

**Vol.65 No 5 May 2025**

**Online Edition**

## **ST PETER'S CHURCH. BRACKLEY**



**“LOVING GOD,  
LOVING EACH OTHER,  
LOVING BRACKLEY”**





## Love is in the Air

*God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God lives in them (1 John 4:16).*

This month I am super excited to be officiating my first weddings. I think it's official, I can now be trusted!

There will, I assume, be confetti and cake, white dresses and sharp suits, wedding rings and joyful music. The weddings will be a wonderful celebration of love. The verse above tells us that there is no greater reason to celebrate than to remember that all expressions of love show something of the God who is love.

That is why the Bible uses marriage to point to something more beautiful and profound, the picture of Christ and his Church (Ephesians 5:32). A marriage is designed to be a mirror that reflects Christ's love for his people. There are two ways we see this happen.

First, marriage shows that Christ's love is *passionate*.

The bride and groom will declare their love. They vow to give who they are and what they have. In other words, the bride and groom are not mere acquaintances. They don't simply have a passing interest in each other. They're not just mildly concerned with the other's welfare. At least I hope not! They will vow to love and to cherish their spouse. Their love is passionate.

How much greater is Christ's love for us? The picture of marriage shows us that Christ pursued his bride. He made himself poor so that she might become rich. He gave himself up for her. This is not a mere acquaintance. Christ, the bridegroom, has given everything because of his great love. His love for you is passionate.

Second, marriage shows Christ's love is *faithful*.

Christ's love for his Church is not a fleeting romance. He is not here today but gone tomorrow. No, he promises to never leave or forsake us. God's love remains. He is always faithful.

The couples will vow to 'have and to hold from this day forward; for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part; according to God's holy

law.' Love is, of course, more than a feeling. The promise of faithful commitment will be given, and it reflects something of how faithful Jesus is towards us.

This is so helpful to remember, especially when we consider how challenging it is to reflect God's love in a broken world. If you're married and struggling, please do ask if we can support you and pray with you.

God's love is passionate and faithful. There are lengths and breadths and depths to God's love that we can never fully fathom. We see how great that love is on the cross of Christ. It is this God of love we serve, whether married or not. That's why the Bible tells us that both marriage and singleness are gifts from God. Marriage is there to reflect Christ's love, whereas singleness allows one to serve Christ and his kingdom of love with unique devotion (Matthew 19:12, 1 Corinthians 7:7).

Whatever our marital status, therefore, in this life, marriage is like a movie trailer. It's not the main event. Instead, it is there to show us something of what the main event will be like.

Each wedding will be *a* special day. But it is not *the* special day. That day is still to come. It's the ultimate wedding that all others were pointing towards. Just take in how incredible it is.

*Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. (Revelation 21:1–3).*

What a reason to celebrate!

# PRAISE EVENING

**TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> MAY, 7.30 PM**

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A TIME OF PRAYER AND SINGING, WITH CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP MUSIC

**WEDDING WISHES**

**TO HELEN & DAN**

**SENDING YOU LOVE AND PRAYERS  
AS YOU EMBARK ON  
YOUR MARRIED LIFE TOGETHER**

**YOUR CHURCH FAMILY**





**Agendas for the Annual Meetings  
of the parish of St Peter with St James, Brackley**

11.30am on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025, at St Peter's Church

1. Opening prayer
2. Appointment of a secretary (for both meetings)
3. Apologies for absence (for both meetings)

**Vestry Meeting**

1. Approve minutes of Vestry Meeting held on 21.4.24
2. Election of Churchwardens

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. Approve minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
held on 21.4.24
2. Matters Arising
3. Presentation of the Electoral Roll
4. Elections and Appointments (only those on the church's  
Electoral Roll may vote)
  - i. Election of PCC members
  - ii. Election of Deanery Synod members
  - iii. Appointment of Sides-Persons (Welcome Team) for the  
coming year
5. Financial Report for 2024
6. Presentation of the Annual Report & Accounts,  
Appointment of the Auditor
7. Fabrics, Goods and Ornaments for 2024
8. Safeguarding
9. Children and Families Worker Report
10. Vicar's Report
11. AOB (items to be emailed to [bensie5459@gmail.com](mailto:bensie5459@gmail.com)  
at least 24 hours in advance)
12. Q&A
13. Closing Prayer



20 May  
**World Bee Day**

**BEE INSPIRED**  
by nature to nourish us all

This year's theme, "Bee inspired by nature to nourish us all", highlights the critical roles bees and other pollinators play in agrifood systems and the health of our planet's ecosystems. Indeed, pollinators are increasingly threatened by habitat loss, unsustainable agricultural practices, climate change and pollution. Their decline jeopardizes food production, increases costs and exacerbates food insecurity, particularly for rural communities.

Pollination is essential for agrifood systems, supporting the production of more than 75 percent of the world's crops, including fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds. In addition to increasing crop yields, pollinators improve food quality and diversity.

More than 200 000 animal species are pollinators, the vast majority of which are wild, including butterflies, birds, bats and more than 20 000 bee species.

