

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

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



March 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to the March edition of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Newsletter. (also see website at www.stantonbury.net)

Partnership News

Partnership wide service

Preparing for Lent

Thank you to all those who came to this service on such a dreadful night. There were people from all six congregations on Shrove Tuesday 13th February at St Andrews. Revd. Asa Humphries, Pastoral Advisor, Buckingham, Diocese of Oxford, led the sermon and then had a drive ahead of him to Buckingham. Asa was supported by Revd. Dr. Sam Muthuveloe and Revd. Canon Chuks Iwuagwu. Thank you to the St Andrews team for making everyone so welcome.

I hope everyone is able to make use of the excellent materials that Revd. Duncan Barnes and a team from the congregation at St. James have very kindly provided to us for Lent. These focus on a selection of themes of Inclusion; to listen and reflect on. We are invited to use these in our six congregations, or attend Sunday Services at St James, or the Bible Study group there. David Preston, Chair of Trustees and I are both grateful to Duncan and St James for this support on our journey to becoming a more Inclusive church community.

(For details see under the Future Events section of this Newsletter)

Appointment of new Anglican Minister

The advert for a Team Rector will go out on 31st March 2024. Thank you to Paul Brookman, Bradwell Church, for his work on our Parish Profile. A Section 11 meeting will be part of the PCC meeting held before the next SEPC on 21st March 2024.

Appointment of new Baptist Minister

A prospective applicant has now visited the six church buildings in our Partnership as well as the Manse. The Trustees will organise an Interview Panel, formal interview, Preach with a View and a Church Meeting in April.

Mission, Evangelism, Discipleship and Worship Committee

I haven't made any change to this comment as the information is the same. This has still to come to fruition, as the Review expected, but I pray we get this off the ground with our ministry soon. This does not mean our Sunday Worship is compromised in

any way, as the Worship Plan is still being organised without a meeting, as has been the case for a while. Our thanks to Margaret Moakes, Helen Rouse and Maggie Prisk for preparing the Plan and to Ann Fountain for helping with the administrative tasks.

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Council

We next meet on Thurs. 21st March 7.30pm. Please could Church Wardens and other Officers ensure that your AGMs are before the CIO Trustees' AGM 2024 on 25th April, venue Christ Church, Stantonbury. The minutes and nominations for new or returning Officers need to be with Ann Slee, Secretary to the Trustees, before that date. Church Warden swearing in is in May.

The Partnership Leadership Team meet regularly so If you have anything you wish us to discuss, just tell me or your congregation representative.

Social Media

Thank you to those who have contributed to our congregations or Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Facebook and website. The Facebook groups are all public so just post your own comments. Please check daily as there are so many activities going on.

UNITYMK (originally known as Winter Night Shelter MK)

They are still looking for volunteers to help from now until March 2024. If you want to learn more, please contact:

Andrea Eklund, Operations Manager on andrea.eklund@unitymk.org or via their website, <https://www.unitymk.org/>

As always, many thanks to John for pulling these newsletters together in the hope that better communication leads to closer friendships as our LEP Review showed was needed.

Warm blessings, and I hope you all continue to have a healthy and reflective Lent, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday during March 2024.

Sharron, Chair of SEP

secchair22@gmail.com

07846346809

Our Church Services and Events

Bradwell Church, St Lawrence

Sunday 3rd at 10:30 **Morning Worship**

Led by Colin Taylor LLM

Sunday 10th at 10:30 **Holy Communion**

Led by Rev Guy Elsmore

Sunday 17th at 10:30 **Morning Worship**

Led by Rev Esther Squire

Sunday 24th at 10:30 **Holy Communion**

Led by Rev Dr Mary Cotes



Sunday 29th at 10:30 **Morning Worship for Good Friday**

Led by Rev Dr Paul Smith

Sunday 31st at 10:30 **Holy Communion For Easter Day**

Led by Rev Dr Paul Smith

Services are frequently live-streamed on Facebook using the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/BradwellChurchMK>

