

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

HUGHENDEN

ANNUAL VESTRY

and

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH

MEETINGS

SUNDAY 27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020

REPORT BOOKLET

## **REPORT BOOKLET 2020**

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## Vicar's Report 2019

2019 will be remembered fondly as the year that Hughenden Church opened wide our doors, offered extravagant hospitality, and welcomed our local community to come and find out more about our church.

Special thanks go to Mike & Anne Dean for overseeing our Community Day, which took place on 9 May, but they would be the first to say that it was a team effort, as members from all 4 congregations worked together to put on a day to remember.

There was something for everyone – great fun children's activities, a nature quest, treasure hunt, historical & bell tower tours, superb musical offerings from our wonderful choir, organist and music group, the most breath-taking flower displays throughout the Church, delicious food and drink, informative displays from the Mothers Union, Alpha, the Friendship Group, amongst others, and the opportunity to pray in our newly refurbished Prayer Chapel.

It is quite a challenge to sum up the day in a few words, but here goes.... my heart was warmed by how united our Church family was in working together for the common good, and through sacrificial giving of time and money, organisation of the highest standard, and hundreds of people in attendance, it was truly a day to remember! In a late, unexpected development, the National Trust gave special permission for us to use the grassland for parking, and that saved the day, and enabled us to host so many people. The Lord's guiding hand was with us all the way, from keeping the day almost completely dry, despite foreboding weather forecasts, to a heart stirring ending, as the team shared a BBQ together, and looked out across the valley, as God placed a rainbow over the Church for us to enjoy – many were moved to tears – we worship a great God! Our Social & Outreach programme, designed to allow the Church family to enjoy fellowship with one another, as well as drawing in others, continues to be varied and well received. Highlights included a Pub Quiz in Bryants Bottom at The Gate, a Pet service, Napfest on a very windy June Saturday, a BBQ in the Thompson family's garden, to our annual Barn Dance, and a Turkish Night.

Alpha has become an ever-present fixture between September-December each year, under the capable and enthusiastic leadership of Frank Hawkins, and 2019 was no exception. A group of about a dozen spent some memorable evenings together over food, film and fellowship grappling with the meaning of life, God, Jesus and the Church. The group bonded particularly well and a new housegroup has been set up, to build upon those relationships, as they continue to grow together in faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

A group numbering over 20 attended the annual Spring Harvest conference in Minehead in April, and were greatly blessed with challenging teaching, inspirational worship and fellowship with one another.

We were delighted to welcome our new curate Rev Tracey Jones (TJ) to Hughenden Parish, following her ordination as a deacon at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, on Saturday 29 June. TJ then spent the summer fulfilling a long-held ambition to walk the

Camino, on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, and she commenced her parish duties in earnest with us in early September.

TJ has already made valuable contributions to the life of our parish, and it is a pleasure to welcome her to our ministry team.

We are truly blessed at Hughenden with a strong ministry team, and Helen Peters, our Associate Minister continues to work with commitment, passion, pastoral sensitivity and dedication in all that she does. It is also good to be able to call on the preaching gifts of David Tester, our licensed lay minister on occasions – thank you all so much.

We continue to foster links with all the local schools in our parish through assemblies, occasional lesson visits as well as special events in partnership with Bex Hawes, our Youth & Children's worker, who we share with Wycombe YFC. Bex and the team help Y6 preparing to transition up to secondary school, as well as organising Easter Eggsplained and Christmas Unwrapped workshops, usually hosted and supported by church volunteers in St Michael's as well as occasionally in other locations.

I am encouraged that housegroup membership is growing, and we currently have over 80 members of our Church family who meet regularly in one of the 9 groups set up by our Church. During Lent, in preparation for our Community Day, all our groups studied the *Talking Jesus* material, to help us to grow in confidence talking to others about our faith. We continue to be blessed by a strong, committed Mothers Union, and a Friendship Group which has been growing significantly in numbers in recent months, under the strong pastoral oversight of Penny Austin and her team of volunteers.

Our Mission Support Group now well established under the leadership of David Tester, arranged a visit on furlough for our link missionaries the Santana family to our Church on 7 July, as they spent some time back in the UK. We partner CMS missionaries Levi & Debra Santana and their two young children, who are based in Goiania in Brazil, undertaking essential work amongst the most vulnerable in society, spreading the good news about Jesus Christ, and offering practical help and support.

There followed a memorable weekend between 23-24 November, as several events took place in support of Wycombe Homeless Connection – including a Papa Truck concert in Church, a guest speaker on Sunday from WHC, and a Big Sleep Out sponsored event in Adams Park Stadium, bravely undertaken by some hardy volunteers including our very own Brian Morley.

Our much-loved and long serving Bell Tower Captain David Cornwall celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 10 September, and a surprise party was arranged for his family and friends, including dozens of Bell ringers, from far and wide. If you have never been up into our Bell Tower ringing chamber, why not ask David for a chance to do so. A glance at the walls of the tower, reveals the chronicles of our church and nation's most significant events over several decades, in plaques to mark special occasions when a peal of bells has been rung.

