

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

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



April 2024 Newsletter

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

The SEP AGM

will be held on Thursday April 25th at 7:30 pm
at Christ Church, Stantonbury.

This will include the Annual Meeting
for the election of Churchwardens and
the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

All members of our six congregations are welcome.
Please come along and find out what has been happening in the
Partnership and prepare for the coming year.

Nominations are requested for Trustees (2), SEP Council Chair, SEP
Council Secretary and SEP Safeguarding Lead. Nomination forms are
available from Anne Slee, anne.e.slee@gmail.com.

Partnership News

Partnership wide service

Tree Cathedral Service

The Parks Trust have confirmed that we can hold a Partnership wide service there on Sunday 15 September at 3pm. This is the last day of the National Heritage Week in Milton Keynes. Also, Bradwell Silver Band have now confirmed that they will play from 2.30pm to welcome everyone.

Appointment of new Anglican Minister

Revd. Dr. Paul Smith has now resigned as Team Rector, so the advert for a Team Rector is in the Church Times, The Oxford Diocese website and Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership website now. The Section 11 meeting took place at the PCC meeting, which was Chaired by David Preston, Chair of Trustees.

Appointment of new Baptist Minister

Several members of the congregation will have met Philip, a candidate for the Baptist vacancy, when he visited Milton Keynes in February. He will be coming again, this time on a more formal basis, for an interview and to 'Preach with a view'.

The interview will take place on Saturday 6th April at 2.30pm at Christ Church. The interview panel will represent most of the congregations in the partnership and will have Adrian Prisk, David Preston, Rev David Haseldine, Trudy Hutchings, Helen Rouse and Diana Stammers.

He will preach with a view on Sunday 7th April at Christ Church's usual 10.30am service. We have his consent for this to be live streamed and for the recording to remain available afterwards. All members of the partnership are welcome to attend as this will be a Partnership decision and not just an appointment for Christ Church.

A meeting, open to all church members in the Partnership, will be held on Monday 8th April at 7.30pm in the hall at Christ Church where on the basis of the interview and the service he has led, which we hope those attending will have seen either in person or online, we will decide whether to choose him and call him to minister to us in Stantonbury.

Adrian Prisk

Mission, Evangelism, Discipleship and Worship Committee

Again 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

Thank you for arranging your Congregation Leadership Team AGMs in good time and letting Irene know. Could you also make sure that she has your draft minutes before the Trustees' AGM 2024 on 25th April, at 7.30pm, venue Christ Church, Stantonbury. The SEPC no longer have an AGM, as we handed over to the Trustees last year. Please attend this meeting, if possible, as we need to be quorate, which is 20% of our membership.

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.

There are no dates set for future meetings. These will be determined after the AGM.

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.

If anyone can start an Instagram or X account for the SEP please get in touch with me.

UNITYMK (originally known as Winter Night Shelter MK)

They are looking for volunteer to help beyond March 2024. If you want to learn more, please contact: Andrea Eklund, Operations Manager at: 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 wish you all a Happy Easter 2024.
Sharron, Chair of SEP
secchair22@gmail.com
07846346809

Our Church Services and Events

Bradwell Church, St Lawrence

Sunday 7th at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Chris Spikings

Sunday 14th at 10:30 Holy Communion

Led by tba

Sunday 21st at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Rev Prof John Beazley

Sunday 28th at 10:30 Holy Communion

Led by Rev Canon Chris Bull



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

Gardening Club on Wednesdays at 10:00

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

Christ Church, Stantonbury

Sunday 7th at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Maggie Prisk

Sunday 14th at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by Helen Rouse LLM

Sunday 21st at 10:30 Morning Worship

Led by John and Jenny Boxwell

Sunday 28th at 10:30 Morning Worship with Communion

Led by Rev Dave Haseldine



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 20th 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 7th at 11:00 **Signed Holy Communion**

Led by Rev Peter Green

Sunday 14th at 11:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 21st at 11:00 **Morning Worship**

Led by Stephen Fletcher LLM

Sunday 28th at 11:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Steve Barnes



Services are live-streamed on Zoom at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85922248518?pwd=Tm4vd00wancwVk52cCtqNm5tMWRZdz09>

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

Please pray for the **Care Homes in Neath Hill & Downs Barn** as we conduct a Church Service and Holy Communion on **Sunday 28th 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

Wednesday 3rd 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 7th at 10:00 **Open Door Service**

Led by Rev Canon Peter Ballantine

Sunday 14th at 10:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday 21st at 10:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu

Sunday 28th at 10:00 **Holy Communion Service**

Led by Colin Taylor LLM



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 7th at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Duncan Barnes

Sunday 14th at 10:00 Open Door Service

Led by the Open Door Team

Sunday 21st at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Dr Paul Smith

Sunday 28th at 10:00 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Dr Margaret Goodall



Services are live-streamed most weeks to St James' Facebook page.

