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St.Mary's Toddlers

If you've ever been in to the Church on a Tuesday or Wednesday morning you'll find the chairs moved back, plenty of toys, yummy cakes and lots of toddlers and carers having fun. We are so thankful to God for the joyous time we have at toddlers - playing, singing, hearing Bible stories and chatting to each other. The toddler groups run on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9.45 till 11.15am. We currently have a waiting list for Tuesday mornings but have a few spaces on a Wednesday morning.

Toddlers couldn't happen without an amazing team of helpers. But we would love a few more to help. Could you help on a rota basis chatting to parents, helping to set up and clear up? Or maybe you could help in the kitchen providing yummy cakes and coffee? Please contact Hannah Martin, 784574, for more information about toddlers or to offer your help.

Small Group Refresh

Future small group leader training is underway as we prepare as a church to launch new groups in a few weeks' time. Some key dates for your diary to be prayerfully considering whether you will take a new step in growing as a disciple of Jesus by joining one of the new groups are here:

- Sunday 3rd March - launch of new small groups. Times available during the week will be on offer for consideration
- Sundays 3rd, 10th & 17th March - mini-series of sermons tackling small group church life
- Sunday 24th March - deadline for signing up for one of the available groups
- Sunday 31st March - new small groups finalised and announced
- Sunday 28th April - new small groups commissioned at both services
- Week commencing 29th April - all groups begin

Please come and grab me (Josh) or any of the staff team if you would like to discuss what is involved in joining a small group in addition to the teaching we'll be enjoying in March.



St Mary's

with St John's Bellingdon



Family News - February 2019

Olive Mayo

Olive Mayo had been a vital part of her parish for almost all her 98 long and colourful years! She went to Emmanuel Sunday School when she was younger and then at 14, as was the custom, she went to St. Mary's Youth and Bible Club. Olive met Gordon through St. Mary's and they married in 1942, and went on to have four daughters, Di, Barb, Liz and Jo.

Olive really enjoyed the breadth of services, ministries and activities at St. Mary's, and was a sincere and committed Christian. She took an active part in Young Wives, cooking at Wallington House with the wonderful Judy Reynolds, the OMF Prayer Group, helping take Communion round the care homes with Jean (more recently many of the people in the homes were younger than her!) and supporting Gordon in his Churchwarden duties.

By the end Olive's family extended to eight grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. She loved hearing about them and visiting them, and the grandchildren have very fond memories of her infamous sponges and hot scones.

Her many friends and admirers at St. Mary's all commented on her continual positivity, her sense of humour, her cheerfulness and her fierce independence. She remained a regular at church and at Senior Fellowship until the very end. As she said regularly, 'I have trouble with my ears and with my feet, but the in-between bits are fine!'



Vi Goffey

We give thanks for the life of Vi Goffey who died peacefully on 9th January at Chesham Leys nursing home. Since arriving in Chesham from Liverpool almost sixty years ago with her husband, Ramsey, and daughter Joan, Vi became a much loved member of the St Mary's community, and a valuable member of the Mothers Union. Vi was a gifted and creative lady, with a generous heart and a sharp eye for detail. Last year Vi celebrated her 100th birthday! Many will fondly remember her most amazing cakes, which she baked for any special celebrations at church, which were usually a huge and tasty fruit cake, beautifully iced. Her funeral will take place at St Mary's Church, Chesham on Thursday 7th February at 1.45pm. Our thoughts and prayers are with her daughter Joan, who has nursed her at home in recent years, and with the grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all the family.



South Africa Mission Trip - Adults.

Over the last 6 years as a parish we have run 2 mission trips for 16-18 year olds both of which have been a great success.

As we have been preparing for both of these trips, one of the things the team has noticed is the number of adults saying that they would love to have the opportunity to do something similar. Well, now is your chance! Paul Brooks and I have got our heads together and are proposing a mission trip for adults to Munsieville.

