



The Parish of Boxmoor

St John's Boxmoor,
St Stephen's Chaulden & St Francis' Hammerfield

The Parish of Boxmoor Annual Parochial Church Meeting

In St. John`s Church, Boxmoor

Sunday 7 April 2019 at 9.30 am

Contents

Reports from our daughter churches, PCC committees
and other church organisations.

PLEASE RETURN TO
CHURCH, ONCE YOU
HAVE READ THE
REPORTS

Please see the main booklet for the agenda, minutes of the last annual meeting, Treasurer's report & audited accounts for 2018, reports on fabric goods & ornaments, Safeguarding, the Deanery Synod and PCC proceedings.

The contents of this booklet are available to be read on the parish website at www.stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk

ST FRANCIS HAMMERFIELD APCM REPORT 2019

Not received at time of printing

REPORT FROM ST STEPHEN'S

As a congregation we try to minister particularly to the elderly which is a great joy and we continue to be a witness to the Church of England in Chaulden.

We appreciate regular visits from the clergy which enables us to celebrate Holy Communion at least twice a month: on the other Sundays we welcome Carole Lewis and Sheena Wilson to lead worship and to preach. When they cannot come, then Richard, Anne and I have permission to lead a service and give a message. This all works out very well.

Our service for St. Stephen's Day was much enjoyed.

This year we have celebrated Holy Communion every Thursday morning and during Lent we welcomed a number of our friends from St. John's for a Lent group.

Expenditure on the building has been minimal. Please see the full financial report on St. Stephen's which is included in the annual account and which shows that the congregation contribute generously to parish funds.

Why not come and join us one Sunday at 11.15 a.m.?

Jean Garner

March 2019

BAPTISM GROUP REPORT 2018-19

This Group continues to help families wishing to bring their children for Baptism and to encourage them to become involved in church activities. From January to December 2018, 28 children were baptised at St John's. We have baptised 5 more little ones since January this year, 4 are already booked in for the coming months with a further 6 who are still deciding on a suitable date. We have continued to offer preparation sessions monthly during the year and have maintained the previous format which includes a presentation of all the activities taking place at St John's and gives them the opportunity to look more carefully at the promises they will be making on behalf of their children when they are baptised, in particular bringing their children to church regularly. We have continued to invite families to attend the next All Age Service following the Baptism to collect their Baptism Certificates and receive a welcome from the whole congregation. Sadly this invitation is not always taken up, and we still have 8 Certificates from last year awaiting collection. More baptism families have been attending Tiny Tots and we have tried to encourage participation in our main festivals (such as Mothering Sunday, Harvest etc.) by sending out special invitations, as well as inviting them to our Children's Celebration Services. It was encouraging to see some of them also coming along to our recent Messy Church which proved very popular.

Linda Gair has continued to organise the distribution of Baptism Anniversary Cards which is greatly appreciated, but we are always on the lookout for new helpers with the card delivery as we have quite a large area to cover. Please let us know if you would be willing to

deliver cards in your road as this would be of great help. We are also lucky to have a special team of Baptism Helpers who are on duty at Baptism Services. However, we really need some new helpers as several of our previous helpers have had to retire – please let us know if you would like to join our team – services are usually the first and third Sundays of the month at 11.30, so it's not that frequent, and it is so encouraging for new families to be welcomed by a friendly face. We are very grateful, also, to our team of organists who provide very valuable musical accompaniment at Baptism Services and also to those in our team who help to run the Baptism Preparation sessions with the Clergy.

Annie Mitchell
Baptism Co-ordinator

ST JOHNS CHURCH BEREAVEMENT GROUP

The Bereavement Group is a Team led by the Vicar. Recently we have welcomed Rev. Canon Ruth Goatley to our team. Our Lay Reader Carole Lewis together with four members of the congregation complete our team.

Following a funeral taken by our Clergy we contact the bereaved families and offer our help which usually consists of providing a good listening ear.

We hold regular meetings in strict confidence to discuss between ourselves the best way we can offer help and to ensure the appropriate person makes contact.

After we have made contact we send a copy of our monthly magazine to the bereaved family together with the dates of the forthcoming Friendship Teas.

The friendship teas provide an opportunity for the bereaved to meet new people and make new friends at a very difficult time. We try to encourage those now left on their own to come along.

