

Autumn is understandably many people's favourite season here in the UK. We see nature in all its glory as the leaves on the trees turn to shades of russet, brown and gold, and the mornings feel crisp and fresh after the long and very hot summer. The car park at Findon Church is often strewn with horse chestnuts at this time of the year, which evoke childhood memories of playing conkers—though in today's 'elf and safety culture, you would probably need goggles, a helmet and gloves to play!

September has been a busy month in the life of the parish, the star of which was the annual Sheep Fair which included the much-loved Songs of Praise led by the Salvation Army band. We also celebrated our Harvest Festivals in each of our three churches. Other scheduled activities included a parish walk and an organ concert. We also saw the start of the new term at our two schools.

This month, on Sunday 4th we can look forward to Becca Lieu and her flute students leading the music at our Worship & Praise service in Findon Church. In the afternoon of that same Sunday, being the feast of St Francis, we once again hold our annual and very popular Blessing of Pets service at 3:30pm. We restart our Messy Church sessions on Tuesday 6th in Findon Village Hall. This is open to all primary school aged children and their parents

or carers, and includes lots of fun craft activities and a delicious tea. Given we are still very much in the harvest season our theme will be the beautiful world that God has created. There are a variety of views amongst Christians as to how God created the universe, but what we do agree on is that God willed creation into being through an outpouring of love, and continues to sustain our very existence. We are invited to share in God's creative love and to care for this beautiful planet which teems with life in all its forms. It is salutary to remember that the world existed billions of years before human beings appeared.

As most readers will probably be aware, our parish has been in vacancy, i.e. without an incumbent Vicar since January when Helena retired. Our bishops have requested we share a full-time Vicar with All Saints, Findon Valley, both parishes being assessed as requiring a roughly half-time post. To that end we are looking to closer working so that we may get to know each other better.

Although the world seems to be full of doom and gloom at present we can be assured that we are held in love as we are part of God's good creation, and there is joy to be found in the small things if we only take the time to stop and be present to the beauty we see all around us.

Rev Colin Cox, Associate Vicar.

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