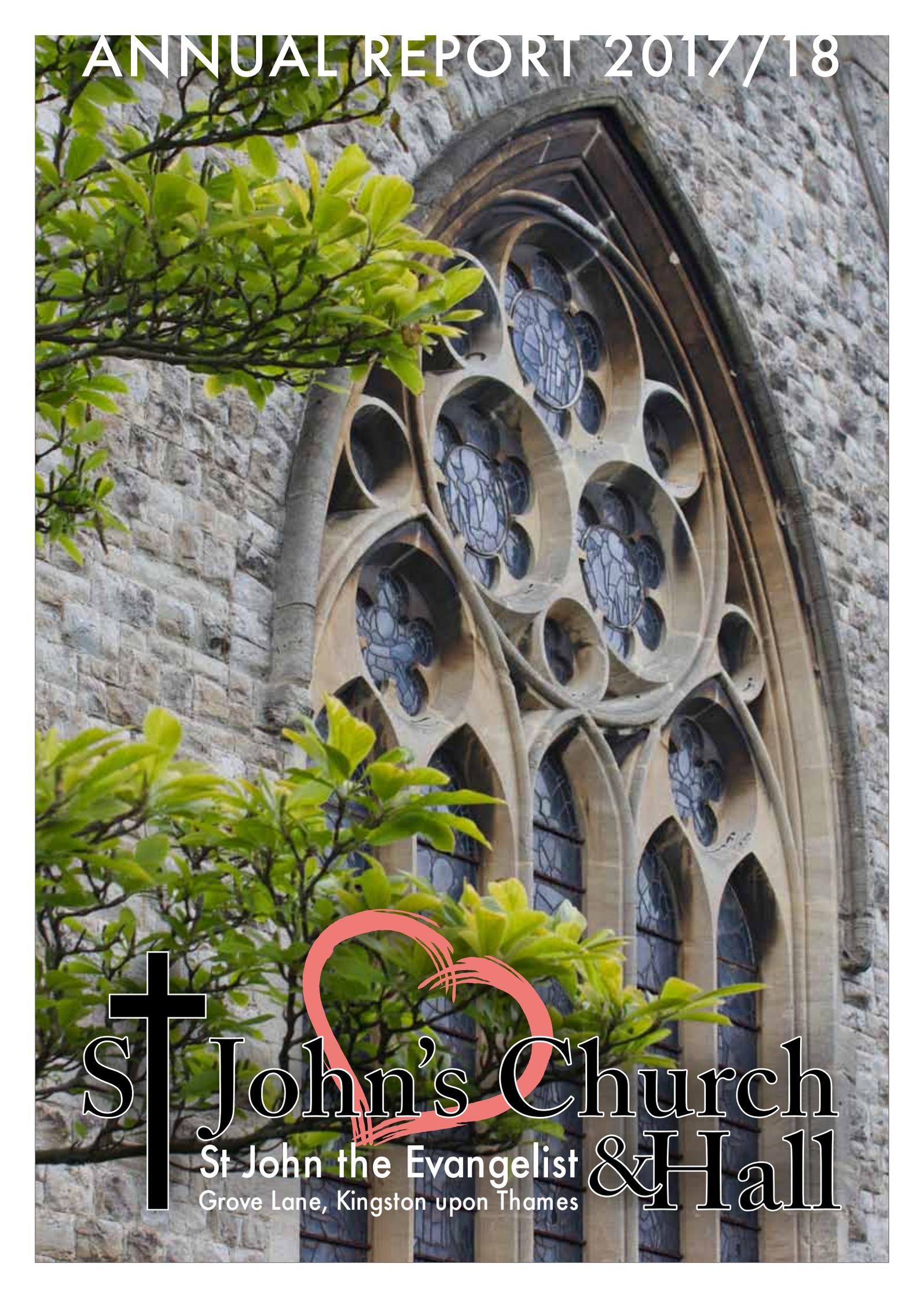


ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18



St John's Church
St John the Evangelist & Hall
Grove Lane, Kingston upon Thames

Vicar's report

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." Proverbs 29:18. We've had a clear vision to make the church the heart of the community since I arrived at St John's in 2007 and we've worked hard at it. We've introduced a parent and toddler group, book fairs, the church café and numerous social events to open the church as a place of hospitality and welcome. We've encouraged community use and hire of the church and we're working to upgrade and improve the building's very limited facilities. I've reached out to local schools and organisations offering friendship and support. 2017 has been a year to pause and reflect. To take stock of what we have achieved. To give thanks for all God has given us and to revisit and renew our vision.

Over the first few months of the year we were blessed to have Rev David Bell taking services while I took a three-month sabbatical. His warm and prayerful ministry was much appreciated and the time away from the parish gave me space to recharge, spend quality time with my family and reflect on my time at St John's which has flown by so quickly.

On my return I stepped away from managing our regeneration project. This has freed my time and energy for more spiritual and pastoral matters. The project remains an important priority because there is an urgent need to replace the heating and lighting in the church, but leadership of it is now in the capable hands of churchwarden Julie Bishop, whose project management skills are a huge asset.

We had disappointing news in the summer that our second Heritage Lottery Fund application had not been successful. But we re-grouped and agreed to phase the building work, and we hope to complete a first phase on the works (underfloor heating and lighting) this summer 2018. Thanks to the many congregation and community people who are giving their skills and time, enabling us to achieve this long worked-for and much anticipated goal. Particular thanks to the project management committee, the grants team and the events team who organised a fabulous Bloomfields street party in May and the Keep the Home Fires burning event in November as well as other events.

