

**Octavia Hill, Social Reformer
died 13 August 1912**



Octavia Hill (3 December 1838 – 13 August 1912) was an English social reformer, whose main concern was the welfare of the inhabitants of cities, especially London, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Born into a family of radical thinkers and reformers with a strong commitment to alleviating poverty, she herself grew up in straitened circumstances owing to the financial failure of her father's businesses. With no formal schooling, she worked from the age of 14 for the welfare of working people.

Hill was a moving force behind the development of social housing, and her early friendship with John Ruskin enabled her to put her theories into practice with the aid of his initial investment. She believed in self-reliance, and made it a key part of her housing system that she and her assistants knew their tenants personally and encouraged them to better themselves. She was opposed to municipal provision of housing, believing it to be bureaucratic and impersonal.

Another of Hill's concerns was the availability of open spaces for poor people. She campaigned against development on existing suburban woodlands, and helped to save Hampstead Heath and Parliament Hill Fields in London from being built on. She was one of the three founders of the National Trust, set up to preserve places of historic interest or natural beauty for the enjoyment of the British public. She was a founder member of the Charity Organisation Society (now the charity Family Action) which organised charitable grants and pioneered a home-visiting service that formed the basis for modern social work. She was a member of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws in 1905.

Hill's legacy includes the large holdings of the modern National Trust, several housing projects still run on her lines, a tradition of training for housing managers, and the Octavia Hill Birthplace House established by the Octavia Hill Society at her birthplace in Wisbech.



St Cross Newsletter August 2022

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The Vicar writes...

Looking back on the month of July it has been pleasing to enjoy organised social activities within the St Cross family. The Open Gardens event was very well supported and the recent Strawberry Tea, though attended by fewer numbers, was a worthwhile event and was certainly appreciated by the visiting choir! My thanks go to all concerned.

At the heart of any church family, prayer and worship should be the main focus and area of concern for us. We are a community of believers in Christ with a story of good news to share. However, a good social network is a good way to widen our community contact and the fellowship within our church. And the fund raising, too, is an important aspect of helping us to make ends meet.

Thinking about community, further afield during August on the 14th, I will be heading up to the hills of Cheshire to Forest Chapel. This is part of the benefice of Holy Trinity, Rainow combined with Saltersford and Forest where our former Curate Simon is the Vicar. He has kindly invited me to preach at the annual Rushbearing service and, apparently, I'll be outside standing on a particular gravestone to do this.

There are only a handful of churches that have such an event now and the tradition involves decorating the church with flowers and rushes. The tradition originates from the time before churches had paved floors,

and rushes were strewn to keep earth floors sweet smelling. An annual of the renewal of the floor took place and this became a special occasion. Rushbearing is about renewal and spiritual cleansing. It can act as a reminder how cluttered and messy our own lives can get, too. Fresh rushes provide a clean fresh floor and so for us, our lives can be likened to a church floor with fresh rushes, sweeping out the old to make a fresh start.

May August be a time for a rest and renewal for all of us before September comes and life gets busier once again.

Yours, in Christ
Paul



St Stephen's Church Forest Chapel

Occasional Offices

Funeral
25 July Alan Conkleton



Readings for Services - Sundays and Wednesdays

	Morning Services	Evening Service
3 August Wednesday	Jeremiah 31.1-7 or Psalm 121 Matthew 15.21-28	
Sunday 7 August Trinity 8	Genesis 15.1-6 Hebrews 11.1-3, 8-16 Luke 12.32-40	
10 August Wednesday	2 Corinthians 9.6-10 Matthew 6.19-24	
Sunday 14 August Trinity 9	Jeremiah 23.23-29 Hebrews 11.29-12.2 Luke 12.49-56	
17 August Wednesday	Ezekiel 34.1-11 or Psalm 23 Matthew 20.1-16	
Sunday 21 August Trinity 6	Isaiah 58.9b-end Hebrews 12.18-end Luke 13.10-17	
24 August Wednesday Bartholomew, Apostle	Isaiah 43.8-13 Acts 5.12-16 Luke 22.24-30	
Sunday 28 August Trinity 7	Proverbs 25.6-7 Hebrews 13.1-8, 15-16 Luke 14.1,7-14	
31 August Wednesday	Isaiah 45.22-end 1 Corinthians 9.16-19 John 13.16-20	