

Speldhurst News



July/August 2022

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Welcome to July/August

Dear Readers,

Happy days were had at the Speldhurst Fete in June (featured on our front cover, courtesy of Nick Coffin) - such a welcome return to a fabulous event after two years without. Well done to all involved!

Hope you enjoy this month's magazine. We have updates from: our Parish Council; our TWB Councillor Matthew Sankey; our allotment guru, Rob Kyte; Church news from St. Mary's and news of an incredible achievement on Page 8.

Do get in touch with any ideas for future editions: from local politics to tasty recipes, we welcome all kinds of news and contributions each month.

Let's hope the weather behaves itself and we all enjoy some welcome sunshine this summer!

With our very best wishes,

Maria Turner

For the Speldhurst News Editors:

Sara Turner, Maria Turner & Abi Dawson

Please remember that copy for the **September edition** should be sent **before 10th August** to: speldhurst.news@gmail.com. Word, Publisher or pdf files preferred. Thank you.

SPELDHURST NEWS endeavours to include articles in addition to village, church and chapel news. These are taken in good faith and without prejudice, therefore the committee will not be held responsible for the accuracy of the content, nor will it be held responsible for any work or treatment received from the advertisers. Readers should satisfy themselves of advertisers' abilities before accepting a job quotation or undertaking a course of treatment. All articles & inclusions should be sent as a word document attachment. The editors reserve the right to amend submissions where they feel it is appropriate.

Diary at a Glance

July

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| Mondays Fortnightly | Bumps & Babes | p.4 |
| Monday pm | Library | p.17 |
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| Sat 2nd | Penshurst Farmers Market Blackham Market | p.11 p.5 |
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Dates for your diary

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| Sat 10th Sept | Flower, Veg & Craft Show | p.7 |

News & Announcements

What's on in Speldhurst for the Under 5's in July/August

Bumps and Babes, which enables new Mums in the village to get to know each other, meets twice a month on a Monday from 10.30, for a chat and a chance for the children to socialise. Contact Jenny for more information.

Praise and Play, St Mary's Toddler Group meets fortnightly (in term time) from 9am.

We will be meeting on Wednesday 6th & 20th July.

There will be no Praise and Play in August.

Meanwhile if you are new to the village and have pre-school children, or know someone in that position, do get in touch with Jenny on 01892 541200 or 07891318123 or at jenny50fitz@gmail.com so she can invite you along.

Bellringers

We would welcome a few more people to join the church bellringing team. If you are interested, please contact Anthony Leeves on 01892 531104 or Emma Tamkin on 07759 476912. We ring on Sunday mornings from 9.30 to 10 am and we practise on Tuesday evenings from 7.45 to around 9 or 9.15 pm, but your initial teaching will be arranged at a time to suit you.

We would particularly welcome anyone who has previously rung church bells either at Speldhurst or elsewhere.

Anthony Leeves

BLACKHAM VILLAGE CAFÉ AND MARKET

(first Saturday of every month except January)



SATURDAY 2 July 2022
10.00am – 12.30pm
BLACKHAM VILLAGE HALL



Meet your friends at “The Stage” café, enjoy filter coffee, tea and a piece of delicious homemade cake!

Produce for sale at the market include: Bread, free range eggs, pasties and other baked savouries, cakes, scones, preserves, wild bird food, pottery, pre-loved clothing, and flowers plus other exciting goodies.

Blackham Village Hall is a registered charity whose sole purpose is to promote and maintain the hall for the enjoyment of and benefit of the community

