



**BROCKENHURST**  
**PARISH CHURCHES**  
*Sharing the love and life of Jesus*

St. Nicholas' with St. Saviour's

# REVIEW OF 2024

**ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**

**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**7:30pm**

**St Saviour's Church, Wilverley Road**

[www.brockenhurstchurch.com](http://www.brockenhurstchurch.com)

## **THE PARISH OF BROCKENHURST**

### **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.30pm at Brockenhurst Church Hall**

Simon welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer.

48 church members attended

Apologies were received from Anne and Mike Dow, Peter and Vicky Wales, Anne and Keith Nolan, Karolien van der Vorm, Jan Campbell, Fred Batty, Paul Pearse, Sue and Jeremy Moss, Sarah Foulger, Mary Richardson, Sue Griffiths.

#### **Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

##### **1. Election of Churchwardens**

Joanna Plummer - proposed Peter Lay, seconded Wendy Lay

Rosalind Waight - proposed Maureen Philips, seconded Ann Hessey

No other nominations having been received, both candidates were elected unanimously. Simon thanked Jo and Lindy for offering their time and talents to this considerable role. Jeremy Moss is retiring as Churchwarden having served four years, during which time he has been a huge support to Simon and has done a considerable amount of work for the church, much of which has been demanding and is not seen. A presentation will be made to him at one of the services.

#### **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

##### **1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2023 were approved. No matters arising. SN to sign.

##### **2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising; no actions required as a result of this meeting.

##### **3. Vicar's Report**

Simon's Report is on page 7 of the Review of 2023 which has been previously circulated. He explained that 2023 was the 'Year of Sharing our Faith' - a time to explore and put into practice how we might better communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ to the wider community we are called to serve. He listed the many ways in which we have reached out and the challenges and successes involved. This has been in addition to the normal pattern of services, weddings, funerals, baptisms, community service, pastoral visits, building maintenance etc. None of this would have been possible without the generous commitment of so many people in the various teams, the office and the PCC, all of whom he thanked individually, including Jeremy and Jo who have been with him every step of the way. Not least of course he thanked our wonderful congregation for being there. Our biggest challenge is how to grow our church and engage with the wider community which will be our focus in the

coming year. The PCC is exploring the sustainable use of our buildings and how we see God trying to enter into the life of the community around us. We have a workshop and a service planned with speakers on the subject of 'welcome' and an Away Day on 12<sup>th</sup> October 'Reflecting on our Future' to which it is hoped as many of you as possible can attend.

#### **4. Wardens' Report**

Jo and Jeremy's Report covers the wide range of activities and events that have been organised and acknowledges the strength of the team that is Brockenhurst with an eclectic mix of volunteers who selflessly give their time and energy to provide a great foundation and support to everything we aim to achieve. We have two ordinands: Mel and (until May) Luke. Mel works in the three benefice church schools and is establishing links with the families in these communities, as well as training for ministry. Luke has been a wonderful presence here and we will be sorry to see him leave us but wish him every success in his future work following ordination. Stephen has joined us as curate and is becoming well known, especially for his guitar playing. Simon, as Area Dean, has a huge workload providing wise guidance and support to clergy and PCCs in the Lyndhurst Deanery, as well as serving the benefice of Brockenhurst, Boldre and South Baddesley, particularly during Boldre's interregnum. Our thanks go to him for all he does and to all those 'retired' clergy and lay ministers who give so much of their time and support and encourage him so ably. Simon, Jo and Jeremy meet regularly to discuss ideas and issues. He thanked them for their considerable help and trust and for the many things they do that are often unseen.

Bill Munt expressed thanks to Jeremy for all his work and expertise in establishing our AV system and his IT skills in general.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report**

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023, with the Independent Examiner's Report to Brockenhurst PCC, is set out in a separate document accompanying this Review of 2023. These have been approved by the PCC and our Independent Examiner. No questions.

Peter Lay explained that this will now go to the Charity commission and is used to demonstrate what we give for public benefit. He thanked everyone who has given so generously through stewardship and said that our funds are reasonably healthy although there is a risk of our funds drying out in the future as our congregation ages.

Simon thanked Peter Lay on everyone's behalf for the mammoth amount of work that has gone into preparing these reports and indeed his reports to the PCC every month which also take much of his time. Simon said he has never known a Treasurer who has consistently produced such clear and regular reports. Applause. Thanks also go to Wendy for "losing this time with her husband".

#### **6. Electoral Roll Report**

Alan Wright will now hand over the job of Electoral Roll Officer to Jeremy Moss. Simon expressed our sincere gratitude to Alan for managing this so efficiently for the past ten years and wished him a well-earned rest. Applause. There are 198 on the Electoral Roll for the ecclesiastical parish as at 24th April 2024 : 170 resident and 28 non-resident. This is a lower figure than the last few years which is why we have to engage in growing our church.

## 7. Other Reports

Reports from our many wonderful teams are on pages 10-24 of the Review. Simon thanked the team members - more than 100, all of whom are volunteers - for the caring and commitment they represent in the life of our church. The breadth of all they do is amazing.

He thanked the team leaders for the work they put into running their teams and for writing their reports: Karina Curson, Safeguarding Officer; Tim Dodwell, Fabric & Grounds Team; Pauline Brown, Church Music; Jo Plummer, Children & Young People; Mel Osborne, Children and Families Worker; John Pearson, Lyndhurst Deanery & Diocesan Synods; Liz Dodwell, Mission Team; Lindy Waight, Creative Prayer; Diane Webster, Home Groups; Lesley Munt, Wedding Preparation; Joyce Kolaczowski, Pastoral Care - extremely busy, covering a wide range of activities and needs with many volunteer helpers; Martin Fletcher, Church Hall and Kitchen; Keith Nolan, Social Team - a small team, vital for events and outreach; Camilla Pearse, Eco Church; Ros Dennison, St Nicholas' Guardians; Jane Thatcher and Sally Hoy, Flower Guild; Lindy Waight, Sanctuary Guild; Lesley Munt, Wednesday Lunches - been going since 1988; Lesley Munt, Brockenhurst Mothers' Union.

John Pearson was thanked for his work in organising the Prayer Ministry Team.

Prayer can be sought by anyone for their own situation or for anyone known to them or for a non-specific prayer of blessing. He would welcome more people to join the team and pray with others. Situations for prayer can also be sent to

[prayer@brockenhurstchurch.com](mailto:prayer@brockenhurstchurch.com) and treated in confidence. If you are interested in joining the team, please speak to John or Simon. Training would be given.

Simon's report on the Worship Team highlights the broad scope of our worship; his gratitude to our worshipping community for 'being there' and embracing new technology and new forms of worship. Thanks also particularly go to Diane, Alan, Mary, John, Stephen, Tony and Mel in giving so much of their time and talents in preparing and leading our worship.

## 8. Election of PCC Members - the following are standing for election:

**Martin Fletcher** (second term) proposed Elizabeth Dodwell, seconded Jean Taylor.

**Jane Forrest** (second term) proposed Jan Campbell, seconded Esther Browne.

**Jeremy Moss** (first term) proposed John Pearson, seconded Joanna Plummer.

All of the above were approved by the meeting and Simon thanked them for being willing to serve.

**Janet McDonald** and **Bob Coombs** are retiring. Simon thanked them for their valued contribution to the work of the PCC and for what they both continue to do for our community. Applause.

## 9. Appointment of the Independent Examiner

Sadly, Lewis Ball who has given his time free of charge as our independent examiner for the past 4 years, passed away in 2023. He has been a great support to our church and has been very much involved in village life. Peter Lay proposed Brenda

Peers-Ross is appointed independent examiner, seconded Maureen Philips. All in favour.

