

Buckland Parish Magazine
September 2026



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* Rev. Pru Duley is on long-term sick leave. Please contact a Churchwarden in her absence.



COVER IMAGE

St Mary's Buckland Chancel & Altar.

Almost unchanged since Henry Woodyer's remodelling of the church in 1860 – 166 years ago. It's wearing well.

The Letter – September 2026

For the next few months, our Churchwardens will contribute The Letter in turn. Thanks to Hilary Ely of St Michael's Betchworth, for contributing this month's letter.

Dear Friends

I am hoping for a time when the parish letter has something new to tell. Last month my fellow warden Linda expressed the hope that we might soon have a clearer idea of what the future holds for our two parishes. Sadly, I do not have any new information for you this month, but I want to tell you that the wardens of St Michael's and St Mary's feel reassured that there is positive engagement with the current situation, and that everyone's concerns are being heard. Meanwhile, our best wishes go to Pru for her recovery.

So many people deserve our gratitude for stepping up to ensure the life of our parish churches continues. Our thanks especially go to the clergy who are supporting our Sunday worship – so far, we have had Sunday cover or the future promise of it from the Revds. Neil Vigers, David Eaton, Kate Capper, Sue Weakley, Martin Colton, and the Ven Carol Coslett.

As we get better organised, I hope that, starting with October, we can look ahead and provide fuller information for the magazine about the services in the benefice and who is taking them. We are also deeply grateful to Father Doug Ross, who has taken most of our weekday funerals and weddings.

I am writing this on what will probably turn out to be the hottest day of the year – and that is saying something. Who knows what September holds - our grateful thoughts must be with farmers and growers, and with the emergency service personnel who are working to keep us safe at this extraordinary time. I know where I would rather be right now than staring at a hot keyboard. At the heart of our villages there is a place that is full of shade and filtered light, (relatively) cool, quiet and beautiful, open for everyone, every day – the Parish Church. In the quiet, it is easy to have the sense that it is filled with the memory traces of generations of villagers who believed in eternity, and who claim a perpetual memorial there.

This year, our churches have been the setting for an unprecedented number of funerals and memorial services. It feels as though we are marking the passing of a magnificent generation of Betchworth and Buckland people. Our churches and

their people – choir and organist, bellringers, vergers, priest or minister – provide a place of beauty and spirituality and above all familiarity, where farewells are said, love recalled, memories revived and shared, and those we love are committed to God's care. It is a privilege to be part of these services, supporting families and friends both in their mourning and in their celebration of lives well lived.

Beyond the day of farewells and tributes, our churches remain the places where the memory of past generations of people of Betchworth and Buckland is preserved and honoured. They are remembered in our prayers, both at their death, and each year at their anniversary. There is memorial book where day by day their anniversaries are marked by turning the page with their name on it. Their names are in our registers, and on their headstones in the churchyard or burial ground. Already in my very short current career as Churchwarden, I have been contacted by two families looking for their family graves and records. Assisting them is a privilege as well. While our parish churches persist, these names will continue to be honoured and will never be completely forgotten.

Hilary Ely

FORMATION IN FAITH NEW SHORT COURSE BY REVD. NEIL VIGERS

We have had some people asking to be confirmed and with Pru's continued period of absence through illness Rev Neil Vigers has very kindly offered to run a series of 5 meetings for anyone who would like to be confirmed or who has questions about faith or the church. These will begin on **Monday 5th October** and we already have 2 people interested. If you would like to hear more about these sessions or may be interested please contact Rev Neil Vigers on neil.vigers@gmail.com

Linda Slater

Editorial Note Adverts for Local Businesses

For many years our adverts have appeared on the centre pages on coloured paper. In this and all subsequent issues, the adverts are reformatted to look a little 'smarter'. They will **appear on white paper, still in the centre of the publication**.

We currently have space for advertisers, and if you wish to advertise your local business, or recommend advertising with us to local trades people, it would be really appreciated. We are now able to start adverts at any time of the year. For information and competitive rates, contact bandbmagads@gmail.com

Church Services -September

Date	St Mary's Buckland	St Michael's Betchworth
6 September Trinity 14		10am Parish Communion
13 September Trinity 15	10am IONA Service	<i>Heritage Open Day at Church</i> 5pm Evensong
20 September Trinity 16		10am Parish Communion
27 September Trinity 17	10am Harvest Communion	
4 October Trinity 18		10am Harvest Communion

PLEASE NOTE..... Due to current circumstances of our Rector, the Revd. Pru Dulley, being on long-term sick leave, there could be changes to church services. Please check on our websites and in the Parish Magazines to see if there have been any changes.



Harvest Festival Service at St Mary's Buckland

10am - 27 September

Please bring in-date, dried and canned food as preferred by Redhill Foodbank

GILL BAILEY – update

Following up the sad news about Gill Bailey last month, after suffering severe injuries from a wildfire in Spain, the following update was posted by Revd. Stephen Bailey (4 August). The intent is not to give monthly updates, but to counter the sadness of the first news of the fire last month. (ed.)

Good news - Gill is now conscious, she can't talk but can communicate with us, is breathing on her own and doesn't need dialysis anymore. She still needs more surgery and whilst she is doing well, it is still a delicate situation and hopefully there won't be any setbacks, re-infections etc. There is still a long way to go.