JustGiving Update from the Recreation Ground Committee

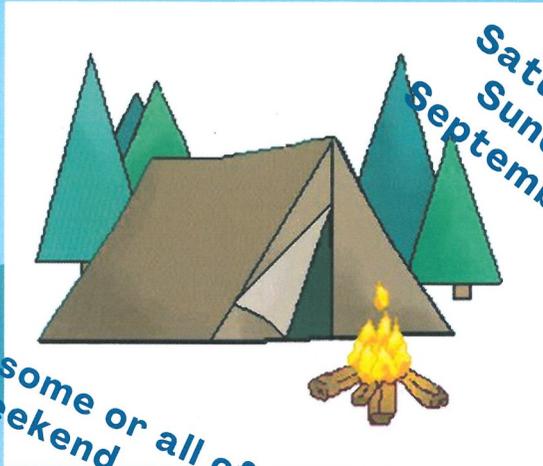
Including giftaid the JustGiving campaign raised over £5,500 with contributions from 84 households. This is an enormous help in covering the annual maintenance costs of the recreation ground. We will start a new campaign in the Autumn and if it is well supported we will be able to plan projects that are long overdue, such as the replacement of the yellow slide in the playground.

Thank you for every contribution!

Kathryn Plunkett

St. Mary's Church Messy Camp

Save the Date



Saturday 3rd-
Sunday 4th
September 2022

Join us for some or all of the
weekend.

Games, food, scripture and craft

@ Speldhurst Primary School

The Speldhurst Flower, Vegetable & Craft Show

Saturday 10th September from 2.30pm

Whether you're a gardening enthusiast, keen crafter, dab hand in the kitchen or budding photographer there is something for everyone of all ages.

Check out our Facebook page Speldhurst Flower, Vegetable & Craft Show or our website page <http://speldhurst.org/contacts/34>



Speldhurst Walking Footballers

Men and women of all ages and abilities are welcome to join Speldhurst walking footballers. It's all about getting some gentle exercise and having fun. So, whether you have ever played football, or not, do come and join us.

We meet at 7pm at the all-weather pitch on Speldhurst rec on Tuesday evenings.

Please call Brian Shilling if you would like any further information: 07940 013135



Project Oscar

A young man in our village has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honour's list. Oscar Anderson was born in Saigon, Vietnam. He was jaundiced at birth. Sadly a condition ignored or missed by a number of doctors, both local and international. He suffered damage to his motor nervous system. Because of the ensuing cerebral palsy, he now uses a wheel chair. In October 2017, Oscar pitched an idea of his to the consumer goods company Reckitt at the One Young World Global Summit in Bogotá, Colombia where he was attending as an Advocate Speaker, talking about life in a wheelchair. Oscar met the Reckitt's international delegate team and they adopted Oscar's project, gave it the kiss of life, and agreed to fund it.

Over the last three years, Project Oscar has trained hundreds of Vietnamese medical professionals in the risks and recognition of neo-natal jaundice. With the distribution of 100 bluelight machines throughout remote rural areas of Vietnam, Project Oscar has allowed thousands of jaundiced, new born infants to obtain instant treatment, under the blue light, rather than having to travel sometimes days, to a metropolitan hospital only to arrive too late to prevent the same affliction that Oscar endures. Project Oscar has been one of the most successful social enterprise projects Reckitt has ever undertaken. The programme has treated over 60,000 new-born infants to date and treats more every day. Oscar continues to speak out for wheelchair users everywhere. He continues to attend One Young World Global Summits. And does what he can to reassure people that they don't have to be afraid of him No mean achievement for a young man yet to celebrate his 21st birthday.



Charles Anderson

Nature Watch

According to the British Trust for Ornithology, this spring has seen low numbers of house martins, swifts and swallows. They have also been very late in starting to nest due in part to the northerly winds we have experienced. Let's hope numbers are back to normal next year. There is a very good show of Foxgloves on the left as you go down Barden Hill. They are very good for Bumble Bees, are biannual and love to grow in woodlands. They spring up after trees have been coppiced [like down Barden Hill]. The plants are poisonous but the heart drug digitalis is made from them. Other names for foxglove include goblin gloves, witches' gloves and dead men's bells.

Pocket park, the area of land where the path to Roopers goes through has been allowed to grow this year and its looking great, with a good array of wild flowers. Have a look and please let the Parish council know if you think its a good idea. It is good for bees and many other insects which all help to feed Bats and birds. A full list will be available later in the year.

