

Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.

If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing:

info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

MEET THE TEAM

I hope to introduce some of the team in the coming months and Yvonne our churchwarden has very kindly volunteered to set us off:

This is a new initiative to give some insight into the various roles of those who lead our church and support the work of our incumbent. We are now blessed with Revd. Amanda Spence, so it seems an appropriate time to include regular articles in our parish magazine. Those of you who take the *Hayes Herald* will have read Revd. Amanda's lead letters and of course our congregation have the benefit of more direct contact.

So, we start with the role of churchwarden. At the time of writing, I have commenced my fourth consecutive year serving as your churchwarden, which I shared with David James for the first three years, during the interregnum and until May this year. This is preferably a role that is shared between two people. Many of you will recall this is my second appointment, as I have previously served for three years, after which I took on the role of verger.

It is difficult to fully define the role of churchwarden – we are the Bishop's officers. Nevertheless, it has to have some structure, as shown below.

Personal Qualifications:

Essential:

- Communicant Member of Church of England (or other church in communion with C of E)
- On Electoral role of St Mary's
- Over 21

Preferred: In sympathy with churchmanship of St Mary's

Responsibilities (in brief):

- Regular attendance at Sunday 10.30 service
- Writing up and giving out notices
- Attendance at special services, ie Christmas, Easter etc.

Liaison:

- Regular liaison with incumbent and other CW
- Regular liaison with vergers

Committee Meetings:

- PCC and Finance and Standing Committee Meetings
- Share attendance at other sub-committees with other CW

Administrative:

- Annual Report to APCM (Fabric and General shared between CWs)
- Co-signatory on financial payments
- Annual inventory of fabric and contents
- Oversight of church collection/counting/safety

Fostering relationships within the church:

- Acting as reference point/responding to queries from church members
- Liaison with incumbent on any staff issues

Other responsibilities:

- Oversight of repair and maintenance issues
- Oversight of sides people and service rota
- Shared alarm call out
- Name and contact on church notice board/magazine/website
- Assistance to minister during services as required
- Support of significant church functions and events as appropriate
- Exercise of churchwarden statutory functions in and around the church building and churchyard.

As many of you will already know, I shall be standing down as churchwarden at the next APCM (April 2024). As I am the only churchwarden at present, it is therefore essential that we have, preferably, two people or more as deputies, willing to give this role consideration. There is training available via the diocese and I am more than happy to talk

to anyone who is interested in exploring this role further. It is a responsible position as outlined, but as a voluntary role, I have felt it a great privilege to serve. I hope to retain my roles as verger (and churchyard superintendent), which does relieve a burden that previous wardens, for many years, were responsible for.

**Yvonne Pickford
Churchwarden**

Many thanks to Yvonne for giving a full account of the many elements to keeping St Mary's serving the community. You can see from this comprehensive list how Yvonne currently serves the church.

The above defines the job as it has been but expectations for anyone coming forward can be shared amongst a team and some also delegated, to accommodate what people are reasonably able to do and make it more manageable. We have a Standing Committee that deals with church building; noting attendance at services can also be shared. Rather than a list of duties, the vision for the churchwardens is being part of team supporting the mission of the church by working alongside myself and others working together to develop the church for the future.

Rev'd Amanda



DATA PROTECTION

A reminder that as we start back after the summer holidays with new meetings, new committees, new members and old, etc., please ensure that you blind copy (Bcc – in your email 'To' box) all collective groups of people. It does not matter how well you know them or how well they know each other, it is safer and there is less risk of widespread hacking of their email and of course your own!

Mary Whytock

CHURCH CHARITY COFFEE MORNINGS

I am very pleased to say that we have now been able to reinstate our monthly charity coffee mornings.

On Friday 11th August we held a coffee morning to raise money for the Hayes Community Foodbank. With a lot of fun and laughter we raised £295! It was nice that Fran and Jean, two volunteers at the HCF, were able to join us. Fran told us that on average the HCF has 50 people weekly that they help, that the supplies are collected from contribution boxes held at several local supermarkets, and that Sponge Kitchen very generously give their un-purchased supplies to them and that they are able also to get supplies from Fair-share. There are volunteers who deliver the bags of food to all who have need. It's nice to know that amongst the volunteers are members of our congregation. My thanks go to all who contributed and to all who helped on Friday 11th. I could not have done it without you!

If anybody would like to arrange a coffee morning or even a tea afternoon for your favourite charity, please let me know.

