



# 2017 ANNUAL REVIEW

St Andrew's Cobham in United Benefice  
with St Mary's Stoke D'Abernon

March 2018

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## VISION STATEMENT

### To Know, Glorify and Make Christ Known

The 2018 Vision of St Andrew's is to bring a broader, larger congregation to Christ; to nurture, feed and serve our congregation and community; and to apply our faith in our everyday lives.

St Andrew's continues to seek to be a Christian community through which all can come to know and accept God's love for them and reflect that love wherever they are.

## THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY

### Ministry Team

*Report by Michael Flaxman & Fiona Lascelles, Churchwardens. (In the absence of the Rector)*

The Ministry Team for the United Benefice of Cobham and Stoke D'Abernon started 2017 with three full time clergy, along with a non stipendiary Associate Minister, a priest with permission to officiate, a Children and Youth Minister, a licensed Lay Minister (Reader) and an Ordinand for Ordained Local Ministry.

The year has however been one of great change for us at St Andrew's, with the retirement of our Rector, Robert Jenkins in January and the departure in May of Folli Olokose, our stipendiary Assistant Curate for the past four years, to his own parish in Weybridge. We have therefore been officially in Vacancy for much of the year.

We should like especially to thank Charleen Hollington, Esther Holley, Peter Vickers and Moni Babatunde, who have all stepped up dramatically to fill the clergy responsibilities resulting from the above departures. We would also like to thank Elaine Bray, our Communications and Administration Manager for running our busy Parish Office, and also the team of volunteers, whom you will read about later in this document, who provide the welcome, love and support that permeates our church family.

Godfrey Hilliard, who focuses on his role as parish priest for St Mary's, Stoke D'Abernon, has continued to chair the weekly Ministry Team Meetings, providing advice and support to the team.

The departure of Robert Jenkins has obviously left a big hole in our church life, but he left a legacy and foundation which we will continue to build on. It is a tribute to his tenure that the life and work of the church seems to have continued in an almost seamless fashion during the vacancy. Many visiting priests, including

Bishop Jo, have remarked that they would not have perceived the church to be in vacancy at all!

Folli Olokose too left an energy and dedication to discipleship, community and especially the children and youth, the latter of which, Esther Holley has now taken on the full responsibility. We would like to wish him and his family success and fulfilment in his new parish and thank him for the indelible mark he left on so many of us during his four years at St Andrew's.

Charleen Hollington, in addition to taking on many of the clergy responsibilities of Robert and Folli, has continued to lead our baptism ministry. She also chairs the Faith & Social Action group and is responsible for the small groups in the parish. She came as a gift from God to carry us through the Vacancy and has found another dimension of herself in the past year, growing into the added responsibilities, and providing strong leadership and motivation.

Esther Holley has also grown seamlessly into her role as full-time Children & Youth Minister and her responsibilities widened after Folli left. She is now engaged not only with the Children and Youth in our church family, but also with Elmbridge Family Services in Cobham, reaching out to youth in the community and local schools. This is in keeping with our vision *To Know Christ and Make Christ Known*. David Taylor and Linda Shaw have continued to search out grants and outside support for this important work.

On a personal note, Esther was asked to accompany Bishop Andrew to Denmark as the Youth Representative of the Diocese. All is described in more detail later in the Review, but This Children & Youth ministry is key to the present and future of our church..

Peter Vickers has been a great support for us during the Vacancy, both taking a large number of parish funerals and weddings in addition to regular services, but also carrying out an important pastoral ministry particularly for the older members of the congregation. His experience and knowledge of St Andrew's has also been invaluable to us during the Vacancy. He has continued to support St Mary's and other parishes in the area in need of clergy.

Cathy Whitnall and David Taylor as authorised Occasional Preachers, have supported the clergy in preaching during the Vacancy and have been much appreciated by the congregation.

A dedicated team of Pastoral Assistants has continued to carry out its important work, often unseen by most of the parish. A separate report on this ministry is given later in this document, but we would like to recognise their extraordinary commitment, especially during the Vacancy.

Elaine Bray has continued to serve, and is essentially the face of the church for many who visit us – her dedication, enthusiasm, faith and compassion, especially in the absence of a Rector, have allowed the church to continue to function efficiently during this past year, despite the additional workload.

Moni Babatunde has followed her vocation and studies as an Ordinand for Ordained Local Ministry at St Andrew's and we have enjoyed watching her grow in faith and confidence as she deacons and preaches on occasion at the church with a view to ordination in 2019.

We would like to thank all our servers, readers, intercessors and sides people ably coordinated by Judy Brickett, whose dedication is much appreciated.

Our worship has been assisted by several visiting priests during the Vacancy, including Bishop Jo who led a wonderful service in August.

Our important music ministry has continued in 2017 (report later) and we thank Kevin Ayton who stepped up as acting Director of Music towards the end of 2016 and who has been able to maintain our strong commitment to music in our worship. He is ably assisted by Cathy Whitnall, who selects the music and looks after our children's choir. We are very grateful for our small but dedicated choir.

Another essential role is carried out by our Treasurer, Malcolm Graham who dedicates a large amount of time keeping our finances in order, as demands from Government and Diocese continue to increase. We are indebted to him and also thank Beryl Mooney who assists particularly in the area of giving and Gift Aid.

We are thankful for Leonard Beighton's continuing role as PCC Secretary, ensuring the smooth and effective running of the PCC, particularly with the additional legal and administrative requirements of the Vacancy process. He is also responsible for coordinating all the reports contained in this Review each year.

Wendy Jane Gray took over the role of Safeguarding Officer, for which we are very grateful, especially at a time where it is becoming such an important aspect of our daily lives.

We would also like to thank Julie Baird and her Social & Fellowship team for their hard work running numerous social events during the year which are so much a part of church life at St Andrew's. These include the Easter breakfast, Time to Remember, Heritage Day and the Summer Barbecue to name but a few. We also thank Shirley Mensah for organising our outreach meals on Christmas Day and on Easter Saturday.

Later in the report you will see accounts from the large number of other groups which make this church such a wonderful friendly, welcoming and holy family including the bell ringers, cleaners, florists, Sacristan, Mothers Union, Open Church, Luncheon Club and Spiritual Cinema. Then there are all the church members who chair or take part in the numerous committees and groups, all of which is an important characteristic marker of the health of a church through which St Andrew's displays strength and character. We must however make sure we broaden the membership of all these groups and committees to assure the future. Our thanks too to Dave Greenwood, our Webmaster, for keeping our website and database current. We tragically lost our Bell Captain Peter Ostley, in January and would like to thank Peter Bound for stepping up to take on the role. Peter Ostley did so much for the church over many years especially in property matters

and the works he carried out still stand in his memory.

Finally we would like to thank Robert Jenkins for his tenure here at St Andrew's. He has been an inspiration and his legacy is demonstrated in the strength and commitment which has remained after his departure last January. As a result, St Andrew's is a caring church, ready for the future and the young but not forgetting the older members of the community. The church family at St Andrew's is drawn from all strands of Anglican theology yet he showed us how to find the way to unite in corporate worship where each person can express his or her faith.

### **Vacancy**

The Vacancy (formerly known as an Interregnum) started on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 on the retirement of Robert Jenkins.

We followed the diocesan guidelines and held a day of reflection in February with members of the PCC and others from the church family. The day was facilitated by the diocesan Local Mission Advisor and resulted in a Statement of Needs we felt we required of a new Rector, which was incorporated into a Profile of the United Benefice along with input from St Mary's Stoke D'Abernon.

The post of Rector for the United Benefice was advertised in the beginning of July and although some applications were received, the short-listing team felt unanimously that none of them fulfilled the criteria set out in the Statement of Needs and therefore no one was invited for interview. The feeling was that God's chosen candidate was not available at that moment.

The post has been re advertised in January 2018 with short-listing in February and interviews early March.

Our thanks to Dominic Combe, our Patron, Alan Jenkins our Area Dean, Paul Bryer Archdeacon and Bishop Jo, for all their support and encouragement during the vacancy.

### **Church Attendance**

The numbers attending church during 2017 remained encouraging, even if there were occasions where the attendance was below last year, probably in part due to the Vacancy when it is typical to see drops of 10-15%, especially as time passes. Rather

than losing members permanently, we feel it is more a case of some attending less frequently.

### **Occasional Offices**

We continue to carry out a large number of funerals and baptisms – clergy officiated at 34 funerals of which 16 were at the church. The pastoral team undertakes bereavement support. 27 children and also 3 adult members of our church family were baptized, which was particularly moving.

7 couples were married in the church during the year with Sue Aitken in the important pastoral role of Assistant for Marriages. She takes care of the booking, and administration, as well as participating in the Marriage Preparation day, which is held jointly with St Mary's.

### **United Benefice**

St Andrew's and St Mary's remain distinct parishes with separate PCCs and church officers. Shared activities include Morning Prayer, Together magazine, small groups, confirmation and marriage preparation, worship and education committees and Spiritual Cinema.

The ministry teams meet together once a week.

### **Vision 2018**

*Report by Michael Flaxman*

The year was again marked by a constant reference to our Vision 2018: To Know, Glorify And Make Christ Known, launched in 2013, in regard to our mission and ministry at St Andrew's.

We reminded ourselves as often as possible of the Vision, including at every PCC meeting, and remained focused on the five priorities the PCC set for 2016, throughout 2017

1. Worship
2. Children, Family & Youth
3. Generosity
4. Financial Management
5. Faith & Social Action

Progress was made in all five areas, details of which can be found elsewhere in this review under each of the points.

As a new incumbent arrives we would expect to be looking at our next Vision later in 2018.

## Alpha

*Report by Michael Flaxman*

Having completed an Alpha course in December 2015, we decided to leave the next until we had a new incumbent in post. After several successful evening programmes, we concluded our next course should be held in the morning to attract those people who find it difficult to get out in the evening but are available in the morning eg parents, carers etc.

We hope to announce the dates once we have passed through our current vacancy.

Many members of our last course are well integrated into and enriching our Small Groups.

Alpha remains a wonderful tool to enable us all to fulfill our Vision 2018 of "Making Christ Known" - a basic principle of Christianity, by encouraging and inviting others to attend our courses.

## Small groups

*Report by Charleen Hollington*

The small groups pioneered by Folli Olokosi have continued to be an important and enjoyable part of the life of the church.

We currently have six groups meeting regularly, with a combined membership of more than 50 people (including a few from other churches). Some groups meet monthly, while others meet twice a month. Charleen Hollington continues to be responsible for the composition and general oversight of the groups.

The current practice is for a sermon delivered at St Andrew's in one month to be adapted as a study guide for the following month, the intention being that although there are several groups, all the members will be united with each other and the rest of the congregation in reflecting on the same issues.