## **10. Date of next APCM**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025

## **12. Open Forum**

There are a few people each year we like to thank for the part they have played in our church life by presenting a small gift :-

**Luke Chambers** our caretaker - for being so helpful and doing a huge amount of work for us with grace and love.

**Lyndsey Hoyle** our Parish Magazine editor - for building a team to help make the magazine more relevant to our community and bringing it together with our Christian voice.

**Mike Kelly** - one of our pianists at St Saviour's - for all the time he gives to leading us in our worship.

**Pauline Brown** - our other pianist at St Saviour's - for all she is doing to try to maintain the tradition of music in our churches.

**Jeremy Moss** - He is stepping down as a churchwarden but remains on the PCC. He has given so much of his time and expertise in setting up and running our AV system at St Saviour's.

**Peter Lay** - our much-valued Treasurer - for his many hours of diligent work and for always answering questions promptly and understandingly. He is an incredible help to Simon and us all ... and has been doing this for more years than he cares to count!

**Tony Foulger** - our Sacristan and a Licensed Lay Minister - for faithfully looking after St Nicholas' and being a voice in that community. He also has been leading services at South Baddesley.

**Rosalind Dennison** - for leading Brockcare while Joyce has been away.

**John Purkess** - for his incredible energy in producing eleven of his famous history books 'By-gone Brockenhurst' and aiming for up to volume 15 next year. He is generously giving all proceeds after printing costs to our Brockenhurst churches.

**Lesley Munt** our Rota Queen - for her reliability in managing a huge team.

**Gill Coombs** - for her organisational skills and quietly getting on with things.

**AOB** SN wished to thank all who have been involved in organising and attending the outreach events. These have been very successful and have brought people together with joy and a community spirit. They are definitely worth doing again and will be advertised in the village diary which is in the process of being produced by a newly formed Village Events Committee. We have MAF in May bringing an aircraft and a flight simulator; an Arts Festival in Oct/Nov with a son et lumiere and concerts booked - all of which use our buildings and grounds and engage with the wider community.

The new resin path at St Nicholas' has received favourable comments, especially the inlaid plaques with passages from scripture which gave us an opportunity to be creative. The cost was covered by generous donations from the congregation to whom our sincere thanks go.

Cynthia Wilson wished to thank Maria our local funeral director who is quiet and compassionate in all she does. She said "God has spoken to this parish over the six

years we have been meeting under Simon's leadership." She urged people to join in morning prayer.

Simon thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting with The Grace.

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## **VICAR'S REPORT**

That Was The Year That Was – and wasn't it a full one considering our theme for the year was one of reflection and listening!

In January there was a wonderful Clergy Conference at High Leigh in Hertfordshire with the excellent keynote speaker Bsp Graham Tomlin – my first clergy conference since being in the Diocese of Winchester. We also welcomed the new Bishop of Winchester to the diocese – Bishop Philip.

In February we began our Lent series of sermons on the seven deadly sins and how to overcome them and heard from five members of our congregation on how they knew that Jesus loved them.

In March our congregations responded to an emergency appeal from Rwanda following a fire in the market place of the UN refugee camp by raising nearly £5000 to help recapitalize those who had lost so much.

In April Jeremy stood down after a hard-working term of being Churchwarden and Lindy stood up. A new more easily accessible pathway, including quotes from scripture, was completed at St Nicholas'.

In May we had Colin Bennett from Moorlands Bible College preach and led a workshop on the theme of welcome. Our Ordinand, Luke, also left us for his new Title Parish in the North of the Diocese – he's doing very well there...

In June we received a new Ordinand on short-term placement – Serena from Hythe, who was surprised by all that goes on in Brockenhurst.

In August the Benefice wide team went away on an excellently led team building day that helped us begin to think more deeply about how we might better work together. The Archdeacon of Bournemouth also came and joined us for our Sunday services. The families of the wider community enjoyed some wonderful Summer Fun events led by Mel and her team.

In September I went on the annual school year 6 residential to Swanage and joined in with lots of outdoor pursuit activities – a wonderful way of building deeper relationships with both the staff and pupils.

In October we had a very well attended Parish Away Day at Beaulieu where we began to think and pray about what God might want our priorities for the future to be. We were also joined by the Archbishop of Canterbury (just before he resigned – although I'm not suggesting the two events were connected) at our Prayer Hub and were given a new bishop of Southampton – Bishop Rhiannon.

In November we had a Spirituality of Ageing Workshop, an amazing MU Christmas Tree Festival (with 41 village organisations taking part), and Bishop Geoff came to join us for our Sunday services.

In December we learned the wonderful news that we had been awarded the gold Eco Church award by A Rocha and Christmas went ahead with a very well attended range of services including two new ones – A Blue Christmas and Christmas Songs down the pub.

Throughout the year the PCC has been working to explore how we best deal with issues such as having two church buildings and the challenge of delivering quality worship across a range of 'traditions'.

This has all happened in addition to the more normal pattern of services, weddings, funerals, baptisms, community service, pastoral visits, building maintenance etc. that goes on – none of it would have happened without God's grace and the hard and generous work of so many of you – as ever, it seems unfair to focus on some for a particular 'thank you'. However, that is now what I would like to do.

Joyce and her Brockcare team (of which so many of you are apart) have been amazing. Thank you for your caring, loving and serving of others that has helped us to remain a community. So too have the Wednesday Lunch Club teams and the Holidays at Home Team.

Camilla and her team in their Eco work – that gold award really was a highlight.

So much work behind the scenes organising us all, is down to Clare, Lesley, Kelly and Mary in the church office – along with all the other volunteers that support them. Thank you for being the 'glue' that's kept us all going in the same direction.

Mike and Pauline (and the band) in their support and leadership of our music and worship.

Our expanding worship team (Diane, John, Mary, Mel, Stephen and Sandra have been such supportive and wise colleagues – thank you for your patient guidance and willingness to be involved where and when you can.

The PCC and associated teams have been a joy to work with on a wide range of challenges – thank you all for your commitment, patience and generous giving of your time and talents.

And finally thank you to three very hardworking, caring, wise, and generous Churchwardens. Jo, Lindy and Jeremy have been with me every step of the way through different parts of this year, and I know that I couldn't have faced the various challenges that came up without them. Thank you so much for being there.

As well saying 'thank you' to those who give so much we have also needed to say 'goodbye' to some dear friends who have given much to the life of the church in Brockenhurst – of particular note, in my time here, this year marked a saying farewell

to Mike Matthews, Andrew Parrish and Tony Foulger – may they rest in peace and rise in glory!

So, That Was the Year that Was, may this coming one be just as fruitful as we seek to discern what God wants us to be and do next.

*Revd Simon Newham, Vicar*

## **CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT**

What another busy year. Sometimes (especially in the colder, winter months) it is good to look back and reflect upon all that has happened.

Reading back over last year's report we were still talking about Covid and its long-term impact. Hopefully everyone's recollection of those times is now a distant memory and we can look forward.

As wardens we are very aware of the strength of the team that is Brockenhurst Church. We are blessed by an eclectic mix of volunteers who selflessly give up their time and energy, often unseen. They provide such a great foundation and support. There's a team in the office, led by Clare and Kelly, with an amazing squad of volunteers who ensure that the services run smoothly, the community is welcomed, the rotas are seamless, the divergent needs of the church family are met, and the music plays! A huge thank you to them and all who support our church family. We've said some goodbyes this year. In May we bid Luke, Erica and family a very fond farewell. They moved to Odiham, as a family, for Luke to continue his training there (following his ordination). He was presented with a variety of very thoughtful gifts from hand embroidered personalised stoles to a family membership of the hawk conservancy. He gave us packets of hand selected seeds, reminding us of the need for us to sow our seeds into the community.

