

The Offwell Mission Community

St Mary's, Offwell - St Cuthbert's, Widworthy - St Michael and All Angels, Farway



THE LINK



July & August 2025

'Tis good, Lord, to be here'

6th August is the Feast of the Transfiguration. On the holy Mountain Jesus is exposed to his closest disciples, Peter and James and John – he glows, he is 'transfigured'. They catch a glimpse of his divinity, They are non-plussed. Peter – he's the one who opens his mouth first – Peter says 'Tis good Lord, to be here.

Well, what can you say?

With a terrible irony, 6th August is also the anniversary, 80 years ago, of the dropping of the atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, followed three days later by a bomb on Nagasaki. We've all seen the picture – not of the flash, 'brighter than a thousand suns' - but of the radiation cloud, ominous, threatening,

In mid June, when this is being written, there is much that is threatening, even, potentially, a repeat of bombing to a similar if not worse effect than that on Hiroshima – Nagasaki 80 years ago.

Will they ever learn? Will we ever learn?

Peter's rather trite response in the face of such an awesome experience might, just might, have some resonance with where we are now. Beset with so many terrible happenings, coming to us over the airways, it's good to remember we are here. Here is not immune; we don't escape from our global networks by being here. But here where we are is precisely that, where we are. And being where we are, remembering we are where we are, acknowledging it, celebrating it, giving thanks for this piece of God's earth helps us to cope with what is so wrong with our world. It's here, where we are, that we can be creative, exercise our imagination, set out elementally the way we are led to make what is good – to insert the divine into the all too fallible human.

To celebrate where we are is not to be insular – though its very tempting. Rather, this is the place to defy the forces of evil which are bent on vengeance rather than mercy, on death rather than life.

+Oliver Simon

FIND US - CONTACT

Revd. Tracey Voysey

Phone: 07968 658 638

Email: revdtracey@gmail.com



1 day a week offering pastoral support to the three parishes and support to the church schools.

Benefice Churchwardens

WIDWORTHY

Mim Prins - 01404 831688

Vacancy

OFFWELL

Jonathan Paveley - 01404 831450

Viki Whitehead - 01404 831050

FARWAY

Tara Huffman - 01404 871372

Stefanie Kastner

Facebook Pages

The Offwell Mission Community

[Offwell Together](#)

[The Offwell Sports And Social Club](#)

[Farway village hall East Devon](#)

[Spotted Wilmington, Devon, UK](#)

Websites:



www.achurchnearyou.com

www.explorechurches.org

www.widworthy.parish.uk

www.farwaydevon.org.uk

www.farway.devon.sch.uk

www.offwell.org

www.offwell-primary.devon.sch.uk

£ Donations for the Link £

If you would like to give a donation towards the printing of The Link, please place your donation in an envelope marked 'The Link' and either give it to the person who delivers your Link, bring it to a service, or post it in the wall safe at St. Mary's just inside the Church door.

Many thanks.

Email Addresses:

Offwell Website (for updates) offwell.org@gmail.com

linkparishes@gmail.com (to contact the editor)

A Message from Suzanne Coussins, Pam Staunton's niece.

I would like to send my heartfelt appreciation to all the friends who have been so kind and caring towards my aunt, Pam Staunton, since her recent accident. Thank you for giving your time and support so selflessly.

By the time this goes to print I hope to have had the pleasure of meeting some of you and expressing my thanks in person.

We have a second new Bishop, all in short order.



The new bishop of Crediton is Moira Astin. She will be officiating at the Benefice Holy Communion at St. Mary's Church on Sunday 24th August.

The new bishop of Exeter, the Rt. Rev'd Dr Mike Harrison says of her, "Her passion for supporting parochial ministry, her pastoral gifts and her evident Christian spirituality will enrich the Diocese of Exeter and I am greatly looking forward to working with her."

Picture and quote courtesy of the Exeter Diocese website.

Family Service at St. Mary's.

Every third Sunday of the month, there is a Family Service at St. Mary's.



It starts at 10:30, and all children of any age are welcome.

The service is kept simple, and children are encouraged to participate. This month Jonathan put together an excellent word search and one younger member was very keen to help!.

We always gather for refreshments and a chat afterwards.

Viki Whitehead.



ST MARY'S CHURCH OFFWELL

Please join us for our annual

Cream Tea

SUNDAY 20TH JULY 3PM OFFWELL VILLAGE HALL

**TEA, SCONES, JAM AND CREAM £6.00
PLEASE BOOK IN ADVANCE IF POSSIBLE**

To book or for info call : 01404 831450 or 831050

St. Mary's Church—did you know

This church was started around 1200, but it is not known if there was a previous church on the same site.