Hannah Wilson

Village Events

SEPTEMBER

- 11-20 Sept, various times & events.** Heritage Open Days (HODS), p.19
12 Sept, 10am start to 12 noon. Village Tidy. Meet at Pond. BPC, p.6
13 Sept, open 10am to 5pm. 'Memories of Leigh' (HODS). Leigh Village Hall
19 Sept, open 2.30 to 4pm. Brockham Village Hall, BGHS, p.27
21 Sept, 2.30pm. Talk: Big Wigs; Fashion in the age of Pepys, Arts Soc, p.30
25 Sept, 7.30pm (TBC). Supper & Magician. Pillars of St Michaels, p.10

OCTOBER

- 9 Oct, 7pm.** Buckland's Music Quiz Night. FOSM, p.8
9-11 Oct, 10am-4pm. Art Exhibition & Sale, Denbies. Dorking Group of Artists, p.28
12 Oct, 1.45pm. Bridge with Afternoon Tea, Pillars of St Michael's, p.11
24-25 Oct, 10-4 Sat, 11-5 Sun. Art Show & Sale. Reading Room, FOSM, p.7

Village Spring Clean!

We are Planning a Village tidy up/Litter Pick , on **Saturday 12th September 2026** assembling at The War Memorial at 10am.



Litter Pickers and Bags are provided, but if you are able to help please make sure you bring with you some sturdy gloves....

All welcome

(Anyone under 16 needs to be accompanied by a responsible adult)

WINTER LUNCHES 2026

Liz and Carol have kindly offered to continue with the Buckland Winter Lunches just for a little bit longer.....so we would love to see 'old' friends and hopefully new friends to the Buckland Reading Room from 12 noon on Friday the 9 October 2026 for food and lots of chatter and laughter. The other dates will be Friday the 13 November and then the Christmas lunch on Friday the 11 December, all starting from 12 noon. Lunch will be served about 12.30. If there are any questions that you would like answered please phone Liz on 07710 277413 or Carol on 01737 247399 and hopefully we can help. Look forward to seeing everyone again in October.

HARVEST FESTIVAL 2026

St. Marys' Harvest Festival will be on Sunday the 27th September at 10 am. The Revd. Carol Coslett will be taking the service. After the service we would like to invite everyone to the Reading Room for 'Coffee and Pastries' and a chat....and we hope you will be able to join us on that day.

Carol Leeds

ART SHOW & SALE – 24 & 25 OCTOBER BUCKLAND READING ROOM



Please reserve the date to visit our Art Show and Sale, last held in 2023.

We thank Everett Leeds, Leigh Banks and Fiona Brindley for the initiative to organize this event to raise money for the Church, through the Friends of St Marys (FOSM). Ed.

Art will be accepted on Friday afternoon or evening 23rd October. Application forms will be going out shortly to those who have participated in the past. New participants please get in touch with me on 01737 247399.

Everett Leeds

For the third year.... back by popular demand!!

BUCKLAND's MUSIC QUIZ NIGHT

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER, 7pm for 7.30

Buckland Reading Room



Fund raising event for
FRIENDS OF ST MARY's BUCKLAND

Fun Quiz for all things musical, spanning pop, classical, TV theme tunes, show songs and more!

Free glass of wine or soft drink, more to purchase...

Dinner of Lasagne & Salad followed by Cheesecake. Alternatives available to meet dietary requirements.

Teams of 6 to 8. Apply either as a team or individual/couples. Prizes to aim for, and a Raffle!

Tickets £20 FOSM members, £25 non-members.

PLEASE BOOK IN ADVANCE no later than 3 October, with CatDawes@aol.com or 07710 498591

BUCKLAND BELLRINGERS



It's September and the start of a new academic year. Perhaps you are looking for a new activity? How about learning to ring tower bells? At Buckland we have 6 relatively light bells which are a joy to ring. Learning to ring will gently exercise your muscles and your brain, and help to keep you fit.

If you are 11 - 75 years old, can climb stairs and catch a ball (and therefore a fast moving bell rope) you can learn to ring. You don't have to be musical, though a sense of rhythm helps. You only need to count to 6, though people with mathematical minds find the methods fascinating, and those with engineering backgrounds are invaluable up the tower, checking the bells. Bellringing is a fun hobby, and once you have mastered the skills of basic bell-handling you can progress as much as you like. It is a hobby for life and you will meet new friends of backgrounds wherever you ring.

At Buckland we practise on Friday evenings at 8pm, and a band of six ringers will ring once or twice a month before the 10am Sunday services, and for the occasional Christening, wedding or funeral as required. If you would like to find out more about bellringing, please contact our Tower Captain, David Sayce (07539742598 drsayce@ntlworld.com) or just come and find us in the tower on Friday evenings, 8pm, our practice night. If you are very quick, you may be able to join us at our annual BBQ at the end of the summer.

Julie Beale

Church Clearance sale of Pastel coloured A4 Paper

For some inexplicable reason, our church has a store of 26 packs of pastel coloured paper (500 sheet reams of A4 size, 80g): 2 *Light blue*, 2 *Mid blue*, 4 *Pale pink*, 6 *pale peach*, 3 *Light mauve*, 3 *Red*, 3 *Pale red*, 3 *Green*. This is no longer needed.

