

## **FAWKHAM AND HARTLEY PARISH NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2017**

### FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends,

It has been a busy couple of weeks with Harvest celebrations and the Jemmett's leaving 'do', so thank you for all your support. Now seems a good time to write to you all as with Mell and Ruth leaving and Wendy shortly to leave this does create a few difficulties with our current service rota pattern. As you know we are working closely together with our neighbouring parishes as part of the Rural North West Kent Group. I hope you are seeing the benefits of what working together can bring and being a part of a wider network of Christians. I am sure we all agree that we can achieve a lot more with more people involved, and I hope being a part of RNWK creates a better sense of belonging. There are so many other activities we do across our neighbouring parishes that it makes sense Church becomes one of these as well. This does mean a willingness to travel and being prepared to compromise when not every Church building can host the amount of services that it used to have. Plus, there is now a shortage of people who can lead services across the Group. However, I would like to put a couple of changes in a more positive light. These changes will begin from January 2018.

#### **EVENING SERVICES RETURN**

After much discussion with the Clergy and Churchwardens, we would like to offer two lay-led Evening services across the Group. These will be at St Mary's, Fawkham on the Second Sunday of the month. And at St Peter's, Ridley on the Fourth Sunday of the month. Both at 6.30pm. We hope a later time will appeal more to those who find teatimes difficult or if you have been out for the day there is still time for Church at the end. We will no longer be able to provide two 9.00am services on the Second Sunday of the month hence the service at Fawkham that day will now be 6.30pm. So, from January 2018, our weekly pattern will look like this: -

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday      9.00am All Saints', 10.30am Church Centre  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday      9.00am All Saints', 10.30am Church Centre, 6.30pm St Mary's  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday      9.00am All Saints', 10.30am Church Centre  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday      10.30am St Mary's, 6.30pm St Peter's, Ridley  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday      Group service  
One Saturday a month – Messy Church

The Clergy and Churchwardens will meet a couple of times a year to review our services and if any new timetable does not work out then we can review and change again. We are always open to new ideas and we would still like to get Café Church back in the timetable again at some point. Of course, these are just the regular Sunday services. Please do remember there are plenty of baptisms and weddings happening throughout the year, so all three places of worship are getting good use. Please also remember there are 8.00am services at Ash and Longfield if you prefer an early start (have a look at the F+H website where there is a heading you can click on which shows you the Group services at a glance). Please do read Parish Notes or sign up to Andrew Gray's e-mail mailing list to be informed when special events are happening and when the regular pattern of services will change. Speaking of which!

#### **BISHOP JAMES' COBHAM DEANERY VISIT**

From November 25 – December 3<sup>rd</sup>, our Diocesan Bishop will be visiting the Deanery to spend some time with us. I will have flyers to give out soon about all the events that you can join us with. However, the two Sundays he is with us he obviously cannot get to every Parish. So, on 26<sup>th</sup> November, we will have joint Group Communion, 9.00 am at St Peter's, Ridley and 10.30am at St Peter and St Paul, Ash. Plus, a 6.00pm Confirmation service at Cobham Church that day. And on 3<sup>rd</sup> December there will be a Deanery service at St Nicholas', Southfleet, 10.30am (or 8.00am Communion at Ash if you prefer). These will be the only services happening on those two Sunday's so please use this as an opportunity to be a part of the wider network of Christians in the Deanery and to make use of having our Diocesan Bishop with us for a week. This only happens once every 4 years! If anyone has difficulties getting to services elsewhere please do speak to the Churchwardens about sharing transport.

There is a need to increase those who can lead Sunday services so do speak to me if you would like to be part of the Diocesan training or speak to Angie Frost who has been through this. The PCC will be spending time together in February to look at ways in which we can cope with the resources that we now have. Do continue to pray for those who lead us.

## **Autumn Newsletter 2017 – Churchwardens' Report**

As the nights draw in and the leaves turn golden, we can look back on a busy but successful summer.

In August, we were very pleased to welcome back Reverend Jim, who has returned from his well-deserved sabbatical full of renewed energy and new ideas. We are grateful to Reverend Mell, Reverend Dylan and all the other members of the Group ministry team who so ably covered in Jim's absence. We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated ministry team leading us in worship and caring for our pastoral needs. Last Sunday, we were sad to see Reverend Mell leave us to take up her new post as the vicar of Holy Redeemer, Lamorbey. We will treasure the memories of her time with us.

We have been pleased to see that our congregations are getting used to the new service rotas, with our Group services being particularly well attended. It is lovely to see our churches so full on these occasions. If anyone is having difficulty getting to any of our services, please do speak to a churchwarden as lifts can be arranged.

One highlight of the summer was the completion of the exterior works at St Mary's Church, celebrated at our Flower Festival in September. The church now glistens in a coat of new, self-cleaning white paint and the tower and roof have been repaired and should last for many decades. We are very grateful to all those who contributed to the cost of these works including the LPOW fund, the Friends of Fawkham Church, and our local KCC councillor, David Brazier. Our thanks go to Malcolm Harris and the Building Committee for bringing this complex project in on time and substantially below budget. The fabric of all our church buildings is now in generally good order with All Saints' Church requiring only routine maintenance as highlighted by the recent quinquennial inspection. Our aim over the next year is to complete several large projects at the Church Centre, subject to the availability of funds, including refinishing the floor of the hall and replacing the heating system.

It has been a very busy period for our social events. In May, our annual fete was a great success despite starting in a shower of rain. Hundreds of people enjoyed the variety of traditional stalls and activities, and over £6,000 was raised for church funds. Our thanks go to David Tremain and the Fete Committee. In September, we held a flower festival at St Mary's Church, to coincide with the Patronal festival, and to celebrate the completion of the renovation works. Our thanks go to the many people who helped to make this such a successful event with special thanks to the members of the Hartley and District Flower Club for their stunning floral displays. £1,600 was raised for church funds.

In addition to these major events, we have also held concerts, quizzes, an afternoon tea, a treasure walk and a Harvest Supper. Our thanks go to the Fund Raising and Social Committees for arranging such an entertaining, and profitable series of events.

As always, we are making a plea for more help with the preparation and running of services, planning and organising social events and maintaining the fabric of our wonderful churches. All help is gladly accepted. Please do offer as only a few hours a month can make an enormous difference.

We have much to look forward to over the next few months with the Bishop's visit in November leading to the start of the Christmas celebrations. Please do come along and support all our events listed in parish notes and sent around on our weekly emails.

Valerie Campbell and Andrew Gray  
Churchwardens – October 2017