

ST MARY'S

APCM

23 APRIL

REPORTS

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VICAR'S REPORT TO THE APCM

Vicar's report

This time last year we laid out bold plans to continue to deepen and grow our work with children, young people and families - we called these plans Flourish. We noted that while many churches have seen a significant decline in the numbers



of children and young people, we had seen the opposite and we wanted to build on this. We called it Flourish because we believe we have a clear call from God to focus our energy, prayer and resource on this ministry, so that we see many more children and young people flourishing in their faith as part of the Christian community.

The first significant step we said we would take - which has taken longer to bring about than we had expected -

was the appointment of a new Lay Minister to have responsibility for all our work in this area. Caroline Turvey will take up this role on 24 April and begin a new phase in the life of St Mary's.

Her job will focus on 3 areas:

- 1 Supporting and developing our Sunday Club provision, in particular by supporting our outstanding group of Sunday Club leaders and making sure that our ministry to children and young people is focussed on growing faith in Jesus Christ.
- 2 Developing projects, groups and events that establish GK Church as a key local resource for children young people, parents and families
- 3 To set up a program of outreach and ministry to children and young people in local pre-schools and schools

This 3 year post is possible because of an incredibly generous donation to the church, and is not funded from our core budget. We set this funding aside and called it The Beacon Fund and we will be looking for ways to keep it topped up over the next 3 years.

We are delighted to have Caroline joining the team and are looking



forward to seeing this area of church life flourish under her leadership.

Caroline will join a settled and developing Leadership Team, with Simon Taurins and Ali Williams as Church Wardens and Barney Mayhew as Chair of the PCC. Under my oversight, and with the wisdom and guidance of the PCC, the team works with the church community to turn our vision into reality.

Becky Addis continues to play a key role in running the day to day activities of the church, and Dave Lodge, the Treasurer, keeps the finances in order.

A few comments about significant areas of change and growth this over the last year.

In the summer last year we made a significant decision to close down the Family Service. This had been running for 6 or 7 years and had been a very successful way to introduce a less formal style of worship to St Mary's. Aimed at families, we had noticed however that numbers were lower on the first Sunday than on other weeks, and that the number of children attending in particular was dropping. At the same time we had become concerned that our Sunday services were too varied across the month, leaving people unclear about what they were going to get when they came to church. From September we made changes, closing the Family Service and introducing a more consistent service style, using the communion table on the chancel step together with the screen each week and a redesigned Order of Service. Leading the sung worship continues to alternate between the band and the choir, but our hope now is that every Sunday has a consistent 'feel'.

At the same time we have signposted the different styles of the three services that we offer every Sunday, encouraging everyone to make a free and informed choice about where to worship. We are blessed to have the opportunity to provide more contemporary and more traditional worship every week. It has been wonderful to see Christ Church grow in numbers and in confidence over the last 12 months.



As part of this review of our services we also introduced a new evening service once a month. The 5 O'clock is informal and contemporary in style, and offers the chance for people to worship, pray and learn together in a different way.

One disappointment this year has been our failure to appoint a new Music Director. We have been blessed by the presence of

Michael Tester, who is playing the organ regularly for us, and who brings enormous skill, and we are content with this situation at the moment. In the meantime, the band has gone from strength to strength, setting up a new fortnightly 'Music night', and recording their first CD!

Over the last 24 months, a significant number of people in the church community have been called to get involved with the asylum seeking children and young people arriving in Kent. In response to this the world renowned King's Singers gave a concert in church in September, donating all the proceeds to our work in this area. Following that we set up The Mustard Seed Project, a small fund to support local work with refugees and asylum seekers. This has now provided small sums of money to three projects which would otherwise have struggled to get off the ground.



For some time now we have recognised the need to develop our life of prayer,



and the way we offer pastoral care. This year these two things have come together in a wonderful new way under our Connect team. Led by Ali Williams and Claire Cooke, Connect is beginning to gather a team of people who can offer both practical help and prayer to people in need.