At the end of September, we had a well-attended church vision day. We invited an external facilitator, Nicola Holloway, to lead the day and we used material from Robert Warren's *Healthy Churches Handbook*. Each person who attended was asked to score our church life in a number of different areas to build up a snapshot of our strengths and areas to develop. This began a helpful conversation about our church life. It was heartening to discover how positively people feel about St John's. Our inclusiveness, community spirit and outward-looking focus were especially valued. Our church council spent time reflecting on the results of the day and a follow-up vision morning was held in January 2018. This has produced some clear and achievable priorities for us to move forward with in 2018. We remain committed to opening the church and reaching out to all in the community.

Alongside that we plan to develop our social media presence, develop our work with older children and students, and create more opportunities for Bible study.

I've continued to give much time to working in the community. We said goodbye to Kingston University faith adviser Andrew Williams in the summer and I'm now working with his successor, Louise Walton, in my role as the University Anglican faith adviser. I continue to be very involved at our church school, taking weekly collective worship, as a governor and supporting the school spiritually and pastorally. I also host class visits to the church and take assemblies and school services with the other schools in the parish; Bedelsford, King Athelstan Primary and Surbiton Junior Girls.

In the summer holidays, we introduced two new children's initiatives. We ran three activity days for unaccompanied primary school-age children where we explored the Lord's Prayer. These included craft, games, cooking and reflection time. They were well-attended and enjoyed, and we hope to make them an annual event. Thanks to Julie Morris and all who assisted her. We also ran weekly under-fives messy play mornings focused on Bible stories. These were organised by Emma Lloyd-Williams and proved very popular.

Our Sunday morning worship continues to be at the heart of our church life. We were pleased to host the team service on our dedication festival in July when we welcomed the Archdeacon and six sisters from St Michael's Convent, Gerrards Cross to give thanks for the chapel furniture they gifted us when they moved from Ham. Stephen Westrop gave a short organ recital on the new organ and many stayed to enjoy lunch together.

In the autumn we developed our family services to make them more inclusive and lively, encouraging more children to read and take part. In December we welcomed the 3rd Kingston Beaver and Cub groups to our Christingle service. Our third Sunday service pattern of 9am Holy Communion and 10am Sacred Space is now well-established.

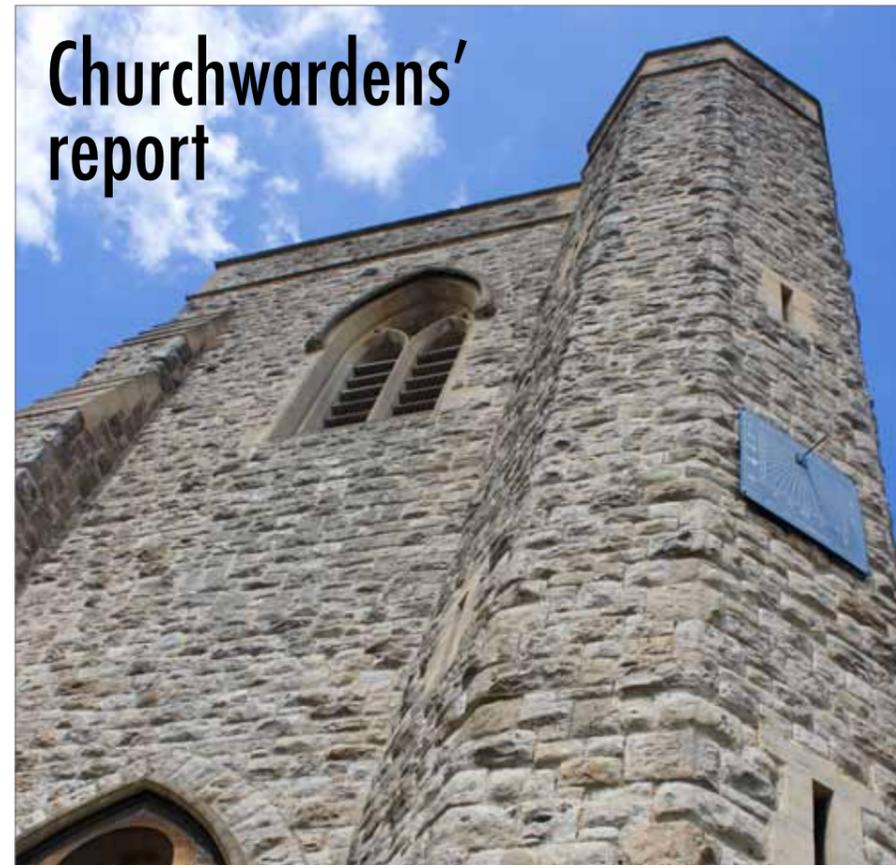
It was a good year and I'm very grateful to the many, many people who give their time and energy to our church life as the pages of this report pay testament. We are blessed to have many dedicated and capable people at the church who are generous with their often limited time. Thank you all – especially to our churchwardens Mimi Fagan and Julie Bishop, treasurer Tony Hardy, administrator Frances Hazelgrove and readers Isobel Robinson and Mick Cooper. Mimi is stepping down this year. Her wisdom, efficiency and warmth in this leadership role have been a great blessing and will be much missed.

Vicky Maunder



Vicky and her daughter Emma

Churchwardens' report



Fabric report

Last year we were given a wonderful pipe organ and a beautiful set of ecclesiastical furniture from the sisters at Ham Convent. This year we had a joyous celebration with them to bless the gifts and shared a delicious meal. The beautiful banners, which they gave, were used for Easter. We now have a Faculty for the items. The old organ we had on loan was removed in August, and returned to Edward Dove at Organ Design.

The windows in the southwest and the northwest (kitchen and baptistery) have been repaired under a list B application. Simone Kay, a local stained glass expert, took great care and did a beautiful job with them.

The church grounds have been well maintained by our new gardener Lou. He has cut down the sycamore tree, tidied up generally and removed the brambles. We are very grateful for the support of our deputy warden Bill

Baker, who has attended to several minor maintenance issues both inside and outside the church and has a schedule of tasks for the coming year.