We continue to welcome couples to our Church to be married and hosted 14 marriage services during 2019.

It is also a joy to celebrate the blessing of children, and to host baptism ceremonies occasionally on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, during our family services. 13 children were baptised at St Michael's during 2019.

We lost several dear Saints during 2019, whose lives and example were an inspiration to us all, including Cynthia Reid, Florence Pinfield and Pat Bottomley.

Funerals which took place either in our Church or on behalf of the parish were as follows:

- 14 Funerals in Church
- 10 Funerals at Crematorium

Christmas was once again a highlight of the church calendar – as we welcomed uniform organisations, schools and many to our special services, as well as taking the good news about the birth of the Saviour of the World out to Spring Valley Adult Centre, The Harrow & The Wheel for carol singing, and our annual service at Naphill Village Hall, which are always well received by our local community.

I am so grateful to our hardworking churchwardens, Julia Grant and Nick Devlin, who have overseen a busy, and at times challenging year for our Church – thank you both so much, and also to Roger Grant and Tricia Devlin for your supportive roles too.

The deteriorating condition of our Bell Tower roof has been a real cause for concern, especially for our PCC, as we have sought the right way forward, exploring funding options, and debating the options which are open to us, in consultation with the diocese. This will be an ongoing challenge going into 2020.

Our church is blessed with an abundance of volunteers who quietly and capably go about their service to God. Jean Godfrey has been overseeing our flower arranging rota for over 20 years, and she finally stepped down from this responsibility during the year. Thank you so much Jean for your hard work and many creative displays over the years.

Arthur Johnson continues to serve the Lord faithfully as our Parish Clerk and Verger, and I am often indebted to him for his vast knowledge and experience, especially in matters concerning our churchyard. Thanks should also go to Arthur's cat Liddy, for keeping the mouse population at a minimum in our churchyard.

I would like to also give a huge thank you to those who serve as car park stewards, green-fingered volunteers who tend our churchyard grounds, bell-ringers, flower arrangers, sidespeople, welcomers, prayer ministry team, those serving refreshments, our wonderful musicians, organists, choir and music group, Creche and JC Club leaders, and those who edit, print and distribute our Outlook parish magazine... as well as anyone I have forgotten to mention too.

What a privilege it is to serve as Vicar in this unique location. I especially value the ongoing support and kindness of our congregations – overall, Hughenden Church are it's members, the living stones, which make us who we are, the community of faith in this place. Thanks be to God.

## CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT (FABRIC)

The Church year began with a considerable effort from all parts of our church congregation, led by Mike and Ann Dean, to put on a spectacular day of outreach to our local community. The Community day left a legacy both spiritually and materially, with the complete overhaul and refurnishing of the Administration and crèche space in North room, and various other repairs and improvements around the church and grounds, including cleaning and refurbishing all of the garden furniture. It also led to the deep clean in church house and additional clear up sessions in the church grounds. Other churchyard clear ups were organized; in July and in October. These were both very successful and once again we benefited from a dry summer which helped to keep the whole of the churchyard in a very tidy condition.

During last summer Mike Hill volunteered to paint the shed outside north room and did a very nice job on it, thank you Mike. Later in the year a new shed was purchased and erected in the Mothers' Union garden to enable us to clear the Donkey Shed so that it could be used for children's groups on Sundays.

The two major pieces of work that were identified last year are still outstanding. The bell tower roof has dominated the entire year and has caused the lighting upgrade to be pushed back until we have a clearer understanding of the funds that will be available for it. We have also been made aware of problems with our boiler, which will require attention within the next twelve months.

During the last year there has been an ongoing process of discovery in the bell tower project. As the scale of the problem has been better understood the cost of the project has been steadily escalating. Once again, the two former church wardens, Brian Clark and Christopher Tyrer have stepped forward to assist me with this work and I am deeply grateful for their assistance as this project has dragged me further and further out of my comfort zone. The escalating costs have become a serious concern within the PCC where it was feared that it threatened to take away from our ability to extend our outreach programme. However, as the PCC is responsible for the upkeep of the building, we have no choice but to address the problem, which means that the only way to protect the church financially is to raise additional funds for our special projects. There is now a concerted effort to raise additional funds from within our congregation as well as approaching external grant funding bodies.

Richard Peters has now stepped forward to help to lead this project and as I write this report, we are preparing to make our faculty application to the Diocese. Various fundraising suggestions have already been received and offers of donations and increases in monthly giving have also been received. During the coming year there will be a steadily increasing emphasis on this fundraising activity.

As I said when I first took on the role of Church Warden I knew that I would have some very experienced people in the church to support me and I am happy to be able to thank them all for their continued support.

**Nick Devlin**

### **CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT (WORSHIP)**

Our Church has continued to grow under Keith's leadership with amazing support from Helen as Associate Minister and David as Licensed Lay reader. We have also this year been fortunate enough to have TJ join us to train for her Curacy under Keith's supervision. At a time when many churches struggle to survive, we are indeed hugely blessed and thank them for their selflessness. I feel very humbled to be able to serve God and our Church as a Church Warden and have enjoyed the role immensely.