The Cuckoos have been singing well at Bough Beech nature reserve this year, but I have not heard one in the garden. I hope you have. British Trust for Ornithology have been tagging them to learn their migration routes down to central Africa and back to the UK. One Cuckoo called PJ, the first tagged Cuckoo to be observed over five full migration cycles, has once again returned to his breeding grounds in Suffolk. Part of a BTO tracking project, PJ is helping us understand why the UK Cuckoo population has declined by 38% in just 23 years. The picture is particularly poor in England, where almost three-quarters have been lost, while in Scotland the species is doing rather better, having increased by more than 50% over the same period. I wonder what stories it could tell.



Alan Ford

SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL

The Drama Club Summer Workshops are back!
26th and 27th July 10-3pm

Our theme this year is “Into The Woods” by Stephen Sondheim. This is a beautiful musical that intertwines the plots of several Brothers Grimm fairy tales with songs and scenes from Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Baker, Rapunzel, and Cinderella, there is something for everyone.



We will be exploring this incredible show through movement, music and scene work, leading towards a sharing of some songs, monologues and duologues for the parents. Children will be allowed to choose whether they focus on scene work or songs for the sharing. So every child will be allowed to play to their strengths. We are so excited to be bringing this magical story to The Drama Club this summer and really hope you can join us. Places are £75 for two days, £7.50 an hour or £60 for sibling places. All places include a drama club goody bag and a chance for the parents to come and see their child’s work. Please message or email acting@bethanwalker.com to book.

As always, contact Sam Van Niekerk on 07894 903979 or



Speldhurst Village Website

Our website includes a calendar of village events, a photo gallery, some village history, a selection of local walks and cycle routes, past editions of Speldhurst News and more.

Why not take a look at: speldhurst.org?



FARMERS' MARKET AT PENS Hurst

We're back at Penshurst Farmers Market this July with the best local seasonal food and drink



**Saturday,
2nd July
2021**

**9.30 am
to
12.00 pm**

**Penshurst
Place Visitor
Car Park**



It's summertime and the living is definitely easy at Penshurst this month. Eating in July is all about keeping things simple as the harvest of gloriously fresh local produce reaches a peak. Getting outside in the countryside is the best idea this month, weather permitting, and you'll want to spend as little time as possible in the kitchen.

So what to put in your basket in July? If you are planning a barbecue, pick up burgers, steaks, sausages and chops from our two meat producers and local game dealer, Kieron's Game or choose wonderful fresh fish and seafood up from Hastings.

Michael Bourne of The Groombridge Farm Shop will be back with us for freshly picked strawberries and raspberries. There's also plenty of choice for easy picnics or beach trips with Scotch eggs, cold pies, pates and dips, brownies and buns.

Snacks, teas and coffee are available at the Porcupine Pantry. Parking is plentiful, free and close by. Dogs and families welcome. If you miss us this month we'll be back on Saturday August 6th, same time, same place.

Find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

www.kfma.org.uk/penshurst



OVERGROWN HEDGES FAQs

Overgrown hedges on roads and pavements can be a thorny issue for Speldhurst at this time of year. So we are here to help with the answers to some of your most common questions. We hope you find them useful.

Whose responsibility is it to cut back overgrown hedges in Speldhurst?

If a hedge is growing out of a resident/landowner's boundary, it is their responsibility to cut it. If a hedge or grass verge is growing on 'common ground' (for example the grass verge along Langton Rd) it's Kent County Council's responsibility. To report overgrown pavements/verges on common ground visit [Roads and travel - Kent County Council/report a problem](#).

There are exceptions to this rule, such as a piece of land that originally belonged to a developer where the deeds have not been transferred and the developer is no longer contactable. KCC will then assume responsibility. With these grey areas it can take time to establish ownership.

It's so frustrating! Why can't people just look after their hedges? Well, they might have birds nesting in their hedge, in which case it's illegal to do any hedgecutting. We also find some residents are genuinely unaware of the problem when we speak to them about their overgrown hedges, because they've been away or working long hours. Others have a cut scheduled for a few weeks' time and have been caught out by the early growing season. Then there are the elderly/infirm who can no longer manage their hedges by themselves. In these cases, some struggle to find a contractor to do the job, and others can't afford this option anyway. This can be very distressing.

