



FLEET

United Reformed Church

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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AGM - Minster's Report - Fleet URC

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path

Psalm 119:105

Another year rolls on under God's guiding hand, where '*reflection is good for the soul*', or so my Pastoral Tutor informed me. So even though some may balk at AGM reports, it is right that we should consider how God has been working through Fleet United Reformed Church, its members and the community in which we are situated.

Psalm 119: 105 '*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path*', helps us understand that worshipping a God of Love is the reason we follow Jesus. The '**word**' is the daily or weekly substance of prayer and worship. It is the reason why we wake up each morning, to be aware of the endless possibilities that await us and the opportunities that have been created for us.

Discipleship

As a light shines in the darkness, so we as Christian Disciples should mirror that brightness in our day to day lives. However the story of discipleship is not just about shining Christ's light for ourselves, it means sharing the light with other people. It is not just holding onto Christ's light for our own means, but to shine God's light with others or even pass the light on to others who live in the shadows of life.

So what does having the Christ light within us mean?

'Living in the Light' means being open to:

- The Wisdom of God
- The Love of God
- The Grace of God
- The Generosity of God.

'Living in the Light', means that we must '**walk the talk**', and allow the Christ light to shine in our daily lives, whatever we are doing.

'Living in the light' enables us to show the Fruits of Spirit, that is Love, Joy, Peace, Self-control, Kindness, Forgiveness, Goodness, Faithfulness and Gentleness.

Worship.

Worship should be an occasion where we immerse ourselves in the presence of God', whether it is a Sunday morning worship, a parade service, or an evening contemplative service. Each service brings a unique opportunity to revive ourselves in the 'Light of God'.

We have a blessed opportunity to experience different forms of worship given by different preachers. Each bringing a unique slant to their understanding of living within the 'Light of God'. There is no right or wrong way to worship, and worship can take a variety of forms. Here are some below:

Traditional:- the usual Sunday service at Fleet, with hymns, prayers and a sermon.

Liturgical:- a more rigid worship style with incense.

Praise and worship:- a more informal style with many contemporary songs and the use of different instruments.

Seeker-sensitive:- a more flexible all age worship which may include the Parade Fleet URC has on a regular basis, or the developing 'Cafe Church' with discussion merged throughout the service.

Contemplative:- a quiet, reflective service focussing on images, and meditation. Usually the evening service at Fleet URC is of a contemplative nature

I know I mentioned this in last years report, but I still would like to explore the possibility of a Fleet URC Worship Group, who would regularly conduct worship whether morning or evening. It was highlighted in Helen Everard's report 12 months ago, and we still need to explore this further. A few questions then to leave you with as we consider worship in the last 12months.

What elements in worship enabled you to feel blessed?

Reflect on a service which has ***brought you into the presence of God?***

Why did that happen ? Was something happening in your life for you to receive God's word?

Reflect on a service which has ***not brought you into the presence of God.*** Why did that happen? Was something happenig in your life that was a barrier to hearing God's word?

Mission

If God's word is 'a lamp for our feet', then we must make sure that the Wisdom, Love and Generosity of God is taken to all the corners of the world. This is the Purpose and Mission of the Church. I know that many individuals are feeling weary and tired and feel they have nothing to offer, or some have done a role or responsibility for many years and feel that another person with fresh insight and ideas are needed.

Let us always be open to how the Spirit moves and give thanks for all the work done by people from this Church in the many projects both locally and globally.

Final Thoughts

Discipleship, Worship and Mission is a bit like the Trinity. The Three in One are bound and rooted within the Light of God's love for us. I close with the words from Theresa of Avila (1515-1582)

"Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
no hands but yours,
no feet but yours,
Yours are the eyes through which to look out at
Christ's compassion to the world
Yours are the feet with which he is to go about
doing good;
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now."

— **Teresa of Ávila**

May God, who is our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer journey with us, as we remember the past, encounter God in the present, and with faith, face the future.

Every Blessing

Ruth Dillon

January 2016

Secretary's Report

Sadly this year I have to report the passing of Catherine Dumbleton who had been a member of our church for 30 years. She did however attend the wedding of her son Matthew to Rebecca, at the church in September. A very special day. Our prayers are with her family; Stephen, Rebecca and Matthew plus her mother Joan Alderson, who was also a member prior to her move to Yorkshire.

Christine and John Gibbons were proud grandparents when Florence Aimee Chevalier was baptised in September. She was so well behaved. Congratulations to Zoe, Dan, Eve and Isla

Milly Haywood, Jean Schafer plus Audrey and Glen Price came into membership of the church in November bringing our membership total to 70. Welcome to you all.

The Minister and Elders have discussed developing the worship life of the church. Ruth has led Film theology evenings and Prayer meetings during the year. This is an area too easily neglected by us all. A different type of Bible study is planned.

