



St John the Evangelist

Meads, Eastbourne

Accounts and Reports

2017

St John the Evangelist, Meads, Eastbourne

Registered Charity no. 1131574

AGENDAS

For meetings to be held in the Jubilee Hall on
Tuesday, 17 April 2018, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting (See page 4)
2. Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Minutes of the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting (See page 4)
2. Matters arising therefrom
3. Electoral Roll Officer's Report
4. Trustees Annual Report (See page 9)
5. Annual Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2017 and the report of the Independent Examiner (See page 16)
6. Churchwardens' Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church (See page 28)
7. Report on the Deanery Synod proceedings (see page 29)
8. Elections and appointments
 - i) Parochial Church Council members
 - ii) Sidesmen and women
 - iii) Independent Examiner/Auditor
9. Reports from Church Organisations & Representatives (See page 30)
10. Vicar's comments:
11. Any other business

Closing Prayers

(The meetings will follow an informal gathering from 7.00 p.m. when refreshments will be provided.)

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETINGS HELD ON 4th April 2017

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Vicar the Revd. Giles Carpenter asked Phyllis Hall to open the meeting in prayer,

Mrs Margaret Kowszun and Mr Tony Mottram (Churchwardens) were present together with 75 parishioners. Apologies were received from 13 parishioners.

1. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

It was proposed by Mr Dick Thwaites and seconded by Mrs Jill Maddock that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2016 be taken as read and a true record. This was agreed unanimously. There were no matters arising.

2. Election of Churchwardens

Nominations have been received from Mrs Margaret Kowszun and Mr Tony Mottram who had been proposed and seconded as churchwardens for the coming year. There being no other nominations they were duly elected.

The Chairman then closed the Annual Parish Meeting.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Chair for this meeting was taken by Mrs Margaret Kowszun (Churchwarden).

1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2016 had been displayed in the Church. Mr Keith Adams proposed, seconded by Miss Sheila O'Hanlon and agreed unanimously that these minutes be accepted as correct.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

3. Electoral Roll Officer's Report

Mrs Carolyn Lacy read the report compiled by the Electoral Roll Officer. On the 27th March 2017 the electoral roll stood at 290 people of whom 185 (63.7%) are women, 105 (36.2%) are men 190 (65.5%) live within the Parish, 99 (34.1%) live outside the Parish. 24 people's names had been removed since the last APCM mainly through leaving St John's or moving out of the area. 10 of which were due to death. 24 people have been added. The electoral roll was accepted on a proposal by Mrs Ethene Lomas, seconded by Mrs Rowena Adams and agreed unanimously.

4. Annual Report of the Trustees

The report was taken as read being accepted on a proposal by Miss Pam Lade, seconded by Mr David Scott-Ralphs and agreed by those present.

5. **Annual Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2016 and the Report of the Independent Examiner**

The Treasurer said that as last year a number of people had mentioned that the A5 books were difficult to read this year's Accounts and reports are in A4. Changes had been made in presentation in order to meet the Charity Commission's requirements and there is more emphasis on public benefit in order to show that we are not a private members club but are relevant and beneficial to our community. There is no separate Treasurer's report but the Trustees Report includes a financial review and more detailed information is given in the Statement of Financial Activities and in the Notes to the Accounts.

The Statement of Financial Activities shows that the unrestricted funds stood at £180853 which is £58000 lower than in 2015. This reduction is largely accounted for by the completion of the organ repairs (£33000), professional fees relating to the re-ordering (£9000) and advance purchases for the audio visual improvements (£8000). Income shows that voluntary giving excluding legacies, totalled some £168k, £1600 lower than 2015 but it should be remembered that in 2015 we had a Flower Festival and Gift Day. However, giving income this year is £1000 per month higher than in 2016 but costs will also be higher this year and we probably need to see a further increase of similar proportions to have a balanced budget.

With regard to expenditure our biggest regular commitment is the Parish Share which in 2016 cost us £72360. This covers the Vicar's salary, pension and housing costs, training of new priests, Diocesan support costs and a small contribution to the national church. We also recognize that in Eastbourne we are not a stand-alone church but part of a bigger picture of mission and therefore make a contribution to help churches in our Deanery who operate in perhaps more challenging areas and in consequence struggle financially. It is debatable whether this should form part of our Parish Share or be reflected in our mission giving. Our salary bill has increased by £8000 largely due to our continued investment in Children and Families work. The accounts also show that our mission giving increased by over £2000 to £16495; what they don't show, although mentioned in both the Trustees report and Clive Dilloway's Mission report is the fact that over £23,000 was actually given by this church.

Finally the Treasurer thanked John Driver for his continued work as Gift Aid Secretary, Jo Naunton our Church Administrator for her help with salaries and the Monday Club team who count the collections.

The Revd Vic Lawrence said he was concerned that we were not giving 10% of our monies to charity. The Treasurer assured him that over 10% of our regular giving was going to charity.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for his continued hard work throughout the year. It was proposed by Dr Clive Dilloway, seconded by Mr Ian Ford that the Annual Financial Report be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

6. **Churchwardens' Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church**

The Chairman referred to the report on p28 and Tony Mottram Churchwarden said he would like to thank Dick Thwaites and other volunteers who worked tirelessly to keep the church safe, any questions regarding re-ordering would be dealt with under AOB.

Miss Pam Lade proposed, seconded by Mr Frank Kelley that the report be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

7. **Report of the Deanery Synod Proceedings**

Mr Keith Adams reported that there had been 3 meetings of the Deanery Synod during the year which were held in different Anglican churches around the Deanery with St John's hosting the October meeting. The host Vicar always gives a brief introduction to their church and Giles focused on 2017 when we would be celebrating our Diamond Jubilee of the rededication of St John's on completion of re-building after wartime bombing. During the year the guest speakers included Revd. Bob Dillingham, the Parish Development Officer, Canon Ann Holt, Diocesan Director of Education and the Ven. Edward Dowler, Archdeacon of Hastings..

The report was accepted on a proposal by Miss Sheila O'Hanlon, seconded by Miss Pam Lade and agreed unanimously.

8. Elections and Appointments

i) Deanery Synod Representatives

Having completed their three year term as our representatives Mr Keith Adams, Dr Clive Dilloway, Mr Jorj Kowszun and Prof. Trevor Salmon were standing down and were thanked for their services. Three new nominations had been received and seconded. There being no other nominations they were duly elected. Mr Ray Hassell, Mr David Scott-Ralphs and Mrs Sally Scott- Ralphs were asked to stand to make themselves known to those present.

Parochial Church Council

One new nomination had been received and seconded. There being no other nominations Mrs Julia Pinder was elected.

Mr Derek Petersen who was retiring was thanked for his services during the year.

ii) Sidesmen and women

All sidesmen and women had been contacted and a list of people wishing to serve for the coming year was read out by the PCC Secretary, The list was accepted by the meeting on a proposal by Mrs Catherine Butcher seconded by Mr Frank Kelley. The Chairman thanked all those who had served last year and explained that newcomers had been included in the list of sidespersons and a meeting to discuss their enhanced role was planned.

iii) Independent Examiner/Auditor

The Treasurer said he proposed Mr Michael Neilan who was prepared to continue for the coming year. This was seconded by Mr Keith Adams, all were in agreement.

9. Reports from Church Organisations and Representatives

The Chairman said she hoped that everyone would read the reports on the many activities that had taken place in the past year and thanked all those who helped with the various groups. Dr John Caroe said that the item on church music did not include a mention of Mark Edwards and the Music Group and he wished to record thanks to them for their contribution throughout the year.

10. Vicar's Comments

The Vicar said he would like to reflect on St John's Gospel Chapter 12 verse 24 *"I tell you the truth unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds"*

These words of Jesus to his disciples remind us of the Christian life, fruitfulness and death, something must die for something to come alive. This had come home to him more and more this past year.

As a sign of fruitfulness 69 new members had been welcomed and the Annual Report showed the many activities at work within the Church especially with the children and young people and reaching out to the community with projects such as Linking Lives.

The changes to the worship services had been a sign of fruitfulness to some, but a loss to others and we must be attentive to each other throughout the changes we are experiencing.

However, the Vicar felt the sense of loss over losing people who have served with us over many years. There had been 39 funerals during the year, 17 of which had been members of the congregation, 6% of the electoral roll, and he read out the list and asked everyone to reflect on the names which was followed by prayer.

In the challenges that lay ahead we must have confidence that God is in the midst of us. Bishops in the diocese were clear what needs to be done and had asked churches to grow by 25% both spiritually and numerically, to re-image ministry by giving opportunities for all to minister and to contribute to the common good by reaching out to the community. The Vicar asked if these were borne out in our Mission Action Plan which was Bridging the Gap, Hospitality to the Fringe and Building Belonging. He felt the gaps were closing but as we grew more areas appear where we needed to be active and he was aware that more needed to be done.

The Vicar wished to thank everyone for the great sense of collaboration within the Church but especially the Revd. Jill Preece and the Ministry team, the PCC, Churchwardens, Treasurer and Deputy Churchwardens for their help during the year. Also the leaders of our many Home Groups.