I have to walk in the road with my pushchair/walking frame because of someone's overgrown hedge. What can I do? All residents should, of course, be able to walk safely around the village. Unfortunately, the many benefits to living in a semi-rural location are also the disadvantages. Narrow pavements are one of them – so any hedges encroaching the pavement, even by a foot, become a safety hazard.

We advise talking to the resident first, keeping an open mind about why they might not be maintaining their hedge.

Offer to help if you can, even if it's just snipping off the worst of the over-growth (always useful to have secateurs in your pocket when you're out and about!).

If this doesn't work, the parish council can write to residents with a gentle reminder, but we are not the deciding authority. If a hedge remains uncut this should be reported to KCC as a last resort. [Over the garden hedge - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) gives further advice on this point.

[Some landowners are slow to cut the hedges bordering their fields. How do we get in touch with them?](#) We are in contact with some, so do check with us. Otherwise, report it to KCC using the 'report a problem' webpage as before, then they can contact the landowner. We have sometimes found that KCC finds it simpler to do the work themselves, budget allowing.

[My hedge has gone crazy this year – how do I stay on top of it?](#) We understand that the milder winters caused by global warming are making the growing season start earlier. One option is to give your hedge a good cutting back in the autumn, followed by further trims in the winter. Even then, you will see re-growth by early May.

[Any more advice?](#) To reiterate, the 'birdsong and blackberries' life we love in Speldhurst is only made possible by the trees and hedgerows growing here. If we all work together to look after them, we will all be happier.

By the time you read this the growing season will be slowing down. We hope you get to slow down too, and enjoy the rest of your summer.

[How did we do?](#) If you have any feedback on this month's article, we would love to hear from you. Contact details below.

[Public Meetings:](#) Full Council Meeting 7.30pm, Monday 4th July, Palmer room, Langton Green Village Hall

Full Council Meeting 7.30pm, Monday 1st August, committee room, Speldhurst Village Hall

[How to contact the council office](#)

Call the Clerk, Katie Neve on 01892 862927 or email clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

For helpful info, visit www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk and sign up for alerts, or follow 'Speldhurst Parish Council' on Facebook.

News from TWB Cllr Matthew Sankey

The Borough Partnership begins its work

With just over a month under our belts the new administration, called “The Borough Partnership”, has been working on its **Five to Fix**.

- Safeguarding our finances
- Vibrant Towns & Villages
- Carbon reduction
- Genuinely affordable housing & social rental housing
- Digital Access, transparency & local democracy

The first “Deep Learn”

The hard work starts with Cllrs taking part in what we’ve called Deep Learns. These allow us to focus on single issues and dig deep into them to unpick the problems. The first topic is the Urbasa waste contract – where we hope to learn the lessons from the procurement process that has resulted in our bin collections being such a concern for all of us. The partnership has also met with TMBC to discuss the joint contract and start to imagine a solution.

Who is Nancy Warne?

As our new Deputy Leader & Portfolio holder for Rural Communities, Nancy is the Alliance representative for Cranbrook and is passionate about planning and rural areas. She will champion our local villages and ensure that Tunbridge Wells Borough isn’t just about our town centre anymore.

Who is Ben Chapelard our new Leader of The Council?

Ben lives in Tunbridge Wells with his wife Jane and two sons who attend local state schools. In his day job Ben is a French and Spanish teacher and works in a Kent secondary school. He is passionate about education and languages.

Ben originally moved to Tunbridge Wells to start his teaching career. He was first elected Liberal Democrat councillor on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council for St James’ ward - where he lives - in a by-election in 2010. He was re-elected in 2012 and 2016 and 2021.

As the then leader of the Liberal Democrat opposition on the borough council, Ben led the campaign to get the derelict former cinema site in Tunbridge Wells demolished. Ben also campaigned for the introduction of doorstep glass recycling.