Ecumenically we have held a number of successful events bringing people into the church to meet with us, including the coffee mornings, harvest supper and Craft & Gift Fair. This is important work and I would like to thank all the volunteers involved in all the events. As part of our mission and ecumenical work, as a church we have started to explore being Dementia Friendly and Anna Chaplaincy. We are working with Fleet Methodist Church on what will be a very interesting and worthwhile project that will develop during 2016.

Amongst our hall users we had a new Rainbow Group start up, who also attended our Harvest Festival. We now have two Rainbow groups and two Brownie units at the church. Brian Armes has done a tremendous job in ensuring our church is well used by many groups and organisations.

The Synod put out a challenge to churches to increase their contribution to central funds. Advised by our Treasurer John Gibbons Fleet URC has

managed to meet that challenge and thanks were received from Synod.

My thanks to all those who have supported the church in the many different ways that you have. Let us face 2016 in faith, together.

Moray Henderson

Church Secretary

Church Accounts Year Ending 31 December 2015

Commentary:

The 2015 opening balance was increased by £122.42 worth of cheques formally declined in 2013 and confirmed in 2014. So the opening balance became £44,661.70 to which our 2015 total income of £72,639 was added. This income marginally exceeded our annual expenditure of £71,445 by some £1,194 thus providing a closing balance of £45,855.94. Major income streams came from the coffee mornings, the premises letting and the Autumn craft fair; our thanks must go to the catering team, Brian Armes and Darrell Henderson respectively.

Continuing on the expenditure side, the accounts show that overall we managed to contain the 2015 costs at a level below those in 2014 this enabled the church to distribute more to worthy causes. There is still more planned restoration work in the 2016 budget and to this end a sum of £18,000 has been set aside to complete the work to the area at the back of the main sanctuary. During the year a sum of £5,886 was spent on exceptional items with the result that our worship services now benefit from an overhead audio/visual facility and the sound reverberation in the hall is reduced by acoustic panels.

Our distribution of gifts totalled £8,325 and benefitted seventeen organisations; the money was split almost equally between work in the UK and work Overseas. Our reserves remain at £25,000 with the provision of £18,000 for project work already recorded.

Finally I would like to thank Gill Durbin, Gilbert Black, Brian Armes and John Johnstone for their support throughout 2015.

John Gibbons

Church Treasurer

Property Report – Church

Grounds

Contractors continue to do satisfactory job with the grounds, spending approximately one hour a week on site. The weather conditions at the end of the year were particularly wet but any outstanding work will be dealt with in due course. To date all has been satisfactory. Brian Coney continues to maintain the front flower beds.

Hall Electrical distribution boards – power sockets

No more spurious tripping of the power breakers since fitting of the new fuse units.

Fire alarm and Emergency Lights

- a) Fire alarm system and extinguishers all tested and serviced by Hampshire Fire Services as per the contract. System tested on a routine basis between formal services.
- b) Emergency lighting tested and serviced by Hampshire Fire Services as per contract. System tested on a routine basis between formal services. Emergency lights renewed at the entrance to the parlour and in the parlour

Heating Systems

- a) Hall and church heating systems repaired and serviced by Rick Martin the local plumber as required.
- b) The heating control switch unit for the Church heating unit has been renewed. This new control switch has been programmed to control times and temperature settings in the sanctuary and parlour. An instruction sheet has been prepared to assist if there is a need to restart the boiler but in general is recommended that the settings are not adjusted.

Sanctuary

- a) A scheme to have the pew chairs repaired commenced but has not been completed. An assessment of all the chairs will be carried out in the near future to determine over all condition and the scale of refurbishment or renewal necessary.
- b) The carpet has been marked with spilled drinks and or food. Local spot cleaning carried out. It is the intention to have all carpets in the property cleaned by professional cleaner in the summer recess after decorating programme has been completed.

Kitchen

- a) The “PROTON” industrial dishwasher water softener is charged on a routine basis
- b) Detergent and rinse aid containers are replaced as necessary.
- c) The Water Heater causes problems on occasion because it is expected to heat up like a normal modern kettle. It is designed to supply about one mug full of hot water at a time, not a full jug/pot. If used as designed it will maintain the water temperature otherwise it will be necessary to wait for the unit to fill and then heat up again.

Hall

- a) All walls have been prepared and painted with a hard wearing emulsion.
- b) The old Dado rails were replaced with deeper ones to avoid the tables marking the walls
- c) All window sills, skirting boards, dado rails and hatch front sanded and varnished.
- d) Eleven Acoustic panels were purchased and affixed to the walls. This has significantly reduced the echo in the Hall. A further panel will be purchased to be installed with the panel left over from the first installation.
- e) The Wooden floor was lightly sanded and reseal with hard wearing varnish.
- f) The External doors were removed, serviced and re installed.

