



Sunday 14th April



I hope you are all doing well. I am sure those with younger families look forward to the schools returning on Monday. Speaking with a young mum recently, I was amazed by all she and her family had to do and plan to keep her children occupied and restful during the school holidays. I bet she is looking ahead to the schools going back. Like many, I have taken the opportunity of the holidays to rest and recuperate.

I am thankful for the generosity of those who have enabled me and my family to do this. While on holiday, I attended the church service, where the reading was about Jesus appearing to his disciples and how Thomas doubted (John 20:24-31). I cannot help but think there is a "little Thomas" in each of us. Something in us wants to believe only what we can see! Seeing, we often say, is believing. But with a God, who we cannot see, we are called to believe and trust. Of course, doubting is good if it helps us ask the right questions and seek answers. But when it becomes a stumbling block, it is dangerous and could drive a wedge between us and God. As Christians, we have many reasons to doubt, but we are assured that we do not do this alone. To face our doubts and turn them into beliefs, we need the company of our fellow faithful. In community and together, we encourage, enlighten and empower each other through our faith. This is why worshipping together and joining small groups are vital to developing our faith. As the Bible reminds us in Proverbs 27:17, Iron sharpens Iron. Likewise, we sharpen each other's faith and Christian living when we do it together. Can I encourage you to consider joining a prayer or Small Group in our Church? There are many opportunities to meet and pray with fellow Christians. Whatever you do, please always remember that you do not need to doubt God, for when He promises, he will fulfil. His word is Yes, and Amen! If you want to know more about our Small Groups, please email

parishoffice@oatlandschurch.org.uk. We will meet at 8 and 10 am for Holy Communion Services this Sunday. There will be facilities for younger children during the 10 am, and we will also hear about the work of one of our Mission Partners, The Leprosy Mission. I wish you a wonderful week.

Revd Folli Olokose vicar@oatlandschurch.org.uk / 01932840077

This Week's Bible Readings: Acts 3: 12-19, 1 John 3: 1-7 & Luke 24: 36b-48.

From the Diocesan Calendar of Prayer: Parish: St Giles' and St George's, Ashted Incumbent vacancy. **Other clergy:** Sarah Tapp, Timothy Long (PTO), Malcolm Raby (PTO), Martin Wainwright (PTO), John Watts (PTO) LLMs Christine Bailey (PTO), Jane Hiley (PTO), Anthony Metcalfe (PTO), Anne Milton-Worssell (PTO)

School: City of London Freemans School, Downsend School (pre-prep), Downsend School (prep), St Giles CofE (Aided) Infant School, Ashted. **Prayer requests:** For our preparations for our new incumbent's arrival; for our community café St George's; for faith and fellowship at our home groups and children/youth groups.

The Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. **We are praying for:** All victims of abuse, violence and discrimination. We remember, in particular, victims of wars and atrocities in Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, Yemen, South Sudan, the Congo and Haiti. **Please remember our Mission Partner:** The Leprosy Mission. **We pray for the sick in our parish:** especially remembering all who suffer from mental ill health and are victims of abuse and discrimination. Please pray for Lily and Oliver, and their families as they prepare for baptism on 21st April. **From the Memorial Book at their year's mind:** Margaret Lindstrom, Brian Hurdle, William White, Jean Martin, Hugh Balding, Howard Stevenson, Helena Bakewell, Henry Scott, Anna Semeraz, Diana Ely, Handel Powell, Sally Ann Hodge, Peter Ekins and Vera Spaul.

We Remember the Recently Departed: Vaughan Reading, Douglas Baynes, Paul Richmond and Anne Smith. **St Mary Oatlands News Reverend Folli's Final Service** Sunday, 30th June, will be Revd Folli's final day and service at St Mary Oatlands. Join us for the 10 am service of Holy Communion. Followed by a 'Bring & Share' lunch on the Church lawn (in the church hall in case of bad weather). A time of food, fellowship, and memories as we celebrate Revd Folli's extraordinary ministry and friendship here at St Mary Oatlands and wish the Olokose family a very fond 'au revoir'. Please use the signup sheet at the back of the church to let us know you are coming. **Memory Book** There will be a memory book for messages rather than a 'leaving card'. The book will be available each Sunday.

Leaving Gift If you would like to contribute towards a gift for Revd Folli, please use the link <https://pay.collectiv.com/rev-follis-leaving-gift-9969> Alternatively, you can pay into the Church bank account using the reference "Folli". Please do not contribute using the SumUp machines in the Church (we cannot link any receipts to this particular appeal). Cash also accepted. Please see Brian S (Treasurer) or Liz Davies (Church Warden). Thank you. **SMART Mother and Toddler Group** is back on Tues, April 16th, 10-11.30am in St Mary Oatlands church hall. No waiting list. Pay as you go (£3 per family incl snacks and drinks). We look forward to seeing you again!

Knit Wits and Colouring Club Wed 17th April. 12.30-2.30pm in the Octagon Room. Bring a packed lunch, tea and fellowship provided! **Film Night:** Wed 17th April 6.30pm for a light meal and drinks. 7pm Film. Please use the signing-up sheet at the back of the Church. **Meeting Point** Wed 24th April 12.30-2.30pm. The Revd Lynne and Paul Bowden are coming to talk about their life in the High Peak, since leaving SMO. We invite everyone who knows them to join us at 12.30 for the lunch and talk. Contact Jane R 07775 9317333 for more details. **Plant Swap Day** Sat 27th April 9am-12noon on the Church lawn. Browse, swap plants and information. Refreshments will be available. Please contact Rachel Bainbridge if you can help or need more information 07557408085. **Oatlands Village Fayre** Sat 11th May 12.30-4.30pm. We will be there once again with our Cake and Children's Crafts stalls. If you can help on either stall or pledge a cake for the cake stall, please use the signup sheet at the back of the Church or contact the parish office. **Quiz Night Sat 18th May** 7-10pm in SMO Church Hall. Spag bol supper with wine. Supporting Leon's Ministry and the charity LTHT (Let Them Help Themselves). Following last year's fundraising to support the management of menstrual hygiene in schools in SW Uganda, LTHT has sourced 750 Menstrual hygiene kits from Days for Girls Uganda. Tickets (£20) are on sale now. **Kim & Malcolm Groom's Open Garden** Sat 15th June 2-5pm 'West Lodge', 169 Burwood Road, Hersham, Walton-On-Thames, KT12 4AT (near Squires Garden Centre).