Each study guide contains opening and closing prayers, points for discussion and 'Apps' – exercises for group members to undertake during the month, in order to put into practice the insights arrived at during discussion. Recently, the groups have also been asked to pray each month for one of the social action projects which the church has been supporting.

During Lent 2017, some groups converted to Lent study groups, using the Lent study guide published by the Guildford Diocese, with some additional members joining

different groups for the duration. In Lent 2018, members will be canvassed as to whether they wish to join with the ecumenical Lent groups being organized by Churches Together, or whether they wish to continue 'as is'.

At a recent meeting of the group leaders it was decided that in 2018, group members would be asked if, after Lent, they would like to depart from the current procedure for a while and embark instead on a programme of Bible study, using a published course of study, with the success (or otherwise) of the experiment being assessed in July 2018.

## Spiritual Cinema

*Report by Hugh Bryant*

What is the difference between 'spiritual' cinema and the standard Odeon or less standard Everyman concept? you may ask yourself.

Spiritual Cinema, slightly counterintuitively, looks after the inner man (or woman) with a choice of red or white wine, fruit juices and Badoit, accompanied by delicious home-made sandwiches, quiches, pies and other delicacies from wonderful Julie Baird.

Having attended to the inner man (or woman) - of whom typically about 25 usually attend, in the comfortable surroundings of Church Gate House - sense data are given by DVD or, less reliably, via the Internet, in a series of feature films chosen undemocratically to inspire and edify as well as to entertain. Suggestions are nevertheless always welcome.

In 2017 we showed 'I, Daniel Blake', by special licence before general release; 'The Third Man'; 'The Chronicles of Narnia'; 'The Passion of the Christ'; 'Eye in the Sky'; 'Diplomacy'; 'The Shack' (twice); 'Hidden Figures'; 'Lion'; 'Wadjda' and 'A Christmas Carol'. We started 2018 very well with 'The Zookeeper's Wife'.

We give out a hand-out which has some suggestions for discussion and reflection on each film, and we spend a few minutes together in discussion after the film has finished and we have attended to the Inner Man (or Woman).

Special thanks are due to Elaine Bray for preparing the hand-outs and setting up the chairs in the room; to Julie Baird for splendid refreshments - and to Keith Baird



for assisting Elaine in the room set-up; and to Revd Mtr Kathryn Twining for her editorial and theological assistance.

## **Sacristan**

The work continues to be shared between Judy Brickett and Derek Bullman.

## **Safeguarding Policy**

*Report by Wendy Jane Gray*

1. The Safeguarding Committee has been formed following recommendations passed at the PCC meeting on 17th October 2017. It has met and discussed aims and direction. The purpose of the committee is to assist the incumbent and the PCC on matters of Safeguarding. The PCC is "the body corporate accountable for safeguarding in the parish" as set out by the Church of England. Safeguarding is about "building a healthy church where all feel and are safe and valued, including those in role" (see [Jane.Huttly@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Jane.Huttly@cofeguildford.org.uk)). This covers child protection, sexual abuse, domestic violence and coercive control, spiritual abuse, awareness of human trafficking, bullying, neglect, mental health awareness and any other safeguarding concern. The PCC is required to adopt the "Promoting a Safer Church" policy statement and sign the Parish safeguarding policy. This has been done by St Andrew's PCC. This is an annual requirement and will come up for renewal in May 2018.

2. There is a Parish Safeguarding and Inclusion checklist which the Safeguarding committee will continue to use as guidance on the matter of Safeguarding. The National Church have produced a document "Know your Safeguarding Role" which outlines the responsibilities for the PCC and the incumbent, the Churchwardens and the Safeguarding officer. This would be useful for the PCC to become familiar with and will be referred to frequently on matters of safeguarding. It can be found at <http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk> - search for "know your safeguarding role". The checklist can also be found here.

## **Assets and Fabric**

*Report by the Churchwardens, Michael Flaxman and Fiona Lascelles*

All the 2013 Category 1 works (Urgent) from the 2013 Quinquennial Report, have been carried out. Category 2 works have commenced, with the major component

being refurbishing the Tower base interior which was completed in early 2015. Other less urgent works will be scheduled over the required periods. A new inspection is due in 2018.

Parish working days were arranged in the Spring and Autumn, removing saplings and shrubs, growing through gravestones as well as low hanging tree boughs. In addition, extensive weeding around the church, parking and Church Gate House was carried out.

The boilers in the church, Church Gate House and the flat were all serviced and Gas Safety Certificates were issued in accordance with Health & Safety Regulations.

The flood protection was only deployed once in April as a precaution after heavy rain and rising waters of the River Mole. Although the water did flood most of the car park and field, it did not come close to the buildings.

Fire inspections were carried out and new extinguishers purchased to replace ones which had passed their use date. Some emergency lighting units and two smoke detectors were also replaced in Church Gate House according to the inspector's recommendations.

The lights in Church Gate House hall continued to be a problem, so all the units were replaced with 240 volt versions. These are compatible with the control system, and will be less expensive to replace in the future, when they have reached their life expectancy.

Cracks appeared in the west nave ceiling of the church where it joins the bell tower. They were inspected by the church architect, a consulting engineer, and a stone and mortar mason who all concluded that the cracks in the plaster were superficial but required repair. The necessary permission was sought from the Diocese and we received the Archdeacon's Written Notice to proceed with the repair, which will be done in January.

Headstones were checked for stability and safety prior to Cobham Heritage Day in September.

The gate and posts at the north east end of the churchyard onto Church Street were kindly repaired and refurbished by David and Judith Robinson.

With the expiry of the short term tenancy agreement on the flat at Church Gate House, it was decided by the PCC that the accommodation should be utilised, as has been the case in the past, by ministry or persons with roles at the church when required. Our Children and Youth Minister was in temporary accommodation in Guildford and with the expansion of her role during the year, it was decided to offer her the accommodation for the better performance of her duties.

Although belonging to the Diocese, the vicarage falls under the responsibility of the PCC during a vacancy in respect of security, maintenance and decoration. The property was decorated throughout and carpets cleaned. Further capital investment will be required by the Diocese once a new incumbent is appointed. and perhaps some further finishing.

## **Garden of Remembrance**

This part of the churchyard provides an attractive focus for remembering loved ones. It was very well maintained by Ray Sherlock for many years before his very sad death. Since then it has been maintained by Mick, the gardener who maintains the garden in Church Gate House under the supervision of Mabs Ostley. We are most grateful to Nick Tamblyn who has taken over while Mick is injured.

## **Administration and Communications**

### **Parish Office**

Elaine Bray is our Communications and Administration Officer. She runs the Parish Office which is open from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays, though her own working hours are 8.30 am to 2.30 pm. She is responsible for much of the administrative work of the church and its communications, and for handling all enquiries, including bookings and enquiries about the Hall. She looks after the Welcome Café and supports the volunteers who man it.

### **Website**

*Report by Dave Greenwood*

The website is now well established. We endeavour to have a balance between information for those who already come and for potential newcomers. The Sermons go up each week, usually in both

written and audio form (click on the relevant service in the Calendar under "About"). The Weekly Notices are usually put up on a Friday, and Together magazine goes up each month. The latest updates about the search for a new Rector are there, along with dates of all sorts of activities, and the material for the House Groups. So are lots of forms (planned giving, electoral roll) and downloadable leaflets (church history, information for people interested in weddings and baptisms etc).

The big new capability introduced in 2017 is the integration with the hall booking system, so you can now check Church Gate House availability and request bookings through the website. Requests will be reviewed and responded to by the Parish Office. We have not pursued running rotas through the website as people are currently happy with the paper processes.

The challenge this year is compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulations which are coming in in May. Behind the scenes we hold the Electoral Roll and other contact lists in the system so we have to make sure we have your permission for what we hold and how we use it. More to come on this.

It is impossible for Elaine Bray and me to monitor every page and to keep them up to date, so if you see anything that needs updating, please let us know. Suggestions are also welcome.

### **"TOGETHER"**

The magazine for the United Benefice of St Andrew's and St Mary's

*Report from the Editor Daphne McFarlane*

The magazine aims to provide current information about the services and activities of both churches. The wide range of articles is mainly contributed by church members; it includes Christian organisations, Biblical research, local news, personal profiles and spiritual poetry.

The Editor is always glad to receive articles, comments and ideas from readers.

Ten issues of "Together" are distributed annually in both parishes and are available on the church websites and in large print. The average print run is 500, with more at Christmas and Easter. It is designed and

published by Edna Tipping and David Greenwood, with support from the parish Administrators, Elaine Bray and Polly Zabari. Zoe Ostley is the advertisement Manager and distribution is organised by Jenny Masters and Brenda Brown. The cost of the magazine, printed by Dyer & Son, Leatherhead, is partially funded by donations from parishioners and also by income from advertisements.

### **Other communications.**

A weekly news sheet is given out at Sunday and Friday services with items of immediate interest. The news sheet is also posted on the church website.

An on-line mailing list, ListServe, is maintained, to which anyone can subscribe at the St Andrew's website, allowing e-mail messages to be sent to subscribers at any time with information about church activities and events.

There are notice boards at the south entrance to the Church, at the entrance to the car park, at the lych-gate, and in the High Street. There is also a board in Church Gate House for church notices.

An annual parish directory is distributed in June, containing contact details of all church officials, committee chairmen and organisations. Its future will depend on the General Data Protection Regulations.

The diocesan magazine, the Wey, ceased publication in August with its 100th issue, but before that it was available in church each month and was distributed free to those attending.

### **Archivist**

We have not found anyone to take over as archivist since Peter Joce died a few years ago. Between them, David Taylor, Elaine Bray and Leonard Beighton ensure that the records are kept appropriately.

### **Electoral Roll**

#### *Report by Jenny Masters*

Since my report last year for the APCM when 260 members were on the roll, we have sadly had 4 deaths and 1 moved away. Unfortunately I am also sorry to report that no new members have been added this year. The roll therefore stands at 255.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### Membership

The clergy, churchwardens, children, families and youth worker, and lay representatives on the Deanery Synod are members of the Council ex-officio. In addition, 15 lay members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, making 26 members in all. In addition our patron, Dominic Combe, attends some meetings.