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 Morning Worship

Led by Margaret Moakes LLM

Sunday 14th at 09:30 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe

Sunday 21st at 09:30 Holy Communion by extension

Led by Margaret Moakes LLM

Sunday 28th at 09:30 Holy Communion Service

Led by Rev Steve Barnes



The monthly communion service at **Oaktree Court, Portland Drive** will be at **2.45 pm on April 4th**. Anyone who would like to join us, and stay for a cup of tea afterwards, would be welcome. Please speak to Margaret Moakes.

Volunteer Gardening at St Mary Magdalene Church. Join volunteers as they start again in 2024 with the upkeep of the churchyard. New faces welcome! **Saturdays 10am – 12pm** from April 13 onwards. Even if you only come sometimes speak to Sharron about joining the WhatsApp group.

The first of the **Second Saturday at Three** presentations organised by Willen Village Heritage Association at St Mary Magdalene Church Willen will be on Saturday **April 13 at 3.00pm**.

T.T.T.T (Third Tuesday at Twelve Thirty) Pop along to St Mary Magdalene Church Willen and be entertained by **U3lele** on **Tuesday April 16, 12.30 - 1.15**.

Future Events

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 SEP AGM

(See Item on front page for details)

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

A lesson on the birds and the bees helped support environmental charity A Rocha UK, at a children's church group in Great Missenden.

Youngsters met for their regular MAP (Making and Praising) group and made bird boxes and decorated plant pots to be planted with bee-friendly flowers. The terracotta pots were sold to an appreciative congregation, while the bird boxes were out up around the churchyard of St Peter and St Paul's and beyond. "Older members of the congregation worked with the kids to make these bird boxes for robins and bluetits. They had great fun decorating the pots and it was great to give back to A Rocha UK who have supported our Eco Church work with access to resources."

Children were also treated to a closer look at a beehive, thanks to Keith Ray who brought an empty one into church. They are looking forward to a farm visit next month where they hope to meet some spring lambs.

Read more about Eco church and how you could get involved.

Oxford Diocesan Synod: focussing on children, youth and families, met on Saturday Nature at the heart of making and praising Eco church group 9 March. Over 70 members joined together for their first meeting of 2024.

Gathering at Holy Trinity Church in Hazelmere, Jim Tucker was admitted into the Order of St Frideswide. Jim was presented by the Revd Canon Peter Moger, sub-dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

The Bishop's address showcased a new film from the diocese that aims to bring the voices of children and young people to the fore. Over half a million children and young

people live in the Diocese of Oxford, but declining numbers of under-20s in attendance at church services paint a stark picture.

Bishop Steven praised the work of the many diocesan youth and children's workers, both lay and ordained, and urged all present to consider what's next. "Every week across the diocese clergy and lay volunteers take assemblies in local schools, church and non-church; local churches host services; children's lives are rebuilt through the patient listening of chaplains. And yet, we know there is so much more we can do..."

Drawing on the wisdom of Matthew 9, Bishop Steven encouraged every member of Synod into a cycle of contemplation, compassion and courage in relation to ministry to children, young people and families, the key topic of a motion and debate occurring later in the meeting.

There were poignant talks on equality, diversity and inclusion. The Revd Katie Tupling, diocesan Disability Advisor, Polly Falconer, UKME Development Enabler, and the Revd Dr Hannah Lewis, Chaplain amongst the Deaf Community, took the mantle in turn to detail their roles and visions for a more Christ-like Church, before opening the floor to questions.

Asked how white, heterosexual, able-bodied men could help, Charnelle encouraged them to use their positions to platform others. "You have roles of authority in which people are willing to hear your voices - use those voices and create opportunities where the lesser heard voices can be heard. Don't listen to the noise - this is the moment in which you're able to show courage."

A recurring theme through the questions was the need for a culture change. A Synod member raised the example of being asked to sit and stand continually through a church service, and how many find that difficult and disempowering. The Revd Hannah Lewis agreed, and urged the room to consider where things are cultural - motions we've got used to - as opposed to embedded in doctrine and necessary to the heart of worship.