Mary-Ann Cooper
020 8462 1091

LUKE'S GOOD NEWS

In one of the early scenes in the classic Hollywood movie *Ben Hur*, Judah Ben Hur welcomes the new Roman Tribune, Massala, to Jerusalem. They had been very good friends as young boys, and revive memories of that friendship by each in turn throwing a spear at a wooden cross beam that happens to be in the Tribune's quarters. They both hit the target. After the excitement of finding that their skills had not left them, they move on to drink a toast together, but the film hovers over that cross beam. A short time later, Judah is accused falsely of an attempt on the life of the new Governor (Pilate). He is arrested and put in a cell. As he tries to escape, he finds himself under the same cross beam. At that moment the film again hovers on the beam. Cinematically, this image of the cross forms a powerful backdrop to the rest of the film, which ends in a similarly powerful climax at the foot of the cross where, in the words of a street beggar, 'the young Jewish Rabbi', Jesus, is being crucified. No further spoiler alerts!

When Luke wrote his gospel, his immediate audience may not of course have been as sceptically dismissive as people today due to over-

familiarity with the Christian story; but he was addressing a sophisticated Roman and Greek world, in which the idea of a crucified divine Messiah was either simply foolish, or dangerous, a threat to social stability. Paul later explained in his letter to the Corinthians how Romans, Greeks and Jews of his day, just could not get their heads around the nature of Christ's suffering and death. And why.

As we begin reading through the gospel, it becomes clear that for Luke the story of Jesus is of critical significance for the world of his day (and ours!). For this reason, he says, he has researched thoroughly to ensure his material accurately represents what Jesus said and did. He is convinced that the story of Jesus represents good news (that is what the word gospel means) for the whole world.

Which is why it may seem strange and paradoxical that the cross – the death of Jesus – from the beginning forms the backdrop to Luke's gospel. The one who has come to be the Saviour of His people and the world, will do so through His death. And throughout the gospel, Luke inserts various geographical pointers; it is almost as if we are invited to join as pilgrims, as Jesus early on predicts His death, yet continues on His way to Jerusalem. And on the way He teaches His disciples about His coming kingdom, preparing them for the role they will play after His death, in taking the gospel to the world.

Within about 250 years of course the faith of these 'foolish' disciples had become the faith of the whole Roman world. The world had been turned upside down.

In our Bible studies working through Luke, we have been meditating on the message of the gospel and asking ourselves what is Luke's – and Jesus' - message to us today? And crucially, why did Jesus, a perfectly good and righteous man, have to die?

In September we restart our pilgrimage in the gospel of Luke. All are welcome! (See diary on pp 8-9 for dates and times.)