The church continues to be hired regularly. Managing all this is our wonderful parish administrator, Frances Hazelgrove, caretaker Wing and cleaner Tracey who work hard to keep the buildings fit for both worship and community use.

Colin has kindly enhanced the sound system with provision of extra microphones.

A new security light has been fitted above the door to the vestry, which has improved safety when entering and leaving the building at night.

A pigeon took up residence for three days after a wedding, and with significant coaxing it eventually left the building leaving a trail of droppings.

MF/JB

The Canons of the Church of England [Canons E1.4 and E1.5] state that churchwardens "shall be foremost in representing the laity and in co-operating with the incumbent; they shall use their best endeavours by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote unity and peace among them". "They shall also maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of divine service. The property, in the plate, ornaments and other moveable goods of the church, is vested in them, and they should keep an up-to-date inventory of these items, and deliver them to their successors."

Another of the responsibilities is to arrest and remove people disturbing the worship. Thankfully, this year we haven't had call to do that.

The truth is it's a role that is supported strongly by the team of deputy wardens. This has been operating in our church now for a couple of years and is working very well.

Mimi Fagan and Julie Bishop

Bill Baker writes...

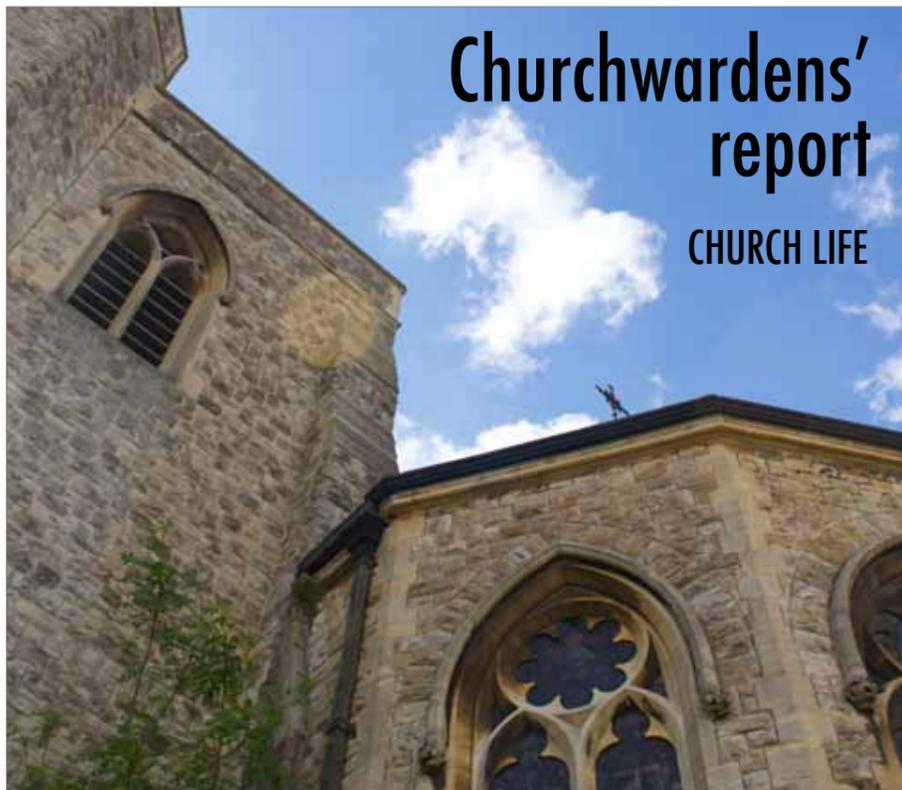
Water ingress has been a problem. The damp patch on the church wall is an eyesore. The guttering suspected of causing the issue was cleaned out several times, but the issue remained. Further investigation during heavy rain indicated that joints in the guttering next to the downpipe appear to drip. This is being dealt with and if this resolves the issue a period of drying out will be required before repairing the wall.

Saplings at the Springfield Road end of the church have been removed. Their close proximity to the church wall blocked light to the altar. They could have damaged the structure of the church if they had been left to mature.

A large number of light bulbs have been changed over this period.

Churchwardens' report

CHURCH LIFE



The church remains at the heart of the community with two weddings, 14 baptisms and three funerals this year.

On a Saturday in September we had a very fruitful and well-attended vision day. Discussion continued with the

PCC, and with the church community in a bid to set the vision for our church for the next few years.

Our regular pattern of worship is now well established with an all-age Family Communion Service involving many young families on the first Sunday of the month, and a non-Eucharistic service – Sacred Space – on the third Sunday, with a quiet service of Holy Communion preceding it.

Feedback suggests that church members appreciate the different styles of worship. However, we're mindful that we aren't currently able to offer anything specifically for children and young people above primary school age – this is an area of focus for our future vision.

We continue to build on our friendship with Kingston Methodist Church and their new minister Karl Rutledge – we have several joint services a year.

Our children's work continues with Children's Church. This year we also had Stay and Play sessions run by Emma Lloyd-Williams during the holidays.

At all our services, the churchwardens are assisted by a great team of servers and sidespeople, and we are most grateful for their help to ensure that people

receive a warm welcome and that services run smoothly.

As we press on with the plans for regeneration, much of our social life has had a fundraising element to it. Yet all of this time, effort and activity is also mission-based, reaching people in so many ways. The family of St John's grows in ever widening circles.

From Little Groovers and Children's Church, to the First Monday Club, the bookfairs, bazaars and all the brilliant events that happen at St John's, our intention is always to be an open and inclusive church where all are welcome.