Lynn Brooks has continued in her role as admin support for Keith and the clergy and we are very fortunate to have her dedication and commitment to this role. The introduction of ChurchSuite which has enabled us to comply with the GDPR rules has been a success but does require more work to ensure we can communicate with our congregation sufficiently.

A project I was working on last year was the provision of a 'Prayer space' in the North Chapel. This was completed earlier this year and has been a welcome addition to our Church and in frequent use. The displays and themes in the prayer space are changed from time to time and have been prepared by a number of different people.

Earlier this year we had our 'Community Day', which thanks to Ann and Mike's amazing enthusiasm and organization was a great success. One of the aims of this was to bring our congregations from different services together and we were delighted that we had help from members of every congregation.

**Julia Grant**

### **GENERAL**

During the year both Nick and I have attended as many of the individual committee meetings as possible. We have divided this activity between ourselves and supported Social and Outreach, Communications, Mission Support and Discipleship. Following the APCM last year there was discussion about the Terms of Reference of a number of the committees. It was agreed that the principal functions of the groups and how they feed back to PCC were amended and all feed into PCC which acts as a 'check and balance'. The Leadership group has been disbanded and the Discipleship and a new Vision group were set up. The House group leaders are now invited to meet together specifically with house groups in mind. Not just to talk about material – but to pray together, to discuss best practice and to look at ongoing training needs.

We continue to draw strength and comfort from the way our congregation pulls together and maintains its commitment to serving God and caring for each other. As Church Wardens we would like to thank the many people in our congregation who work so hard in different roles to serve God and our Church and make our jobs so much easier.

We look forward with confidence to the year ahead under the leadership of Keith.

**Nick Devlin and Julia Grant**

### **ELECTORAL ROLL**

At the close of the APCM in 2019 there were 183 members on the Roll.

During the year five were added to the Roll by written application. Thereafter the Roll consisted of 188.

The new Roll (names only) will be exhibited, as required by law, in the Porch, and for not less than fourteen days thereafter; and the membership total will be further disclosed at the APCM on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

**Arthur Johnson, Electoral Roll Officer**

### **REGULAR GIVING**

The 2019 report is a totally different report from that of 2018.

Our regular giving in 2019 has seen a dramatic decrease on our 2018 regular giving by £15.731 on our 2018.

As there was no gift day in 2019, this has obviously contributed to such a high figure, with the 2018 gift day raising £8.891. This however does not negate the fact our giving has substantially declined.

Church House teas raised £5.829; this is yet again down by £1.100 on 2018 income. 2019 has seen the last of church house teas, as it is felt that this has run its course. That being the case this loss will be felt in our 2020 income.

Money collected at services has increased by £2.435, with visitors increasing by £166.

Had it not been for kind donations, together with a very substantial legacy, 2019 would look very different.

In my 8 years as your treasurer, I have been fortunate in never recording a loss. In 2020 I fear that this may not be the case, due to substantial repairs that need to be carried out in 2020/2021 and the decline in giving.

**Ian Faulkner (Treasurer)**

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

During 2019 – 2020 the PCC was constituted as follows:

Vicar: Rev. Keith Johnson

Associate Minister: Rev. Helen Peters

Curate from September: Rev. Tracey Jones

Diocesan Synod: Christopher Tyrer

Deanery Synod: Arthur Johnson, Christopher Tyrer

Churchwardens: Julia Grant and Nicholas Devlin

Treasurer: Ian Faulkner

Elected Members: \*\*\*Clare Godfrey\*, \*\*Louise Stallwood, Brian Clark, Antony Rippon, Patricia Devlin, David Tester, Frank Hawkins, Michael Hill, Matthew Skillen, Anne Dean, Ben Sharp, Mike Dean (resigned January 2020)

\*\*\* Lay Vice Chair, \*\* Secretary, \*Assistant Secretary

There were six PCC meetings in the last year. Thank you to everyone who gave up time and energy to attend the meetings.

The meetings this year have covered Finance, PCC committee structure, Prayer Weekend in September, purchase of a welcome screen and a colour photocopier. The proposed work to the bell tower and roof has taken up a great deal of time in our meetings. A Governance working group was formed with a remit to assure the members of the PCC and the APCM that the PCC is aware of and complying with its legal and moral responsibilities. A series of governance policies have been developed with a schedule for regular compliance reviews. Six policies have been written to date with a focus on safeguarding and health and safety in particular. The work is expected to conclude during 2020 with the PCC taking on the outcomes in normal business.

Tricia Devlin continued as Safeguarding Officer, Recruiter and Verifier with Bex as Child Advocate. PCC members have been trained in safeguarding, an audit has been undertaken and the PCC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

**Louise Stallwood (PCC Secretary)**

## PARISH MAGAZINE – OUTLOOK

Another year has passed with a variety of interesting and thought-provoking articles appearing in *Outlook*, together with notices, poems, illustrations, reports, etc. and we are grateful to all contributors. Sadly, despite this, distribution numbers have been falling.

