

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash

Informal Reports



Annual Parochial Church Meeting

21st April 2015



St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

FAMILIES WORK

2014-2015 has been a great year for Families work.

Stay and Play is thriving, with many regular families attending on a weekly basis. At this stage, there is no need to actively publicise this group, as we need to make sure that there is plenty of space within the church hall for the families (sometimes 24 families at one time), to enjoy Stay and Play.

Tots Praise continues to run on the second Thursday of each month. There is a team of clergy who run Tots Praise on a rota basis, and the great majority of families move seamlessly from Stay and Play in the hall, and then into the church for Tots Praise.

Messy Church also runs on the second Thursday of each month (with the exception of Good Friday). Similar to Stay and Play, there are many regular families; some occasional and some who have only attended once. Most families are from Warsash, but invitations are offered to all local schools. It is still very popular- on Good Friday we had 100 people (families and helpers), all having fun and getting messy with a green jelly Garden of Gethsemane, eating chocolate crosses and competing with family members on the new life egg and spoon obstacle race (just a few examples of the activities). The morning was finished off with a delicious shared lunch after a family quiz, which focused on the learning from the morning session.

The Families Worker role is developing. With increased hours (due to funding from the Mission Opportunities Fund and a gift from St. Pauls, Sarisbury Green), the role is hoping to work on maintaining the success of Stay and Play, Tots Praise and Messy Church, whilst also looking to develop some new mission opportunities. The families worker and those on the families committee are planning to develop one off and more regular events. Some ideas are a group for Dads and children; a childrens service; parenting and marriage courses; as well as developing opportunities for the youth within our church and community. All ideas are in their infancy, and we need to work with the other local churches.

Thank you to all involved in Families work- practical support, love and prayers.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

PASTORAL GROUP

'I was sick and you visited me' Matthew 25:36

Members: Revd. Nicky-Sue Terry, Carol Day, Valerie Edmonds, Sarah Sands, Sally Clear, Eva Upward

The Mission Priority/aims are to provide pastoral care/support for Parishioners well as for those who are ill, housebound and requesting Home Communion.

We are a small group working to provide pastoral care for our Parishioners. We meet once a month to pray as well as to discuss those who need visiting, any issues arising and to allocate visits to team members.

We rely largely on the prayer list and hearsay as to who needs us. Sometimes a request for a home visit comes via the church office and whoever is available from the team will respond. Each member of the group has to sign a confidentiality form as this is an important aspect of our work and we have also to be DBS cleared.

We use the prayer list as a source of referrals in addition to concerns raised by parishioners of folk in need of pastoral care. Requests for visits can also be received by the church office.

We are aware that parishioners not on the pastoral care team, out of compassion, are visiting those whose needs are imminent but better communication needs to be established to avoid duplication. Referrals can also be made to pastoral care team co-ordinator, Eva Upward, by e-mail on upward@sky.com , and she will allocate visits.

We are also aware of parishioners who, out of Christian compassion, are visiting some people whose needs are imminent but better communication needs to be established to avoid duplication.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

Training needs have been identified for our team. One of the team will be attending the Acorn listening course. We have also had training in the administering of Home Communion.

Our small group is very much developing its practice as we are engaging with those in need. We will need to expand if we are to be truly effective in this vital ministry.

We may ask the PCC to give this group a small budget for training as well as for items such as stationery/possibly petrol money.

Ongoing Action

- produce pastoral care leaflet
- bereavement counselling training
- Acorn trust (training imminent)
- referral to outside agencies as appropriate
- monthly meetings to review
- lots of prayer
- mutual support

The pastoral support group

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Group was set up as one of the Mission Priorities to coordinate and improve Communications both within Church as well as the wider Community.

The group has met together four times during the year and is made up of people involved in the areas of Church Office, Pew Sheet, Parish News-Advertising, Editing, Distribution, Social Events, Services and Rosters, Publicity and Website/Social Media. Our aim is to plan far-enough ahead to ensure that we communicate in a timely and effective manner, and so that nothing is missed out or left to chance.