This began with a new prayer team offering prayer after each Sunday service. This has developed so that there is now also prayer for the life and ministry of the church taking place before the 10:45 twice a month and increasingly, this team will also be available to visit anyone wanting prayer, whether for healing or any other reason.

At the same time the pastoral care group are developing a range of ways to support people needing practical help, including visits and a Community Cupboard & Freezer of food with provisions for those in need. This work will undoubtedly develop and grow over the next 12 months.

You can read about other areas of church life, including many of the wonderful God-given ways in which members of the church community are serving, in the rest of this report.

Looking ahead to next year, our focus lies in 2 main areas.

First, to continue to build on the Flourish strategy. With Caroline in post, you can expect to see new initiatives emerging and I ask that you pray for her and her work. I also want to emphasise that her role is not to do all our children and youth work. The reason this ministry has been successful over the last few years is that it has been embraced by the whole church community, and has involved a

huge number of people week by week. It is us as a whole who carry the calling to help children and young people come to faith and grow in faith - Caroline will help us all with that.

The second area is to work on encouraging everyone to be more confident in sharing their faith with others. For many of us, the idea of telling a friend, colleague or neighbour about our faith is genuinely terrifying. We are very happy sharing our views on films, books, websites or current affairs, but talking about God or Jesus in our culture is much more difficult. During this year we will look at why this is, and give some simple practical tools to overcome this fear, so that we can all become more confident in sharing something that is really important with other people. We will do this through a course in the summer, and then again on a Church Day Away on 6 January next year, when the whole church - together with the community at Christ Church - are invited to spend a day together at Ashburnham Place. Our speaker will be Mark Green, Executive Director of the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, a world renowned writer and speaker.

Other work will continue of course, including continued attention to our finances, which urgently need to improve, and we will be speaking about this at the APCM and over the next few months.

St Mary's is a church that is full of life, prayer, love, faith and worship. It is the greatest joy to see new people coming to faith and joining the community; to see more people discovering their God given gifts and calling; to see God's compassion being shared with others in the local community and to see Jesus Christ proclaimed in word and deed in our streets, schools and villages. As we give thanks for what has been and forward to what will be, my prayer is for more people, with more faith, from more communities to come to know Jesus as Lord

May it be so

God bless

Revd Hugh

ALPHA

Over the last 4 years we have run Alpha for a large group of people in one location – somewhere in the region of 180 people from Goudhurst, Kilndown, other local villages and beyond have now done Alpha - and many, many blessings have flowed.

This year we are trying something new. Instead of one big Alpha in one location, we are running smaller Alphas at different times and locations using the new Alpha film series. This approach has enabled those unable to attend Alpha on the previous basis to take part. We currently have two evening courses running on a Thursday and Friday, and a Tuesday morning course. So far, the majority of those taking part have not previously been on an Alpha course before, which is encouraging and illustrates there is a need to continue to run the courses. The freezer meals are being used for one of the groups, and the Alpha team are available to help and support anyone who would like to run one. We continue to invite anyone to consider gathering a group of people - as few as 3 or a maximum of 10 - and running Alpha for them. We are hopeful that more leaders and hosts will come forward as the year progresses, there is no time restriction on when these individual Alphas can begin and it would be great if we could continue to offer a course throughout the year.

Ali Williams

BELLRINGING

This last year has been a case of now you hear us, now you don't. For the first time in many years we were unable to ring at Christmas. Over the year we have had many problems - holidays, illness, operations and family matters. Hopefully we are now over the worst and people are beginning to return to the band. The few under 11's continue to turn up to chime the 5 minute bell (s) before the main service. We also have some new learners (various ages) so soon we aim to be back to full strength.

