# **Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership**

Six thriving and growing churches, making Christ known in our area of Milton Keynes.



## May 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to May's edition of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Newsletter.

# **Partnership News**

## **Advert for new Priest in Charge**

The advert for a permanent full time Priest in Charge is on the SEP website and Facebook group, Oxford Diocese website, Pathways and CPAS. If you can spread the word anywhere around the world, please do. There is a short closing date, due to delays at the Diocese, so I think we will probably have to advertise again. Bishop Alan is leading the interviews booked for 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023. The interviewers are; Mike Duff, CPAS, David Thom, Chair MKLEPs, Sharron Marland, Chair SEP, Derek Atkinson, St Andrew's and SEC, Sam Muthuveloe, Ministry, Penny Miller, Christ Church and SEC, David Preston, Trustee and St. MM, Peter Green, C&S Treasurer, Stephen Fletcher, Deanery Synod, Rose Hunt, C&S and SEC, Chuks Iwuagwu, Ministry. (See attachment or above websites for the advert).

#### **SEP AGM 2023**

Thank you to those who were able to come out on such a rainy night. Because there were so many of you, we can move forward with the elections and actions. Could Chairs please stress the importance of any feedback from their congregations to the draft minutes within two weeks of receiving them.

I am happy that the trio of myself, Adrian and Irene can continue another year of service to God in the way we feel pulled to do. I am really pleased that there was such wholehearted support for the work of John Porter to keep us all linked through this SEP Newsletter. Please also keep checking into the Facebook group of Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership, as more news crops up daily.

## Leadership Committee members are;

Paul Smith, Nicola Martyn-Beck, Chuks Iwuagwu, Sharron Marland, Adrian Prisk, Irene Farr, Alan Potter, Brad Stone, Jackie Williamson, Patricia Collins, Peter Green.

## Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship Committee

This hasn't met yet, but Chuks Iwuagwu would like to be part of it when it does and so would Jo Roberts. If anyone reading this would also like to join when it is begun, please let me know.

## **New Trustees**

Congratulations and thanks to David Preston, Adrian Prisk, Diana Stammers, Michael Williamson, Stephen Fletcher, Anne Slee, Paul Smith, Chuks Iwuagwu.

We do need one more trustee, hopefully but not necessarily, from the PCC members. Please let Irene know if you want, or know somebody who wants, to be nominated.

Congratulations to our Church Wardens, who will be sworn in by Bishop Alan and Archdeacon Guy soon; Mary Kennedy, Graham Crisp, Penny Miller, Adrian Prisk, Gill Grant, Ken Brine, Brad Stone, Alan Potter, Mary O'Neale and Steven Hutchings.

The SEP Representatives for Deanery Synod are Stephen Fletcher and Adrian Prisk

The SEP Representative to Churches Together is Susan Armstrong

#### SEP wide service

Sometime before the AGM I asked the Ministers what they thought about a Sunday service for all the congregations, in one church with all the other churches closed. Tim Norwood was suggested as he was at SEP on May 28, covering for Paul Smith. (This made me realise we don't have a clear idea what numbers of people our insurance policies cover. Please would you check and let me know.) Bradwell raised the point that Tim is leading a special service for their 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on that day so it isn't possible. St James raised the issue that it was too soon to put in place and we need more discussion and also the suggestion that the service could be at another time to allow congregations to meet as usual. Chuks supported a SEP wide service, saying David Lewis always wanted this to happen. Gill supported this view by reminding us that we used to have a Tree Cathedral service each year. Many thanks for all the comments on my suggestion. We will continue this at SEC meetings.

#### **AGM** minutes

Please would each congregation send me a digital copy of their AGM minutes for archiving, and when I see you next, a paper copy if possible. Thanks to St Andrews and St MM for theirs.

#### Social Media

Please search for the name of your church or Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership and you will find the SEP Facebook pages and website. The Facebook groups are all public so just post your own comments. The advert for a new Anglican Minister should be there by now. Please like, join and post to Facebook groups to keep them popular and easy to find.

## Facebook prayer for Earth Day last week

I liked Jo Roberts (St James) post below:

Earth God.

We are of the Earth.

We honour the Earth

As a place of living things.

We praise the Earth

For its beauty and biodiversity.

We recognise a shared responsibility

To care for, restore and replenish the Earth.

Speak to us through the Earth, now and forever.

Amen

The lona community, based on the letter of the Earth, Rio 1992 Graham McGeoch

SEP event for Coronation Sunday 7 May 2023 is to be held at St Andrew's at 1:00p.m. (See events section of this Newsletter and attachment)

## Voting

Please remember your photo ID when you go to vote this week. It will be needed at all UK polling stations from now on.