Invitations to the Remembrance Service in November are sent to the families of the bereaved where our Clergy have officiated at the funerals during the past year. We have found that this Service provides a focus for the bereaved and provides comfort to the families.

Valerie Darvill - Bereavement Group Coordinator

REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MARCH 2019

The Communications Committee of the PCC is responsible for all the various aspects of communication within Boxmoor Parish and for the parish's representation to the wider world. Our remit includes the magazine, newsletter, website, Facebook page, publicity including posters and banners, and articles in the local press. The vicar is keen that all publicity material should have the same parish logo, as our "brand."

By the time of the APCM the committee will have met 6 times during the current church year, the meeting on 25 February having been devoted to a deeper consideration of the way in which we communicate. I should like to take this opportunity to thank committee members for their participation and their efforts to carry out the various communications

tasks. Sally-Anne Bates has done an excellent job of editing the magazine every month, as she has done for the last 40 years and more. This takes up a lot of her time and we appreciate her work. Printing is now done in the parish office and Alan Munford organises the distribution. Annie Mitchell has taken a break from the weekly newsletter, but we are grateful for her dedication to it over many years. The newsletter is at present being produced by the vicar and Hilary Kemp in the Parish Office. It is available online to those who request this.

After many trials and tribulations, the new parish website went live before Christmas and gives us a much more modern presence online. Many thanks are due to Stacey Barton for setting it up and to the vicar for much of the content. We acknowledge that it is still to some extent a “work in progress,” that more content is needed, and responsibility will be designated for routine updating. The St John’s Facebook page has been operated by Stacey Barton, Anne Lyne and Alan Munford. Our page now has 235 followers (up from 174 last year). Information about events and some services are “shared” with other local Facebook pages for wider publicity. We are trying to keep our page relevant to the church seasons by temporary updates of the cover picture and to include more about the life of the church as well as advertising events.

I have developed a relationship with local press, including the Gazette and Boxmoor Direct to publicise significant services, seasons, or events. However, the Gazette has reduced their Faith News section. Alan Munford managed to get the Summer Fayre featured on BBC Three Counties Radio.

The Committee is responsible for the production and the printing of the parish Christmas card (over 6,900 copies) and Easter card (4,000 copies) distributed to homes in the parish. The Committee agrees the design/text. The card is printed in-house and Alan Munford very efficiently organises the distribution. We are indebted to volunteers who take on the various “walks” to deliver the cards and we would ask the members of the congregation to volunteer for this task, if at all possible.

Posters are usually produced by the organisers of a particular event, or the Parish Office for church services. The Communications Committee involvement is to ensure distribution/press coverage and sharing of information from St John’s with the wider public. The Committee is, as always, grateful to Alan Munford for all the work he does in publicity and communications for the parish, despite no longer being a member of the Committee. The eye-catching banners which appear outside St John’s to advertise Church Seasons or events, are organised by Alan. The noticeboards rely on Alan’s work too, along with Peter Garner. We also owe thanks to Alison Jackson (previously) and now Hilary Kemp in the Parish Office for their part in the printing of publicity material and countless other tasks. The Communications Committee can only communicate material and information which is given to us and that we need information in plenty of time if it is to go in the press. Internal communication within the parish is not always efficient. People should never assume that the Communications team actually know everything!

Anne Lyne
March 2019

CRAFTY COFFEE

Over the last few months we have held craft sessions and have tried different times and formats. However, it hasn't taken off so we would welcome any ideas/help to encourage more people to come.

Sue Horsnell and Dee Fisher

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

There have been some notable musical services at St Johns during the past year.

There was of course an unforgettable memorial service to David Mitchell, with many returning choristers and subsequently we have mounted some splendid evensongs and organ recitals.

Last May the Festival Evensong included magnificent Ascension music such as "God is Gone Up" (Finzi) and other challenging music.

In addition to the MASJ Friday recitals, in September there was a special series of organ concerts to celebrate the completion of payment for the new organ, starting with one where we were privileged to have James O'Donnell, Director of Music at Westminster Abbey, to play for us, in which he thoroughly explored the colours of the organ. In successive weeks, Nicholas King, Linden Innes-Hopkins and I gave further celebratory recitals, mine shared with Trumpeter David Marley and Oboist David Gladstone.