Ben became Leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council following the local elections in May 2022. He now leads a new administration called the Borough Partnership made up of 16 Liberal Democrat councillors, 9 Tunbridge Wells Alliance councillors, 7 Labour councillors and 1 Independent councillor. This new administration aims to bring new ideas and energy to our borough!

School Bus issues

Many of you will have noticed the changes affecting the school busses and have contacted me. At the time of writing, I have suggested that some of us meet where we can coordinate our efforts to ensure that these cancellations are prevented. These things are always a numbers game, so if the bus cancellations affect you please get in touch via my email or phone below.

Your Borough Councillors

| | Contact Details | Re-Election Date |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Cllr Matthew Sankey (Alliance) | 07881 674 310 matthew.sankey@tunbridgewells.gov.uk | May 2024 |
| Cllr Lucy Willis (Alliance) | 07958 634 185 lucy.willis@tunbridgewells.gov.uk | May 2023 |
| Cllr Harry Allen (Conservative) | 07523 005 178 hary.allen@tunbridgewells.gov.uk | May 2024 |



Speldhurst Community Shop and Post Office

Fresh bread from Groombridge and Rusbridge Bakeries, fresh veg from David Catt, meat from Southborough Butchers all available for order

Newspapers and magazines, general provisions, cards and gifts

Dry cleaning and laundry

Coffees and cakes

Opening hours

Monday to Friday 7am to 5pm (Post Office 9am to 5pm)

Saturday 8am to 1pm (Post Office 9am to 12pm)

Sunday 9am to 11am (no Post Office)

Please call us on 01892 863158 for any orders, or just a question!

Jo Eames for volunteering 07896 932716



**Speldhurst Library
is open**

Come and visit us at the Village Hall
on Monday afternoons
between 2pm and 5pm





Speldhurst CEP School News



'*Laskavo prosymo* means welcome in Ukrainian – and so please join me in saying a great big '*Laskavo prosymo*' to two new pupils who started at Speldhurst School this term – Roma in year 3 and Dmytro in year 6.

Head Stephanie Hayward says: '*It is early days for these children who have been through such difficult times but they are settling well. We are very fortunate to have a Ukrainian teacher working full-time as a teaching assistant. This has proved invaluable in welcoming the children and ensuring they are able to communicate with staff*'.

Svitlana Zavadska has 11 years primary school teaching experience in Ukraine. Meanwhile Speldhurst's year 3 teacher Mr Vale-Taylor has been learning Ukrainian on a language app for the several weeks in preparation for the arrival of the new pupils. Later this month (July) a further two Ukrainian children will also join the School. It must be such a culture shock for them – new language, new friends, new country. I wonder what they made of the Jubilee celebrations? At Speldhurst, the Platinum Event proved a good learning opportunity and there was even a surprise visitor – Is that really who we think it is?



No of course it isn't – just a convincing look-alike provided by year 6 teacher Mrs MacNaughton. All the children like these Year 4's in Empire Class had their photo taken with 'Her'. A memory to go with other Jubilee memories such as automated corgis in the Queen's 70th anniversary parade down London's Mall, the flamingo mobility scooters and a short film of Paddington Bear taking tea with her Royal Majesty on the big screen before the previous evening's concert. All the children designed a crown for their 'Queen' to wear and the winner of each year group had theirs featured in their class photos. These are the ones made by the Year 6 pupils (above). In school, the classrooms were festooned with bunting also made by the children, whilst outside a grandparent decorated the field with their home-made bunting for a whole school Jubilee picnic. But all too soon the holiday and celebrations were over and it was back to lessons. As part of this term's topic about human and animal biology, Russet class pupils made life sized skeletons to show how the internal organs of the body are protected by our bones. Meanwhile at the younger end of the school, pupils were learning the differences between deciduous and evergreen trees by spotting and identifying them through the shapes and textures of their leaves.

The sun shone and Year 1 children in Jazz class were allowed outside for other lessons such as reading, writing, spelling and phonics. Inside however, the serious-minded Year 4 pupils in Empire turned their classroom into a Parliament. They adopted the role of MPs to debate environment and sustainability issues culminating in a vote on whether deforestation should be made illegal. They also voted on something of particularly immediate interest to young minds – whether homework should be banned. The vote said ‘No’. A demonstration of democracy in action.