As always, many thanks to John for pulling these newsletters together in the hope that better communication leads to closer friendships.

Warm blessings,

Sharron, Chair of SEP secchair22@gmail.com

## **Our Church Services and Events**

**Bradwell Church, St Lawrence** 

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Maggie Prisk

Sunday 14th at 10:30 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Steve Barnes

Sunday 21st at 10:30 All Age Worship

Led by Rev Esther Squire

Sunday 28th at 10:30 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Tim Norwood

Services are frequently live-streamed on Facebook using the link: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/BradwellChurchMK">https://www.facebook.com/BradwellChurchMK</a>

Bell Ringing practice every Wednesday at 19:45. Beginners welcome.

# **Christ Church, Stantonbury**

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by John and Jenny Boxwell

Sunday 14th at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Rev Peter Dudeney

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 Morning Worship with Communion

Led by Rev Peter Ballantine

Sunday 28th at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Helen Rouse

All Sunday services are live-streamed to Christ Church's Facebook page, using the link below. You don't need to belong to Facebook in order to follow the service.

Streaming starts from 10.25 https://www.facebook.com/christchurchmk/

There is also a Christ Church website at <a href="www.christchurchmk.org.uk">www.christchurchmk.org.uk</a> which has the service details on it and which is updated each week

## Saturday 21st at 09:30 Coffee and cake morning

all donations received go to Christ Church coffee money charity.

**Morning Drop-In** every Wednesday 10.00 – 11.30.

Meets at Church, refreshments and a quiz are available.

**Under 5's** meet every Thursday in **Term time only** from 10:00 to 11:30 in the Hall.



**Cross and Stable, Downs Barn** 

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 Signed Holy Communion

Led by Rev Peter Green

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 Morning Worship

Led by Helen Rouse LLM

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 Morning Worship

Led by Stephen Fletcher LLM

Sunday 28th at 11:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Services are live-streamed on Zoom with the link normally being published on www.stantonbury.net on Saturday

Friday at 2:00 pm - Prayer time & Bible reflection on Zoom
This lasts around 45 mins - do join us from wherever you are on Zoom!
Please contact Sue Baines for the Link on suejbaines@gmail.com

**Chatterbox MK** every Wednesday from 10:30 to 12:30. All Welcome - tea - coffee - cakes - meet and chat. Come and meet others

St. Andrews', Great Linford

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday Communion

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 Open Door

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday 14th at 10:00 Easter Dawn Service

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Sunday 21st at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday 28th at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday Evening Prayer at 17:00 on Zoom every week

Morning Services are live-streamed on Facebook using this link: https://www.facebook.com/StAndrewsGL

See St Andrew's attachment for details of Coronation event, 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday Communion and other events happening in and around St Andrew's. Alternatively see St Andrew's page on <a href="https://www.stantonbury.net">www.stantonbury.net</a>

Morning Worship every Wednesday at 08:30 in Church. All are welcome to attend in church or on our Facebook page.

St. James', New Bradwell

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 Holy Communion

Led by Rev Tim Norwood

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 Morning Worship

Led by Maggie Prisk

Sunday 21st at 10:00 Holy Communion with Baptism

Led by Rev Hannah Akibo-Betts and Rev Duncan Barnes

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 Baptist Communion

Led by Rev Dr Mary Cotes

Most services will be live-streamed to St James' Facebook page at: St James Church, NB | Facebook.





Every Saturday from 10:00 to 12:00 St James' hosts a Coffee Morning

Visit St James' website at www.stjamesnewbradwell.org.uk for more information.

St. Mary Magdalene, Willen

Sunday 7th at 09:30 All Age Worship

Led by Margaret Moakes

Sunday 14th at 09:30 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 21st at 09:30 Eucharist

Led by Helen Rouse LLM

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> at 09:30 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Every Monday at 1:30 Willen Choir rehearse and at 7:30 Quorum rehearse.

Volunteer Gardening at St Mary Magdalene Church Join volunteers as they continue with the upkeep. New faces welcome! **Saturdays 10am – 12pm** 

**TTTT** (Third Tuesday Twelve Thirty) A free monthly lunch-time concert at St Mary Magdalene Church.

This month be entertained by **Drop Anchor**. See poster for details.