Each pack new would cost about £6 at the lowest-cost online retail price, so 26 reams = £168. We would suggest a donation of £60 for the lot, saving over £100, or £3 per pack (500 sheets). Proceeds to our Church funds.

Please contact Carol Leeds (01737 247399) if you are interested.



In aid of The Pillars of St. Michael's

*An
Evening of Magic
with Bertie Pearce,*

Member of The Inner Magic Circle

Friday 25th September
Betchworth War Memorial Hall
Arrive 18.30 for supper at 19.00
Tickets £30.00

Supper and paying bar.

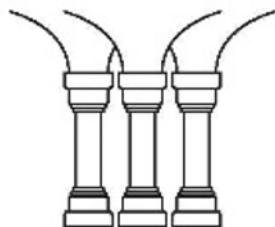
please email
pillarsbetchworth@gmail.com
to book

tables of 8 and individual tickets available
(tickets strictly limited)



For more information on The Pillars of St Michael's, please see:
www.stmichaels-betchworth.uk

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR



A CHARITY BRIDGE AFTERNOON TEA

CHICAGO SCORING

IN AID OF
**THE PILLARS OF ST. MICHAEL'S
BETCHWORTH**

AT
**CHRIST CHURCH HALL, BROCKHAM
RH3 7JH**

ON 12TH OCTOBER 2026

£20 A TICKET (£80 PER TABLE)

**1.45PM SET UP WITH 2PM START & 5PM FINISH
CARD TABLES WILL BE SUPPLIED, PLEASE BRING YOUR
OWN TABLE CLOTH**

**FULL DETAILS FROM SALLY CRONK ON
SALLYCRONK@BTINTERNET.COM**

**THERE WILL BE LIMITED PLACES SO
PRE BOOKING WITH FULL PAYMENT IS ESSENTIAL**

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE



Hartsfield Manor – Planning Application MO/2026/01018

Hartsfield Manor has submitted a planning application that can be viewed on Mole Valley District Council's planning portal by searching for reference MO/2026/01018 or via a link included in the news item published on the village website.

You are **strongly encouraged** to review the planning application and to take the opportunity to express your views to Mole Valley District Council (MVDC). When this article was written, on 16th August, the public consultation period was scheduled to end on Tuesday 1st September 2026 so please submit your views as soon as you can. MVDC is inviting your views, positive or negative, on any aspect of the application. Please explain any concerns and consider suggesting conditions you would like to see attached to a permission granted. These suggestions could be to address a concern or to secure what you hope will be a benefit for local residents and remember to include any mitigating action you would like MVDC to require of the applicant to address concerns you may have relating to the lengthy construction period. Please do not think that the parish council response will suffice on its own; the parish council responds with respect to the community as a whole; be assured that every individual response will contribute to the outcome.

The news item on the village website is being updated as and when additional information is shared with the parish council so do take a moment to check out the news item before you submit your response.

Events on our local roads in September

The Tri Reigate Triathlon Event is being held on Sunday 13th September with athletes expected to be on our local roads completing the bike portion between around 8:30am and 11am. The swim and run sections are being held within Buckland Park Lake. Run Reigate is being held on Sunday 20th September – be sure to check your route and allow extra time for your journey if your route passes near Reigate as some road closures will be in place during this event. For more information visit the news page of the Village website which includes a post that provides links to the Tri Reigate and Run Reigate websites.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk

parishcouncil@bucklandsurrey.org.uk

01737 448023

NATURE NOTES - SEPTEMBER

Helping Nature Recover After a Long, Hot Summer

Everyone living in the 4Bs will have their own memory of this long hot summer — a parched lawn, shrivelled flowers, early apple falls, a pond or stream shrinking to nothing, the feeling that we are living in the south of France. It's been the hottest and one of the driest springs and summers in living memory. The figures below evidence this and they provide a

context for the fact that climate change is now affecting us and the wildlife around us in a significant way. Farmers have borne the brunt of this drought, watching crops and pasture struggle through the driest months in years. We need to act now to help build a more resilient environment by adapting our homes and gardens to cope with more extremes of weather as human impacts on climate become more profound.

Stark Stats

39.1°C Charlwood, Surrey recorded the UK's hottest day ever on 19 July 2026.

0.0mm rainfall A long-running private weather station in Reigate, recorded no rainfall in the whole of July 2026. Its last rainfall before that was on 27 June.

Surrey is in its **third drought since 2022**. By August 7th - **40 consecutive dry days**.

What does this mean for wildlife?

The direct effects of hot dry weather are visible already: trees shutting down early and dropping leaves out of season to conserve water; ponds and brooks shrinking or disappearing, taking amphibian and dragonfly larvae with them; and rivers and streams running low enough to concentrate fish, deplete oxygen and stress the invertebrates that feed everything from trout to house martins.

Reduced insect abundance in a dry summer means less food for wild birds, so fewer young survive to fledge. Baked ground cuts birds off from earthworms. Blackbirds, song thrushes, robins and starlings all hunt earthworms near the surface by sight and vibration. In drought, earthworms retreat deep into the soil profile and the surface bakes hard enough that even a bird that finds one can't dig it out. Hedgehogs depend heavily on earthworms and soil invertebrates, and hard ground ahead of hibernation is a genuine concern.