The delivery of monthly evensongs at a high musical standard has been greatly enhanced by our being joined by friends from my previous church in Chipperfield. Sadly, the numbers attending regularly in the congregation is very small.

One of the most satisfying highlights of the year was the addition of orchestral accompaniment along with the organ for the Festival of Lessons and Carols. A large congregation attended that service, and feedback was almost exclusively positive, and we hope to have the resources to maintain this innovation. This may be the point to thank all those whose financial support is always appreciated and never taken for granted.

Inspiringly led by Katherine Boyce we have now begun to develop a junior choir. It has performed already in the service on March 3rd. Katherine, with very modest assistance by Marian Davies, Jo Rhoden and me has done amazing well already with this challenging little group of about 10, rehearsing for up to an hour once a fortnight.

Regular choir numbers on Sunday mornings have recently been very small, with a number of factors bearing on this, not least the provision of musical at sister churches. A scheme has been launched, with the promise of financial support both from the PCC and MASJ to offer four choral scholarships via local schools. This is an innovative idea which I will report upon in future.

Along with the May MASJ series there will be a very exciting Festival Choral Evensong in May. Please do your very best to support this. We are delighted that Gabriella Delderfield has now passed on from being a probationer to full member of St Albans Cathedral Girls' Choir.

Thanks go to all of our loyal choir members, not least to Paul and Marian Davies whose help is invaluable.

Keith Beniston
Director of Music

2018 REPORT FROM THE FINANCE AND GIVING COMMITTEE

Apart from the routine of reviewing the quarterly management accounts and projected cash flows prepared for the PCC, the committee discussed and agreed to pilot means of achieving electronic giving (particularly at baptisms, weddings and funerals) and oversaw outward giving. Note 11 to the Annual Accounts details the charities supported, either directly or through special collections.

For 2019 the Committee expects to focus on inward giving (Stewardship) and outward giving (Missions) although means of funding new boilers and a possible Visitors' Car Park at St John's will doubtless feature.

Chris Angell, Parish Treasurer.
3/3/19

FRIENDSHIP TEAS

As they approach their 15th year, Friendship Teas are still flourishing. They continue to offer a feast of fellowship, food and friendly conversation, on the second Thursday of each month. We seek to offer a friendly ear and an understanding heart, as well as companionship, frequent fun and occasional frivolity. There are usually 25 – 30 people present

As usual, we have been pleased to sponsor and decorate a tree at the Christmas Tree Festival and, this year also, to sponsor an arrangement at the Flower Festival. We have, again, made a donation to 'Bibles for Children' at our local primary schools.

We are hugely indebted to "the team", who bake, make sandwiches, prepare and serve, move the furniture, wash up, and make people really welcome. We would be delighted to include anyone new who would like to join the team, on a monthly or rota scheme. Our drivers who transport people to and fro, are a vital part of the arrangements. We value their thoughtful care enormously, and again would love more help on regular or occasional basis.

If you know of someone who is going through a difficult time or would simply enjoy some extra company once a month, they would be very welcome. Of course, we would, love to see you too; come as a helper or a guest, and bring your friends.

There are details in the magazine, on flyers and posters in the church, or from Gill and Ian Williams (256216).

Gill and Ian Williams

2018 REPORT FROM THE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

The committee met under the Chairmanship of Cathy Shaw during early 2018 to plan and organise the Parish's major fundraising events. Cathy stood down temporarily as Chair due to work commitments and the Committee subsequently combined with the Finance Committee under my Chairmanship to progress Events, the net surpluses from which are set out below:

Silent Film Night £742 (new event)
 Churchwardens' Easter Appeal £3,902 (no appeal in 2017)
 Summer Fayre £3,067 (new event)
 Christmas Tree Festival £3,291 (£3,212 in 2017)
 Countdown to Christmas Fair £3,056 (£3,206 in 2017)
 Quiz nights £1,323 (£1,365 in 2017)

A great deal of enjoyment was generated through the hard work of the many volunteers involved and the enthusiasm of those attending. Whilst fundraising is vital the outreach achieved through these events should not be overlooked. The Silent Film Night was a case in point, bringing new people into church and providing great entertainment. The Committee's thanks go to Father Ben for organising the film and a virtuoso performance at St John's organ.

Various sales of work and produce and the sale of Church Christmas Cards raised further funds making the net total raised a very substantial £15,480.

