



HORSHAM TEAM MINISTRY

**Agenda and Papers for the**

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting of the Parish of Horsham**

**To be held in St. Mary's Church, Causeway, Horsham**

**on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 11.00am**

These papers can also be read on our Church websites:

St. Mary's - [www.stmaryshorsham.org.uk](http://www.stmaryshorsham.org.uk)

St. Leonard's - [www.stleonardshorsham.org.uk](http://www.stleonardshorsham.org.uk)

Holy Trinity - [www.holytrinityhorsham.co.uk](http://www.holytrinityhorsham.co.uk)



## AGENDA

1. Welcome and opening worship
2. Apologies for absence
3. To receive and approve the Minutes of the Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – *see attached (A)*
4. Joint meeting with the Vestry for the election of **three** Church Wardens
5. Election of lay representatives to Horsham Deanery Synod
6. Election of lay representatives to the Parochial Church Council
7. To receive the Electoral Roll Report - *see attached (B)*
8. To receive a report on the proceedings of the PCC - *(C) see separate PCC Annual Report*
9. To receive the PCC Annual Report for 2023 and the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023, as adopted by the PCC on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 – *(D) see separate PCC Annual Report*
10. Appointment of Independent Examiner
11. To receive the Report on Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the churches in the Parish - *see attached (E)*
12. To receive a report on the proceedings of Horsham Deanery Synod – *see attached (F)*
13. To receive the Youth and Children's reports – *see attached – see attached (G)*
14. To receive the report from Parish Safeguarding Officer - *see attached (H)*
15. To receive the report from the Mother's Union (MU) – *see attached (I)*
16. To receive the report from St. Mary's Primary School - *see attached (J)*
17. Chairman's Comments
18. Any other business, of which notice must be given before the commencement the Meeting to the Chairman or Secretary.
19. Closing prayers

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## A) Draft Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held in St. Mary's Church on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 11am

**Present:** Revd Lisa Barnett (in the Chair); Nigel Stalley (Hon. Secretary) Greg Andrews (Hon. Treasurer); Peter Fruin (Churchwarden); 227 parishioners;

### 1) Opening Worship

The meeting took place during the 'Notices' at the 10am service.

### 2) Apologies

Were received from 5 parishioners.

### 3) Minutes

The minutes of the APCM held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 had been circulated. These were approved and signed by Lisa. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### 4) Joint meeting with the Vestry meeting to elect three Churchwardens

Valid nomination forms had been received for **Cath Hatton (St. Mary's), Peter Fruin (St. Mary's), Morag Davies (St. Mary's)** and they had completed the necessary declarations. They were declared elected as Churchwardens. Lisa thanked them for being willing to stand for a further year and thanked them for all they had done during the last year.

### 5) Election of Lay Representatives to the Deanery Synod

There were no new nominations received. We currently have 3 Lay representatives on Deanery Synod who are also on Diocesan Synod.

### 6) Election of Lay Representatives to the PCC

Paul Goodwin and Richard Pearson, whose nominations had been agreed by the St. Mary's Church AGM, and who had completed the necessary declarations, were duly elected.

### 7) Electoral Roll report *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Lisa thanked Keith Rayner for completing the report.

### 8) Proceedings of the PCC *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Lisa thanked Nigel Stalley for his report.

### 9) Audited Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Greg Andrews presented the PCC Annual Audited accounts.

Greg said that the outcome for 2022 had been strong with a surplus of £25k. This was due to an increase in Stewardship income and open collections along with an increase in Lettings income. There was a £50k legacy at St. Mary's which will be used for the South Aisle project, along with the £38k which was raised by an appeal to the congregation. Along with an increase in income we have also had an increase in our expenses during the year. However, we now have three months General Reserves of £100k.

Looking forward Greg drew our attention to the South Aisle project at St. Mary's and the other various fabric works planned across the Parish. The Bell repair at St. Mary's will be covered by our insurance.

Greg thanked all the volunteers who have supported him during the last year especially the Church treasurers, our Gift Aid officer, our Stewardship officers and our counting teams.

