

Keeping in Touch

The Newsletter of St Mary's Church
Portchester

No. 37 July / August 2017



Looking back

June began with a special Day of Prayer in the Church as we sought God's direction for our future renewing of the vision. It was one of the best attended ever, and those who were there felt it was the start of something special. This was part of the Archbishops' 'Call to Prayer' throughout the nation, asking for a great wave of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost.

The Civic Service for the Mayor of Fareham on 11th June was very well attended, and we did enjoy the special treat of Danish pastries with our coffee. Our civic visitors paid glowing tribute to the service, sermon and the marvellous team at St Mary's. That evening 'the house was filled with smoke' as we recalled Isaiah's vision and his Trinitarian acclamation, 'Holy, holy, holy.'

Portchester Gala Day on 17th June was well supported and brought the community together in such a positive joyful way. It is always good to meet old friends and to be reassured of the goodwill of the community towards us (or at least most of the community!). We raised over £3,000 for the church. Thank you to all who donated jams, plants, cakes, etc; and all who helped with stalls, setting up the church and all the many jobs which had to be done.

A few of our prominent members have been ill and even in hospital recently, but are now well and recovering slowly. These include Trevor Hubble and Margaret Andrews (who will be off 'work' for the next 3 months at east). Pat Poil is awaiting surgery and sends her love.

On Sunday **2nd July, Rev Trevor** celebrates the 40th anniversary of his ordination. He is presiding at the 10.00am Eucharist that day. There will be a little surprise for him after the service, and we hope that many of you will come to that service to celebrate with him. His

mother Jayne, who is in Carleen Care Home, celebrated her 102nd birthday last month!

It has been a real joy to welcome several new friends who have started worshipping with us. However, there are also quite a few faces we have not seen for a while – you are missed, and we hope you will return to worship with us. Your presence alone is such an encouragement and inspiration, and by helping to fill St Mary's, you contribute to the atmosphere. The summer holidays are often a time when we can lose people. When we don't see them for a few weeks, we assume they are away on holiday or enjoying nice days out. Often, however, they are at home and feeling spiritually low or neglected. Please look out for one another – phone, send a card, invite for coffee, remember the words of the Lord in Hebrews 10:25, *'Let us consider how to love one another ... not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another...'*

Talking of looking back even further, Portchester Community Association has just published a new book entitled, *'Portchester Remembered 1938-1948* – looking back at the village of Portchester before, during and after the war.' Portchester's history just keeps yielding its secrets, and we are so blessed to have such good local historians and writers. As ever, St Mary's members and friends have been very much to the fore in helping to compile this book. It is on sale from the Hub, 2 New Parade, West Street (The Precinct).

Clergy holidays

Rev Ian will take the first two weeks in July and in August (3rd – 16th July, and 7th – 22nd August). Rev Mark be on holiday from 17th July and will not be back with us until his final service on 30th July.

Rev Mark Williams

Mark and Sarah and family's last Sunday with us will be 30th July. The 10.00am service will be a non-eucharistic praise service and we hope that many of their friends will come along to say farewell. After the service there will be a bring and share lunch, so do try and bring something along. Mark will preach the sermon on that occasion.

As there will be no communion at the 10.00am service, this will be held at 6.00pm.

Mark's licensing on the Isle of Wight will be at St Paul's Church (St Pauls Avenue, Gatten, Shanklin, PO37 7AW). We are organising a coach for that occasion . The itinerary is as follows and the cost would be £21 per person. Please sign up to book a seat – they are limited, so first come...

Itinerary:

11:45 - Depart Portchester
12:30 - Check in Portsmouth
13:00 - Ferry crossing
14:15 - Dis-embark ferry
15:00 - Arrival at Shanklin

18:30 - Depart Shanklin
19:30 - Check in Ryde
20:30 - Ferry crossing
21:15 - Arrival

Future Curate

Once Mark leaves, we will be without a Curate for at least a year. If we get one at all, and it all depends on how many are being ordained, it will not be until June 2018. In the meantime we are renting out the house at Jute Close through a professional management company.

Marquee.

We are grateful to the 2nd Portchester (St Mary's) Scout Group for the donation of a marquee which is now in the churchyard. This can be used for meetings etc, during the summer, as well as the tea room. If you have a group you would like to meet in it, feel free to use it, but it must be pre-booked at the parish office with Wendy, in case another group are using it.

Faculty updates

A faculty is a permission from the Diocese to make changes or additions to our building or churchyard. These are particular issues given that our building is Grade 1 listed. There are a few projects going through at the moment at various stages, and we will keep you updated as to their progress:

- The temporary heating to become permanent still needs a lot of paper work done before a fresh application can be made, but we are hopeful.
- Our architect Julian Livingstone is currently working on plans for a new glass porch.
- We are hoping to install a World War II war memorial, and designs are now being considered.
- We are hoping to have a stone at the labyrinth saying what its use is. Special thanks to Leroy for taking on this initiative. While on this subject, many thanks again to Leroy and Sophie for their marvellous initiative in creating a rose memorial garden. It has been lovely in June to see so many roses blooming – has given much pleasure and solace to many.