For 2019 it has been agreed to repeat the Easter Appeal but not the Summer Fayre as the latter would clash with the regular Flower Festival, held every other year. It is hoped, however, to provide extra activities on the Saturday of the Flower Festival.

Chris Angell
3/3/19

ST JOHN'S HALL MANAGEMENT REPORT

The St John's Hall Management Committee met on four occasions during the year. Our Hall Cleaner handed over her duties to another lady during the year. We are pleased to report however that the cleaning responsibilities have now reverted back and are going well.

Further decoration to the Hall facilities was undertaken during the year by Mark Harbour and Andy Fisher, we are extremely grateful to them and their helpers for their efforts which included decorating the toilets in the Church.

The committee recommended to the PCC that Hall Hire Charges should be increased from 1st January 2019. This increase was agreed, and all hirers were advised of the increase during the autumn of 2018, we are pleased to say that there has been no adverse reaction to these changes.

The level of bookings for our Hall remains similar to 2017. The U3a are our largest customer and we are extremely grateful for their support.

The 'Hall Dividers' were serviced in October, the contractor advised us this time that the manufacturer of the dividers had gone into liquidation. The contractor also advised that the 'shelf life' of the dividers is estimated to be 12 to 18 months but may be longer. A contingency replacement sum of £6,000/£8,000 will be included in the 2020 Fabric Fund should they need replacing.

In conclusion we thank Graham Liddle for his work as our Hall Booking Secretary and of course our grateful thanks go to Di Tovey for undertaking the duties of Hall Caretaker.

Peter Garner
Hall Co-ordinator

JUNIOR CHOIR

The newly formed Junior Choir had their first rehearsal on Friday 11th January.

I am pleased to report we have a regular group of 13 children with ages ranging from 4 to 10 years old.

We rehearse every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month in the Church hall from 5:30 – 6:30pm.

The rehearsal consists of half an hour singing/technique practice and learning new songs, followed by a short break and then more relaxed musical games to finish.

At the time of writing the children are preparing for their 'debut' at Church – they will be singing a short song and leading the Gloria as part of the Family Service on Sunday 3rd March.

Their next service will be Mothering Sunday on 31st March.

New members Primary School age most welcome – no singing/music ability necessary.

Katherine Boyce

ST JOHN'S LUNCH CLUB

The St John Sunday Lunches have continued successfully this year, people continue to enjoy fellowship and a good Sunday lunch, it would be good if the word was spread that we extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us, future dates will be found in the magazine and on the website.

A warm welcome would also be extended to anyone willing to help cook, serve or clear up!

Marian Davies

THE KNITTING CIRCLE

The Knitting Circle has continued into its seventh year and meets from time to time on a Monday afternoon at Marion Roff's flat.

This year we again knitted Easter Chicks and Bunnies to sell in church and raised £100 for church funds . . .

We produced a variety of goods for our stall at the Autumn Fair but our most successful item is still the knitted crib which sells well so we are knitting away on the crib figures throughout the year.

If you like knitting, come and join us for a chat and a cup of tea and know that at the same time you are using your talents to help church funds.

Jean Garner
March 2019

MUSIC AT ST JOHN'S

Our charity continues to support the musical life of the church and its local community.

In 2018 we completed our fundraising for the organ at St John's which allowed the Parish to repay the loan early. We now expect to respond to specific requests from the church – for example to help with financing potential choral scholars.

Music Festival 2019 (10 to 12 May)

Plans are well under way for our annual Music Festival. This year we are again holding it in the Spring instead of the Autumn. It will begin with a lunchtime concert on Friday 10th May featuring a brass quintet named "J50". If the weather is good we may be able to hold it outdoors! This will be followed by the very popular concert on the Saturday morning by the Dacorum Music School.

In the evening on that Saturday the Dacorum Youth Orchestra will give a concert to include a concerto with visiting soloist and this will be conducted by Claudio di Meo.

It is also hoped to hold another Festal Evensong on the Sunday – watch out for further news.

Lunchtime concerts (17 May to 19 July)

The Spring/Summer Series of Friday lunchtime concerts will continue from the week after the Festival. Look out for details of these concerts which will be displayed on the Music at St John's noticeboard at the West End of the church.