A special thanks to Dennis Thompson for taking over the organizing of the Men's Breakfasts during Revd. Vic Lawrence's illness, Rowena Adams for her help with Connexions, May and Jack Harris, despite illness and John and Helen Roe for Coffee Pot, Dick Thwaites for looking after the church fabric, Ken and Pam Mayhew for hospitality on many occasions, Jean Tucker and the Flower Team, Pam Lade, Joanne Naunton and the office staff, Tris and Hannah Peattie for their work with the children, Sarah Hassell for organizing the Open the Book project at St John's primary school and our school governors, Sue Bull for her safeguarding role, the musicians under the leadership of David Oakenfold and Mark Edwards, Olly Margry for starting scouting again, Byron Stevens for running Living Lives which had now received full charitable status and Catherine Butcher for organizing the Street Party during the summer.

11 Any Other Business

Re-ordering

Tony Mottram reported that the request for a Faculty had been sent to the DAC and had been favourably received and 10 members were coming to visit the church to see what was envisaged. They seemed particularly concerned that we replace the pews with wooden chairs but we would not wish to pursue this as it proves to be very expensive and we await DAC's decision on the one we favour.

As far as the removal of the pews was concerned the Vicar had spoken to the Archdeacon who confirmed that a request for a partial removal would be turned down.

The question of the work load of our Cleaner was raised and the Chairman said discussions were on-going.

PCC Secretary Retirement

The Vicar said he would like to thank Carolyn Lacy for her work over many years as PCC Secretary and a bouquet of flowers was presented by the Chairman. Thanking everyone Carolyn said that her late husband Trevor, who many still remembered, had volunteered her for the role back in 2008 and she was glad that Julia Pinder had come forward to take her place.

The meeting closed by saying The Grace.

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of

St John the Evangelist

St John's Church, St John's Road, Eastbourne BN20 7ND

Registered Charity no. 1131574

For the year ended 31 December 2017

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Website: www.stjm.org.uk

Incumbent: The Revd Giles Carpenter

Independent
examiner: Mr Michael Neilan

Price & Company, Chartered Accountants

Bankers: CAF Bank Ltd., Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent

St John the Evangelist, Meads, Eastbourne

Registered Charity no. 1131574

Trustees Annual Report for 2017

Our aims and purposes as a charity

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd Giles Carpenter, in:

- The promotion of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England;
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical.
- To know Jesus better and make Him better known;
- Providing practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay;
- Providing financial support to those in need and, to other organisations with similar objectives.

The PCC also has responsibility for the financial affairs of the parish and for the repair and maintenance of the Church fabric and the Parish Hall.

What we planned to do to achieve our charitable objectives

When planning our activities for the year, our incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

For 2017 we discussed and planned the following objectives and activities to fulfil our aims:

- Enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church;
- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community;
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers;
- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish;
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish;
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament;
- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations;
- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus;
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish;
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish;
- Giving away approximately 10% of voluntary income to missionary organisations and other charitable causes;
- Reaching out to the unchurched through provision of an annual fete and in our support of the annual 'Meads Magic' Christmas street event.
- Planning the reordering of the church building to better facilitate a wider variety of services and enable its use for community activities.
- Planning improvements to the Church Tower to enable the chapel to be open on a daily basis both as a place for quiet prayer and also to allow access to the Memorial to those from our Parish who gave their lives in the First World War.

What we achieved and how we affected beneficiaries' lives

Attendance at worship

The church family welcomes visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary. Visitors attend by personal choice and it is our great pleasure to welcome anyone from all walks of life to take part in the life of the church. We contend that voluntary attendance to worship the Lord Jesus Christ is a major demonstration of the public benefit of our activities.

There are 278 persons on the church electoral roll. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 270 adults and 27 children, but this number increased at festivals with 460 attending on Easter Eve and Easter Day and 563 attending on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. These numbers are broadly similar to 2016.

St John's meets to worship both on Sundays and during the week. Members meet regularly to pray for the life of the parish and mission of the church, on Monday and Wednesday mornings and at the monthly 'Prayer Plus' gathering. The St John's congregation represents a broad range of traditions and there is an ongoing process to ensure that the services we offer not only meet the needs of the existing congregation but enable us to reach out to the unchurched. A key element of our Mission Action Plan is ***Bridging the Gap*** – reaching the age groups who are missing from St Johns. We run three Sunday Children's Groups – Rising Stars (0-5), The Big God Space (5-10) and Streetwise (11+). Streetwise also have mid-week events and there is a Thursday morning Parent and Toddler group which is growing in popularity to the extent that we need to create additional space to facilitate further growth. In addition to the Children & Families Minister's work at St John's Church of England Primary School two groups of volunteers from St John's Church participate in the school assemblies every two weeks and 'act out' bible stories as part of the Bible Society's 'Open the Book' initiative.

Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers

We were pleased to celebrate the baptism of 4 infants, 4 children and 2 adults during the year.

We have seen more members of the church family involved in leading and participating in aspects of worship which gives encouragement both to them and the whole congregation. We continue to seek to extend the opportunities for the exercise of ministry and gifts within the life of our community. We obtained 'Permission to Preach' for a further member of the congregation bringing the total to five.

A key element in the area of nurturing faith and discipleship is home groups which meet regularly on a fortnightly basis. There are 10 groups and 144 people belong including some from other churches/traditions.

We see the above aspects of church life as part of the Diocesan strategy for reimagining ministry, explained by Bishop Richard at the launch in 2015. This, together with the following, also contributes towards another of our key Mission Action Plan elements – ***Building Belonging*** – making sure that neither newcomers nor long-standing members of the church go un-noticed or unwelcomed; and helping people find their niche in the church family.

We shared food and fellowship together at various times and in various places including Men' Breakfasts at the Holywell Tea Chalet, Lunch Club and Coffee-Pot/Paperback library at the Parish Hall, Cameo and Scrabble in the Jubilee Hall and Connexions teas at the Vicarage, the latter specifically for those new to the church and/or faith.

Provision of church buildings for people to enjoy

We celebrated 10 baptisms and 11 funerals/thanksgiving services during the year. Our church continues to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. A particular highlight was the baptism by full immersion of 2 adults and 2 children of Primary School age.

Our plans to re-order the church building (see below) to create, inter- alia, more opportunities for it to be used for events other than services have now received the support of the Diocesan Advisory Committee and Faculty permission is expected early in 2018. As mentioned above our plans were extended to include improvements which would enable the Tower chapel to be re-opened on a daily basis and provide community access to the 1914-1918 War Memorial.

Four well attended free Organ and Choral concerts were held during the year and as part of our Fete weekend there was a Jazz concert and two performances of a purpose written music/word/visual event 'Stories of Hope'. There was also a free photographic exhibition.

The Parish Hall, with its more central location in Meads Street, is an important component in our outreach to the local community – our third Mission Action element, ***Hospitality to the Fringe*** - building stronger relationships with our local community and people on the fringe of the church.

The Parish Hall has been listed by Eastbourne Borough Council as 'an asset of Community value'. As well as generating income through hiring, the Hall is used for community activities led by church members namely, Lunch Club, Coffee-Pot and Paperback library. It is also used by the church to provide refreshments at community street events such as the annual 'Meads Magic' at Christmas.

A new Scouts group started in Meads early in the year and three groups – Beavers, Cubs and Scouts now meet weekly over 2 evenings in the Church's Jubilee Hall.

Building for the Future

The plans which we had been developing over the previous 2 years were extended to include the Church Tower and now comprise 4 elements.

1. Re-ordering of the Chancel area which includes replacing the Baldachin and Dossal curtain with the copper cross which fell from the roof in 2015, renewing wiring and upgrading lighting.
2. Removal of remaining pews and replacing with chairs.
3. Installing TV screens and upgrading audio, including acoustic improvements.
4. Essential stone works to the Church Tower and improvements to the ground floor chapel and War Memorial.

These improvements will address some health and safety issues, particularly with regard to fire exits. The replacement of the pews will improve access and choice for those with disabilities and allied to a new ramped access to the Chancel enable them to play a fuller part in services. The flexibility of the chairs allows for different configurations to meet the needs of traditional and contemporary services and also to create a large open space which could be attractive for both church and community use. The audio visual upgrades will facilitate the more modern approach required for some services and allow greater use of the church by St John's C of E School who currently have to use another church for some of their events. The Tower improvements will facilitate daily access during daylight hours to a quiet space for prayer and contemplation and also the First World War Memorial to the Meads residents who gave their lives.

These are significant changes which it is felt will enable the church to fulfil its mission but will require our continued spiritual and financial commitment. An appeal for financial support was launched in October and is ongoing with over 50% of the estimated cost donated/pledged. Grant assistance is also being sought.

Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish

Pastoral care is headed by Revd Jill Preece and undertakes hospital visits and home communion. We also have teams who, on a monthly basis, visit 4 care homes locally. Communion services are held on occasions for those too frail to attend the church.

We continue to support both financially and with volunteers the Linking Lives Eastbourne charity which was formed in 2016 with the assistance of other local churches to provide a befriending service to the lonely. It is hoped this will extend throughout Eastbourne and is open to all regardless of faith. The new charity has its own trustees and is independent of any church.