Lisa thanked Greg for all his work on our Parish finances during the last year.

**10) Appointment of the Independent Examiner**

On the proposal of Greg Andrews, seconded by Lisa Barnett, Galloways Accounting were elected unanimously to act as Independent Examiner for the Parish.

**11) Fabric Report** *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Lisa thanked Nick O’Riordan for the Parish Fabric report.

**12) Horsham Deanery Synod report** *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Brenda Large was thanked for her report.

**13) Youth Report** *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Lee Buck was thanked for his report.

**14) Safeguarding report** *(Copy attached in the Minute Book)*

Lisa thanked Linda Goodwin for her report and for the work carried out by the Safeguarding team.

**15) Chairman’ comments**

Lisa said that last year she was looking forward to interviewing for a Team Vicar and for having the next APCM on a Sunday, both of which have happened. She also reminded us that last year staff illness was also putting a lot of strain on the team. Thankfully we are now fully staffed, we have a new Team Vicar and many volunteers taking active roles across the Parish. She said that she is now enjoying her work, has moved on from survival mode and feels positive and excited about the future.

Peter Fruin paid thanks to Lisa and the clergy team (Sam, Pat, Bernard and Alan) for all that they do in the Parish and the wider community of Horsham, not just Sunday services, but during the week and with all the Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.

**20) Closing Hymn of the service**

**B) Electoral Roll Report 2024**

The numbers on the Electoral Roll compared with those reported at the APCM last year are as follows:

<b>Church</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>April 2023</b>
St Mary’s	421	425
Holy Trinity	104	104
St Leonard’s	26	29
<b>Horsham Parish</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>558</b>

The Electoral Roll is completely renewed every six years in accordance with Church Representation Rules. The next renewal will take place in 2025. In intervening years, a

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revision to the Roll takes place prior to the APCM when the Roll is brought up to date with changes since the previous revision. A revision is an opportunity for new members to join the Roll. The latest revision to the Roll takes place in the early part of April 2024.

I would like to thank Alistair Inglis-Taylor and Paula McCarthy, Electoral Roll Officers at St. Mary's and St. Leonard's, for their help in promoting the Roll in their respective churches and advising me of appropriate changes.

**Keith Rayner** *Parish Electoral Roll Officer*

## **C) Report on the proceedings of the Horsham PCC 2023 - 2024**

Please see separate PCC Annual Report (Trustees Report and Independent Examiner's Report)

## **D) Financial Statement**

Please see separate PCC Annual Report (Trustees Report and Independent Examiner's Report)

## **E) Fabric Report**

This report covers the outcomes and plans for St Mary's Church, Church Centre, Holy Trinity Church and St Leonard's Church.

Team composition: Dan Britton (Premises Manager to June 2023), and 5 volunteers: Ray Hambling, Paul Goodwin, Nick O'Riordan(chair), Nigel Stalley and Bob Whittaker. The team meets at 3 monthly intervals at which tasks are assigned appropriately and progressed.

The unplanned departure of Dan Britton, and the continuing need to coordinate maintenance matters in the absence of a Premises Manager, led to Laura Fletcher and Cath Hatton attending Fabric team meetings in the latter part of the year.

Normal maintenance activities have been carried out by the team and term contractors throughout the year largely without incident and only exceptional items are reported below.

### **1. St Mary's Church (QI architect Simon Dyson, next report was due October 2023)**

#### **1.1 Church Fabric**

Simon Dyson's workload was such that the Quinquennial inspection Quotations for the church could not be carried out until 2024.

Deterioration of the Horsham stone roof of the church, in the form of continual spalling and erosion of mortar, continues. A significant hole, temporarily patched last year, was fully repaired in October.

We were granted a Faculty for the reordering of the South Aisle in July and after a period of competitive tendering and assessment, Pilbeam Contractors Ltd were appointed. The works were carried out very satisfactorily and were completed within 6 weeks. The underfloor heating was fully commissioned on 30 November. 19 of the 20 pews removed as part of work have found good homes.