# Future Events

# 5 WAYS CAFÉ at St. Andrews' Church 11am to 1pm on Tuesdays 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> May

Come along to enjoy good company, refreshments and, for those wanting a bit of exercise, an accompanied walk in the Great Linford Manor Park to see the new layout, information boards etc. Everyone is welcome and the café is dementia friendly.

\*Please note the 'Textilers' now meet in the church on the <u>2<sup>nd</sup></u> Tuesday and not the 4<sup>th</sup> and work with textile artist Jane Charles who is always happy to see new 'joiners' (no previous experience required!).

One of the main events of May is going to be the **Coronation** of **King Charles III** and there are a many other things tied to that either directly or indirectly some of which are listed here.



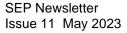
# CORONATION CELEBRATIONS on 7<sup>th</sup> May at St. Andrews' Church

All in the partnership are invited to attend a special service in the church at 11am and afterwards to bring a picnic and something to sit on to join the party in the church gardens from approximately 1.00 to 3.30pm.

Crossroots Band (who played at our Jubilee Celebration) will be performing throughout the afternoon and refreshments will be served from our North Porch Café. There will also be a raffle and funds raised from the afternoon will go towards our Churchyard Accessibility Project.

**The Big Help Out** is on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May where local communities work with each other to improve their local environment.

For further details see the website at The Big Help Out | Home







## **Resources from Hope Together**

Hope Together is publishing a souvenir Gospel to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III to be given out in schools, at street parties and special services. They also have an Assembly plan to use in school. Contact <a href="Hope Together: WebHome">Hope Together: WebHome</a>.

Churches Together in Milton Keynes have a dedicated list, on the front page of their website, of events in the area which can be found at <a href="https://www.ctmk.church">www.ctmk.church</a>

## **Eco Churches Workshop in Milton Keynes**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June, Christ the Cornerstone from 10.00am - 1.00pm

People can continue discussions informally over their packed lunches.

Stuart Kean who is organising this workshop writes: I'm convenor of the Eco Church Initiative at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone in Milton Keynes. Our Eco Church activities have been going for just over a year and one of the activities we're organising this year is a workshop involving local Eco Churches from the Milton Keynes area and a bit beyond, to learn more about implementing Eco Church actions and importantly to share and learn from each other's experiences.

The workshop will include presentations from Simon Brown, the A Rocha Coordinator for speakers and representative of an Eco Church with a Silver Award followed by questions and answers, breakout groups discussing each of the 5 key areas of church life for Eco Churches with plenary feedback and Next Steps.

For further information please contact Stuart Kean <u>stuart.kean@gmail.com</u> or Margaret Broadhurst <u>mebroadhurst@yahoo.com</u>

## **External Ecumenical News**

## **News from Diocese of Oxford**

On Thursday 6 April 2023, four people from the Diocese of Oxford were honoured with Royal Maundy gifts of specially minted coins by The King, in the Royal Maundy Service at York Minster. The number of Recipients is equal to the Monarch's age and this year 74 men and 74 women were chosen. Each recipient is gifted two small leather purses, one white holding coins to the value in pence of the Monarch's age and one red holding a special £5 and a special 50p. The tradition is one of the oldest of royal life dating back to at least 600AD, and in this country, the first record of the monarch doing so is in 1213. Now a symbolic ceremony, the tradition began with kings and queens giving money to those in need and washing the feet of their poorer subjects, as Jesus washed the feet of the disciples at the Last Supper.

The four recipients in the Diocese of Oxford are honoured for their quiet and steadfast dedicated Christian service to our local communities and churches.

Penny Ginger has been a dedicated volunteer in her community, local church and Christ Church Cathedral. Penny spent many years as the Aston Clinton Parish Church Council Secretary, a Church Warden, and volunteering with the Women's Institute and the Horticultural Society. Since 2011, she has been Head Steward and Chair of the Stewards' Committee and Head Guide and Chair of the Guides' Committee at Christ Church Cathedral.

Anthony Houghton-Brown is a Parish Church Council member and was a Churchwarden for many years at his village church in Buckinghamshire. Anthony has raised over £30,000 for Parkinson's Disease research and he remains devoted to faith and the church.

Gloria Richards has been committed to the Christian faith and serving the Lord from a young age. She recently celebrated her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday and continues her support of the Church Army as a Mission Community member. Her 'prayer life of intercession for others is regular, committed and expectant'. at Berinsfield Church. She facilitates a monthly prayer link with the 'Burning Bush' Project in the Diocese of Kimberly and Kuruman, a Mission Partner of the Diocese of Oxford.