### During the year the following served as members of PCC

Rector:	Rev Robert Jenkins ( <i>to January 2017</i> )	Chairman
Associate Rector with special responsibility for Stoke D'Abernon:	Revd Godfrey Hilliard	
Assistant Curate:	Revd Folli Olokose	( <i>to June 2017</i> )
Assistant Curate	Revd Charleen Hollington	
Licensed Lay Minister:	Hugh Bryant	( <i>to March 2017</i> )
Licensed Children, Families and Youth Minister	Esther Holley	
Churchwardens:	Michael Flaxman Fiona Lascelles	Lay Vice Chairman
Lay representatives on the Deanery Synod:	Leonard Beighton (Secretary to the PCC) Hugh Bryant Michael Elson Geoffrey Morris	( <i>From June 2017</i> ) ( <i>To May 2017</i> )
Elected members	Keith Baird Leonard Beighton (Secretary) Elizabeth Bradley Ian Bullough Lyndon Ferguson Judy Franz Malcolm Graham (Treasurer) Tanya Hall Peter Kelly Sue Kilpatrick Daphne McFarlane Shirley Mensah Clive Moorman Lindsay Sainsbury Elaine Slade Phil Slade Nick Tamblyn Carrie Taylor David Taylor	( <i>To May 2017</i> ) ( <i>From April 2017</i> ) ( <i>To April 2017</i> ) ( <i>From April 2017</i> )  ( <i>To April 2017</i> ) ( <i>From April 2017</i> )    ( <i>From April 2017</i> )  ( <i>To August 2017</i> )
Co-opted	Moni Babatunde	

### The work of the Council in 2017

*Report by Leonard Beighton*

The Council maintains oversight of all the main activities of the church, and it does

this by receiving regular reports from each of the sub-committees and group leaders. All these activities have been fully described elsewhere in this Report.

## **Leatherhead Deanery Synod**

*Report by Michael Elson*

**Alan Jenkins and Bill King**

During the time of the vacancy in our parish, major changes have occurred in the Deanery. Alan Jenkins remains area dean but Bill King has become the chair of the house of laity. Another change is that meetings of the synod are now normally open to all that wish to attend. Members normally remain to consider the business of the synod after the visitors have left. The three members for Cobham are Leonard Beighton, Geoff Morris and Michael Elson.

### **'Stronger together, moving forward in unity'**

The synod established a working group in 2016, on the future of the Deanery, which reported in 2017. The report, 'Stronger together, moving forward in unity', implements the diocesan vision, *Transforming Church, Transforming Lives*. The report notes that the local population is generally prosperous and diverse but that, of the dwindling number that attend church, most are more than sixty years of age. In October 2017 the synod adopted the report's four recommendations.

### **To introduce a single church culture across the Deanery**

The plan identifies ways for churches in the Deanery to become more effective in mission by becoming more collaborative. The aim is for churches that are strong to become a resource, so that churches that face challenges receive the support that they need.

### **To share expertise and best practice across the Deanery**

Churches can learn from one another. The first initiative will be in the ministry to young people. The synod will hold open meetings and encourage networking. The synod will go on to identify and respond to opportunities for sharing in other areas of service and mission.

### **To engage beyond individual churches across the Deanery**

Significant opportunities often arise beyond the boundaries of individual parishes. New housing, for example, may be an opportunity for church planting and for the provision of fresh expressions of church. The deanery is in a good position to manage such a strategy and implement any plans.

### **To form a mission and pastoral committee for the Deanery**

The synod's standing committee has become its mission and pastoral committee. The committee will support the area dean in the role of assisting in the production and implementation of church development plans. The synod will adopt its own Deanery action plan, to connect the synod with the chapter, and provide the means for further development in the future.

### **Implications for our church**

During the vacancy the implications of the diocesan vision and the Deanery plan have been minimal. With the appointment of a new rector the parochial church council will have to consider and provide our response as a church. The expiry of the church's present vision in 2018 is timely. Both the diocese and the Deanery will expect us to produce a church development plan.

## **PCC COMMITTEES**

The PCC operates through a number of committees. Each committee includes at least one PCC member (not necessarily the chair) and reports on its activities to PCC annually to ensure two-way communication.

### **Standing Committee**

*Chaired by the Rector*

This is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of PCC between its meetings, subject to any

directions given by Council. It also recommends to the PCC the dates for meetings and the arrangements for the Annual Parochial Church meeting. In practice, however, it rarely needs to meet.

### **Church Gate House Committee**

*Chaired by David Tipping*

This is my second year as Chairman of the small enthusiastic committee who play an active part in the operation of this excellent

facility. We are fortunate to have our busy Parish Office located on site, and it is a great asset to the life of the church and the wider community. Church Gate House is a popular resource, being used for a variety of activities and a meeting place for various local clubs and groups, from children's parties, wedding receptions, Keep Fit classes, Probus, and the ever popular Art Club to name but a few. We have recently introduced an on-line booking system, enabling those interested in using our facility to find out more and its availability. This is working well under the guidance of Elaine Bray, our efficient and hard working Administrator. It also generates an income in excess of £2,000 per month, a figure which we hope will grow.

It is important, however, that we retain some time and space for our church activities; our excellent youth work under the leadership of Esther, Spiritual Cinema, Lunch Club, and other initiatives.

Unfortunately the adjacent car park, which we are fortunate to have, can at times present a problem and this is something we will need to consider for the future. Perhaps we should encourage more car sharing to help alleviate the problem.

Finally, thank you to the Committee (Elaine Bray, Julie Baird, Esther Holley, Fiona Lascelles, Mabs Ostley, Gill Sharp) and all the volunteers who play an important part in the operation of our Church Gate House.

## **Eco Committee**

*Report by Clive Moorman*

It has been a less active year for the Eco Committee (Leonard Beighton, Geoff Morris, Sam Acquaye, Wendy Jane Gray and myself). However we have made some interesting progress over the year on a number of fronts.

1. We did suggest that St Andrew's invest in a bike rack to encourage more people to cycle to church. This would have the double benefit of saving on fuel, if they previously drove to church, and increasing personal fitness. However it was felt that there wasn't sufficient demand to warrant the expense. So if you think differently please let me know.
2. Wendy Jane was able to use one of the recipes that formed part of our Veggie

MasterChef competition for the Church Watchers Supper.

3. We arranged for ethically sourced meat, from Chris Donn's farm, to be used at our summer BBQ which was greatly enjoyed by everyone who attended.
4. We organised an Eco Committee stand at the Heritage Day celebrations and it was a very popular stand, partly due to Wendy Jane's homemade bread and produce from Geoff's garden. This was complemented by various homemade preserves and hot coffee. We also featured a video of some of the eco focused things we do at St Andrew's.
5. We managed to find a relatively new member of our congregation (James Moreno) who has agreed to carry out the 4 annual audits (spring, summer, autumn, winter) for RiverSearch, which contributes to a national database on the health of our rivers. Wendy Jane will be training and arranging more formal training for him shortly.
6. We made a video of some of our young people answering questions and expressing their concerns about how well we look after the environment and the people of the world. As you would expect, they had some rather good insights and we are planning to feature this video at the next Eco Service in which we take part.
7. We purchased an apple press and the children had great fun pressing the juice out of both apples and grapes. They were also able to enjoy the fruits of their labour, literally, afterwards and that was enjoyed by children and adults alike. As well as being an interesting thing to do, it was also to show how it is better to find ways of using surplus produce than throw it away. This press will be available at harvest time for many years to come.
8. Our energy deal with Scottish Power came to an end in November and we managed to negotiate a competitive deal with EcoTricity, a 'green energy' supplier, which pleased Leonard.
9. We planted another 100 trees in St Andrew's field to fill in the gaps left when 50% of our last batch died from both floods and droughts. Well done to Wendy Jane, Peter, Sam, Chris Donn

and all the others who helped the planting on our soggy field.

There are still some more things we want to do in 2018, like refurbish the 'bug hotel', preparing our part in the next Eco Service, and follow up on our recycling visit to Leatherhead Waste Transfer Station. With plastics being very much in the news at the moment, we want to know how we can use less plastic and recycle what we do use. We are also looking forward to working with our new rector when he/she arrives to understand their thoughts on supporting our eco work and gaining an Eco Church award.

## Education Committee

(A joint activity between St Mary's and St Andrew's)

*Report by Dominic Combe*

**1. Robert Jenkins,** In January 2017, Robert Jenkins, our Rector since March 2004, announced his retirement. All these years he has been a driving force within the Education Committee, and we are very grateful for his many contributions. We wish him well in his new life.

**2. Folli Olokose,** our Assistant Curate, was installed on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July at St Mary's, Oatlands. His last day with us was 11<sup>th</sup> June. In him we have lost a dynamic, creative and fun member of the committee. His contributions were many and his legacy continues in the House Groups which are well attended throughout the year.

**3. Alpha Course:** No Alpha course this year. This will be reviewed when we have a new rector.

**4. The Lent Course 2017,** organised by Charleen, was Bishop Andrew's "Transforming Lent," written in part by Julie Gittoes. The Bishop's fundraiser for Lent was split between the Bishop of Guildford's Foundation and a major water project in the Diocese of Kebbi, N.W. Nigeria.

**5. Thy Kingdom Come 2017.** This was the Archbishop's call to prayer from Ascension to Pentecost.

It was a Churches Together event under Godfrey's chairmanship. Father Jonathan How of the Sacred Heart participated with members of his congregation.

**6. Future Courses:** for Lent 2018, will consist of house groups organised by

"Churches Together" with the theme: "Stronger Together."

**7. Small Groups:** All the present groups are doing well. Bible Study will be introduced after Easter.

**8. Spiritual Cinema:** Hugh Bryant handles this and appreciates ideas for suitable films. Average attendance is about 25, by no means all church members. For Holy Week 2018, "Risen" will be shown.

**9. Ladywell Retreat:** None this year. The matter will be reviewed when we have a new Rector.

**10. Contributions to "Together":** The committee continues to submit articles which are well received.

**11. Confirmation Preparation:** In 2017, there were three adult baptisms and no confirmations. Looking forward to 2018, a children's confirmation course is starting and up to four adults may be confirmed.

**12. Marriage Preparation:** On 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 a marriage preparation day was attended by many couples. Looking forward to 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2018, 16 or 17 couples are likely to attend.

## Faith and Social Action Committee

*Report by Charleen Hollington*

In 2017, the church continued its efforts to express the love of God by supporting those in need. We have continued to support the following projects (as introduced to the church in 2016), each represented by the 'champion' named:

OM Nepal – Peter Kelly;

The Garden Route Children's Trust – Lesley Flaxman;

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) – Charleen Hollington.

In addition to these projects, the invaluable work of the Foodbank has continued under Hugh Bryant's energetic and inspiring leadership.

Unfortunately, for various reasons, we have ceased to be actively involved in one of the projects originally embarked upon, Prison Fellowship, although we have supported them financially through an Outward Giving contribution. One of the aims of the Faith and Social Action Committee for 2017 is to re-invigorate support for this ministry, and we are

currently looking for a 'champion' to lead our involvement.

A report on each project appears elsewhere in this Annual Report.