Sound System

- a) Recordings continue to be made of services. Members of the congregation are welcome to borrow the recordings from the “library”.

Projector and screen in the Church

- a) A new retractable screen has been installed.
- b) A new projector was installed and hard wired to the work station area next to the sound cabinet.
- c) A small desk was purchased to use when managing projected programmes with the computer.

Cleaning

- a) All areas of the property are cleaned on a regular basis.
- b) The outside windows on the property are cleaned on a regular basis by a contract window cleaner.
- c) The inside of the windows are now being cleaned by Mr Tuibau, in stages, throughout the year.

Shed

Temporary repairs on the shed are still keeping most of the wet out. Base continues to subside and wooden frame is more distorted.

John R. Johnstone

Property Report – Manse

The Minister reported damp in one of bedrooms. Investigation by a contractor deduced that driving rain was getting down the chimney. The chimney was fitted with a cowl and the top re-cemented to prevent water ingress. This has hopefully cleared the problem.

The dishwasher failed and the cheapest option was to purchase a new one.

The gas safety inspection was carried out and a certificate issued.

The regular inspection of the Manse on behalf of the Synod is overdue and will be carried out shortly.

Brian Armes.

Hall Bookings Report.

Bookings continue at a reasonable level although during the year we have lost the Toddler group on a Tuesday morning because they were unable to staff it. Also the Thursday afternoon U3A Art class has moved to another venue.

To offset this the Yoga group has taken an additional booking on Monday lunchtimes and a Photography class is using the Meeting Room on many Monday evenings.

As a result the income from Hall bookings has remained steady at around £23,000 again this last year.

Brian Armes

Catering Report

In addition to the weekly Coffee Mornings reported on separately, our Team in the kitchen provided refreshments for the following events during the year. This varied from tea and biscuits, bacon butties to homemade cakes and more.

- a) 17th Feb – Funeral – Lorna Gelder
- b) 17th Feb – Social evening – talk by Bernard
- c) 14th Mar – Rotary NHASB Concert – Church on the Heath
- d) 27th Mar – Social evening – talk by Bee
- e) 2nd Apr – Funeral – Daniel Cox
- f) 24th April – Social – St Georges Supper
- g) 2nd July – Funeral – Nick Nicholson
- h) 3rd Oct– Harvest Supper
- i) 7th Nov – Craft Fair
- j) 27th Nov – Social – Presentation about Rotary “Shelter Boxes”
- k) 3rd Dec – Rotary NHASB Carol Service - Church on the Heath
- l) 11th Dec – Funeral – Edna Mary Brown JP
- m) 14th Dec – Funeral – Catherine Dumbleton
- n) 20th Dec - Refreshments after Church Christingle service

We extend our thanks to all who have helped us with these events including John Gibbons and his Team for their input during the year.

Moirra Johnstone

Coffee Morning Report

It has been another successful year for our Thursday Coffee Morning. Our grateful thanks to our regular supporters.

Our friends from the Methodist Church continue to grow in number.

We have welcomed several visitors, some of whom now come along on a regular basis. It is a good outreach for our community.

In August the hall was out of bounds for three weeks, so we put up the tables in the lobby on two of the weeks and on the third week we visited Elvetham Hall and enjoyed a relaxing morning.

Profits from Bee's weekly bric-a-brac and book stall continue to swell the Church funds.

One Coffee Morning in September was held in aid of Macmillan Nurses.

In November we invited along Karen Jones, an author and artist from Tadley URC, to run her stall selling Christian books, gifts and resources.

Thanks, of course, to our catering team who work hard to ensure the smooth running of the Coffee Morning.

Val Cox

Craft Fair Report

Saturday 7th November 2015 started with a welcome and prayer from our Minister Ruth Dillon

The 8th Fleet Brownies held a Christmas themed tombola Jackie Cresswell and her very willing Brownies worked very hard and donated over £194 our Church.

Again this event was well attended by Crafters old and new. If only there was more space to allow me to squeeze in more talented crafters. This annual event has a healthy waiting list and as most of our regulars want to return year after year it makes it very difficult to say “no” to enquiries.

Again our Catering team were on the ball with homemade soups and cakes, Val Cox donned her pinny and cooked delicious Bacon Butties all day, what a star!

The Tea room was again full most of the day with people gathering and enjoying the chance to sit down and relax.

I would like to thank everyone who volunteered to help. Thank you Christine Gibbons for designing the poster and flyers, for the team who clear the Church ready for the day and for putting it all back together again. A special big Thank you to Pearl & Bill Thomas for their unfailing support distributing Posters and flyers around Fleet. We need to advertise to make the day go with a special Buzz! More volunteers are needed please.