Your say in running this charity

In order to increase awareness of the nature and objectives of Music at St John's, we are planning to hold our Annual General Meeting immediately after the lunchtime concert on 4th October (over lunch!). This concert will take the form of a piano recital, given by Nicholas King, as part of our Autumn Series. We hope that more music lovers will attend and take an active part in the running of the charity.

Music Bursaries

We have widened the geographic area covered by our Music Bursary Scheme to cover the whole of Dacorum.

If you know of anyone under the age of 21 who is a music student that could benefit from some financial assistance, then do get them to contact us. They only need to have achieved a pass in Grade 3 or above (of the ABRSM or Trinity London examinations) and be either living or studying in the Dacorum area or offering their musical talents in one or more of the churches, schools or other musical bodies in Dacorum. See the brochure in the church.

Music School educational events

The Dacorum Music School continues to make good use of the facilities at St John's by holding their UniSound, UniSong and 'WOOFYT' days in the church.

Thank you for your continuing support of *Music at St John's*.

Paul Davies, Chairman

PARISH MAGAZINE

300 magazines are printed monthly in-house by Hilary Kemp, Parish Administrator. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank Hilary for undertaking this task and to Alan Munford for all his hard work in making up the bundles for distribution and collecting the money in and being my proof reader. Thanks also to Gill and Ian Williams who send out the postal copies. Special thanks to Trevor Boyce who looks after the advertising side so well and if you know of anyone who would like to place an advert in the magazine, please ask them to contact Trevor on 01442 249629 and to Annie Mitchell for the support she gives me on the editorial side and to Janet Packe and other members of the congregation who provide photos from the different events held. I would also like to personally thank Reverend Michael Macey, The Reverend Canon Dr Ruth Goatly, Carole Lewis, Sheena Wilson, Alan Munford, Peter Garner, Jean Garner, Graham Gibbs, Chris Angell, Mark Harbour, Paul Davies, Philippa Graham and the various Groups and Organisations for all their contributions on a regular basis and also to Hilary Kemp, Parish Administrator for her monthly support in preparing the Parish Diary and Registers to send to me and to everyone else who supports me as Editor of the Parish Magazine. Thanks also to all the distributors who work so hard in delivering the magazines on a monthly basis and would always welcome anyone new who wanted to join the team.

Items can be e-mailed direct to me at magazine@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk which helps to make my job as Editor much easier but, of course; items can still be left in my pigeonhole or delivered direct to 27 Beechfield Road. ***Would you please note that any article sent by e-mail should be produced in A5 portrait format (preferably in MS Word or MS Publisher format)***. I would welcome any ideas, comments or even complaints regarding the Magazine (***how it can be improved***) or to receive "***letters to the Editor***". Also if you know of anyone who would like to receive this publication on a regular basis, please contact either Alan Munford (242543) or myself with their details or ask them to complete the slip which appears in the magazine, our distribution numbers are still low and we would welcome new

readers or any suggestions on how to promote the magazine to reach more members of our local community. The monthly price has remained at 60p or £6 for the year.

The Magazine is a very important “vehicle” for communicating what is going on in our Boxmoor Parish including any fund-raising events towards “Music at St. John’s”, a community project. Please keep reading the Magazine! and let me have your suggestions of what you would like to see appear, which I will try to accommodate, space permitting!

Sally Bates, Editor HH 266912

REPORT FROM ST JOHN’S PASTORAL TEAM FOR APCM 2019

Composition: The Vicar (Chair), Rev’d Ruth Goatly, Carole Lewis, Jane Prew-Bridgewood, Jean Garner, Nicholas King, Sue Brown.

It was very good to welcome Ruth onto the pastoral Team in December. She will be looking into our current pastoral care system over the coming months, appraising and assessing what we offer. Recommendations will then be received as to how we can grow our pastoral care in this Parish.

During 2018 our remit remained to be, and to ensure as far as possible, that people’s pastoral needs are met and that vulnerable people do not fall off the Church’s radar. Some team members are licensed to take Holy Communion to people in their homes when they are unable to come to church. All team members have people whom they visit on a regular basis. The team meets regularly to share information and bring any needs or concerns to the attention of the group for action where necessary. Due to the sensitive nature of such information, minutes of the meetings are not published and the information is kept within the team unless it is necessary to involve outside agencies, which is always done with care and with the consent of the person concerned.

