

September 2025 Edition 115

*Well done! Good and Faithful Servant (Matt 25 v21)*

## Revd Canon Maggie Marsh Remembers John

I have known John for many years, both as a neighbour, a friend and, latterly, since my return to St Mary's in the autumn of 2022, as a clergy colleague.

Working together as part of the Ministry Team was an experience I shall always treasure. It soon became apparent that John and I shared the same theological understanding, the same approach to biblical interpretation, the same appreciation that life is a journey and we are all learning all the time. John had so many more years' experience as a priest than I did – he was due to celebrate 60 years of priesthood next year – which puts my 25 years into perspective, and John's wisdom, experience and insights were something that I valued and appreciated so much.



It was such a joy to work with him during the long vacancy after Theresa left and before Joshva's arrival. You may have heard that Charlie said he could never decide if we were 'The Gruesome Twosome' or 'The Dynamic Duo', but decided that we were, in fact, 'Geriatrics United'! The emphasis is on the word 'united', for we always stood together in our expression of churchmanship, the way we liked to lead worship, our view that preaching should always express how relevant our Holy Scriptures are to our life experience, and especially the power of love to overcome all things.

John and Daphne's hospitality was second to none. Their annual Garden Party Afternoon Tea in their beautiful garden was something to be looked forward to and relished each time, with Daphne's delicious food and the warmth of the welcome that was extended to everyone.

Equally, the annual Christmas Party, with drinks and nibbles and seasonal joy revealed so much of John and Daphne's expression of 'loving their neighbours'. Such happy times to remember always.

It seems incredible that it was only a few months ago that John started to feel unwell. Sometimes, as we both waited with the choir prior to a Sunday service, John would say to me 'I don't feel very good today. If I can't manage to lead the whole service, are you prepared to take over?'

Of course, I could reassure him that I would. But I never had to. For John was, above all things, a dedicated priest, who pushed through the pain barrier to serve God and the lovely people of Cuddington.

His sermons were always inspiring and his wonderful way of presiding at the Eucharist, with great reverence and times of quiet, brought us all into a very real sense of the Presence of God, which is so tangible in our beautiful church. I always left a service which John had led knowing that somehow, in a way I perhaps couldn't put into words, I had met with the Living God through our Lord's close presence.

His genuine love of people, his kindness and empathy, were also revealed in the relationship he had with those who came to the Toddlers' Group. He never 'pushed religion' or a sense of guilt about not coming to church. Rather, his 'love in action' encouraged many requests for Baptisms, which obviously touched so many families deeply.

John was such a gifted man – not just in his academic achievements but his creativity – how fortunate we are to have in church his wonderful illustrated booklets with words that were so beautifully chosen – as part of his legacy.

To see him decline in health so quickly was tragic to witness. He wanted to come home, and he did. Daphne supported him constantly, and their love for each other was palpable. Theirs was, indeed, a deep and lasting love that flowed from them to others.

John, my dear friend, you will be missed more than words can say. I hope I was able to let you know how much I valued everything you shared, which I know will sustain me as I grieve your passing. I'm sure I'm not alone in saying that knowing you was a blessing. May you rest in peace and rise in glory.

## Our LLM, Jason, Shares his Memories of John



I've been asked to share some memories of John, and his ministry here at St Mary's.

In all my time here at St Mary's John has been the rock. We have been truly blessed by his talents and unwavering commitment of his faith and his love for people.

His gentleness and guiding hand had such a calming and endearing influence to the work of our ministry team (Maggie and I) and wider church community. I could hang off his every word knowing he was talking with complete sincerity and authenticity in all he wanted to share.

John gave a message to us all that we are loved unconditionally by our God. The heart of Christ's message was love. I felt so blessed to hear it numerous times and that is what we must give to others. It's our job to share that love.

John, we will miss you dearly but your central message of love, and sharing that with others is something we will all carry here at St Mary's in the days and years to come in all we do in support of our Church and the wider community.



## September Services and Events

<b>Monday 1</b>	<b>19.30</b>	<b>Knit &amp; Natter Group in the Leverton Room</b>
<b>Friday 5</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>Toddler Group restarts in Cuddington Hall</b>
<b>Saturday 6</b>	<b>09.00</b>	<b>Men's Breakfast at Horton Golf Park</b>
<b>Sunday 7</b>	<b>08.00</b>	<b>Holy Communion (Common Prayer)</b>
	<b>09.30</b>	<b>Sung Communion &amp; Children's Groups</b>
	<b>12.00</b>	<b>Parish Barbecue Lunch</b>
<b>Wednesday 10</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>Knit &amp; Natter Group in the Leverton Room</b>
<b>Saturday 13</b>	<b>11 - 5</b>	<b>Heritage Open Day in Church</b>
<b>Sunday 14</b>	<b>08.00</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>09.30</b>	<b>Sung Communion</b>
	<b>15.00</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Service for our Pets</b>
<b>Monday 15</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>Celebration of John Richardson's Life</b>
<b>Wednesday 17</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>PCC meeting in the Cuddington Hall</b>
<b>Thursday 18</b>	<b>14.30</b>	<b>Afternoon Club in the Cuddington Hall</b>
<b>Saturday 20</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>Women's Group in the Cuddington Hall</b>
<b>Sunday 21</b>	<b>09.30</b>	<b>Sung Communion &amp; Children's Groups</b>
<b>Sunday 28</b>	<b>09.30</b>	<b>Sung Communion</b>
<b>Weds 1 Oct</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>Knit &amp; Natter Group in the Leverton Room</b>
<b>Saturday 4 Oct</b>	<b>09.00</b>	<b>Men's Breakfast at Horton Golf Park</b>
<b>Sunday 5 Oct</b>	<b>08.00</b>	<b>Holy Communion (Common Prayer)</b>
	<b>09.30</b>	<b>Harvest Festival</b>

**Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am**

**Everyone is very welcome**