MAGAZINE

SEASON OF CREATION



From the Editorial Team

The summer holidays are drawing to a close and preparations are being made in many households for the return to school. Whether it's starting school for the first time, returning to the same school but moving up a year, entering senior school or indeed starting university, there are changes ahead. All good wishes to one and all in their studies and learning.

For churches all over the country we are entering the period called Season of Creation and the theme for 2024 is **To Hope and Act with Creation.**

Over the Summer we have said goodbye to both John & Camilla and Richard & Mel. As a consequence, Steve is our remaining vicar with the weight of the whole Parish on his shoulders. For the majority of September he and Lesley will be visiting their family in Japan, returning in early October. Our Churchwardens, Mark & Sue, are working diligently to ensure church services during Steve's absence are maintained, as well as working on the Parish Profile for the appointment of our new vicar. Mark has provided an update on the interregnum in this issue.

We ask for the Lord's help and guidance during these very challenging times.

Lesley

LESLEY BELL | MAGAZINE EDITORIAL TEAM

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CREATION CRIES OUT

In September, heading up to our **All Age Harvest Festival Service on Sunday 6th October**, churches of all denominations worldwide will be celebrating the Season of Creation - a massive show of unity in a broken world. As an Eco Church, we want to join in.

Sunday 15th September is Climate Sunday. Join us at 9.45am in St Mary's or at 11.15am in St Peter's to praise our Creator God and be inspired to follow His command to take care of the beautiful world He has given us to live in.



Climate Sunday

RESTORE NATURE NOW: Service & March for Nature

On Saturday 22nd June, over 500 Christians joined 100,000 people marching to Restore Nature Now in Central London. It was deeply encouraging to gather together as people of faith to pray and reflect on caring for creation and to advocate for all of the species and habitats our Creator God made.

Hannah Eves of A Rocha UK

Our Stewarding lead Mike Buckland writes: Aware that the UK is now one of the most nature depleted countries of the world*, I joined other Deanery Environment Leads from Oxford Diocese for the ecumenical service organised by A Rocha, and walked with them from Mayfair to Westminster. It was wonderful to witness so much joy, colour and music, hear the CEOs of organisations such as wildlife trusts, the RSPB and National Trust, and see so many people of all ages dressed as animals!

You can find more information about the day and resources to support you in speaking up for nature at A Rocha UK's website arocha.org.uk.

*stateofnature.org.uk



Photo: A Rocha UK

Photo: Alison Riggs, Oxford Diocese

GIVING TO THE CHURCH



SCAN QR

PARISHGIVING.ORG.UK



Photos: Tim Hodges

WARGRAVE FESTIVAL

foreword by Peter Dart, Music Director

St Mary's Church events at the Wargrave Festival owe their success to the tireless efforts of dedicated volunteers. These unsung heroes work behind the scenes, from early preparations to late-night clean-ups, handling everything from seating to refreshments and logistics. Their commitment goes beyond tasks; their care for the community and faith makes everyone feel welcome. Their quiet dedication transforms ordinary gatherings into memorable experiences. To these volunteers, we offer our deepest thanks. Your efforts have not only enhanced our festival but also strengthened our church's place in the community.

BUTTERFLIES

by Alex Clark

The Butterflies Festival gathering was a sell-out, making St Mary's a hive of activity on the 19th July. Helpers wore butterfly-themed items and served a delicious breakfast of fresh fruit, bacon and waffles. The children enjoyed butterfly crafts, especially decorating biscuits, which quickly disappeared. Judging by the noise and smiles, everyone had a great time!

New Term starts up on Wednesday 4th September. We look forward to seeing you there!



A TRANQUIL RAMBLE

by Jane Austen

A group of 10 ramblers met on Holyport Green for a sunny 4-mile stroll through peaceful countryside, including meadows and polo grounds. True to Bob's style, the route was easy, with no hills or stiles, as they've been replaced by gates. This time, there was no military history, so the group missed out on one of Bob's famous commentaries!

The ramble concluded back at Holyport with a Sunday roast at the George on the Green—a perfect end to the day.

FAMILY BBQ

by Sue Witney

The BBQ on Sunday 30th June after our farewell service to John & Camilla was well attended, with about 400 people mingling on the Green. The ideal weather and perfect setting made for a great Family BBQ. Some even turned up on the day to buy tickets.

Sausages, burgers, baps, and salad were in high demand, and the bar kept our three servers busy. Church members provided a fantastic range of desserts, all well appreciated. The event was such a success that it was hard to get people to leave

Thanks to all who provided food, served, cooked, and helped with setup and cleanup.

