St. Michael's, Verwood
& All Saints, Three Legged Cross

PARISH OF VERWOOD

"To Know Jesus Christ and to make Him Known"

GROUPS INFORMATION & ANNUAL REPORTS 2024

Children's Work

We have welcomed our regular families to the family service on a Sunday morning at 10am although the numbers have remained small with the hope to always increase. Some weeks we have seen new children with their families, but these have not been regular at the moment.

Our family service on the third Sunday of the month invites the choir from Trinity First School who attend with their families. The children have also enjoyed the puppets at these services.

Deborah, Michael, and Marina have visited the local first and middle schools regularly, delivering assemblies to the children.

Similarly to previous years, we have welcomed families into the church through Baptisms; retention after the baptism is lower than we would hope but we continue to encourage this.

We held a summer party in July 2024 and a light party in October 2024 – these were hugely successful events. Once again, these were free events for families but with the help of the local community, businesses, and services we were able to keep to a minimal budget and also raise some money in the meantime.

Although numbers remain small in church on a Sunday morning at the moment, we find it positive that relationships with families are developing in strength and the feedback is immensely encouraging during our other events.

Marina

Choir

Our numbers have remained relatively stable over the year but as always we are keen to find new members of any voice, but especially men! We are finding that we are more limited with our choices of music because of the imbalance of numbers so please think carefully if you know anyone! The continuing support and encouragement from the church congregation is much appreciated.

As usual we have helped to lead the worship Sunday by Sunday and we meet regularly on Friday afternoons for rehearsals. We joined with Verwood Concert Brass to sing at the Remembrance Service. and have enjoyed preparing for the special services in Holy Week and Easter, Advent and Christmas. This year, we sang at several weddings, including Katie Shier's, and sadly at funerals for Ruby Medcalfe, Chris Gibbons, Doreen Webb, and Rodney James. We will sing Faure's Requiem on Palm Sunday.

The Choir have also been busy outside of Church services, amongst other events singing at the Wedding Festival and the Christmas Market coffee morning which was very well received.

As in previous years, the Choir decided not to send cards to each other at Christmas, and instead we donated £130 towards the local Dementia Association and MacMillan Caring Locally. We enjoy social occasions too, including celebrating birthdays and an annual barbeque.

If anyone is interested in joining the Choir aged 7 and above (no upper age limit!) please contact Ann or any member for details and times of practices.

Music

I would like to thank all those who contribute in any way to the music at St Michael's. We have a wealth of talent and commitment from so many people, and special thanks must go to Vanessa playing the organ and to Sue who organises players for Together at Six. We are fairly unique as a Parish Church with our thriving Choir and other musicians who contribute in many ways. Thank you too for the good humour, endless patience, adaptability and commitment from you all!

Ann Mayo

Flower Guild

The flower guild's year followed the usual pattern of events throughout the seasons:

Several ladies helped make Mothering Sunday posies to distribute to the congregation. Also, a basket of flowers is placed on the altar for mother church.

On Maundy Thursday we erected an altar of repose, to be used throughout the nightly vigil, and on Holy Saturday we decorated the church with fresh flowers to celebrate Easter Day.

In June extra flowers were displayed and the flower arch placed on the chancel screen for the wedding festival.

We had a lovely display in Autumn colours for the Harvest Festival in October, and we also placed silk poppies in our arrangements for remembrance Sunday.

Finally, the church was decorated for Christmas Day and looked very festive.

We are a small team of ladies who use their time and expertise, and I thank them all. You would be very welcome to join us.

Occasionally, we are requested to arrange flowers in memory of a loved one, and we are most happy to do so.

Jacqui Mellett 01202 829169

Friday Cleaning Club

We meet each week during the year to keep the church and meeting room clean and tidy. This is usually a not too difficult, although essential, job and we do appreciate it when, for instance, users of the kitchen have tidied up after themselves and emptied the bins! We normally finish in good time to allow for coffee and a chat with the Flower and Brass Guild, who also come in on Friday mornings to prepare for the Sunday services.