David Shaw's life-long Christian faith has seen him committed to fervently serving the local church in each place he has lived. At 88, David is still an active member of a church in Chipping Norton where three of his children and their families also attend, a legacy that is a witness to David's devotion to following God's call. Local people say that his "extraordinary faith sets a wonderful example to all of us who are privileged to meet him."

The Diocese of Oxford has launched a brand-new contemplation and reflection resource for families with young children to enjoy exploring and journeying together in faith.

Space Makers for Families is designed to equip caregivers, parents, grandparents and godparents with tools to nurture their own everyday faith and spiritual journey, alongside the children and family members with whom they live.

Recognising that family life is very full, the resource provides seven practices, one for each day of the week, that can be done anytime and to fit into the busyness of everyday life. The practices range from a few mins to 15 minutes and are suitable for children from preschool to age 11. Each practice provides the opportunity for families to explore different elements of an everyday faith.

Reflecting on her hopes for the resource, **Yvonne Morris**, **Space Makers author**, **Discipleship Enabler and Children and Family's Ministry Advisor in the Diocese of Oxford**, said:

"I'm excited to be able to offer this resource tailored for families and children to help them to encounter more of God, and to live more deeply and less anxiously as they journey together in the Christian faith.

"It is an invitation to parents, grandparents, caregivers to do something with and for themselves, their children, and their household. The hope is that in time these practices will become a habit for each family member, as part of who they are, as they seek to serve God in their everyday lives."

The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford, said: "I'm delighted that we have expanded the Space Makers series to deliver this new resource for families to grow in faith in Christ together in a way that fosters those important everyday faith habits of self-reflection and contemplation. "It is my hope that this resource will create spaces for families to experience God's love and presence in their lives together, as parents and caregivers guide their children to flourish on the pathways of life and faith."

Space Makers for Families is designed in an easily accessible way for children – even the youngest – to take part, share their reflections, lead and guide the practices. Each pack contains a booklet with detailed practice exercises and suggested scripts, a

tabletop booklet with images and practice prompts, and a Moment Maker template for children to create.

## Order for just £5.99

Additional resources are available to <u>download</u> from the Diocese of Oxford. Space Makers for Families is part of the series of resources and complements <u>Space Makers</u> and the <u>Contemplative Toolkit</u> for schools and churches

## **News from the Methodist Circuit**

#### 52 ways to pray

Do you find prayer difficult, boring and frustrating? Or creative, life-giving and transformational? A set of new Methodist prayer cards offers 52 different prompts for creative prayer; different ways that we can fulfil the Methodist Way of Life commitment to "pray daily" as far as we are able, with God's help. The cards can be used by individuals or groups, at church events onsite and online, in homes, schools and care homes. Early feedback has included: "The teenagers liked them – thought the illustrations were cute/cool and it prompted some good discussion." "As the focus of a prayer station, at the online Circuit Day of Prayer, I got the following comments: 'Love the focus and simplicity of the cards'; 'Wonderful, keeping me focused'."

Available to download as a <u>PowerPoint</u> or <u>PDF version</u> for easy use in digital meetings and church services. Or, <u>buy a print pack from Methodist Publishing</u>.

## **News from The United Reformed Church**

## Coronation Day: URC prays for King and Queen

In a typically British piece of ritual, much pomp and ceremony will take place to anoint and crown someone to a purely symbolic office with no real independent power. Such authority that the King has can only be exercised with the advice, and consent, of the government. Such guidance and advice that the King may give to ministers is necessarily private and, of course, can easily be ignored.

The URC stands in a tradition of British Christianity which was, at best, rather ambivalent about the monarchy.

Our spiritual ancestors welcomed the Commonwealth in the Civil War era and argued, after all, for the execution of Charles I! Passages in the Old Testament which showed God warning against the Jewish people establishing a monarchy were used as guidance in the Civil War era and the identification of the monarchy with the Church of England added another layer of complexity to our history.

Thankfully, the turmoil of those years is long behind us and, in a much more secular age, differences between Christian denominations are less acute. The URC, and its antecedents, were – and are – eager to play a key part in the civic life of our nations; each year we continue a long tradition of sending an Address To The Throne from our General Assembly where we comment on the issues of the day, presumably in the hope that His Majesty will send those comments on to various government departments. In our contemporary society, and certainly within our congregations, there are a variety of views on the monarchy, yet we can unite in wishing Their Majesties The King and Queen well today. We pray that they will feel God's presence as they are anointed and throughout His Majesty's reign. We hope that they will use their office well and use their voices at the centre for those on the margins of our bitterly divided society. We pray that His Majesty The King reminds

us of the importance of spirituality and religion in the lives of our nations. Above all, the URC commends their Majesties, The King and Queen, to God's care and protection.