The Faith and Social Action Committee continues to be responsible for the general oversight of the church's social action work. Its members are Charleen Hollington (Chair), Leonard Beighton, David Taylor, Sue Kilpatrick, Geoff Morris and Elaine Bray. Meetings of the committee now include the project champions, and also Hugh Bryant for the Foodbank. Meetings are held quarterly.

During 2017, as planned, we held a Social Action Sunday for OM Nepal, Christians Against Poverty, and the Garden Route Children's Trust. On those Sundays, at the 10.00 a.m. service, the relevant champion gave a presentation on the project, tied in with the preaching, with appropriate music and intercessions.

In addition to Social Action Sundays, each project was allocated a 'promotion Sunday', at which champions were invited to promote their respective projects (without the service itself being focussed on the project).

Towards the end of 2017, we began including a specific prayer section for our social action projects in our monthly Small Groups Study Guide

Our Outward Giving committee has been very supportive and has continued to provide financial support for the four projects from the resources available to them, in the amount of up to £1,500 each.

All four projects put up a display in the church for Cobham Heritage Day in September 2017. However, it was felt that there was very little 'traffic' past the displays and it has been suggested that the displays be put up in a different place at the 2018 CHD.

I would like to thank most sincerely all the members of the Committee and also the champions for all they have done to further the church's social action work and look forward to all we will do in the year ahead.

## **Fellowship and Social Committee**

*Chaired by Julie Baird*

We began the New Year with a Farewell Reception for our Rector Rev. Canon Robert Jenkins. This took place at St

Mary's Church Hall where some 250 invited guests enjoyed drinks and refreshments. A very big Thank You to everyone who contributed to making this a memorable send-off for Robert, especially the team from St Mary's. The following day, 29<sup>th</sup> January' after his last Sermon we held a smaller event at Church Gate House with drinks, canapés and a beautiful cake baked by Abi Slade.

Marriage Preparation Day came next on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February, with 14 couples, together with helpers enjoying a 3-course lunch comprising of Pate and Toast, Chicken Paprika Casserole with New Potatoes and Beans and Apple Crumble and Cream.

Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup> was Easter Breakfast, where some 85 people enjoyed Full English Breakfast in-between the services on Easter morning.

On 25<sup>th</sup> June at Coffee time after the Service we celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Together Magazine and Daphne Macfarlane's editorship over that time. Drinks and delicious cake were served and Daphne was presented with flowers to acknowledge her wonderful contribution.

At lunchtime on the same day we carried on partying with the Annual Family BBQ, which this year also marked the leaving celebration for Rev. Folli Olokose who had just been given his own parish at St Mary's Otlands, Weybridge. Tempting BBQ food and drinks kept some 150 odd guests happy and the weather was kind to us too. A big Thank You to everyone who helped to make this event such a success, especially Chris Donn who helped so much with the BBQ. From donations on the day we were able to give over £300.00 to the Youth Group.

Heritage Day on 9<sup>th</sup> September was very successful with the team in Church Gate House providing refreshments throughout the day, ranging from hot sausages in rolls to cream teas and gallons of tea and coffee. We made a profit and were able to put over £400.00 back in the kitty to help towards future events.

We celebrated Harvest Festival with coffee, tea and cake (including a special Harvest Cake) in Church on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October.

Time to Remember Tea took place on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November and yet again served a traditional English tea to around



85 people in Church Gate House following the special service. Thank you to everyone who contributed cakes and helped with the occasion.

We have also held other events during the year that have been organised by their own individual teams, namely Friday Lunch Club, Men's Curry Nights, Easter Saturday Afternoon Tea, Christmas Day Lunch and Spiritual Cinema Evenings and of course the wonderful team who do Tea and Coffee after the services every week in Church Gate House.

Very many thanks to everyone who has helped and contributed to making all our events throughout 2017 such a success. In this Vacancy year we have with the help of all of you managed to hold our loving Church family closer together while we wait for our new Rector. Thank you so much to my core team, small as we are and to the amazing helpers who come on board when needed to get our events off the ground. They would not happen without you and it has been a pleasure and privilege to work with you all throughout the year.

We have some lovely things lined up for 2018 so keep checking your weekly newsletter for diary dates.

## **Finance & Administration Committee**

*Chaired by Michael Flaxman*

The committee is responsible for maintaining, protecting and enhancing the physical resources of the Parish, including the buildings and their fabric. It discusses and resolves expenditure matters and can approve expenditures up to £750 without further reference to the PCC. Any expenditures in excess of this amount are submitted to the PCC with the committee's recommendation.

## **Giving Committee**

*Report by Peter Kelly*

The Giving Committee was reinvigorated in the spring of 2017 with Peter Kelly accepting the chair of the Committee. Michael Flaxman and Malcolm Graham generously provided Peter with a series of workshop meetings to transition data and the leadership responsibilities during the late spring and early summer of the year.

In the summer of 2017, the committee held its first organisational meeting and focused on the proposed charter and a

calendar of responsibilities for the next 12 months. The committee settled on a charter which included the annual stewardship day, advocacy, communication, and education of stewardship as a lifestyle and generosity as a spiritual discipline. The committee decided to not include spending and end-use discussions or education as part of its mandate because it was counter to the character of obedience which it hoped to create as its focus for stewardship.

As summer drew to a close, the charter and direction were shared with the PCC who affirmed the direction of the committee. This direction for 2017 was to educate and focus on giving as a positive movement towards greater gratitude to God for His blessings and then and thereafter a greater expression of that gratitude through giving.

The annual Giving Day sermon was delivered by Peter with significant input from committee members in the autumn of the year to coincide with the Harvest Celebration. Members of the congregation expressed enthusiasm for the concept and the call for new enrolment in Planned Giving as well as increases in Giving Levels were both successful, albeit to a limited extent. The Committee ended the year with a request to Malcolm to bring specific results in enrolment and giving levels to the meeting in January 2018. The agenda of this meeting included assessments of giving and plans for new communication of giving progress. Also on the agenda for the meeting was possible adult education on Stewardship for 2018 and beyond.

The Committee thanks all members of the congregation for their faithful and sacrificial support as well as the guidance and wisdom of the PCC.

We look forward to a wonderful and generous year in 2018.

## **Outward Giving Committee**

*Report by Cathy Whitnall*

In 2017 the team, consisting of Carrie Taylor, Michael Elson, Keith & Julie Baird and myself, met several times in addition to the usual exchange of ideas by email. The PCC had set aside £14,170 for this year's donations. In addition, there was a sum of £500 left over from 2016; this had been intended to support the training for a Nigerian pastor, but in the event the

charity to which we had hoped to send the money was no longer functioning.

As last year, first consideration was given to the charities supported by the Social Concerns forum, these being OM Nepal, The Garden Route Trust (South Africa), Christians Against Poverty and Cobham Area Foodbank. £1500 was distributed to each of these funds in June, and a further £1500 was sent to Oasis (Cobham)

Towards the end of the year we made further recommendations for the remaining funds. In addition to our usual support of St Andrew's School, Elmbridge Rentstart, Citizens Advice Bureau, Guildford Cathedral and the Diocesan Bellringers, we sent £1500 to Wycliffe Bible Translators in support of the work done by John and Maila Davies, £500 to the Prison Fellowship and £500 to Operation Noah, a charity working to inspire action on climate change.

In September we welcomed a new member of the team, Melissa Kreisa, who had links to Elmbridge CAN, a charity supporting refugees who have settled in this area. We were able to send them £1500. A further £1000 was earmarked for the Young Futures fund, which looks after the interests of young people leaving the care system. This left us with a remnant of £670, which was divided between Elmbridge Chatterbus and Crisis.

We continue to pray that we make appropriate use of the funds entrusted to us.

## **Pastoral Committee and Prayer for Healing Team**

*Report by Charleen Hollington*

Pastoral care and prayer for healing at St Andrew's are led by our Pastoral Committee. The committee is made up of the clergy (being Charleen Hollington and Peter Vickers, following the departure of Robert Jenkins and Folli Olokosi in 2017), and the Pastoral Assistants, namely, Sue Aitken, Wendy Jane Gray, Judy Brickett, Dave Greenwood, and Carrie Taylor (who was licensed and commissioned as a Pastoral Assistant in 2017). Lindsay Sainsbury is also a member of the committee in her role as a Pastoral Visitor, assisting the clergy and PAs by undertaking home visits within the parish. Moni Babatundi also sits on the committee as part of her ordination training.

The pastoral care undertaken by the team extends from the general to the specific, such as bereavement, the elderly, hospital visiting, prayer for healing, worship and newcomer welcome. In 2017 members of the team also co-ordinated support for families in the congregation affected by serious illness.

A very important and popular ministry of the committee is the church's annual Time to Remember service for the bereaved, which the team helps to arrange and lead.

The Committee meets every few weeks to discuss pastoral issues and to offer mutual support and prayer.

The Prayer for Healing team meets on Friday mornings and private prayer for healing is offered at all Parish Communion services. The Cross of Prayer with individual petitions is received at the altar during parish communions. In 2018, the team plans to offer prayer for healing during family services as well.

The monthly Friday Luncheon Club continues to flourish under the stewardship of Jenny Masters and her enthusiastic helpers. The number of people attending has remained stable throughout the year, and the price of the lunch has remained unchanged, offering excellent value.

## **Property Committee**

*Chaired by Michael Flaxman*

The Property Committee meets on an ad hoc basis to consider both major projects and maintenance requirements. As always, the challenge is to prioritise the smaller projects so we maintain the excellent state of our assets.

Further details of those carried out are in the Assets & Fabric Review.

## **Welcome Committee**

*Report by Phil Slade*

The Welcome Committee met together three times since July 2017. There are 9 church members who input into this group, 5 of whom are on the PCC. The remit for the committee set out at the initial meeting was 'a think tank for the welcome ethos within St Andrew's – to welcome everyone from the mildly curious to those who want a deeper relationship with God'. The aspects discussed and agreed have included:

a Welcome card for new people to fill in their details if they would like more information or to be contacted by a member of staff at St Andrew's. This has been developed and side persons are aware they are at the back of church.

The existing Welcome packs were discussed; these are given out to people who ask for more information. Both are stored in the entrance area; clergy, churchwardens and sides persons actively give them out when appropriate.

It was decided to give out the Welcome cards and Kids/Youth brochure at the various Carol services attended by several schools, as well as the Crib Service in December to encourage people from the community to join in with family focused activities at St Andrew's.

It was agreed to replace the existing Welcome packs with a less expensive brochure, modelled on the Kids/Youth brochure that the Children's/Youth worker uses for families joining St Andrew's. The brochure would provide an overall picture of what is available in the church life of St Andrew's if newcomers want to know how they can become better connected.

