

Mission in practice – Churches at work

Crocodile rock

Each autumn the parish of Nursling with Rownhams runs a family fun concert in aid of projects in the parish's link diocese of South Rwenzori, Uganda, and the Kimbilio project which works with street children in Lubumbash in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This year the concert—entitled 'Never Smile at a Crocodile— raised more than £1,000.



A smiling crocodile

money for good causes, we have a lot of fun, and we welcome many friends, family members and others who might find it intimidating to come to church for a formal service. Once they have seen church members dressed as crocodiles, or singing comic songs, they are better able to see Christians as 'just like us' –

and as the proceeds all go to charities other than our parish church, perhaps we can show a little of the love and compassion of Jesus for those less well-off than ourselves."

Churchwarden Sue Newbitt said: "This event serves three purposes: we make

Flushed with success

St Mary's Church, Fordingbridge, and the wider town are flushed with success after raising more than £2,500 for 'Toilet Twinning.'

Nearly 50 toilets across churches, schools, community buildings, pubs, cafés and homes have been 'twinned' with latrines in countries overseas.

The fundraising started last year with cake sales, collecting coins in Smarties tubes, and spending a penny when people went to 'spend a penny'.

Breamore School, and Fordingbridge Infants and Juniors got involved, and the MP Sir Desmond Swayne supported the initiative. The funds raised have gone to



Members of Fordingbridge Junior School with the mayor and Rev'd Rachel Noel

Toilet Twinning, a partnership between development agencies Cord and Tearfund, to help some of the 2.5 billion people worldwide who lack decent sanitation.

Contact us:

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Live the Mission



January 2018



Happy first birthday Café 46. Bishop David and Rev'd Andy Edmunds lead the celebrations in Yateley (see page 3)

The dark winter nights are full of celebration—Advent, Christmas, the new beginning of a New Year with all its hopes and resolutions, Epiphany... and in the case of St Peter's, Yateley, a birthday. The church has just celebrated the first anniversary of Café 46, a vibrant café which is fulfilling a 25-year dream of creating a community hub which is also feeding in to initiatives in the town. Read more about it on page 3.

This month's issue also celebrates light—especially the cross at Christ Church, Freemantle (see page 2) — generosity and mission. On pages 4-5 you can have a taster of what taking

part in the Bishop's Commission for Mission could mean for you.

There's plenty more and remember, too, let us have news from your part of the Diocese. See page 8 for contact details.

Inside

News and Fairtrade..... p.2-3

Bishop's Commission for Mission..
..... p 4-5

A blessed circle—legacies and giving p.6-7

Mission in practice—churches at work p.8

News from across the Diocese

Symbol of light

The iconic cross on the tower of **Christ Church, Freemantle** (right), is once more lighting the way for travelers on both land and sea.

The 2.2m high white cross was installed in the 1950s and contains lighting tubes which are switched on every night. However the lighting tubes are difficult to change and the cross had been dark for a year, a loss felt not just by

the church and local people but by pilots of container ships docking in Southampton.

Angi Nutt, vicar of Christ Church, said: "We were approached by the port operator ABP who explained that the container ships use the cross as part of their navigational aids as they come into dock and they were very keen to work with us to restore the cross and make community connections."



The cross was taken off for restoration work and returned on November 7 when it was lifted to 18m and fixed back on to the church. It is fitted with LED bulbs which have a longer life, are cheaper to run and use less power than the previous bulbs.

Mark Bray, a pilot with ABP, said: "Back in the days of sail and steam Southampton pilots used the many church spires

which surround the docks as navigation aids. Today's pilots bring in ultra-large container ships. They use modern hi-tec equipment but they still verify the ship's position and progress by looking at fixed objects ashore. The illuminated cross on the church is especially useful at night to guide us through the docks."

Angi Nutt continued: "The cross is a beacon and a lovely symbol of the light of the church in the community."

Fairtrade resolution

Make 2018 the year your church family embraces Fairtrade. Could yours be the church that takes Winchester up to the number to enable our diocese to reclaim 'Fairtrade Diocese' status?

If you are already committed, why not celebrate again? Let's demonstrate our prophetic global voice in solidarity for

beleaguered workers in the Developing World, and be active agents of social transformation. With just a few weeks until 'Fairtrade Fortnight' in February, there's still time to plan a Fairtrade-themed service. For more information and resources visit www.fairtrade.org There are also locally produced resources. Contact Revd David Hinks 01420 83458 or hinksrev@gmail.com

money on our buildings we need to know what the vision for the buildings will be." They have decided to spend some of it on a project which was already part of their vision— a youth and family worker. "We had already planned this but didn't know where the money was coming from. So we have set up the Avon Valley Partnership Youth and Family Trust."