Small mammals are surprisingly exposed. Shrews have very high metabolic rates and need to eat roughly their own bodyweight in invertebrates daily — a sharp drop in surface invertebrate availability can be lethal to them directly, not just growth-limiting. Vole populations often crash in drought years as grass growth (their main

food and cover) stalls and this affects barn owls and kestrels that depend on them as a food source.

Drought stress compounds year on year — this is Surrey's third dry summer in five, and trees already weakened by 2022 and 2025 have less reserve capacity to cope with 2026, making them more vulnerable to pests, disease and storm damage in years to come.

What we can do — now, and for the future in the garden this autumn

Keep a shallow dish of water topped up for birds, hedgehogs and insects; resist the urge to tidy borders and cut hedges hard while conditions are dry, since long grass, leaf litter and log piles are the moisture refuges wildlife needs most right now; and top up garden ponds using stored rainwater rather than mains water where possible. Protecting the soil carbon and organic matter already in our gardens, hedgerows and woodland — through mulching, minimal digging and leaving deadwood in place — does more for long-term drought resilience than any amount of new planting. Where new planting is done, choose deep-rooted, drought-tolerant native species that are more resilient to drought and flooding.

Norman Jackson

oh... I've already
got it...

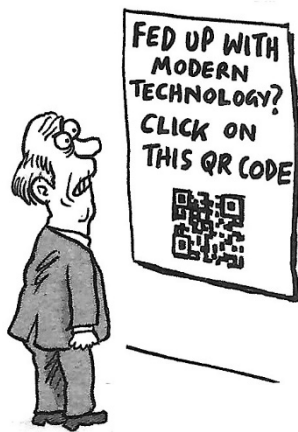


"The Book for Men who Have
Everything" by IQ Street

"Any questions about your colonoscopy?"



"Yeah — is it ok if I live stream it
across my social channels?"



ST. JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL

On what clergy should wear on their feet

The Rectory, St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

Thank you for sending me the photograph of you having your face painted at your parish's 'Fun Day' - although I can't help feeling that to label an event 'fun' is the most effective way of draining it of all amusement whatsoever. Why on earth can't parishes continue with the traditional title of 'Crowning of the Rose Queen and Fete', equally traditionally grimly enjoyed to the accompaniment of thunder and torrential rain.



However, the one thing that caused me the greatest concern in your photo was the fact that you were wearing sandals. Sandals are only to be worn by Franciscan monks (without socks) and holidaymakers on Blackpool promenade (regrettably, generally with socks). I know that you will argue that Jesus wore sandals. This was mainly because reliable pairs of brogues had yet to be invented, but also because He lived in a hot, dry country. We live in a cold, wet one.

The only appropriate colour for footwear for a parish priest is black, and the only appropriate material is leather - although I will concede that can create difficulties. Wet leather shoes and polished marble sanctuary floors are a potentially lethal combination.

I well remember as a curate when old Canon Griffith entered the Sanctuary, having just got drenched coming from the Rectory. His feet moved across the marble floor some miles per hour faster than the rest of his body. Had he landed face down, the congregation may have assumed he was reverently prostrating himself before the altar. But lying in a supine position, staring in a dazed state at the rafters, only conveyed inappropriate indolence, when he should be at work.

However, do not take the alternative of wearing crepe soles. I suspect your present church will be fully carpeted - it seems to go with your sort of theology - and there will be no problem. But crepe soles and any sort of polished stone floor are a truly disastrous mixture. The slightest movement will make it sound as if you are being followed by a swarm of demented frogs.

Your loving Uncle, Eustace

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD (answers p.32)



ACROSS		
1. Thin strip	27. East southeast	45. Sesame
5. Fire residues	28. Teacher	46. Cuckoo
10. Sounds of disapproval	31. Go-between	50. Cut short
14. Wife of Zeus	34. Not stale	52. Line of poetry
15. Vista	35. Foot digit	54. By way of
16. Mormon state	36. Castle defense	55. Percussion instrument
17. Ask an unreasonable price	37. Blood pump	56. Badgering
19. Egyptian river	38. Nap	58. Banquet
20. Evening (poetic)	39. Stomach muscles, for short	59. Martini garnish
21. Multitude	40. Charges	60. Celtic language
22. Twiddled one's thumbs	41. Enclosed	61. Mats of grass
23. Bondage	42. Until now	62. S S S
25. French for "Our"	44. Prohibit	63. Y Y Y

DOWN		
1. Footwear	18. Thorax	40. Penny
2. Stage	22. Skin irritation	41. Walking sticks
3. Sporting venue	24. Opening	43. Messenger to the gods
4. Driveway surface	26. Depose	44. Supervisors
5. On land	28. Muse of poetry	46. Courageous
6. Alarming	29. Seep	47. All
7. A group of cattle	30. Marsh plant	48. Washer cycle
8. Results in	31. Asian nurse	49. Satisfies
9. Observe	32. Mongolian desert	50. Combines
10. Permafrost region	33. Eastward	51. Spirit
11. Spike heels	34. Festivities	53. Greek goddess of discord
12. Cabbagelike vegetable	37. Warning device	56. Furrow maker
13. Outbuilding	38. Musty	57. Kitten's cry

IF WE HAD A SUNDAY SCHOOL... we might have stories to tell

The teacher asked why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem.
A child replied: 'They couldn't get a babysitter.'