The local major land tenant at the time was Gervase de Offewell, who appointed the Rector of the Church, with the agreement of the local Bishop. There is a record of that from 1219, although we don't know who the Rector was.

The first known Rector was Michael de Arcediakene, appointed in 1263. However, he seems to have been non-resident, and delegated his duties to two vicars, Aleured and Osbert Giffart.

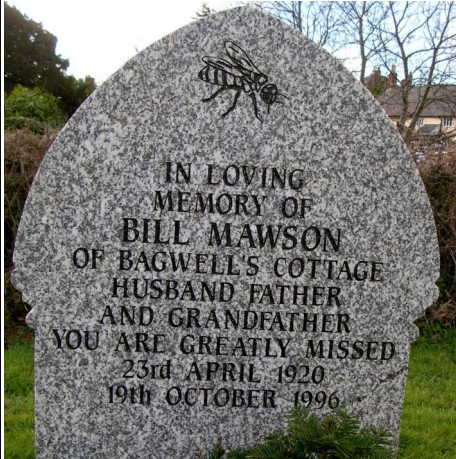
The Rector with the longest tenure appears to have been John Rost, from 1667 to 1713, 46 years. There are records of him paying the Hearth Tax on 5 hearths in the Rectory.

The Coplestone family provided the Rectors from 1772 to 1954, 8 of them over 182 years. John Gaius Coplestone was Rector from 1804 to 1841, 37 years; John Gay Coplestone from 1841 to 1880, 39 years; and John Henry Coplestone from 1880 to 1918, 38 years.

Courtesy of Debrett's History of Offwell Church and Parish

BEES AT THE FUNERAL OF BILL MAWSON

The 'telling the bees' tradition is a custom where beekeepers inform their bees of significant events in the household, including death. Here in Offwell we have firsthand evidence that the tradition is still very much alive. Last summer I was in the New Graveyard and happened to meet the daughter of beekeeper, Bill Mawson, who died in 1996. (Bill's gravestone bears the emblem of a honeybee.) Grace was present at her father's funeral and confirmed every part of the following story.



Bill Mawson died in October 1996. A much-loved beekeeper, for three days prior to his passing, a lone bee flew quietly around the room where her master lay. She showed no inclination to leave, as is normal when a bee becomes isolated in an indoor location, but more that she wished to stay to watch over her dying master. She only left the room with reluctance at the end of the day, as light gave way to darkness, returning at first light the following day.

Bill died peacefully during the evening of 19th October. The next morning, his grieving widow, Annette, walked to the

nearby apiary to tell the bees of his passing, thus keeping faith with the ancient custom: *"Poor master has passed away, but he is still with us in spirit."*

Four days later Bill's widow and family were joined by close friends and beekeepers to celebrate his life. As the cortege entered the Nave of St. Mary's church, it was followed silently and almost unnoticed, by a host of bees, which settled quietly towards the rear of the building in the south aisle.

During the service, the Rector, Rev. David Gunn-Johnson, read the lesson from the Book Ecclesiastes. As he began his eulogy the gathered mourners became aware of the distant sound of bees on the wing. The noise grew louder and louder. Within half a minute the crescendo reached its peak. The Rector paused, raising one solitary finger towards the heavens and said quietly, "Listen!" For a minute or more everyone sat silently and then, as spontaneously as it had arisen, the sound of flying bees declined before dying away into the distance.

Had the bees come to bid a final earthly farewell to their faithful departed master? We may never know but of one thing we can all be certain – there are more things in heaven and earth that mortals can fully appreciate, and perhaps only God and the bees know the true explanation of what happened on that October day.

Carol Hayes.

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES

DATES	ST MARY'S OFFWELL	ST CUTHBERT'S WIDWORTHY
Sun. 6th July 4th Sunday after Pentecost	9:30 am Holy Communion	9:30 am Family Service
Sun. 13th July 5th Sunday after Pentecost	5:00 pm BCP Evensong	9:30 am Holy Communion
Sun. 20th July 6th Sunday after Pentecost	10.30am Family Service	9:30 am Morning Prayer
Sun. 27th July 7th Sunday after Pentecost	9:30 am Benefice Service at Widworthy	
Sun. 3rd August 8th Sunday after Pentecost	9:30 am Holy Communion	9:30 am Family Service
Sun. 10th August 9th Sunday after Pentecost	5:00 pm BCP Evensong	9:30 am Holy Communion
Sun 17th August 10th Sunday after Pentecost	10.30am Family Service	9:30 am Morning Prayer
Sun 24th August 11th Sunday after Pentecost	10:30 am Benefice Holy Communion , at St. Mary's, with the new Bishop of Crediton, Moira Astin.	
Sun. 31st August 12th Sunday after Pentecost	10:30 am New Beginnings Service, in Offwell.	