We also said a very fond goodbye to Tony Foulger who had been a lay minister and faithful servant of Brockenhurst especially St Nicholas Church.

We welcomed Sandra Hall to our team, she has recently retired and is a very welcome addition. Mel (our ordinand and Child and Family Support Worker) continues to work in the three benefice Church Schools (one day a week each) and to establish links with the families in the communities – as well as train for ministry.

Simon continues his tremendous work as Area Dean, providing wise guidance and support to Clergy and PCCs. This, as well as being in charge of the benefice, keeps him fully occupied! As a church, we would like to say a huge thank you to all of those 'retired' clergy and lay ministers, as well as office staff and volunteers who, in addition to the regular weekly Sunday services (at both churches); Thursday communion at St Saviour's; nightly and daily prayer services; weddings; funerals; christenings and Compline services have stepped in to support Simon over the last year.

Over the past year we have been host to a wide variety of events and visitors, all serving our local community. Some of these, such as CAMEO and Wednesday lunches, are regular – and well supported, although volunteers are always needed. Some are seasonal, such as the amazing Holidays@Home, set in Paris, complete with dancing the can-can, games and fun; Harvest Quiz with Fish and Chip supper; Newcomers (to the village) Party and the wonderful Christmas Dinner. Our visitors have included two bishops, Bishop Philip, the Bishop of Winchester and the Archbishop of Canterbury, just before he resigned from the role. Both men were



really interesting and interested in us. Bishop Philip submitted to being publicly questioned by Simon and brought his dog, as well as his wife Ruth. We look forward to meeting our third Bishop (watch this space) soon.

This year has been a time of thought and contemplation. We still face the challenges of running and maintaining two listed buildings, with grounds, and this has continued to challenge our amazing site and grounds teams (as well as our budget). Mostly run by volunteers they have ensured that the churches remain safe, and we remain dry and warm(ish). As the buildings continue to age and the weather continues to challenge us, so it becomes more important for us to pray for and consider the longer-term solutions.

Accordingly an awayday to Beaulieu was arranged for October 2024 so that the ideas referred to in our last report ("a plan [for] 'our' church for the next 10 years, to create a vision for the whole church. A survey of members yielded some great thoughts and are a good base for discussion") could be carefully and sensitively discussed and then prayed about. A follow up meeting was held at the very beginning of March and we look forward to sharing those actions in the next report.

Finally we want to end with a note of gratitude, Jeremy Moss stepped down last April as a warden, huge thanks to him for all his hard work, his care, his concern and his wisdom. Lindy joined the team and is a co-author of this report, so I just want to say welcome and thank you for your diligence and all that you have added to the team this year. It's been an interesting one! Thank you.

*Lindy Waight and Jo Plummer, Church Wardens*

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 with the Independent Examiner's Report to Brockenhurst PCC is in a separate document accompanying this review of 2024.

*Peter Lay, Treasurer*

### **STRATEGY GROUP (10-15 year plan)**

This is an ongoing activity as we, as a church, move towards a tipping point where the resources required and costs of maintaining the church activities & buildings cannot be covered by the church members.

A professional report was commissioned by the PCC in 2024 to look at options for the site of St Saviour's in the centre of Brockenhurst. This report is currently being evaluated with experts from the diocese of Winchester. This evaluation is on-going and it is likely to be a number of years before a detailed action plan is produced for further consideration by the PCC.

*Report by Paul Pearse*

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK**

This report needs to be read in conjunction with Mel Osborne's exciting report as there is an element of crossover.

### **Brockenhurst C of E Primary School:**

Simon continues to deliver occasional assemblies, but most Wednesdays Mel delivers these. The three foundation governors (Vicky Wales – Chair of Governors, Simon and myself) continue to visit the school (and pre-school) regularly, not only in an official capacity but also as readers/helpers/volunteers. Several other members of the congregation volunteer on a regular basis: reading, gardening, accompanying trips, supporting Mel's initiatives (including very welcome cake making) and as midday lunch supervisors.

In September Mel, Sandra Hall and Jo took on the organisation of the Little Flames services, we continue to be supported by the Mother's Union. Following discussions with the new team and the school it was agreed that these services would now be termly. They follow a similar pattern to before, for example at Christmas we 'followed the star' all over church, then used the stars to decorate our own Nativity scenes. The next Little Flames services will be on March 21<sup>st</sup> and Sandra will be leading the team. We will be thinking about Easter. The final, end of the summer term one, will be led by Mel. It is warmly welcomed by the school and they are involved in the collaboration process.

### **Brockenhurst College Christian Union:**

The college is very supportive of this initiative. Unfortunately it is now just available for 40 minutes at lunch time instead of the original 90 enrichment session. This has inevitably curtailed what we can do in the time however it is exciting to see God working in the small spaces. There are now 4 or 5 regular attendees. We've answered big and small questions, been open to the varying needs of the group and eaten plenty of 'sugar'! This term we are looking at St Paul's letter to the Galatians, which has led to some interesting discussions. I feel that I am now well recognised by staff in college and they are grateful for the chocolate/cake biscuits (that are left over from the sessions!)

### **Families and young people in church:**

There are currently none who attend regularly, please pray. There is a plan for a new family/young people initiative, which is very much in its infancy.

The main concerns remain all those unchurched children and young people in our village and how we reach them.

Please continue to pray for all our children and young people.

*Report by Jo Plummer*

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' WORK**



I continue to work across the Parish in three schools, whilst engaging with the community through ad hoc church based events. Within each of the schools, I work with groups of children who act as 'worship ambassadors' and these groups have enabled child led teaching and decision making. The schools are also using myself as a resource to deepen their worship, curriculum learning and spiritual engagement.



## School Work

**Brockenhurst:** weekly times of worship/assemblies are fostering a positive time of spiritual exploration. Worship Ambassadors are enjoying participating and planning these sessions and offering creative ideas. Intergenerational work continues with Biblical storytelling at Woodpeckers, where pre-schoolers visit the residents. We have hosted at church a number of class visits to explore Easter, the church and offer a pretend café, for Year R to develop their manners and independence. Karina and I have now run sessions of Godly Play with the whole school. Christian festivals have been joyous occasions within the church, bringing families, church and school together.