A future to-do list has now been compiled and is coordinated by the Church Office so that tasks can be monitored and started in good time. This has

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

resulted in us starting to plan much further in advance than we have done previously.

Sheila Wiggs took over as Editor of the Parish News during the year, and changes to the production process of the Parish News are being trialled. There is still a need for further articles so that the content is varied each month. The Church website was changed and updated during the year with new software provided by the diocese. This was not without various challenges as we were the first Church in Portsmouth Diocese to use the new system. The result is a more user friendly and easily updated website. The Church Calendar and Church Hall Calendar are available on-line as are copies of the Sunday Pew sheets. A review of all of the web pages is currently underway and you may find one or two anomalies on pages. If so, please email any suggestions to webmaster@stmarywarsash.org.uk. It is hoped that this review should be completed by the end of the year. We are also experimenting with social media and now maintain a presence on both Facebook and twitter. One post on our Facebook page last year reached over 2,000 people within a few days.

Iain Wilkie

CHURCH CLEANERS AND BRASS CLEANERS

Following the recent death of her husband Paul, Kay Cope has decided to retire as a brass cleaning volunteer. This leaves a vacancy which, at the moment, is being filled by me, with the generous help of Sarah Sands.

In addition, one of the Church cleaning volunteers has also decided to withdraw, leaving Jenny Tubbs to clean the complete church on her own. Jenny has a busy life; working as a pre-school teacher and at the local school, as well as helping the church flowers arrangers by decorating the porch most weeks. I will step in to assist Jenny but this, with the additional brass cleaning, my existing Church cleaning slots and the weekly flower arranging means that the time is fast approaching where more help is needed.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

A recent appeal in the pew sheet and the Parish News for more volunteers has, so far, proved fruitless. Any suggestions from the PCC on how the situation can be improved would be greatly appreciated.

CHURCH FLOWERS

The flower arrangers (Carol Barnden, Margaret Adams, Jenny Tubbs, Jen Gardner and Pam Hutchings) had a very busy 2014. All the festivals were greatly admired by the Church family. There were 26 weddings during the year, which provided flowers for several weeks of the year. The flowers are supplied by a local wholesaler, the foliage is collected from gardens in the village and the work is done for the love of the Church.

This year Margaret decided that the time had come to take a back seat. She is happy to continue helping at the main festivals and at the busy times when there are weddings. This leaves only the four regular arrangers, which is quite hard work but the dedication of the team is encouraging.

Funding for Church flowers comes from personal donations; from weddings, funerals and sometimes to mark special memories and loved ones. Great care is taken to ensure that all contributors are recognised in the pew sheet and Parish News, which helps to boost the flower fund. The current fund level is sufficient to be able to provide basic Church decoration for four to five weeks should no further donations come forward.

The break from flower arranging during Lent has recharged us all and we are ready for the year ahead.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

CHURCH HALL

The Church Hall is a popular venue for both regular and occasional users. The bookings have increased in 2014 which is encouraging both from its use as a community facility and the additional revenue generated.

The Church Hall is subject to a maintenance programme and it was our intention to decorate the Hall Lounge in 2014. This project was delayed but will be completed in 2015 with the provision of shelving for books which are currently taking up valuable space in the Church Office. During the year we also acquired a new larger fridge to further enhance our kitchen facilities. We also investigated the viability of astroturfing the Church Hall back garden together with the provision of a paved patio area. This proved prohibitively expensive and other options are being considered.

I would like to thank the Church Hall Management Committee for their support during the year. In particular I would like to specifically mention Paul Cope who passed away recently. Paul had been a long standing member of the committee and during that time was always ready to volunteer to undertake those tasks that often go unnoticed but for those of us directly involved were very grateful. He will be greatly missed by us all.