Rosemary Southon

BENEFICE OFFICE

Life in the Benefice Office continues to be busy but always fun. The biggest change I have to report this year is that I'm now enjoying the best view in Kent, which at times is a little distracting! For those of you that haven't visited the Benefice Office, it's the old coal shed at the far end of The Vicarage. Up until about a month ago the window was a small one that you had to stand on your toes to see out of – very frustrating given the view the other side! But now I have a beautiful big window so I can look out towards Bedgebury. The office has all been painted, I have a new carpet and office furniture – and most excitingly on 24 April I get a

new roommate in Caroline Turvey and I can't wait – although she has warned me that she sings a lot, but I think I can put up with that. In terms of work I continue to spend my time preparing the weekly email that people receive on a Wednesday morning, the weekly sheet for Sunday mornings, helping with the administration involved in weddings, baptisms and funerals, preparing information for the Parish magazine on a monthly basis, keeping on top of the bookkeeping and also organising all the rotas for our Sunday morning services, which as our congregation continues to grow involves more and more people. There are also other events that need organising, for example the Big Church Day Out, the annual cricket match and our Film Afternoons in the school holidays amongst others. I have also taken over the oversight of cleaning and would like to thank all the ladies who quietly clean and tidy our church so that the rest of us can enjoy it in all its beauty. Sue Crookall has now stood down from overseeing the cleaning following their move to Tenterden - huge thanks to Sue for all her hard work over the years, we are so grateful. If you would like to get involved in the cleaning of the church, or in any other aspect of church life, please do get in touch – I would love to hear from you.

Becky Addis

CAFE TODDLERS

Cafe Toddlers is 4!

Every Friday morning during term, about 20-25 mums, dads, grannies and nannies come to church with their children. It is a very happy time and everyone seems to enjoy the cakes, craft and conversation.

For most of these people, it is the only time they come to church. The mums quite often remark on how much the little ones like coming to church on a Friday. We hope that it gives them very good associations with church long term. We have had some great creative / social evenings for the mums during the year, with a short talk or interview beforehand about the things of faith.

Victoria Dawes, Sue Donkin and Mandy Alison are a brilliant team and Lizzie Nelson and Becky Addis come along each week to help us clear up at the end. There are a variety of other kitchen helpers who do one or two Fridays a term. What we really need is some more help on the craft table, so if you could run craft two or three times a term, please let me know on 01580 212766. We can reimburse you for any materials.

It would be great if other members of the church congregation popped in sometimes to encourage us and chat to the mums. Please come along and have a cup of coffee and see what we are up to. Or send up a prayer for us as we reach out to our community.

Henrietta Mayhew

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Our ministry to children, young people and families remains a key part of our focus at St Mary's.

We run 5 groups for different age groups, starting with Scramblers for children aged 0-5. This group started in September 2015 and has been the fastest growing group this year, with up to 10 children on any given Sunday.

Climbers is for children in Years 1 to 4 (ages 6 to 9); they meet in the Village Hall - and we are very grateful to the Village Hall Committee for their support for Sunday Club. Pathfinders is for Years 5 and 6 and meets in the Church Room. Pioneers is for Years 7 and 8 and after a time in the Church Room, now meet in The Vine pub in the centre of the village. Our older teenagers meet at Explorers in the Vicarage.

We have run extra sessions for Explorers, focussing on some of the very real challenges and issues that they face in day to day life, including relationships, bullying and social media.

Our Youth Group meets every fortnight in term time for Secondary school aged children, running a variety of activities and sessions around the villages and further afield.

Our involvement with the Primary School is significant. Hugh and Kev, while he was the Families Minister, take Collective Worship at the Primary School every week. We also run a weekly 'Tuesday Club' which uses Godly Play to explore the bible and faith, and Hugh leads Breathe, a simple weekly morning prayer for staff before school on Thursdays.

In addition we ran sessions on Holy Communion with Year 6 and lead regular sessions around the church for different classes.

Hugh also takes assemblies at Bethany school and Marlborough House as well as visiting Little Squirrels and Goudhurst pre schools.

Cafe Toddlers continues to be a crucial part of our provision for children and families, and you can read a report from them elsewhere.

As you can read in the Vicar's report, the PCC remains clear that this area of our ministry is our key priority, and we are investing significant resources in our work with children, young people and families. We look forward to everything that the Holy Spirit will do over the next 12 months.