Looking ahead

"This Synod endorses the need to significantly increase our engagement with children, young people, families and schools building on Disciples Together and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, and calls on every deanery and benefice in 2024 to develop plans and partnerships for growth."

News from the Regional Central Baptist Union

The Central Baptist Association covers the historic counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire and has 150 churches with a combined membership of ca 12,000 (including Local Ecumenical Partnerships).

Faith and Society Update - March 2024

This month's update comes to you in the midst of Lent. For many this is a time of quiet reflection and prayer.

As we prepare to follow Jesus's journey to the cross and onwards to celebrate the power of the resurrection, we take time to reflect on our own journey.

The beautiful hymn found in Paul's letter to the Philippians reminds us of the enormity of all that Jesus did for us. Taking human likeness, becoming as a servant, emptying

himself; and all for our sake (Philippians 2:5-11). This surely shapes our own reflections, our own journey and challenges us to follow.

Lent is a time for personal and corporate reflection, seeking God alone and together. Together we have been joining in prayer each week and each month – click here for the [link to the monthly prayer broadcast](#)

We pray that your personal journey, prayer and reflection draws you closer to the heart of God's love. And together, as we journey towards Easter, we bow our knees and proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Every blessing

Diane, Hilary, Jane, Mary, Mat, Mike, Paul, Sharon, Steve and Wale
Faith and Society Team

News from the Methodist Circuit

The Vine Resources

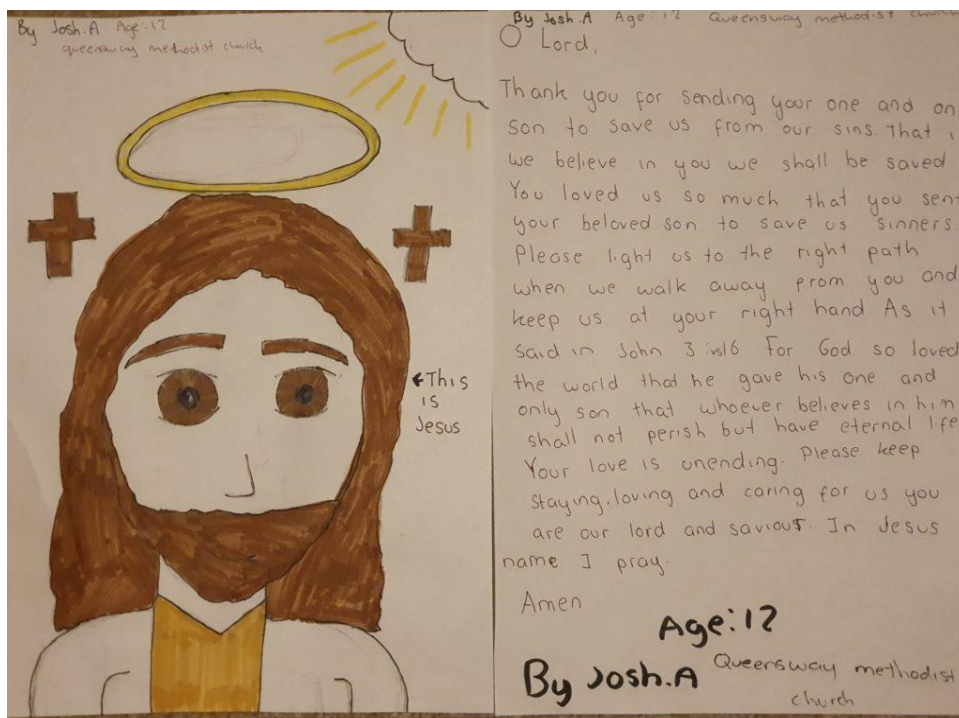
Read below some of the Easter Prayers written by children

Dear God we would like to say that we are very thankful for our lives and family. Please help the world find a cure to the coronavirus so we may go back to school safely. Please bless and protect us so we can return to our normal activities.

Dear God, please bless our church through this pandemic and heal all who are sick in world. Amen.