We had a centre spread in the local paper which was lovely and if you would like to see more please visit our Church Website www.fleet.urc.org.uk or our Facebook page.

A date for your diary, our 10th Craft & Gift Fair will be held on Saturday 5th November 2016.

God Bless

Darrell Henderson

Fleet URC on the Web

Church Website: www.fleet.urc.org.uk

Our church website, which was originally set up in 2008, had a complete 'facelift' in 2015. The software interface had become obsolete, and therefore an upgrade became a priority. After training at the URC Windermere Centre in August it took me a few weeks to re-build the site, during which time unfortunately we were off-line.

I hope you will think that the new website is as clear and easy to navigate as the previous one. It is still very much under review, and I expect to add new features during 2016. All feedback is welcomed!

Church Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/fleeturc

Church Twitter Account: www.twitter.com/fleeturc

Social media allows people to create, share or exchange information, ideas and pictures or videos in virtual communities, and therefore is ideally suited to church outreach.



I have continued to 'tweet' regularly throughout the year about our activities at Fleet URC. We have increased our number of followers to 92, which includes local URC congregations, individuals and organisations. Follow the link above to join in.



The Fleet URC Facebook page was set up in March 2014, and has proved enormously popular. My impression is that local people are often more likely to look at our Facebook page than our website to keep up to date with our news. Certainly we have the potential to reach a great number of people across the globe with our stories and photos, particularly when these are shared between friends. For instance, well over 400 people read about our church anniversary last summer. All these people are our virtual congregation!

You don't have to be a member of Facebook to look at our page and see what's going on: just use the above link to keep in touch.

Christine Gibbons

Little Fishes

Little Fishes meets on a weekly basis during term time on a Sunday morning. The group is aimed at younger children (from birth to age 5/6).

Each session begins with a child-based call to worship and welcome time and concludes with a time of reflection focused around a prayer, a song or hymn and the sharing of healthy food. Each week our activities are based around a biblical story or theme, which we explore through a variety of age-related games, free and structured play, stories, music, puzzles and craft. We are always looking for fresh and innovative ideas to explore Bible stories and help children remember and relate to their themes. During the year, Helen Bailey has stepped forward to take a more active role in planning, preparing and leading our sessions. My thanks go to Helen for her ongoing support.

Over the last 12 months we have loosely followed the liturgical year. We look at stories from the Old Testament during the Autumn term, before covering the Christmas story during Advent. The Spring and Summer terms are spent learning about New Testament stories including Jesus' Parables, Miracles and other events in the life of Jesus. During Lent we focus on themes such as emotions, love or new life as well as Palm Sunday, the Last Supper and Easter day. We have also learned about Remembrance Day, Mothering Sunday and Father's Day. On occasions when we have younger children and babies joining us, we also provide a big box of toys to play with.

Until the end of the summer term we were a small group with up to five regular children. From September, Alice Bagshaw and Eve Chevalier moved up to Loaves and Fishes, leaving us with three regular children. On parade Sundays and other occasions such as Baptisms, our group can often be much larger and we are always pleased to welcome visiting children.

We now look forward to another year of sharing, learning, exploring and having fun with our friends in Little Fishes!

Grace Bagshaw

Loaves and Fishes

In September 2015 we welcomed 2 new members to Loaves and Fishes, Eve & Alice who were presented with a silver fish pin to celebrate their move up.

Therefore we now have 9 lively and exuberant young people who attend our jolly group.

We are still using the Resources Roots and planning is going ahead for Easter and other events that are happening in the Church.

The group decorated the windows for Easter, Harvest and Christmas. They also attended our family services, enjoying the Remembrance Sunday when we were joined live with the whole country.

The annual Christmas card was also part of their art work, we all hope you enjoyed it.

The Young People invite you to come and see them and see what they are doing during 2016. The door is always open either pop in after the service or join us for the class. You are all welcome.

At the moment we still have 3 leaders and share this rewarding task with quite a few willing and talented helpers which we really appreciate. Again I will ask if anyone wishes to join us please see Margaret Armes to discuss even if it is a one off experience..

God Bless and Thank you for all your support and interest.

Darrell Henderson

Pilots

Our Pilots company meets every Tuesday in term time between 3.45pm and 4.45pm. There are seven lively children (aged between 7 and 13 years) in our group. They are supervised by five dedicated adults, Bee Griffiths, Maureen Coney, Margaret Armes, Mary Mathew and Mary French.

Each session starts with refreshments and games (outside if weather permits) followed by group work. We have studied two countries this year – Zambia and the Czech Republic. Activities may include practical sessions such as cookery and craft work and computer practice. So our Pilots enjoy new experiences and have fun in a safe environment.