The highlights this year were the fabulous Bloomfields street party, which was attended by hundreds of local people who had a very enjoyable afternoon, and the Keep the Home Fires Burning event, which was held in the church. It had elements of the first world war with a delicious potato-based lunch, potato car racing and a traditional singalong with the Spring Grove Fringe. A successful Christmas bazaar rounded off the year. Many people are involved in making this happen and we can't thank them enough. Above all, we wish to thank Tony Hardy, our long-standing treasurer for his good stewardship of our resources.

“Our intention is always to be an open and inclusive church where all are welcome”

This year Vicky had a well-deserved sabbatical from January to May, and we were extremely lucky to have had David Bell who led most of our services throughout this time and became a welcome member of our church family. Vicky returned to us at the end of May with renewed energy and full of ideas to enhance our church life. MF/JB

Sidespeople

We welcomed three new sidespeople: Barbara Duffy, David Wellman and Michael Wraight, bringing total numbers to 12. Our principal duties are to welcome the congregation, guide them at communion and take collection.

We are on hand during services for any extra duties that a specific celebration may demand, for instance during the busy Christmas services, when as many as five sidespeople may be on duty at once.

The only qualification needed is a welcoming smile on a Sunday morning. If you can find a smile to share with us, and would like to be part of the sidespeople team, please let me or Vicky know.

David Hamilton

Administrator's report

Our church building has continued to be well used. Regular users included local Morris dancers; the Orpheus Choir, Little Groovers; the Samatha Trust meditation group; 8-18 Youth Theatre, yoga for adults; Rees UK, for Retail Training; and the university for Spring/Summer examinations.

The church was hired for drama workshops for children, as a polling station by Kingston Council, for a choir charity concert, for a choir performance and talent show by Kingston University music department, and for a student event held by the department of criminology and sociology.

The Linden Wind Orchestra gave a Christmas concert, and Love Kingston arranged an evening of singing by community choirs in association with Sing it Back. A Dance into Worship workshop and a summer children's club – a young children's playgroup – also took place in our church.

The church has held seven book fairs to raise money for the regeneration, while the church café supported different charities. There were 11 afternoon meetings of the First Monday Club, a

social gathering for adults; the Keep the Home Fires Burning family afternoon social, arranged by the regeneration team; our Christmas bazaar; St John's school disco and its Christmas bazaar.

We were fortunate to be given a table tennis table early in the year and a small group met on several Thursday afternoons to play.

Visits to the church were made by children from St John's nursery and primary school, Kingston Kindergarten, Surbiton Junior School, King Athelstan Primary School and Bedelsford School. The university carol service, and the Bedelsford School harvest festival and carol service, were held in the church, as was the annual memorial service arranged by Frederick W Paine Funeral Directors.

Our school – St John's Primary – had services in the church for Ash Wednesday, Easter, Pentecost, Harvest, Christmas, and for its leavers.

Wing is our caretaker for the church and has given conscientious support for which we thank her.

Frances Hazelgrove

REPORT FROM THE PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the governing body of the church and is chaired by Vicky. The PCC also includes other members of the clergy team – the churchwardens, treasurer, secretary and nine members of the congregation who are elected at the APCM to serve for three years.

The PCC is responsible for the overall practical and spiritual wellbeing of the church, its building and its people. It has met six times since the last APCM.

There is also a standing committee – comprising the vicar, churchwardens, treasurer, secretary and two other members, Isobel and Alice – which can be convened to make *ad hoc* decisions on behalf of the PCC between main meetings if a quick decision is needed – for example during the renovation work.

The PCC represents the congregation and welcomes all thoughts, questions and observations about church life. There are three vacancies on the church council so if you are interested in being involved, approach Vicky or another PCC member.

I took on the role of secretary at the PCC meeting on 7 September. It involves writing minutes of PCC and standing committee meetings, collating the contributions to the annual report and distributing occasional correspondence from Southwark Diocese.

Sarah Price

Safeguarding reports

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

The Diocese issued new parish safeguarding procedures at the beginning of 2017, and together with Vicky, I successfully completed and submitted the self-audit in advance of the deadline.

The House of Bishops also published new guidance on promoting a safer church and responding to domestic abuse; both of which were shared with church officers.

Over the past 12 months, seven new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS checks) have been requested – and four have been completed. These are primarily for new children's church leaders, as well as for the new summer church activities and current children's church leaders whose checks were up for renewal.

I am pleased to report that there have been no safeguarding incidents this year.

Anna Gorrell

ADULTS

As safeguarding officer for vulnerable adults at St John the Evangelist, I too am pleased to say that once again since our last report we have had no incidents brought to our attention.

All our procedures and processes are up-to-date. We recently completed an internal audit.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any matters pertaining to this.

Chris Fowles

Electoral roll

There are 102 people on the Electoral Roll for 2018.

Eight people have left the roll; six people have joined.

Jenny Holden
Electoral roll officer

Community

The church and parish hall continue to be well-used for a diverse range of activities from toddler groups to meditation, from badminton to ballroom dancing. We hope to increase use of the church space following completion of the first phase of our regeneration project, which should start in July.

It is part of our vision to open up our church building to our community – we are open to ideas and suggestions for future use. Bookings and hirings run well and without any major issue.

Jan Hartley, deputy church warden, community

Pastoral

I feel blessed to have taken on the newly created role of deputy church warden for pastoral care. We plan to develop this role, which includes home visits and/or communion for those who are housebound or in need of companionship. We would like to co-ordinate a lifts-to-church rota, a prayer email chain for those who express a need and to find other ways to minister to those unable to attend church regularly. Contact email luannehiggins@tesco.net.
Luanne Higgins, deputy church warden, pastoral care

Treasurer's report

In 2017, our total funds increased from £136,251 to £252,800, giving a large surplus of £116,548 for the year. Of this surplus, £71,000 came from two generous legacies, of which £45,000 to date has been earmarked for regeneration and the balance of £26,000 held in a separate restricted fund. A further £41,000 was transferred from the Parish Hall reserve and with fundraising and Blossom Scheme giving, the Regeneration Fund stood at £204,506 at the year end.