The teacher discussed the 10 commandments with her class. After explaining the commandment to 'honour thy father and thy mother', she asked 'Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?
Quick as a flash, one boy said "Thou shall not kill."

The lesson recounted the story of how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and she said, "Charles, what is the matter?" Charles responded solemnly, "There's a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

A little boy in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed around the offering plates. When they came near his pew, the boy said loudly, "Don't pay for me, Daddy, I'm under five."

'Solomon, one of David's sons, has 300 wives and 700 porcupines.'

Can you remember one of Jesus's miracles? 'It was a miracle when Jesus rose from the dead and managed to get the tombstone off the entrance.'

The Fifth Commandment is honour thy mother and father.
The Seventh Commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.

SUDOK

	3				2			6
7	9			8		2		
8								
		5					2	
		8	2		3	9		
	6					7		
								9
		1		4			6	8
6			1				5	

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WORDSEARCH - The Parable of the Weeds (Matthew 13.24-30)

Kingdom	Master
Heaven	Sow
Good	Gather
Seed	Reap
Field	Root
Sleeping	Let
Grain	Grow
Weeds	Together
Enemy	Harvest
Servants	Bundles
Barn	
Burned	

H	I	U	S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G
E	E	R	E	A	P	B	E	H	T	K
N	I	A	R	G	E	U	W	W	I	B
O	D	R	V	D	K	N	T	O	U	T
R	L	E	A	E	I	D	T	R	S	H
Y	E	H	N	S	N	L	N	G	D	A
T	I	T	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R
Y	F	A	S	O	D	S	M	B	E	V
T	T	G	O	A	O	D	A	Y	W	E
E	V	D	N	D	M	R	D	E	E	S
H	S	E	O	A	N	P	I	L	E	T

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS (HODS) – 11 to 20 SEPTEMBER



England's largest festival of history and culture, Heritage Open Days, will run from September 11 to September 20, 2026. The festival is entirely free to attend, offering the public exclusive access to hidden places, historic buildings, and special

events. Mole Valley DC has planned this year's events in our area, and it should be noted that they organise more open buildings and events than any Council area in Surrey. The dates which each property is open are detailed online, and by the time you read this, the printed brochure will be available, from Pippbrook, Dorking Library and some of the places that are open. For some properties visitor numbers are limited and you must book online, so get booking straight away, at:

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk>

The Mole Valley DC organisers are conscious that this will be their last year of organisation, and next year we will part of the amalgamated East Surrey Council. We hope that the new Council continues this Event in future years, and your support this year will help justify the continuing enjoyment it brings to the public.

Duncan Ferns

Sorry folks, but **Buckland Windmill will NOT be opening for HODS this year** as the owners (me!) have other commitments. But local readers can just email fernsondc@gmail.com in advance to arrange a private visit at another time!

WHERE WAS I? (Anon)

Just a line to say I'm Living
That I'm not among the dead,
Though I'm getting more forgetful
And so mixed up in my head

I've got used to my arthritis,
To my dentures I'm resigned,
Can cope with my bi-focals,
But ye Gods, I need my mind

There are times I can't remember
When I'm standing on the stair
If I should be going up, or
have I just come down from there?

And before the fridge is opened,
Now my mind is full of doubt.
Did I put some food away,
Or have I come to take some out?

HOW DID JESUS USE SCRIPTURE?

An opinion piece by Father Richard Rohr, Franciscan & Author

This extract is from Richard Rohr's book, 'What Do We Do with the Bible'?

Just because you use Scripture, even in a God-affirming way, does not mean you are using Scripture for life and love, growth and wisdom—and for the sake of God or others. *Father Richard describes how Jesus read his own Hebrew Scriptures through the lens of love:*

Jesus never once quotes from nineteen of the books in his own Hebrew scriptures. In fact, he appears to use a very few favourites: Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Hosea, and Psalms. Jesus appears to ignore most of his own Bible, yet it clearly formed his whole consciousness.

That is the paradox. If we look at what he ignores, it includes any passages that appear to legitimate violence, imperialism, exclusion, purity, and dietary laws—of which there are many. Jesus is a biblically formed non-Bible quoter, who gets the deeper stream of God's unconditional love, the spirit, the trajectory of his Jewish history and never settles for mere surface readings.

When he does once quote Leviticus, he quotes the one positive mandate among long lists of negative ones: "You must love your neighbour as yourself" (see Leviticus 19:18). He openly disagrees with Scriptures that emphasize non-essentials and "mere human commandments" that made their way into what are presented as divine commandments (see Mark 7:1–23 and almost all of Matthew 23). Jesus reduces the 613 clear biblical commandments down to two: love of God and love of neighbour (see Matthew 22:34–40).

He omits troublesome verses with which he does not agree, as when he drops the final half-verse from the Isaiah scroll when he first reads in the Nazareth synagogue (see Luke 4:18–19). As if to make the point, he "rolls up the scroll, hands it back to the attendant and sits down." We can imagine them glaring at him for adjusting the Scriptures. They know the final line of Isaiah 61:2b is "to proclaim a day of vengeance from our God." Jesus ends with verse 2a, which "proclaims the Lord's day of favour," and better portrays the God he knows.