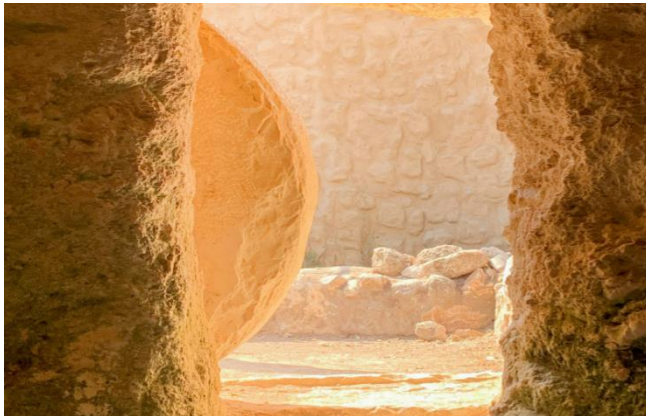
Written by Russel, Ronal and Ryan

Woburn Sands Methodist church



News from The United Reformed Church

GEAR Easter 2024 message



Follow
<https://youtu.be/fEUGZrmEQmo>

In this short video, the Revd Matt Stone, Chairman of Group for Evangelism and Renewal within the URC (GEAR), reflects on the God who comes along side us in Jesus this Easter.

GEAR is a voluntary network of Christians who long to see evangelism and renewal become part

of the heartbeat of our denomination, the United Reformed Church.

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

Wishing you a blessed and peaceful Easter. May this Easter be a time of reflection, renewal, and gratitude. Happy Easter!

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

Eco tip for April.

UNWANTED ELECTRICALS HIDING IN YOUR CUPBOARDS?

Wolverton Community Fridge will now #RehomeYourElectricals! Just drop off working items at community fridge and repair café sessions at The Old Bath House and Community Centre, Milton Keynes (next to Tesco, Wolverton):

- Wednesday Community Hub (main hall) - 10.00-12.00
- Wednesday Community Fridge – 18.00-19.00
- Saturday Community Fridge – 12.30-13.30
- Saturday Monthly Repair Cafe sessions (main hall)

09.30-12.30 on 13th April / 11th May (and every 2nd Saturday of the month)

WHAT TO BRING

We're accepting:

All small, clean electricals in working condition, such as:

- Laptops, tablets & phones
- Kitchen appliances: toasters, microwaves, kettles, blenders etc.
- Other items: Games consoles, alarm clocks, speakers, televisions, desk lamps,
- Portable heaters etc.
- Loose cables & extension leads

ELECTRICALS WE ARE NOT ACCEPTING

- Large white goods like fridges and washing machines
- Used personal hygiene electricals, e.g. electric toothbrushes, shavers and epilators
- Electrical components

A team at the community fridge will check over donations to ensure items are safe to use and good quality before rehoming them with local community organisations. Any unrepairable electrical items will be recycled responsibly.

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 May's issue is **Thursday 25th April** to allow me to get it to you in time to send out before the beginning of April*

John

John Porter sepnewsletter9@gmail.com

*Finally 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*

*So I leave the **Last Word** item this month to Rev Dave Haseldine*

Dear Friends,

Happy Easter to you! Christ who was crucified is risen! **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!** We believe in the goodness of God that we see all over the place: in the natural world; in the Bible; in the person of Jesus; and when we are aware of and see the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. And we believe: 'all things shall be well'; and in a new heaven and a new earth where there will be no more illness or death and God's love will reign unopposed.

But we live with the tension that this Kingdom of God is *coming*, it is not here fully yet, and for too many people it seems a cruel fantasy.

Paul of Tarsus knew of this almost unbearable tension and wrote of it and of how Jesus: knew of it; lived in it; faced it; what it cost him to overcome it; and calls us to live with the same tensions and trust him by following him. In Romans 4:25-5:5, Paul writes:

Jesus was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Life is a struggle! But we grow when we struggle. Maybe that is the only time and way we grow. I wish it were different, that Jesus could make me grow without it being so costly, without me having to 'die to my self', to the worst that is in me, or the 'me' that most resists Jesus' call to trust him in and above absolutely **everything**.

So there is no short-cut to resurrection by-passing the crucifixion. Jesus says that losing your life is the only way to find new life. And everyone who takes even small steps on this mad way of his grows as perseverance produces character, and character produces hope. I confess that I only take small steps trusting Jesus in this way, but when I do, God's love seeps into my heart. And I take huge encouragement from others who take bigger steps, and it is clear that the Holy Spirit does indeed abundantly pour God's love into their hearts. As we face all the challenges that we do at this time, may we encourage one another in this way and look for the outpouring of God's love through us! Amen!

Dave Haseldine:-)

Minister (Presbyter) in the Milton Keynes Methodist Circuit
<https://mkmethodist.org.uk>

In Hanslope + Newport Pagnell + Woburn Sands + Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership communities