Provision of tangible support to the poor and needy

The church family at St John's continues to be a high contributor among the local churches donating food and toiletries to the Eastbourne Foodbank. Some members of the church also assisted in the running of the Foodbank, whilst others assisted in the work of the Beachy Head Chaplaincy, Linking Lives, St Wilfrid's Hospice and Matthew 25. All these charities also received financial support. Other Eastbourne charities that received financial support were Family Support (CDAFSW), the Winter Night Shelter, PARCHE and Meads Community. In addition our children's groups played a leading role in presenting the Harvest gifts and produce to the Foodbank and the Matthew 25 Mission.

Other charitable giving

The income from the Duplex Bequest amounting to £803 is included in the sums given by the PCC. A total of £15,619 was given via the PCC accounts to 9 Eastbourne charities and 8 charities primarily engaged in relief, development and mission support overseas. Altogether 18 charities were supported, as detailed in note 4 to the accounts. Special collections were also taken, raising a total of £5844, for 8 charities including British Legion (£522), Children's Society (£688), Christian Aid (£992), CMCT (£685) and St. Wilfrid's Hospice (£2047). Parishioners also gave support to the Mustard Seed Mission 'Love in a box' appeal.

Financial Review

Incoming and outgoing resources

The total receipts on unrestricted funds were £313665 and are detailed in the Financial Report. Planned giving through envelopes and banker's orders increased by over 5% including tax recovered whilst overall voluntary income, excluding legacies & appeals, increased by some 12%. The PCC was grateful to receive further legacies totalling £58622 and as mentioned above an Anniversary Appeal was launched in October to assist with the costs of the Building for the Future projects.

There was an overall net surplus of some £45000 on unrestricted funds but discounting exceptionals there is an underlying deficit of £20000 which we shall seek to address as we move forward.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of Chichester

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £76668 paid to the diocese for our share of all churches' Parish Ministry Costs and church insurance incurred by the diocese. This amount covers the housing, stipend and pension costs of the clergy, the church insurance and, also a standard sum for diocesan central costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds.

Currently, the church is meeting 100% of the costs allocated to this church. It is important to note that approximately 80% of the total paid relates directly to the clergy costs of this parish, the remainder being the shared costs of the Christian family throughout the whole Church of England, including assistance towards the upkeep of churches less able to manage than ourselves. Our contribution which increased by 4.6% in 2017 included an additional 3% specifically to assist our fellow churches.

Staff costs

The 8% increase in Staff costs represents a 2% annual cost of living award to all employees together with the first full year costs for both the part-time Early year's worker/administrative assistant and the pension costs for the Children & Families Minister. Further details are provided in the notes to the accounts.

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC supported the clergy by paying Council Tax of £2971, water and environmental charges amounting to £772 for the Vicarage plus other annual costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, broadband and accommodation amounting to £2152.

Four trustees received refund of expenses totalling £1683 in respect of travel, stationery, postage, hospitality and accommodation.

Mr Tristram Peattie, a trustee, received £26794 in his role as Children's & Families Minister but the cost to the PCC was offset by a 40% contribution from St John's C of E School.

Mrs Hannah Peattie, wife of Mr Tristram Peattie received £5794 in her part time role as an Early year's worker/administrative assistant.

Repairs to the fabric of the church building

We continue to address the issues raised in the last quinquennial report. The report highlighted the likelihood of problems with two flat roof areas at an indeterminable future time and recommended a sinking fund be established. The PCC has agreed to set aside £5000 per annum in a designated Roof Repair fund as provision for this potential liability. Stonework repairs to the Tower & West window are now included in our Building for the Future project.

Why we hold some money in reserve

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) which equates to approximately three months' worth of unrestricted payments as contingency against unforeseen situations. The closing balance of £94317 exceeds this requirement but we are mindful of the likely need to contribute to the Building for the Future project.

It is PCC policy to invest temporarily surplus general funds with the CBF Church of England deposit fund, returning proportionately these funds to our current account, as they are needed, to pay day-to-day bills.

Structure, governance and management of the charity

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission as required by the Charities Act 2011. Its governing document is the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex Officio members

Incumbent:	The Revd Giles Carpenter	Chairman
Assistant Priest:	The Revd Jill Preece	
Readers:	Mr Jorj Kowszun Mrs Jill Maddock Mrs Sarah Hassell Mrs Catherine Butcher Mr Nicholas Pendry (from September 2017)	
Wardens:	Mrs Margaret Kowszun Mr Tony Mottram	Vice Chairman
Deputy Wardens:	Miss Sheila MacNicol Prof Trevor Salmon (to April 2017) Mr Robert Orchard	
Deanery Synod:	Mr Keith Adams (to April 2017) Dr Clive Dilloway (to April 2017) Mr Jorj Kowszun (to April 2017) Prof Trevor Salmon (to April 2017) Mr David Scott-Ralphs (from April 2017) Mrs Sally Scott-Ralphs (from April 2017) Mr Raymond Hassell (from April 2017)	

Elected Members

Mrs Debbie Canning	
Mrs Phyllis Hall	
Mr Frank Kelley	<u>Treasurer</u>
Mr Francis Kimberley	
Mrs Carolyn Lacy (to April 2017)	<u>Secretary</u>
Mrs Julia Pinder (from April 2017)	<u>Secretary</u>
Mrs Sarah Bull	
Dr John Caroe	
Mr Derek Peterson (to April 2017)	
Mr Byron Stevens	

Co-opted members:

Mr Tristram Peattie (to December 2017)

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of certain ex-officio members (the incumbent/priest-in-charge, curate, lay readers licensed to officiate in the church), the churchwardens and members of the Deanery, Diocesan or General Synods and up to 15 members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). Members are warmly encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

The PCC operates through two committees to oversee various aspects of the Church's corporate life, which are –

Standing Committee:

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


The Standing Committee also undertakes the function of a Finance Committee by monitoring the Church's finances and proposing action to be taken to preserve the funds.

Parish Hall Committee:

The committee has responsibility for hiring out the Parish Hall and maintaining the property.

Various teams exist, comprising members of the PCC and others, to further the work of the Church and report their efforts and proposals to the PCC where decisions are taken.

This Trustees' Annual Report was **approved** by the PCC and signed on their behalf by The Revd. Giles Carpenter, PCC Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Giles Carpenter', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Date 13.02.18

Annual Financial Report

of

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, MEADS, EASTBOURNE

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ST JOHN'S ROAD, EASTBOURNE BN20 7ND

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1131574

For the year ended 31 December 2017

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Annual Financial Report

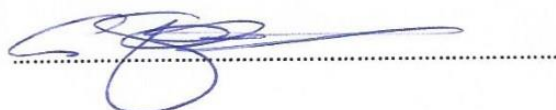
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2017	2016
INCOME from:						
Donations & legacies	2a	286561	173	-	286734	185334
Charitable activities	2b	4516	-	-	4516	5566
Other trading activities	2c	22386	-	-	22386	20790
Investments	2d	202	2474	-	2676	2359
Other receipts		-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME		313665	2647	-	316312	214049
EXPENDITURE on:						
Charitable activities	3a	248709	3419	-	252128	261731
Raising funds	3b	5084	-	-	5084	148
Other trading activities	3c	15107	260	-	15367	11366
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		268900	3679	-	272579	273245
Net gains(losses) on investments		-	-	-	-	-
NET INCOME or(Net Expenditure)		44765	(1032)	-	43733	(59196)
Transfers between funds:						
Gross transfers in		16500	-	-	16500	23909
Gross transfers out		(16500)	-	-	(16500)	(23909)
Other recognised gains/(losses):		-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation of investment assets		-	-	6311	6311	6986
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		44765	(1032)	6311	50044	(52210)
<i>Reconciliation of funds</i>						
Total funds brought forward		180853	5055	69918	255826	308036
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		225618	4023	76229	305870	255826

St John the Evangelist, Meads, Eastbourne Registered charity no. 1131574
Annual Financial Report
BALANCE SHEET as at 31 December 2017

	Note	Total Funds 2017	Total Funds 2016
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	9a	4791	1436
Endowed investments	9b	76229	69918
Total fixed assets		81020	71354
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	11	29362	30158
Short term deposits		68659	67665
Cash at bank and in hand		133257	96423
Total current assets		231278	194246
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	6428	9774
Net current assets or (liabilities)		224850	184472
Total assets less current liabilities		305870	255826
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year		-	-
Provisions for liabilities		-	-
Total net assets or (liabilities)		305870	255826
The funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted		225618	180853
Restricted		4023	5055
Endowment		76229	69918
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	13	305870	255826

This Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2017, including the notes following, was approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by The Revd. Giles Carpenter, PCC Chairman:



Date 13.02.18

1 Accounting policies

a. Accounting convention

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCC's, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at fair value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members.

b. Funds accounting

Funds held by the PCC are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes

Designated funds - monies set aside by the PCC out of unrestricted funds for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund.

Endowment funds - funds the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from the investment of the endowment may be used, either as restricted or unrestricted funds, depending on the purpose set out in the terms of the original endowment.

c. Income and endowments

All income and endowments, which are accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received.