Generally speaking, Jesus makes use of his own Scriptures to teach a message of radical inclusivity, mercy, and justice, and to negate the predominant religious

messages of exclusion, religious righteousness, and oppression of the underdog, the impure, and the sinner.

Jesus clearly considers “justice, mercy, and good faith” to be “the weightier matters of the Law” (see Matthew 23:23), and many statements such as this seem to indicate he did have a definite hierarchy of values. As Pope Francis indicated, mercy is always right there at the top of Christian values! Not all Scriptures were created equal in Jesus’s mind, **which is a great blind spot for most fundamentalists.**

Jesus seems to teach that you can only tell goodness “by its fruits” (see Luke 6:43–45) and not just by the action itself. Paul then lists these fruits as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (see Galatians 5:22–23).

MUSIC IN DORKING – SEPTEMBER



While September remains quiet, the new concert season resumes in October and there is plenty of excellent music to look forward to in the coming months. The Dorking Concertgoers have their usual enterprising series of concerts planned, including three concerts by the **Sacconi string quartet** (below & sacconi.com) and a visit from the Orchestra of the Swan.

The Dorking Choral Society will be singing two major works from the baroque - Bach’s Magnificat and Vivaldi’s Gloria - in November. Next year’s Leith Hill Festival will include, alongside music by Holst and Vaughan Williams, a mass inspired by Argentinian tango music, and Rossini’s Solemn Mass, performed with two pianos and accordion. Plus much more – full details to follow!



Ian Codd

GARDENING NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER

Recovery mode in the garden after the heat of summer

After the challenges of this summer, with regular heatwaves and so little rain, the cooler (and hopefully wetter) days of early autumn will be welcome in the garden.

- Parched soils will benefit from mulching. Your own well-rotted compost spread around beds, borders, young hedging and trees will help enormously to loosen up compacted and dry ground. Alternatively, spread around mushroom compost, which is particularly good for improving humus and texture, or horse manure. Composted bark will help ericaceous plants such as azaleas, ferns, pieris and heathers. Even without digging in, worms will do a marvellous job in breaking down the soil using any mulch.
- Use September wisely to remove and replace any plants that have failed during the summer. Herbaceous perennials can be divided now: this will re-invigorate what is left and also give you extras to spread around the garden.
- Most bedding plants are by now looking tired, however much watering and feeding you have managed to give them. Autumn bedding can now provide a fresh replacement, safe in the knowledge that they will benefit from the cooler conditions in the latter part of the year. Violas, pansies and cyclamen are often the mainstay, with calluna heathers, hebes and ivy providing reliable autumn colour.
- As soon as the ground is workable, dig in some spring bulbs. There's plenty of varieties and colours to suit all tastes. Plant in groups for maximum impact.
- After so little rain during the summer, check water is free-running into water butts; gutters and downpipes need to be cleared of debris and leaves.
- It hasn't been a bumper year for most allotment crops, so enjoy any harvest that you have. Let's hope for a bumper year in 2027!

David Hogg, Buckland Nurseries

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Small Surrey Churches – Part 19

St John the Baptist, Okewood



St. John the Baptist, Okewood was built in the 13th Century of local stone, now part rendered with external buttresses under a Horsham stone roof. The Church is situated at the end of a single-track road, heavily wooded on either side. There is a small car park below the hill on which the church sits.

It is now in the joint benefice of Okewood and Forest Green, within the Diocese of Guildford. Regular services are held most Sundays at 10.30am.¹

The Church was built in about 1220 as a ‘Chapel of ease’ to Wotton Church, which in those days included the rather distant hamlets of Ockley, Abinger, Rudgewick, Warnham and Ewhurst. It was therefore initially Owned within the Wotton Estate of the Evelyn family, who remained generous patrons well into the 20th century.²



Thomas Malthus
Rector of Okewood Church

Economists and agriculturalists (of a certain age) will have heard of Malthusian theory, proposed by Thomas Malthus in 1798 in his treatise 'Essay on Population', stating that human population grows geometrically (exponentially), while food supply increases arithmetically (linearly) due to fixed land and diminishing returns. Without checks, this imbalance leads to widespread scarcity, triggering famine, disease, and war - the 'Malthusian catastrophe'. Malthus was a Cambridge academic from a wealthy family, being brought up in Wotton. His theory caused concern worldwide, being read and commented on by those as famous as Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace and U.S. President Thomas Jefferson. [The following century, Malthus's failure to predict the

Industrial Revolution was a frequent criticism of his theories]. Why bring this into the history of Okewood Church? Because **Thomas Malthus was at the time the Curate of Okewood**. His theory developed when he realised that he was baptising many times more people than he was burying!³

The original Chapel was built around the years 1220, with the earliest surviving record dated 1290. This states that Sir Walter de Fancourt presented a priest to the chantry. It was endowed by the gift of land to the value of £200 by Edward de la Hale, a local resident, and a brass memorial (right) is set under the chancel floor recording his death in 1431.²

There are two wall murals on the south wall of the chancel, uncovered during a 1975 restoration, one of the Anunciation and one of the Apostles.² Both are now feint and difficult to interpret.





