

AGM Reports for 2013/14, pt 2

Mission Committee Report

The Mission committee continues to meet twice a year to plan Mission Suppers, organise the Minute for Mission slots and discuss issues raised by information received from URC Headquarters and other organisations such as Christian Aid.

Through our Communion Offering we continue the pattern from previous years, supporting a smaller number of charities over a longer period of time. In many cases the Minute for Mission at the end of the month is used to provide information and updates on the charity that we support in the following month's Communion Offering. This arrangement has continued over the last twelve months and appears to be working well. In 2013 we supported the Retired Ministers' Housing Fund, the Junior Church Charity, Traidcraft, Rivers of Living Water, Friends of Vellore, Children of Fiji, Lewis Manning Hospice, Young Minds, Chaplaincy Wessex, Bournemouth Churches' Housing Association, Alpha India, Routes to Roots and the Bible Society.

The Mission Suppers are always happy occasions, providing members with an opportunity to have fellowship together as we share a meal and learn about work that a particular charity is doing to help those less fortunate than ourselves. As in previous years we have organised two events since the last AGM, one in the autumn and one in the spring. At our harvest supper last September the Rev. Chris Rowberry from St. John's Church Hedge End, came to talk about the work of the Amos Trust in Israel and Palestine. Chris gave us an interesting first-hand account of the work that the Amos Trust is doing in following a visit that he and his wife had made to the

project in May last year. From the Harvest Supper and the Harvest Thanksgiving offering we made a donation of £445 to the Amos Trust. Food brought to our Harvest Festival service was again given to the Poole Food Bank, who was very pleased to receive non-perishable food from our Harvest Festival service and also fresh food from our window displays. At our spring event this year, held on Saturday 15th March Les and Gill Sherlock came to talk about the work of a local Christian charity Child of Hope, run by their daughter and her husband in Uganda. From visits that they have made to Uganda most years they gave an excellent and moving presentation on the work that is being done, primarily through a school that they set up, in the Namatala slum on the edge of Mbale in eastern Uganda. As in previous years there was a much better attendance at our harvest Supper (around 50) compared to the spring event where attendance is around 30. This continues to be an area of concern for the Mission Committee.

The United Reformed Churches' Commitment for Life programmes continues to be supported by about 30 members. We have made significant contributions to this programme for at least the last 13 years. Last year members contributed £2183, the fifth year in succession that we have raised more than £2000. Thank you to all who have supported, and continue to support Commitment for Life.

Finally, my thanks to fellow members of the Mission Committee; our minister Caroline, Pat Johnson, David and Saz Holland, Janet Meachin and Eileen Thurston, for their work and support throughout the year.

Ian McDonald

Children's And Youth Work Report 2013/14

This year has seen a change of format in the way that our youth work is led and drawn together, with the formation of the Children's and Youth Work Forum. We have representation from all our different strands of youth work and aim to work together to spread the word of God to those families that touch the life of the church in one way or another.

Toddlers

The Toddler Group has continued to meet most Wednesday afternoons throughout the year and after a quiet start at the beginning of September we now see over 20 parents/carers/grandparents and one great grandfather with their children in the hall. The team, including Joan Dyer, Pat Purser, Julia Gowen, Sandra Taylor, Janet Meachin and Isobel Evans, arrange different activities each week. This year a teddy bear's picnic was organised in the summer and Christmas was celebrated with the arrival of Father Christmas. Thank you George for being willing to play this role. From our weekly contributions we have been able to replace toys and books where necessary and to support the work of Home Start and the BURC

funds.

May we take this opportunity to thank church members for the support they give us, especially Caroline who regularly visits us when she is able.

Pop-ins

We continue to hold five very popular pop-ins during the year, seeing many familiar faces along with some new families every time. Caroline and I have had some very encouraging conversations with the parents and it is apparent that they are keen for the children to learn more about Jesus and the Bible and they enjoy reading the stories with their children at home afterwards. When we start talking about worship, it is clear that there are some parents who had a church experience as a child but who feel unable to commit to church on a weekly basis. There are also parents who feel uncomfortable about coming to church due to a fear of the unknown coupled with a fear that their children will make a noise!

Caroline has had a pop-in/toddler family approach her about a baptism which is due to take place in June.

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Children's And Youth Work Report *continued*

We are welcoming the Praizin' Hands puppets from Hythe URC to our pop-in on 28th June, so please put the date in your diary and come along to see a dramatization of the story of Zaccheus.