However, a new colour printer has been purchased and following meetings, discussions and planning by the Editorial Team and Ben Brice, the launch of the first colour version of *Outlook* took place on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> January, with every member of each of the congregations being given a free copy. Not only were these copies in colour, but a complete overhaul of the style and layout has taken place, replacing the old, dated magazine with a bright, colourful and modern style for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. For this we are

very grateful to Ben whose expertise, artistic talent and extensive knowledge of IT, has produced the result we now see. We are hopeful that as a result, take-up of *Outlook* will increase, especially in our congregations, many of whom until now, had not been among the readership.

Our thanks to the Printing Team – Brian Clark, Andrew Cole, George Wilson and Tricia Devlin – who have all trained on the new colour printer and print our magazines each month. We welcome Roger Grant, who has joined the team and we also thank Keith Dean who, after many faithful years of printing, has now retired and we wish him well.

Our thanks to Stan Cole who continues to send copies of *Outlook* to readers outside the area. Thanks too, to Andrew Cole for delivering bundles of magazines to households and to all those who deliver them to homes in their areas.

We, on the Editorial Team, hope that many more readers will enjoy the new style *Outlook* and we look forward to receiving contributions for inclusion.

**Sylvia Clark, Christopher and Jane Tyrer, Susan Brice, Editor**

### **BELFRY**

The bell ringers were looking forward to increasing their numbers following the Church's Community day in May, alas, despite the enormous interest in how the bells worked and performances by the ringers, no new recruits were forthcoming. This leaves the tower very short of ringers for Sunday service. If any of you would like to give it a try please come along to our practice evenings Tuesday 7.30pm where you will be warmly welcomed. For further details give David Cornwall a call 01494 714718. Children can learn to ring from age 10 – there is no upper age limit so no excuse – age is no barrier! We are pleased to report a further £400 has been given to the organ fund from the bell ringers.

**David Cornwall**

### **MOTHERS' UNION**

We have continued to support our church with a varied programme – the Toddlers' picnic in June, Christmas and Easter Unwrapped, coffee mornings and of course the yearly Ploughman's lunch (which we will do again this year). From the Ploughman's lunch we were able to send over £600 to the Mothers' Union charity 'Away from It All' and from the coffee mornings we have sent donations. We have also supported the families that bring their Children for baptism and couples who are being married. Sadly, we have lost some valued members and seen more of our elderly members having health problems. We have enrolled some new members and there are more to enrol this year.

There have been some very interesting speakers, both from within the church congregation and further afield. Both Anne and Mike Dean have talked to us separately. Anne talked about her Christian counselling and Mike about mentoring in Aylesbury Prison. We welcomed Jackie Holderness from Oxford Cathedral and Captain Martin Greenwood with his memories of his maritime career.

In committee we have spoken about supporting the Bell Tower appeal. We would like to thank Keith, Helen and TJ for their continued support.

**Norma Clarke**

### **ALPHA COURSE**

Alpha Course 2019 ran for 11 weeks from 25<sup>th</sup> September until the beginning of December and was a great success. There were some 8 people attending plus leaders and helpers.

The Group quickly gained momentum, and also set up a "Whatsapp Group" that really helped everyone bond and encouraged questions and conversation. The result of this was that people gained much knowledge about Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity but also made some excellent friends.

A new house group has formed with the course members as the core and this is progressing well.

My thanks go out to all the helpers on the course and to all those who made such delicious food for us.

It would be good to have at least as many people as last year and we can cope with more if required. We love to encourage new people to come and try out and question any matters to do with Christianity, but we also welcome any people who feel they might benefit from a refresher course. So, please therefore, ask friends and colleagues if they would be interested in this year's course that will commence on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 in Church House. Enrolment is open now.

**Frank Hawkins (Alpha Leader and Coordinator) 07850 150462**

### **SIDESPEOPLE AND WELCOMERS**

We are extremely grateful to the many people who offer themselves as sides-people and welcomers in all of the services and thank you Amanda for organizing the 10.45 service. These roles are vitally important as they are the first point of contact for those entering the church, for those who come to worship and visitors to our Church. We are recognized as a Family Friendly Church and have established a reputation as being a very welcoming Church. We have aimed this year to encourage more families and younger people to both these roles, and particularly to encourage those with children to support the sides-people role, what a wonderful way to welcome visitors and families into the Church!

Visitors in particular need to be acknowledged and assisted in understanding what is happening, welcomed to join us for coffee and introduced to the clergy. However, there

are never enough willing volunteers and this is a valuable service to our Lord that is open to everyone, so please do offer your help. We will provide plenty of support until you are comfortable with the role.

We need and continue to seek support help and service in the Church in many areas and have been pleased to see a number of people already signed up for this year:

Welcomers, Sides-people, collection stewards, chalice administrators, crèche helpers, 'mowers for the church yard', the list is substantial and needs replenishment with new faces! Please come and talk to us if you would be willing to help.

