



St Mary's Speen Pew News 368

Dear friends,

It feels a rather awesome responsibility to act as the Pew News guest editor this week to give Mavis a break. There is, in fact, going to be a different guest editor next week, just to keep us all on our toes.

Being in charge this week means that I have the opportunity to say a massive thank you to Mavis for all her faithful service week after week to get Pew News both written and out on time. Since March this has entailed additional responsibilities of distributing the Thought for the Week, as well as liaising with the St Nic's office for the paper distribution to those who cannot receive things via email. So thank you, Mavis, for all that you have done to keep us connected as a church during this time. We hope you are enjoying a break from your editorship. We will try to hand it back to you in good shape!

- 1) This Sunday, 27th September, is our **Harvest Festival** and Rev Janice Macdonald and our curate, Rev Jackie Fountain are sharing the leading of this Service of the Word. The readings are Psalm 65 and Luke 17:11-19.

Our thanks go to Brian for decorating the church this week. Sadly, we are not able to hold our usual auction of produce after the service but do consider donating to the Foodbank. Each year, the Foodbank relies on harvest festivals in our churches to replenish their stocks – and this year these are particularly low as a result of increased need in our community, as well as fewer places being available during lockdown for people to donate.

Please consider donating any of the following:

Tea, coffee, biscuits, sugar, dried/long life milk, orange squash, jam, marmalade, chutney.

The Food Bank is also low on these items:

Meat meals in a can (chilli, stew), baked beans, custard, rice pudding, sponge puddings, sugar, tinned fruit. They will also take fresh fruit and vegetables.

There is a box for gifts in the church foyer. Alternatively, if you are not at St Mary's but are in town, you can drop your gift into the Foodbank crate at St Nic's.

It is more important than ever that we give generously and if you would prefer to give financially as your harvest gift, you can do one of the following:



If you are not eligible for Gift Aid, then it is suggested you send a cheque payable to “West Berks Foodbank” and send to: The Treasurer, West Berks Foodbank, 23 Charter Road, Newbury, Berks. RG14 7EW.

Or, if you are registered with St Mary’s as being eligible for Gift Aid, then it is suggested that you write a cheque made out to St Mary’s Speen PCC, put it in one of the orange donation envelopes around in the pews, and mark on the outside FB (for Foodbank!) and our revered Treasurer will sort it all out.

Harvest is a time when we remember that ‘Every good and perfect gift is from above’ (James 1:17), a time to be thankful for all the blessings that we have and a reminder to share all that God has given us.

2) **Another reason to celebrate this Sunday!**

This coming Saturday, 26th at 2pm, Jackie Fountain is finally ordained in Reading Minster, the service having been postponed from early July. So Jackie’s first service in the Benefice, following her ordination, is at St Mary’s this weekend! If you are in church on Sunday, please congratulate Jackie and do be praying for her, and the family, as they continue to settle into life in Newbury and our Benefice. The ordination service is by invitation only, but will be livestreamed via the Diocese of Oxford website if you would like to tune in. www.oxford.anglican.org

- 3) **Wednesday Prayers** continue in church each week from 2-4pm. The church is open for you to come in and enjoy the peace of our beautiful building for a time of quiet prayer and reflection, with some led prayers at 3pm. Our thanks to Marion who is hosting this. Come for as little or as long as you like.
- 4) **Next Sunday, 4th October**, Rev Pam McKellen leads our service of Holy Communion.
- 5) **A reminder** – do be remembering as we gather together of the need to be socially distanced, particularly after services when we must be careful to spread out around the premises and not have conversations in groups larger than six.
- 6) Our **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)** – the Church of England has extended the timeframe for when these may occur, and we are planning to hold our APCM during the second half of November after a morning service. Watch this space!
- 7) **Some people news and requests...**
 - Brian would be very grateful for china, metal or terracotta pots suitable for planting Christmas hyacinth bulbs. He is going to have 100 to plant (!) with the plan to sell them in aid of church funds. Please drop off any spare pots that you have to church or Brian’s home. Thank you! I am confident that those hyacinth

bulbs are in capable hands bearing in mind how gorgeous Brian and Denise's begonias look – they bring me joy whenever I go past.



- Many congratulations to John and Mavis who are celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 26th September. We hope you celebrate in style!
- And finally, Ruth has been to Holy Island in Northumberland recently and saw this prayer



This week, may we all know something of God's peace and grace and power providing and protecting, and his love lifting us, particularly during these strange times.

God bless,

Joy (Mawdesley)