Carole Lewis

POETRY GROUP

Nothing much has changed in the Poetry Group except that we do have a manly deep voice reading amongst us now, belonging to Ken Farmborough. Since, sadly, his brother Reg died last year and he was his full-time carer, he finds he has the time to join us, which is great. We will be sponsoring and arranging a flower arrangement in the June Flower Festival and adding a piece of poetry.

Carole Crowhurst

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The social Committee still has the remit to organise non-profit making Social events for all ages in the Parish. To this end the Committee now includes friendship teas and St. John's lunches (formally OMO lunch).

At the pancake party last year, we had the most children we have ever had. This may have been due to the fact that Shrove Tuesday fell during half term so many of the after school activities were not taking place. We start with quizzes or a craft activity to give everyone time to arrive and then the races start. These are graded by age and the older they get the more competitive they become. It finishes with freshly made pancakes with a variety of topping.

The family fun day now runs to a tried and tested formula. After the service and coffee everything is set up outside the West doors including the barbecue and bouncy castle which is kindly provided and manned by the Hart family. While we wait for the food the children play and the adults relax, reading the papers or chatting. The barbecue meat is accompanied by salads kindly provided by members of the congregation who also provide a lovely selection of puddings.

The first weekend of October is harvest festival and for the past couple of years we have reverted to holding a harvest supper with entertainment rather than a harvest lunch. We were lucky to be entertained last time by pupils from the school where Keith Beniston's wife teaches as well as some home-grown entertainment. Once again, we were grateful to members of the congregation for providing such a lovely variety of puddings.

Our last event of the year was the OMO Christmas lunch where 24 people enjoyed a Pre-Christmas traditional meal. It was decided that in the new year that the OMO lunches should be renamed St. John's lunch club to make it more inclusive. This has now been running for three months and usually has between 12 and 20 people.

Friendship teas continues to go from strength to strength. Gill and Ian Williams do sterling work in co-ordinating the day and inviting guests and a very willing core of helpers who transport, make cakes or come along on the day to help welcome people, serve tea and clear up.

No matter which event we are running the congregation never fails to support us either by attending or providing help when asked for. The Committee is very grateful for the continuing support.

Since writing this we have held the 2019 pancake party and we were overwhelmed when 45 children turned up- ages ranging from under 2's to 10-year olds. The Vicar was run ragged organising the races in the different age groups while the ladies in the kitchen cooked and served stacks of pancakes. It certainly showed that we are a living church and hopefully we can keep building on this.

Lorraine Ioannou

March 2019

TINY TOTS REPORT 2018-19

Our weekly term-time meetings and services at Tiny Tots have continued to attract new families during the year. Many of these have come along through Baptism enquiries and it has been rewarding to welcome some of these on Sundays as well, especially at our All Age Services. It is also good to see more grandparents bringing the little ones along once their mums go back to work, and to offer an opportunity for them to meet, as well as mums with their first babies. Many long-term friendships develop from introductions at Tiny Tots, and our service of Action Songs and Prayers provides a good introduction to the Christian faith and helps the little ones to feel at home in church. During the year we have seen our weekly attendance increase and we currently have between 15 to 25 little ones, with their parents and a total of just over 40 on our register. It has been particularly heart-warming to see some dads coming along recently too.

We are so grateful to our stalwart team of helpers, both in the kitchen and in the hall, especially to Di Tovey and Yvonne Munford who work particularly hard setting up and clearing up afterwards. We are blessed with a great kitchen team of Jean Garner, Linda Gair, Christine Waters, Sue Brown and Jane Prew-Bridgwood who provide our refreshments each week. Once again, we enjoyed some good weather for our annual picnic in August. Thanks to Yvonne for her organisation again we were able to raise quite a bit for church funds from our Toy Stall at the Fayre and decorate a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival. Our party in January was a great success with 21 tots enjoying themselves. As ever, we are very grateful to our pianists, Jean Garner and Mary Bennett, for helping us with our singing, and Auntie Carole for bringing Mr. Monkey and his friend, Dai Jones, for story-time, which enhances our joyful, informal little service of action songs and prayers. Thanks also to Fr Mike leading our procession and sorting out the furniture in church too, and it is lovely to have Ruth back with us too. It was good to see lots of our former members again when they came along to Messy Church in January – they all really enjoyed themselves and are eagerly looking forward to the next one!