Gary has also emphasised the psychological challenge that the legacy presents: "If, because of Roy's generosity in leaving his estate to us, we reduce our generosity – either in our own planned giving, or in the other areas of fundraising for Church and charity – then this gift will very soon be used up, and we'll be in a worse situation, both financially and spiritually, than we were before."

This resonates with the thoughts of the Diocesan Stewardship Advisor Gordon Randall who describes giving as an "outworking of discipleship". He says: "Why God wants us to give more is so that we can benefit others and develop mission and ministry, but it also enables the individual giver to grow and become more Christ-like. God gives so we can give and he gives more so that our generosity can grow. It is a blessed circle."

You don't have to have a lot to become part of this blessed circle. Think, for instance of the story of the widow's mite told in both Mark and Luke's gospel, in which a poor widow gives more than she can afford. "The impact of her generosity

has been huge," says Gordon. "She has been an example and an encouragement ever since."

Research into legacies has shown that people often want to know how to leave money in wills but don't want to make a song and dance about it. "Throughout our lives we are encouraged to be generous so it is natural and normal at the end of life that people should seek to offer a lasting legacy," says Gordon.

"Some people may not be able to give as much as they might have wanted to in life but can see legacy giving as making a real difference – a final thank-you to God for his blessings in life."

"God gives so we can give and he gives more so that our generosity can grow. It is a blessed circle."

Parishes are encouraged to have a legacy policy. "It is best to say to anyone who asks about leaving a legacy that if possible they should leave one that is unrestricted in terms of what it can be used for," says Gordon. However a legacy policy could say that money received will go to development or mission projects and not just to fund operation costs. "A policy could say that as far as possible a legacy should be used in accordance with the passions and wishes of the person leaving it," he adds.

Talking about legacies may encourage people to leave a gift but it may also encourage those who have not made a will to do so, taking us back to that 'admonishment' in *The Book of Common Prayer* and to Gordon's thought: "To die without leaving a will is one of the worst legacies someone can leave a family".

A blessed circle—giving and legacies

“Men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health.”

So says *The Book of Common Prayer* which also ‘admonishes’ people to make a will, and the instructions apply to women as well as men.

And many do respond. Each year around 5,000 people leave a gift in their wills to parishes in Church of England, amounting to about £50 million a year, money which is used to fund mission, finance projects, maintain buildings and encourage communities to grow.

Every now and then a church receives a particularly large legacy, something that has happened to both **Romsey** and **Fordingbridge** recently.

In the case of Romsey the money came “out of the blue”. A member of the Romsey Abbey congregation died. He was known as “quiet, but enthusiastic” and “a true man of God” and soon after his death the Abbey received a letter from the executor of his estate advising that the PCC would receive a legacy which should be invested in the Church of England CBF Investment Fund with the income generated used for the general purposes of the PCC

A spokesperson for the Abbey said: “At the moment, the amount received is in excess of £1.6m, but the matter of the estate has not yet been concluded.”

The annual income generated is likely to be in excess of £75,000. The PCC has yet to decide how it will spend majority of this income but already, using some of the income, potential and significant



Romsey Abbey

cuts in the budget for 2018 have been avoided which will enable the Abbey to consolidate and continue the current mission and ministry.

St Mary’s, Fordingbridge, has received £640,000 from Roy Lillington, an organist in the church in the 1970s. When he moved away to Berkshire he would still return to Fordingbridge every Friday evening for choir practice until Sunday evening after Evensong. He was also a senior Scout with local Scouts in the late 1940s and early 50s.

The church knew he had left something to his “beloved St Mary’s” but were unprepared for the actual amount.

Gary Philbrick, Priest in Charge of the benefice in which St Mary’s resides, is keen to emphasise that this is a gift. “We haven’t done anything to ‘earn’ it, or to ‘deserve’ it, it has simply been given to us through Roy’s generosity.” It will be used “for the long-term good of the Church (in its widest sense) – both the building and the people” and the PCC will spend a while deciding how to spend it. “Our vision for the benefice will determine how we use it,” says Gary. “If, for instance, we spend the

A journey in accompaniment for Anna Chaplains



Anna Chaplains, Anna Friends, Bishop David and Rev'd Paul Bradish from King's Worthy

Four new Anna Chaplains and nine Anna Friends were commissioned at the end of October at **St Mary’s, King’s Worthy**, which has now become a hub for Anna Chaplaincy work.

Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends, who are in a supporting role, minister to older people, and as Bishop David said in his commissioning address, this was an

ministry of accompaniment, one in which they would discover Jesus. When speaking with older people, he encouraged the Anna Chaplains and Friends to ask ‘what do I see the Lord doing in this conversation?’ and this, he said, “is where accompaniment begins”. For more on Anna Chaplaincy, visit <https://www.thegiftofyears.org.uk/>

Happy birthday Café 46

Café 46, **Yateley**, was packed and buzzing on its first birthday and blessing by Bishop David at the end of November.

“It’s done a lot for the community,” said Rachel, a regular customer. “I’ve lived in Yateley all my life and I see people here I’ve never seen before. It’s a lovely space and very accessible.”

“It was so needed,” said another customer, Pauline. “There was a need for a place where people could meet and talk. People have gravitated here and it helps combat isolation.”

The café is run by **St Peter’s Church** and is right next to Discoveries charity shop which the church also runs. It has taken 25 years of planning, saving and praying to realise the vision of forming a hub of community life.

Groups meet here, people drop in, there has even been a wake there. It is a place of welcome. Together Café 46 and Discoveries are also a thriving business where the profits are being ploughed back into community initiatives with plans underway to fund a youth worker.

The Bishop's commission for Mission



Andy Saunders explains some of the aspects of BCM to the group.

On a dark winter's night, 30 or so of us are gathered in a church hall in the middle of the Hampshire countryside.

There is nothing particularly special about the hall, there is nothing obviously special about those of us here—we are ordinary men and women. And yet... There is a buzz in the air, a sense that this could be the beginning of something for many of us, or the next step on a journey, and that the impact could be far wider than just within this church hall.

We have gathered for a taster session about the Bishop's Commission for Mission (BCM), a programme which is designed to help equip lay people to follow their vocations by giving them greater skills and knowledge.

BCM is, say Phil Dykes and Andy Saunders who run the programme,

“about the heart of God”. “God's heart,” Phil tells us, “is that everyone should know his love.”

BCM, they explain, is a way of helping us find our place in God's purposes in a world in which society has changed and people's needs have changed. The church too needs to change to reach out to this society and their needs, though this doesn't mean throwing out all that is old. “The church,” says Phil, “needs to take the best of the past, move forward and change.”

We gather in small groups to discuss our response to this and this mirrors what will happen in BCM sessions, for much of the learning that goes on comes from each other, particularly in what are known as ‘action learning sets’. Phil and Andy explain that in each session 30 minutes is usually given over to action learning sets, safe spaces in which

A journey begins

people can discuss what they have been learning and any issues that have arisen. Many people who have taken part in BCM programmes already have remained in touch with those in their sets – they are the same for every session. The only thing that changes each week is who chairs the set as everyone has a go at this.

In this taster session we are encouraged to think about how we might engage with our communities and how BCM might help us by giving us new ideas and resources. Some of us will feel called to be worship leaders, others to some form of pastoral ministry, others to be more effective in witnessing about our faith— these BCM programmes are already available. On the other hand, some may be drawn to the new streams which are currently being developed: leading small groups/nurturing; working with children, youth and families; church planting; fresh expressions of church; or preaching. It will depend on us, our strengths, interests, our own calling.

Throughout the evening Andy and Phil emphasise that BCM is a programme and not a course, nor a qualification. “It is not rigid, it is flexible so that it works with your needs, helps you explore. It is a formational journey and God shapes you on your journey.”

The programme runs over 11 sessions but not over 11 weeks - there is an initial day of three sessions, followed by

six evening or daytime sessions and a final day with two sessions. Participants learn from each other and from practitioners in the given area— “passionate, personal practitioners” as Phil describes them. “They earth some of the theories” he tells us. In between sessions, participants also earth some of the theories by putting them into practice in their own context or visiting

The church needs to take the best of the past, move forward and change.”

others to see another context. “You can pair up with someone and go and visit the other person's church,” explains Andy.

They also keep a diary of personal reflections - we are assured that this is private, just for us — and at the end write a 1,000 word reflection on what they have learned.

Anyone who feels that BCM is for them must receive the backing of their incumbent and PCC who will pay the training fees (currently £90 per person), and must fill in an application form (available at <https://www.winchester.anglican.org/bcm/>). After completing the programme they will be commissioned by Bishop Tim.

And that, of course, will not be the end. It will be the start of new ministries, or the development of current ones, ministries carried out by ordinary lay people like the 30 or so in that church hall, but people who, as Phil says, “leave with a clear vision for ministry, confident in using their gifts, affirmed and encouraged”. And who knows where that may lead?