

## **From the Vicar - September 2024**

I hope that you are well and have had a pleasant summer?

I have found, over the past couple of years, that August provides an opportunity for some rest, reflection and relaxation, while the schools and college enjoy their long vacation, and many parishioners go away, too. Although we have had a number of weddings and baptisms across the Benefice, I have also been able to enjoy some meals out with friends and colleagues.

I recently joined a Deanery Pilgrimage, walking 11 miles from Church Knob, near Blewbury, to Dorchester Abbey. And later this week, I am looking forward to attending the Greenbelt Festival, where I hope to meet up with friends, enjoy worship, and attend a number of events including 'Beer and Hymns,' and various 'meet-ups', talks and workshops.

It is many years since I have camped – and even longer since I last attended a festival - so I am quite excited to be attending Greenbelt this year.

I wonder what exciting holidays and events you have enjoyed this summer? I wonder how you make time to rest, reflect and relax? Rest is so important for our well-being, creativity and productivity. I am glad to worship a God who gifted us the Sabbath, and I love Jesus' invitation, to "all who carry heavy burdens," to come to him and rest.

As you will see from our service poster, there won't be as much opportunity to rest in September, though I am looking forward to attending a short theology conference. Other highlights include: a Pet Blessing Service (in Garsington on 8th September – all welcome); a Harvest Songs of Praise on Sunday 29th September (again, in Garsington – Cuddesdon are celebrating Harvest on 20th October); and, of course, Mark Chapman's leaving service, and a bring and share lunch for him and Linda, on Sunday 15th September. All are welcome!

Mark and Linda will be hugely missed. Over the years, they have contributed so much to the village, College and church. I shall miss them greatly, and I am sure many in the village will miss them too. It seems appropriate to end this article with a blessing, from the Northumbria Community, for Linda and Mark, as they prepare to leave Cuddesdon:

Linda and Mark:

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you,

May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm,

May he bring you home rejoicing, at the wonders he has shown you,

May he bring you home rejoicing, once again into our doors. Amen.

God bless

Karen x