None of this is possible without our skilled, committed and generous Sunday Club leaders and helpers, all of whom give their time, love and prayer to teaching and leading our children into faith. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

Hugh Nelson

THE CHURCHES TOGETHER COMMITTEE

This Committee, led by our respective clergy, has continued its self-appointed task of bringing our two Churches, Anglican and Catholic, as close together as possible with the now traditional pattern of special joint services through the Church year - Ash Wednesday, Good Friday (Procession of the Cross), Easter Eve, Ascension Day and Advent. We have also come together for Lent Study Groups, and the Saturday Lent Lunches held in St. Mary's have become increasingly popular. Donations this year are being sent to the Blackthorn Trust which helps teenagers with mental health problems. Another interesting event was a dialogue arranged between and Anglican Bishop Stephen Platten and a Roman Catholic Bishop on the subject of Ecumenism. Both these clerics have been closely involved at high level with ecumenical work both together and independently. The Question and Answer session was fruitful, and encouraged us to feel that our efforts are very worthwhile.

Sheila Klopfer

CHURCH FLOWERS GROUP

We are grateful to our team of volunteer flower arrangers who have kept the flowers at St Mary's looking so good month by month throughout the past year.

We were particularly pleased to be able to put on a wonderful display of lilies at Easter and thanks are due to all those who contributed so generously to the Easter Lilies fund.

We welcome anybody who would like to volunteer to join our friendly group. You do not have to be an expert flower arranger and we find that it is very satisfying to care for our Church in this way. Mostly we work in teams of two and each team is allocated about 2 to 4 weeks a year to 'do' the flowers. If you would like to be involved, even in a small way, do please put your name on the rota which is on the Bread Tomb in Church.

I am now retiring from my role of organising the flower ladies rota. It has been very satisfying and enjoyable but after more than 15 years or so I feel I should hand over the baton. Thank you all who have so willingly volunteered to help.

Now I am pleased to announce that Angela Pakenham-Walsh is taking over from me. You can contact 'AP-W' on 01580 211610 if you would like to help in any way with the Church flowers. I feel sure she will be seeking helpers for the St Mary's Flower Festival in mid-September 2017.

Judith Farnfield

CHURCH ROOM REPORT TO A.P.C.M. 2017

Maintenance

Part of the back wall of the building was re-pointed prior to the fitting of the new awning over the veranda.

I should like the PCC to consider reserving funds for redecoration of the interior of the Church Room. It is some years since it was last decorated and it is now looking rather shabby. If you agree I will discuss it further with Richard Hillier.

Finance

The accounts for 1916 show income of £11,106 and expenditure of £11523 giving a deficit for the year of £418. The large increase in expenditure is due in the main to three exceptional items i.e. Car Park resurfacing £3180, re-pointing of rear wall £1548 and a contribution of £3574 to the Pre-school to pay for the new awning blinds.

I regret to report we are still having problems obtaining payment for hire of the Church Room by the Youth Group, this despite strenuous efforts by Becky and Rosemary. The money is payable by the KCC and is currently approximately £330 in arrears.

Brian Ferdinando

Pre-School

Goudhurst Village Pre-school has flourished over the last year. Attendees numbered 45 during the Summer Term but were depleted due to 21 leavers going to Primary School at the end of July. Nevertheless, the register was healthy for the Autumn start - 32 - and in the midst of numerous other Kentish settings closing, the pre-school has done extremely well.

The pre-school has continued to fund raise successfully and with the considerable help of the PCC and a private donation, an awning to protect the children from inclement weather was installed on the outside decking. Their vegetable and flower garden that was created last Spring has also been a huge success. They are now in the process of creating a Woodland Experience Area.

Through these provisions and of course the 6 high-calibre staff who are continually training (one now has Early Years Professional status) and frequently praised by outside visitors such as those from Kent County Council and external training providers, the pre-school has garnered a great reputation and parents are booking their children places over a year in advance.

They are due their Ofsted visit this May and hope to improve upon their "Good" rating which was the best they could be afforded without historical performance when they first opened.

*Alison Clarke
Chair/Trustee Goudhurst Village Pre-School*

COFFEE & QUESTIONS

We have had another happy year at Coffee & Questions.

