

## **All Saints' Hertford Mothers' Union Annual Report 2018**

We have had another successful year and our members continue to be involved in many aspects of the worship and life of All Saints. Our Branch is one of only two remaining in Hertford & Ware Deanery & includes several members who worship elsewhere. We are pleased to have welcomed many visitors to our meetings & events throughout the year. We maintain close links with MU members in other churches and attend Diocesan events representing the Deanery.

Our members were also involved in the Easter Journey, providing & making the Mothering Sunday posies & making wreaths for ourselves & to order following the Christmas Bazaar.

Our programme in 2018 was varied and interesting. We started with Graham Jones helping us discover the origins & history behind our favourite carols & hymns. We enjoyed listening to our choices played by Michael at the organ or on CD.

Our Lent meeting, during March was a fascinating talk & slideshow by Janet & Colin Bird on the Diocesan Pilgrimage to The Holy Land. We appreciated having the places so familiar to us through Bible readings being brought to life & hearing of the current situation there.

Later in March we were delighted to host a snowy Diocesan MU Sharing Day. It was lovely to welcome fellow members & the donations from providing refreshments together with contributions from guests at meetings this year allowed us to send £125.35 in donations to MU projects.

In April & May we heard of exciting holidays. The Toyn family kindly shared their beautiful slideshow of their Alpine holiday with a focus on the varied means of transport. Then we welcomed Barbara Askew from the Methodist Church with her excellent photographs of an adventurous cruise down The Amazon.

In June, we arranged a visit & guided tour of Waltham Abbey. Our guide was most informative on the history of the foundation of the Abbey & gave an excellent tour of the many historic points of interest. We shared lunch together & enjoyed a wander through the Abbey grounds & rose garden.

Later in the summer 20 members & friends enjoyed a very sociable lunch & browse at Hopley's Garden Centre to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reopening of our Branch.

In September, we were delighted to have Nerine Chalmers share with us memories of her childhood growing up in Rhodesia & the political changes surrounding the emergence of Zimbabwe. Also, the fascinating history of her forebears as the first white missionaries in Rhodesia.

2018 was a year of 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries & in October we celebrated the upcoming anniversary of women's suffrage with an informative talk by Janet Bird on the campaign to win the vote & the Suffragettes. She reminded us why we have so

much to thank those women for & brought back distant memories of history lessons with such interesting photographs & resources. November saw the anniversary of the Armistice & Anne-Marie Parker shared her slideshow on the art of the World Wars. It was very moving to see such realistic images & caused us to pause for thought of the sacrifice & realities of war.

During Advent, our travelling crib sets, (also containing Christmas story books, Advent calendar, colouring sheets & a short service) were given a home by our Messy Church & Family Service families, returning for the Crib Service.

For 2019, Dorothy Toyn has kindly agreed to be Branch Leader for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time with Rosemary Bolton & I continuing as Secretary & Treasurer respectively. She has arranged another varied programme of events & outings with something for everyone. Please pick up a programme & come to any of our meetings which are open to all, we would love to see you there.

*Ann Stephens-Jones*