Our visits this year:

1. On May 16th we joined with Pilots from all over the UK at the West Midlands Safari Park. We saw so many wild animals in close up. It was a special memorable day out.
2. In July Colin and Mavis Gray gave up their time again this year to take us to Fleet Pond for a kite making session followed by a picnic. We are grateful for their support. We always enjoy these visits.

3. In December we went on a shopping trip to Farnborough to buy items for the Christmas shoe boxes.
4. In January we went to see the Pantomime "Aladdin". This was a local production at the Harlington Centre. We all had a great time. A panto visit has become an annual event for Pilots.

Pilots are encouraged to get involved in helping others. We supported "Operation Christmas Child" again this year. The response was amazing – more than 50 boxes were distributed this year from our church. Maureen Grew (the project representative) received our gifts during our morning service on November 22nd. She was delighted by our generosity. Our thanks go to all those who helped us in any way towards this magnificent effort.

Bee Griffiths.

Sunday Lunch Report.

We met together for 4 lunches last year, on the second Sunday of March, June, September and in December for a special Christmas meal.

We welcomed friends from the Methodist, Baptist and Catholic Churches in Fleet and other friends from Cove and Ash Vale.

Katie Ellis is our 'chef' and we look forward to sharing a delicious lunch together, as many of our friends live alone. It is always a great time of fellowship and a wonderful 'outreach' opportunity for our Church.

Special thanks go to Katie for all her hard work and to Cynthia and Jill who so willingly prepare the tables. Thanks also to Evie and Molly, our two new delightful waitresses!

Our next Sunday Lunch will be on March 13th at 12:30pm. You will receive a warm welcome if you care to join us.

Margaret Kemp.

Phyllis Tuckwell Fleet and District Support Group

The year started with a roof raising performance by the Hampshire Constabulary Band in February under the direction of Major Peter Curtis and with singer Amanda Goldthorpe-Hall. This is one of our most successful events (held at The Church on the Heath) and raised over £4000.

Other events included a well-attended Quiz Night with Fish and Chips at the United Reformed Church, a Literary Tea at the Elvetham which provided a

fascinating glimpse into post-war Germany with author Sieglinde Ward. Salesian College in Farnborough hosted a concert with the Hart Male Voice Choir plus two school chamber choirs from Salesian College and Farnborough Hill; a Ritz style Tea at the Elvetham was enhanced by the elegant Audrey Finnemore providing background music with her harp; a well-received Wine Workshop was held at United Reformed Church and the year culminated in a magical Carols by Candlelight performed by Hart Voices and directed by Ray Rashbrook with choirs from Crondall Primary School and Parsonage Farm Infant School..

In addition to these events stalls were run at the local fetes in Dogmersfield and Hartley Wintney. The Street Collection in Fleet, Church Crookham and Hartley Wintney was a huge success with the donations from the collecting tins being boosted by a generous donation from Lloyds Bank who also provided two ladies from the bank to help with the counting.

This year has seen many changes in the membership of the Fleet Support Group. Sadly we lost one of our most active members - Sheilagh Bell - who died in September following a long spell in hospital. We also said goodbye to two longstanding members who contributed hugely to the infrastructure and running of the committee, no less than three others who suffered illnesses or accidents that curtailed their ability to contribute to the work of the group, and two moved away from the area. However we welcomed two new members who are providing fresh ideas for fund-raising, and received offers of help with publicising events in the churches and local businesses.

We would also like to thank all those invaluable helpers who turn up year on year to offer their services at our events, help on the stalls, carry a tin in the street collection, preparing halls for an event or putting on a performance very often at no charge so that as much as possible can go to the Hospice.

New members are always welcome so please contact us if you feel you would like to become a part of this enthusiastic team (ring 01252 683540 or 01252 612527) .

Judy Keep, Publicity and Sponsorship Manager.

Church Flowers

Yet again we've had a good year with all the dates being covered. We are very thankful to be able to arrange fresh flowers every week which are then delivered to members of the congregation.

While I have been ill Vera Mosley and Sandra Smith have been arranging the flowers for me for which I am truly grateful. Thanks too to all the people who deliver and to all who donate.

Liz McClune.

Organ notes.

Once again we've had a very good year with no dates without an organist. We have a small pool of 6 which includes two from the Methodist Church and two from Camberley for whom we are very grateful. Maurice covered Christmas Day for us again which is a difficult one to fill and poor Nessie found she seemed to be playing for most of December what with one thing and another! We are very thankful that we have such a devoted band.