Gift aid recovered is recognised when the income to which it is attached is received.

Grants and legacies are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received by the PCC.

Charitable activities

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the events have occurred. Fees received in advance of the event are recognised as deferred income until the event occurs. The statutory proportion of fees held as agent for and due to the Diocese of Chichester, are not recognised as income and are included in creditors until paid.

Other trading activities

Where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services, income is recognised either: a - when received, or b - in the case of concerts: for the year in question, irrespective of date of receipt. Advance bookings are included in creditors until the concert has taken place.

Sales of magazines and study notes are recognised when received.

Investment income

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue.

All other income

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December.

d. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over or, when awarded, where the award creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

Charitable Activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis, reflecting the allocation set by our Deanery. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet.

e. Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements. For other property acquired prior to 1 January 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore the cost of such assets is not stated in the financial statements.

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1000 are written off in the year they were incurred.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. Furniture and equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight line basis over 4 years. Individual items with a purchase price of £1000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at mid- market value at the balance sheet date.

f. Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are recognised as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank.

2 Analysis of income and endowments

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	TOTAL FUNDS	
		Funds	Funds	Funds	2017	2016
		£	£	£	£	£
(a)	Donations & legacies					
	Planned giving					
	Gift Aid donations	112446	-	-	112446	99685
	Tax recoverable	39622	-	-	39622	26294
	Other	21972	-	-	21972	29129
	Cash Collections at services	8870	-	-	8870	9150
	Donations, appeals, etc	45029	173	-	45202	3986
	Grant	-	-	-	-	-
	Legacies	58622	-	-	58622	17090
		286561	173	-	286734	185334
(b)	Income from Charitable activities					
	Magazines, books and cards	969	-	-	969	1756
	Fees	2361	-	-	2361	2793
	Clubs	1186	-	-	1186	1017
		4516	-	-	4516	5566
(c)	Other trading activities					
	Parish Hall lettings	18020	-	-	18020	15063
	Fund-raising events	4366	-	-	4366	5727
		22386	-	-	22386	20790
(d)	Income from investments					
	Dividends and interest (gross)	202	2474	-	2676	2359
		202	2474	-	2676	2359
	Other receipts	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL INCOME & ENDOWMENTS	313665	2647	-	316312	£214049

3 Analysis of expenditure

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	TOTAL FUNDS	
		Funds	Funds	Funds	2017	2016
		£	£	£	£	£
(a) Charitable activities						
Missionary and charitable giving						
Church overseas						
Missionary societies		4790	300	-	5090	5028
Relief and development agencies		950	200	-	1150	1360
Home mission		9076	303	-	9379	10107
Note 4		14816	803	-	15619	16495
Ministry:						
Parish contribution		76668	-	-	76668	72360
Vicarage expenses		3910	-	-	3910	3928
Clergy expenses		3257	-	-	3257	2831
Church running expenses		14437	-	-	14437	13729
Church maintenance		10944	-	-	10944	13898
Upkeep of services		20747	211	-	20958	13950
Upkeep of church garden		195	2059	-	2254	2304
Expenditure on parish magazine, books and cards		1991	-	-	1991	2808
Mission outreach & training		989	-	-	989	2427
Salaries		48559	-	-	48559	44305
Children's activities		1744	-	-	1744	2054
Printing, office supplies & telephone		7804	-	-	7804	9534
Other administration costs		11488	346	-	11834	5978
New & replacement furniture and equipment		1514	-	-	1514	3778
Depreciation of furniture and equipment		1436	-	-	1436	1437
Major works		26650	-	-	26650	48355
Governance		1560	-	-	1560	1560
Note 8		248709	3419	-	252128	261731
(b) Raising funds						
Stewardship expenses		729	-	-	729	148
Cost of applying for grants		4355	-	-	4355	-
		5084	-	-	5084	148
(c) Other trading activities						
Parish Hall running costs		13434	-	-	13434	10921
Cost of events		1673	260	-	1933	445
		15107	260	-	15367	11366
TOTAL EXPENDED		268900	3679	-	272579	273245

4 Missionary and Charitable Giving

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds 2017	Total Funds 2016
Overseas:					
CMS	800	200	-	1000	1000
Revive	1190	-	-	1190	1000
Tearfund	900	200	-	1100	1000
Open Doors	1000	100	-	1100	1178
Malawi Assoc. Christian Support	700	-	-	700	750
Mission Aviation F'ship	600	-	-	600	600
Mission to Seafarers	500	-	-	500	500
Toilet twinning	-	-	-	-	360
<i>Other charities</i>	50	-	-	50	-
Overseas total	5740	500	-	6240	6388
Home:					
Linking Lives Eastbourne	1897	203	-	2100	3400
St Wilfrid's Hospice	1000	100	-	1100	1000
Beachy Head Chaplaincy	1379	-	-	1379	1000
CDAFSW	800	-	-	800	750
Eastbourne Winter Night Shelter	800	-	-	800	800
Matthew 25	1100	-	-	1100	1000
Eastbourne Foodbank	1100	-	-	1100	1000
Church Army	500	-	-	500	500
St Luke's Healthcare for Clergy	100	-	-	100	100
PARCHE	200	-	-	200	-
Meads community	200	-	-	200	557
<i>Other charities</i>	-	-	-	-	-
Home total	9076	303	-	9379	10107
Total Giving	14816	803	-	15619	16495

5 Staff Costs

Unrestricted Fund	Wages & salaries	Social security costs	Pension contributions	2017 Total	2016 Total
Administration and Verger	26365	638	1777	28780	27464
Working with Children & Families	17890	421	1349	19660	16841
Maintenance of Church and Parish Hall	10531	95	105	10731	10150
Total	54786	1154	3231	59171	54455

During the year the PCC employed an average of 5 people in the following posts: an administrator, a Children's and Families Minister, an Early Year's / administrative assistant (part time), a verger (part time) and a cleaner. There are no employees who received total emoluments of more than £60,000.

6 Payments to PCC Members

Mr Tristram Peattie received £26794 in his role as Children's & Families Minister but the cost to the PCC was offset by a 40% contribution from St John's C of E School.

Other payments were made to PCC members in reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the PCC:

a) Clergy support: Council tax £2971, Environmental charges £772, Travel, hospitality, telephone, stationery, accommodation £2152.

b) 4 members received reimbursement for travel, stationery, postage, hospitality and accommodation totalling £1683.

7 Transactions with persons related to PCC Members

Mrs Hannah Peattie, wife of Mr Tristram Peattie received £5794 in her part time role as an Early year's worker/administrative assistant.

8 Governance Costs

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds 2017	Total Funds 2016
Independent examination	1560	-	-	1560	1560
	1560	-	-	1560	1560

9 Fixed assets

a. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Furniture £	Total fixed assets £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2017	2268	3479	5747
Additions	-	4791	4791
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 December 2017	2268	8270	10538
Charge for impairment			
At 1 January 2017	(1701)	(2610)	(4311)
Additions	(567)	(869)	(1436)
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 December 2017	(2268)	(3479)	(5747)
Net book amounts			
01 January 2017	567	869	1436
31 December 2017	£Nil	£4791	£4791

b. Investments

	Endowment Fund £
Market value at 1 January 2017	69918
Surplus on revaluation	6311
Market value at 31 December 2017	£76229

10 Analysis of Net Assets by Fund

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total funds 2017 £	Total funds 2016 £
Fixed Assets	4791	-	-	4791	1436
Investment fixed assets	-	-	76229	76229	69918
Current Assets (except cash)	29362	-	-	29362	30158
Cash at bank & on deposit	197893	4023	-	201916	164088
Current Liabilities	-6428	-	-	-6428	-9774
Fund balance	£225618	£4023	£76229	£305870	£255826

11 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total funds 2017	Total funds 2016
Income tax recoverable	14679	-	-	14679	6000
Prepayments	6366	-	-	6366	10259
Other debtors	8317	-	-	8317	13899
	29362	-	-	29362	30158

12 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total funds 2017	Total funds 2016
Accruals and deferred income	2885	-	-	2885	2960
Creditors for goods & services	3543	-	-	3543	6814
	6428	-	-	6428	9774

13 Statement of Funds

Endowed funds are required by the donors to be invested and the income spent on specific objectives.

The Garden Maintenance Fund is a permanent endowment, invested in CBF Investment Fund shares (2961.0 shares), which requires income to be spent on maintenance of the church garden.

The Duplex Bequest is a permanent endowment, invested in CBF Investment Fund shares (1509.7 shares), which requires the income to be given to charitable causes.

The Flower Fund is a permanent endowment, invested in CBF Investment Fund shares (179.0 shares), which requires the income to be spent on floral decoration of the church.

The CBF Investment Fund shares were valued at £16.3944 per share at 31 December 2017 (2016: £15.0370 per share).

Restricted funds are not invested permanently but are to be spent within reasonable timescales.

The Garden Fund which holds income for the upkeep of the church garden.

The Flower Fund which holds income to provide for the floral decoration of the church.

The Charities Fund which holds income from the Duplex Bequest pending payment to charities.