**Julia Grant (Church Warden)**

## **TINY TOTS**

The Tiny Tots Informal Service has continued during 2019/20, meeting on the second Thursday of each month (except August) between 9.30 and 11.30am welcoming the Hughenden Toddler Group into the Church with extravagant hospitality.

Rev. Helen Peters heads up the team which includes Nicky Fairbairn, Barbara Willson, Charlotte Tester, Jane Tyrer, Christine Powell and more recently Alison Gieler. Team members provide and serve delicious homemade cakes and snacks throughout the morning to children and their parents, grandparents or carers.

We are pleased to work closely with the weekly toddler group's enthusiastic leaders - Ester Comunello, Vicky Eaton and Bryony Jones. We were all sorry to say goodbye in the summer to Claire Nobel, Ben and George who moved to Miami. Claire was sent out with love and thanks for all her contributions.

On a second Thursday the North Room is laid out with toys and a relevant craft activity, ably prepared and delivered by Charlotte Tester, or another member of the team when Charlotte is away. At 10.30am everyone is invited into the Church for the Tiny Tots Informal Service. Helen Peters, Nicky Fairbairn, Charlotte Tester, Jane Tyrer, Ester Comunello, Claire Noble, Christine Powell and Vicky Fletcher have all played their part in presenting and encouraging participation in songs, a Bible story time and prayers, celebrating birthdays with the model birthday cake. We have been delighted by how engaged the children are and also how much the adults appear to enjoy this time.

As always, a highlight of the year was the Teddy Bears' Picnic in June, held again in the church instead of the MU garden due to uncertain weather. We thank the many Mothers' Union members for their generous hospitality and donations of food: the picnic lunch was delicious, and the kind welcome shown to the many who came, contributed as ever to the terrifically worthwhile outreach exercise. The Picnic date fell near to Pentecost and so we heard this explained through the story of 'Teddy Horsley and the windy day'.

Members of Tiny Tots were invited and encouraged to attend the Crib Service at Christmastime; it was lovely to see many familiar faces from the current group and children from families who have passed through over the years joining us, and especially seeing Iona, a founder member, reading from the pulpit as part of the crib service!

Through this monthly Tiny Tots Service, the TT's team and additional helpers have been able to continue to establish good relationships with those who attend, providing pastoral and practical support where appropriate. On the other three Thursdays in the month, there is always a Tiny Tots team member attending the weekly Toddlers Group, making coffee and generally helping out. This contributes to the ongoing social dynamic.

A prayer from bishop Steven of Oxford which we feel is very relevant for Toddlers and Tiny Tots as we look forward to the coming year:

God of gentleness and love  
Draw near to us as we draw near to you.  
Dwell in every heart and conversation.  
Fashion us into the likeness of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Help us to discern together all you are calling us to be  
and all that you are calling us to do.  
Assist us, by your Spirit, to become a more contemplative,  
more compassionate and more courageous church  
for the building of your Kingdom and the glory of your Son.  
**Amen**

**Rev Helen Peters**

## **FLOWERS**

During last year, after 25 years' service, Jean Godfrey retired from organising flowers in church. Jean has overseen many events and many festival days throughout the years and has, herself, created some beautiful arrangements, including those for weddings. She was warmly thanked for all her years of dedication and presented with a flowering plant and card.

I am delighted that following a meeting early this year, there are around 15 people who will arrange flowers in church throughout the year. The presence of flowers always makes the church seem more welcoming to anyone visiting and, of course, enhances our beautiful building. We are always pleased to welcome anyone who would like to join the team. It is not necessary to be a professional flower arranger. As Jean always said, 'If you put some flowers in a container with love, then that is all that is needed'.

We were planning a Flower Festival over the three days of the Bank Holiday at the end of August this year, offering refreshments throughout the days to raise funds for the

restoration of the Bell Tower. However, sadly this event has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

**Sylvia Clark**

### **CHURCH BOOKSTALL**

**Please** use and enjoy the bookstall. If you have any small donations contact Alison Gieler.

[alisongieler@pipex.com](mailto:alisongieler@pipex.com), 01494 562473

### **BAPTISM**

Nicola Fairbairn has continued the managing of the Baptism Rota during 2019.

There have been twelve Baptisms at St. Michael and All Angels Church between January 2019 and February 2020, all taking place on Sunday either at a 10.45am or 12.45pm service. A Mothers' Union representative has been present in a supportive role on each of these occasions: the custom of the MU member presenting a Baptism Cube and Card to the candidate has continued. At the service, the parents, Godparents, family and friends learn of the MU support that is available and offered should the family be in need of it. There is always a note accompanying the card and cube, introducing the church's 'Hughenden Weekly Baby & Toddlers Group' which includes the monthly Tiny Tots' Service. A member of the church's Tiny Tots team attends the weekly group in the North Room, providing coffee, tea and support of any kind: this has proved to be a very worthwhile exercise and undoubtedly encourages some parents to consider having their child baptised at St. Michael's.

I continue to be very grateful to MU representatives who have attended the Baptism services, presenting the cards and cubes. There is no doubt that this representation and support as part of our outreach programme, continue to be appreciated and parents see it as a warm and welcoming gesture.