Meanwhile in Crispin Class, Year 5 pupils became archaeologists, historians and detectives - all in one lesson for their Saxon project. In the classroom, they recreated the fascinating dig at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk. From the various artefacts they uncovered, the pupils deduced which Saxon 'superking' was buried there – and they were absolutely right about his identity.



Finally for those of us looking forward to the summer holidays there was a lovely, albeit imaginary treat for Year 2 children in Galaxy Gala class as part of their topic 'Under the Sea' when they compared a Victorian trip with a modern-day excursion. They also made and entertained each other with their own Punch & Judy show.That's the Way to Do it!!



Have a wonderful summer holiday. See you in September.

Sara Andrew Communications Governor, Speldhurst School



~ Allotment News ~



Doctor Carrot and Potato Pete

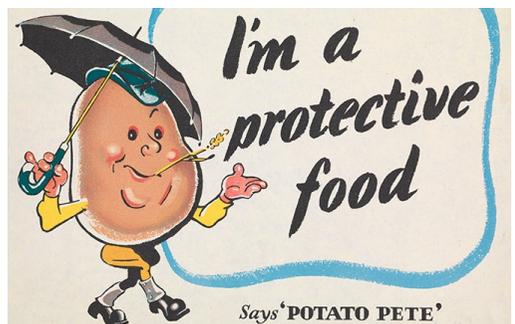
Although it was widely looked upon with suspicion when first introduced by the Spaniards in the 16th century, the potato has managed to settle itself as an important staple across the European continent. It has fed many mouths and has become an essential source of energy for countless people. But until WWII, it had never been more than that. Yet in the war-struck Britain of the 1940's, the mighty potato rose to become a protagonist in a brilliant piece of propaganda. Potato Pete was invented.

Before the beginning of the war, Britain imported a good 60% of its food. With a shortage of food and to keep the morale high, the enormous 'Dig for Victory' campaign was set up with the aim to motivate the British people to grow their own vegetables.

And so Doctor Carrot and Potato Pete were created to make helpful suggestions as to how to serve vegetables that the Dig for Victory campaign was encouraging. Doctor Carrot came up with such culinary delights as curried carrot, carrot jam and a home-made drink called Carrolade, which was made from the juices of carrots and swedes. Both Potato Pete and Doctor Carrot had their own song to further convey their message, sung by Betty Driver. Here is an example of a rhyme from that period:

Potatoes new, potatoes old
Potato (in a salad) cold
Potatoes baked or mashed or fried
Potatoes whole, potatoes pied
Enjoy them all, including chips
Remembering spuds don't come in ships

Visually, these vegetables were anthropomorphised to add weight to their message. Potato Pete was established as a Humpty-Dumpty style figure proclaiming the myriad of culinary uses for the humble potato.



Doctor Carrot was bestowed with the trustworthy weight of medical authority, dressed in a suit and white coat, while carrying a top hat and a black medical case emblazoned with 'VIT A'.



During the 1940's there was an explosion of allotments and home gardens in almost every possible space. This was the era of growing your own. By the end of the Second World War there were almost 1.4 million allotments. By 1943, estimates suggested that home gardens were responsible for more than one million tonnes of produce.

Today? Mention allotments and the traditional image / stereotype that can spring to mind is of a ramshackle and usually far from charming site run by old boys in flat caps with too much time on their hands. Hmm. Do any of us resemble that?!? In as much as any member of the population may have thought about allotments for many years, they tended to be characterised as a quaint, rather eccentric part of the English landscape which is mildly amusing – what is it with these people and their cabbages? But now. In this day and age? With a need to be eco-friendly, encourage bio-diversity and reduce carbon, allotments and home-grown produce are become ever so important. We again have a need to dig. Not this time for victory. But for our futures.

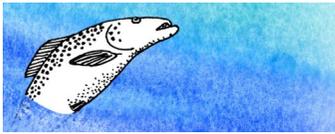
Rob Kyte

And finally:

If you are interested in acquiring an allotment, please contact Mark Oddy on 01892 862746.