Gardening Club re-starts Wednesday 6th March at 10:00

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

Christ Church, Stantonbury

Sunday 3rd at 10:30 **Morning Worship**

Led by Rev Canon Peter Ballantine

Sunday 10th at 10:30 **Morning Worship**

Led by Colin Taylor LLM

Sunday 17th at 10:30 **Morning Worship**

Led by John and Jenny Boxwell

Sunday 24th at 10:30 **Morning Worship with Communion**

Led by Rev Dave Haseldine

Sunday 31st at 09:00 **Short Communion Service**

Led by Rev Canon Peter Ballantine

and at 10:30 **Easter Sunday Celebration**

Led by Maggie Prisk



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 www.christchurchmk.org.uk which has the service details on it and which is updated each week

Saturday 16th 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 3rd at 11:00 **Signed Holy Communion**

Led by Rev Peter Green

Sunday 10th at 11:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 17th at 11:00 **Morning Worship**

Led by Stephen Fletcher LLM

Sunday 24th at 11:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 31st at 11:00 **Holy Communion Service for Easter Day**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe



Services are live-streamed on Zoom at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85922248518?pwd=Tm4vd00wancwVk52cCtgNm5tMWRZdz09>

Meeting ID: 859 2224 8518 Passcode: 830413

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 (Party on the morning of 20th)

Please pray for the **Care Homes in Neath Hill & Downs Barn** as we conduct a Church Service and Holy Communion on **Sunday 24th at 3.00pm and 4.00pm** respectively. Remember the frail, elderly, the caring staff & the concerned families as we minister God's love and grace.

St. Andrews', Great Linford

Sunday 3rd at 10:00 Open Door Service

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Wednesday 6th at 10:00 1st Wednesday Communion

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Followed by refreshments and the 3rd seminar in the series of 6 on "Talking about God" led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Sunday 10th at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday 17th at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Sunday 24th at 10:00 Holy Communion Service for Palm Sunday

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Thursday 28th at 18:00 Holy Communion Service for Maundy Thursday

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Friday 29th at 14:00 Seven Stations of the Cross

Led by

Sunday 31st at 05:45 Vigil and Dawn Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

and at 10:00 Easter Day Festal Choral Eucharist

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday Sitting Room at 17:00 on Zoom every week

Contact greatlinford@googlemail.com for joining details

Morning Services are live-streamed on Facebook using this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/StAndrewsGL>

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

5 WAYS CAFÉ at St. Andrews' Church

11.00am to 1.00pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month

Come along to enjoy good company, refreshments, a selection of board games 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.



St. James', New Bradwell

Sunday 3rd at 10:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Paul Smith & Rev Duncan Barnes

Sunday 10th at 10:00 **Morning Worship for Mothering Sunday**

Led by Helen Rouse LLM

Sunday 17th at 10:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Mary Cotes

Sunday 24th at 10:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev David Nash

Friday 29th at 13:30 **Stations of the Cross**

Led by Mary Borrett & Helen Rouse LLM

and at 14:30 **Good Friday Liturgy**

Led by Rev Dr Paul Smith & Rev Duncan Barnes

Saturday 30th at 09:00 **Said Morning Prayers**

Led by Helen Rouse LLM

Followed by Easter Cracked

Sunday 31st at 06:30 **Dawn Vigil and Holy Communion**

Led by Rev Dr Paul Smith

and at 10:00 **Holy Communion service for Easter Day**

Led by Rev Duncan Barnes

Live-streaming of our services to St James' Facebook page will resume after the Lent Course beginning with Easter Sunday Holy Communion at 10:00.

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 3rd at 09:30 **All Age Worship**

Led by Margaret Moakes LLM

Sunday 10th at 09:30 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 17th at 09:30 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Hannah Akibo-Betts

Sunday 24th at 09:30 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

and at 18:00 **Evensong with Quorum**

Led by Stephen Fletcher LLM

Sunday 31st at 09:30 **Holy Communion Service for Easter Day**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

The monthly communion service at **Oaktree Court, Portland Drive** will be at **2.45 pm on March 14th** and is moving from the 1st Thursday for this month only. Anyone who would like to join us, and stay for a cup of tea afterwards, would be welcome. Please speak to Margaret Moakes.



Future Events

St. James' church is currently exploring issues around being an *Inclusive Church*, in order to build towards a whole-SEP meeting in May.