Unrestricted funds used for the ordinary purposes of St John's, however, fell by £7,751 to £22,298, because of reduced giving and especially a substantially reduced return from hirers with one significant hirer having a much lower requirement in 2017.

Fundraising for regeneration was a net £7,304 with Bloomfields and the regular book fairs making up the lion's share of this. The Blossom Scheme in support of regeneration continues to run, and £10,740 was contributed in 2017. The number of active contributors, however, has fallen from a peak of 40 in early 2015 to 22 by December 2017. Sincere thanks are once more extended to everyone who has supported regeneration through regular giving and energetic fundraising.

Total income for the year was £200,472, boosted by the aforementioned legacies, Parish Hall transfer and fundraising. Unrestricted income totalled £64,000 with the university being a significant contributor at £16,675. Giving for ordinary purposes including tax reclaimed on Gift Aid fell by 11% versus last year and was only sufficient to cover two-thirds of our annual pledge to the Diocese.

Total expenses were £83,923 of which 87% relate to unrestricted costs. We pledged and delivered £45,000 – our contribution to the Diocese – representing a 2.3% year-on-year increase. Despite cost inflation, a number of expense categories showed reductions including heating and lighting and repairs and maintenance.

In summary, we ended 2017 with total reserves of £252,800 made up of £204,506 held as the restricted Regeneration Fund, £25,996 representing the balance of legacies and £22,298 held as unrestricted funds for the ordinary uses of the parish.

Given the focus on regeneration, careful stewardship of ordinary costs and income will be required in the coming months if we are to start to build our unrestricted reserves again.

Tony Hardy

Charities, causes & campaigns

We had three meetings and continued to co-ordinate fundraising activities for charities, and to inform church members about various needs and issues both locally and worldwide, mainly through the weekly pew leaflet and Vicky's emails.

We receive newsletters from local charities including Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH), the Joel Project and Kingston Foodbank, also from the Leprosy Mission. Please take a look at these on the team's noticeboard in the north aisle, where you can also see thank you letters from charities we have supported.

St John's Church paid nearly £2,134 to a range of causes. Locally, these included KCAH, Oxygen, the Joel Project and Princess Alice Hospice. Nationally, we supported the Children's Society; and internationally, Christian Aid, Water Aid, Women and Children First and the Leprosy Mission. This was mostly raised through Book Fair refreshments,

collections and donations. Our Lent Appeal for 2017 was for African Vision Malawi, and we were able to send £600 to this Surbiton-based charity.

Christian Aid Week raised about £1,700, including £1,434 from the house-to-house collection, which is paid direct to Christian Aid, so doesn't appear in the church accounts. Thanks to all who contributed to this excellent result, especially the collectors.

Thanks also to the many church members who hold Children's Society collecting boxes at home and bring them in to be opened once a year. Last year's total was £508, which was sent direct to the society. Emma Peries, who is now co-ordinator for the boxes, asked as many box-holders as possible to bring their boxes to the Christingle service in December and join in counting the money in church afterwards. This initiative brought the boxes in earlier than in previous years, and it is likely to be repeated this year.

Harvest donations of food were received from the church, St John's school and kindergarten, and Bedelsford school. Most of these went to Kingston Foodbank's central store, but we also took boxes to the Fircroft Centre, Surbiton and to Refugee Action Kingston. Foodbank donations from the collecting box in church go direct to the outlet at Kingston United Reformed Church.

Later in the Autumn, 44 shoeboxes filled with gifts for needy families and elderly people in Eastern Europe were donated by members of the church and school, and All Saints church. We were also able to give Link to Hope another large batch of Maggie's splendid knitted hats and a bag of foreign currency.

Thanks go to all who give so generously of their time and resources, enabling St John's to reach out in response to the needs of the world around us.

Pat Lines, Kay Baker, Vicky Maunder, Jenny Holden, Isobel Robinson, Tony Williams

Flower arrangers

Flowers in church are both a living and beautiful celebration of creation and a symbol of new life in Christ. At St John's, we have fresh flowers in church all year round except for the weeks of preparation during Advent and Lent. They enliven our worship space and help to dress the church for the great festivals. We appreciate the generosity of our arrangers for their time and gifts, and those who help out at Christmas.

You may give flowers in thanksgiving for a family member, perhaps for the birth of a child or the occasion of their



baptism; to celebrate an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. To do this, speak to Vicky or if you'd like to join the team, get in touch with Mimi. **MF**

Servers

Ladies and gentlemen, please help – we need more servers in church.

The role of the server is to assist Vicky during the service. As a server you prepare the altar before the congregation arrive.

This can be very peaceful and a time for reflection, and also for your own thoughts and prayers.

So please think about helping. Speak to Vicky, or any of the servers, if you think you can.

Neville Hall

Sacred Space services

Our third Sunday 10am non-Eucharistic Sacred Space services have been running for five years, offering something a little different with each new theme. Services generally follow an informal structure drawing on liturgy from a range of sources. They include a bible reading, perhaps poetry or a psalm, music, hymns – with increasing use of contemporary hymns sung to old tunes. Time is often set aside for quiet contemplation, meditation with sensory input, or sometimes the opportunity to talk with those nearby. The service ends with the congregation linking arms across the aisles to bless each other.

We began the year with a joyful exploration of "The Word made Flesh", continuing the Christmas celebrations around the crib with blinis, pastries and sparkling wine. In February, Sandy Cragg took as her theme The Heavens, exploring the paradox of the vast mystery of Creation and the personal God. In March, we created our own Stations of the Cross around the church, using reflective material from the Progressive Christianity Network. Father's Day in June provided an opportunity to think about God our Father. For July we looked at Growing Up. To coincide with the Season of Creationtide, our September theme was Celebrating Cre-

ation. In October, we contemplated the gift of Sabbath rest; and in November, The Power of Story, a service adapted from a BBC broadcast from St Martin's in the Fields.