There were three proposals put to the PCC which were agreed to in the October meeting:

To develop a team to further support and help newcomers settle in at a more involved level after the initial contact during a service. Sides persons; clergy; churchwardens and church members could bring new people to the attention of someone on the Welcome team.

Coffee and biscuits in church after some Family services starting in February 2018 to encourage those who find the transition to CGH daunting to stay and chat.

'Get to know us better' (Newcomer's) lunch – a small meal of soup and a roll and cake and fruit in CGH two or three times a year as an opportunity to chat to clergy; churchwardens; PCC and church members to get to know new people better and to ensure they can have the opportunity to ask questions about church life with one or two brief presentations about different aspects of church life. There will be information boards up too for them to look at. The first will be in February 2018 after the Family service.

## **Worship Committee.**

*Report by Dave Greenwood.*

I particularly want to thank Charleen, Peter, Esther, Moni and our occasional preachers Cathy and David for leading our services and preaching last year following the departures of Robert Jenkins and then Folli Olokose. As Bishop Jo commented when she visited in August, you wouldn't know this church was going through an interregnum. We are blest to have such a strong team. Obviously it was with much sadness that we said goodbye to Robert and Folli and we miss the styles that each of them brought, again a thank you to them too.

One of Robert Jenkins' last actions was to finalise the Lent Service Booklet thus completing the set which we have been using ever since. These exploit the richness of alternative texts in Common Worship to bring a different feel to each season.

The committee have noted a couple of observations, particularly around options for the creed, that can be considered when we need to re-issue the books or the new Rector decides to do so. Also the choice of Agnus Dei for Easter which we need to agree again for this year.

The Call-to-Worship song at the beginning of the service is intended to be the time people prepare themselves and either listen or join in, however there is still quite a lot of talk going on through it. Whilst we have to be welcoming, please keep business matters for discussion after the service. The screen-based worship, supported by paper booklets, has been well established and has become normal during the year. It is good to have people singing, especially, with heads up. This seems to be accepted and generally working well. Thanks to Carrie & Elaine for the slide preparation each week and to the projectionists who have the great responsibility of having the right slide up at all times - it is not as easy as you might think!

Another relatively new focus this year, for the second time, was the national week of prayer "Thy Kingdom Come". The committee discussed the programme for that leading to a fuller, more balanced week, in which a good number of people took part. Other than those, we have carried on our usual reviews of services

past and co-ordination and suggestions for services to come.

## CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

### St Andrew's Bellringers

*Report by Peter Bound, Vice Tower Captain*

2017 was a changing year for the ringing band. The passing of Peter Ostley, Captain for seventeen years, was a sad occasion.

The bells have been rung intermittently throughout the year, not all Sundays regrettably or practice nights. In 2017, weddings requesting bells were rung for as well as for most church festivals.

On Heritage Day we opened the tower for exhibition ringing and 'have a go' sessions with members of the public. For health and safety purposes we were unable to allow visits to the higher chambers.

New Year's Eve Ringing was silent from the tower, rallying the team on this night is not easy owing to members' commitments

We are pleased to report the bell and clock chambers have seen a major overhaul in 2017. The two higher chambers were cleared of bird debris, accumulated rubbish and hoovered on completion. The church clock was serviced in November and all these costs were paid for by funds the ringers collectively contribute to.

We were pleased to be advised by the PCC, that the ringers had been bequeathed a fund for the use of the ringers. We provided a scheme to upgrade the ringing chamber as well as the clock chamber for works that have required some attention for several years. Plans were submitted to the PCC and endorsement is awaited from the diocese. The ringers will also contribute to the costs of the scheme and the first stage mentioned above is complete.

Three visiting towers rang at Cobham during the year and we continue to host the occasional event for District Practices.

Promotion to encourage new members is always active, like other towers in Surrey interest continues to remain low.

### Church Cleaning

*Report by Mabs Ostley*

Five members of St Andrew's Church meet every Thursday morning all year at 10.00am to clean the church. Each member is responsible for a special item e.g. the lectern, the altar rails as well as assisting in the general cleaning of the entire church.

The present team are depleted in numbers and new members are urgently wanted. We will be down a further number in early 2018 and will be short of hands to complete the works necessary to keep the church clean.

Grateful thanks are extended to the present team for maintaining the church, but reluctantly, unless new people come on board, this could be last year we continue. The legacy of hard work that has been given by present and past church members will go unnoticed forever by the need to employ external cleaners to maintain the church.

### Church Flowers

*Report by Mabs Ostley*

St Andrew's team of flower arrangers are pleased to confirm they were approached by two new people within our community during the latter half of 2017. These two new members have joined the team and rota, which will meet the forthcoming year's duties. These duties include the display pedestal at the altar for most Sunday services together with other flower arrangements in the church when requested.

The team regularly does wedding flower requirements.

Memorial flowers are asked for occasionally and the team can arrange these too.

Anyone interested in flower arranging, but hesitate thinking they have to go solo, can be paired with our present flower arrangers to build their skill and knowledge. If interested, please ring Mabs Ostley for further information on how the rota works and the flower arrangements we provide.

## Friday Luncheon Club

*Report by Jenny Masters*

We are still able to produce a two-course lunch for around 35 people each month at a cost of £3.00 per person despite the rise in price of food generally. A small profit is made most months enabling us to support our usual charities – namely Princess Alice Hospice, The Bible Society, and the Leprosy Mission

My grateful thanks to Gill Sharp who faithfully helps me every month and also to Mabs Ostley and her team who provide an excellent roast in January and July. Also I wish to thank very much those friends who help to set up the tables and help to clear away each month without whose help it would be difficult to manage.

## Mothers Union

*Report by Jenny Vickers*

This year we had several speakers from within our Church family and these included Michael Flaxman, Elaine Bray, Joan Bingley, Lynne Ayton and Cathy Whitnall. Their topics were varied and much enjoyed by all members.

Some members attended the Lady Day Diocesan Eucharist at the Cathedral on a bitterly cold day. The scaffolding was still up which meant we were unable to parade our banners as there was nowhere for them to be placed during the service. The parading of the banners from the parishes is always a most moving experience so bearing this in mind together with the fact that there was not any heating we might have felt a bit 'down', but once the service got underway we almost forgot the cold and came away feeling in good spirits.

Leatherhead, Great Bookham and Oxshott branches invited us to join them for their summer meetings and they, plus other branches within the Deanery, joined us for our summer meeting when the theme was "My Favourite Hymn and Why".

Sadly, during the year, three of our members died, Marjorie Sellors, Marjorie Dunford and Florence Cooke. Kathleen Bailey, who had moved away, but with whom we were in contact, also died. We will have their names put into the Mothers' Union Guildford Diocese Book of Remembrance at the Pilgrimage of Prayer.

T4U has been well attended during the year.

## Music

*Report by Kevin Ayton, Acting Director of Music.*

We continue in an extended period of transition, but have settled in to a period of reasonable stability. We will not be advertising for a new Director of Music until a new Rector has had time to settle in, although if a suitable candidate appeared in the meantime we wouldn't let them get away.

The music (chosen each week by Cathy Whitnall) is designed to be a balance between traditional and modern, familiar and new. But above all the music is chosen to support the theme and style of the service, and – as far as possible – to fit in with any special requests from the preacher. I've particularly enjoyed some of the songs Cathy has found that we haven't done for many years – I've asked if we can repeat some of them soon, so they become more familiar. And if anyone has something they would particularly like us to sing in a service, please mention it to Cathy so she can try and fit in.

The choir currently numbers just eight, so new members are always welcome. I am very grateful and thankful for the commitment and hard work shown by this loyal band.

The music group has continued to play at the Family Worship services. The opportunities to play at other services are somewhat constrained by the difficulties of arranging practice times with the music group and that week's locum organist, but we will continue to be as flexible as we can. We currently have five instrumentalists – a bassist, a guitarist, a saxophonist and two drummers. We can always accommodate new members, so again, please come and talk to me.

**SAY** choir, led by Cathy Whitnall, has continued to be small in numbers but big in vision; rehearsals include general musicianship training as well as singing, and they sing at all the Family services. The instrumental talents of the members have been put to use, with performances at the Easter Tea, and before the Christmas Eve crib service. There has only been one opportunity to sing at a wedding in 2017; it is hoped that this will increase in 2018.

Our Good Friday Devotional Concert "Were you there?" took the form of a

series of readings and music reflecting on the *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, with the music centred around the four of the movements of the 'Ordinary' of the Mass (*Kyrie, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei*) from Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man*, supported with anthems, solos for voice, violin and organ, and congregational hymns. Thanks are due to all who took part – singers, instrumentalists, and particularly to Michael Flaxman for his readings of the Words.

June saw the departure of Foli, and we offered our farewell with Bob Chilcott's *Irish Blessing*.

In September, the Choir presented a "Come and Sing" session in church as part of the Heritage Day celebrations. We had great fun, and I think our audience did too – a few came and sang with us which was great.

For the annual Service of Remembrance the Choir sang two anthems. The Introit was Peter Skellern's *Rest in peace (and rise in glory)* while for the anthem we sang *Turn back, O Man*, a setting of the hymn by Gustav Holst. A number of our 'regular extras' were able to join the choir for this service which helped to swell the sound.

The highlight of the year for the choir is the service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Alongside the traditional congregational hymns we sang a mixture of accompanied and unaccompanied carols, with some chosen from the 'new' items we had performed in recent years and others less familiar. Again, we were joined by a number of our regular guests which allowed us all to relax and enjoy the service.

We are moving towards a time of more change for St Andrew's. We have a broad tradition of music on which to build, and I look forward to working with the choir, the music group and our *locum* organists in the months ahead until a new permanent Director of Music is appointed.

Those *locum* organists – Oliver Macfarlane and Tim Slack – have coped magnificently with the music presented to them with little warning. Too often during services I remember the little nuggets of information I should have passed on, but forgot because it's just habit to us! I can only apologise to them.

## Church Watch

*Report by Eileen Ranger.*

Following on from Peter Vickers' amazing story discovered from the Visitors Book in the church regarding our family story which went back to great great grandfathers as members of St Andrew's. *Realised the value of our church watch.*

Colin Burgess at the age of 97 decided after 33 years, it was time to give up church watching - as he could not remember as much as he would like to. WELL DONE COLIN.

Jill Newman could not continue at the moment due to her other commitments. Thank you very much Jill!

Celia Edwards cannot continue at the moment – Thank you Celia.

Marlene Robinson no longer goes to the Princess Alice every other Saturday so is available more Saturdays for us if necessary – their loss is our gain.

The very good news is that we have two new watchers, namely Yvonne and Ken Welford. Their details are on the updated list of names and addresses. Beryl and Ed have volunteered to be with them for a while on their first visit in December.