A separate Faculty application is in preparation for a kitchenette to be installed at the West end of the South Aisle; we anticipate that the kitchenette will be fully functional by mid 2024.

Quotations for the structural stabilisation of the Hoo Memorial canopied tomb have been obtained and we continue to seek funding for the works.

## 1.2 Heating controls

After a successful trial in the Bethany building and thence through our Ecochurch team initiative, we obtained a grant from HDC's Climate Change Fund for the installation of Nest learning thermostats across all buildings in the Parish. Thermostats have been installed and are working well in the church and Church Centre. Further installations in Holy Trinity and St Leonard's churches are planned in early 2024.

## 1.3 Churchyard

Again through the Ecochurch/Caring for God's Acre initiatives, we continue to meet with Horsham District Council (HDC) staff to improve enjoyment and use of the accessible spaces to the west of the churchyard area and to improve biodiversity.

## 2. Church Centre (QI architect Robin Nugent, next report due January 2026)

### 2.1 Change of Use

A small but still significant part of the motivation in the minor improvements to the Church Centre made in 2021 was to enable the St Mary's Pre-School to use the Manor Room weekdays and the Barn on three weekdays, termly. This required a Planning Change of Use and the process became stalled by the intervention of Natural England in requiring HDC to demonstrate water neutrality in non-domestic planning applications. We installed water

metering in the Causeway in July and within the Church Centre in December so that we can closely monitor usage in future. We have resubmitted the Change of Use application using the new data and we hope for progress to a conclusion of this matter in early 2024.

### 2.2 Sound Transmission

Working with our party-wall neighbours at 31 Causeway, we successfully installed a trial acoustic panel in 2022. This will enable a permanent installation to hopefully be installed in 2024, subject to agreement with HDC Conservation officers.

## 3. Holy Trinity Church (QI Architect David Swarbrick, next report due September 2025)

### 3.1 Church Fabric

The lead roof to the Vestry building was replaced using mastic asphalt in Autumn 2023.

There has been movement of the Vestry building leading to internal structural cracking which is being monitored. Original drawings of the church have been located and copied

from West Sussex County Record Office. These drawings show drainage details around the Vestry that will be checked to establish whether the movement is due to poor drainage/shrinkage of ground.

Progressive replacement of components of lighting and heating took place through the year and these will continue in 2024.

4. **St Leonard's Church** (QI Architect Simon Dyson, next report was due July 2023)

4.1 Church Fabric

A BT Wi-Fi hub was installed in October and this has enabled the installation of a smart lock at the west end door, and will enable Nest thermostats to be installed in early 2024. It is anticipated that these devices, which can be controlled remotely, will improve the operation of the church to the benefit of all.

4.2 Hall acoustics

Following the success of installations in St John's Broadbridge Heath, that team made a comprehensive installation of acoustic panels in the Hall in early December. The effect of these acoustic controls has been to reduce echo and reverberation to more acceptable levels in that part of the building.

4.3 Street frontages

We are investigating ways of improving the grassed areas, making them more attractive in a low maintenance and eco-friendly way.

5. **Energy use and carbon footprint**

In 2021 the PCC endorsed the General Synod's aim to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. A particular challenge has been that the Parish has eight fossil fuel-based heating systems across its five buildings, of which only one can be considered modern and efficient. Through the year all of our heating systems have required repair and careful attention, against a backdrop of changes to Faculty rules in mid 2022 that no longer permit a straightforward like-for-like replacement of fossil-fuel heating systems.

We renegotiated our electricity and gas supplies in July and September. We obtained favourable rates although, due to market forces, they have increased by a factor of between 2 and 3: with consequent impact on our energy bills.

We have taken on board the Net Zero Action Plan that the Diocese published in the Autumn and are hoping to interact positively with those with expertise that is growing, so that we can continue to drive downwards our carbon footprint.

