

ST MARY'S SPEEN PEW NEWS 29/2021

1) SERVICES

This week 11th July: Service of the Word led by Jane Sutton

Next week:

Sunday 18th July: Holy Communion led by Rev Joy Mawdesely.

2) ST MARY'S ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM) last Sunday. You will see our Annual Report online. Chaired by Will, I think we had 25 there. We were very happy to elect our Churchwardens Brian Nobes and Michael Bell. We thanked Jo Fageant as she retires, for her sterling work as Churchwarden.

The following were elected to our PCC:

Five new/re-elected members: Carole Liddiard, Anna Newton, John Hughesdon, Marion Burke and Alan Booth.

Other members are:

Michael Bell and Brian Nobes (churchwardens), Peter Rimmer and Jo Fageant (deanery synod representatives), Mavis Hughesdon, Nikki Monger, Marion Mottram, Will Hunter Smart, Joy Mawdesley, Jackie Fountain and Janice Macdonald.

3) WELCOMERS AND SERVING COFFEE AFTER MORNING SERVICES.

I am sure that one of the things we have missed about our COVID church regime is an opportunity to enjoy a cuppa and chat after our services. So we now need kind people to form a rota, which will be deeply appreciated by many. Welcomers will be similarly needed too, to provide that cheery smile as we come into church. So please could you

a) spare 3/4 hour before the service and an hour or so afterwards once a month to help with refreshments?

b) 3/4 hour before the service and just over 1/2 hour after the service to join our dedicated team of sidespeople? It's a good way of getting to know everyone.

If you think you can help, please speak to Jill after a service or give her a ring on 48698. JW

4) SHOEMAKERS MAKEOVER

Please be advised that Shoemakers Christian bookshop will be closed from Monday 12th – Monday 26th July inclusive. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause, but we are taking advantage of the summer to refresh the paintwork in the shop. Please visit www.christophershoemaker.org.uk or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/shoemakersbooks) for more information. Steve.

5) INDIA APPEAL AND MIRIAM DEAN FUND REPORT. The UK media has been full of the severe escalation of the COVID pandemic in India. We asked our Partners about their recent experience. In Kerala at Mannacknad, Sr Rani tells us that the "situation continues

to remain grim". The second wave of the pandemic has stretched health care infrastructure to its limit. Many of the Special School's students and families are affected, "they remain at home unable to go to hospitals since there is no place in hospitals". Babu at AHM says that the "Theni District is one of the ten in Tamil Nadu that reported a high number of cases". They went into a complete lockdown in May. DEEPAM, with Sr Hilaria at the helm, is based in the same complex in Vathalagundu as the Leonard Hospital. Hilaria says "it is very painful to see the happenings around ... continuously hearing cries, loss, death ... going through tough times. The sisters, doctors and hospital staff members are almost working 24x7. There is a great need for ventilators, an oxygen plant, medicines ...". St Nic's and St Mary's response and our own matched funding means that we are sending over £18,000 to Leonard Hospital. Others have also raised a further £20,000 to date. Sr Dr Jacqueline at Leonard Hospital responded " I have no adequate words to express my overwhelming gratitude for the marvellous way you and your supporters are trying hard to help us and the COVID victims.... God bless you all for being His helping hands and reaching out to the sick and the needy". Thanks to an unexpected windfall, we are also sending supplementary funds to all our Partners to help them respond to and recover from COVID. In the midst of this crisis, the final stages of the Indian Government's planned new regulations have been put in place to ensure that all "foreign contributions" are routed through the State Bank in New Delhi, and our Partners have had to open new accounts. This has caused some problems which are gradually being resolved. Please pray for: • all our Partners in India, Kenya and South Africa, as they continue their work to support some of the world's poorest through the pandemic; • the doctors, nurses, hospital staff and sisters at Leonard Hospital; we pray that they find the strength to work the long hours needed and that they remain safe; may the funds that have been raised be used wisely and urgently to help alleviate the suffering of their patients; • Sr Hilaria at DEEPAM, as they work to combat the spread in the villages and to help the children who have poor nutrition, health and safety; • a speedy resolution to the problems in India with transfer of funds.

6) **HOLIDAY CHURCHES.** John and I attended one in Swanage recently, with a well-robed choir of 6, as permitted by COVID regulations, rehearsing before the Service. It seemed that they were all very grumpy because of the restriction limiting amateur choirs to 6. Up to then the full choir had been blithely singing on every occasion that the church was open since March 2020, firmly in their belief that any regulations regarding singing in church did not apply to church choirs!

In Wales, we attended a church where the Service leaders, reader and prayer all kept their masks on, so everything was a bit muffled, by we were all handed hymnbooks on the way in, and were allowed to sing "quietly" behind our masks.