Over the year we have many generally complimentary comments such as "beautiful, well maintained, wonderful stain glass windows etc". The following are some quotations from our Visitors' Book in 2017.

10 January Married here 40 years ago  
Mr and Mrs White.

13 January From New Zealand – My Grandfather's ashes are in this Church's Garden.

31 March Wonderful to find St Andrew's open – thank you.

9 April From Belgium Pam and Nigel Hobbs – my Gt Grandparents were here.

19 August Pam Oliver wonderful to visit this church after 41 years at my brother's wedding.

13 September From New Zealand – amazing church beautifully kept.

15 September From USA.

15 September Annabel and John from Guernsey – we were married here in 1962 – 55 years ago.

14 October Our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding here 50 years ago.

17 October I was christened in this church – wonderful to return – so well maintained.

It is amazing how many visitors we have from all parts of the world. I feel that we are doing a very good and worthwhile job.

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### Child Safeguarding Policy

We continue to work hard in our need to provide a safe environment for all children and young people attending the various activities within the church. In May the PCC formally adopted a new safeguarding policy which had been approved by the House of Bishops. This brought together a large number of different documents. A copy is displayed in the church porch, the church hall and on the website.

A report from Wendy Jane Gray, our Parish Safeguarding officer, is at page 9 above. It brings up to date how we are moving forward in this area. Meanwhile the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) is still being used as the vetting and barring scheme to validate the identity and suitability of anyone wanting to work with children. Most of the leaders and volunteers now have full criminal record clearance: renewals and checks for new leaders recruited for our growing youth ministry are being processed through the Diocese.

### Children, Young People and Families Ministry

*Esther Holley, Children and Youth Minister*

The SAY Team and Kids' Church Team are committed to work out the Church's vision by seeking to glorify Christ in the work we do, and make Christ known to the children, their families and young people of our Church and community. This ministry in St Andrew's Church is overseen by our licensed Lay Children and Youth Minister, Esther Holley. With Esther, the ministry and activities are carried out by passionate, hard working and committed volunteers.

### Children's Ministry

Kids' Church meets in Church Gate House at 10:00am every Sunday except the 1st of the month. We have four groups: 'Little Fishes', 'Waves', 'Anchors' and 'DiscipleSHIP'. These groups provide fun and age-appropriate lessons, which

include learning from the Bible, games, crafts and interactive activities. The teaching follows the Lectionary, therefore in Kids' Church and in the Church service all receive the same message. After 40 minutes of teaching and activities, the groups come together for a time to share what they have learnt. We also learn together about the Church seasons, such as the changing of the altar cloth and the lighting our own advent wreath. The children sing to God through fun action songs or have a reflective time of prayer.

Kids' Church continues to be full of joy and we often have new families joining us. In December 2017 we had 47 children registered.

Kids' Church has a wonderful team of volunteers, who work very hard to provide exciting sessions each week. Each group has a Team Leader - the Little Fishes group is overseen by Michelle Bonner, Waves by Carrie Taylor and Anchors by Alison Wilde, while Esther leads the DiscipleSHIP group. The registration team is overseen by Lynn Moreno. The Team Leaders are responsible for organising their Kids' Church group and for communication with the other adult members of their team.

The Kids' Church team has had a few new members over the past year and it is great to see people bringing a diversity of gifts and skills to the ministry.

In 2017 we had our very first Kids' Church Holiday Club, taking place over three days during Holy Week. It was held inside the Church with a variety of activities, songs and crafts. Children known to the church and many from the community came to take part in the celebration.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make the event such a joy and success.

In December we had a wonderful Crib Service led by the children and young people, with the congregation joining in the

joyful celebration. The children and young people continue to bring their gifts, talents and creativity for the glory of God into the service, through acting, reading, dance and playing music.

The family worship services once a month also continue to reflect the presence and involvement of the children and youth in St Andrew's Church. We encourage the children to actively take part in the singing, readings and prayers in the service.

I would like to thank all who lead, help and are involved in Kids' Church.

Thank you to Carrie, Alison, Michelle, Wendy Jane, Mel, Linda, Becky, Suzannah, Alyson, Marianne, Lyn, Liz, Lynsey, Angela, Sam, Kennedy and Shirley for your commitment, example and hard work in making Kids' Church such a wonderful place for the youngsters to know more of Jesus.

In June 2017 Carrie Taylor was authorised as a Pastoral Assistant, with a special focus on Children and Families. We as a team are delighted, Carrie will continue to be a great blessing to the Children and Families ministry and to the Church as a whole.

There are members of the Kids' Church team who care deeply and have served in the children's ministry for many years, selflessly giving their time and energy for the benefit of the little ones growing up in St Andrew's. I am aware there are volunteers who would like to step down and some who aren't able to continue with us much longer. Kids' Church is growing and we are really in need of some more loving leaders. Please do speak with Esther if you would like to be a part of this vital and valuable ministry in the Church.

### **Children and Families Ministry - Baby Talk**

Baby Talk is a longstanding meeting place for those caring for babies and pre-nursery school children. It enables mothers and carers to meet and chat over a cup of coffee whilst their children play.

Baby Talk is flourishing and numbers continue to rise each week. It is such a wonderful place for people to come from all walks of life. In 2017 Baby Talk has included singing, a paddling pool in the garden on a hot day, bubbles, games, play-doh and an area for new born babies.

The group caters to a whole range of little ones.

This year Baby Talk continued through the summer holidays, half terms and the Christmas break and many continued to come along as there is a need for family activities in the community at these times.

Many thanks to Mabs Ostley for all you have done and continue to do, for your consistency, for your constant love and care for the young families of Cobham. Thank you to Elaine Bray for regularly being involved and welcoming the families, and to Christine Woodfield for your continued support and care.

### **Youth Ministry - SAY it's SUNDAY**

SAY it's Sunday is a weekly youth group for young people aged 11 to 14 years which continues to meet through school holidays. We meet in Church Gate House on Sunday evenings.

Most young people are not from a church background. The young people over the age of 14 are our volunteer Junior Leaders, doing a great job of supporting our Youth Leaders and helping out at the club. They are each developing in confidence and leadership skills. Some weeks we have parents support us by preparing the food in the kitchen, which relieves our Youth Leaders to spend more time with the young people.

The club ensures there is plenty of time for socialising and developing friendships, for games and for activities or crafts. Each week we have food and discussion together. The 'Faith' part is the final part of the session, with a talk, activities and discussion focused on a Bible verse or topic.

During May Bank Holiday Weekend, SAY it's Sunday had its third residential trip to Walton Firs, for the first time staying for two nights! The trip was a great success with 35 young people taking part. We enjoyed games, climbing, a talent show, BBQ and faith based discussions.

The SAY it's Sunday team has experienced some change over 2017, with the departure of our curate Folli, who had been deeply involved with the youth ministry since his arrival in 2014. Phil Slade, who helped to start SAY it's Sunday and has been a huge part in leading, stepped back from the team at the end of the year. We are very grateful to



both Phil and Folli, for their immense contributions, and say 'Thank you' for setting us in good stead for the future. Carrie has also stepped back as a Youth Leader.

I would like to thank the current SAY it's Sunday Team; Alison, Wendy Jane, James H and Claire, and our newest leader James Moreno. Huge thanks also to the Junior Leaders, who shine bright each week and are a real asset to the youth work. You are all willingly and wonderfully contributing, and by faith, encouraging the young people of Cobham through fun and friendship.

### **14+ Youth Work and Outreach**

14+ Youth Group works in partnership with Elmbridge Family Services. In January 2017 Nick, the Senior Youth Practitioner for the borough, who assisted in leading the sessions each week left his role within the council. That left Esther as the lead youth worker both for the sessions and for youth work in Cobham. 14+ continued to be an open access youth centre in Church Gate House, providing activities for older teens in the community.

Each week the young people were able to make their own food, engage in team games, play with the games console and develop new skills, such as CV writing. The leaders encouraged discussion on topical issues, related to local community and current affairs.

However, in the Autumn Term 14+ took a turn in its approach to youth work. Gary from Elmbridge stepped in to support our ongoing work. As a team we made a decision to close the youth centre temporarily. Esther continues to lead the group under the supervision of Gary, with the support of two long-term and committed Elmbridge youth workers, Liam and Carmella. Esther and the team took to the streets of Cobham, braving the cold for 10 weeks. Kitted out in red 'Youth Worker' jackets, we visited the young people where they were at - hanging out in car parks, local parks and in the streets - with the aim to develop relationships with the communities 'neediest' young people. The outreach has been a success, and we have come into contact with and come to know over 15 new young people. We opened up the youth centre again for a Christmas Party, which several of these new young people attended. We have high hopes for 2018, and believe we can

support more young people in the year ahead.

I am very grateful for the support of Elmbridge Family Services for providing us with Gary, Carmella and Liam.

In 2017 we continued to have success in receiving grants and funding for the youth group. Thank you to David Taylor the hard work and voluntary support he has given to ensure the youth work remains funded and active. In May 2017 David hosted an evening with Michael Aspel to raise funds for the youth work.

Thank you also to Linda Shaw for handling and overseeing the finances of the Youth Ministry.

If you are interested in the work of 14+ and would like to be involved or wish to discuss this area of the youth ministry, please speak with Esther.

## **St Andrew's C of E Primary School, Cobham**

*Report by Jo Mitchell, Acting Head Teacher*

The number of pupils on roll has risen again, from 455 (Sept 2016) to 476 (Sept 2017). The school has Planned Admission Numbers (PANs) that indicate it is a '2 form entry' primary school, though five of the seven year groups have extra 'bulge' classes as the school has responded to the County's request for some schools to accommodate additional pupils over the past few years.

The school successfully converted to Academy status on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. It is the first Primary School to join the Esher Learning Trust (ELT). The partnership with Esher High School is successfully developing through a range of means; joint finance processes and CPD opportunities allow us to achieve maximum value from the school budget; regular cross-school meetings with senior leaders around key themes such as attendance and inclusion provide shared knowledge; and joint work with all leaders in the school support the achievement of the School Development priorities. Other schools are expected to join the multi-academy trust in the future.

There has been a focus on increasing attendance rates and in particular for those pupils with an attendance rate of less than 90% (persistent absentees). With the introduction of an Attendance

Team and a set of procedures that are consistently applied, there has been a successful increase of overall attendance from 95% (annual figure Jul 2017) to 96% (Autumn Term Dec 2017). There has also been a decrease of unauthorised absences and late marks. Attendance rates for persistent absentees have also started to drop.

The school continues to strengthen its focus on the quality of teaching and learning, and progress rates have substantially increased when compared to the same period last year.

