

St Mary's Ticehurst and St Augustine's Flimwell

To: Congregation members and those on our circulation list

VICAR'S LETTER/UPDATE as at 30th September 2021

Creationtide ends this weekend, and it is highly appropriate that it closes with Animal Welfare Sunday, and ...

ST MARY'S PET SERVICE! Bring a pet or a photo, or just come to celebrate and be concerned for animals!

Great Big Green Week: see overleaf for Penny's report back on the week. Well done her and the Eco Church Group (18th -26th) - it was exhausting but rewarding! The session with our MP was excellent. Don't forget the **COP26 climate conference** that the UK will chair in Nov. Please pray for outcomes that will bring about greater efforts worldwide to arrest global warming before it's too late and our children ask why we left it so.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE: Communion in 'one kind only' for now. Coffee after 11am's. *St Mary's unless stated:-*

3 Oct: 18th Sunday after Trinity & Animal Welfare Sunday

8am Communion (1662 BCP)

11am PET SERVICE!!

10 Oct: 19th Sunday after Trinity

8am Communion (1662 BCP)

9.30am Flimwell Harvest Festival

11am Communion (Contemporary)

17 Oct: 20th Sunday after Trinity

8am Communion (1662 BCP)

11am Morning Prayer (1662 BCP)*

3pm FOREST CHURCH (in the churchyard)

24 Oct: Last Sunday after Trinity

9.30am **Flimwell** Communion (Contemp.)

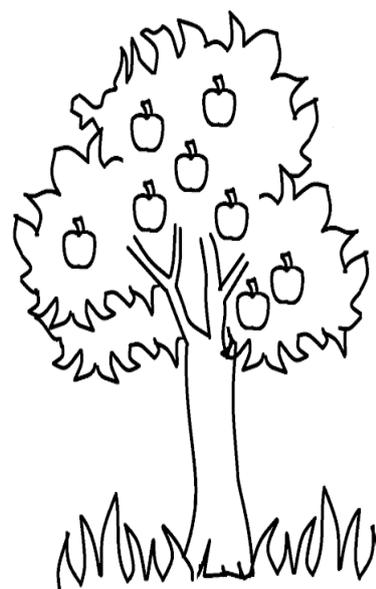
11am Communion (Contemporary)

6.30pm Evensong (1662 BCP)

31 Oct: All Saints' Sunday

8am Communion (1662 BCP)

11am Communion (Contemporary)



November 7th - 11am Children's Service – NEW! This replaces Morning Praise, with more of a child-age focus! and **"In Memoriam: a Service to Remember Departed Loved Ones"** in St Mary's at 4pm (time tbc).

Let me know if you'd like a loved one's name read out. All can light a candle *in memoriam*.

November 14th is Remembrance Sunday. We hope to gather as usual in Ticehurst centre and church after.

Online services are viewable under Videos on Facebook Page [@stMarysTicehurst](#). Future livestreaming is under review. As well as our [website](#) and Facebook Page there is info about us and our services on [achurchnearyou](#)

ECO CHURCH. The 'meadow' SE of St Mary's is being strimmed as I type! Churchyard volunteers welcome.

Forest Church (17th Oct at 3pm). We had about 30 for the first meeting in St Mary's Churchyard and the rain just held off for us (and the firepit)! It was a lovely time, for young and old(er). It's for all who find it easier to connect with their spiritual side outside in nature. The next has an apple-ly theme!

St Mary's Harvest Festival. It was lovely to see a number of new faces and children at this service on 26 Sept to hear our guest speaker Gareth Martin (from [A Rocha](#) who run the Eco Church scheme) and to bring a huge number of non-perishable items for the [Family Support Work](#) foodbank (serving E.Sussex). The collection was shared equally between the foodbank and [Tree Aid](#). Our FSW contact Sheila Synge (01580 860164) was delighted with our Harvest donations – their fully loaded car just made it to Hastings!

St Augustine's Flimwell's Harvest Festival is on Sun 10th Oct at 9.30am. Donations at the service are going to [Smile Train](#) – *change a child's life forever*. Parking in Church Farm next the church, Hawkhurst side.

ST MARY'S OPENING HOURS. Very limited 12th to 24th Oct due to services/works. See our email circulars.

CHURCH FINANCES. Your continued giving, contactless or otherwise, is very welcome. BACS details: Nat West Bank 60-22-15: Ticehurst PCC 71164383 or Parochial Church Council of Flimwell 35098651.

God bless you all. *Ashley Evans*

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REPORT ON THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

Creation Season this year has taken place at a crucial time in human history, coming to an end only a month before the COP26 talks in Glasgow. The Eco Church Group at St Mary's Ticehurst decided to make the most of this opportunity. We began with a Climate Sunday service, which included a lifestyle survey for members of the church. But we wanted to go further than this, and find a way of reflecting on climate change and issues around biodiversity loss with the wider community. We found inspiration in the Climate Coalition's national initiative, the Great Big Green Week. They were encouraging communities across the country to plan events between the 18th and 26th September 2021, and these dates conveniently coincided with the launch of our new Forest Church on the 19th and our Harvest Festival scheduled for the 26th. We thought this would work very well for us as we could, in effect, sandwich most of the week's activities between worship in the context of prayer. Maybe this explains how blessed we were with amazing weather!

We wanted to make it a partnership with other groups where this was possible: shops and businesses were hugely supportive with advertising and promotions, and several groups organised their own events for the week, such as the WI's sale of cakes and preserves, and the local cub Beaver group's riotous animal craft session. The local primary school took a full part with art and poetry competitions and even launched a gardening club in the week – this resulted in a herb garden in the church's Garden of Remembrance, which promises to be a beautiful sensory experience for visitors. We watched two spectacular nature films (My Octopus Teacher and Fantastic Fungi – both well worth watching on Netflix if you have the chance.) We had a talk by a local charity based in Hawkhurst, Hands of Hope, who are restoring a walled kitchen garden and 22 acres of AONB, their vision being to bring people together around food, sharing and friendship. We put up our mini-marquee in the churchyard for our Swap Shop and Plant Swap – no money was exchanged, the aim being to encourage recycling, reusing, sharing and reducing waste. We planted trees on church land – all designed to attract insects, birds and other wildlife. There were displays in church on how we manage our churchyard for wildlife, with an interactive board inviting ideas and suggestions for creating a healthier, greener future. There were opportunities for discussion – we held a coffee morning in the churchyard for conversation on green issues, making new friends in the process, and we held a plastic-free picnic in the churchyard, which very clearly demonstrated the challenge of avoiding plastic in our society today! We also offered space to be quiet and commune with the natural world through art and yoga in the churchyard, and of course Forest Church where we reflected on balance in our lives and in our treatment of the planet.

One of our key events was the visit from our MP, Huw Merriman, who impressively turned up on his bike in lycra! He kickstarted our discussion by talking about his role as chair of the Transport Select Committee in the context of COP26 – this was a really stimulating discussion with ideas flowing back and forth. We look forward to another visit when this is possible!

Despite a great deal of hard work, the week was a great success and well worth the effort, not least in helping us meet new people and form new friendships. On the last day, our Harvest Festival was well attended and blessed with generous donations towards the food bank. It felt deeply meaningful after such a week, as we lamented our role in the climate crisis, and as we asked God for wisdom in discerning the way ahead.

Penny Evans, on behalf of St Mary's Eco Church Group