FESTIVAL SERVICE

by Richard Eves

On Sunday, 30th June, the village celebrated two events: the End of Festival Service on Mill Green and John Cook's final Sunday as Vicar of St Mary's Church after 16 years of service. Volunteers set up tables and the marquee for the service, while food for the family BBQ arrived. Though rain threatened, it cleared before the 10.30am service.

The marquee was filled with church members, residents, and others whose lives John and his wife, Camilla, had touched. Churchwarden Sue Witney interviewed the Cooks, discussing their journey in faith and ministry highlights. Reverend Jon Drake, a former curate, delivered a message based on Jesus' parable of the Great Banquet found in Luke chapter 14. He described the great invitation to eternal joy that God gives to each one of us in the Lord Jesus Christ. The real danger, that because of a familiarity with church things and the innate human desire to turn away from God, we might reject this offer. The good news, that God will always find people who will accept His invitation, even if they come from unexpected places and backgrounds.

At the end, John and Camilla were gifted a photo of St Mary's, a framed hymn, and a financial gift. The gathering ended with a BBQ, as attendees bid farewell to the Cooks.

ST PETER'S CHURCHYARD

by Lesley Bell



Helpers at July's churchyard tidy

St Peter's has seen significant improvements recently, including the long-awaited toilet facilities and essential roof repairs. The Churchyard and Graveyard upkeep relies on a small group of volunteers, who have faced challenges like flooding.

Recently, visitors will have noticed the area looking much tidier, thanks to the incredible generosity of local residents Lucy and James Pickavance. Following the interment of Lucy's father, they generously supported St Peter's by purchasing a lawn mower and strimmer for the volunteers.

St Peter's is deeply grateful to Lucy and James for their thoughtful and practical support, which has made a real difference.



The repairs to the south side of St Peter's has been completed and the repair works have moved to the north side. Fingers crossed these will be as simple as the south side.

PCC UPDATE

by Sheila Williams, PCC Secretary

The PCC met on 22nd July in a two-part meeting. First, the Archdeacon of Berkshire, Stephen Pullen, and the Diocesan Parish Adviser, Rhodri Bowen, discussed the process for recruiting a new Vicar and producing a Parish Profile. Members were encouraged to reflect on the strengths and areas for improvement in their churches. A Parish Forum, led by Rhodri Bowen, was held on 3rd August, and the PCC met again on 12th August to review its findings. Progress on the Parish Profile will continue, and the church website will be updated to attract potential candidates.

During the meeting, the PCC also addressed the continuation of spiritual leadership during the interregnum, with Steve Turville providing continuity. Arrangements were made for services, including Holy Communion, with changes to service patterns starting in September. The congregations were thanked for their understanding during this period.

Under Chairman Mark Puddy, regular business was conducted, including a financial review, safeguarding confirmation, and reports from COG leaders. The PCC also reflected on the Wargrave Festival and approved Jubi da Silva as an Authorised Preacher. A report was received on family and youth provision at St Mary's. The meeting concluded with plans for ongoing responsible management of the churches.

TICKETS
ON SALE
14 SEPT



ANNUAL CONCERT: 16TH NOV

by Peter Dart, Director of Music

Make sure you have Saturday 14th September in your diaries as the tickets for the Annual concert go on sale at 9.30am from the Church Centre.

The concert on Saturday 16th November at 7pm will feature: Apollo5, The Wargrave Community Choir, The Piggot Junior School, Kirsty-Taylor Stokes, Laura Anstee, Paul Speed, Elif Cansever and Thomas Kelly and the Darts.

There will be classical and popular music for everyone.. Tickets: £20 Gold | £10 Silver

CURATE'S FINAL LETTER

Dear *Friends*

"And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Acts 20:32



These are the words of the Apostle Paul to a church he had loved and served in for many years, when he knew he was about to leave and would never see them again. And returning to these words seems fitting as I write this farewell letter.

In his final words to this church, Paul points them to the three things that will build them up and keep them safe until the very end.

I entrust you to God...

The church belongs to God. It is His people, and He is its ruler, provider, and protector. Just as it only exists because He made it, it will only be kept secure if He guards it. We can't protect the Church - only God can.

... and to the word...

The church is built as God's people hear his word and respond in obedience and faith. Only by continuing to do this can they stand safe and secure.

... of His Grace

The Message of the Gospel is of God's undeserved kindness shown to sinful people in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our only message, hope and comfort as believers is the grace of God in Jesus Christ. As we put our trust in God, and receive His word in faith and obedience, we can be sure - wonderfully - of His grace to us.

