

Here's an update for September and October looking back at what has been going on in the parish thanks to the grace of God; as well as the time, prayer, money, and other resources that are generously given by our congregations.



Showing God's love in everything we do

Messy Church

Each month 50+ of us gather from Four Marks, Medstead and surrounding villages as Messy church,

Did you know Messy Church is for everyone- regardless of age.

It is a completely informal style of church built around creativity, celebration and hospitality.

Messy Church will have a different theme each month but will always include a range of activities crafts, food, games, discussion, singing and stories.

Over the next year at Messy Church we will be digging deeper into Who God is.



For September we used both Genesis 1, God at the beginning and Exodus 3 and 34, the Name of God: Yahweh, to think about who God says he is.



In October we built on this theme exploring what the bible says about God as Father, Love, compassion and forgiveness.

Evenings of Prayer



Thank you to all who attended our Evening of Prayer on 24th September and 22nd October.

Our next Evening of Prayer is in the church hall at COGS on this coming Tuesday 26th November, at 7.30pm. It would be great to have you join us

Review of 'Music for an Autumn Afternoon'

Alton Choral Society Concert: Saturday 26th October St Mary's Church Bentworth



Alton Choral society gave it's annual 'Music for an Autumn Afternoon' concert at St Mary's Church, Bentworth on Saturday 26th October. The concert was part of a series of events held to celebrate the recent refurbishment of St Mary's which includes a new kitchen, toilet facilities, state of the art lighting and new wooden flooring.

The choir directed by Wendy Busby and accompanied by Jane Palmer, delighted a large audience with a choral medley from Les Miserables by Claude Michel Schonberg and a collection of West end hits by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

There were also solo performances by Soprano Alison Crow singing 'Here amongst the Shady Woods' By Handel and 'By Strauss' by Gershwin. The second Handel aria 'How Beautiful are the Feet' from The Messiah was sung by alto Nancy Buck. In keeping with the autumn theme, Bass David Sheraton sang Vaughan William's arrangement of Linden Lea. Pianist Patrick Busby followed this with Franz Liszt's Concert Paraphrase on Rigoletto which is a stunning reinvention of the tune to the Verdi aria 'Bella figlia dell'amore.

Over £700 was raised through the raffle and ticket sales. Some of the proceeds from the concert will be given to local charity 'Dementia Friendly Alton'.

Alton Choral Society's next concert will be 'The Wonder of Christmas' in The Alton Maltings Centre at 7pm on Saturday 7th December in aid of Homestart. They will be joined by Alton's excellent concert Band and Ancora female voice choir, for what promises to be a great and lively musical start to the Christmas period.

We are always looking for new members to join our friendly choir. No auditions are necessary, but a basic knowledge of reading music is recommended and a love of making music absolutely essential! We rehearse at the Salvation Army Hall on Wednesday evenings from 7.45pm.

For more details, please check out our website: <https://www.altonchoral.org.uk/>
If you are interested in joining us, please come along to one of our rehearsals and contact our secretary at welcome@altonchoral.org.uk.

Harvest

The Parish celebrated Harvest on Sunday 6th October. As well as our mornings services at both St Andrew's and Medstead, we also held our Harvest Tea & Praise service on the Sunday afternoon. Many thanks to all who assisted with this special service.

A promotional poster for a Harvest Tea & Praise service. The background is a close-up photograph of golden wheat stalks. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Harvest
Tea & Praise**

6th October 2024
3pm

This popular service will be held at
the Church of the Good Shepherd
It will have traditional harvest hymns
followed by delicious cakes and
refreshments

Please invite your neighbours and friends
and bring them along

We look forward to seeing you.

Schools

Howard and Virginia continue to visit Four Marks and Medstead schools weekly on Tuesdays in term time for collective worship.

On October 8th we held Four Marks Primary School's Harvest service in the church of the Good Shepherd in Four Marks, and on the 10th of October Medstead Primary School's Harvest service was held in St. Andrews Church in Medstead.



Jane has also been able to bring story times to Four Marks school reception class each week this month, and was able to take part in their Harvest celebration on 8th October.

COGS Tiny Tots

COGS Tiny tots, for ages 0-12 months, returned to meeting at The Good Shepherd each Monday for September. This month we celebrated Cecelia's first birthday.

This group continues to grow both in relationship and in numbers yet due to other commitments our team is shrinking, Currently Jane is running this without any helpers. Please pray and consider whether you could help out 10:15-12:15 on a Monday morning once or twice a month. Please contact Jane (07711407831) for more information.

COGS Tots

Toddler group is always lots of fun with crafts, games, toys, tents, tunnels and ride on trucks. In September 26 little ones and parents/carers joined us as we told the story of Gods colourful creation and thanked God for all he created.

COGS Tots
For children age 0-4

Welcome

September tots is all about colour

Today we are thinking about all the different colours in God's creation.