The tables below show our recorded energy consumption since 2019, together with the associated carbon footprint:

		<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>St Mary's Church</b>	Gas (kWh)	262000	122000	168000	180000	196100 (69500 in Q4)
	Electricity (kWh)	16800	10500	10200	13000	13500
<b>Church Centre</b>	Gas (kWh)	100000	59000	50000	91200	59200
	Electricity (kWh)	10500	7500	7600	9200	8700
	Total Carbon footprint	73 tonnes	37.5 tonnes	44.5 tonnes	55.3 tonnes	52.3 tonnes

		<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Holy Trinity Church</b>	Gas (kWh)	40500	34700	39200	35000	50100
	Electricity (kWh)	5500	4310	4800	4400	4700
<b>Church Hall</b>	Gas (kWh)	2300	4300	1000	1125	3742
	Electricity (kWh)	8100	5600	6400	7500	6500
	Total Carbon footprint	11 tonnes	9.5 tonnes	10 tonnes	9.3 tonnes	12.3 tonnes

		<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>St Leonard's Church</b>	Gas (kWh)	30000	53000	28500	35000	38500
	Electricity (kWh)	10000	2900	3800	5025	4400
	Total Carbon footprint	8 tonnes	10.5 tonnes	6.5 tonnes	8.1 tonnes	8.6 tonnes



Through better, more mindful use of environmental controls and investment in more efficient heating and lighting systems, our aim is to reduce our carbon footprint to well below 2019 levels whilst increasing the level of use of our buildings.

The Fabric team is committed to drawing up a plan for the logical phasing out of as many of our fossil-fuel heating systems as possible over the next seven years.

**Nick O’Riordan** *Chair of the Parish Fabric Team*

## **F) Report on the proceedings of the Horsham Deanery Synod 2023/2024**

The Deanery Synod met twice in 2023. In June we had a report about the help that the local Churches were giving to the asylum seekers that were based at a local hotel. In October we had somebody from Horsham Matters who explained what Horsham Matters do and how we could help.

At the beginning of the year The Rev David Beal resigned as Rural Dean and The Rev’d Martin King was appointed as the new Rural Dean.

Brenda Large resigned as Horsham Deanery Secretary after 14 years in the post, at the moment we are without a Secretary.

**Val Burgess** *Horsham Deanery Treasurer*

## **G) Youth and Children’s Reports**

### **Youth Report**

2023 was a very busy year in our youth work. Our youth club continued to grow. We started a Boys group, Start to stir course, and ran our first Silver DofE. We saw a new set of young people join our youth system. We did our first young leaders’ course which 6 attended. In September Lee Buck (Parish Youth worker) also started his Certificate with CMS which is the first year of a university degree, in Theology, mission and ministry, with a focus on youth work. We had all our normal trips and camps. Which has seen steady numbers. We have also been able to strengthen our leadership team. We have also seen a larger number under 30’s joining our team.

### **The Core**

We have seen a larger amount of young people join us on Sunday Mornings, mainly year 6’s. We have explored the Bible and how it breaks down into 66 different books, letters, and poems. We have been bonding as a group and grown our leadership team.

### **TGI’s**

Our youth club has grown this year with a new group of year 7’s and more friends being invited. Since January we have had 25 – 30 each week and since September we have been getting 40 -50 each week. In the summer term we had a car wash, colour party, Zorb balls, Hunger games and

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more. We were able to have 2 sessions in which parents joined us. We have also been able to supply Dunelm with gifts for those at Crawley open house and Horsham Matters.

**Youth Alpha**

We have almost finished our Youth Alpha course. We have had 10 young people from Year 6 & 7 attend these sessions. They have asked for some type of youth group to continue afterwards, which has Christian content. We have enjoyed looking and exploring who Christ is and the importance he can have on our lives.

**Start to Stir**

We have never done a Start to stir course before. This was run with last year's year 6's before they started at TGI's. We learnt that we are spiritual beings, and we can find spirituality from world issues, music, the world, and our homes. This has been a good chance to build rapport with a few young people before they start in TGI's.

**Zoom Bible studies**

For a while we had online Zoom sessions for 15 minutes. We looked at Hebrews and explored into each chapter. We sometime had young people read and deliver a deeper explanation of what the chapter meant.