David James

~~~~~

**The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.**

**For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email [ocs.hayes@hotmail.com](mailto:ocs.hayes@hotmail.com)**



Thank you to all at St Mary's who are holding me in their prayers. I feel greatly strengthened by all your prayers as I face major surgery on Monday at Guy's Hospital. Rev'd Amanda and Mary-Ann Cooper are very kindly taking over from me whilst I recover. Mary-Ann's telephone number is 0208 462 1091 if you need to contact her.

Our next meetings are 10.30am in the Meetings Room, on **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September** and **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October**. In October we are fortunate to have a Mothers' Union prison visitor who is going to tell us her role as a Rochester men's prison visitor and all that that entails. We are still continuing our social meetings, 11am at the New Inn on **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September** and **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October**. The Autumn Members' Meeting is on **21<sup>st</sup> October** at St Mary's Church, Kippington, Sevenoaks.

As many of you know, we The Mothers' Union movement began in 1876. Mary Sumner, the wife of a rector in Hampshire, set up a group to support mothers of all kinds in bringing up their children. After delivering a speech in 1885 to churchgoing women at the Portsmouth Church Congress, she inspired many of them to go back to their parishes and set up similar groups. Over time the groups who met as Mothers' Union became embedded in their communities. They forged strong links with local people and the Anglican Church. They worked to support one another and give a voice to disadvantaged women while addressing wider societal issues. Driven by Mary Sumner's passion for the role of women in bringing about a better society, the groups proved very popular. By 1892, membership had reached 60,000 in 28 dioceses, which was to grow to 169,000 members by the turn of the century. In 1893, annual general meetings were organised, and, in 1896, Mothers' Union Central Council was formed.

On 9<sup>th</sup> August each year, Mothers' Union celebrate Mary Sumner Day. In the past, Hayes MU have made a pilgrimage to Rochester where we gathered for a special service in the Cathedral. This year, Rev'd Amanda was honoured to be asked by Erith Deanery to be one of their 'pilgrimage prayer' stops. Our members gave her a very warm welcome.

## **Burundi Report**

We are delighted to be launching our report about the long-term impacts of our Literacy and Financial Education Programme in Burundi which has

been running for over 20 years. This report is significant in both its scope and in its conclusions. Reflecting on 20 years of programme work in Burundi, it charts and measures cumulative impacts over that period in areas of literacy, poverty alleviation, girls' education, sustainable savings groups, employment creation and family and community cohesion.

The highlights include:

Over 165,000 people (77% women) have participated in the programme in some of the most disadvantaged and hard to reach communities. Of those participants, over 144,000 have learned to read and write and now have a formal literacy qualification. This accounts for 2.9% of the adult literate population in Burundi.

7,500 participants accessed the parenting education element of the programme which has resulted in improved relationships between spouses and their children. 98% of participants interviewed report that their ability to now read the Bible has changed their relationship with God and given them a greater sense of belonging to their local church.

6,200 savings and loans associations have been created. Over 84% of those formed have grown organically beyond the formal support of the programme.

The economic and social impacts of the programme deliver on eight of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, alongside nurturing self-worth, value and spiritual maturing; which in turn empowers participants to take on leadership within their churches and wider communities.

We have worked in partnership with Five Talents, Development Services International (DSI) and Lakarmissionen (LM) to create this sustainable programme, highlighting the impact of successful partnership working.

“The programme is giving voice to the voiceless.” “It has been more than a programme – a movement, given the very high levels of community ownership and alignment with women's and community priorities. This was clearly a programme designed with the ‘grain’ of the vision for change that people have for themselves. It has taken on a ‘life of its own’ as women and men whose lives have been improved spread the word to others about the positive changes in their lives.”

I thought I would include this article as it shows the impact that Mothers' Union is having around the world.

If you are interested in finding out more about Mothers' Union please contact Mary-Ann **0208 462 1091**.

**Avril Ashford**

## ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY SEPTEMBER 2023

**Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom\* and Tuesdays to Fridays in Church throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).**

### 13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

|                                 |                 |                                                                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>    | 8.00am          | Holy Communion BCP                                                 |
|                                 | 10.30am         | Morning Praise<br>Sunbeams session** (age 3-5)                     |
|                                 | 12.00noon       | Baptism: George Francis<br>Mortlock-Ruffle                         |
| <b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup></b>   | 11.00am-12.15pm | Bible Study**                                                      |
| <b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup></b> | 10.30am         | Coffee morning for the bereaved<br>and those living on their own** |
|                                 | 12.30-3.30pm    | Welcome Space**                                                    |