We have a large, supportive and incredibly enthusiastic team who work tirelessly to ensure that pop-ins are well prepared, planned and thought-out every single time with no drop in the incredibly high standards that the community have come to expect of these events.

Pop-In Express

Siobhan, Jane and Shirley continue to plan and run the monthly pop-in express for children aged 8 and over on the second Saturday of the month. At each session the children take part in a variety of games and handicrafts connected to a Christian theme. They also have a discussion and may watch a video on the theme after tea. They have 23 children on the books, and attendance varies from 6 to 12 each month.

Pop-in Express supported the Junior Church charity last year and are doing so again in 2014. This year they are linking some of their themes with the pop-ins which resulted in the Jonah display in February and will see a joint session in June with the visit of the Praizin' Hands puppets. They are also hoping to get involved with the shoe-box appeal this year.

Our thanks go to Siobhan, Jane and Shirley who work so hard to ensure an enjoyable and fulfilling Christian experience for the children each month.

Junior Church

The zeer pot charity collected an amazing £1,326.99 – a huge thank-you to the church for their support with this. This year's charity is solar lanterns, so please support our annual musical ploughman's lunch on Sunday 27th April.

The orchestra continues to play in church on a monthly basis and it is great that we have successfully opened this up to the whole church family. Our Seekers continue to attend regularly and play a part in worship from time to time.

We laid on craft activities at the Broadstone Summer Jam event last July and plan to do so again this year – this contribution by the Broadstone churches was very much appreciated at last year's event.

We have a number of families who are connected to the church and attend from time to time, and the Forum

has been discussing how we might seek to encourage these families whilst ensuring that both parents and children have a worthwhile and fulfilling experience. What became apparent very early in our deliberations was that we didn't want to divide our church family by having separate services for families. Our vision for 2014 was to provide church that is attractive for all ages and to provide for all ages within the church and for those on the periphery of the church.

After much deliberation, discussion and research with other churches, we have come up with a proposal which we are calling Family

Worship Mix which would run on the fourth Sunday morning of the month. In noting that families feel unable to commit to weekly church, they would nevertheless get a more beneficial experience if they all came on the same Sunday. The format of this service would be loosely based around the service which Tim led a few weeks ago with an opportunity for the whole church family to worship God and study his Word through a choice of creative arts, discussion, prayer and, for those who prefer a more traditional approach, a topical sermon. All the activities will be open to a mix of ages from children to adults. We will begin with praise and worship in the church before breaking for the various activities, returning later for a short time of sharing together.

It has become clear to us that there are parents who are uncomfortable with a sermon, therefore by encouraging those of all ages to take part in the practical activities, we hope our message will be accessible to all, with the opportunity for a more relaxed approach to church.

We have started producing invitations to our family services (Christmas and Mothering Sunday, to date) which go to Toddlers, the Beavers, with whom we continue to maintain a close relationship, and those families who have a link with the church. There is the potential for a number of children of all ages at these services and at the new Family Worship Mix, therefore, I hope you will be ready with your Broadstone welcome!

Finally, a huge vote of thanks to all those who work so tirelessly and with such enthusiasm to ensure that our youth work and outreach continues to be successful.

Gill McDonald

Music Group report for 2013/14

Our objective is to provide music to add to our services of worship, because music is an important way to express our faith and has been mentioned in the earliest books in the Bible. In that music is also important in our culture and everyday lives, it is possible for it to be common ground for those coming newly into the church.

We have sung our way through the church's year, as you will know, with a range of music including "Be still my soul" to the Finlandia tune, arrangements of contemporary worship songs and anthems from our 'flexible' anthems book. Whilst music by John Rutter still featured ('All things bright and beautiful' at harvest) music by ex-Kings Singer Bob Chilcott featured at Christmas with his carol 'The shepherds sing'. Alan Bullard is another whose compositions or arrangements we have used during the year.

I was personally pleased and would like to thank the

members of the group who were willing and able to sing at the wedding of Kathryn and David – albeit augmented by many of their friends – under the baton of Iain Nesbit, Organist of Witley Parish Church, and with Sam Hanson on the organ. We had a good time singing "The heavens are telling" from Haydn's 'Creation' and 'Faith, Hope and Love', a piece composed by David for Kathryn for their day.

I am grateful to the members of the Music Group for their faithful support during the year, and their fun and encouragement. It is not all hard work and if anyone would like to try us out we would be delighted to welcome them to our meeting. If you are interested, please talk to me or any member of the group. We meet on Thursdays, 8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. in the Waterman Lounge. Also, if you have any suggestions of music you would like to hear, hear more of, etc. please let me know.

Martin Casey