Left: An attractive stained-glass window of 1905, of the Mother Mary; 'Ave Maria'
Right: The recent memorial of 'Buckland-ers' – Ralph & Pearl

For 700 years the only lighting in the church had been by candle, and the Victorian Candle sconces remain at the end of each pew. Remarkably, electricity was only first supplied to the church in 1964, and then only two lights were installed, and the organ of 1910, which had previously been pumped by hand, was electrified. The present full lighting scheme was installed only in 1972.²

Finally, Okewood has become the resting place of Ralph & Pearl Smithers, who many Buckland residents will remember. Ralph worked and lived in Buckland for 56 years; first in the Sandpits, then in property and land maintenance for the Buckland Estate. When he 'retired' he continued with volunteer work on the Estate. For much of this time and to the end of their lives, Ralph and Pearl lived at No.3, Orchard Farm, on Lawrence Lane, Buckland. They were the last of their generation to have a property rented from the Estate 'for life', by virtue of having worked there for such a considerable time. They were highly regarded as great souls - 'the salt of the earth' - comes to mind. They lived simply and Pearl would frequently talk of 'how lucky they had been in life, and what a wonderful place Buckland was to live.' Ralph died in 2020 at the age of 93, and Pearl in 2024, age 90. They are interred in the graveyard at St John's Okewood and the memorial is featured above.

Their son, Richard Smithers, kindly clarified Ralph & Pearl's link between Buckland and St John's Okewood. This is the burial place of many of Pearl's family, the 'Buckman's'), including her parents and grandparents. It is the parish where Pearl grew up, and where she met Ralph, when he was lodging at nearby Forest Green, working on local farms. They were married here too, at St John's Okewood, so what better resting place could they have than at this beautiful, peaceful church? ⁴



Interior of St John the Baptist, Okewood

Access: Turning off the A29 at Ockley, the church is about 2 miles from that road on narrow country lanes, the postcode is RH5 5QT, and Church Road is a no-through-road leading to the church car park. The church is open most days 9-4.

This church is less than 1 mile from the Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden, which is well worth a visit (ticket-only entrance, from www.hannahpescharsculpture.com)

References

1. Okewood & Forest Green Parish website, www.okfg.org
2. Stanway, Revd. Oscar, 1940, reprinted 2000. *The Story of Okewood Church*, 24pp.
3. Wikipedia Page, Thomas Malthus.
4. Personal communication, Richard Smithers, July 2026

Societies & Charities

BROCKHAM GREEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Annual Horticultural Show - Saturday 19 September Brockham Village Hall

We are looking forward to our Autumn show and welcome everyone to come along and look at the exhibits, which include flowers, vegetables, cookery, arts & crafts and children's categories. As usual entry is free and is between 2:30 and 4pm. Will be holding a raffle and auctioning some of the exhibits and the proceeds will go to The Patchwork Garden Project.

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Ruth Johnson

Religion is believing someone else's experience.
Spirituality is having your own experience.

Deepak Chopra (Indian-born American, Spiritualist)

BUCKLAND & BETCHWORTH CHORAL SOCIETY

Save the Date: 14 November – Haydn Concert

After our summer break we'll be busy rehearsing for our major 2026 concert - and this year, it's all about Haydn! We will be performing the magnificent **Haydn's Nelson Mass in D minor** and **Missa Sancti Nicolai**, with professional soloists and chamber orchestra. So if you're a Haydn fan, here's your chance to take part in this wonderful choral experience...

Autumn term begins on 2 September. We meet on Wednesdays, 7.45 to 9.45pm at Betchworth Village Hall. Just pop in and see what you think or contact our membership secretary at membership@bbcsinfo.org for a chat.

Tickets are already available for what will be a very special evening. You can buy your Haydn tickets directly from choir members, from our website, www.bbcsinfo.org or via Ticketsource.



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Art and fashion in the age of Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) were defined by the opulence, Restoration-era extravagance, and heavy French influence that followed the return of Charles II in 1660. As a meticulous diarist and son of a tailor, Pepys's personal record provides an intimate look into this period, documenting his own obsession with status-signalling, high-end clothing and the vibrant, often anxious, culture of 1660s London

Our lecturer Jacqui Ansell gained her Art History degree from Essex University before specialising in History of Dress at the Courtauld Institute and establishing a career as writer and tutor for the Open University and lecturer at the National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and Christie's Education

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The reason that worry kills more people than work,
is that more people worry than work.

Robert Frost (American Poet, 1874-1963)

BROCKHAM BOWLS CLUB



The months of June and July are the busy months for matches against other Clubs. Last month I noted we won about half our matches in June. In July we played 14 matches and only lost 2, an excellent result. That is despite the hot temperatures we have been experiencing. There are also many different internal competitions members are still competing in, with the finals being played over the weekend of 29 and 30 August.

Like most other Clubs our green has suffered from the heat, but it is still playing well, thanks to the hard work of the green maintenance crew. By the time you read this in September we will also have played approximately 10 more matches in August. If you want more information about the Club please contact Peter Goldup, our Club Captain, on 07391 254689, or visit our website below.

brockhambowlsclub.co.uk Trevor Anderson

DORKING MUSEUM IN SEPTEMBER

‘Dorking: Cycling capital of England’: Our summer exhibition traces the history of cycling in Dorking from the 1880s Cycling Clubs, all the way to the 2012 Olympics.

Walking in Dorking: This month’s guided walks feature Hidden Dorking (6th), Up and Down the Greensand (26th), and The Deepdene Trail (27th). See dorkingmuseum.org.uk/guided-walks-around-dorking/ for details.