### 14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

|                                  |               |                                              |
|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup></b>    | 8.00am        | Holy Communion BCP                           |
|                                  | 10.30am       | Morning Praise<br>Blaze session** (age 6-10) |
| <b>Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup></b> | 12.30-3.30pm  | Welcome Space**                              |
| <b>Friday 15<sup>th</sup></b>    | 10.00-11.00am | Twinkles – singing, story,<br>Snacks**       |

### 15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

|                                  |                 |                     |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b>    | 8.00am          | Holy Communion BCP  |
|                                  | 9.15am          | Fresh Start         |
|                                  | 10.30am         | Parish Communion CW |
| <b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup></b>   | 11.00am-12.15pm | Bible Study**       |
| <b>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup></b> | 12.30-3.30pm    | Welcome Space**     |



## 16<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

|                                  |                   |                                                                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup></b>    | 8.00am<br>10.30am | Holy Communion BCP<br>Parish Communion CW<br>Blaze session** (age 6-10) |
|                                  | 5.00-6.00pm       | Illuminate** (Bible study, age 10-18)                                   |
| <b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup></b>    | 10.30am           | Mothers' Union**                                                        |
| <b>Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup></b> | 12.30-3.30pm      | Welcome Space**                                                         |

\*\* denotes Meetings Room

\*For Zoom link contact the church office

The church is also open for private prayer on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



## RECENT BAPTISMS IN THE PARISH

Elias and Julia Gudinchet

## HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

September is always in holiday mode for HMF. There's no meeting with a visiting speaker, nor an outing to preview, nor even a monthly Newsletter to send out to members. So let's just look back on our recent events.

After a good run of weather for HMF Outings, the weather for our trip to Bressingham Steam Museum and Gardens near Diss in Norfolk changed – but not completely! It was rather overcast when we set off on the coach from Husseywell Crescent at around 08:30. Our Driver was Mark, who we have had several times, and we had 42 people on board – close to the average for all this year's Outings.

The Gardens were established by Alan Bloom MBE at Bressingham Hall which he moved to in 1946. He was a plant expert of international renown, particularly in the field of hardy perennials. He laid out the Dell Garden, with its island beds. His son, Adrian Bloom, laid out five additional gardens for year-round interest, starting with Foggy Bottom in 1963. Both of these very substantial gardens are still key features. Overall, the site covers 220 acres and over the years has been developed to include a plant nursery, garden centre, 12 Gardens and Beds including the Dell and Foggy Bottom gardens, three narrow gauge railways, a Gallopers, Steam Museum and the Dad's Army collection.

There were plenty of highlights and not really enough time to make the most of them:-

- Garden Railway – a miniature gauge (10.25 inch) railway that takes passengers around the picturesque Dell Garden. The engine used was built in 1995.
- The Fen Railway – a much longer narrow gauge (23.5 inch) railway running past a lake with bullrushes, meadows, horses, cattle and a field of potatoes too for 2.5 miles. We were pulled by “Bevan” an engine built in 2010 but there are other engines of this gauge here dating back to 1883.
- Waveney Valley Railway - another miniature gauge (15 inch) railway that follows a similar route to the Fen but for only 1.5 miles. We were pulled by Beaver, a small diesel based on a BR Class 22 locomotive.
- The Gallopers – this large carousel with three rows of horses was built in 1897. Originally steam powered it now runs on electricity and is accompanied by a 1954 Bruder Fairground Organ. The music was loud and eclectic, ranging from Sweet Caroline to the William Tell Overture!

- The Exhibition Hall housed both the Steam Museum and the Dad's Army Collection. The Steam Collection includes several traction engines and some examples of these were seen driving round the site. In fact, the driver of one of them was recognised from the Channel 5 TV Programme "*Inside the Steam Train Museum*". There was also a magnificent 15 inch gauge locomotive called Rosenkavalier built by Frederick A G Krupp of Essen in 1937. A sister locomotive Fleisseges Lieschen was transferred from Bressingham to the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway in 1976 where it operates as the Black Prince.
- The Hall also includes a reconstruction of the High Street in the fictional Walmington-on-Sea with the butcher's shop of Lance-Corporal Jones, Private Frazer's undertaker's shop and Captain Mainwaring's bank and office. These are accompanied by four vehicles from various episodes or films and include the iconic butcher's van of Lance-Corporal Jones (below).



Disabled members of our group were pleased to see that there was good access to two of the trains. One had a special carriage to take wheelchairs with a short steep ramp to board (but with staff happy to assist), and the other a carriage that quickly converted to take a wheelchair and was at the same level as the platform so was easy to board. On the other hand, the paths were mainly gravel, and were crossed by rail tracks, which made pushing a wheelchair hard work!

Next we had our walk in the Edenbridge area. We were again lucky, with the weather again ideal for walking, sunny but not too hot. The eight walkers started their circular five-mile walk from the pub car park, going across open grassland and some fields left to go wild – many interesting plants were growing as a result. Following advice from one of the walkers, they diverged a little from the planned route to avoid a road