**Young leaders course**

At the beginning of the year. We did a young leaders course for Year 9+. They looked at Safeguarding, running session, using our strengths and weaknesses. This then allowed these 6 young people to support us at TGI's, Café Connect and at May Camp. The Young Leaders we have are invaluable to what we do and are trying to achieve in our youth system. We are hoping to bring up leaders who want to serve, give and do it well.

**Café Connect**

Café Connect is our youth service, which is held once a month at Holy trinity. We gather with young people from the parishes of St. Johns BBH and St. Margaret's Warnham, along with others who attend from other churches or youth clubs. We have had guest speakers, youth workers and vicars who have joined us in worship and preaching the Bible to the young people. We get 15 -20 young people from across different Churches. A big highlight for us was having the young people start to do the cooking and leading worship for us.

**Schools work**

Lee has been running a regular lunchtime club in Millais School for the year which has seen good numbers attending, some of whom have now leaked into our youth club. Lee has been going in to Tanbridge House School since September meeting those who attend Church and our TGI youth club. He has met with their friends and invited them to TGI and some have come along. Lee has also been doing assemblies and doing a few Easter sessions in St Mary's Primary School, getting to know the young people and the Year 6's better.

**May Camp**

We took 20 young people this year to May Camp. We joined 350 other young people in the Diocese at May Camp. We experienced God's presence via Worship, community, and seminars. We had young people who had never been before or experienced this style of worship. We also took some

who have attended previous years. Lee believes those who have attended before were able to go deeper into their beliefs and feel the Holy Spirit. For us this is a gateway and an invitation to Christ and Church.

**Mini May Camp**

We attended Mini May camp as well. This is organized by the Diocese with the idea of getting young people excited for May Camp and bringing those who have attended, back together for a reunion. We had a great time in Worship, playing football and enjoying some sweets.

**Duke Of Edinburgh**

We have finished our second year of DofE. We had 7 young people do their Bronze 6 who passed. We had 6 young people do and pass their Silver. This means we have taught them about reading maps, compasses, co-ordinates. As well as volunteering, doing something physical and learning a new skill. One of the girls went around Horsham litter picking. Another young person did their first aid certificate and then attended Brighton and Hove football games as a First Aider. It is great to be able to offer this opportunity for our young people.

**Satellites**

We attended Satellites in the Summer. This is a 5-day Christian camp with about 4,000 young people. We had seminars, mini seminars, worship, games and more. This was our first year here. We had a great time and really enjoyed the vibe there. The young people we took are very keen to go back and experience the presence of God again.

**October Retreat**

We took 20 young people to Edenbridge for a retreat. This is hugely inspired by the young people. They suggest the speakers, topics, worship leaders and activities. We had a moment during the worship where we were worshipping in a circle and the worship leader was in the middle. Lee couldn't explain the feeling or how it happened but believes most felt the same, which could only be described as the Holy Spirit working amongst us.

**Families and Children's work Report**

We have wonderful team of Children's Leaders working alongside Linda Baker our Families and Children's worker here in Horsham Parish and 2023 was a busy year for everyone. There were many and varied services, events and activities happening for the very young up to Primary school age children in our Parish.

**Messy Church**

Is held at Holy Trinity several times during the year continued to have a large group of children and adults attending the wonderful morning of crafts, varied activities, praise songs and lunch. Different themes around 'God's World'.

**Mum's and Toddlers**

This takes place at Holy Trinity and has remained very popular in 2023. The leadership is now shared between Libby Risby and Jan Walsh.

**Diddy Disciples**

This new group, started and planned for by Lucy Hodges with more wonderful Leaders supporting, is for under 5's, during Holy Trinity's morning service. In September it began with just a couple of children and then we had six really jam-packed sessions of Advent-themed Diddy Disciples in November and December, managing (in spite of illness) to keep to our regular pattern of second, third and fourth Sundays right the way up to the morning of Christmas Eve (with a celebration of the angels' visitation of the shepherds).

**Little Footprints'**

Is held at St Leonard's Church. Josie Collis our coordinator for St Leonard's Mum's and Toddlers stood back from this role and we would like to thank Josie so much for all her Ministry and giving of her time. Linda continued going there as Leader, however latterly, they have been very short of volunteers to run this group which is very popular.