With the retirement of Andrew Tulloch in July 2017 the Governors have been focused on providing the school with a suitable replacement. Working with the input and guidance from ELT and Guildford Diocese, they held a rigorous 2-day interview process and successfully appointed Bethan Thomas and Jo Mitchell as co-heads. Their joint role will commence from 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

St Andrew's Governors are confident that the new Co-Heads will bring to the school an ideal combination of educational experience, strategic vision, enthusiasm and drive to lead our school to be the truly outstanding Primary school in Cobham that our pupils, their families and our broader community want and deserve.

The Local Governing Body (LGB) remains a positive influence in other aspects as well. They concluded their working group on the school values, have carried out a review of administration needs, applied for SIL funding and still maintained their focus on the key priority of improving outcomes for all pupils.

The school now also works with the Trust Governing Body to co-ordinate an approach to education that enables a consistent journey from Reception through to the end of secondary school, to be ready to tackle the challenge of 6<sup>th</sup> form and University or to enter the world of employment confidently.

We also collaborate with the Trust to maximise the impact of our expenditure, to get best value out of all that we spend, not just academically but in all aspects of our provision from Pastoral Care through to sporting endeavour and success.

St Andrew's has always placed great emphasis on the broader educational opportunities we offer our pupils, which includes the wide range of outdoor pursuits that our pupils engage in, every year across all age ranges.

The school leadership and governors remain grateful for the prayerful and practical support of so many at St Andrew's Church including weekly assemblies taken by Reverend Hollington and Esther Holley (Youth Worker), the warmth of the welcome extended every time children and staff participate in Sunday worship services, and the St Andrew's school focus on the family service each term at St Andrew's Church. St Andrew's school choir sing and children from across the school participate in the service by writing and sharing appropriate prayers and readings. We also have family and community services at Christmas with the annual 'Carols by Candlelight' and also at Easter. Again children, parents and the wider school community visit St Andrew's Church and participate in the services through singing and reading. Last year we had two reflective days for Easter and Pentecost. St Andrew's School were very grateful for the support and resources provided by Reverend Olokose, Esther and Charleen and other members of St Andrew's Church at Pentecost. On these days the children and staff enjoy a variety of activities, such as drama and circle time that help the children to have a deeper understand of the meaning of these important times in the Christian faith and wider world.

## **FAITH AND SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS**

### **Christians Against Poverty**

*Report by Charleen Hollington*

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is one of the projects chosen by the PCC as part of its Faith and Social Action programme (please see the report on the Faith and

Social Action Committee elsewhere in the Annual Report).

The following information about CAP is taken from our annual report for 2016, but

as it explains what CAP is all about, it bears repeating:

"CAP helps people to escape the prison of debt, with all its consequences of stress, family breakdown and hopelessness. People who are burdened by debt seek the help of CAP's trained debt counsellors. Having reviewed the client's finances and worked out a budget which allows them to meet their living expenses while repaying debt, CAP then negotiates with the clients' debtors on their behalf to establish a repayment plan.

"What is the church's role? Throughout the UK, a number of churches have entered into partnership agreements with CAP to minister in a designated area. Bookham Baptist Church is the 'CAP partner church' for Mole Valley. CAP partner churches then look for support from other churches in their area. St Andrew's is one of these. We have made a commitment to Bookham Baptist to work alongside them in providing CAP services in Cobham.

"The church's support takes a number of forms.

"One is financial, and we have undertaken to contribute £1,200 a year to CAP's operations (subject to review by the PCC). Outward Giving has agreed to contribute this amount from its resources, and to contribute an extra £300, making a total of £1,500. We are also asked to pray for CAP and for CAP clients.

"A more visible role is to provide 'befrienders' to accompany the debt counsellor and then to walk alongside the clients and support them as they undergo the difficulties involved in living to a very tight budget, which includes praying with the clients should they wish it."

Charleen Hollington is the 'champion' for the CAP project at St Andrew's. She, David Greenwood and Elaine Bray are all befrienders. In 2017 we have continued to support one family who fall under the St Andrew's area, who are sticking to their repayment plan despite its difficulties. The congregation once again responded generously to an appeal for contributions to a Christmas hamper for the family in 2017, as they did in 2016.

In September 2017, a CAP Sunday was held. Fran Pyatt, the CAP Co-ordinator for the Mole Valley, gave an address and was well-received, but unfortunately there was

not much of a response to the appeal for more people to come forward either as 'befrienders' or to join a team of 'pray-ers' to respond to occasional requests for prayer for CAP clients in distress.

In 2018, we hope to expand our reach to more clients in the Cobham area.

CAP is a wonderful Christian enterprise which brings hope and freedom to many people and we look forward at St Andrew's to being a real support them in their valuable work.

## **Cobham Area Foodbank**

*Report by Hugh Bryant*

'How is the Foodbank doing?' is a tricky question. If it means, 'How are the people who have got food from the Foodbank doing?', the answer is, 'Badly.' Poor people have borne the brunt of the government's austerity programme of cuts in funding for services and benefits. Disabled and sick people are 'assessed' by non-medical assessors using tick-box methods, and declared fit to work, being denied benefits sometimes when they are so ill that many have died within weeks of the cruel assessment. The film 'I, Daniel Blake' gives an accurate but scarifying picture of the effects of current government policy on poor people. See <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt5168192/>

Other people - and this is the commonest reason for people to come to Cobham Area Foodbank - just do not earn enough to be able to pay the rent - they are all forced to rent from private landlords or housing associations, as the proper council houses have been sold off - and to buy food as well. The government claims to have introduced a minimum 'living wage' of £7.50 per hour for those over 25, whereas the independent Living Wage Foundation calculates the real 'living wage' as £8.75 outside, and £10.20 per hour within London. See <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/> and <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

The introduction of Universal Credit (combined with a large cut in the total amount of benefit provided) has challenged the food banks' ability to respond. 4/5 of those receiving UC are in arrears with their rent, and the delay in making the first UC payment, even if you are already on long-term benefits, for instance if you are disabled, means that

the level of destitution and hunger increases wherever UC has been introduced.

The latest forecast is that UC will be introduced in our area in December 2018. See <http://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/housing-benefits/universal-credit/> Foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network report that, where UC has been introduced, demand for food aid has increased by 30-40%. This will be on top of existing growth in usage of our Foodbank in the last year - 29.5% more food has been given out than in 2016, in 24.6% more food parcels. We served 1,387 adults and 942 children (although some have come on more than one occasion; the statistic records each visit as a different client). Cobham Area Foodbank sets no limit on the maximum number of vouchers which any client can have. Our criterion is, whether the need persists; and if so, we want the client to have as many vouchers as they need.

Cobham Area Foodbank is an independent charity (Reg. no 1154217), founded by Churches Together in Cobham, Oxshott &c and opened by Dominic Raab MP in December 2013. We subscribe to and operate the Trussell Trust system, according to which someone in need has to obtain a food voucher from one of the 37 voucher issuers that we have appointed, as being competent to verify the need and alert us to any special needs. The voucher is then presented in exchange for enough food to last a week, in a nutritionally balanced package.

We open for 90 minutes every Friday, and undertake a small number of home deliveries. We have averaged a distribution of just under half a tonne (actually, 422kgs) per week. In the calendar year 2017, we distributed a total of 21.99 tonnes of food and other essential groceries such as soap, toothpaste, nappies, loo roll and pet food as well as basic foodstuffs. We can store only non-perishable foods. We are, however, very grateful to The Patisserie in Stoke D'Abernon for supplying fresh bread every week. We do not give out food which has passed its sell-by date.

The principle which underpins the Foodbank's operation is 'There, but for the grace of God, go I'. If you are wondering what to give us, think what you would like to eat, and - provided that it is non-perishable - give us that. Fray Bentos

steak pies (usual disclaimer) always come to my mind at such junctures - but you may like quinoa. We publish a shopping list of what we need, regularly on our Twitter feed @CobhamFoodbank, on our website

<https://cobhamarea.foodbank.org.uk/> and shopping lists are pinned to our collection bins which are placed in all the local churches and Waitrose. We are grateful for the regular donations of food etc which we receive from St Andrews' people - just over 800kgs last year, the second-most-productive individual collection point (after Waitrose, from whose collection point we got nearly 10 tonnes).

We are very grateful for St Andrews' faithful and generous financial support, and for the volunteers from our church who work in the Distribution Centre, in the Warehouse and on our beautiful Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van. All our roughly 60 volunteers are unpaid. We completed our purchase of the van in November 2017, and we are now fund-raising to have the outside polyurethane wrap replaced, so that we can keep her in tip-top condition for another six years at least.

We have investigated the possibility of finding a more convenient warehouse, but so far have found no viable alternatives to Brook Willow Farm. If we could persuade the landlord to make up the access road, we would be much better accommodated.

As well as the challenge posed by the impending introduction of Universal Credit, we have another obstacle to overcome, in that our friends at Cobham Methodist Church, who have generously provided our distribution centre space and a permanent walk-in cupboard in their church hall, without making any charge, are going to merge with Cobham United Reformed Church in April, and CMC will close, so we have to find another suitable central location for the Distribution Centre. Positive discussions are taking place, but a solution has not yet been found.

So - the Foodbank is doing well, in that it is meeting an increasing need. We are really grateful for all the various help which we receive from St Andrew's.

## **Garden Route Children's Trust**

*Report by Lesley Flaxman*

The Garden Route Children's Trust (GRCT) is a UK-based Christian charity and is supported by the Faith and Social Action programme.

The aim of the GRCT is to alleviate poverty amongst children in South Africa through the provision of food and education. Nourishing the bodies and minds of children in need gives them a good, healthy foundation on which to build and helps them to learn to look after themselves and their families.

Our main beneficiary continues to be the e'Pap Feeding Project in Knysna which serves over 4500 children a daily meal of e'Pap in their schools. E'Pap is a highly nutritious porridge which is a pre-cooked blend of maize, soya, vitamins and minerals. Despite devastating fires in the area in June the e'Pap feeding continued as normal. The committed volunteers on the ground enabled this to happen, despite the trauma and loss that they themselves faced when the fires took hold. The area now faces the long process of rebuilding lives and infrastructure.

The Missionvale Care Centre operates in the township of Missionvale in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. It was founded by Sister Ethel in 1988 and has become a centre which provides love and care to the poor, with particular emphasis on those living with HIV/AIDS. We feed the school children a daily meal of e'Pap.

Sister Ethel reported: "Our school has 239 learners this year and they each receive a bowl of lovely e'Pap as they arrive in the morning. They absolutely love it. We have one particular learner who is HIV positive. She always came to the centre full of painful sores and blisters, but since she is in our school and getting this nutrition every day, she is absolutely thriving. She has thrown herself into our extra-curricular activities and embraces every opportunity that comes her way."