What is your favourite colour?

The collage features a large photograph of the church interior where children are playing with toys on a purple carpet. Below this are three smaller photos: a child in a pink shirt wearing a colorful mask, a child in a blue shirt riding a blue toy truck, and a child painting a pumpkin.

Toddler group is always lots of fun with crafts, games, toys, tents, tunnels and ride on trucks. October's session was a busy group, with 33 little ones and 29 parents/carers joining us as we thought about Harvest, gave thanks to God for all he provides and shared the pumpkin patch parable at storytime.

Being a Christian is a bit like being a pumpkin



God picks you from the patch and brings you in
(John 15:16)

Then washes all the dirt from you
(2 Corinthians 5:17)

He opens you up and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate and greed
(Romans 6:6)

Then He creates you a new smiling face
(Psalm 71:23)

and he puts His light inside you to shine for all the world to see
(Matthew 5:16)

Words taken from happyhomefairytory.com

October storytimes for under 5's



10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Christian Book Award

Tuesday 15th October 9-11am

October Tots is all about Autumn and Harvest 

What's on this month...

For the little ones:

Craft
Paint printing with cut fruit and vegetables 

Activity
Autumn sensory table

Story from 10.30
Pumpkin patch parable 

Songs
Old Macdonald
Dingle dangel scarecrow 



Medstead Toddler Group

Jane continues to build relationships with both the team and the families that visit the weekly toddler group at Medstead village hall, chatting with parents, helping with playtime and getting to know the children.

Pre-Schools

Jane continues to visit our three local preschools, Heydays, Butterflies and Medstead, for story time each week in term time.



Jane has also been able to bring story times to Four Marks school reception class each week.

Pre-Schools Harvest

On the 7th October we welcomed Medstead Preschool for their first harvest visit to St Andrew's church followed by a harvest themed play session and story-time in St. Andrews church hall.

Then on the 9th October both Heydays and Butterflies preschools visited The Good Shepherd for their harvest visits. All three preschools enjoyed exploring the beautifully decorated churches, listened to The Pumpkin Patch Parable and took time to thank God

for all He provides



Preschool
Harvest Visits
2024

Jane continues to visit our three local preschools, Heydays, Butterflies and Medstead, for story time each week in term time, this month our weekly stories have had a harvest theme.

Kids Church Family Gatherings

Some of our Kids church families joined us on 28th October for a fun evening around the campfire, cooking sausages, dough twists and marshmallows.



Family Campfire
Sausages, dough twists and marshmallows
Monday 28th October
4.45 - 6.15pm
Book your space with Jane or Virginia
families@pmafm.co.uk
youthandchildren@pmafm.co.uk



Older Children and Youth

The Kids Church continues to meet in the church hall every Sunday. The Church held the Harvest service in the church on the 6th of October, it was an all age service where the young people lead the congregation into the readings from the Bible and children lead in the time of prayers and also into an action song.

The Youth continued to meet in the upper room in the church on the second and fourth Sunday each month.

The Youth Club on Friday has now moved to be on Monday every week. 4:15pm to 6:15pm is the time for the first group (year 6-8) to meet. And 5:30pm to 7:30pm the second group (year 9 and plus) meets. Both the groups enjoy their meal together between 5:30 to 6:15pm.



It is a great space for young people to connect with each other through games, crafts and other fun activities. They also have opportunity to hear from the Bible and have discussions and interactions during the Bible talk.



Tea & Chat/Tea & Bowls/Coffee & Questions

Tea and Chat

Since September can be a time of new beginnings for many people, we used this theme for our September meeting. After discussing various new beginnings we had experienced in our lives, such as starting a new job, moving house, etc., and how we felt at these times, we examined a number of quotes about new beginnings made by famous people. Working in groups, we then created our own very thoughtful sayings on this theme. The session finished with a "Beginnings Quiz" before we enjoyed a lovely afternoon tea with the bowlers. We were joined by some of our friends from Belford House and had a record turn out of 31 guests!

Coffee and Questions

The question we examined in September was "How do we sometimes use our mouths in negative or ungodly ways?" After creating a diagram of the many ways in which we sometimes do this, we examined a number of verses from the Bible on this theme. We then discussed the impact our words can often have on others, and the need to think very carefully before we speak.

Our next Tea & Chat and Tea & Bowls on Wednesday 20th November and our next Coffee & Questions is Wednesday 27th October.

Community Cupboard

Community cupboard with COGS café continues to meet every Thursday at the Good Shepherd from 3.30pm. We meet with 20-25 households each week to help save food from landfill but also build an intergenerational community space with our community cafe. We are still looking for one more person to join our friendly team, if you could help fill this space 3-5pm once a month, please speak to Jane. a DBS application and safeguarding training are required to volunteer in this role.

Vicar: Howard Wright

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Family Worker: Jane Hughes

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Youth & Children's Minister: Virginia

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