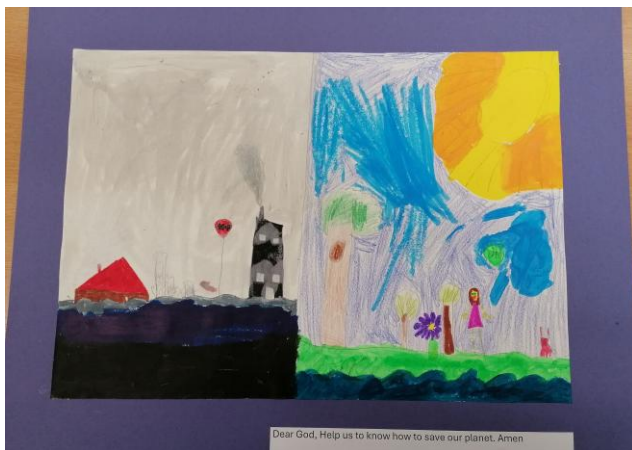
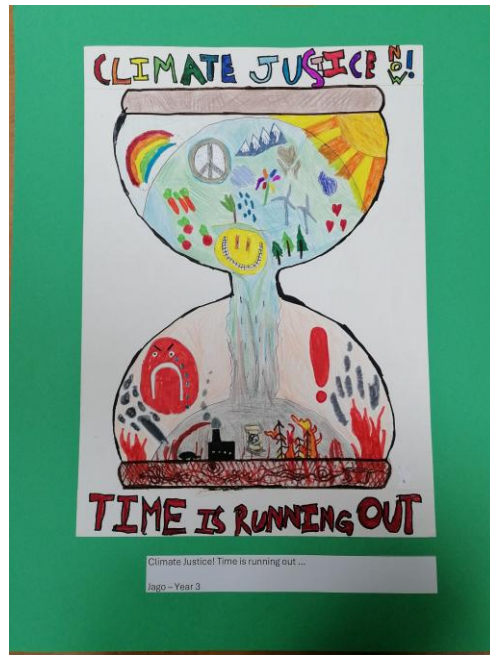
**William Gilpin:** undertook community based projects by raising money for Toilet Twinning through cake and art sales, successfully twinning all four toilet areas. Child led worship has focused on loving our neighbours by understanding how others live, concerns for water sanitation and environmental issues. I also support the choir with an afterschool craft club and work pastorally with children with complex needs. The Church School Vision group successfully helped prepare Harvest, Easter and Christmas events.

**South Baddesley:** The Worship Ambassadors have helped run Godly Play at lunchtimes and run special times of worship, highlighting creation care at the Harvest Festival and explaining the Easter story. They also created a beautiful 'stained glass' picture for Pentecost and have been developing their prayer space. I have spent time with the children in Woodland school and reception, whilst undertaking regular worship on a Tuesday with KS1. I have been supporting Anne Moir as she explores the Christian Aid 'Global Neighbours' award scheme.



All three schools participated in the 'Creative for Climate Justice' project offered by Christian Aid, where children drew artwork for a competition with a chance for it to be exhibited in the Houses of Parliament. Their artwork on this matter was extremely thought-provoking.





by Cordelia



by Lucy



by Olivia



by Sophie

I also went with William Gilpin and South Baddesley to the Cathedral for the Year 6 Leavers Service.

We continue to successfully run holiday club events during all holidays and held a Light Event which was well attended. A team of volunteers and myself ran SO4.12: scripture, craft and games on the fourth Sunday of the month at the school for a year but for 2025 will be looking to start a new group to encourage more families to come. Other future plans include growing the roles of the Worship Ambassadors, the possibility of a year 6 junior youth club, further developing prayer spaces and further ad hoc events with the schools.

*Report by Mel Osborne*

## **WORSHIP**

2024 was our Year of Listening to God with a view of trying to begin to discern what He would have us be and do over the next few years.

Various speakers joined us through the year including from UCCF (University Chaplaincies), Gateway, Colin Bennett from Moorlands (who preached and led a workshop on the theme of welcome), our new Archdeacon (Jean) and the acting Bishop of Southampton – bishop Geoff. We even had the Archbishop of Canterbury come and join in our prayer hub!

We began the year with our first ever service to thank and pray for our local businesses – thanking them for the hospitality they provide and the opportunities they create that help to keep our community a thriving one.

Worship continued throughout the year using both live and digital formats - a huge thank goes to Pauline, Mike, John and the digital team led by Jeremy for making all this possible.

Sundays and Lent explored the seven deadly sins and how to overcome them and at Wednesday Compline services we heard from members of our congregations on how they knew God loved them. Once again we managed a full Holy Week and Easter programme including a pilgrimage to South Baddesley via Boldre on Good Friday and a dawn Easter Day service with bonfire, bubbly and bacon butties at St Nicholas'.

Daily Morning and Evening Prayer continued online; housegroups continued; we had a well attended ANZAC service and Remembrance Commemorations; there was another moving and well attended service of Remembering Loved Ones Departed; worship continued in the schools and Nursing Homes; we worshipped together across the Group at Choral Evensongs and at an Advent Carol Service.

In the autumn we had a beautiful and well attended Taizé service of healing

And finally, we ended the year with a range of well-attended Christmas services including two new ones, A Blue Christmas and Christmas songs down the pub (guess which was my favourite?)

In December we ended SO412 in the Primary School after a year of services believing that it had run its season and are currently exploring options for replacing it with something else that might better reach out to our young families.

Worship has included our primary school with Mel or Simon going in weekly and the school coming to church for Easter, Harvest, Christmas and the Year 6 Leavers' Service. It's included our Nursing Homes with Communion Services and Truth Be Told; it's included our young families with Little Flames and the special holiday and

festival events that Mel and her team put on; and it's included our pubs and local businesses as described earlier in this report.

Throughout the year we have continued to serve the wider community as evidenced by the 10 weddings, 12 baptisms and 12 funerals we have taken.

As always, I have been particularly impressed and encouraged by you, the wider congregation, for the constant support and participation - thank you for being there, and continuing to be there, as a worshipping community and for welcoming others into that worshipping community (thank you to Jane and her Welcomers Team and to Keith and the Social Team for the hospitality they so ably supply).

None of the above would have been possible without those who so generously give of their time and talents in preparing and leading our worship, and so my final word is to express my thanks to Diane, John, Mary, Stephen, Mel and Sandra - supported of course by our wonderful Admin Team (particularly the Rota Queen, Lesley), Sacristy Team, readers, intercessors, welcomers, flower team, bell-ringers and all of you who contribute to our worship. Thank you!

There's only one person left to thank - he's sadly no longer with us but Tony was at the heart of our worshipping community - not just for St Nicholas' (which he profoundly and generously loved), but the whole of the church in Brockenhurst. He was a wonderful example of what it means to be a part of Christ's Church and we miss him - thank you Tony for all you gave us - may you rest in peace and rise in glory!

*Revd Simon Newham, Vicar*

## **PARISH PRAYER ACTIVITIES**

Efforts to invigorate and support the prayer life of Church members continue, although there have been some changes to the way support is offered.

It remains a primary goal to ensure that support is available at every service for those who are finding it difficult to find the words to express their situation before God - whether that be to give thanks, articulate concerns for others or personally seek His intervention. In the first instance, please contact the person leading the service or myself, who will help you find the most appropriate person to support you. I am grateful to all our Priests and the other members of laity (Jo Plummer, Liz Dodwell, Mel Osbourne) who have expressed their ongoing willingness to participate in this work. If you feel you - with appropriate support - could be part of this work, please contact me. Prayer is also usually available for yourself or others during communion at Sunday Communion at St Saviour's.

We are extremely grateful for the work of Lindy Waight who has consistently provided interactive and creative prayer activities in the South aisle. These support both church family members and visitors to the building by providing inspiration and a focus for being with God at any time when the building is open. Similarly, we thank Sue Moss for providing an ongoing Prayer Blog and seasonal prayer materials accessible through our website.

Additionally, we have provided a number of prayer installations throughout the last year including at Pentecost (when we reflected on the nature of the Trinity) and in the Autumn (when we sought to discern His direction for our Parish and for His blessing on missional work throughout the Diocese). We have also provided a well-attended service for wholeness and healing on behalf of Lyndhurst Deanery in which many people sought either a standard prayer of blessing, anointing or a more personal prayer.