**Open The Book Team**

This continues to bring alive the Bible stories for St Mary's School children which delights them as they watch and also act them out.

**First Communion at St Mary's**

We had a very special First Holy Communion celebration at St Mary's in church on Sunday May 8th, where 16 children from our Parish shared with the congregation what they had learnt and received Holy Communion for the first time.

**The Families and Children's Services**

These were twice monthly with afternoon tea at St Mary's at the beginning of 2023 and then they became, monthly as the attendance for this special service was just from a few families. Baptism requests have been increasing and so more Baptism visitors are being recruited to support this important Ministry.

**Sunday Club**

This year we have been continuing our journey through the life of Jesus using True Way Kids New Testament lessons. Sessions open with the Lord's Prayer, usually a chat about something we're grateful for that week & a mindful moment. Then we have the story, a related game and finally a craft. We've welcomed a few new families some of whom have become regular members. Numbers fluctuate but on average we have a dozen children.

**Wonderful Wednesdays**

Summer Activities in the Church Centre went very well. We held 2 drama and 2 arts and crafts mornings in the Barn with up to 25 children booked. Everyone seemed to enjoy making salt dough and clay shapes, playing with paint in various ways and creating scenes based on 'The Good Samaritan' and 'The Prodigal Son'. Great support from a team of volunteers.

**FUSED**

A new Worship Venture started, time for both children and young people to meet together during the 10am service in the Barn in the Church centre to worship together with activities including games

& cooking and had a wonderful time! in June for the first time led by Linda and Lee and again in November. Songs crafts, fun and worship!

### **St Mary's Pre-school & School**

Regular services continue. Many schools and other groups visited the church over the year especially in the summer term and Christmas periods.

### **Christmas Nativity Service**

About 25 children, both regular attendees and some new faces, presented the story of Christmas. Together we enjoyed making a craft, lighting candles and singing carols. There is a genuine sense of wonder during these special events.

*Lee Buck Parish Youth Worker*

*Linda Baker Families and Children's Worker*

*Cath Hatton Children and Youth Officer*

## **H) Safeguarding Report**

During the early part of 2023 a **Safer Recruitment Process for Volunteers** booklet, approved by the PCC in March 2023, was developed with significant amounts of assistance from the PCC Secretary, using Church of England templates. Along with the use of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook – 'Promoting A Safer Church', Horsham Team Ministry Safeguarding Policy (reviewed in May 2023) & the Diocesan 'Simple Quality Protects' assessment tool, Horsham Team Parish is contributing greatly to keeping our 3 churches, church & wider community safe. The Safer Recruitment Process for Volunteers booklet & its sections can be accessed via SharePoint in 'Parish Safeguarding' where the hyperlinks on the pages will work. All sections of this booklet are available for leaders to utilise when recruiting new volunteers to their team by adjusting the templates as required for particular roles.

**Team Parish Safeguarding Team** consisting of the PCC Safeguarding Officer, St Mary's Safeguarding Officer & St Mary's Safeguarding Training Officer, Holy Trinity's & St Leonard's Safeguarding Officers met three times (termly) during 2023. The team meetings ensure a consistent & updated approach especially in terms of training & Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks which are both key to ensuring we have safe & caring churches across the Team Parish. Supporting one another in the Team Parish Safeguarding team is also conducive to positive working arrangements & outcomes. During 2023 there were no **Safeguarding issues requiring referral on to the Diocese**.

The PCC Safeguarding Officer would like to thank the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, the Team Rector & Team Vicar for their advice & support in respect of Safeguarding matters. She would also like to thank the Team Parish Safeguarding team & the PCC Secretary for all their assistance/efforts as well as all those who have completed their training &/or obtained DBS clearance during 2023.