section. This was a good choice, quieter, safer and enabling them to see things that would otherwise have been missed. A very good lunch was provided by “The Old Eden” at Edenbridge.

Our walkers plan to continue each month as usual. No break just yet for our activity organisers either, as both the outings sub-committee and the full committee meet at this time to finalise our plans for a full programme of activities from October, when we welcome members back for the next Session. This will start, as always, with our annual church service at St Mary’s Parish Church in Hayes – more about that here later.

That new Session is also an excellent time for retired or semi-retired men of any faith or none to consider joining us, thus gaining full benefit of a complete year in congenial company. Just take a look later in September at our website on [www.hayesmensfellowship.org](http://www.hayesmensfellowship.org) or call us for a friendly chat on the contact details below. More news from us next and every month here in the pages of *Hayes Herald*.

**Allan Evison**, HMF Chairman    **Graham Marsden**, HMF Secretary

e-mail: [secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org](mailto:secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org)

phone: **07764 153383**

## **SUNBEAMS**

Our children at Sunbeams and Twinkles give me great joy. Recently at Sunbeams I was telling the children the story of the Prodigal Son who when he asked his father for his share of his money then squandered it in riotous living. He ended up feeding a farmer’s pigs and eating their food because he was so hungry before realising he would be much better off as one of his father’s servants.

I explained to them that the Father in the story loved his son very much, in spite of the way he had behaved, and was so happy to welcome him home. In the same way God loves us all the time even though he doesn’t always love the way we behave.

The following week they heard about the lost sheep and how hard the shepherd looked for it, never giving up on it. They learnt the shepherd was like Jesus and we are the sheep who he watches over. We also spent a little time hunting for a sheep in the Meeting Room. It wasn’t easy to find but we were very happy when it was found.

As God’s children we must cause him such sorrow when we turn away from him but when we come back he is always ready to welcome us home with joy.

**Hilary Burtonshaw**

## THOUGHTS FROM WESTGATE

I have always known that I have salt water in my veins. Both my parents were born in seaside towns, my mother in Weymouth, my father in Devonport. My mother, especially, missed the sea when, after her marriage and for the rest of her life, she lived, first in London, then in South London suburbia. She longed for the sight and sound of it and for its unmistakable energising smell. After the war she would spend months each year planning our escape, usually to the west country and always to the seaside. Even before those holidays, my sister and I were already familiar with sand and sea. During the Blitz my mother had taken us to Looe in South Cornwall, where we had remained for some months. And twice, in the later war years to escape the flying bombs (which we called doodle-bugs) and the even more destructive rockets, we had stayed with our maternal grandmother in Christchurch, Hampshire (now Dorset). My mother would have been happy, I know, if only my father could have come too, but his essential work was in London. My sister and I *were* happy. My mother's two sisters lived nearby and since one had two and the other six children we had plenty of company and were never bored. My cousins taught me to swim and introduced us both to the delights of 'messing about in boats'.

I don't think I consciously hoped or expected to marry a sailor. If I had I would have been disappointed. My husband, a countryman, did not appreciate beach holidays. Although we sometimes took our children to spend a few hours on the Sussex coast, our holidays were always inland, in Derbyshire, Yorkshire or the Lake District. This was not a penance: we all enjoyed walking, especially in such lovely countryside, but I confess that I, as my mother had, missed the sea. So it is not surprising that, living alone as I did many years later, realising it would be sensible to move nearer to one or other of my children, I chose to live in Westgate, by the sea and not too far from London or from my friends in Hayes. I am happily settled near my younger daughter and her husband, in a small, pleasant town. We have a railway station, lots of buses, medical support services as well as a GP surgery, shops, even a cinema, all close at hand. And I live within easy walking distance (even for me) of the sea. Incidentally both my son and my elder daughter live in villages, the one in rural Lincolnshire (my husband would have liked that) and the other on the North Devon coast, undeniably beautiful, but unlike Westgate, not flat!

I have been by the sea most of this afternoon, as I very often am. For much of the year, as I approach the sea front, I am assailed by a stiff breeze, but today, in early July, it is almost windless, and very hot. The beach is crowded, and many people are in the water. The tide is halfway out, and beyond the bathers the sea is sparkling and calm. Disappointed

Andy Murray fans are lamenting his second-round defeat at Wimbledon, and cricket enthusiasts are holding their breath as they await the outcome of the second test match at Lord's. Less engaged than usual, I have no wish to be at either venue, nor am I tempted by the TV. Sitting on my favourite bench, on a path above and behind the esplanade at Westgate's St Mildred's Bay, watching children playing games on the beach is all the entertainment I need. And as I look out to sea, I wonder idly what are the purpose and destination of two or three small boats I can see in the distance; I marvel at the grace of wheeling seagulls as they fly towards the horizon, and wonder about them too.