*Report by Stephen Bennett*

## **CHURCH MUSIC**

For those of us who love music, the state of our church music is rather dispiriting. Reading through last year's report, I could write the same again, as nothing has changed. We are still not able to pay for an organist and apart from at Christmas, weddings and funerals, the two organs have not been played for our services. At St Nicholas, the 9am services continue to use digitally produced music, whilst at St. Saviour's, Mike Kelly and I play the piano for the 10.30 services when we are available. A small but keen group of instrumental players join Mike on the second Sunday of the month. Stephen Bennett, who sings and plays the guitar, is aiming to get a permanent group of singers and instrumentalists together. One notable exception was the St. Nicholas Carol service, when Martin Penrose trained a choir of 15 or so people to sing at this service. We were able to sing three pieces of Christmas music and Martin's organ playing also contributed to the lively singing of the congregation. Music is at the heart of successful churches, so let us hope that we can work together to improve our current music and enhance our worship. I would love to write a different report next year!

*Report by Pauline Brown*

## **MISSION**

Our giving to Mission from the church continues to be a mix of direct payments to ten charities; collections in church for special events or services (such as Christmas); appeals for emergencies or special items and personal giving.

In 2024, as a church, we have supported the Church Mission Society, Tearfund, the Bible Society, Jerusalem & the Middle East Church Association (JMECA), Gateway Club, Friday Club, Rwanda (Kigeme), SAT-7, the Universities' & Colleges' Christian Fellowship and A Rocha (for the environment). On our Mission Sundays and on other occasions we have had special collections for Gateway, Rwanda, JMECA, Christian Aid, Embrace, UCCF, Christians Against Poverty and Basics Bank. The Gateway team visited our combined service with a team in July and told us about their work. Our Christmas giving was shared between our church, the Children's Society (at our Christingle service), Oakhaven Hospice and Embrace the Middle East. Our local Mother's Union group continues its charity works both home and overseas. The 'treasure trail' round the village continues to contribute to our mission fund.

*Report by Liz Dodwell*

## **PASTORAL TEAM REPORT – 'BROCKCARE'**

As ever, this has been another busy year for pastoral activities in the Parish (April 2024 – March 2025)

Pastoral Visiting: There is no doubt that pastoral visiting is an important part of our work as a Church, and our Pastoral Visitors (PVs) make a huge difference in the lives of many individuals across our village. We visit people in their homes, or in the Care Homes in the village, or in hospital. Those who find themselves isolated or bereaved or sick, or those who need help with shopping, for example, look upon PVs as godsenders – which, of course, they are! Visits keep vulnerable folks abreast of what is happening in the village, and crucially, enable them still to feel as if they are part of the community – and cared about. Genuine friendships and support networks are



built up over time and both sides in these precious relationships benefit enormously. Through these visits we are trying to fulfil our Church's mission of 'sharing the love and life of Jesus'.

Wednesday Lunches: These continue to be such an important part of the pastoral/outreach work supporting the elderly and vulnerable in our village. (See Lesley Munt's separate report on Wednesday Lunches elsewhere).

CAMEO (Come-And-Meet-Each-Other): Our Thursday morning gatherings with coffee, tea and biscuits on offer, bring together friends old and new. Many are regulars; others 'drop-in' on a more ad hoc basis. All-comers receive the same warm welcome thanks to the wonderful CAMEO Team members who approach their task of hosting with good humour and smiles!

All-4-One: A few get-togethers and activities over the year have been arranged. Contact has been maintained (via email or phone) with many people across the village who find themselves alone for a variety of reasons. This group encourages individuals to join with others for shared experiences such as attending the village pantomime, or visiting gardens etc.

The Sunday Club: This self-help group for those who have been widowed, has remained popular over the past year. The group, overseen by Diane Webster and others, meets for afternoon teas, occasional Sunday Lunches in the Hall and for other get-togethers. Attendance has been buoyant and the Club clearly continues to fill a 'need' within the parish.

Film & Tea Afternoons: 'The Duke' was shown in the Autumn term and 'Mrs Harris Goes to Paris' in early Spring. Both were very well supported and well received.

'Holidays@Home': H@H remains very popular indeed. In September, we found ourselves in France for our 'virtual' holiday. 26 invited guests joined us and we enjoyed themed talks, games/quizzes, dancing, singing and food. Having fun is the order of the day! Thanks are due to a dedicated team of organisers, cooks, drivers and other helpers/supporters, without whom this lovely event could not happen.

'Service to Remember Loved Ones Departed': Once again this service – held at the end of October – brought much comfort to those mourning the loss of loved ones. Over 50 people attended this year. Following the service, there was an opportunity for pastoral visitors (and other church members) to speak with those who had been bereaved. Tea and cakes were kindly provided by the Social Team, and were served in the Church Hall.

Christmas Day Lunch: Thirty guests attended the Christmas Day Lunch (2024) in the Church Hall. Roger Drake was once again on hand to cook this wonderful feast, and everyone present enjoyed it very much. Ros Dennison hosted the event, and was ably supported by several trusty helpers. Thanks to an anonymous doner, the cost of all the drinks for this special lunch was covered. Thanks to a further anonymous donation we were able to provide small gifts and Christmas cards for our guests to take home. Woodpeckers Residential Home provided tablecloths, napkins and Christmas crackers: we are very grateful for their generous support.

I would like to say 'thank-you' to all those involved in any of our pastoral care activities – too many to mention by name. Our many volunteers willingly give of their time and talents to reflect Jesus' love and friendship, comfort and compassion to all those with whom they come into contact. It is a huge privilege to work alongside them. Special thanks go to members of the Brockcare Committee who oversee all these activities, and who review the needs of individuals in our village on a regular basis, thereby ensuring that no-one 'slips through the net'. Thank you to Mary Robinson too, for helping with some of Brockcare's administrative tasks.

Please contact me or the Church Office if you would like to join the Pastoral Team, or would like more information about what we do.

*Report by Joyce Kolaczowski*

## **FABRIC AND GROUNDS**

### **St Saviours Church**

No significant problems have arisen with the maintenance of the church building. Consideration of how to deal with the church roof is still on hold while long-term planning for the future of the building is resolved. Consideration is being given to an alternative electric heating system which will warm the congregation rather than the building.

In the Church Hall the disabled toilet in the foyer has been refurbished thanks to an anonymous donation.

The tarmac apron at the entrance to Wilverley Road has been repaired with the cost shared with the riparian residents.

Voluntary working parties have again cleared gutters and done much trimming and tidying-up work in the churchyard (with the active participation of members of Greener Brockenhurst) to supplement the professional mowing and hedge-cutting. A belt of grass round much of the boundary was left unmown during the summer to encourage biodiversity. This is to continue in 2025 with the much more of the grassed area being left unmown during 'No Mow May'.

The two remaining Norway Spruces near the wicket -gate have been felled as they were giving signs of mortality. The stumps are to be ground out. It is planned to plant replacements in the next planting season.

### **St Nicholas's Church**

Repair to the flaking render on the north side of the vicar's vestry were commenced and then halted when it was found that the stonework underneath the render had deteriorated. It is planned to undertake the necessary work in 2025.

Repairs to the leaded window above the west door have been delayed pending finding a glazier willing to quote for this work. One has recently been found and application is to be made for the faculty which is required due the age of the glass.

The project to resurface the footpath from the main gate and round to the disabled entrance by the choir vestry has been completed with texts set in and looks most attractive.

The main entrance gates have been repainted by members of the Evans family who originally donated them in memory of their parents.

Meetings with representatives of Hampshire & I.O.W. Wildlife Trust have taken place to consider what could be done to improve the present unkempt appearance of the unmown areas of the retained churchyard without unduly disturbing wildlife. A staged plan to manage the grassed area and the brambles is to be put forward by the Eco Church team in the spring. In the meantime much clearance work had been done with the assistance of the local Community Payback group,

Thanks are due to the whole of the Fabric and Grounds Team for their support during the year, to those who joined in the working parties, in particular Martin Fletcher for his work in organising them and undertaking many other tasks, to Richard Elliott for undertaking the management of the St Nicholas' Footpath Project and to Paul Pearce for the organising and supervision of building maintenance work.