The proposed mission is in response to a request from the Senior Minister of an evangelical church in Munsieville, South Africa's oldest undeveloped township. They are looking for a team to give input to emerging leaders of the church, focussing on equipping them to be agents of transformation in their own community. The centre-piece of the mission will be a project working with local Christians to build a dedicated child crisis centre in a school. The plan is to help the church establish a credible long-term policy to support the centre as a place of safety and support to children facing extreme challenges at home, at school and in their personal development. Munsieville is estimated to have in excess of 12,000 children classified as "vulnerable" according to UNICEF definitions, many of whom attend the selected school.

This trip will be happening at the end of October 2019; it will last about 10 days, be self-funded and open to anyone aged 18 or over.

For more information, please speak to either John Spence or Paul Brooks.

Pastoral Care at St Mary's

We all experience times in our life when something difficult or unexpected comes our way. It may be personal illness, bereavement, times when family life is hard, a difficult relationship, depression or anxiety. Or it may be a happy life event, such as the birth of a new baby, which though full of joy is also exhausting! At St Mary's we have a pastoral care team to offer support at times such as these.

Home Visits: Members of our pastoral team regularly visit people at home and in care homes in the parish. Visits might be prompted by issues of illness, bereavement, loneliness – or simply by the desire to keep in touch with one another.

Face to Face and Prayer Support: We also offer short term support for those within church who need a listening ear, counselling support, or practical help during a period of need. Prayer support is also available during our Holy Communion services.

Residential Services: Our licenced ministers take Holy Communion Services in Residential Homes and offer home Communion to those who are sick or housebound.

Lifts to Church: We have a team of volunteer drivers, which provides lifts to/from the 9am & 11am services, for those who may otherwise not easily get to church.

Prayer: Those known to be in particular need are prayed for at Sunday services, daily midweek staff prayers, and pastoral care team meetings. If you would like to be prayed for at any of these times please get in touch via the Parish Office.

Equally, if you are interested in joining any of the pastoral care teams please contact Chris (Curate)

This month's Mission Focus – TEARFUND

Tearfund works to help communities overcome the worst effects of poverty and disasters in over 50 countries. Current work includes:

Indonesia - Tearfund are helping communities recover and rebuild following two tsunamis in late 2018. *Pray that those affected will feel God's peace and comfort and those responding will be blessed with His wisdom and strength.*

Yemen - After four years of conflict this humanitarian crisis has led to 22.2 million people being in urgent need of aid. *Pray for those working here to reach those suffering the most and for the provision of drinking water, food and access to healthcare and hygiene advice to reduce the spread of disease.*

Burundi - one in six children under five years of age is suffering from chronic malnutrition. Tearfund is providing food and training through establishing feeding centres - a lifeline to thousands of vulnerable children. *Pray for those working in the feeding centres and for resources to reach more vulnerable people.*

Myanmar – Over 500,000 Rohingya people are fleeing violence and surviving in very basic conditions – many without shelter or clean water. Tearfund is helping to provide hygiene kits, drinking water and are giving medical assistance to help reduce the outbreak of disease. *Pray for the Rohingya families whose lives are being brutally torn apart.*

Monthly Prayer Meetings with a difference

Many gathered a few weeks ago to pray, sing and enjoy food together as a church family and we'll be doing the same again

Wednesday, 6th February at 8pm in the Church Rooms.

This time, we'll be enjoying wine and cheese together (with non-alcoholic and non-dairy options of course also available) and bringing our concerns before our Father's throne of grace in the Name of His Son, in the power of His Spirit. Many who came to the last meeting prayed silently in their hearts when it came to praying together, and this was a great encouragement to all there. If you are still feeling uneasy about praying out loud, do come and hear others to be encouraged and to be an encouragement in the hard but vital work of prayer!

We will be extending the use of Taizé-style singing as so many benefited from this, introducing some new songs as we hear from all different aspects of the life of the church to fuel our prayers together and throughout the week. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Team Administrator

Lynette Price is the new Team Administrator for the Parish! She worked in the NHS for 22 years, part of which was spent in the Human Resources Department, and the rest as a Team Administrator. She is looking forward to the new and exciting step of serving God and the people of Chesham in this new role, and the challenges that it will bring.