About 15-20 people tend to come along and we do a variety of things, all aimed at helping us grow in our knowledge and love of God. We have recently been looking at 1 Peter and also been discussing the problem of suffering. A lot of good friendships have emerged from the group and we were very sad to say goodbye to Wendy Russell. She is now our only overseas member!

And big thanks to Caroline Davis who has very kindly baked some delicious cakes for everyone to enjoy during the popular time of coffee and chat at the beginning.

Henrietta Mayhew

CONNECT REPORT

Mission Statement

Jesus said "I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

We want to be those kind of disciples; to love one another like Jesus.

That means providing practical and pastoral care to people who need a hand - whether that's a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on or something more practical. It also means praying with anyone who needs God's involvement in their life - whether that is for healing, comfort, help with a decision or something else.

Our Prayer and Pastoral Care team are the frontline of this pastoral and prayer support. Their aim is to help the whole church community to love like Jesus - sometimes by offering the pastoral care or prayer themselves; always by promoting and encouraging a culture of this kind of mutual care in the whole community.

The pastoral care is led by Ali Williams with Claire Cooke leading the prayer ministry

Visiting

In February we had an evening's 'training' in conjunction with the prayer ministry team which was facilitated by Dr Emma Sedgwick which focused on the practicalities of the pastoral visiting whether for companionship or prayer and included how visits might be arranged, ideas of approach and the need for sensitivity, the paramount importance of confidentiality, and safety. So, we are trained, ready and willing to respond to anyone, predominantly from church, who would appreciate a visit, for whatever reason. However, the caring and looking out for each other is obviously not just something for a 'team' but for all of us. The

team is in place for people to call upon, but it is not meant to be a replacement for us to stop looking out for and after our neighbours, friends and church family. This is of course something many of us do quietly and anonymously anyway, but which also needs to be encouraged amongst others. It will take time, but we will try and be more pro-active in responding to news of people who are ill, alone, looking for practical help etc always with the upmost respect and sensitivity.

Community Cupboard

Myself, Gill and Tina have moved on to develop the 'Community Cupboard'. Having gleaned lots of practical tips from Pembury Baptist Church who currently run their own Food Bank on a small scale, we are confident this is something we can set up without it being too complicated and onerous. The biggest challenge at the moment is where to store the goods, which we are working on, then we can start asking for donations. We will keep an eye on sell by dates, and plan on taking anything approaching this to one of the bigger foodbanks so nothing is wasted. The immediate local need may not be huge, but nevertheless we feel having a system in place to be able to respond quickly to this type of need which is generally immediate and not planned would be a good starting point to develop other social initiatives and engage the village in helping each other.

In General

In addition to the 8 people on the visiting team, we currently have a further 11 people willing to help in various ways as a need arises, the more people willing to join us the better. We are also looking at help with debt and a job club through Christians Against Poverty, and an appointed networker for new baby and pre-school families. There is such a variety of skills amongst our church family, we would love to have 'response' groups for different areas of need, so we can quickly react to requests for help, whatever form that may take. Connecting with love to those around us – just like Jesus.

Ali

WEALD DEANERY SYNOD

Goudhurst and Kilndown churches are part of the Weald Deanery - the local grouping of Anglican Churches. The Deanery Synod is the local level at which church communities can contribute to shaping the direction and policy of the Church of England. Rev Ali Duguid, the Vicar of Marden, is the Area Dean, and works closely with the Lay Chair, Sandra Marsh from St Dunstan's, to lead the Deanery.

We have defined the purpose of the Deanery as:

To work together for the growth of the Kingdom in the Weald

The specific priorities for the Deanery are under review at the moment and will be approved at Deanery Synod later this year.

The Deanery will become increasingly important as the level at which local churches are supported by the Diocese. Our Deanery remains healthy and supports a proportionally high number of clergy per church - this is likely to change over the next 5 to 10 years, as a national shortage of clergy kicks in, and as church groupings are reconfigured.

We should have 2 Deanery representatives, who take part in decision making for the Church of England in this area. At present Jane Wickham represents us, and I am very grateful to her for doing so. If you are interested in getting involved with the church in this way, please let me know.