Taking, as a baseline, the work done by www.inclusivechurch.org, which includes 6 published books on different aspects of developing a more Inclusive Church mindset, we would like to suggest a parish-wide sermon series and Lent group in the 6 weeks before Easter.

Using the booklets, we are hosting a Sunday service, followed by a Monday evening home-group on the following four remaining subjects/dates:

3/4th March – Including **Mental Health**;

10/11th March – Including **Disability**;

17/18th March – Including **Gender**;

24/25th March – Including **Poverty**.

The *Inclusive Church* Statement of Belief is:

‘We believe in Inclusive Church – church which does not discriminate, on any level, on grounds of economic power, gender, mental health, physical ability, race or sexuality. We believe in church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.’

We are aware that, being an Ecumenical Parish, there are a wide variety of outlooks, traditions and interpretations of these issues. In offering this Lent sermon and home-group series, we hope to deepen the discussions and face these important questions together as a parish.

If you have already planned a Lent group series, please could you let us know. Also, could you let us know if any members of your congregation might be interested in participating in leading aspects of the course.

Lenten Reflections -2024

Come and See this Lent- The way of love.

Five Wednesdays starting Wednesday 21st February 12.30 to 1.30 pm- with soup and a roll.

Venue – Cross & Stable Church, Downs Barn, MK14 7RZ

Video, reflections and discussion.

Programme arranged by Bishop Stephen of Oxford.

For information contact Sam Muthuveloe [sam.muthuveloe@gmail.com]

Wednesday 20th March

10:15 to 15:30 An Arts And Heritage Event At St. James Church.

An arts and heritage event at St.James Church New Bradwell on the above date.

The event will celebrate the work of the Arts Society of North Bucks and their group of volunteer Church Recorders.

The event will include a lecture by Janet Gough, formerly Director of cathedrals and church buildings at the Church of England and a Director at Sotheby's, with City and finance experience. Janet studied history and history of art at Cambridge and was awarded an OBE for services to heritage in the New Year's Honours 2017 and in 2021 she became one of the first lay canons of Bangor Cathedral.

The event promises to be most interesting and informative so please do support it if you are able.

Please see the attached poster for more information about the event.
If you intend joining us it would be helpful if you could book in advance, contact details are on the poster,
We look forward to welcoming you to St James.
Thank You
Graham Crisp. Churchwarden St.James Church.

Saturday 13th April

10.30-13.00. MK Eco Church Network

St James is hosting a meeting of the MK Eco Church Network on the above date. There will be a short presentation about gaining a Bronze Award, a question and answer session, discussions and a tour of the church and churchyard. There will be a tea/coffee break and you are welcome to bring a packed lunch if you would like to. Please use the link below to register your interest but you are welcome to just turn up on the day.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/milton-keynes-eco-church-network-visit-to-st-james-church-new-bradwell-mk13-0da-tickets-815652567787>

Thursday, 25th April

7:30 pm Partnership AGM

The AGM of Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership CIO will take place on the above date in Christ Church, Stantonbury. This meeting is open to every member of our six churches – please come along to hear what has been happening in the Partnership this year and prepare for the coming year. It's important that we have as many people there as possible, so please **SAVE THE DATE**.

External Ecumenical News

We want to plan for our future in faith and church and ministry. If anyone reading this is thinking their future may lie in any level of ministry, please speak to your minister or drop me a line.

News from Diocese of Oxford

Death announced of the Rt Rev Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham.



The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, has announced with great sadness the unexpected death of his colleague, the Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham.

Paying tribute to Bishop Alan, Bishop Steven said: "Alan was a dear friend and colleague to many across the Diocese. Alan has deep friendships and pastoral relationships across both church and community in Bucks. Alan has been a friend and advocate for survivors of abuse and a strong ally and supporter of the LGBTQIA+ community for many years.

“Alan had recently begun a well-earned sabbatical and was planning to use the time to plan and prepare for retirement in the next year. Alan loved God and loved God’s church with a rare passion. Bishop Alan served as Bishop of Buckingham for over 20 years. His entire ordained ministry was within the Diocese of Oxford as a curate in Eynsham, Vicar in Caversham and Sandhurst, Area Dean in Sonning and then Bishop of Buckingham. The Archdeacon of Buckingham, the Ven Guy Elsmore, who worked closely with Bishop Alan, said: “On behalf of the Bucks Area Team, my deepest sympathies to Lucy and the family at this time of shock and loss.

