



Your monthly round-up of news and information from around the Diocese

newsletter

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bishop's message of hope for the New Year

In his January video message, Bishop James talks about how the beginning of the New Year is a time for hope, and that as Christians, we are a people of hope.

While recognising that for some another year passing can be a time of anxiety, it is also a moment to look forward

"At the wonderful season of Epiphany, we remember the shining out of God's light in Jesus Christ - those wonderful, enigmatic figures of the wise men who symbolise the nations and peoples of the world to whom that light shines.'

Bishop James goes on to share a number of initiatives the Diocese is engaged with this year that provide opportunities for hope.

These include Hope 2018, an initiative to encourage and support churches to engage in their communities, and also, 40 Stories of Hope - a book containing a collection of stories written by those connected with prisons, about how their lives have been transformed through Jesus Christ.

Watch the full video message on the Diocese of Rochester website.



SURPRISE GIFT FOR MARY'S CHILD PROJECT

Husband and wife team, Reverends Andrew and Carol Avery received an early Christmas gift at their Community Café in Greenhithe, where their local Asda Community Champion surprised them with a cheque for £10,000.

The couple, who run a project called Mary's Child had been secretly nominated for a Christmas grant from the Asda Foundation; the generous sum will be used to pay for a big storage unit to help store furniture, bedding and clothing that they collect for local people and families who are vulnerable or in need.

Andrew is priest-in-charge at St Mary Greenhithe, which acts as a community hub for local people, and wife Carol is curate at St Mary The Virgin in Stone, which is less than a mile away.

He said: "We speak to a lot of people in the area who have had to leave their accommodation for various reasons and we often come across a single mum with two children who's got nothing but an air bed. Our Mary's Child project aims to meet this need.



AWARD FOR MULTI-FAITH WOMEN'S GROUP

A multi-faith friendship group called, Women Together, has received a prestigious award from the Three Faiths Forum.

Founded by Revd Ann Norman, Community Deacon for the Erith Deanery and Associate Minister at Christ Church, the group of Christian and Muslim Women, who meet each month for coffee and a chat.

They received their award in recognition of their role in creating a sense of belonging, togetherness and inclusion among London's diverse communities.

Ann said they were surprised and delighted to receive their award and explained that they meet as friends would normally meet, in pleasant surroundings like cafes.

"I thought a friendship group could bring people together and break down barriers. We were aware that many people often stay in their ethnic and religious groups, and so we felt it important to be seen to occupying a public space together."

TRAINING

Stewardship Training

Want to be more confident in talking about stewardship? Then new training for parish representatives could be for you. Its aim is to help parishes review and refresh their approach to stewardship and to see it as more than just asking for people to give financially.

Dates are: **24 January** and **6 February, 2018** in the Diocese Office. To book, search for finance courses on the Diocese of Rochester website at www.rochester.anglican.org

VISION AND AIMS

Enriching communities

As one of our three key **priorities**, we want to enrich every community through the activities of the local church

• HOPE IN 2018

Throughout 2018, the Diocese will be helping inspire, encourage, and resource churches to be more confident in sharing the hope they have in Jesus with their communities, through a variety of workshops and courses.

Covering social issues, such as loan sharks, modern day slavery and befriending, the courses seek to help churches meet the needs of their communities.

Discover more at:

www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/hope-2018/

• GROWING COMMUNITY

With allotments running alongside, St. Andrew's Church in Orpington grew a link with the local allotment society.

The society began to donate vegetables for the church to make the soup for its monthly lunch club.

Trevor Taylor, from St. Andrew's says that for some single people, it might be the only chance they have had to speak to another person all week.

Get in touch



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