Nick St John, Chairman Church Hall Management Committee

COFFEE POT

Coffee Pot is a friendly and supportive group for all, including children, meeting every Tuesday morning during term time between 10:00 and 11:30 at Brenda Bottomley's house - 6, Sandycroft, Warsash. We are an informal group starting with a tea/coffee and a general chat then at around 10:30ish we have a sprinkling of Bible study and meditations finishing with a time of prayer. At present we are studying Philip Yancey's book 'What's so amazing about grace'.

We welcome new members on an occasional or regular basis - please call Brenda Bottomley for more details.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD

Throughout the last season we experienced excellent numbers at our Saturday morning get-togethers. Many jobs large and small are undertaken and I hope you agree, this results in our Churchyard being tidy and attractive for its many visitors.

It is worth mentioning that ours is the only 'open' Churchyard in the Western Wards of Fareham; all of the others are 'full' and responsibility for maintenance and grass cutting then falls upon the Council. Responsibility for St Mary's Churchyard falls upon us, until such time as we run out of burial plots. Can I therefore express my gratitude to our team of enthusiasts for their work

Almost separate to this regular function, we do have a group of 10 or more folk who take responsibility for a defined plot within the Churchyard and ensure that the grass is cut within it. May I also thank them for the enthusiastic way that they go about this important job.

If you wish to join us you would be most welcome; just turn up on the 3rd Saturday at 9.30am' ish and stay to enjoy tea, coffee and cake in the Hall at it's around 11.30am, courtesy of Margaret Adams whom I know that all of our helpers would wish me to thank.

Mike Ford

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Men's Fellowship has met regularly on the fourth Tuesday during the winter months along with one most successful combined meeting with the Woman's Fellowship.

We have had lively, free ranging, thought provoking and sometimes contentious discussions on many topics of mutual Christian interest. During Lent, in parallel to the house groups, we debated the many challenging points raised by the Lent Course with many diverse views.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

We are a small group whose numbers regrettably have dwindled during the year, due to sickness and the death of one of our longstanding stalwart members, and we are looking for younger members to come forward to join us. We are also looking for a new leader of the Group, as George Gebauer, after many years of sterling and dedicated service to the Group, has decided it is high time that he stood down as leader.

Mike Tanner for George Gebauer

HEALING PRAYER MINISTRY & PRAYER LINK TEAMS

The two Prayer Link Teams have been very active over the last year. The teams have received some very encouraging feedback from those requesting prayers. This reflects the importance of this Ministry both within our Church and the wider community as an act of outreach.

The Prayer Ministry Team have continued to support all our communion services and have been available at other services when required. The team over the year have supported and input to the Healing Services which are planned into our Service rota over the year.

Bill Day ran a Healing course in the early part of the year which the Prayer Ministry Team attended together with others who felt a calling to this Ministry. This provided refreshment and renewal to the existing members of the team and an introduction to others who have expressed an interest in this Ministry. Special thanks to Bill for his willingness to run this course from which we have all benefited.

Finally we should like to thank all those involved in these ministries for their hard work and dedication over the last year without which this good work would not be possible.

If you wish to know more about these Ministries Nick and Rita would be pleased to hear from you and can be contacted on the numbers below:

Nick St John Telephone: 01489 574589

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

MOTHER'S UNION

In 2014 we celebrated 120 years as a Mothers Union Branch here at St Mary's. We enjoyed some interesting speakers during the year. We hosted an afternoon tea for Church volunteers. For our annual outing, instead of our usual coach trip, we enjoyed afternoon tea together at Hilliers Garden Centre. Our Strawberry Tea was a particular success with guests from neighbouring MU Branches and our own congregation, together with Stay and Play families, all enjoying an afternoon of fellowship. In December several of our members attended a Deanery Advent Service at Holy Trinity, Fareham, celebrating the amalgamation of MU Fareham and Gosport Deaneries.

There were times of sadness too in August we lost our dear friend and loyal member of over 50 years, Pat Davis. We also heard the sad news that Christine Batchelor had also passed away. In September, Liz Simpson resigned as Acting Branch leader, a position she had held for several years. However at our AGM Jean Buckles was elected Branch Leader, Hazel Burcher, Secretary and Rita Collins, Treasurer. As a Branch we were able to contribute to Away from it All Holidays the sum of £272 and a small donation to Overseas Relief Work of £30. We hope to encourage more members to join our Branch here at St Mary's. We are a small, committed branch and we face the future with confidence, putting our trust in the Lord. Thank you to the Clergy and congregation for their support.