News from the Regional Central Baptist Union

World Day of Prayer

Fri 1 Mar

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. The 2024 theme is 'I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love', and was prepared by the Committee in Palestine.

A women led, global, ecumenical movement

Informed Prayer; Prayerful Action: We encourage women to plan ecumenically for the World Day of Prayer, promoting prayerful living and worship for men, women and young people and helping raise awareness of the lives and concerns of others throughout the world, especially those who write the service.

Statement for World Day of Prayer

The theme of our service this year is from *Ephesians 4: 1 – 6*. “*I beg you, bear with one another in love.*” The service was written by a group of Palestinian Christian women before the current conflict and deals with their own personal experiences. Their hope was to encourage and inspire other women around the world to bear with one another in troubled times. As has often happened before, this year’s service has been overtaken by a tragic set of events.

We are called to support the Christian women who created it and we invite all those taking part to listen prayerfully to their voices. We pray with world leaders, relief workers, medical teams and all those praying about the situation, for an end to the killing, and for the wisdom to build a lasting peace.

News from the Methodist Circuit

The Vine Resources



The Vine provides resources for Local Arrangement services. Although The Vine was conceived to help Stewards, Worship Leaders and members of the congregation lead local arrangement services, feedback has been received from Ministers and Local Preachers who have also found The Vine to be a useful source of inspiration in their planning of worship.

Our Circuit is paying for these resources for one year, and then we will review the benefit to us. They are sent on a weekly basis to representatives in each church, and also to the Circuit Administrator and the Circuit Superintendent.

News from The United Reformed Church

Sign up to be a Festival Friend (volunteer) with the URC at Greenbelt Festival 2024

We are looking for volunteers to be a part of the URC team at the Greenbelt festival, 22 – 25 August 2024, at Boughton House, near Kettering. Being part of the URC team is fun, with plenty of free time to enjoy the fun activities offered by Greenbelt. Don't worry if you have never been before, as you will be part of a supportive group of people.

If you are interested in joining the Youth team at Greenbelt, please contact our team directly: [Children & Youth Work Team](#)



Volunteer Application Form

If you are interested in volunteering with us for the Greenbelt festival this year, please complete the form online. (Due to the increasing demand to volunteer with the URC at Greenbelt festival, we will give priority to applicants who have either not volunteered with the URC before or have volunteered with us just once.)

Each denomination has a website with all these items and much more. You can subscribe to receive updates.

Warm blessings and I wish you a continued healthy and reflective Lent.

Sharron, Chair of SEP secchair22@gmail.com

News from Churches Together in Milton Keynes

Our strapline is:

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

There are far too many items on the website to list, so please take a look for yourself at: [Churches Together in Milton Keynes \(ctmk.church\)](http://ctmk.church)

News from the Partnership Green Champions



No Faith in Fossil Fuels Lent Vigil for Climate Justice

Four members of Stantonbury Parish Eco churches attended the Lent vigil on Friday 16 February. The vigil started on Ash Wednesday and goes on 24 hours a day for 10

days supported by 10 charities including Christian Aid and A Roche. The focus was on climate change justice as well as mitigating climate change. Fortunately, the weather was good and several people on the busy pavement outside the Houses of Parliament stopped and joined in

conversation with those on the vigil. Christian aid information pack says 'Prayer is Powerful' and we hope the vigil prayers will impact on the decisions taken by leaders to:

- Make the UK's biggest polluters pay for climate action.
- Deliver and build on the UK's international climate finance pledges and pay into the UN's Loss and Damage Fund.
- Ban new UK-based fossil fuel projects.

I hope that you find this newsletter interesting and useful.

If there is anything you think would make it better or find any glaring omissions, please let your congregation's newsletter editor, Sharron or myself know.

*The deadline for information to go into April's issue is **Monday 25th March** to allow me to get it to you in time to send out before the beginning of April*

John

John Porter sepnewsletter9@gmail.com

*No **Last Word** item this month, however if anyone would like an item included as the **Last Word** (max one and a half pages please) either next month or in future, send it to me at the above email address before the deadline with the reference 'Last Word'.
JP*