It is evening now, and I have returned home. I am indoors, watching the sun's declining rays as they illuminate the lovely trees, cherries and holm oaks, in the square my balcony overlooks, and the mellow red brick of mainly Victorian houses which surround it. It is cooler now, and there is a light breeze gently lifting curtains which hang at my open door, moving the still air, and relieving the stuffiness of a room which has been shut up for most of the day. As I sit, still watching, still dreaming, I am content. If I close my eyes I can see the sea, which will still be here tomorrow, only ten minutes away. Why would I not have made the decision, a couple of years ago now, to move to sunny Westgate, Westgate by the sea?

**Hilary Abrahams**

## **THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*  
(John 14:27)

I often find it hard to find peace. I try to find it in the beauty of nature, listening to birdsong or beautiful, peaceful music – it helps but it isn't the answer. I also try to find it in prayer; prayers of intercession for people do draw us nearer to God, but for me are not in themselves the complete answer to finding peace.

I have thought a lot recently about the words of Christ on this subject. He offers us his peace and tells us that it is not like anything the world can give us. Jesus was 'one' with his Father and spent his life in constant communication with him. He prayed constantly. Even in the Garden of Gethsemane he prayed to his Father for strength and peace in order to face his final sacrifice on the cross. In spite of all his suffering he

knew peace with his Father and offers us the same peace to help us live our lives. So how do we receive it?

We need to be imitators of Christ if we want to share in his peace. He loved and served all people – so should we. He comforted the distressed and told them of God's love for them – so should we. If we can become like Christ in these ways through prayer we will find ourselves closer to the heart of the Father and know that peace which passes all understanding. I suppose it is ultimately about surrendering ourselves to God through prayer and an act of will. He wants to come and live in every 'room' in our hearts. Sometimes I have found that to be possible but too often I reclaim the rooms in my heart and lose the peace of Christ, only to feel lost and adrift and needing him again.

Fortunately, he is so gracious that when I call out to him in distress, he comes with his peace, again and again, as I stumble along on the journey of my life.

**David Langford**

## **CHURCHES URGED TO HELP IN RE-SETTLEMENT OF PEOPLE LEAVING PRISON**

The General Synod has backed a call for churches to join partnerships working to help resettle and rehabilitate people leaving prison.

The Probation Service is already working with churches, bishops and Diocesan Safeguarding Panels to help support people leaving prison. Yet even so, many ex-prisoners are currently unable to find a welcoming faith community in which to settle.

The Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek, who is Bishop for Prisons, said: "We need a holistic approach in everything, and this includes partnership with our probation and our amazing prison chaplains. When people leave prison, our chaplains play a key role in trying to pass on the baton and this is where this motion comes in."

She urged that the churches should be "more imaginative and more connected with the probation service," which would help with "God's work of reconciliation and transformation."

The Chaplain General for Prisons, the Ven James Ridge, said the motion "confidently asserts and acknowledges that faith makes a difference in the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders."

Currently, following risk assessments, people can be connected to community chaplaincy projects or faith communities such as those in the Welcome Directory, connecting prisoners with faith communities that have prepared to welcome them.

A background paper for the General Synod showed that between 30-45% of adults released from prison in any given year will be reconvicted within a year of release and for those on short sentences (less than 12 months) this rises to 55-60%.

***PP News Sept 23***

## **25 YEARS OF GOOGLE**

It was 25 years ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1998, that Google, the internet search company, was founded by Larry Page and Sergey Brin, both students at Stanford University in California.

The company was originally based in a friend's garage at nearby Menlo Park. It began in January 1996 as a simple research project which employed links to decide the importance of individual pages on the world wide web. The two students – both Jewish – worked from their college rooms and called the search engine BackRub, a name fairly rapidly abandoned. Google is a slight misspelling (or reinvention) of the word googol, which is the mathematical term for a 1 followed by 100 zeros.

This turned out to be quite appropriate, given the amount of information involved. Google is now the world's most used search engine by far, leaving such "competitors" as DuckDuckGo, Bing and Yahoo! floundering distantly in its wake.

Google Inc was born officially in late summer 1998 when Sun co-founder Andy Bechtolsheim wrote Page and Brin a cheque for \$100,000. There was a third founder, Scott Hassan, who wrote much of the original code, but he left before Google was officially founded as a company. Today, however, he is described as a serial entrepreneur with a net worth of around a billion dollars.

Being a huge company, Google has plenty of critics, but its code of conduct, stated in 2004, was "Don't be evil" because "we believe strongly that in the long term, we will be better served – as shareholders and in all other ways – by a company that does good things for the world, even if we forgo some short-term gains".

***PP Community Sept 23***

**Items for the October magazine by 16<sup>th</sup> September please. Copy to the Editor: Clare Wickert, 3 Hayes Garden, Hayes.**

**Tel: 020 8462 7161 [wickerts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wickerts@hotmail.co.uk)**

**Business Manager: Gordon Barclay, 29 Hurstdene Avenue, Hayes**

**Tel: 020 8462 2568 [gcbarclay@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gcbarclay@hotmail.co.uk)**

**Church Website: [www.stmaryshayeskent.co.uk](http://www.stmaryshayeskent.co.uk)**

**October magazines will be ready for distribution on 30th Sept.**