13 Statement of Funds (continued)

St John School Governor's Fund which holds monies allocated by the PCC to meet costs incurred by governors in carrying out their roles.

Unrestricted funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the PCC decides.

The PCC has designated certain funds for administrative purposes and to set aside monies for future anticipated expenditure.

The designated funds comprise;

Parish Hall Fund to provide for the running costs and upkeep of the Parish Hall.

Parish Hall Maintenance Fund to provide for maintaining the fabric of the Parish Hall.

Reserve Fund to provide funds as a contingency and for the further development of the church.

Organ Fund to provide for future repairs to the organ.

Repair Fund to provide for repairs and decoration of the church and replacement of equipment.

Roof Repair Fund to provide for future repairs to flat roofs as recommended in latest quinquennial report.

Anniversary Appeal Fund to meet the costs associated with the Re-ordering Project.

Summary of all Funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2017	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains & losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2017
Garden Maintenance	44525			4019	48544
Duplex Bequest	22701			2049	24750
Flower Fund	2692			243	2935
Total of Endowed Funds	69918			6311	76229
Garden Fund	2514	1575	(2119)	-	1970
Charities Fund	-	803	(803)	-	-
Flower Fund	838	268	(471)	-	635
St John's School Governors	1703	-	(286)	-	1418
Total of Restricted Funds	5055	2647	(3679)	-	4023
General Fund	97533	256178	(242894)	(16500)	94317
<i>Designated Funds</i>					
Parish Hall Fund	15943	18100	(13434)	-	20609
Parish Hall Maintenance	10000	-	-	-	10000
Reserve Fund	50000	-	-	-	50000
Organ Fund	1537	2161	(1580)	-	2118
Repair Fund	840	-	(10872)	10500	468
Roof Repair Fund	5000	-	-	5000	10000
Anniversary Appeal Fund	-	37226	(120)	1000	38106
Total of Unrestricted Funds	180853	313665	(268900)	-	225618
TOTAL FUNDS	255826	316312	(272579)	6311	305870

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St John the Evangelist, Meads, Eastbourne for the Year Ended 31st December 2017

Section A

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (PCC) of St John Meads on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2017 set out on pages 16 to 26

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The PCC members consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed. ~~{The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [named body.....]}~~

.....]] Please ~~delete [bracketed words] if not applicable.~~

It is my responsibility to:

1. examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
2. to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
3. to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention ~~(other than that disclosed below in Section B *)~~

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
 have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the (brackets) if they do not apply

Examiner's signature M. J. Neelan

Examiner's name CAPITALS MICHAEL NEILAN

Date 29 MARCH 2018

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body if any CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

Examiner's address PRICE & COMPANY 30-32 GILDREDGE ROAD, EASTBOURNE BN21 4SH

St John the Evangelist, Meads, Eastbourne

Registered Charity no. 1131574

REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

The past year has been one characterised by growth in the use of our Church and its buildings. The users are diverse and range from Diocesan training for child protection and vulnerable adults to Scouts, Cubs and Beavers, from Scrabble and Cameo to Bible study and cello lessons, Mothers and Toddlers to Jazz and Coffee Concerts; all have different needs and requirements for their use. While this is exciting to see, it brings with it the need to both manage this growth and deal with the extra wear and tear that it inevitably generates whilst at the same time develop practices that will help us manage more effectively in the future.

A building of the size of St John's requires constant attention and the past year has been no different. Chief among the work carried out includes:

There have been a few teething problems following the installation of a new fibre glass flag pole in 2016, in particular the noise created by the lanyards flapping in an easterly wind. This is being investigated by Dick Thwaites, who also provided guidance on when and what flags should be flown. This was published on our Facebook page and in the notices for those who may be interested.

The withdrawal of the blue wooden chairs - Following a series of accidents, fortunately none too serious, we have now replaced the blue chairs with new metal framed chairs, which are lighter and easier to carry and stack.

Replacement of the altar cloth – The old altar cloth had become thread bare and torn. A new cloth was made and donated by Hazel Mottram and is now in use.

Changes to the office furniture and layout - Some internal alterations have been made to the office and additional desks added to allow for the growing number of staff and volunteers working in the office.

The installation and commissioning of a panic alarm -During the year we have had a panic alarm installed and commissioned. This provides security for lone workers in the office and the possibility of a serious incident in the church. This has been enhanced with an electrically controlled door entry system which is now up and running.

Boiler room and heating system - The boiler room has been cleared and shelving installed in the old coal cellar. Following a breakdown of the heating system to the church a new expansion vessel has been installed and a leak in the kitchen fan heater was identified and dealt with.

Quinquennial - The report from the last quinquennial inspection recommended repairs to the stonework of the tower, as well as repairs to the West window above the choir gallery (the damp in this area has the very real potential to affect the organ repairs recently undertaken) and South wall, where rain is now penetrating into the building along its length. A survey of the work needed was conducted in April 2017, with a view to costing and fundraising. The survey itself led to us seeking tenders to do the work and these were received towards the end of 2017. A fundraising campaign has been included in our Building for the Future project.

Archdeacon's Visitation - This year we welcomed the Rural Dean for the official Archdeacon's visitation. This takes place every few years and includes an inspection of the church silver, which must be examined and accounted for as per the annual wardens' inventory check. Some of the silver is of historic significance and we would be delighted to show the collection to any church members who may be interested in seeing the collection.

The annual inventory identifies a bishop's chair on loan to Battle Abbey since 1984. All attempts to identify this with the curators at the Abbey have drawn a blank. Should any member of the parish have information on this please could they speak to the wardens.

Parish Hall - The parish hall which is heavily used by a wide variety of groups, has benefitted from the installation of a new Wi-Fi system and the installation of cupboards. A planned-up date to the toilets has had to be put on hold in order to deal with serious damp in the Green room. We are also looking to raise funding to provide access parking, renewed and level surfacing to the building for accessibility, and a projector and sound system for hall users.

Our volunteers – Much of the work that has taken place has been carried out by volunteers. We are indebted to Hart Reade for the gift of loaning us their handy man Steve. This has allowed us to install shelving in the cupboards in the Jubilee hall for use by the Scrabble club and Open the book team. Additionally, he has recently fitted protective edgings to the corners of the walls in the halls and rooms which had become damaged with use.

A newly established maintenance team recently took on the task of cleaning the windows in and out of the cloister entrance and replacing light tubes and bulbs around the building. This has been a real bonus and we would like to encourage anyone who feels able to help to join us on the team where we look to deal with a variety of tasks around the grounds and buildings.

Thanks - Thanks must go to a number of people, first to Dick Thwaites for all the organisation and practical help he has provided throughout the year. This has included everything from winding the clock and ensuring the appropriate flag is flown to sorting out door locks, panic alarms, computers and a myriad of other essential jobs in and around the church. Second to Rosie our cleaner who gives of herself unstintingly. The pride she takes in the work undertaken, often going well beyond what is required of her is an example to us all.

Finally we owe enormous thanks to Tony Mottram, our Church Warden, whose practical knowledge and expertise in all matters building and plumbing has been invaluable. We really couldn't have done it without you! [Margaret wrote this final paragraph!]

Tony Mottram and Margaret Kowszun - Church Wardens

REPORT ON THE DEANERY SYNOD PROCEEDINGS

Eastbourne and district Deanery Synod

2017 saw three new members of the PCC elected to the Deanery Synod – Sally Scott-Ralphs, David Scott-Ralphs and Ray Hassell. Jill Preece attended as a member of the House of Clergy and additionally, Peter Pickett attended under new rules to include representatives of retired clergy. Jill and Sally were subsequently elected onto the pastoral committee for the House of Clergy and Laity respectively.

A presentation to the Synod by Canon Ann Holt, Diocesan Director of Education, highlighted that there are 37,000 children attending church schools. The vision for education in diocesan schools was encapsulated in the phrase 'educating children for life in all its fullness'. Members of Synod were invited to pray for the work in schools and to get involved as Governors or in other ways. Canon Holt informed the Synod that consideration was being given to developing a Multi-Academy Trust for the Diocese.

There was discussion and a motion put forward concerning plans to include in the Parish Share an element for Self-Supporting Ministers and these plans were subsequently dropped by the Diocese following further consideration.

At the autumn meeting there was a presentation by Martyn Relf representing Churches Together for Eastbourne about Hope Eastbourne in 2018. Martyn informed the meeting about the series of events being planned throughout the year to encourage Christians to be more confident in sharing Jesus in words. Churches were encouraged to identify a Hope champion who could spearhead plans for each parish. There was also a discussion about Linking Lives Eastbourne, spearheaded by St John's and a call to all churches to encourage new volunteers.

The final meeting of the year had a presentation from the Right Reverend Richard Jackson, Bishop of Lewes, on the state of the Church of England today. Bishop Richard spoke about three issues:-

Sexuality – Bishop Richard made the point that decision-making in this area has to be on the basis of the scriptures and how we interpret them. A teaching document is being prepared which will provide the basis for debate after its publication in 2020.

The need to be a missionary church – there is a need of new confidence in truth and the life-changing power of the gospel.