Summer Lunchtime concerts

Our popular series of summer lunchtime concerts begins on 6th July and will continue each Thursday at 1.00pm until 31st August. This is

now our eighth season of recitals and again we have some marvellous performers lined up. Many of previous years' favourites will be returning along with some new performers. There are flyers with details and a programme has been produced to cover all the concerts.

Sunday 8.00am service

If during the summer months you want to go out for the day and make an early start, why not try our 8.00am service. It tends to become more popular during the summer months with attendances between 40-50 (how many churches would love that number for their main Sunday service!). On the first Sunday of the month we have Matins which is a non-eucharistic service and on the other Sundays we have Holy Communion. The service is in traditional language, and there are no hymns except on major festivals and when Matins is sung. Children are welcome, although it is not particularly child-friendly. The service includes a shorter sermon and is usually over by 8.50am so you can be home for 9.00am.

Castle event Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th August

The theme will be the Prisoners of War who have been held at the castle. From 10am – 5pm, you can experience the sights and sounds of the 19th century, when England was at war with France.

Witness heroic soldiers prepare to battle Napoleon. Learn about life as a prisoner of war at Portchester whilst the kids revel in history with drills and displays. As in previous years, there will be paid admission to the castle grounds, but those attending the church service **do not** pay, and there will be a church steward at the gate to meet you.

Disabled badge attendees at the 10am service can bring their cars in but must remove them as soon as the service is over and there will **NOT** be coffee after the service.

House Groups

The next house group leaders meeting will be on Sunday 30th July 2.30pm at the Parish Hall. During the summer, groups will be doing their own thing, but from September we will be using the material which was the talks given recently at St Mary's evenings services by Rev Michael Thomas entitled, 'The fullness of life.' We have around 100 members in house groups and we extend a warm welcome to some of our newer members to try them out.

St Mary's Facebook

We are grateful to Wendy Pyatt for keeping this live and up to date for us. Let's help develop this as a real resource to let people know what's happening at St Mary's on a daily basis. Could we ask for more of you to click on 'like' for certain services and events – this shows interest and support for things. It would also be good to get some more 'comments' going, either about an event we have just had, or something coming up. This makes it a more conversational forum. Speak to Wendy or e-mail her at the office.

Stewarding

All Stewards/Sidesmen are reminded that the counting of numbers has changed recently. You no longer have to deduct those who were at the 8.00am service. This will make it easier for us to plan for future services and to know how many booklets to print. The exception to this will be the month of October when we only count people once – they are not included in the 10am count if they have been to the 8.00am. Stewards should also be aware that quite a lot of people arrive at church after the service has started, so please stay at the back and include latecomers. There are still weeks when there are long gaps in those coming up for communion. There should always be a queue forming at the chancel steps ready to take the place of those communicants already there. Please start from the right hand side.

Keep the church tidy

We are concerned that the transept and chancel (not to mention the vestry!) all too quickly become general dumping grounds, making the church look untidy and creating an unhelpful image. We realise that storage is becoming a problem, and have recently met to try and resolve this. In the meantime, please do all you can not to start dumping stuff in these public areas of the church.

Prayer during Communion

During Communion there is a prayer ministry going on in the north transept, the area to the left of the altar (looking at it). If you have come to the service with burdens, or the need for healing, or if the Lord has spoken to you, please don't go out carrying the burdens you brought in. There are friends there for you who you can share with, and they will pray with you.

Men's breakfast

These are held on the second Saturday of the month from 8.00am – 9.45am, and are continuing to be popular. After breakfast, we have a short time of worship followed by a speaker then discussion. Our speaker on 8th July will be Rev Mark Williams. There will be no meeting in August, and we re-commence on Saturday 9th September with a new programme. We are always looking for speakers, so if you would like to speak, or know of someone who would be suitable, please let Rev Ian know. After many years of preparing the breakfast, Peter Battley has decided to give up. We are very grateful to Peter whose bacon butties have always gone down well, and we wish him God's blessing on his 'retirement'. Of course, this means we need someone to take over this role, or perhaps a small team. Please have a word with Peter or Rev Ian if you are interested.