Liz McClune

House Group - Bible Study

Members of the House Group were discussing who would write the Annual Report on behalf of the Group. Jean Hawkins asked if she could do it. The Group felt it was a good idea and Jean duly produced the report below. Other than an odd word being changed it is as she submitted it.*

Every Monday morning Bernard & Mavis open their home for the House Group. We start with prayers and everyone has given us confidence to feel we can all take a turn. The first half we are completely absorbed with the part of the bible that together we have chosen to study. It reminds me of washing day with everything muddled. Gradually with lots of help the bible pages are unravelled and become clearer. It is a very special morning and after a hectic week calms and grounds us all.

The Lord says if a few people meet together in His Name he will be among them and it certainly feels very special.

The second hour begins with coffee or tea and biscuits and a chat. We also try and help complete any unfinished crossword clues which Sheila and Jill bring along - sometimes successfully but not always.

Every few weeks we have a DO-IT-YOURSELF morning when most bring something that they think will be of interest to the others. It is quite amazing how all our different choices somehow fit in with everyone else

and the Holy Spirit seems to be amongst us.

Mondays are the best day of the week. In Acts 18 Paul is spreading the word of God staying with people in their homes, so at 35 Frere Avenue, God's word is still being spread, Marvellous !

Jean Hawkins

**Jean has been a member of the Group for well over two years being introduced by Margot Cooper.*

A member of All Saints she is involved with Praise and Play on a Tuesday morning, a choir member, before the fire a member of the gardening team and much more. We are pleased she shares Monday mornings with us.

Bernard Potter

Cradle Roll

This year we have had one baptism to add to the cradle roll. In September, Florence Aimée Chevalier was baptised by the minister and welcomed into the church.

For those previously baptised or blessed at the church, anniversary cards are sent in commemoration every year until the child's fifth birthday.

Recipients this year were as follows:

Benjamin George Dale
Eden Rose Cheyne
James Philip Alan Bailey
Isla Beth Chevalier
Ava Rose Faulkner
Amelie May McGhie

Helen Bailey

URC Toddler Group

Who runs the group?

The URC Toddler Group is run by parent volunteers who attend with their children. We cater for 0-5 year olds and so children outgrow the group fairly quickly and we are always encouraging new parents to help facilitate sessions. In September 2014 we decided not to call ourselves a 'Committee' as we felt this was putting people off joining and so instead renamed ourselves the 'Helpers Group'. At the same time we set up a Facebook group page as a way that Helpers could contact each other to arrange who is opening up the group on a weekly basis, what activities we are running etc. We have found this has been a very successful way to communicate with each other. New members have joined the group, whilst past members can still be involved at times when advice is needed. We currently have 28 members of the Helpers Group, but of these only 7 are regular attendees and volunteer to help set up the hall, prepare craft activities or manage the group's admin.

Session Structure

09:30 Set up, 10:00 Start, 10:30 Refreshments served, 11:15 Tidy up time, 11:20 Songs/story/parachute, 11:30 End and final tidy, 11:45 Lock up.

What days do we run?

The group has traditionally run on both Tuesdays and Fridays, but during 2015 we saw several of our key Helpers leave, not many new volunteers and a reduction in attendee numbers which meant an unsustainable loss of £10 per session. We sadly decided in June 2015 to cut our losses and only run on one day of the week. Initially we opened on Tuesdays only, but then as key volunteers left with the start of the new school term in September we found we had more volunteers willing to open up on Fridays rather than Tuesdays, so had to change our days and open up on Fridays only instead.

Attendance

During 2014 our attendee numbers averaged 22 adults and we were able to cover our costs. During 2015 our average numbers reduced to 10-12 adults per session. We are lucky in Fleet that we have a lot of other toddler groups and commercial activities running daily so there are always plenty of places for parents to attend, so it is important that the URC Toddler Group is advertised on a weekly basis via social media Facebook sites and that we always offering an appealing activity. Good news though, since the beginning of January 2016 we have seen a rise in our numbers, are now breaking even every week and we've had some new volunteer Helpers too – including two ladies attending without children to keep an eye on!

Kitchen & Church volunteers

We would like to say a special **thank you** to all the help provided by Church volunteers; to Brian and Margaret for managing our bookings, to John for hall

maintenance and to Ruth for hosting the Christmas service. Our decision to close on Tuesday regrettably meant we had to say goodbye to kitchen volunteer Pearl and more recently Pam has also needed to stand down. We would very much like to thank Pam and Pearl for all their fantastic help over the years keeping both the children and the parents happy with much needed drinks and biscuits! Thank you also to Sandra, to Muir & Rosemary for being on stand-by and to Millie who joined the kitchen volunteers in 2015. In January 2016 we also recruited two new kitchen volunteers Jackie and Jill. We are very grateful to everyone's support and help in keeping our toddler group running.

Anna Burns

Toddler Support Group

The toddler group is still running but Fridays only.

It does look as if it is getting more well attended.