The need to be more spiritual – the church needs to see itself as a community that sustains and nurtures faith, grounded in the Word of God, demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit. All we do must be supported in prayer. A praying church recognises our inadequacy and God's sufficiency.

David Scott-Ralphs

St John the Evangelist, Meads, Eastbourne

Registered Charity no. 1131574

REPORTS FROM CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Growing in relationship with God and each other – *building belonging*

Prayer Ministry

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18

Prayer is a vital part of our life with God and together, and it is encouraging to see people praying with and for one another, especially in the time between the 9.30 and 11.15 services. This is currently the main opportunity to receive prayer ministry, although members of the team will be pleased to pray with you at any other time.

Prayer ministry offers us the opportunity to come before God and to lay down before Him the things which are on our hearts. Of course, we can do this by ourselves in our own prayer time, but there is something powerful about coming to God supported by the prayer of others.

When you come for prayer you can share as much or as little as you like and you can be assured that whatever you say will be kept in confidence. Those praying will invite Jesus to come, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and will then wait on God, listening for whatever He might want to say into this situation. We pray with confidence that God always answers our prayers, although not always immediately or in the way we might expect! The first result of committing a problem to God is often a sense of peace and an increased awareness of his presence with us.

We try to meet as a team every few months, and would welcome new members, particularly those who might be able to offer this ministry at other services so if you would like to be involved please speak to me.

Jill Preece

Pastoral care

Over the past year we have been building a Pastoral Care team within St John's. This team of people support and visit those members of the church family who are in particular need, or who are isolated, either on a long-term or short-term basis.

While we recognise and appreciate that this care often happens in a natural way within the church the aim of having a team is to provide a structure that ensures no-one is missed out, and that we offer a safe and supportive framework for both those visited and those who visit. As a part of this all the team have safeguarding checks and undertake safeguarding training, and we plan to undertake further training in other aspects of offering good pastoral care.

The opportunities for pastoral care within the church will never diminish. Over the past year this care has continued to support many in our church family and we are immensely grateful to those who offer this care.

If you or someone you know would appreciate the support of the team, or if you would like to join the team, please speak to me or to Nick Pendry.

Jill Preece

Worship Team

Over the last few decades the church has seen an outpouring of songs like never before in history, songs sung by tens of millions of people around the globe, many of them originating in the UK! Music has been a vital element in growth, unity, revival and evangelism, as well as corporate and personal renewal.

I'm so thrilled that St John's has been able to embrace this worldwide move of God over the last few years. It's not so much about a different 'style' of worship, but rather reflecting what the Lord is doing in his church, and in transformed lives, as men and women are drawn to express praise, worship and gratitude in their own words, and experience a new intimacy in the setting of sung worship. I am so moved to see, and hear of, people encountering the Lord in new and personal ways, through the Holy Spirit in our services.

I love traditional hymnody too, and it's so important to strike the right balance, between songs which declare truth about who God is, and what he has done, and songs which express our loving response and gratitude to him. I feel we have a freedom to draw from all traditions at St Johns, which is very special.

What has also been a privilege to witness is the growth of the worship team at St Johns. From 3 people, when I first joined, to around 20 people now regularly serving at the 9.30 service. It's been a joy to get to know, and learn from such a wonderful group of generous, loving, faithful and mature Christians, and to see individuals grow in skill in confidence as musicians and worship leaders.

My utmost gratitude goes to you all.

It's also been great working alongside the brilliant and tireless David Oakenfold, and seeing more and more folk getting involved in his projects, and to be able to come together with the organ, choir and brass players from time to time during combined services.

There are still deeper places to go in our worship, and I am loving being on this journey with you all.

Mark Edwards

Church Music

Music has continued to form an important part of worship in St John's during the last year.

The monthly Choral Matins has been joined by Choral Evensong. These services are held the second and fourth Sunday of the month respectively unless otherwise advised.

The encouraging growth of these services has shown the successful diversity of services at St John's.

The 'St John's Singers', our choir, have provided Choral accompaniment for these and other services throughout the year. I cannot express my appreciation enough for this group of dedicated singers and musicians who turn out in all weathers! There has not been one occasion in either of the monthly Choral Services where an anthem has not been sung! The choir practices are great fun and we would welcome new singers/musicians. Everyone has a note in their head! We have a choir practice the Thursday before each Choral Service at 7.45pm which lasts about an hour.

We are privileged to have other musicians who participate from the organ loft and the two services which continue to prove our diversity are the Remembrance Service and the traditional Carol Service.

I'm grateful to all the musicians who take part in these, and other, services but particularly proud of our youth brass group. Their ability is exceptional! Thanks to Colin and Andy for their assistance here.

The coffee concerts continued during the year but became more difficult to hold, not because of lack of performers, but logistical support during the concerts. This year will also be a challenge as timing will determine whether events can be held or not depending on church reordering. The Renaissance Singers sang the Advent and Epiphany Meditations which were particularly poignant. We are grateful for the ongoing support of this group of brilliant singers and musicians. Die Alten Knaben group will return next year on 10th May. Noteworthy gave us an interesting programme of a Capella singing and we are delighted to welcome them back again shortly.

We were able to help St Saviours when their organ blower failed just as they were about to have a recital by Alex Eadon. The recital was successfully transferred to St John's and was a great example of inter-Church cooperation.

There are a number of ideas for this year which are now being explored. The old adage of 'one door closing and another opening' is to the fore at present. We will keep you informed.

The organ has been used regularly in the various services and it has been encouraging to hear how the services where the group and organ are used together, are greatly appreciated. We will continue to explore further avenues for this with Mark. It's been a pleasure to play with Mark and his group and disprove the comments that it's not possible to play together!

Special thanks must go to Rachael for her part in providing music from the organ loft and playing for our services. It may not be seen from below but there's often organ bench changes, conductor changes etc. during the services and the fact we both have white hair, adds to the confusion!!

Brian continues to help on all fronts and Rachael and I are extremely grateful for, not only his help, but advice.

The organ has continued to be well maintained, tuned and kept in good condition wherever possible. There are issues which are being exacerbated by the continued ingress of damp through the west window. The issues with the great and swell organ were covered in the last expenditure and the choir organ will need to be addressed when the window has been fully repaired and the damp issue solved. This is planned to be done imminently together with the Tower repairs.

To everyone who has helped in the music at St John's, thank you.

David Oakenfold

Home Groups

Home Groups are flourishing with 10 groups including an Alpha group and a Confirmation group. We currently have 144 members – more than half the congregation.

Here is a selection of comments that people have recently made about their Home Group:

"I look forward to it – it's become an important part of my life."

"There are lots of groups which each have their own flavour so you can find the one that best suits you."

"It's a chance to go deeper into your faith in a small group."

"We have a lot of fun and laughs as well as discussing a topic or a Bible passage."

"One of the best things about Home Group is that everyone looks after each other. It becomes like a second family"

"Anything said in Home Group is confidential and is kept within the group."

"You feel more comfortable about speaking up with people you've got to know and trust."

"In Home Group you can ask any question you like – nothing's off limits and nobody criticises you."

"You don't need to know the Bible to be in a Home Group and no-one is going to embarrass you."

"You can be any age to join a HG, nobody's too young or too old. In our group we have an active member who is 94!"

Nick Pendry

Catering and Hospitality

The hospitality team is now headed up by Sally Scott-Ralphs following the retirement of Pam and Ken Mayhew, who have served the church diligently over a number of years and to whom we express our grateful thanks.

It was a busy year hospitality-wise, with many new people joining the Sunday coffee rota and helping at other events across the year. These included a Passover meal, attended by around 60 people and celebrating the arrival of Easter in the traditional way; a lunch to welcome Andy and Rose Roberts' visit to St John's to talk about their work in Brazil; a Harvest Brunch; a Lights of Love event in aid of St Wilfrid's Hospice; and a leaving celebration for Tris and Hannah Peattie as they prepared to leave for new ministry in Coventry. This is not to mention the various musical events which took place over the year, including some great jazz coordinated by Mark Edwards. Support was also given to a number of funerals which took place in the church. We are grateful to Sally and all who serve the church in this way.

David Scott-Ralphs

Connexions

Five or six times a year we hold a “Connexions” tea-party at the Vicar’s house for people who are new to the church. This format was introduced by Giles a few years ago with the help of Rowena Adams who organised the events with her usual efficiency and her ability to know everyone in the church! We are very grateful to Rowena for her work and for setting a standard that we are struggling to meet!

I took over Connexions from Rowena in the summer of 2017, supported by Margaret my wife. Since the last APCM there have been six Connexions events. One of these was held at our home, the rest at the Vicarage. In total 41 adults and 12 children have attended these events.

Not all people find 4pm in the afternoon on a Sunday convenient and some new members have not been able to attend a Connexions event. For this reason we are planning to hold one or two such events in 2018 on a different day and at a different time to accommodate a wider range of new members.

The purpose of Connexions is to provide new members with an insight into the nature and character of the Church. They meet a range of people involved in the life of St John’s and Giles gives a brief overview of our current Mission Action Plan. More than anything else, it is an opportunity to meet and talk with each other and with key members of St John’s. I would like thank Giles and Rachel for opening up their home and for their generosity and hospitality in welcoming new members.