All of us involved with Tiny Tots feel that this is such an important part of our Christian ministry – as ever, we would really appreciate **more help** to keep this vital work going in all sorts of ways – please contact the Vicar or me if you are interested, particularly with setting up the hall or helping with craft activities on Tuesdays and running the toy stall at our winter fayre.

Annie Mitchell

TOGETHER ON MONDAY

Our membership has increased this year and there are usually 30 plus people at our meetings which are held on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month in the church hall. We have a variety of speakers from among our members and people from outside all who have something interesting to tell us. Samovars on Bodmin, Life in the Foundling Foundation, A New Twist on Recycling, Donkeys and Special Needs Children and the speaker from Boxmoor Trust told us about the invaluable work done by the volunteers. Ben, our former curate told us about Richard D'Oyly Carte and the Savoy and Noel James spoke about the

various houses he and Sheila had lived in during his career in the R.A.F. Each year we support a local charity and this time it was Bibles for children and Andrew Masters came to speak to us regarding the work he does in distributing the bibles.

Our AGM was in February where we enjoyed a meal provided by the committee before getting down to the more serious business of the evening.

We had two musical nights both of which we were all able to join in with some of the songs. The outing in the summer was to Capel Manor which was a great success as was the summer meal at The Old Hunter's Lodge and the Christmas meal at Little Hay Golf Club.

On a more serious note the Lent talk by Mike gave us all food for thought, we try to provide a varied programme and are always open to ideas.

We are a very friendly group and would welcome anyone who wanted to come along and join us.

Di Tovey

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship meets at 2.30 p.m. on the 3rd Friday of each month throughout the year.

The new format of our meetings works very well. We usually gather round the table to share our thoughts and memories on a number of topics, often led by one of our members. Discussion is always interesting and stimulating and often surprising.

We continue to support "Mercy Ships" as our charity and raised £50 during the year. This was the theme for our Christmas Tree.

New members are always welcome and can be assured of a warm welcome.

Jean Garner

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee, chaired by the Vicar, has met four times during the year to discuss the liturgy, planning, and reviewing of services in the Parish and their outcomes. Membership comprises representatives from all three churches in the parish. We have said farewell to our curate, The Reverend Benjamin Weitzman, and welcomed the return of The Reverend Canon Dr Ruth Goatly as our Associate Priest.

Among the topics which have been discussed are:

1. The continual monitoring of the weekly attendances in all three churches. The average number at the Sunday 9.30am service at St John's is in the 90s and we hope the new parking spaces on the south side of the church makes it possible for more people to come. Although

the Wednesday morning Communion services continue to be popular, the one on Monday evenings has seen falling numbers and it was decided that from September 2018 it would now be held fortnightly instead of weekly. Age and illness still affects numbers on a Sunday at St Stephen's, but the Thursday morning Eucharist is maintaining its own and means St Stephen's now has a communion service at least once a week. The numbers at St Francis are holding steady, averaging 12 on a Sunday. It was particularly gratifying that over 1600 people attended one or more services in the 36-hour period from the evening of 23 December to Christmas morning.

2. The arrangements for special services held during the year, of which there have a number of memorable ones, including: the service on St John's Day when The Reverend Laura Jørgensen (nee Burgess) was the preacher; the service on the Parish Fun Day when Abigail Macey was baptised; the Choral Evensong which marked Ben's final service with us; Harvest Thanksgiving; annual services for the Departed; the Royal British Legion Remembrance Day service which marked the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War; the Deanery Confirmation at which 23 candidates were confirmed, of which 8 were from this parish; and the Christmas cycle.
3. Review of the major services which takes place between meetings commenting on what has gone well and noting those things which need to be improved in the future. The series of sermons on our MAP goals has made the congregations more aware of them. The success of Messy Church in January has been noted. It has also been noted that attendance at several special services has been disappointing, such as the Deanery Ascension Day service, the Corpus Christi service to which Chalice Assistants were invited, and the Deanery Confirmation where more support for the candidates would have been welcome.
4. The work of the Choir. Our Director of Music, Keith Beniston, has brought in extra people to augment the choir for special evening services. The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols saw the addition of a small orchestra, which resulted in an attendance of 238. A Junior Choir was launched in January and it is intended to launch four Choir Scholarships.

We would like to express our thanks to all those who, in their various ways, work to ensure that services in the parish are offered to the highest possible liturgical standard.

Graham Gibbs