#### **Prayer**

Eternal God,

You order and govern our world and all that is therein, bless, we pray, Charles and Camilla today as they are crowned and anointed, that amid the pomp and ritual, they may feel your loving presence, that they may fulfil the roles prescribed for them, and that we may, in this kingdom, be better governed, and always reminded of your eternal Kingdom which is to come. Amen.

Sharron, Chair of SEP <a href="mailto:secchair22@gmail.com">secchair22@gmail.com</a>

# **Churches Together**

Our strapline is:

One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission, empowered by the Spirit.

We have two upcoming events;

'Thy Kingdome come' – This is a global event during the period between Ascension day and Pentecost. It is planned to hold 5 events in Milton Keynes during that period. Details available from <a href="https://www.ctmk.church">www.ctmk.church</a> website.

**'Civic Prayer breakfast'** - Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July at Cornerstone. This brings together members of the clergy, those with office in local government and members of local businesses.

Adrian Prisk

I hope that you find this newsletter interesting and useful. I have also attached the items referred to in various places.

If there is anything you think would make this Newsletter better or find any glaring omissions, please let your local newsletter editor, Sharron or myself know.

The deadline for information to go into May's issue is **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May** to allow me to get it to you in time to send it out for June1<sup>st</sup>.

John Porter sepnewsletter9@gmail.com

Please note my new email address for all things newsletter related. This is active now, but I will still pick up from the old address for the next month or two.

If anyone would like an item included as the Last Word (max one and a half pages) either next month or in future send it to me at the above email address before the deadline. JP

So this month I am leaving the **Last Word** to Rev Dr Paul Smith with his Pastoral Letter.

## Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership, Milton Keynes



Team Rector of Stantonbury and Willen LEP The Revd. Dr. Paul A. Smith

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e-mail: smith.paul.a@icloud.com

22nd April 2023

Dear Members of Stantonbury Partnership,

#### Sabbatical Plans

Many of you know that I am taking a final sabbatical of my active ministry from I May to 31 July 2023. In conversation with some individuals I realised that it might be helpful if I wrote to all of you, giving you an idea what is planned.

First, I am grateful to those who are kindly providing cover in different ways whilst I'm away. Several ministers, local and from further afield, are taking Sunday services. At Bradwell Susan Jackson will be covering funerals, and Esther Squire baptisms. Steve Barnes has agreed to provide emergency advice should it be needed. At St James Helen Rouse is covering funerals, Duncan Barnes baptisms, and together with Mary Cotes, these three 'in-house' ministers will be able to respond to unexpected matters. In both churches we have experienced churchwardens and other lay leaders perfectly capable of holding matters or making decisions should they be needed. Nicola Martyn-Beck is also a back-up for all concerns that can't be dealt with at congregational level.

My sabbatical is going to be spent exploring possible forms of ministry after I leave full-time active ministry beyond autumn 2024. Some people have asked whether I'm going to write another book! I don't intend to do that – but I may well write some reflections of my 38 years' experience of ordained ministry, the last 20 years of it spent in the Stantonbury Partnership. I do plan to read plenty of other people's books, however!

Apart from just taking some time to rest and recuperate, I'm going to be exploring two aspects of chaplaincy ministry in the (Anglican) Diocese in Europe. During May and June, Jeanette and I will be staying at our apartment in Kuşadası, on Turkey's Aegean coast (near the biblical Ephesus). There is a local Anglican chaplaincy serving the many ex-pats who've settled there. In retirement we intend spending extended periods there, and I may be able to help the full-time chaplain from time to time.

For ten days in the middle of July I'm staying in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. There are many Englishspeaking pilgrims who walk one of the many "caminos" (ways). During the main season Anglican ministers
do short periods of duty there, offering a ministry of welcome to pilgrims, taking English services, meeting
and sharing with individuals, helping them take stock of what can be a life-changing experience. I'm going to
try it out with a view to offering perhaps an annual "tour of duty" when I'm retired.

May I encourage you to think of my period of absence as also your "sabbatical" during which you perhaps review your commitment to and involvement with our church life here? In particular, I'm encouraging those who I most closely work with, to observe areas where my absence highlights aspects of church life where advice or support is especially needed. We can then examine how any unexpected gaps can be filled or provided for when I am permanently no longer in post.

With my love and prayers,

Paul

Baptist Union • Church of England • Methodist Church • United Reformed Church

Website: http://stantonbury.net