*Report by Tim Dodwell*

## **CHURCH HALL**

The church hall is now in its 38<sup>th</sup> year of use since it was opened and it was never envisaged it would have such a diverse use and range of activities since the opening in late 1987.

Three regulars are still with us since early 1988; firstly, Cynthia Wilson's adorable Music and Movement, run on a Monday morning is as popular as ever; participating mums and dads, who came as toddlers, are now bringing their own young.

Brownies are still with us, but with somewhat reduced numbers, they were of course a carryover from the old church hall and have been going since the 1950's or probably earlier in the 1930's.

Busy Badgers and yoga are two starters from 1988, though both have changed leaders.

The star of course is Wednesday Lunches, going from I think February 1988 initiated by Heather Brewster, along with Lesley Munt, who has skilfully blended new helpers and team leaders to maintain a continuous provision of Wednesday Lunches. This over about 30 weeks of the year for 35 – 40 participants, presently has a waiting list. Word gets out on the excellence of the cuisine, borne out by nearly 40,000 lunches having been served. Thank you, Lesley.

Repair and maintenance is always ongoing – the building approaching 40 years old has stressed the waterproofing of the lobby lantern, where the long term leak has now been cured, by our regular building contractor, Mark Harvey, who has been with us for over 30 years. Likewise, our unsung hero of father and son team, Les and Dan Palmer the sewer pump engineers have been with us from day one. What a team too, they have even turned out on Christmas Day so the lunch could go ahead. Other weekly minor repairs have kept the hall open and running. We are very grateful for the anonymous donation, that allowed complete refurbishment last summer, of the lobby disabled toilet.

I am grateful to the hall committee for all they do to keep the premises going, Kelly Cooke for her work on bookings, Lindy Waight with a dual role now of Churchwarden and keeping up all she does on the kitchen front to maintain our five star NFDC rating. Keith being a wise counsellor, plus numerous others who do so much to 'oil the wheels', literally in Luke's case, who has just serviced the two kitchen trolleys. The expertise from an appropriate working career in the oil industry and computing from Steve Curson and Jeremy Moss respectively, has been of great assistance to me solving problems way out with my sphere.

The hall letting income and money from Wednesday lunches has covered nearly 70% of the running costs in 2024.

*Report by Martin Fletcher*

## **SOCIAL TEAM**

We organised refreshments for the APCM in April, the Bereavement Service, and three Carol Services.

We helped with the MAF plane event in May, and the D-Day Anniversary in June.

The Newcomers' event in July had 23 newcomers, and the Harvest Quiz, with Alan and Bill, in September had its usual 80 customers.

We supported the Village Christmas Event in Brookley Road.

I, once again, thank the small but very willing team.

*Report by Keith Nolan*

## **ECO CHURCH**

Summary

As a church, we continue to be committed to taking our environmental impact and use of resources fully into account in our work, worship, teaching, and programmes.

We also work to increase awareness of environmental issues in our church congregation and village community, working towards us all enjoying simpler, greener lifestyles.

As a framework for this work, St Saviours joined the Eco Church movement back in Jan 2020 and in February 2024, St Nicholas, too, was signed up. This has been an exciting year for us as in September 24 St Nicholas was awarded Bronze, and then in January 2025, St Saviour's achieved the Gold award, only the 3<sup>rd</sup> church in our diocese to reach this level.

Activities and Progress over the past year:

- April 24: The first of The Eco Church teams monthly gardening sessions took place. These now happen on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday morning of each month and our effort is split between supporting Martin and the Church Grounds team with general maintenance work and working with the Making Space for Nature Team, Greener Brock on the wildlife area.
- April 24: Butterfly survey completed in the grounds of St Saviours, repeated several more times over the year.
- April 24: A professional, Church subsidised, energy audit of St Saviours and the Hall was undertaken.
- May 24: The Forest-wide community patchwork quilt, put together by New Forest Friends of the Earth in the national United for Warm Homes Campaign, and to which Eco Church contributed, was displayed in Church.
- September 24: St Nicholas was awarded the Bronze Eco Church award.
- September 24: A "Sharing box" was set up in the Church porch where members of the congregation (and indeed anyone else) can share any excess produce
- October 24: Eco Church planned and let the Harvest Festival Service in partnership with the St Annes 'Care For Creation' team. The Brownies were involved and there was a strong message around thinking about the environmental impact of what we choose to buy to eat.
- October 24: A specialist from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust did a site visit to St Nicholas Churchyard to advise us on forming an appropriate Land Management Plan for the area.
- November 24: The Eco church team and, indeed, several other members of the church, supported the "March for Clean Water" organised by Greener Brockenhurst and the WI. St Saviours kitchen was used for the serving of refreshments for the 80 plus people who joined the march
- November 24: St. Saviour's Church Nature and Wildlife-Friendly Land Management Plan issued
- November 24: The annual environmental lifestyle survey was sent out to all members of the church on the electoral role. 43 parishioners responded.
- November 24: The PCC gave approval for 2 bee hives to be located in the grounds of St Saviours, owned and maintained by the Charity, Bee Mission.
- December 24: A summary of the results on the environmental lifestyle survey was uploaded to our church website. In general, it is encouraging that for most of the areas being asked about, small improvements are reported. The 3 key areas that perhaps require further discussion / education are:
  - Use of renewable energy tariffs at home
  - How to do a personal carbon footprint audit
  - What is ethical investment
- December 24: Additional loft insulation was installed over the old part of the Church Hall, as recommended by the Environmental audit.

- December 24: Replacement of 9 non-LED ceiling lights in the Church Hall with LED, as recommended by the Environmental audit.
- January 25: Brush door seals installed under the main hall doors, the main church doors, and the outside vestry door, as recommended by the Environmental audit.
- January 25: St Saviour's awarded Gold Eco Church award!
- January 25: A community work party was organised to begin to tackle the encroaching bramble
- February 25: Initial talks have begun with DAC re the possibility of St Saviour's transitioning away from gas heating to infra-red heating.
- February 25: Input of church energy usage data to the Church Energy Footprint tool to enable us to look at our carbon footprint and compare to previous years, setting targets for reduction.
- Easter 25: As a lent initiative, the Eco Church team published small daily challenges to try at home.
- Throughout the year: Ongoing environmental awareness raising articles in the monthly Parish Magazine and well as weekly "Eco tips" in spotlight.
- Throughout the year: Close involvement with and support of the work of Greener Brockenhurst.

*Report by Milla Pearce*

### **PARISH SAFEGUARDING**

During the year, Brockenhurst Bell Ringers appointed a Safeguarding Officer and a Safeguarding Policy was prepared. This is in accordance with the Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. The Guild follows Church of England Safeguarding practice including Training.

Risk Assessments and Role Descriptions were completed during the year for Brockcare Activities and Children's Activities.

Busy Badgers Mother and Toddler Group became a Church Activity in 2024 under the supervision of our Children and Families Worker. Risk Assessments, Volunteer Role Descriptions and Safeguarding Training for Volunteers were completed during the year.

Best practice guidance on safer environments and activities was issued to all Team Leaders involved with activities for children and vulnerable adults.