Rev Hugh

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

For the Friends of St. Mary's 2016 was a busy year. We continued with our spring and autumn tidy ups of the church yard, tending the borders on the south side and renovating the areas around the Bathurst tomb and the adjacent grave on the SW corner. We weed killed, laid a membrane and covered overall with carefully selected gravel making the whole area look aesthetically pleasing and cared for. We took part in the fete in June where the Human Fruit Machine made its usual appearance. It makes a lot of noise and provides a good deal of amusement and we know that returning visitors to the fete look forward to seeing us perform our antics. In July our summer event was a return to Pimms By The Pond courtesy of Keith and Carol Buckland. We were blessed with a warm dry evening completed by the enthusiastic dancing of the Weald of Kent Morris Men. However the main source of our revenue is the Christmas Fair and Village Evening held each year on the last Friday in November. Always a popular event this one was no exception raising almost £3000, a record amount for us. In December there were 6 carol parties hosted by members of the Friends and attended by members and non-members all of whom enjoyed a traditional celebration of Christmas whilst raising money for our cause.

In addition to our usual fundraising events we took over the opening of the church tower, a new venture for us. Whilst we were reasonably satisfied with our first year we could do with more people to volunteer and help us open for more sessions. We open on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays from Easter to October with each session running from 2.30 to 5.30. If you could help please talk to Andrea who would be highly delighted to add you to our list of people willing to go on the rota.

The Friends of St. Mary's was set up over 50 years ago to provide funding to help repair, restore, maintain and if necessary renew the properties and fabric of the

church. This year we have been able to give £2750 for this purpose, most of which went to repair the clock. We are already committed to expenditures in 2017 including a contribution to external electrical and lighting works restoring the floodlighting of the church, the provision of notice boards at the East and West gates and the repair of at least one of the benches on the south side.

Our thanks go to all those who have supported us in the past and we look forward to welcoming you to this year's events. We are a small but vibrant and energetic group who would be pleased to welcome new members to help us continue to care for our heritage.

Secretary: Mrs Andrea Kirkby, 2 Grand View, North Road, Goudhurst. Kent TN17 1AS

ST MARY'S FUND RAISING

The majority of our church's costs and outgoings are funded from our collections and of course donations from the fantastic Friends of St Mary's, our important Youth Work however is financed by the Fund Raising events we run over the year. These events don't just raise money, we hope they also raise a smile and bring us closer together as a community. Last year's Quiz and Barn Dance in the Hall relied entirely on Angela Pakenham-Walsh's team of ladies conjuring up marvellous food and James Wickham providing the means to wash it down with. The Fete always provides us with the highest earnings but only in return for far more involvement from the congregation, no surprise that a record number of helpers in 2016 led to a record profit. Special thanks must go to Jill Dunstall's team of Cream Tea makers, Team Wickham for the bottle tombola, the Stewarts for golfing, the Dawes' for Rat Batting, Josie Parsley, Eli Nelson and the Sunday Clubbers for the Cup-Cake mountain, The Donkins, Lloyds and P-Walshs for being at the right place at the right time, Becky Addis for collecting bottles, Andrea Vinton for doing a bit of everything and Rev Hugh for a range of chores including awarding Coco the Dog her traditional first prize.

This year May's Barn Dance, June's Fete, autumn's massive Flower Festival and winter's Quiz offer us all a chance to help, contribute, enjoy and laugh our way to raising the money needed to help our Youth Work thrive. We hope to see you at all of them.

Richard Vinton



Goudhurst and Kilndown Church of England Primary School Headteacher's Report to St. Mary's A.P.C.M-Spring 2017

On Friday 6th May we were delighted to welcome +Trevor to our community. He started his visit at Cafe Toddlers in St. Mary's Church, he then came to school and officially opened our amazing Peace Garden. Everyone in the school had written their name on a coloured ribbon and tied it to the fence as a symbol that the space belongs to us all. Bishop Trevor placed his ribbon on a post that already had a ribbon tied on it to demonstrate that we all should share and work together. We then had a short service, which was wonderful and very reverent. Furthermore, following our entry into the Kent Life Garden Awards, our Peace Garden was awarded, Runner Up for the "BEST SACRED SPACE" SCHOOL GARDEN.