Sacred Space services are created with input from a small group. We appreciate the time given to put each one together, and are open to receiving suggestions for fresh topics. Although they are generally led by Vicky or a member of the clergy team, they offer a great opportunity for lay leadership. If anyone would like to get involved with creating or leading any part of the service, you'd be most welcome.

Mimi Fagan



Regeneration

At the last AGM we were still hopeful of getting a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful, so we have decided to carry out the work in stages as funds become available.

We are fortunate that incredible fundraising over the years, and legacies, have provided enough money to enable us to start this year. We have also have detailed plans that we can use and permission to carry out the internal works, which we have managed to extend.

During the summer holidays we will close the church for a while and will hold services in the school while we replace the strip lighting with modern energy-efficient spotlighting. We also plan to add underfloor heating in the central aisle and radiators around the sides and the chancel. This is subject to getting quotes that fit our budget.

We have successfully carried out an eco-audit, which has given us some advice for the buildings.

We are also preparing applications to the City Bridge Trust and the Garfield Weston Anniversary Fund. If successful, these will support any works we want to carry out in 2019.

We are hopeful that we can improve access to the church and add toilets in 2019, but that is subject to successful grant applications.

I want to thank everyone who, over the years, have got us to where we are, and the current committee for all their hard work. I'm hoping we can have a party in autumn to celebrate the new lighting and heating, which will make our building so much more useable.

Julie Bishop, chair, Regeneration Project

First Monday Club



We have had another year of fun and cream teas in the First Monday Club – occasionally known as the Second Tuesday Club, depending on what is open and when.

When the weather is fine we prefer to be out and about and last year enjoyed a boat trip to Hampton Court, an interesting tour of St Mary's Twickenham and a talk about the making of the Millennium Tapestry at the walled garden in Sunbury. We also visited Morden Hall Park

and garden centre and the Isabella Plantation.

During the winter months, we meet in the church for quizzes, games, talks and craft sessions.

Our programme this year includes visits to Marble Hill House, Orleans House, Turner's House in Twickenham, the Lavender Fields at Carshalton and York House gardens.

We would love you to join us. Look out for details in the pew sheets.

Jo Need

Book fair & café

For the fourth year, book fairs were held in the church on eight Saturdays in aid of the Regeneration Project. The church café offered drinks and home-made cakes – proceeds went to chosen charities.

The regeneration team organised a successful brunch and games day at the first fair in February to raise extra funds. Books are frequently donated and customers return regularly. The fairs and café continue to be worthwhile socially and financially, and give an opportunity for non church-members to come inside our interesting beautiful building.

Thank you to everyone, children and adults, who helped sort books, set up tables, put out and put away the boxes of books and were there on a Saturday to man the shop.

Thank you also to the loyal café helpers who provided, prepared and served the refreshments and did the washing up.

Frances Hazelgrove

Music

Keyboard duties have been split this year. Chris Morris has continued at Sacred Space and family services where his piano playing is suited to the modern style of service and musical content. Chris Metherell has returned to play the organ on the second and forth weeks when services are more traditional and hymns more suited to the organ are sung.

The new organ has proved to be a huge upgrade with a much more consistent sound and touch. It is a pleasure to play, particularly during the quieter parts of the service.

The musical highlight of the year was the Christmas choir. A large turnout sang with great confidence thanks in part to the guidance of Jan Gow who was conducting for the first time. We are confident that she will be back next year.

Chris Metherell



We entered 2017 with a new strategy for our fundraising events – to do less, but better, concentrating on two flagship events and pulling out all the stops.

First on the calendar was Bloomfields 2017 – our biennial street party. On 13 May we rolled out our grass carpet on a closed-off Bloomfield Road and welcomed the community to a fun-filled afternoon.

The crowds were entertained by live music on the Bloomfield stage, classic Punch and Judy, Morris dancing and ballet from the Bellarinas. Although we got off to a rather soggy start, the sun put his hat on after everyone had enjoyed a burger from our sizzling BBQ train and a Pimm's from our bar, just in time for the Hot Wheels and Hot Dogs parade. We encouraged children to decorate anything with wheels, and dog owners to decorate collars in a spring-like fashion. Everything from bright pink feathers to fresh flowers adorned bikes,



scooters and pooches in the parade, which was judged by Dame Jacqueline Wilson.

We were joined on the day by friends from the community including our sponsors Curchods, Hugo Firth Osteopathy, Go Cycle and the Hogsmill Community Garden.

Faces were painted, raffle tickets bought, ice cream sold out and the children's games enjoyed, especially the coconut shy. Just over £3,000 was raised. A great day all round and a marvellous start to the fundraising year.

In the second half of the year, we brought a little wartime nostalgia to St John's with our Keep the Home Fires Burning party on 11 November. Inclement weather meant all the action was inside. However, it was lovely to enjoy our beautiful church and we created a wonderful atmosphere for the most convivial afternoon. Hearty luncheons of sausage, mash and gravy were enjoyed as were homemade apple pie and custard... all washed down with a local ale, G&T or simply a pot of tea.

The Spring Grove Fringe joined us for a fabulous and rousing singalong, while children crafted their entries to Kingston's first potato car race. There were more than 60 entries in our Spud Speedway, with prizes for speed and decoration. Meanwhile, grown-ups could enter the home-brew competition judged by our friends from 7,000 Jars of Beer, who kindly donated the prize. Volunteers from the Hogsmill Community Garden joined us and brought an autumnal feel to things – making a scarecrow.