Family Pilgrimage: From Portsmouth to Southwick (23rd July)

During the recent vacancy at Southwick & Boarhunt, the clergy of Portchester helped with the services. With the coming of their new priest, Rev Simon Brocklehurst, we thought it would be good to forge closer relations with our 'daughter' church over Portsdown Hill, which is also our neighbouring parish, as well as sharing the same patron. On **Sunday 23rd July** (their Patronal Festival – nearest to St James' Day, 25th July) we are holding a joint walk to remember the journey of the Augustinian Canons who left Portchester to open a new Priory at Southwick. We will try and follow the route they took. It will begin with a short service at Portchester at around 2.00pm and finish with tea and cake at Southwick at around 5.00pm followed by a Songs of Praise, all age service at 5.45pm. We would encourage as many as possible – especially the children – to dress up as monks (we have plenty of costumes available). We have a few for adults as well, but you might be able to get your own. If you can't manage the whole route, there will be stopping points where you can join us. If you can't manage any or part of the walk – please still join us at Southwick. After the service, there will be a tea.

Children's Holiday Club

Once again, Diana and her wonderful team are prepared to put on a children's holiday club each Thursday during August. These will be held at the Adurni Hall (Scout Hall) Chalky Walk, off White Hart Lane. It will be in two halves: from 10am – 12pm it will be like Messy Church and will include crafts, a bible theme and worship, then we will have lunch at 12noon. After lunch, there will be play and games until 2.00pm. We hope that families and children will make the most of this, as the team will be spending a lot of time putting an interesting programme together.

High Tea – another social event has been planned for Monday 28th August at 2.00pm in the church. This will be a bring and share.

SEPTEMBER

Theological Reflection Group.

This group has been meeting now for about a year, and we have had some great speakers with interesting subjects challenging us to look afresh at some contemporary issues in the church, or ideas we did not think much about before. The down side is that it is only attended by about eight people, and considering the amount of preparation the speakers put in (plus distance travelled), this is discouraging. We wonder if some more people might be interested in joining us. You don't need a degree in theology to enjoy it – just an openness and a willingness to think again about things. We break for July and August and our next meeting will be on 7th September when Greg More will speak on the Roman Catholic understanding of the phrase in the Eucharist, 'this is my body, this is my blood: symbol or reality?' We meet from 10.30am – 12noon with coffee from 10.15am.

Autumn Alpha course

Our Alpha Course now seems to be an annual event with the next course starting on **Wednesday 13th September** and will run for the next 12 Wednesdays. This year it will be held at the church. Alpha is particularly good for those who are on the edge of the church and perhaps exploring the basics of the Christian faith. It is also good for those being confirmed, or for people returning to the church who want to go over the foundations again. It starts at 6.45pm with a two course cooked meal; followed by a DVD presentation and then discussion. There is no cost for the course, but a basket for donations is available. To book, or for more information contact Vicki Powell on 02392 200314.

New Kidz Klub (including breakfast)

We have decided to try Saturday mornings rather than afternoons. This will be held on the 4th Saturday of the month at Castle Street Centre. From 23rd September we will start with a **breakfast** at 9.00am. We are grateful to Tanya Simpson, one of our newer members, for taking this initiative, and we are sure she would appreciate some help with the breakfast. Then the Klub itself will start at 10.00am until 12noon. Wendy Castle is leading this second part, so have a word with her if you would like to help or want more information. We are holding this in the church rather than Castle Street Day Centre, so we will need some help to move some pews and set it up for this activity.

RENEWING THE VISION

We are looking again at our vision statement, and reminding ourselves of the purpose of St Mary's Church. It is more than simply to put on a Sunday service, but to try and build a loving supportive church family which reaches out into our community. This has been the programme so far:

- On Friday 2nd June we held a **Day of Prayer** in the Church (others prayed at home)
- On Saturday 3rd June we met in the church to consider what the Lord was saying to us.
- A summary of that was shared with the **PCC** at their June meeting.
- A group of us will meet over the summer to think about ministry, leadership and outreach structures and strategy.
- The Vicar will preach a few **sermons** on the theme, and this began on 18th June with the text, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few.' Try and get a copy of that sermon to read, or ask one of the sound team to e-mail it to you to listen to.

- A new leaflet on '**Situations Vacant**' is being distributed along with this newsletter. This does not list everything we do at St Mary's, but areas of ministry where we really could be doing with some help. Please think about this carefully – we are particularly encouraging some of our newer friends to get on board (not those already doing several jobs!). If you could return this by the end of July to either the parish office labelled for Church warden, the Vicar or the Churchwardens, and someone connected with that ministry will get in touch with you. We realise that many of the magazines go to couples and families, so there will be spare copies of the leaflet available.
- We hope to re-launch this with a **Cafe Church on 17th September** – similar format to the one we held a year ago, which was very popular and successful. We will give a brief update on the latest with the building project, but the main emphasis will be the building up of the Body of Christ – the real church.