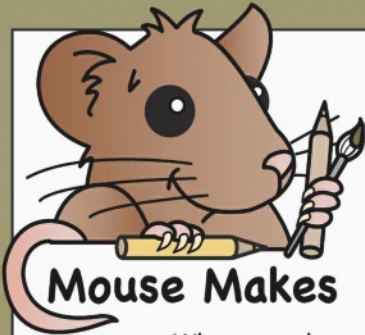
Bees and other pollinators also serve as indicators of environmental health, providing insights into ecosystems and the climate. Protecting pollinators also enhances biodiversity and critical ecosystem services, such as soil fertility, pest control, and air and water regulation.

Nature-friendly agricultural practices like agroecology, intercropping, agroforestry, and integrated pest management help sustain pollinators, ensuring stable crop yields and reducing food shortages and environmental impacts.

Deliberate pollinator protection efforts ultimately foster the conservation of other components of biodiversity, which enhances ecosystem services like pest control, soil fertility and air and water regulation. Adopting a holistic approach that ensures the long-term co-existence of agricultural practices for the production of food, fibre and fuel is needed for sustainable agrifood systems.

There is something all of us can do to safeguard the future of pollinators.

## MIRACLES OF PETER



At which temple gate  
did the crippled man lay?

Acts 3:1-10



Who were the man and wife  
who lied to God?

and

Acts 5:1-11

People carried the sick into  
the streets so that when Peter  
came by at least his

might fall on them.

Acts 5:12-16



How long had Aeneas  
been paralysed for?

years

Acts 9:32-35

Where had Tabitha's body been laid?  
in the

Acts 9:36-42



"And the word  
of God  
continued to  
increase,  
and the number  
of the disciples  
multiplied  
greatly."  
Acts 6:7

E L P R A I S I N G M H  
B E A U T I F U L M I T  
S A R W S A P P H I R A  
A P A C R I P P L E A B  
N I L W O N D E R S C I  
A N Y P W D I R A I L T  
N G S R A A E R L C E H  
I H E A L E D O I K S A  
A K D Y K N F O V I L L  
S K P E T E R M E D E B  
L I E D L A M E I G H T  
G S I G N S S H A D O W

After Jesus  
ascended into  
heaven, the  
Holy Spirit  
came upon  
the Apostles  
and Peter was  
able to perform  
many miracles  
in Jesus' name.  
**See the book  
of ACTS**



PETER • SIGNS • WONDERS • MIRACLES • HEALED  
CRIPPLE • LAME • WALK • LEAPING • PRAISING • LIED • DIED • SICK  
AENEAS • PARALISED • TABITHA • ILL • PRAYED • ALIVE

*Nigel Beeton writes:*

*May sees the eightieth anniversary of VE Day - Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945.*



## **The bells rang out in England**

The bells rang out in England  
And songs of heartfelt joy,  
But 'midst the cheers were bitter tears  
For each lost man and boy.



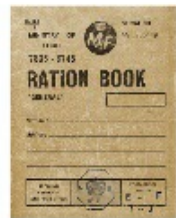
The six long years of fighting  
Had such a dreadful cost  
In blood and sweat and mortal threat  
And countless lives were lost.



It now, at last, had ended –  
In Europe's shores at least;  
Our people brave feared not the grave  
To slay the Nazi beast.



The lessons learned stayed with us  
For eighty peaceful years.  
Yet now, again, some brutal men  
Are raising wartime fears.



We should be celebrating  
This coming VE Day;  
Yet not at ease, but on our knees  
For lasting peace, we pray.



*By Nigel Beeton*





## Joan of Arc: saving France from the English



How far would you go to respond to God's call on your life? When, as the daughter of a peasant family in Champagne in 1426, 14-year-old Joan heard heavenly voices calling her to 'save France' from the English, she decided to obey the call, no matter what the consequences.

Teenage girls who want to rescue their country from foreign troops were considered every bit as crazy back then as they would be now. But Joan eventually came to the notice of the Dauphin (Later Charles VII) who decided to make use of her obvious ability to inspire people – in this case, the French, to fight. And so Joan, dressed in white armour, rode at

the front of the French army when they relieved Orleans in April 1429.

Her presence and belief in her divine calling to get rid of the English, did wonders for the morale of the troops, who loved her even more when she sustained a wound in the breast, and made little of it.

A campaign in the Loire followed, and then in July the Dauphin was crowned at Rheims with Joan at his side, carrying her standard. More battles followed that winter, until Joan was captured and sold to the English. They attributed her success to witchcraft and spells, and imprisoned her at Rouen. She was brought before judges, where her spirited and shrewd defence were outstanding.

But the judges declared her false and diabolical, and she was condemned to die as a heretic. She was burnt at the stake in the marketplace at Rouen on 30 May 1431. Joan died as she had lived; with total faith in God and certainty that she was obeying His will for her life. She died with fortitude, looking at a cross and calling on the name of Jesus. Her ashes were thrown into the Seine.

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