A feel-good event for all generations that raised just over £800 for the regeneration fund.

Thanks to all who participated, volunteered and came along to the events. More to come in 2018.

Jennifer Marshall



Christmas bazaar

Natasha Perry and I organised the bazaar. We had lots of new independent stalls this year as well as old favourites. Father Christmas even had a spruced-up grotto.



Thank you to everyone who helped us decorate the church and make it look really festive, it was much appreciated by all who attended the event.

The takings were slightly down on the previous year but this may be the result of the Home Fires event that was held two weeks beforehand. All in all, it was still very well attended by the community and everyone enjoyed themselves thoroughly on the day.

Emma Lloyd-Williams

Children's Church

The children's groups meet regularly each Sunday, apart from the first Sunday in the month when it is family service.

This year the younger group attracted fewer regular children, and the older group (6+) has grown because several have come up from the younger group.

We still have fewer older children because they have so many outside activities on a Sunday.

Each session is based on the readings for that Sunday, with varied activities and crafts – aimed at their age group – to help the children understand the lesson. They are always pleased to show these off at the end of the service.

The sessions can only run with the help of the dedicated team of helpers, currently seven for each age group. We have a designated "sitter-in" for the older group, drawn from all the helpers. This has proved very successful because it fulfils our safeguarding needs and gives the class leader extra help with some of the younger children, without adding too much of an extra burden to the helpers.

This year we have lost some of our regular helpers but have welcomed some new people to the rota. We are always happy to welcome new helpers to the group.

Carolynne Cotton

SUMMER MESSY PLAY FOR THE UNDER-FIVES

During the summer holidays, we organised four messy play mornings for the under-fives.

The activities were based on the themes of Noah's Ark, The Lost Sheep, Feeding the 5,000 and Jesus walks on Water. The children really enjoyed getting stuck into the variety of messy play and craft activities – with some very creative results.

We benefited from some of the Mums running extra yoga and

football activities to round off the sessions. While the children were entertained, the adults were able to sit back, relax and enjoy delicious coffee and cake.

The sessions were very well attended with an average of 40 children at each session. We had lots of positive feedback and it was great to see so many families from the local community having so much fun.

Emma Lloyd-Williams



Little Groovers

2017 was a good year for little Groovers. I continued to run the group for a second year with help from Laura Whelan.

Towards the end of May the average age of the group was three with a lot of them leaving in July to start pre-school. However with the help of Facebook and mentions on other social media sites, we had a new cohort starting in September – at the moment the average age is about two years with around 20 parents/carers attending regularly with at least one child.

The group appreciates Frances coming each week to make the tea and coffee,

Other children's activities

CHILDREN'S SUMMER CLUB

In August we ran our first three-day Summer Club. The theme was the Lord's Prayer, and each day we organised a number of activities and learnt about parts of the prayer. On the last day the children made wraps, fruit kebabs and chocolate dough balls, and we all sat down and ate together. Over the three days we had more than 30 children. It was a fantastic way for the children to get together, make new friends and learn more about the Lord's Prayer.

Julie Morris, Parish representative to the diocese for children and young people's work

GOOD FRIDAY WORKSHOP

We joined together to learn about Good Friday and to celebrate Easter. This year we had eight craft tables and the children made bunny baskets, bonnets, chocolate nests, wreaths and took part in other craft activities. It was wonderful to see so many children in the church and we finished with a children's service. The event was made even more special because we welcomed families from All Saints church and all the helpers were so enthusiastic. **JM**

and provide the biscuits – she is a valued member of Little Groovers.

There is a small group of people on a monthly rota who set up the church for Little Groovers, and Sarah and Laura do the clearing up.

People like the group because it is friendly and welcoming, and it's easy to keep an eye on your child in the church. Little Groovers is an important group for the young community and parents/carers, giving everyone a chance to get out of the house and chat to people who are often experiencing a similar day.

Sarah Pinchbeck

Administrator's report

The Parish Hall continued to be a popular place to hire.

The Kingston Kindergarten used the hall on weekday mornings during term time and the following groups met regularly: badminton, Dance Stars, jiu jitsu for adults and children, Perform, yoga, Bellarinas, Rugbytots, ballroom dance group, neo-nunchaku and the Spring Grove Fringe drama group.

The hall was booked most weekends for children's or adult parties. The Spring Grove Fringe put on four productions, and the hall was hired for quiz nights, concerts, charity events.

The Rose Theatre used the Parish Hall for rehearsals, and Kingston Council hired it for a residents consultation evening.

The Allotment Association held its

annual general meeting there, and the Spring Grove Resident's Association used it for their annual barn dance.

The hirers (regular and occasional) have commented on how much they enjoy using our hall.

Wing, our caretaker, continues to be a very conscientious and helpful support in managing our hall.

Frances Hazelgrove

TREASURER'S REPORT

At the start of the year, Parish Hall funds stood at £56,290 – £20,290 unrestricted funds; £36,000 church reserve. A further £5,000 was added to the church reserve during the year and a total of £41,000 from this surplus fund was subsequently transferred to the main Church Regeneration Fund. Subsequently the hall has no further restricted funds and at year-end our remaining reserves stand at £27,735.

The hall has had a successful year, with a surplus of £12,000 achieved despite further investment in keeping the fabric and internal decorations in good shape.

Income was higher at £28,602 (£28,061 in 2015) – 82 per cent from regular hirers: 18 per cent occasional hire.

Expenses were 16 per cent lower than last year and totalled £16,157.

The hall fabric continues to be maintained cost-effectively and work included decorating the main hall and toilets, new kitchen lights and repairs to exterior windows. Utility costs were lower thanks to efficient buying and sensible use by hirers.

Tony Hardy

OTHER KINGSTON TEAM CHURCHES

St John the Baptist, Kingston Vale

In 2017 we branched out and tried some new social activities, beginning the year with a great Burns' Night run by Sue Richardson.