Jean Buckles, Branch Leader

MUSIC GROUP

The Music Group has continued its support of the monthly Family Worship and Creative Communion Services together with occasional special Services. It's a huge privilege to be able to contribute to the Spiritual life at St Mary's by bringing a more contemporary style of music to accompany modern songs (and hymns), and enrich congregational worship. Scripture tells us that God inhabits the praises of his people and therefore, in a mysterious way, our singing is a two-way street by which we are able to bring

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

our praise to God, and God, through our praise, is able to enter our lives. Our prayer is that from time to time we may all experience these moments of intimacy with God as we offer our sacrifice of praise with full hearts and lives abandoned in His service.

We have been using the Worship Today book at the 10:00 Service for many years and although there are still new songs for us to explore it is now 15 years old and beginning to show its age. A new 30th Anniversary Edition of Mission Praise was published in January and we currently have a copy for review to assess whether it would provide a suitable congregational resource to take us forward. We are always keen to hear about new songs that members of the congregation have heard elsewhere and would like us to introduce to St Mary's; just drop us a note with your requests.

Numerically the Music Group continues to flourish and this year we have welcomed Jade on acoustic guitar joining Penny, Steve and Bob. Our orchestral instrumentalists include Alison (oboe), Claire (Sax), Ed (trumpet), Emma (clarinet), Imogen (Flute) and, following Christmas, we are delighted that Charles has joined us on a regular basis on cello. We continue to encourage younger musicians (Ben, Elena, Abi and Philippa) to play with the group from time to time, specifically with our Christmas Orchestra which was a big success this year. Our female vocalists – Lyn, Lorraine and Brenda, and keyboard player Josephine, continue to serve the group faithfully.

The Music Group meets to practice in Church at 7.30 pm on the second and fourth (or fifth) Sundays of the month during term time. We are always on the look-out for new members so if you feel called to offer your musical talents and/or vocal enthusiasm please do come along to any practice or speak to Brenda & Bob Bottomley.

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

LAY MINISTERS

AIMS:

As lay ministers we serve the congregation of St. Mary's and to provide spiritual encouragement to all. Whenever possible, we reach out into the community with Christ's message so that more can come to know His redeeming love.

We give thanks to God as He continues to bless our ministry.

This has been a busy year for June and I.

June continues with her duties as chaplain to the sea cadets.

She helps organise and set up 'Messy church' which has grown considerably. Her many talents as a former primary teacher stand her in good stead when planning activities for our young congregation at Messy church.

At major church festivals our skills as former teachers prove useful when planning and leading services which are family based.

We are both involved in preaching, leading services as well as leading intercessions during services.

June and I lead the Tuesday afternoon study group. During Lent I joined another group which meets on a Wednesday and I anticipate staying there.

The ministry team decided that the vicars as well as lay ministers should have a presence at 'Stay and Play' on a rota basis. This is our ministry to the very young and their parents. This also provides support for our Families worker but can be handy when parents enquire about baptisms.

We continue to develop closer links with Hook academy. This involves leading collective worship in school as well as leading a prayer session with the children at the end of each half term. We also attend all school services in church to support our part time clergy. These events, among other items, are discussed half termly at school by the Forging Links committee of which we are members.

Remembrance Sunday has become an established and very well attended event at the school where children are involved in the national Act of

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

Remembrance. There are a number of activities laid on to make the youngsters reflect on wars past and present and its effect on people. Again, this is something June and I plan as well as run in conjunction with the school. It is important for the children to have a Christian framework in which they learn. To that end I attended a SIAMS course last year to make the collective worship relevant within a Christian context.

We both attend Ministry team meetings once a month. This means that we work closely with all our clergy.