*Report by Karina Curson*

### **DEANERY AND DIOCESAN SYNODS**

We continue to participate in and be informed by the work of the wider Church. Locally Wendy Lay, Peter Lay and John Pearson represent our Parish on the Lyndhurst Deanery Synod. Peter has additionally volunteered to act as Deanery Treasurer, whilst the Reverend Simon Newham remains in the role of Area Dean. The Deanery Synod meets three times a year to share information on the state of the parishes within the Deanery, to explore shared interests (Rwanda, Local mission through the New Forest Show and a range of missional areas (For example, Ministry to Children and Young People). The Deanery Synod is also a focus for the dissemination of information from the Diocese to local churches.

By contrast, the Diocesan Synod tends to focus on the strategic initiatives and concerns for our shared future as well as setting broad budgets and operational parameters. Representation of the Deanery on this Diocesan Synod comprises three ordained ministers and five members of laity, including myself. Current strategic

focus areas include ensuring that the church embraces the broad and rich diversity within the diocese and looking at ways of resourcing local churches to have full impact of their communities. Please contact me directly if you would like to understand these and other strategic initiatives or concerns in more detail.

*Report by John Pearson*

### **HOME GROUPS**

It's been a mixed year for the Home Groups. The established ones (7) have been meeting regularly with a steady membership. Three meet in the Church Room which is proving a great asset and one at Woodpeckers. Others in members' homes. Three are ecumenical and one outside the parish. Four are studying John's Gospel. Brockenhurst Fellowship Group meets monthly on a Saturday morning and looks at a wide range of topics.

However, it has been difficult to maintain new groups. This is partly through lack of leadership and partly because finding a convenient time to meet has been impossible. One group has become a friendship and prayer group without meeting, and one has disbanded. Most of the groups are women only which is regrettable and it would be good to have more groups.

*Report by Diane Webster*

### **BAPTISM PREPARATION**

During the last year we had 12 baptisms with associated baptism preparation sessions to which parents and Godparents are invited. These sessions are based on the Rob Bell Nooma video *Rhythm* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FNHoYI8a78> which generates some very interesting discussions and is well worth taking a look at. The sessions are held in the meeting room at St Saviour's over tea and cake and participants are encouraged to both think carefully about the commitment they are making in baptism and to ask questions about the Christian faith and the difference it can make in their child's (and their own) life. We go through the service together explaining what the different symbolic acts mean and how they will be invited to participate in them. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in our Sunday worship prior to the baptism. Local parents are also encouraged to keep in touch through the 'Little Flames' services for the under-fives which are run by the Mothers' Union. Thank you to all who have helped with these sessions.

### **MARRIAGE PREPARATION**

At the end of January 2024, we ran our annual joint Marriage Preparation afternoon with Boldre and South Baddesley and 23 engaged couples (6 from Brockenhurst; 14 from Boldre and 3 from South Baddesley) attended the session held in the St. Saviour's Church. After a fun introductory session based on which road sign most described their relationships and thoughts of marriage, Simon explained the Christian understanding of marriage and why we feel marriage preparation is so important. Simon then talked on various topics and aspects of marriage (barriers to talking; conflict resolution; financial management; personal style and habits; children and parenting; spiritual beliefs etc) and couples were given worksheets to discuss with each other. After a break for tea and cake provided by members of the Mothers' Union, Simon went through the Marriage service itself and the couples were introduced to those who would be involved with their wedding - the clergy taking the ceremony, Sue Lynes the Verger, Sally Hoy, from the Flower Guild, and Clare Robbins and Sally James, the administrators who would be sorting the forms and formalities.

Before leaving, as a gift from the Mothers' Union, each couple was presented with the book 'Growing Together' - a marriage preparation book written by Andrew Body.

*Report by Lesley Munt*

### **ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH GUARDIANS**

The Parish Church of St Nicholas welcomed many visitors from all parts of the world in 2024. Many are strangers to the area following published 'walks' and discover the church often by happy accident. Thus varied are the reasons for entering St Nicholas.

Some enter seeking a place to pray or find peace, experience the atmosphere of an ancient building, others are looking for the 1000 year old yew tree, whilst others have a family connection, baptism, wedding or funeral memories and like to reminisce. People researching family history are looking for records of graves, hoping for further detail to enter on the 'family tree' can discover a numbered grave map produced before the inscriptions faded due to weathering and we have a corresponding file with alphabetical lists of all the family names on the graves in our upper graveyard. Visitors from New Zealand with possibly a WWI hospital connection see the exhibition boards and the 2016 NZ window, then realise that the church has other beautiful stained glass, notably four windows in the chancel depicting the four seasons. It is important that we recruit more volunteers, we need to have an afternoon presence in the summer months. Guardians are able to highlight the many aspects and features of this ancient church and by selling merchandise we contribute to church funds.

### **ST NICHOLAS and ST SAVIOUR FLOWER GUILD**

The Flower Guild ladies beautifully arranged flowers for 7 weddings in 2024. We had some wonderful comments and some lovely thank you messages from the brides.



Appreciation of the flower designs always makes us happy. We also arranged several bespoke flowers designs for Christenings and Funerals. For Easter services Jane ran a workshop to help the ladies create a new contemporary design using the tubes, green twigs and Spring flowers they looked bright and cheerful on the window sills.



We arranged both churches in red, white and blue flowers with special flags to join in the village celebrations for the 80th Anniversary of the D- Day landings for 6th June. This was particularly poignant as several of the arrangers had Fathers who were operational on this day. As always the churches were filled with poppies for Remembrance Sunday and for Harvest Festival we used fresh flowers, sunflowers, gourds and pumpkins supporting a local farm. The window sills looked amazing with all the Autumn colours and the creativity of the ladies. We encouraged the men parishioners to join us to arrange for harvest and we were joined by Simon and Paul who happily filled pumpkins with flowers. They did really well and were very creative. It was great fun and they are welcome to help us again.

On behalf of the Flower Guild, Sally and Jane entered a contemporary Christmas tree in the Mothers Union Christmas Tree festival using fresh red roses and conifer, cones and lights.

Christmas this year was filled with gold stars as the highlight and then surrounded with evergreen foliage with red flowers, candles and cones.





We thank all the ladies who give their time and creativity to help decorate the churches and thank the parishioners who kindly contribute to the flower pot donations. We are self funding, some ladies donate fresh flowers or pick from their gardens, we also use wedding flower and other donations to buy the fresh flowers and materials throughout the year. Flower costs have increased hugely, so there may be occasions when we will need to use artificial flowers in the future. We also struggle to fill all the flower rota slots, so if there are any flower arrangers wishing to join the team please let us know, you would be very welcome.

We hope the flowers in church bring you happiness and joy.

*Report by Jane Thatcher and Sally Hoy*

### **THE SANCTUARY GUILD**

Our team consists of Tricia Hilborn who continues to wash and iron the altar cloths, Ros Dennison, Lizzie Tindell, Marion Burden and a new member Vicki Jago who we welcome to our team.

Our duties have not changed: We wash and look after all the linen used for communion; clean the silver; prepare for communion at St Saviour's and St Nicholas' and change the altar frontals when required. Since we sadly no longer have Tony to chivvy us along, we do not change the altar frontal at St Nicholas' - we now keep the 'all season' frontal up all year as this is quite difficult to change and re-fix.

We carry gluten-free wafers at each communion service and anyone wishing to use these instead of the usual ones, please let the presiding clergy know before the start of the service. Alternatively, you can let me know and I will make sure the clergy are aware of this.

*Report by Lindy Waight*

### **BROCKENHURST CARE CARS**

The service experienced another busy year with 520 trips to medical appointments arranged and carried out by twenty nine drivers.

We now have over two hundred clients on our books. However, our pool of drivers has reduced by twenty five per cent over the last two to three years and the number of co-ordinators (those who take turns at picking up the calls from clients and placing the trips) is at a level where they are spread very thinly over the year meaning more "tours of duty" for each co-ordinator. Whilst word of mouth remains the most

effective recruitment tool the committee is actively looking at other forms of promotion to enlist new volunteers.