Jorj Kowszun

Alpha

There have been two Alpha courses at St John’s in the past year – the first run by Tris and Hannah Peattie and held in Peter Pickett’s home, and the second jointly run by David and Sally Scott-Ralphs and Adrian and Catherine Butcher. Both were well attended and they have been a great testimony to what God is doing at St John’s, with many coming to faith or being reaffirmed in their faith. In both instances they have resulted in new home groups being created. New friendships have been formed and new engagement with the church fostered.

These are exciting times to be at St John’s!

David Scott-Ralphs

REPORTS FROM CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES (continued)

Reaching out to the community around us – *hospitality to the fringe*

PaperBack Library/Coffee Pot

The PBL and Coffee Pot continue to provide this 'St. John's Service to Meads' – about 1,000 PaperBack books and Jigsaws to borrow (free!), computer help from our 'partners' CPC (Coffee Pot Computing) and Hearing Aid help from Don and Pam Brooksbank.

The 'staff' (John and Helen) set up at 22.00 on Thursdays (after the Silver Band practice), ably helped by Clive and other excellent volunteers. Fridays are as popular as ever, with many offers of help at closing time. We serve about 70 coffees and teas, and there is a steady supply of 'new' paperbacks and jigsaws, and a few DVD's. On the last Friday in every month, Don and Pam Brooksbank give much valued Hearing Aid help.

The 'Library' is very informal, with no booking in or out; the 'Coffee Pot' is a place to meet and chat - and if it is helpful - a listening ear with (if and when appropriate) sympathy and advice – without any commitment. John and Helen will 'retire' on the 13th July. We are pleased and thankful to be able to serve in this way. In September Mrs Margaret Kowszun will take over: she has asked for suggestions.

John and Helen Roe

Outreach to the housebound including PARCHE (Pastoral Action in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly)

Under the PARCHE umbrella we have responsibility for three care homes in the parish. Sarah Hassell leads the team at Alma Lodge, while Derek Mouland leads teams at Camelot and Meads House. Each month they lead a service of familiar hymns, Bible readings and prayers, which are greatly appreciated by residents and staff. New members would be warmly welcomed to these teams, particularly as Derek hopes to relinquish his role after many years of excellent service. Other care homes in the parish, including Elstree, are visited by PARCHE teams from other churches.

Sarah Hassell also leads a team taking a service of Holy Communion in Elstree Court each month. This is greatly appreciated by the residents, and has led to closer involvement with some of the families.

Although our involvement in providing a service at Chaseley has ceased there is now a PARCHE team going in each month, and several of the residents have been able to join us at Sunday services. We are working on developing a team to help with transport, using the Chaseley minibus, and if you would be able to help please speak to Tony Mottram.

St John's is one of the churches in Eastbourne that leads Sunday afternoon services at the DGH. The service is broadcast on the hospital radio so those who attend are joined by those on the wards. The service begins at 5.00 pm and lasts 30 minutes. Again if you would like to join in you would be very welcome. Please speak to Derek Mouland for more information.

May I extend a heartfelt 'thank you' to all those who take part in these activities – they are a vital part of our commitment to love and serve our community, and we are grateful to all those who express God's love in this way. If anyone would like to join in any of these teams we would love to hear from you.

Jill Preece

CAMEO

We have had a great year with the Ladies at St. John's. It is so nice to see their enthusiasm each month and the afternoons are very much enjoyed.

We started the year with Catherine Butcher author of "Edith Cavell Faith before the firing squad". She shared with us the marvellous work of Edith Cavell, which was very exciting and challenging. Well recommended. The film "The Shell Seekers" was enjoyed by all. An afternoon sharing our favourite poems/prose with each other showed the many talents our ladies have and was great fun. Fiona Castle was a hit and we had visitors from other churches. Over 50 ladies enjoyed her most interesting story of faith.

Fun and games afternoon with a Beetle Drive and chocolate prizes! Sue Lockhart gave us a fantastic Photo show of some amazing pictures including the Eastbourne Pier after the fire. Jill Maddock spoke about her and David's life in the Arctic, which was quite an eye opener to the work she and David were called by God to do. It was most informative and challenging.

Our main Charity this year was "Twinning a Toilet". Toni gave us a real fun afternoon with her experiences of toilet stops!! Also highlighting the plight of women and girls having no toilet in many countries around the world. The generosity of the ladies enabled us to twin 3 toilets, - one in Nepal, Malawi and Uganda. It is such a privilege to play our part in helping them. We finished the year with Christmas Traditions, Quiz and epilogue from Jill Preece. Our average attendance is about 40.

Last September we were sorry to say goodbye to one of our team members, Carolyn Lacy, who moved to Seaford. She was marvellous with the teapot! We have great pleasure in welcoming Barbara Eddleston joining the CAMEO team and she has been a great help with the Technical appliances required during the afternoon!! Thanks to our wonderful team: *Brenda, Patricia, Pauline, Rowena and Toni.*

Rowena Adams

Summer Fete 2017

2017 was our Diamond Jubilee year (60 years since the church was rebuilt after the war). We held a photographic festival asking people to send in their photos of people. Colourful photos, people doing something interesting or just with interesting faces! These were displayed around the church. The Seven Sisters Camera Club brought a display of their photography, we had a display of some of our old archive photos from when the church was bombed during the Second World War plus photos of the changing face of St John's as it's been altered through the years. Plus other stalls – Art Therapy for Refuge Children, organised by Lisa Medard and Sue Lockhart brought her photography and cards in to sell.

On the evening Friday 9th June Mark Edwards organised a Jazz Concert featuring Jo Fooks an award winning saxophonist, which was a really popular event.

The Summer Fete held on Saturday 10th June, was organised and co-ordinated by Jo Naunton. It was a huge success and the weather was extremely kind to us. St John's School opened proceedings with a couple of songs plus there was music from the Eastbourne Silver Band. A bouncy castle, Soft play for toddlers, face painting, bottle tombola, raffle and many lovely stalls plus our very popular cake stall, refreshments and what turned out to be an extremely popular burger & hot dog stand! We even had a Vintage Car from 1957 loaned to us for the afternoon from Elaine Montgomerie.

Everyone worked really hard and the atmosphere throughout the whole afternoon was 'buzzing'. Everyone enjoyed themselves sitting listening to the band, eating burgers and ice cream and enjoying the sunshine.

Then to close the festival on Sunday 11th June, Mark Edwards wrote and performed a composition of music, stories and visuals called 'A Part of the Main', which again was a great event.

A massive thank you to everyone who helped in some way, large or small, to make the whole festival and summer fete a complete success.

We raised over £3500 which is fantastic!

Joanne Naunton

Eastbourne Foodbank

Eastbourne foodbank started in June 2011 when budgets in agencies were being cut and many people were struggling. In the first month of operation 30 people were fed and it was thought it could never get busier. Trussell Trust released its annual figures recently to the press and sadly it shows in the past 6 months in the south east, 55,000 food parcels were given out, 12,000 of those in East Sussex. In Eastbourne the figures are 4,500 for the last 6 months - an increase of 27%. Children received help 1400 times in the last 6 months, maybe not surprising when Eastbourne has a ward with one of the highest levels of child poverty in the south east, not a proud achievement.

The foodbank is providing 3 days nutritional food to on average 850 people a month and have helped 48,000 people since the foodbank started. Too many people are coming in a desperate state not having eaten for several days or finding their cupboards empty and no money to replenish them.

Low income and benefit delays are the main reasons for coming to date but it is expect to see a large rise in demand when Universal Credit really starts to take hold in Eastbourne. The minimum 8 week wait for money will force many more people into debt, some will lose their homes and most will struggle to make it work.

A decision was made some years ago to help people coming to foodbank with more than just food. The foodbank now have 5 advocates in the team who undertook 1,850 sessions last year to help clients with their problems. Often debt, benefit delays and changes, unwieldy forms or bad decisions are the cause. The foodbank is recognised alongside the CAB as the best place to get face to face support and real holistic help.

The foodbank provides debt advice, welfare benefits advice, housing advice PIP advice, and support right to tribunal if required, also give clothes, plates, prams, cots, toys, bedding etc. to clients via a referral system. The foodbank works incredibly closely with adult and children social services, the DGH midwife team, Homework's, homeless health team, Eastbourne Borough Council, doctors, churches, schools and another 150 agencies in the town.

The foodbank is taking a leading role in trying to get to grips with the new Universal Credit system and have worked extremely closely with Eastbourne Borough Council in trying to iron out potential problems for applicants. Help is offered with applications and more relevant help is given to unravel the chaos applicants find themselves caught up in. The services offered by the foodbank to vulnerable clients are certainly much more than food alone.

The foodbank has been extremely fortunate to have had a brilliant base in Cornfield Lane loaned to it by St Andrews URC church but notice was given to leave. The property search was incredibly hard to find an in town replacement which proved impossible. Finding a suitable venue enabling the foodbank to continue the work has taken over 2.5 years and a new site has been found and the move from Cornfield Lane to the Brampton Road warehouse took place in February. A major decision taken was to scatter the distribution work around the town into local communities. A shop has opened in Grove Road to meet clients and 2 new outlets were opened in Willingdon Trees and Old Town. Plans are in hand to open 3 more satellites in the East side of town in church halls or community centres during 2018.