Twice a year there is a Bishop's training day which we both attend. These are interesting, thought provoking days at the cathedral which provide a rich, spiritual experience. We try and attend courses put on by the diocese. I hope to attend a Funeral ministry course next month as this is an area which I feel I need to develop.

At the beginning of March this year I accompanied our vicars on a LYCiG (leading your church into growth) course in Salisbury. This was such a wonderful and inspiring course, confirming that the Holy Spirit is really working within our church family nationwide.

As with all such courses, we came away full of good ideas as to how to grow Christ's church on our patch here in Warsash. As a starter we are planning an Open morning at our church on 29th April, inviting the community in under the heading 'What can St. Mary's do for you?'

The hope is to have perhaps two such events in the year as part of our outreach/mission priorities.

Another opportunity for such outreach will be the Warsash festival on 4th July. Our church will have a presence there and so will June and I.

I am also part of a small but dedicated pastoral support group. We endeavour to visit people who are unwell. Part of our aim is also to administer Home Communion.

We pray that we may continue to serve God, St. Mary's and our community.

June Ward and Eva Upward

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School runs every second and fourth Sundays during school term times, offering groups for pre-school to young people aged 18.

We currently run three groups: Climbers – for pre-school to age 7; Explorers for ages 7-11 and Pathfinders for 11-18s. Climbers and Explorers meet in the main hall and Pathfinders make use of the church hall lounge.

Both Climbers and Explorers use Scripture Union resources which encourage exploring the bible in fun, engaging ways, incorporating craft and other activities for the children to enjoy. Pathfinders often use resources from the internet including the Christian Aid website. From this term Pathfinders will be trialling resources from www.rootsontheweb.com, an ecumenical, lectionary based resource.

At Christmas Sunday school again produced a nativity play, this year based on the Nicholas Allan book “Jesus’ Christmas Party” also known as the grumpy innkeeper! The children loved putting on the play for their families and church members and they received wonderful comments from the congregation.

Our annual book giving was very well attended by children from all groups. It provides a wonderful opportunity to recognise the number of children who make up our Sunday School and bless them through the gift of a book.

At Christmas we said goodbye to Ros Lockyer as a Pathfinders leader, after more than 7 years in the role. Our team now consists of Theresa Davison, Pauline Ayrton and Tracy Wahltuch leading Climbers, Sian Mills and Richard Candlin leading Explorers and Suzi Greaves leading Pathfinders. This causes some difficulties for Pathfinders, although Sian has stepped in on the occasions when Suzi has not been available. We desperately need new helpers, but more importantly group leaders willing to plan and lead sessions for any of the age groups, to come forward. We had a notice on the pew sheet for 4 weeks, so that the congregation of each service was aware of our need, which has resulted in a possible helper for Explorers, but no offers for group leaders. The current team are very dedicated, with over 45 years’ experience collectively, but all have other demands on their time from family

St Mary, Hook-with-Warsash - Informal Reports

and work commitments. We are in the difficult position of potentially not being able to run all the groups if another leader leaves, or is unavailable. We would value your prayers as we look for a way forward as a team so that we can continue to provide an environment for the children and young people of St Mary's to learn more about God's love for them and his role in their lives.

Suzi Greaves

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship is a friendly group of ladies who meet on the third Monday of the month, either in the Church Hall Lounge or at a member's house. Our programme is varied and this year included enjoyable and interesting talks by our new Ministers explaining their life stories. Also we had a wonderful display of embroidery created by a local enthusiast. Other activities include historical local walks and talks from various organisations often of a charitable nature.

One of our outreach events is providing the hospitality given to those attending the Solent Singers' Concert just before Christmas. This has proved a great success. We usually end the season with a social evening where partners are invited.

We also support certain charities which are recommended to us by our members and so far this year we have made donations to:

Children of Chernobyl

Orphans of the Ebola Crisis

Mary's Meals

The Haven, Titchfield.

If you are interested in joining our group please contact either -

Sarah Sands 01489 601472

or Brenda St. John 01489 574589