Refreshments will be served after all our services in St. Mary's.



COFFEE MORNING

Thursday 17th July, and Thursday 21st August
10:30—12:00

3rd Thursday of every month, in Offwell Sports and Social Club, for all three of our Benefice Parishes.

This event is for everyone, whether you go to the church or not. You will be made very welcome.



BIBLE READINGS



DATES	FIRST READING	NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLE	THE GOSPEL
Sun. 6th July 4th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 24.34-38, 42-49, 58-67	Romans 7. 15-25a	Matthew 11.16-19, 25-30
Sun. 13th July 5th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 25.19-34	Romans 8.1-11	Matthew 13.1-9, 18-23
Sun. 20th July 6th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 28. 10-19a	Romans 8.12-25	Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43
Sun. 27th July 7th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 29.15-28	Romans 8.26-39	Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52
Sun. 3rd August 8th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 32.22-31	Romans 9.1-5	Matthew 14.13-21
Sun. 10th August 9th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 37.1-4, 12-28	Romans 10.5-15	Matthew 14.22-33
Sun. 17th August 10th Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 45.1-15	Romans 11.1-2a, 29-32	Matthew 15.21-28
Sun. 24th August 11th Sunday after Pentecost	Exodus 1.8-2.10	Romans 12.1-8	Matthew 16.13-20
Sun. 31st August 12th Sunday after Pentecost	Exodus 3.1-15	Romans 12.9-21	Matthew 16.21-28

St Mary's, Events and Fundraising

There was a very successful Quiz night in the Offwell Village Hall, which raised around £1,000 towards the church fabric fund. We'd like to thank all those who worked so hard on the night or who donated food, drink (Hook Norton Brewery) and some first-class entertainment, organised by resident Richard Lee. Thank you, Richard.

We are looking to extend the programme for 2025 and are delighted that new people have offered support. If you'd like to help in any way, please get in touch.

OFFWELL COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL

We are proud to report that all our Year 6 children have recently achieved success in the Torbay & Devon Civic Award. Running for over 20 years, the award was created by a primary school teacher who was inspired to create the award because of a deep belief that education should be broader and more focussed on the future.



The award is based upon a moral responsibility to develop children's attitudes and values, as well as transferable skills, to equip them for the future, which coincides with our vision that all children at Offwell can Be Well; Learn Well; Live Well.

All the children who took part challenged themselves successfully in a variety of areas, aimed at helping them develop confidence in themselves and discover what they can do for their communities and environment.

We have recently been working with our School Improvement Partner, looking specifically at the Personal Development element of our school offer, which he has confirmed is a real strength of the school. Our efforts begin in our youngest classes and continue for the whole time they are with us at Offwell. We have: Welly Walks to Offwell Woods throughout their time with us; Bikeability - which is now being taught annually at Year 5 and in Year 1-2; children looking at the wider world in their group 'clubs' covering the Environment, gardening; looking at the spiritual element of our school through the Ethos Group; seeking the opinions and suggestions of every member of the school, through service on the school council; participating in a variety of inter school sports competitions and public speaking experiences. This is just a snapshot of what we already do.

It is always encouraging to be told you are doing something well, but we are not content to leave it there. From September we will be looking at ways of helping the children record these experiences, so that they can have a growing picture of their own personal development. Our rationale is, if we can ensure they thrive here they will be able to use those skills anywhere, and will be able to tackle anything; they will be truly able to Live Well.

Offwell Village Hall Charity

Following the last issue of The Link, which contained the Survey regarding the Village Hall activities and improvements, I would like to thank everyone who provided a response either using the paper based or electronic version. I have spoken to other village halls that undertook a similar survey and have been greatly reassured that the response levels provided are much higher than others had received; again a big thank you.

All of the results are now being analysed and will be used to guide the activities we will look to do in the future, the improvements we need to prioritise, and help in our applications for grants. In the next issue of The Link I will provide the analysis of the survey feedback.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Mark, Chair of Trustees

A Family Rounders Match.

To start off the Offwell Fete week, a Family Rounders Match was organised, on Offwell Recreation Ground, on Sunday 22nd June. I am told it got really quite competitive at times! And there were threats of escalation of some contested decisions.. A good time was enjoyed by all.





HONITON HEARING CENTRE

Independent Hearing Professionals Since 1999



Did You Know?