Year 3-6 attended a church service at Christ Church in Kilndown on 15th June 2016. Years 4-6 then walked back to Goudhurst from Kilndown following the Millennium Trail. Whilst Year 3 learnt all about the history of the church and surrounding area. Particular thanks must go to David Denton for giving up his time to share his knowledge with Mrs Omer and Year 3.

30 Year 6 pupils moved to a variety of secondary schools last summer. We celebrated the achievements of each at our leavers' service and gave everyone a Good News Bible, paid for by the PCC – Thank you.

We started the new academic year with a full complement of staff and in addition this year we have welcomed Mrs Curry, Mrs McCarmick, Mrs Clewes, Mr Draper, Mrs Mitchell and Mrs Neate to our teaching team. In December we said a fond farewell to Mrs Norman who took up the post of Head of School at Sandhurst Primary School.

Our Forest School goes from strength to strength and has been identified as an example of "Outstanding Practice". Since September 2017, every child now

has the opportunity to experience between 10-12 sessions in the forest. We are extremely grateful to Joe Meyer who continues to allow us to use his woodland, in Ladham Lane, Mrs Stanford our Forest School Leader and our band of enthusiastic parent volunteers who support our sessions each week, without which we would not be able to sustain our extended programme! If you have a couple of hours to spare each week and would like to get involved in our Forest School please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01580 211365 for more information.

Academic standards continue to remain high; indeed we are fortunate to have an experienced and committed teaching staff that work incredibly hard every day to ensure that the children in our school receive the very best Education possible. July 2016 schools all-round the country, saw their Keystage 1 and 2 results fall as a consequence of the new more rigorous national curriculum tests. However, I am delighted to say that our attainment and progress at the end of each Keystage last year was above national average in every area, which is a great achievement. This year we have upgraded our library in light of the higher reading expectations and particular thanks must be given to the Kildown Educational Trust who awarded us a grant towards this cost.

In addition to the statutory curriculum, we try to provide our children with a wide range of extra curricular experiences to help enrich their learning. We continue to offer a wide range of clubs to all our children and last year we introduced an annual Arts Festival. Children had the opportunity to perform to an audience, which was a wonderful experience for all that took part. Particular thanks must go to Ms Lane for organising the event and the Arts Council for presenting to us on the evening. The children and staff in KS2 put on a wonderful performance of 'Ali Baba' at the end of the summer term. Year 5 completed their two night residential trip to Swattenden during the middle of September and for the first time in the school history; Year 6 enjoyed their final residential trip to Hardelot, France in June 2016. Our Year 6 this year repeated the trip in March 2017 and we are looking forward to returning next year in 2018. All the children had an opportunity to practice their French and combined learning about French culture and outdoor adventurous activities. Year 1 and 2 have received weekly whole class djembe drumming lessons and Year 5 are enjoying learning how to play the trumpet. In addition, some children are learning to play the guitar, piano and are having singing lessons. Year 5 also took part in a magnificent production of Midsummer Night's Dream at the Shakespeare School Festival in Tenterden.

It has been another year of great sporting success. We secured 1st place for the 8th time in the Julie Rose Athletics in July 2016; will be lucky enough to win it for a 9th time this year? Other events entered included the Rawlinson Run, the Orchard Run, Basketball, Hockey, Football, New Age Curling, Swimming Gala, Infant Agility, Cross Country Festival, Tag Rugby and The Kent Junior Schools Cross Country Championships where we competed against hundreds of children taking part from all over Kent. Last year we have introduced 'the mile run' into our curriculum and we certainly believe that this daily exercise continues to have

a positive impact on the children's fitness and concentration skills. A big thank you to Mrs Mileham for all her hard work coaching and supporting the teams and for leading the school to success. Particular thanks must also go to all the staff and the parents for their commitment and involvement in the many sporting activities on offer at our school.