Heritage Open Days Walks: Free guided walks are: Historic Pub Walk (12th), Betchworth Castle (13th), and Everyday Histories (13th and 19th). See <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/> for bookings.

South Street Caves tours: Our September open day is sold out, but why not get together a group for a private tour?

Family Activities at Dorking Library: Future town - Design your perfect Dorking for the year 2076: 19th, 10am-2pm. Celebrate Roald Dahl: 26th, 10am-noon. Dorking Library, St. Martin’s Walk. Free, materials provided and children must be accompanied.

Dorking Refugee Committee papers: Our archive team is working with the University of Surrey to create a publicly accessible archive of the Dorking Refugee Committee’s records, which will be launched on 24th September.

*Dorking Museum: Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry.
www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk. Visit dorkingmuseum.org.uk/digital-guide/. 01306 876591*

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS (p.16-18)

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8	1	2	6	9	4	5	3	7
3	4	5	9	7	8	6	2	1
1	7	8	2	6	3	9	4	5
2	6	9	4	5	1	7	8	3
4	5	3	8	2	6	1	7	9
9	2	1	5	4	7	3	6	8
6	8	7	1	3	9	4	5	2

H	I	U	S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G
E	E	R	E	A	P	B	E	H	T	K
N	I	A	R	G	E	U	W	I	B	
O	D	R	V	D	K	N	T	O	U	T
R	L	E	A	E	I	D	T	R	S	H
Y	E	H	N	S	N	L	N	G	D	A
T	I	T	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R
Y	F	A	S	O	D	S	M	B	E	V
T	T	G	O	A	O	D	A	Y	W	E
E	V	D	N	D	M	R	D	E	E	S
H	S	E	O	A	N	P	I	L	E	T

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Articles Please submit articles for next months edition by the above date, via email to fernsdc@gmail.com. If possible please submit WORD format for text files, JPG for images and PDF for posters. New articles and contributors are welcomed.

Editorial Views expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the editor or other church staff.

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Web Access The web version of the magazine, including trade adverts & colour photos, is available online at stmarythevirginbuckland.com/parish-magazine. The online rolling-archive retains the most recent 2 years of magazines, readable as PDFs without charge.

BOOKS ON THE HISTORY OF BUCKLAND

1. Buckland's Past Lives (2025), 308pp - £17#
2. A Buckland Memorial (2025, War biographies), 600pp, full text online*
3. St Mary's Graveyard Survey (2020), 94pp –full text online**
4. Buckland 1000-2000 with 20-20 vision (2019), 294pp – now £15#
5. History of Buckland Village School (2006), 148 pp -full text online***

to purchase, email request to fernsdc@gmail.com

* www.bucklandsurrey.org.uk/local-amenities/war-memorial/

** www.stmarythevirginbuckland.org.uk/ Link on 'Resources' page

*** www.bucklandsurrey.org.uk/village-history/the-story-of-buckland-village-school

BUCKLAND READING ROOM ACTIVITIES

Monday am	Singing for Pleasure (1st & 3rd Mondays)
Tuesday am	Toddlers
Tuesday 2.15pm	Bridge Club
Tuesday 6.30pm	Yoga (Maria)
Tuesday 8.00pm	Yoga Beginners (Maria)
Thursday 2.15pm	Bridge Club
Thursday evening	Yoga (Judy)
Saturday 08.30am	Qi Gong (Judy)

**For booking enquiries please contact Jane Stewart, preferably by email:
Bookings4bucklandreadingroom@gmail.com or 07733 116992**

Arts Society, Betchworth	Carole Evans	01372 452563
Bell Ringers (<i>practice Friday evenings</i>)	David Sayce	01737 242776
Betchworth & Buckland Children's Nursery	Laura Snelling	01737 843610
Betchworth & Buckland Toddler Group	Debbie Jones	07701 347351
Betchworth & Buckland Society (<i>Secretary</i>)	Nathalie Nichols	07801 967623
Betchworth Operatic & Dramatic Society	Diane Mayall	01737 842758
British Legion	Maurice Daley	01737 843058
Brockham Green Horticultural Society	Ruth & Paul Johnson	01737 842691
Brockham Surgery/Chemist	n/a	01737 843259
Buckland & Betchworth Choral Soc. (<i>Sec.</i>)	Caroline Bartlett	07967 969425
Buckland Parochial Charity (<i>Clerk</i>)	Debbie Jones	07701 347351
Buckland Parish Council (<i>Clerk</i>)	Sheena Boyce	01737 448023
Buckland Deli (Village Shop)	Amy Snaith	01737 845999
Children's Society	Margaret Miller	01737 842098
Family Activities Betchworth & Buckland	Katrina Rea	07803 163868
North Downs Primary School	Jane Douglass	01737 843211
Reading Room - Bookings	Jane Stewart	07733 116992
- Chairman	Tim Howe	07961 123126
- Treasurer	John Maud	01737 843530
- Secretary	Liz Vahey	01737 221444
Reigate Pilgrims Cricket Club	Julian Steed	01737 842220
St. Catherine's Hospice	Sheila Dyer	01737 842046
Women's Institute	Margaret Miller	01737 842098

Websites: Church: www.stmarythevirginbuckland.org.uk

Village: www.bucklandsurrey.org.uk

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