Hearing loss is the third most common long-term health condition.

Our professional team offer personal care for you

- Hearing Aid Consultations
- Hearing Aid Repairs
- Earwax Removal
- Tinnitus Assistance
- Hearing Tests
- Speech Mapping



Our team continues to provide our customers with excellent services for all types of hearing related issues.

Need your hearing aid repaired?

We offer warranted repairs to all makes and models of private hearing aids.



Make an appointment online via www.honiton-hearing.co.uk

Call us on **01404 47070** to discuss your requirements with one of our team members

Offwell Sports and Social Club

Offwell sports and social club is open every Friday from 6pm and Sunday from 3pm. Also open on a Wed 7pm-9pm, dependant on bar staff. Family friendly; everyone is welcome including well behaved dogs. We have a well stocked bar at very reasonable prices. We also have a Pizza night, and an Indian night, each of them on a regular 3-4 week schedule. There is nothing better than relaxing on our veranda with friends and family watching the sun set on a warm summer evening. Membership is £20 per year with a reduced price of £15 for those 66+. The bar is open if any sports are taking place on the field and we do open for televised sports on request if well supported.

How would you like to receive The Link?

Would you like to receive The Link by email—IN COLOUR—as a pdf file— most phones/tablets/ laptops can display that format well. You can receive the email version, either instead of, or in addition to, the hand-delivered version. You might even get it a couple of days earlier, as it doesn't have to be printed!

If so, please send me an email (linkparishes@gmail.com) telling me your email address, and whether you'd like it "instead of" or "in addition to". **Privacy notice:** your details will be used ONLY for the distribution of the email version, and nothing else. In particular they will NOT be forwarded or copied to anyone else.

Thank you.

Carl—the editor.

ADVERTISERS



Hedge Cutting – Strimming
– Planting - Pruning -
Regular Maintenance

Call : 077 29229729

ANDY SPARKS

General Building Work

Lime mortar stonework, patios
and repointing a speciality

No job too small

VAT exempt

Offwell references available

079 7237 8601

SC JOINERY

All aspects of joinery & carpentry

Mobile: 07725129757

Email: scjoinery@yahoo.co.uk

Facebook: @joinerysc

With many thanks to the advertisers, who help defray some of the printing and distribution costs.

If you, or anyone you know, would like to advertise in the magazine, could they please send an email to the Editor at linkparishes@gmail.com.

DIARY DATES

Wed. 9th July	Offwell	OFFWELL LADIES LUNCH CLUB Contact Marian for details on 01404 831066 or tuckers@offwell.com
Thur. 17th July	Honiton Golf Club (probably)	MEN'S BREAKFAST 9:30am for 10am Contact 01404 831924 for more details
Thur. 17th July	Offwell SSC	BENEFICE COFFEE MORNING 10:30am - 12 noon
Sat. 19th July	Offwell Village Hall	OFFWELL VILLAGE MARKET. 10 a.m. to 12 Noon
Sun. 20th July	Offwell Village Hall	CREAM TEA in aid of St. Mary's Church. 3 pm. If possible, please book in advance, £6. 831450 or 831050.
Wed. 13th August	Offwell	OFFWELL LADIES LUNCH CLUB Contact Marian for details, as above.
Sat. 16th August	Offwell Village Hall	OFFWELL VILLAGE MARKET 10 a.m. to 12 Noon
Sun. 17th August	Offwell Recreation Ground	TUG of WAR, NATIONAL LEAGUE, from 10 a.m.
Thur. 21st August	Offwell SSC	BENEFICE COFFEE MORNING 10:30am - 12 noon
Thur. 21st August	Honiton Golf Club (probably)	MEN'S BREAKFAST 9:30am for 10am Contact 01404 831924 for more details
Sat. 13th Sept.	Offwell Village Hall	OFFWELL FLOWER AND PRODUCE SHOW. Entries 08:30—11:00. Public Viewing 2:00 pm. Prize Presentations 3:00 pm.
Sat. 4th October	Offwell Village Hall	HARVEST SUPPER (more details to come)
Wed. 29th October	Offwell Recreation Ground	OFFWELL BONFIRE NIGHT (more details to come)
Fri. 31st October	St. Mary's Church	LIGHT PARTY (more details to come)

Farway Village Hall Coffee Morning every Wednesday 10am-12. Bar open every Friday at 7.30pm.
See Farway Village Hall on Facebook for more events.
Please see their **Facebook** pages for information about other events

If you would like to have your Group's dates added in to this Diary Dates section in the September / October edition, please send details to the editor at linkparishes@gmail.com, before 19th August