Just ticking over financially at the moment. So we are hoping that 2016 will see it improve.

We have enough volunteers to cover we just need some more attendees.

Pamela Hasted

Adult Library Report

In 2015 we had a notebook to record the number of books that were borrowed. In spite of the increase of books made available in the previous year we found that only a comparative few were taken out.

This was rather disappointing but I feel that providing this facility is still worthwhile.

Jill Durbin.

Children's Library.

The number of books borrowed during the year was 18 and five new books were added to the library. The number of issues compared to the total of 85 in the previous year shows a startling decline in borrowing. Among possible reasons for this are a good choice of books in school libraries and the fact

that children's leisure time is often full occupied. However they often read library books while they are still on the premises.

We are very grateful to parents and grandparents who bring children to choose books from the library and their interest and encouragement is key to increasing the borrowing. Equally leaders and helpers in the children's groups can assist with this.

The library contains a good number and range of books including picture books, Bible stories and rather longer stories for the 7+ age group. Some of these may not mention Christian beliefs but they express Christian values. We also have books available for the 10+ age group including biographies.

I should like to express my thanks to Maureen Coney, Val Cox and Christine Gibbons who help with the running of the library.

Sheila Durbin.

Reform Magazine

This year we have gained one subscription but lost two and now have eleven individuals or families who take the magazine.

A glance through recent issues reminds me of the great range and variety of the topics discussed. Two which were of particular interest to me were four short replies to the question "What happens when we pray?" and an interview with Pope Francis. Regular features include a letters section, news of the denomination and other events of particular interest, book reviews and a crossword.

Sheila Durbin.

Christian Aid

The house-to-house collection in May raised £877, almost the same as last year, and as usual we are very grateful to all our collectors. We really couldn't do it without you! The Cake & Plant Sale in May was held in the parish hall at All Saints Church and raised £981, an amazing result. We held the Christian Aid service at the Church on the Heath. It was a very good service and greatly enjoyed by all those who attended. The grand total for all the collections and sales in Fleet during the week was £9,883.

Following the fire at All Saints Church earlier in the year, the carol concert in December was held at a new venue this year, namely St Philip & St James

Church. It raised £798 and we are very grateful to Fleet Choral Society for their continuing support. It is much appreciated.

Dates for your diaries: looking ahead to this year, our Cake & Plant Sale will be held on Saturday 14 May from 10-12 noon in the parish hall at All Saints Church, Church Road. All contributions of plants and/or cakes will be very gratefully received. This year the Christian Aid Service will be held at 6.45 p.m. on Sunday 15 May at St Philip & St James Church, Kings Road.

We are always looking for more helpers and would be very pleased to hear from you. Please contact Linda Storey or Liz McClune.

Linda Storey

Liz McClune

Commitment for Life

Total raised for Commitment for Life in 2015 was £1,500 through personal donations, Commitment for Life letter fundraising drive and general fund donation.

Thank you to everyone for your fantastic support of this vital work this year, especially considering all of the other issues in the world. Every penny and every prayer add up together to help Commitment for Life partners and those they are supporting.

Focus partner for 2015 was Central America, suggest that should remain for 2016, although as during 2015 will continue to provide information on all four regions as funding is distributed across all four and unfortunately all are very much in need of our prayers. Thank you to everyone for their prayers, campaigning and monetary contributions both for Commitment for Life specifically and the incredible work Liz McClune, Linda Storey and Bee Griffiths and others do with Christian Aid and Fairtrade throughout the year. It was an honour to assist Nicola with the Christian Aid service this year. The comments we received were encouraging and glad we played a small part in spreading the word about Christian Aid's history during their anniversary year.

Tamyra Sherratt

FACCTS Report.

The FACCTS team continues to grow as does its work in the schools in Fleet and Church Crookham. Janis and Jamie have now been working with the team for a year and more local schools have become involved with us and especially our "Open Book Assemblies." Recently a head teacher asked "How much does it cost?"

She did not expect the answer to be "It's free".

We had another successful year delivering our Easter and Christmas presentations to the children in our schools. Hard work at the time but very rewarding.

As part of our regular work, the Christian Unions, Lunch Clubs, Assemblies and so on are all going well, please pray for them. We are continuing our weekly coffee mornings in the secondary school. John Beal-Preston of Coth, who does Calthorpe Coffee is planning to run his second year of CAP Money Youth lessons to Year 9's.

Finally, last term Jamie learned something profound from one of the chosen student representatives from Crookham infants. She wrote, in 6 year old handwriting, that her favourite thing about the Prayer Space was "Being here". What a profound reminder, that we are *human beings*, not *human doings*.

Nicola Hamilton

Churches Together Report.

The year started with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Sunday united service was held at the Church on the Heath and the Thursday Prayer Meeting at Crookham Baptist Church.