The Eastbourne foodbank makes a massive difference to the town and without the financial help and donations made by people from St John's the foodbank would struggle to exist and for this the foodbank give grateful thanks.

Dennis Thompson
Eastbourne Foodbank Trustee

St John's Scrabble Club

Our Scrabble Club meets twice a month in the Jubilee Hall at 2.30 pm. on the second Monday and last Wednesday of each month. Our members who come along have a really enjoyable time with refreshments during the afternoon. Beginners to experienced player most welcomed. Our club reaches out to everyone, men and ladies, whether they attend church or not. Any donations which are received go towards our Church funds.

Pam Lade

Men's Breakfasts

It has been another good year of breakfasts held at the Holywell Café, with a varied selection of speakers giving their Thought for the Day.

About 18 months have passed since Vic Lawrence passed the reins to me and Vic of course was a difficult act to follow. Vic from his past experience as a vicar had a fund of stories up his sleeve which he would share at each of his breakfast's; sadly I did not have that experience or the fund of stories.

I decided I would change the direction of the breakfasts by inviting members of the congregation to talk for approximately 10 minutes on their life experiences, calling it their 'Thought for the Day' and as I said earlier there have been varied and interesting accounts given.

We have seen a steady increase in numbers to the breakfasts, from the low teens to a record number in January of 29 and it looks as though we can certainly expect to see a regular number over 20. Something I am delighted to see are a number of gentlemen joining our group who are not members of St John's who are always most welcome and I sincerely hope they will be happy to share a 'Thought for the Day' at some point.

We must give thanks to Richard and his staff who come in especially early to open the café to provide a wonderful cooked breakfast.

Dennis Thompson

Parish Hall

During 2017 the hall has continued to be a very popular venue, with increased usage in a large variety of areas which has produced a steady rise in income. We have had many new hirers who have become regulars and have made long term bookings into 2018 and beyond.

Some of these include:-

- Dog Training – one a week
- Art Class which meets twice a week and a Creative Writing Workshop once a week
- Swoove exercise – once a week
- Dance awareness sessions – once a month
- Record Fayre and Life Drawing Classes also feature on a quarterly basis.

Plus many children's parties which is a great source of income.

- We shall be undertaking works in the future to our toilet areas to give them a facelift and will also be creating more storage space by having some new cupboards built.

Rosie Whittaker our cleaner/caretaker has continued to look after the flower beds and garden area of the Parish Hall. We have some new shrubs and flowers which have improved the look of the garden area.

Thanks to Rosie, as usual, for the work she does at the Hall. She's continued to care for the Hall and has also helped set up for the Lunch Club each month.

The Hall has continued to go from strength to strength during 2017 and the diary is full throughout 2018. Our Parish Hall is most definitely a much loved and well used facility which continues to be greatly appreciated throughout the Meads community.

Joanne Naunton

Church Garden

The gardens provide a beautiful tranquil space which is enjoyed by church goers, Meads dwellers walkers and even tourists who venture away from the promenade. The Memorial Garden on the south side of the church contains the scattered ashes of loved ones. Flowers or crosses are left there on special occasions or anniversaries and the benches are used by many for quiet contemplation or prayer.

The gardens are maintained by a small band of volunteers and only the lawns are mown professionally. Each volunteer takes on a section of the flower beds and another volunteer trims the shrubs and paints the benches. Sadly the group is gradually diminishing and we are always looking for more help but we manage to keep them looking good by just taking on a little more. The gardeners are co-ordinated by another volunteer and meet together over cake and coffee a couple of times a year to chat about their upkeep and any plants or equipment that is required. Like most gardens we have a shed where we keep our equipment and a diary of notes throughout the season.

The gardens provide a small but important part of church life and St John's contribution to the Meads' community.

Karen Fletcher-Wright

Lunch Club

The Lunch Club continues to be a popular monthly event at the Parish Hall. We cater for approximately 30 customers each month and they really enjoy and appreciate the food and company. We have a lot of regulars but also have seen some new faces recently which is always lovely.

Sheila MacNicol stood down as one of the team leaders at the end of 2017 after two years dedicated service. So we'd very much like to thank her and acknowledge all her hard work and the support she gave us.

We welcome Sam Williams and her mum Pat Smith as our new team leaders, and thank them for agreeing to take over the baton from Sheila.

An enormous thank you goes to every single person on both lunch teams, who work so hard to ensure everyone is fed and happy, especially Ken and Pam Mayhew who have continued to lead the other team and fill in when needed. Thanks also to Rosie, as she sets up for the Lunch Club each month.

We look forward to welcoming more people over the coming months.

Joanne Naunton

Children and Families

Sunday Club

Tristram Peattie continued in the role of Families worker until December when he, his wife Hannah & their children moved to Coventry to pursue new challenges. All at St John's were sad to see them leave and are very grateful for their many contributions during their time with us. We wish them well for the future.

The post is shared between the Church and St John's C of E Primary School and it is pleasing to report that both organisations have committed to continuing their investment in this important work. At the time of writing the recruitment of a successor is well advanced.

At Church the children are split into age appropriate groups as follows, all of these take place during the 9.30 service.

RIISING STARS- This group is for all pre-school children. Parents are welcome to leave the children, or stay in with them. The group is held in the Pauling Room. There is a time of free play, a craft activity and a bible story. We finish with a time of singing.

BIG GOD SPACE- This group is for children aged Reception- Year 6 and is held in the Jubilee Hall. A variety of multimedia is used to teach and inspire the children. Every week lighting and decorations help create a warm and inviting atmosphere for the children. We have a focus on prayer and making the teaching visual for the children. We have weekly prizes and a game each week.

STREET WISE- This group is for secondary school children aged year 7 upwards and the group is held in the Lodge. Streetwise also meet socially every fortnight on a Sunday evening during term time. The Lodge has been completely re-decorated and is now a bright fantastic venue for our youth to meet in.

PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP- This group is run every week during term time on a Thursday Morning from 10:00-11:30. This group is continuing to flourish and grow. We have parents who come early to help set up and great volunteers who serve tea, coffee snacks and make people feel really welcome. The group offers a nurturing friendly environment to build community and have fun.

Teaching Material used-

Scripture Union material is still used as the basis for planning by the helpers in all groups to prepare for each Sunday. However the designated leaders also spend time adapting the material to make sure we teach more than just stories from the bible, but rather make it applicable to their daily lives. Further information can be found at www.scriptureunion.org.uk/light

We have enjoyed seeing the children from all the groups enrich some of our celebration services, through drama, worship and prayers. We have enjoyed Harvest and Nativity Services which they have led well. At the beginning of our 9:30 church services we regularly start with a children's song to engage them with worship and create a sense of them belonging and being an important part of our church community.

We have continued to update our resources and storage to make the most of our facilities to serve these young people.

School Links

We have continued to support St John's Primary School through Communion services, Big God Breakfasts, Prayer Spaces, and assisting with RE lessons, visits to the church, hosting school church services, leading Assemblies and developing and implementing the Christian ethos of the school.

The Open the Book initiative has gone from strength to strength and a separate report follows.

Open the Book

Open the Book, in partnership with the Bible Society, is a way of bringing Bible Stories to life for Primary School children up and down the UK and abroad. Currently Open the Book goes into over 2,000 schools, with over 11,000 volunteers taking part.

Teams of between four and eight people act out the stories from Bob Hartman's Lion Storyteller Bible, which is beautifully illustrated and tells Old and New Testament Bible stories faithfully but simply, and the illustrations are full of fun.

At St. John's we have been involved with Open the Book since February 2017, following a really good training Day a month beforehand. Some fifteen of us take part, so we have a Monday team and a Thursday team. Each team goes into St. John's Meads School once a month, so the School has Open the Book assemblies twice a month. The stories we perform tie in with the children's R E lessons. We make or provide the props we need and wear homemade Middle Eastern style costumes

.
We started with little more than a large supply of tea towels and a collection of curtains. But people helped out and we soon had a good supply of tabards, robes and cloaks, including small sizes for the children who really look forward to helping us each time we perform. Of course, as far as possible it has to be different children each time! We also aim to get in as much audience participation as possible, and the children love letting rip with boos and cheers, or making noises, like the pitter-patter of raindrops or the buzz of gnats and flies.

Props have needed creativity and ingenuity - some of the most memorable having including the snake in the Garden of Eden, the whale that swallowed Jonah, Noah's ark and the Temple wall, complete with slit and empty lemonade bottle through which people put their offerings (2p pieces) which rattled down into a container with a very lifelike and satisfying clatter.

It is a privilege to take part in Open the Book, and our prayer is always that the the scenes they have watched will have a lasting effect on the children and that they will share what they've seen with their families. This year we have the opportunity to re-enact some of the resurrection stories at the School's end of term service, to which parents and friends of the School are invited.

We could do with a few more folk in each of our teams. You don't have to have any experience. You'll discover talents you didn't know you had! You just need a sense of fun, a desire to bring the Bible to life for children, and no more than three hours to spare per month (in term time)!

Sarah Hassell