**Nicola Fairbairn**

### **FRIENDSHIP MORNING**

This has been another very active year, with an average of 18 members coming each month during the first six months of the year and an average of 26 members during the last six months. We have welcomed 12 new members to the group during the year bringing our total membership up to 38 people.

Sadly, we said goodbye to four of our past members whose funerals we went to during the year – Audrey Todd, Michael Harris, Dennis Oldfield and Pearl Clark. They are greatly missed.

We have again held our really popular events - Alan Jaycock's Photographic Presentation and Neil Bryce's Organ Recital as well as our home made "Hot Soup Lunch" in March, a Summer Picnic in the Mother's Union Garden in May and our Bring and Share Cold Buffet in August; all of which were a great success. Our Annual Advent Lunch, held at the Red Lion in Great Kingshill in November, was very popular and 34 of us sat down together for a very enjoyable meal. We were delighted that Keith Johnson, Helen Peters and TJ were able to join us.

I am so grateful to my 6 helpers who do all the behind scene activities, make scones and cakes, bring flowers for the tables, provide transport when necessary and of course welcome all the guests.

This warm and friendly group of men and women is for anyone who is bereaved or living on their own, feeling isolated or as a couple are unable to get out and meet people. All the members of the Friendship Group offer companionship and great support to one another. We do our best to contact anyone who misses a meeting, or we know is unwell, to make sure that they are getting the support they need. We also offer Prayer time to anyone who requests it. Please get in touch with me to find out more about the group if you think this group might be for you or for someone you know.

The Group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month in Church House from 10.15am to 12 noon. Please do contact me to have a chat.

**Penny Austin (01494 529596)**

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## **WOMEN GET TOGETHER**

The aim of this group is to offer the women of the church and beyond an opportunity to get together for a variety of different events throughout the year, to strengthen the women's network for fun and fellowship. The events are ad hoc and there is no expectation to turn up to all events but equally it is fine if you do!

We have had a number of successful events so far, ranging from flower arranging to pub nights, a trip to a church national women's event and a couple of coffee and croissant mornings with guest speakers. If you have an idea for an event or wish to be on the mailing list to receive news of our activities please do contact [lucy.rippon@gmail.com](mailto:lucy.rippon@gmail.com)

**Lucy Rippon**

## **CHURCH HOUSE TEAS**

As a matter of service and outreach, we have devotedly provided Church House Teas to the community and visitors for over 40 years. The season last year was challenging for a number of reasons. Excepting the few occasions recently when the financial return has been commensurate with the time, effort and commitment required to organise and provide this service, the last few years have seen a significant drop in the number of people coming to Church House for teas, with a consequent fall in revenues. Although finance is not and should not be the determining factor in deciding whether to continue

or discontinue this provision, it has also become increasingly difficult to find willing volunteers to organise the event. There have also been concerns about the changes in Health and Safety requirements in recent years with volunteers required to complete Hygiene certificates and the worry about ingredients and allergies. In the light of these circumstances and, taking into account the considerable amount of money our volunteers spend in providing cakes, scones, ice cream, milk etc. it has been agreed by the PCC not to run Church House Teas this coming summer.

Given the long and eventful history of this public service, it is not a decision that was taken easily or lightly and the PCC would like to extend their deepest thanks and appreciation to all the many volunteers who have so faithfully, over all the years, delivered this service. The fruits of their efforts have done much to provide Christian outreach to the community and to support the upkeep of our wonderful and unique church.

Alternatives have been proposed and considered if we can find willing volunteers to coordinate. We could provide a basic 'Tea and Cake' session on Sunday afternoons from the back of the church for a donation. This would be a good way of providing outreach to the considerable amount of our visitors who do not attend Church House. Please speak to the clergy or Julia Grant if you are interested in supporting this.

**Julia Grant**

### **MISSION SUPPORT GROUP**

The aim of the MSG is to inform, inspire and encourage the St Michael and All Angels church family in the support of Christian mission, near and far. To do this we have continued our focus on a different mission each quarter, inviting a visiting speaker to talk on the organisation's work on one Sunday in that period. The focus is introduced by regular articles in Outlook, by displays on our mission noticeboard by the font, and on the website. Our focuses over the year since the last APCM have been: Wycombe Refugee Partnership, the Santanas and their work in Brazil with Church Mission Society, Wycombe Homeless Connection, and most recently Mission Aviation Fellowship. Each of these Sundays was very special, and challenging as well, but the two below need special mention.

**Santanas.** The highlight of the year had to be the visit of Levi and Debora Santana to speak at services on 7 July last year. Levi gave really inspiring talks about his difficult work with those on the margins of society in Goiania. We also arranged a special collection to meet their pressing need for another car to support that work in such a large city. We were delighted that the £6079.13 raised, when combined with Gift Aid and some money they already had from donations, was sufficient for a good second-hand vehicle, which Levi purchased when he returned to Brazil. Called "Mike" in honour of St Michael's, it is now hard at work.