Deanery Pastoral Assistants Course

Our Vicar is also involved in producing training courses for Fareham Deanery and has recently pioneered a new course for lay Pastoral Assistants, which was attended by a few from St Mary's. We are putting on a new course starting in September at Portchester Parish Hall, which will be once a month on Saturday mornings. You don't need to be a Pastoral assistant in order to come on the course – just compassion and an interest in helping people. There is a poster and details of the course on the notice boards. Please contact Rev Ian if you are interested. There is no charge for the course.

Interested in mental health care/counselling?

In his sermon on 'the harvest is plentiful, the labourers are few' Rev Ian spoke of the growing number of people in our area with mental health problems. This is an area we are thinking about developing, and how St Mary's might be able to respond to the situation. Tom Harper, a young Christian who is getting married in St Mary's in August is the East Hampshire volunteer co-ordinator for the Richmond Fellowship, a charity which deals with mental health, and would like to be involved in helping us set up something. For those who are in need, there is also a group meeting in Portchester Library. We asked Tom to write something for our newsletter, he writes:

Dear St Mary's

Richmond Fellowship has been pioneering approaches to Mental-Health recovery and championing social inclusion for more than 55 years. We are now one of the biggest voluntary sector providers of mental health support in England. We offer a wide range recovery support for people suffering with mental health difficulties, from Supported housing to substance misuse and employment advice we are a country-wide network centred on empowerment and respect for those in need.

A year ago we started our service in South and East Hampshire. The areas covered run from Fareham to Alton covering several towns on the way including Portchester, Havant and Petersfield. A few months ago we finished finding locations for our social activity groups, and have just started looking for volunteers to run them. We currently have a very small group running in Portchester library as well as 2 groups in Fareham and 2 groups in Gosport. We are looking for people with a desire to support vulnerable people to

volunteer to run these. This will be to provide 2 hours a week to give these people social recovery through activity and Peer-friendship.

The aim is to grow these groups to a sustainable level and have volunteers run them with the use of activity, creativity and conversation. The dream is to see the vulnerable and often neglected in society, have a place of friendship, recovery and hope. All our volunteers will be inducted and supported by Tom Harper, the Peer support Coordinator and will be given an accredited training session and level 2 qualification in “Volunteer and Peer Mentoring” when they start.

What we would like is to find people who have no more than a couple of hours spare in the week to help run and organise the activities for one of these groups. This could be anything from simply facilitating discussion at the tea or coffee meetings, to a longer wellbeing based setup. The activity is entirely up to the volunteer. The dream is to offer our clients support in social settings, to help them get out and about, meet kind caring people and make friends, helping them aid each other in recovery. It is about supporting and seeing recovery in the most vulnerable.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with us, please speak to either Rev Ian Meredith, or myself; Tom Harper, (Peer Support Coordinator – East Hampshire) and we can go for a coffee and discuss how you can help.

My contact details are as follows:

Phone: 07979451653

Office: 02393072017

Email: tom.harper@richmondfellowship.org.uk

Please also tick on the leaflet 'mental health care/counselling'

In addition to the Richmond Fellowship, we are making contact with the 'Moving On Project' which is one of this year's **Mayor of Fareham's charities**. They work with young people suffering with mental health issues. As this year's Mayor is Geoff Fazackarley, a local councillor, we think we should try what we can to support his charities. There is a poster on the notice board, and of particular interest might be the afternoon teas with speaker. The next one will be **'Antiques Road Show' with Cllr Nick Walker on Thursday 6th July** 2.30pm at the Mayor's Parlour, Civic Offices, Fareham. Admission is £4 and a very good tea is included.

St Marys' finances – a last word from Rev Ian

St Mary's Church just manages to keep its head above water financially. In recent years we have just about broken even by the time our annual expenditure is taken from our income. We don't want to keep going on about fundraising, and we don't want to have to rely on fundraising for our regular ministry, but sadly this is having to happen, as giving just does not come anywhere near what we need. There are some of our members who give very little, some only give when they come, and others have stopped giving or reduced their giving. We appreciate that this has to happen if people's financial situation changes. However, people who reduce or withhold because they are unhappy with something the money is spent on, often claim to love St Mary's at the same time. But they are actually 'cutting off their nose to spite their face' as other aspects of St Mary's ministry has to be cut back. If all our members would give as much as they can; think of increasing it if they only put in coins, or take out a regular bankers order, we would be in a much better position. All these things we want to do cost money, as does keeping St Mary's open every day and providing worship and ministry every week.

Do you know how much St Mary's costs each month even before we embrace any outreach:

Parish share	7,623
Worship	585
Ministry team	480
Light and heat	310
Cleaning	150
Waste collection	100
Parish office rent	136
Church office	2,075
Verger	650
Finances and governance	190
Telephone	185
Altar & sanctuary	100
Insurance	160

Total 12.744

This does not include any costs for the fabric and building, any outreach or tearoom – just what it needs to keep St Mary's running each month.