This was the first of many social nights in the hall including ABBA and Queen tribute bands, and our resident band with Jules and Jenny heading up great nights such as Swing into Summer.

This year there were a number of successful holiday clubs starting with an Easter Club run by the Korean congregation and co-ordinated by Faith Lee, who enabled young people to stretch to new levels of leadership. Sadly we had to say goodbye to Faith because she had to move back to Korea. We also had a great Messy Science holiday club in the summer, including testimony from some Christian scientists and many opportunities to blow things up!

The sun shone on our summer fair, and a great time was had by all who came and enjoyed the circus theme and all the fun.

This year, many of the groups that are connected with the church continued to thrive with the Monday afternoon group growing in numbers. Tony opened a new group that plays boules in the orchard. A stay and play group opened on Monday mornings so the church feels lively and well used. This is also reflected in worship, with a confirmation service being held at St John's this year. The congregation was joined by new members from Sherwood Grange and the year ended with a nativity service that was so successful we will need to print more service sheets next year.

Rev Mandy Beck, Vicar



Michael Wraight, Bishop Richard and Vicky after Michael's confirmation on 25th June at our sister church St John the Baptist.

All Saints Church

On 22 April we said goodbye and thank you to Stephen Westrop as director of music. He has served in this role for the past three years, though was organist before that, and so has made an enormous contribution to the worshipping and musical life of our church.

We have also recently said goodbye to Kate Kern, our heritage and learning officer. Kate joined us as we embarked on delivering the activity programme for the Heritage Lottery Fund and has done wonderful work establishing our project, working up activities and programmes for schools and event days, and building a team of volunteers with which to develop our heritage work.

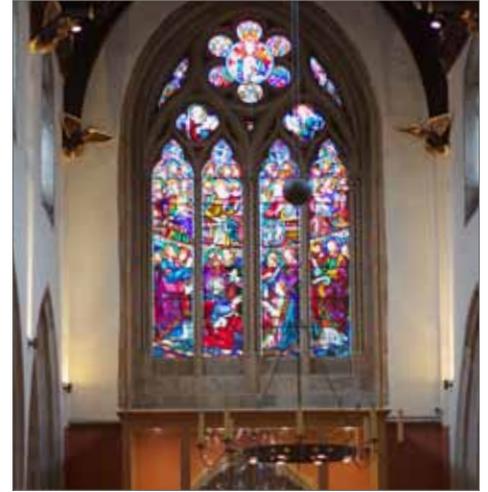
Beyond these things it has been another busy year hosting a range of community events, services and activities. Letting of the church increased by a significant 67 per cent, which speaks of the way we are being seen by other groups in the community. Our ministry to the town has continued through our Listening Team, the Vergers who welcome visitors, heritage activities and regular community service such as the Little Saints groups for carers and toddlers (Tuesdays, 1.30-3pm and Fridays, 9.30-11am), the vibrant knitting circle (Tuesday, 10am-12pm) and the wonderful Thursday coffee morning meetings (11am). The last of these was the brainchild of Liz Hann. Liz and Peter Hann move away from the area this

summer and we will greatly miss the warm and dedicated way they have served our church.

If an army runs on its stomach then the church runs on an army of volunteers who, with huge dedication, skill, love, patience and good humour, work to make its life, mission and ministry possible. This is certainly true at All Saints. At the last count we had 190 people contributing to things here in one way or another. None is more valuable than any other and all deserve our gratitude and deep appreciation for all that they do to help us say something about the value of mystery, the place of community, and the primacy of love that Jesus pointed us to.

In a world of ever-present fear, division and need, God is more relevant than ever – though more than ever before, perhaps, ignored. Our role in strengthening the societies of which we are a part has, arguably, never been so necessary as it is now and we are deeply thankful that so many are willing to lend their hand to the plough at this time.

We cannot mention them all by name, but I should, on all our behalf, thank Kat Hardy in the office for her hard work managing a storm of activity with skill, good grace and humour; Eva Panter and Sarah Cogger for the friendship, cheer and great cakes they offer in the Cafe; Sandy Cragg; David Bell; Vernon Fray; John Richardson and Martin



Corner for their liturgical and pastoral ministry to us, our deputy wardens and PCC for their deliberations and Isabel Isaacson, the PCC Secretary that serves them, Alastair Deller, our treasurer and those who support him overseeing an increasingly large and complex financial operation with calm skill and, perhaps first among equals, Jennifer Pearce and Liz Deller our two churchwardens. I think we all know how hard wardens work behind the scenes to enable the life of our church. From dripping taps to accompanying the mayor up the aisle and all stops in between they have served us with commitment, energy, love and friendship. We are truly blessed in them and have an enormous amount to thank them for. Thank you both – thank you all – so very much.

Rev Jonathan Wilkes, Rector

TEAM RECTOR'S REPORT

We have continued in the past year working as a loose federation as our team foundation of three independent churches bound by a common purpose suggests. The cement that fixes us together has continued as before: we gather once a year to share worship (this past year for the patronal festival of St John the Evangelist), a team council of wardens, readers, pastoral assistants and clergy meet three times a year, a conference (looking this year specifically at safeguarding) for all three PCCs was held in the summer and our team Vicars continue to meet regularly. Thus connection, support and the swapping of good ideas continue.

We will continue with these in the coming year.

What is abundantly clear, when hearing about the work of each of our three churches, is that there is a huge amount of commitment, imagination and ability going into the way we are trying to relate to our communities. Preaching the good news of love afresh to this generation and in these places requires skill and dedication, with which we are greatly blessed, both by volunteers and paid employees alike. We have much to be proud of and a great deal to be thankful for to those who work so hard on behalf of our mission.

Rev Jonathan Wilkes, Rector