**Wycombe Homeless Connection.** Our visiting speaker, Tim Keightley, from Wycombe Homeless Connection at the morning services on 24 November rounded off another special weekend which highlighted the charity in many different ways, with the Papa Truck concert on the Saturday, Brian Morley taking part in the WHC Big Sleepout on the Saturday evening, and the young people helping the charity by selling decorated biscuits after the 10.45 service as well.

**Forthcoming.** We have a programme mapped out for another year. For instance, New Leaf will be presented in April through June. Then over the summer we will look at Embrace the Middle East, followed in the autumn by Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust.

**Church funding.** In addition to the above, the MSG advises the PCC how to donate the church funds it allocates to mission causes. Last year, the £1.500 was donated as follows:

- £100 to each visiting speaker's charity in 2019, ie Open Doors, Wycombe Refugee Partnership, Church Mission Society (Santanas), and Wycombe Homeless Connection.
- £275 to each of 4 charities, which we decided should be Church Mission Society (Santanas), Mission Aviation Fellowship, Wycliffe Bible Translators, and Wycombe Homeless Connection.

The MSG is grateful to the PCC for increasing this mission grant to £2.000 for 2020.

**Christmas Collections.** The MSG also chooses the causes to be supported by our collections over the Christmas period. Last year these totalled £2290.88 (including Gift Aid) and this was divided equally between: SeeAbility, Wycombe Women's Aid, and HART.

**Interested in Mission?** If you have a heart for mission, beyond our parish boundaries out to the farthest reaches of our planet, and you would like to help us by serving on the MSG, then we would be delighted to hear from you. New blood and fresh ideas are always welcome and at least one of our members will step down later in the year.

## **COMMUNICATIONS TASK GROUP**

The purpose of the group is to support and deliver the Church's mission by improving communications both within the Church congregation and between the Church and the local community. Its objectives are to:

- *Engage with those who attend different services, those temporarily or permanently unable to attend services, differing age groups and occasional worshippers*
- *Engage with those who are yet to hear or respond to the good news about Jesus Christ*
- *Recognise different forms of communication are required to reach different audiences*
- *Ensure communications released by the Church are professional, consistent, informative, accurate and relevant*
- *Recognise the group's products reflect a public face of the Church and must be developed in line with the Church's vision, mission and teachings*

It seems a long time ago now, but in the early part of the year the group was heavily engaged in the final preparations for the immensely successful Community Day. The communications group was involved in the production of numerous leaflets, banners, posters and advertising materials as well as most of the literature for use on the day, all superbly designed by Ben Brice. It was noticeable, that the whole day exhibited a cohesive design and our thanks go to those who produced additional materials in line with the 'house style'. In addition, Guy Mannerings produced video materials about St Michael's, with interviews to be shown both on our website to advertise Community Day, and during the day to show what we offer.

During the year, the social media presence of the Church was enhanced; with Ben Sharp taking the lead on posting regular information/what's on and historical 'snippets' on Facebook and Instagram.

Our Instagram page launched at the end of March 2019 and now has 102 followers, principally from High Wycombe but also Brazil, India and the USA. Our Facebook page is a little older and a similar geographic spread; it has 233 followers, doubling in number during the past 12 months. Both made a strong impact by connecting with people around the Community Day, emphasising the potential power of social media to tell people about faith, Jesus' message and our church. Similar to the website, our social media presence is an important way to make a 'first impression' for those wishing to visit or seeking a place to workshop.

Usage of ChurchSuite continued to be expanded, and a process for ensuring event information is consistently disseminated in all publications was developed and is in the process of being enhanced. An explanation of and encouragement to use ChurchSuite appeared in the February edition of Outlook. (Currently 281 adults and 28 children are enrolled)

The website continues to be updated and enhanced by webmaster Ben Brice. All groups within the Church are asked to check and update their entry.

The installing of a colour printer has meant that two other publications will be enhanced and provided in colour and in the house style during the year: the *In memoriam* leaflet and the Church History.

Sound recording and website publication of sermons was trialled to provide access for those unable to attend St Michael's.

Work has started on exploring the possibility of installing a video welcome and information screen at the back of the Church.

During the year leaflets were also produced for:

The Easter Services

The Christmas Services

The National Prayer weekend,

**Jane Tyrer (group leader)**

## **YOUTH AND CHILDREN**

As the Youth Task Group gathered to set out our Terms of Reference for the PCC earlier this year, it provided prime opportunity to pause, reflect and seek God for His guidance. As part of this process, we took some time to refine our vision and our mission and objectives through which we hope our vision will become reality.

**Vision:** That all children, young people and their families would know and experience God's love and transformative power in their lives.