If there is any topic you would like to address relating to matters gardening or horticultural, please send an email to kytehouse@stepex.co.uk.

If you would like to submit something for this article, please also email it to kytehouse@stepex.co.uk.



July & August 2022



3rd July

10 am Communion

10th July

10 am Morning Worship

10 am Online Worship available via

<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

Saturday 16th July

3 pm Wedding

17th July

10 am Morning Worship

During the summer holidays we will again be experimenting with some different experiences of church. Our theme this year will be “Growing the love of Jesus in our community”.

24th July

10 am Summer Worship - Growing ... in faith
All-Age Communion in church with
Bishop Simon of Tonbridge

10 am Online Worship available via

<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

Saturday 30th July

1 pm Wedding

31st July

10 am Summer Worship - Growing ... in nature
Informal worship in the churchyard, beginning with
breakfast

7th August

10 am Summer Worship - Growing ... together
Café Communion in Speldhurst School Hall

10 am Online Worship available via

<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

14th August

10 am Summer Worship - Growing ... with Jesus
Breakfast in church, followed by a choice of walks

21st August

10 am Summer Worship - Growing ... in love
Communion on the move in church

10 am Online Worship available via
<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

28th August

10 am Summer Worship - Growing ... our community
Informal Worship on the Rec, starting with
bacon sandwiches

Saturday 3rd - Sunday 4th September

St Mary's Messy Camp at Speldhurst School.
Join us for some or all of the time. *(See separate advert)*

4th September

10 am Breakfast at Speldhurst School

10 am Online Worship available via
<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

11 am Summer Worship - Growing ... the love of Jesus in our
community
Communion Service at Speldhurst School



Baptisms

| | |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| 15th May | Leonardo David Friday |
| 10th June | Barnaby Arthur Hugh Parker |
| 12th June | Holly Beth Starritt |
| | Abigail Grace Morris |
| | Imogen Frances Morris |

Weddings

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 4th June | Tom Heilpern and Tabitha Dixon |
| 11th June | Dan Orton and Chloe Hagger |

**The Church Office can be contacted on 861187 or
speldhurst.church@btopenworld.com**

Normal office hours: 9 am to 12.30 pm

See our website: www.speldhurstchurch.org

St Mary's Facebook page:
facebook.com/StMarysSpeldhurst/

A Letter from St Mary's

July 2022

Dear All,

Whilst sitting here considering what to write for this month's article (during Douglas's sabbatical), I noticed a book recently given to me, entitled 'Our Faithful Queen, 70 Years of Faith and Service'. It started me thinking about the many Jubilee celebrations taking place and reminded me of the importance of faith, service and community. Our villages really shone during lockdown with people helping and loving their neighbours – think about the Speldhurst STARS as one example. And lots of people chose to move out of big cities into smaller local communities.

We all know that village life is great, but you really do get more out when you put more in. I found that myself when I started volunteering at the Speldhurst Shop and Post Office – it's been a fabulous way to get to know more people in the village; it gets me out of the house and reminds me what a great range of things we sell there too. Sadly, since lockdown, there has been a real decline in volunteering across all parts of the country, and in all areas of activity – from youth work, to charities, even to our own village shop here in Speldhurst. Greater minds than mine are currently thinking about the reasons for this and how it can be addressed, but I wonder if you had noticed this yourself? What do YOU love about your village? Just looking through this magazine is a great way to find local groups that could do with a hand and I'm sure any act of service, however small, would make a big difference.

So, this summer, how about thinking not what can your village do for you, but what can you do for your village? And, as the Queen said in her Christmas message in 2012, what better example than God, who sent his son to serve, not to be served. He restored love and service to the centre of our lives in the person of Jesus Christ.

Julie

If you need to contact us about anything to do with our churches, please contact Andrea in the Parish Office on 01892 861187.

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| | Alan Rowe | 863404 |
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| Library (village hall): | Monday 2-5pm. |
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