On Good Friday there was a Walk of Witness ending at All Saints Church at a service that filled the building.

During the run up to Easter ecumenical lent groups were arranged by post code and held in homes in those areas. This method of forming really ecumenical groups worked well except in the case of Elvetham Heath when practically all were from the same church.

The Christian work that is carried on in the town involves people from all the churches, for example Fleet Angels, the Food Bank, Livingstones, FACCTS, Christian Aid Week, Women's Day of Prayer and so on.

All these efforts require prayer, so Churches Together Prayer Meetings are very important as they bring urgent needs and more information to guide our prayers.

Jill Durbin.

1st Fleet West Rainbows

Spring Term

We started the year with a challenge badge all about Sea Creatures. We found out a lot of interesting things about the Ocean. We had a sleepover in half term on the theme of 'The Princess and the Frog'

We then celebrated World Thinking Day on 22nd February, and this set us off for our Global Adventure badge, where we pretended to visit a different continent each week and try their food and activities.

Summer Term

During the summer term we planted some flowers to take home and then did a badge about Pets. We even got to visit 'Pets at Home' where the Rainbows got to hold rabbits and snakes!

As the weather became warmer, we had some meetings outside. We went to the park and also for a long walk to learn some skills and how to pack a bag for a hike. The girls enjoyed having hot dogs and playing water games.

In the Summer holidays we had an Insect themed sleepover – the girls went on a bug hunt and made glowing fireflies to sit by their beds at night.

Winter Term

This term we completed a badge about Enid Blyton and her stories. We got to visit many different lands during our meetings such as Dreamland, Topsy-turvyland and also Sweetieland!

Throughout the term we also completed a badge about festivals such as Diwali, Pancha Ganapati and of course Christmas! The Rainbows were Elves for their Christmas service and recited a poem about Father Christmas.

Hayley Scott

4th Fleet URC Brownies

Spring Term

We started the year with our 'Writer' badge, which saw the girls making a glossary, writing poems and also hosting our very own version of Countdown! During half term we had a sleepover on the theme of 'Beauty and the Beast'.

After half term the girls worked hard on their Journey badges which they complete throughout their years with us.

Summer Term

During the summer term we tried doing some old style Brownie badges from the 80s and 90s. It was interesting for the girls to see what has changed. Some of our oldest girls also planned a craft meeting for us.

We also spent a lot of time outside going for hikes, following a treasure hunt around the town centre and also cooking fritters on the outdoor stoves.

Some of the girls got to spend 4 days away on Brownie Holiday which was on a 'Superhero' theme. It was a good opportunity to make new friends, learn how to keep the home clean and also use up some energy fighting off the bad guys.

Winter Term

This term we worked on our 'Culture' badge, where the girls had to find out some more about their own history, some interesting facts about Fleet and compare these to other places and cultures.

We also did our 'Seasons' badge on the theme of Winter. The girls got to have a paper snowball fight, learn about how animals survive during the winter months, and find out how other countries celebrate Christmas.

Pauline Warner

8th Fleet Rainbows

On 15th September 2015 8th Fleet Rainbows held their first meeting. Our meetings are on Tuesdays with 4 adult leaders, one guide helper and 15 rainbows.

In our first term the girls learnt about the colours of the rainbow and we all had fun getting to know one another. For harvest we decorated the church window with leaves on which we had written things that we'd found out about one another.

We held a princess meeting where we made tiaras and wands and another time we'd walked around the block looking for animals which had been hidden.

At Christmas we attended the gift service but also our district carol service where we represented the angels.

Pauline Warner.

8th Fleet Brownies

The Brownies have had another active busy year. On a Tuesday night in the hall they have worked on obtaining interest badges in such varying subjects as science, investigator with a local bridge engineer visiting to assist in them building different style bridges. Much physical activity was witnessed over the year with keep fit routines and physical challenges. Cooking and eating what they have made a Brownie favourite.

The Brownies visited Tesco taking part in a hunt the fruit and vegetable activity and visiting various counters e.g. fish, bakery, and especially the cheese where they were able to sample.

The summer saw the Brownies out and about especially around Fleet pond, making boats to sail, building shelters following trails and learning about the local wildlife and how to keep safe in the countryside.

In late spring and the autumn they cleared the old plants and re planted the containers at Fleet Hospital.

The Church Autumn Fair saw them take to the tombola stall again with a Christmas themed tombola raising money for the church to give to local

charities. The week before this had seen them walking the streets delivering leaflets to houses, this gives great excitement being out in the dark.

December was particularly hectic this year attending Advent service, decorating church window, taking part in Brownie carol service then the following week performing at a residential care home the nativity story and singing carols. They also assisted in making the Christingles.

Jackie Cresswell.