**Mission:** To nurture faith development of children, young people and their families.

**Objectives:**

- *Engage with the children, young people and families in our parish; through internal church events, community outreach events and schools work*
- *To provide a safe space and opportunity for children, young people and their families to ask questions and to explore and experience what faith in Jesus might mean for them; through teaching of the word, space to encounter God personally and being living examples of Christ's followers*
- *To provide space and opportunity for children, young people and their families to fellowship and journey together*
- *To advocate a culture where young people feel valued and welcomed into Church*
- *To inspire confidence in our children and young people, in using their gifts and sharing their faith with others*

- *Recognise the ever-changing nature of children's & youth work and as such change and adapt provisions as directed by service users*

### **Children and Young People @ St Michael's**

Over the last year our Creche and Bubbles groups have continued to run under the direction of our superb teams, while we have seen some changes in our groups for those in school year 1-9. This group has now split into two age specific groups; school year 1-6 & school years 7-9. Once a month our children in school years 1-9, gather together to share in a more creative session with musical worship at the forefront. Through all of our groups, children and young people are offered the opportunity to engage in the Bible through age appropriate teaching, allowing them to consider what it means for them today.

As we saw many of our children move up to Secondary school, so our youth groups saw a big shift as this cohort moved up. In the Autumn term we ran a Youth Alpha course with six of our secondary age youth, joined by one of the older young people in a young leader capacity. We had an excellent few weeks; asking big questions and examining the Christian faith together, considering what it means for us, in our own lives, today.

It has been wonderful to encourage the skills and gifts of our children and young people in serving our church community; through speaking and leading in services, working with puppets, operating the AV system and supporting our younger children's groups. The community day was a wonderful opportunity for our youngsters to really feel a part of the wider church team, and many of them thoroughly enjoyed being given the opportunity to share in serving through the variety of roles they assisted in.

### **Wider Youth Work**

Along with a number of other churches in the town, we have been working on a project called ReCharge – which seeks to hold events that create a space where Christian young people from across the churches can come together in unity, while also being a safe place to invite friends. We were due to host the last event, though there was a venue change last minute due to inclement weather.

### **Schools' Work in the Parish**

Keith, Helen, TJ and Bex continue to have the privilege of taking turns in leading acts of collective worship in Great Kingshill school; and ad-hoc assemblies in Hughenden and Naphill & Walters Ash.

We have run Christmas workshops for both Hughenden and Great Kingshill Schools, and by the time of the APCM will have run Easter workshops too. Transition Lessons were also led in both of these schools. We thank Wycombe Youth for Christ for their support in these endeavours, resourcing us with excellent material for these sessions and supporting us in the delivery of it all.

In Great Kingshill we have led three prayer spaces; one for KS1 (school years Reception-Year 2), one for KS2 (school years 3-6) and one during lunch times for anyone who would like to access it.

At various points throughout the year, we have welcomed Hughenden and Great Kingshill schools to the church for their school services.

We continue to seek to develop our relationships with both Naphill & Walters Ash and Piper's Corner, through offering of opportunities and ways in which we can serve and support the schools.

### **Messy Church**

Messy Church continues to happen on a monthly basis, in partnership with Cryers Hill Methodist Chapel and attracts a number of families from Great Kingshill School. It has been wonderful to see the deepening relationships with the regular attendees and to see increasing engagement with the parents as well as the children (who have been known to nag parents to change plans to allow them to attend Messy Church when they suddenly realise it's on!!).

And finally, we want to say a HUGE thank you to each and every volunteer; those who help week in week out with our Sunday morning groups, those who turn up each month to Messy Church, those who volunteer for our workshops, those who offer their support in the Prayer Space, and those who respond to our urgent last minute pleas for additional support in any of the above! None of this would be possible without YOU!

To God be the glory for all He has done, is doing and will continue to do through our children and young people!

### **Rebecca Hawes (Children's & Youth Worker)**

## **SOCIAL AND OUTREACH**

The 2019 social and outreach calendar got off to a fantastic start on New Years day, with a walk from Naphill to the Le de Spencer Arms in Downley, followed by a great quiz night at the Gate Inn, Bryants Bottom, organised by Antony.

The Community Day held in May was hugely successful with the event being superbly led by Mike & Anne Dean with the preparations energising the whole church and providing for the integration of the different congregations. The day itself was well received by the community with at least 200 of them attending supported by a 50 strong church team showing off all aspects of church life from music and bells to friendship and flowers.

In June, around 60 people attended a summer BBQ at Anu and Lyall's house. The event was very relaxed and many new faces were welcomed there. In July a service for pets was organised by Frank with some 40 people and many dogs in attendance. In the same month 45 people from the church had a theatre and dinner evening at The Mill in Sonning, for a production on the story of Simon & Garfunkel.

In September, a fine day was enjoyed by players and all that enjoy watching cricket, as the church turned out for its annual match against Bradenham Cricket Club. This was organised by the late and much-loved James Godfrey, who very sadly died in January this year. In October a Barn Dance was held, jointly organised by Antony & Frank, with a turnout of 90 people including the band and our very own caller, Helen. Later that month Ian organised a Turkish Night at the "Village Mangal" in Amersham where a very appetising evening meal was enjoyed by 35 people.

In November, Mark organised a charity event, which saw Papa Truck coming back to the church for a Blues Grass night in aid of Wycombe Homeless Connection. The band, featuring our resident fiddler, Nia, very generously gave us a free concert so all proceeds went to the charity.

**Antony Rippon**