Carol Sampson

Hospitality Group

The Hospitality Group has had another busy and successful year. Our list of helpers has been well used, and my sincere thanks go to everyone who has helped in any way. Without all our volunteers and the huge amount of cakes and other goodies they provide, as well as the help they give us during our events, we would not be able to function. You are all amazing!!

During the year, we celebrated David Mankin's "21st" birthday (he is a leap year baby) with wine and cheese after the Sunday service. We celebrated Passover on 26th March with a very successful meal that was spiritually led by Duncan Moss and enjoyed by over 50 people.

On 29th June we held a really lovely Wedding Festival in church with 32 dresses and 32 Christening gowns. Ann Mayo provided some lovely music and the catering team and cake makers excelled themselves. My thanks to everyone who helped set up and take down too.

Jean and Pete Steele held a BBQ in their garden in July, which was well attended and enjoyed by all. In August we held our usual Cream Tea, with stalls, a raffle and the cake stall; so many people came and stayed all afternoon chatting. In September Jean and Pete held another cream tea in their garden, with a hat display. The weather was kind and everyone had fun.

In October, we held the Harvest Supper, when 46 people enjoyed a roast dinner, along with table quizzes. In November, Brian and Lesley Cox hosted one of their famous Quingo evenings , with a fish and chip supper. Over 40 people attended this really enjoyable event.

Towards the end of November Ann Mayo and Carol Sampson held their amazing annual Christmas Market. Choirs came and sang, the stalls did a roaring trade and we all had such a lovely time. In December, we held another Carols in the Car Park, which was actually in the Parish Centre because of the weather. We kept warm with mulled wine and mince pies whilst we enjoyed a really lovely Carols service led by Deborah.

Jean and Pete hosted three Christmas meals at their house during December. During the year, the Puppets Group held 3 coffee mornings, which were great fun and the puppets made an appearance at some of them.

The point of our hospitality group is not just to raise money for our church, but to provide a rich and varied programme for everyone's enjoyment and to provide a friendly surrounding where anyone can come and share in the fellowship there. However, this year we have all managed to raise over £5,000 at the same time.

It is vital that anyone who wants to hold a function comes to me in the first place to check availability of dates. This is to make sure that we don't run too many events too close together, ending in too few people attending.

Ro Green

L.I.F.T. Ladies in Faith Together

LIFT is an outreach group for any ladies wishing to socialise, have fun, find friendships and find their faith. We usually meet on the 1st Friday of the month. Unfortunately, due to other commitments we have been unable to meet in 2024.

All Ladies are welcome to come and join in any of the events even if you only fancy coming along to 1 or 2 evenings in the year. If you feel that you would like to join our group or receive emails detailing events coming up please contact me on **07763 148442** or email me at **debbiecaddy@yahoo.co.uk.**

Debbie Caddy

Noah's Ark Puppets

The format for Puppets has changed since September 2024. In an effort to encourage children to come to Church more regularly the Trinity Choir group now come every 3rd Sunday to sing and bring their brothers and sisters. The puppets are still available, and perform for the Mother and Toddler group when needed. We did host a very successful coffee morning on Saturday 13th July raising £355 for church.

On 19th December, we performed another show at the Mother and Toddler Christmas party. On Saturday 8th January we performed songs at our most successful coffee morning ever, raising £400 for church funds – it was very well attended, and we have been asked to repeat this in the not too distant future, using the puppets with lots of popular songs.

J Baxendale

Servers

The faithful few have continued to serve each Sunday and have also managed to cover other services when required. Due to lack of numbers, we have had to stop having acolytes and have combined the jobs of MC and Crucifer, but it is still difficult to cover every service.

If you think you can help, please speak to any of the Servers or Deborah for more information.

Marion Mouland

Sunday Lunches

A group of seven of us provide a full 2-course Sunday roast lunch with wine, followed by coffee, once a month in the Parish Centre. We usually cater for about 64 senior citizens who would not otherwise have company on a Sunday. They are referred to us by other agencies as well, so are not all church members. We do, however, have a waiting list, and unfortunately are unable to provide transport for the attendees.

We are greatly helped by volunteers, who come to help clear and wash up for us to reduce our workload, and we thank them most sincerely for this.

Catherine Gibson 01202 826880