*Report by Adrian Butterworth*

## **MOTHERS' UNION**

2024's theme was Transformation – Now!

### **BRANCH MEETINGS**

In January we held our Wave of Prayer Service followed by our AGM. Our speaker in February was Luke Augustyn, our Ordinand, telling of his journey to faith; in March, Valerie Young gave a moving talk on the work at St. John's Eye Hospital in Jerusalem; in April a member of The Blue Lamp Trust, 'Cyber Bobby' talked on the importance of safety in IT and in June, Christine Clode told us of the project to supply Hygiene Kits for Girls to young teenagers in Africa – a project we are hoping to start here in Brockenhurst. In July our own Sandra Hall gave an amusing talk on her experiences of 'Hatches, Matches & Dispatches'; in September we learned of Jane Walker's work with children in the Philippines; in October, Sam Scott, Diocesan Environment Officer, gave a talk about climate change and in November, Bev McKay told of the amazing work undertaken by the Waterlily Project in Christchurch. Our December meeting took the form of a fun quiz, carols, mulled wine and mince pies.

### **MOTHERS' UNION SERVICES**

#### **Corporate Communion**

These have been held on the third Thursday each month in St Saviours, apart from the November Communion, which was at St Nicholas's, as the Christmas Trees were in St Saviours.

A Deanery Lady Day Service took place at Hythe on Friday 22 March and two of our members attended

#### **Cathedral Prayers**

On 7th August, it was the turn of Lyndhurst Deanery to lead the prayers, admirably done by Gill Coombs with her talk 'Mary's Legacy and attended by several committee members. After the prayers, flowers were laid on Mary Sumner's grave.

#### **Deanery Carol Service at Milford-on-Sea**

4 of our members joined members from Hythe and Milford for this service.

#### **'Little Flames' Services**

Four services were held in 2024, with the School Reception class and a few others attending. Having organised these services since 1991, after the July service, Lesley Munt decided it was time to step down and the December service was arranged and led by Mel Osborne, our Children's and Families Worker, and Jo Plummer, helped by Revd. Sandra Hall. These three will lead and organise future services, but there will be only 3 per year.

### **EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **Marriage Preparation**

On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 24 engaged couples met at St Saviour's church. Fourteen of them were from Boldre, three from South Baddesley, and seven from Brockenhurst. The Vicar explained the Christian understanding of marriage, and then tea and cake was provided by our members. Each couple were given the book "Growing Together" as a gift from the Mothers' Union.

#### **MU Information Days**

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at St Gabriels Church, Popley. No one from our Branch was able to attend.

Thursday 11 July at St. Lawrence's Church Hall, Winchester. 2 members attended.

Thursday 14 November at Hedge End. Four members attended.

#### Mothering Sunday

As usual members came together to make posies for Mothering Sunday, and arrangements were taken to the nursing homes in the village. Members read the lessons and led the prayers at the Sunday services.

#### Summer outing

We went to Christchurch for a Heraldry Tour of Christchurch Priory. We then went to the Old Station Tea Rooms at Holmsley, to meet other MU members.

#### Tea Afternoon

In August we held our members' tea afternoon, when we made our "Little Bags of Love" to be given to parents of the children joining the YR class at the school.

#### Board Games Cafe

Our Board Games have been well attended. We had one on 2 March and another on 5 October.

#### Busy Badgers

MU members and others continue to provide refreshments for the parents and toddlers' weekly sessions.

#### Crafts

Members and others continued to knit and crochet prayer Blankets for children being christened, and other items including knitted bees for the Honeypot charity and for the New Forest Ukraine appeal.

#### Christmas Tree Festival

A huge thank you to Gill Coombs and her small team (Esther Browne, Anne Dow, Maureen Phillips & Wendy Trundle) who organised this very successful event running from 23 - 30 November and beginning with a tree lit service of celebration. 41 trees were entered by businesses and groups in the village, depicting their role in the community, and the peoples' favourite was voted for by cash donations. £1,000 was raised and distributed between 4 local charities. Over 1,692 attended and the event was voted a huge success - possibly to be repeated alternate years but with a theme?

#### FUNDRAISING

We have raised money from our Gift Swap 4 Coffee morning, sale of MU cards, ploughman's lunches and cream teas for 7 visiting MU groups and other donations. Altogether we sent over £1,900 to MU for Overseas, Relief Fund, Britain and Ireland, Summer of Hope, and Literacy - a truly wonderful effort.

#### Sweet Tubes

As an extra fundraiser, members were given tubes of sweets at the Christmas social and these were returned full of money.

#### MEMBERSHIP

We had one new member, Revd. Sandra Hall, join this year.

Thanks go to everyone who provides tea, coffee and cakes for our meetings, and those who have helped with the 'Little Flames' services, and all who read and intercede at our communion services. Thanks, too, to those who have assisted with the cream teas and ploughman's lunches for visiting branches, and other events. Special thanks to Liz Dodwell for organising Busy Badgers helpers; Lindy Waight for maintaining the prayer chain; Jenny Noyelle for keeping us in touch with Kigeme and the Mothers' Union there; Jean Taylor for keeping the photographs of our activities; Diane Webster for ordering and selling MU cards, diaries and other items, and Lesley Munt for supporting baptism preparation and cards.

#### Committee

Heartfelt thanks go to all the Committee members: Lesley Munt, our Secretary, Maureen Phillips our Treasurer, Sue Lynes, who has organised our excellent programmes, Geraldine Angel, Esther Browne and Gill Coombs,  
THE FUTURE

Wendy Lay is stepping down as Branch Leader at our 2025 AGM and if no new leader is forthcoming, the branch will continue to run under the leadership of the Committee. The continued success of our branch relies on the support of all members, so please give serious thought and prayer and consider if you might volunteer to join the committee.

The theme for 2025 is JOIN US – JOIN IN!

*Report by Lesley Munt*

### **WEDNESDAY LUNCHES**

Since last year's APCM, Wednesday Lunches have continued to thrive, with a regular high attendance. During the year, we have welcomed several new guests and now have 40 on our register which is the maximum we can comfortably accommodate. We continue to offer lunches on the first 4 Wednesdays of each month, in school term time only, and are managing to maintain the cost at £5 for the two-course meal followed by tea or coffee.

Christine Bellenger has joined Christina Simons as joint leader of the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Team, taking care of the admin side of things, and Woodpeckers Care Home very kindly continue to provide the dessert each month for which we are extremely grateful.

Jean Wright continues to head up the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday team but has lost three of her volunteers, so we are currently advertising for new recruits, especially people who are willing to cook.

We know how much the weekly lunches are appreciated by all who attend and I am very grateful for the help given by all our volunteer cooks and drivers and especially Joyce who so admirably organises the transport rota and keeps in touch with our guests (even when she's supposed to be on holiday!) and Sue Griffiths who deputises when Joyce is not around. I would also like to thank Luke Chambers, our caretaker, who sets up and clears away the tables for us each week - such a great help as we are all getting older and, in some cases, less able.

If anyone is interested in helping, either on a kitchen team or with transporting our guests, please get in touch with myself or Joyce. I would also like to find someone to shadow me to know what the weekly administration for the lunches entails should I ever not be around – it needs to be someone confident with computers.

*Report by Lesley Munt*

### **CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL**

The Electoral Roll as at Annual Meeting in 2024	198
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The new Electoral Roll as at Annual Meeting in 2025	149
( Resident: 140      Non-resident: 9 )	