Friends, as we leave you now, we entrust you to God, and to the word of His grace.

In Christ,
Richard

Richard Eves - Curate

INTERREGNUM UPDATE

by Churchwarden, Mark Puddy

We have been going through a process of seeking the views of the congregation and our local community to work out what we feel are the priorities for our parish and what characteristics we need in selecting the vicar to address the priorities.

On the morning of Saturday 3rd August, 52 of us from all over the parish met in the Church Centre for a session excellently led by Rhodri Bowen, the Parish Development Officer for Berkshire. There was constructive agreement on a range of priorities. We then had an excellent lunch, organised by Sue Witney and her team. We had 8 replies from the wider community as a response to the survey advertised in the Wargrave News. The Churchwardens have received lots of thoughtful written responses from our congregations.

All of this feedback was then presented to the members of the PCC (Parochial Church Council), who held a very constructive meeting on 12th August, and we have a good basis to help with the work on the parish profile, (the prospectus viewed by anyone thinking of applying for the vacancy for our new vicar). While Sue Witney and I have done a lot of work producing an initial draft of the Profile, we now have a team in place to drive this on.

There will be a formal meeting, called a Section 11 Meeting, for the PCC in September, when the two members of the Parish on the Interview Panel will be selected. Once the Parish Profile has gone through further modification, and meets with the approval of the Berkshire Church of England Administration, this will then return to the PCC at another meeting to be confirmed.

Then we will be able to post advertisements and await the response. Your continued prayers for this process, and for our next vicar, continue to be vital for this process.

SUNDAY SERVICES (Please note changes to services from September)

ST MARY'S CHURCH, WARGRAVE

8am	1st & 15th September	Holy Communion (A said service in traditional language)
9.45am	1st September	All Age 'Back to School' Service
	8th September	Holy Communion
	15th September	Climate Sunday
	22nd September	Holy Communion
	29th September	Parish Holy Communion

ALTERNATE WEEKS



JUNIOR CHURCH

9.45am	Every Sunday	0-3 yrs Crèche 4-16 yrs Church Centre
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ST PETER'S CHURCH, KNOWL HILL

11.15am	1st September	Holy Communion
	15th September	Climate Sunday

NEW TIME!

ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WARREN ROW

11.15am	8th September	Holy Communion
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PARISH REGISTERS : WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS & FUNERALS

Funerals at St Mary's, Wargrave

5th June	Wilfred Raymond Williams, 95, Interment of Ashes, New Cemetery
5th June	Angela Wilverton Williams, 79, Interment of Ashes, New Cemetery
20th June	James Rance, 91, Funeral Service
27th July	Anthony William Elliott, 89, Interment of Ashes, Churchyard

Weddings at St Mary's, Wargrave

15th June	Scott Anthony Marlin & Rebecca Elizabeth Walsh
28th July	Anthony Matthew Keeley & Hannah Louise Watts

Funerals at St Peter's, Knowl Hill

26th June	John Anthony Kerslake, 87, Interment of Ashes
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September

DIARY EVENTS



A quiet space for prayer

Sunday 1st

All Age Back to School (WG)

Wednesday 4th

9.30am - Butterflies (CC)

Saturday 7th

9am - Ladies Breakfast (CC)

Monday 4th

7pm - PCC (CC)

Wednesday 11th

9.30am - A Quiet Space for Prayer (HR)

Saturday 14th

9am - Ride+Stride (Ext.)

9.30am - Concert Ticket Morning (CC)

Sunday 15th

9.45am - Climate Sunday (WG)

11.15am - Climate Sunday (KH)

10.30am - Fairtrade Stall (WG)

Wednesday 18th

Butterflies (CC)

Thursday 19th

2.30pm - CAMEO (KH)

Sunday 22nd

10.30am - Fairtrade Stall (WG)

Wednesday 25th

9.30am - A Quiet Space for Prayer (HR)

8pm - Deanery Synod Meeting (CC)

Sunday 29th

12 noon - Ramble with Bob (Ext.)

WG = Wargrave | KH = Knowl Hill | CC = Church Centre
HR = Hannen Room | MG = Mill Green | Ext. = External

CHURCH CENTRE BOOKINGS

Looking to hold an event in the Church Centre?
Contact Lucy in the office to discuss your requirements.

LIFE EVENTS

If you are interested in holding your wedding, baptising your child or getting baptised yourself, or need to discuss funeral arrangements, please contact Lucy in the Parish Office.

THE PARISH OFFICE

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