Tigerkloof School in Vryburg set up The Hem of His Garment Soup Kitchen to help support the needs of the local community. Pupils from Tigerkloof School also volunteer at the soup kitchen. Funding from the GRCT helps to supplement the food programme with e'Pap. Around 200

children from toddlers to 12 year olds receive meals around three times a week.

All the schools supported by the GRCT are monitored by volunteers from local churches to ensure that all donations go straight to the point of need.

The GRCT has also funded a number of new painted playgrounds in 4 primary schools in the Port Elizabeth area. These playgrounds (painted on tarmac) promote both active and imaginative play during school break time and have proved to be very popular. A particular benefit of painted playgrounds is that they cannot be vandalised or stolen, a persistent problem with climbing frames and swings which we have funded in the past.

Talented artists and photographers from St Andrew's organised an art sale and exhibition in March, and generously donated 50% of their sales to GRCT. This was a wonderful community event and an opportunity for the many visitors to hear about our feeding projects in South Africa.

Two of our trustees participated in the London to Brighton bike ride.

Support comes also from Wycombe Abbey School, City of London Freemans School and Royal Kent School in Oxshott

Summer Braai/Barbecue – around 70 guests (including several from St Andrew's) attended the first GRCT fundraising braai in Oxshott. A South African style BBQ, live music, children's games and a raffle all contributed to a relaxed and successful event.

In November we held our annual prayer meeting to pray for the work of the charity, for guidance for the trustees to use our donations wisely, for the children who benefit from a nutritious daily meal, for the teachers who recognise the importance of healthy food, and for the volunteers who distribute and oversee the feeding programmes.

We keep all our supporters and donors informed of the projects and fundraising events through regular newsletters and on our website ([www.grct.org.uk](http://www.grct.org.uk)).

## **Operation Mobilisation (OM) – Nepal**

*Report by Peter Kelly*

The year of 2017 was a very busy one for the Nepal team. Hardly a month went by that our Nepal partnership was not the

subject of a part of the PCC, the Faith and Social Action Committee, the Social Concerns Forum, or our internal meetings. What follows here then are key highlights of the year, rather than a detailed chronology of every meeting or presentation.

The year began with the congregation and relevant committees hearing from participants of the October 2016 Nepal trip. In a number of meetings including the January Nepal Sunday, people heard about the country of Nepal, the spiritual situation, the need for support, the work that OM is doing, and the possibility of partnering with OM.

As winter turned to spring, the OM partnership proposal was discussed in a number of forums. Key to the partnership is the support of local teams in Nepal and the opportunity to advance the gospel in a way that is respectful to individuals and legal within the laws of Nepal. During the spring, the OM partnership was approved and initial funds were sent to OM.

As summer arrived, we began to prepare for a trip to Nepal in 2018 and we also welcomed Becky Slade to the church a number of times to share her experiences working with OM in Nepal. These visits were very warmly received and they generated much enthusiasm for the partnership.

The most significant event in the fall was the Nepal fundraiser on Saturday of Harvest weekend. Despite the challenging dates, the support received outstanding support from volunteers and local merchants, and was attended by more than 50 people, raising £500 with a wonderful evening of Nepali food, music, and a panel presentation by Nepal trip participants. The funds were promptly sent to OM by our church treasurer.

The end of the year brought us two pieces of news that presented a challenge to our plans. First, the Nepali government enacted new strict laws restricting evangelism. Realising this might jeopardise plans for our next trip to Nepal, we deferred the final planning activities for a 2018 trip until after the end of the year to see if the local situation became untenable. Secondly, we learned that one of our committee and a planned trip leader for fall 2018, John Kreisa, was being relocated back to the USA soon and he would not be able to lead the Nepal trip if

we went forward with it in 2018. As the year drew to a close, we learned that the local situation in Nepal was actually tolerable and could support a trip. However, taking all this into consideration, we concluded that it was most prudent to defer our trip to 2019 and continue our prayerful and financial support.

Throughout the entirety of the year, OM has sent regular updates of activities on the ground, including an annual report specifically developed for the information requirements of our partnership. This report was a significant narrative of their work and we are humbled by the work they put into such a piece which turned out to be such an excellent document to distribute to those interested in the partnership. The regular reports were shared with members of the committees where our team was periodically sharing updates on the Nepal program.

We are indebted to, and wish to thank Phil Slade, St Andrew's member and OM liaison, for his excellent coordination in support of our partnership and we thank the PCC and the entire congregation for their vision and faithful support of this critical mission project. We also wish to thank the clergy for their guidance, vision, and wisdom which has been a great encouragement throughout the year.

We look forward to strengthening the partnership in fall 2018 and to rejoicing with OM as people's lives are mended and spirits are lifted in the beautiful but needy country of Nepal.

## **Prison Fellowship**

*Report by Charleen Hollington*

Prison Fellowship (PF) is one of the four projects chosen by the PCC as part of its Faith and Social Action programme (please see the report on Faith and Social Action elsewhere in this report).

PF was founded in the U.S. in 1976 by Charles W. Colson. It is now the world's largest association of national Christian ministries in the criminal justice field. It was established in England and Wales in 1979, where it now has over 115 prayer groups, with over 2000 volunteers praying for our prisons, supporting chaplains and running PF programmes.

PF seeks through prayer and practical care to help, support and develop a Christian ministry to prisoners and their families. There is some 'crossover'

between PF and other prison work through prison chaplaincies, such as forgiveness and bereavement programmes.

As reported in last year's annual report, efforts to become involved in Prison Fellowship during 2016 were not successful. Due to the vacancy then occurring at the beginning of 2017 efforts to re-start our involvement in this project rather fell by the wayside, due to the increased demands on everyone's time. The aim of the Faith and Social Action Committee is to re-energize the project in 2018, and to this end we are renewing our efforts to find a new 'champion'.

On the positive side, St Andrew's again donated £1,500 to prison ministry, through the Send chaplaincy, from resources available to Outward Giving.

## **Social Concerns Forum**

*Chaired by David Taylor*

The Social Concerns Forum's purpose is to bring together those for whom social action is an important outworking of their faith, and with the aim of encouraging understanding of the issues and support across the wider church community. Whilst the focus is on the areas which the PCC has chosen to support, all those either engaged, or interested, in other areas of social concern are encouraged to attend.

The Forum meets two or three times a year after the Morning Service and its meetings are announced in Weekly Notes, and by the clergy orally, and are open to all members of St Andrew's.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **Bible Society**

*Report by Jenny Vickers*

Once again thanks to the support of Jenny Masters and Gill Sharp, who provided the main meal, we were able to hold another fund raising quiz & supper evening in aid of the Bible Society. As in past years, Paul Masters helped in the kitchen, Rosie Masters organized the raffle and Peter acted as quiz master. Raffle prizes were donated and desserts provided by volunteers. In addition to tables made up of members of St Andrew's, we had a team representing members of the former WI group, the Sacred Heart and St Mary's.

The evening raised £846 bringing the total amount since the first quiz & supper in 2003 to £12,911.87.

### **Cathedral Link**

*Report by Jenny Vickers*

Sad to say the Link system seems to have broken down. However I can report that the Cathedral is now looking wonderful. The scaffolding has all gone and everything is back to normal. The organ is being rebuilt and should be completed in time for Easter.

Information regarding services and events are displayed on the notice board in the porch and future events publicised in "Together"

### **Christmas Lunch**

*Report by Shirley Mensah*

The Christmas lunch was a huge success with 42 guests enjoying a traditional festive occasion with us just as if they were with their family and friends at home. It is growing from strength to strength!

As ever, we are most grateful to Waitrose for the very considerable support which we get from them - in time, food and money. And also to those of our own church family who supported us by cooking at home or helping us with welcoming our guests, hosting and waiting at the tables.

We are now working on the Easter high tea which will take place on 31 March.

### **Churches Together**

*Report by Leonard Beighton.*

Paul Fisher of the Church of the Sacred Heart has taken over from Revd Godfrey Hilliard in running Churches Together in Cobham, Oxshott and Stoke d'Abernon.

Churches Together has been a bit quiet, but it is organising the ecumenical Lent groups this year. As ever, a joint service was held to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and there was an opportunity to pray around the Cross in Hollyhedge Parade on Good Friday.

The Cobham and Area Foodbank was originally formed under the auspices of Churches Together and continues to be supported by members of all the churches.

Messy Church is another organisation which gets support from across the churches.

## **Messy Church**

*Report by Elaine Bray*

Messy Church in Cobham, run by Cobham Churches Together, is now in its fifth year of running.

At Messy Church we share the gospel with primary school aged families through craft, games and worship. We meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at the United Reformed Church on Stoke Road, Cobham. Families arrive from 3:45pm and spend until 5pm moving between the 7 themed craft tables, using the quieter games room or tucking into the tea, squash and biscuits available. The crafts vary depending on the theme of the month, but they will always include the ever popular edible crafts table and lots of mess! At 5pm, everyone moves into the worship space, for singing, a talk and prayers which reflect the theme and all the crafts they have been doing. The families then share a child friendly meal and cakes before going home with their bag of precious crafts!

Our Lord has richly blessed Messy Church in Cobham with the great number of children that regularly and excitedly arrive at Messy Church, in the last year we have averaged 40 families. The relationship between the Christians from the different churches in Cobham, has been wonderfully fruitful as we have work together to share the gospel with the families.

Messy Church is run by volunteers who all have a heart to share the gospel with the children of Cobham. We are immensely grateful for the help and practical support

we continue to receive from each of these volunteers in addition to the financial and prayerful support from the Churches in Cobham. In this coming year we will be experiencing with a few new ideas to try and improve Messy Church and strengthen the relationships between the families and the volunteers.

## **Elmbridge Multifaith Forum**

*Report by Leonard Beighton*

The Elmbridge Multifaith Forum (EMF) continues to put on a very worthwhile programme. There is a mixture of visits – usually two a year – and a variety of interesting talks every year.

The old guard have now moved on. The EMF was founded some 15 years ago by Dr Nabil Mustapha and Geoff Morris to help create greater understanding in the area of other peoples' faith. The newly elected Chairman is Margaret Hicks (of St Peter's, Hersham and for many years a Surrey County Councillor): the secretary position is in a state of flux.

Our work is supported by a grant from Elmbridge Borough Council.

## **Recycling**

*Report by Peter Vickers*

We continue to encourage the 'recycling' of postage stamps for the Leprosy Mission. These can either be left in an envelope in the 'V' pigeon hole in the church porch or the small container in Church Gate House.

It helps if they can be trimmed with a half centimetre border. Over the year I have also received a number of stamp albums which will be sent on to the Leprosy Mission.

## **FINANCE REPORT**

The finance report is published in the Annual Report for the Diocese and Charity Commission.