*Linda Goodwin Parish Safeguarding Officer*

## **I) Mother's Union (MU) Horsham Branch Report**

The worldwide Mothers' Union is dedicated to the promotion of conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children. In 2023 our programme included talks on some of the problems of the world we live in, such as modern-day slavery and county lines drug dealing, making us alert to the clues we might encounter. We also heard how we might support the detainees at Gatwick airport and last Christmas provided 500 pairs of socks for them. Our worship programme includes the annual shriving service and a monthly communion service at St Leonard's Church. Our two main social occasions, the garden party and the Christmas lunch are fundraising opportunities for Mothers' Union projects in our diocese and worldwide.

With Lisa's support we have been trying to raise our profile in the Parish and we are now mentioned more often in Church. Members have led intercessions at all age services and helped children with craft work during the service. Although many individual members already serve in several different areas, we are considering how we might serve the Parish in other ways as a group.

We have enrolled five new members during the year but sadly have also lost three long-standing members. Our numbers now stand at 35.

**Karen Ind**



## **J) St. Mary's Primary School Report**

It has been a year of great change at St Mary's Primary School, with the departure of Alex Bird last Christmas followed by a term of interim Headteacher Brian Ball, and then my appointment last summer term. This has inevitably been a challenge, but also presented exciting opportunities for change and development. Staff turnover has been high and pupil numbers declining across Horsham due to a falling birth rate predicted to last for the next 5 years, which has a significant impact on the school budget. We are therefore more grateful than ever for the continued support of the church in providing for our pupils. It has been a pleasure getting to know the staff and children of St Mary's school, who have risen impressively to the challenges this year has brought and continue to work incredibly hard to move things forward.

### **School Development**

School governors have this year reviewed the school's long-term vision, direction and values, implementing a new 5-year strategic plan. Our key priorities are:

1. Improve attainment and progress in all subjects across the school.
2. Develop a curriculum that meets the educational needs of all pupils and prepares them for future success.
3. Improve workforce effectiveness.
4. Strengthen church and community partnerships in the school, for the benefit of pupils and the wider community.
5. Modernise the school's image and marketing to ensure it remains appealing to the changing demographic.
6. Improve the environmental sustainability of the school and encourage sustainable behaviours in stakeholders.

Our new school motto, inspired by Matthew 5:16, is 'Let your Light Shine,' supported by our school values: Courage, Hope, Compassion, Love, Respect and Joy.

### **Curriculum and Outcomes**

With the support of the local authority, we identified an immediate need to improve the school in a number of areas last year - most significantly in phonics, the structure of the wider curriculum and attainment in writing. This September, a new phonics scheme was introduced with training for all staff, as well as a new English curriculum. This required the purchase of over £10K of new books, which was achieved with the financial and training support of Springhill English Hub, who we continue to work with to raise standards. The wider curriculum is a work in progress, which we are developing with support from local advisors to ensure it meets current OfSTED expectations and is representative of our local demographic.

### **Church and community**

At the heart of our work this year is responding to our changing demographic, whilst maintaining the school's unique character and Christian distinctiveness. We have had a dramatic increase in the number of international pupils, including those of different faiths and those who may speak little or no English. Some of our pupils are asylum seekers and refugees, who need a high level of pastoral support as well. With the help of fundraising, training and volunteer support, we are working in partnership with various services to meet their needs.

Responding to the needs of the parent community, we are also in the process of opening wraparound childcare. Breakfast Club has been open now since September and After School Club will open after Easter.

We have been working hard to re-establish community links and events that had weakened post-COVID. Taking part in Horsham Children's Parade, the Church Flower Festival, and singing in local retirement homes have been particular highlights. We are especially grateful to the church for allowing us to use their facilities for staff training on several occasions, and have been pleased to be able to open up these training courses to church and preschool staff, who have attended.

### **Premises**

Significant internal alterations are underway to improve the way we use our school buildings. We have moved to mobile technology for computing, freeing up the IT suite for wraparound childcare, and are planning a library restock and refurbishment thanks to a significant anonymous donation for this purpose. Recent storm damage has necessitated structural repairs to the rear of the building, for which we have applied to the diocese for funding, and we look forward to the resurfacing of our uneven paving later this year, funded by a diocese grant.

**Emma McLaughlin** *Headteacher*