Every year the children contribute either by their actions or by raising money for worthy causes. This year is no exception and included Demelza, Comic Relief and Autism to name but a few. Well done and a BIG thank you to everyone. The children have also been learning about the work of Starfish Malawi and we have now established a link school in Malawi.

We recognise the importance and value our strong links with St. Mary's Church. The School/Church Link Group has already met a number of times this year and the meetings have been most productive. Reverend Hugh continues to lead our Wednesday Collective Worship Services which the children really enjoy. Particular thanks must go to Kevin Draper who also led some of our Collective Worship last year.

Our Harvest Festival took place on Friday 30th September in St. Mary's Church; the children performed beautifully and filled the church with their music, poems and prayers! It was a delight to see so many parents and members of the community coming together at the service to help us celebrate. We held a Community Harvest Shared Lunch in the school on Wednesday 12th October. The school laid a wreath, as usual, on Remembrance Day as part of the Sunday Service after joining the procession through the High Street; some of our children were invited to read at the service. In addition our Year 5 and 6 pupils attended the official Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial in the village.

Our Choir regularly perform at village events – late night shopping, family services and this year they represented the school along with Year 4, in the Young Voices Choir February 2017 at the O2.

KS1 performed a wonderful Nativity Play entitled 'Straw and Order' on 13th and 15th December which was very well attended by parents. The dress rehearsal on 12th December was watched by KS2 alongside members of the community who had first enjoyed a delicious lunch. On Wednesday 21st December we had our end of term Carol Service which was again very well attended and a lovely end to a very busy term.

Last year we opened our doors to the Village Community Lunch Members; once a fortnight about fourteen members of the village join the school children for lunch. The older children meet and greet our visitors and serve them a delicious roast lunch. This has now become a permanent event within the school calendar and is enjoyed by everyone involved.

Again, this year we held our Christingle Service in St. Mary's Church on Friday 3rd February. The Year 6 pupils led the service very confidently; every child was given a glow stick to hold whilst the year 6 pupils were given a real candle. When the candles were lit and the lights turned out, silence filled the church and there was

a sense of awe and wonder in the air. Our annual Ash Wednesday service, led by Reverend Hugh was also held in St. Mary's Church. It is moments such as these that really help to deepen the children's spiritual development.

One of the highlights of our year this year has to be our 200th Anniversary Service. It was an honour to be part of such a fantastic celebration. Indeed, it was a "joyus" service. One of the parents commented that he thought it was fabulous and it made him feel 'warm' inside. All the children and staff were given a commemorative badge, and I hope they will always look back on their time at Goudhurst & Kilndown School with pride and fondness. Once again, we were very fortunate to share this memorable occasion with Bishop Trevor.



Finally, on Friday 31st March we held our End of term Celebration Service in St. Mary's Church and I think you will agree we have much to celebrate in the life of our School. Many parents and family members joined us; it was a wonderful way to conclude yet another busy and successful term. Our Easter Service will take place on Friday 21st April 2017 at 2pm in St. Mary's Church please do come if you can, you would be most welcome.

Please visit our school website to keep up to date with all the latest school news and events:

www.goudhurst-kilndown.kent.sch.uk

Lindsay Roberts
Headteacher April 2017

LEND WITH CARE REPORT

Norma and Rosemary administer this charity effort. Lend with Care is part of Care International. The idea is that we loan money (in £15 multiples) to people in mainly third world countries. They produce a business plan and say how quickly they can repay the money loaned to them. We select who we would like to support and then the money is returned at monthly intervals. With this system we are then able to recycle the money We have supported endeavours in education, farming, carpentry, general store, a pineapple growing business etc and currently have 23 individuals or groups on our books. Countries range from South America, central Africa, Palestinian Territories, to Pakistan, Vietnam and the Phillipines.

Rosemary and Norma

MUSIC

Choir

St. Mary's choir continues to uphold the tradition of singing two Sung Eucharist services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at St. Mary's. With the increasingly large congregations, the choir are now preparing and singing two anthems, while the congregation take communion. The number of hymns sung have been cut from four to three, but are still fairly traditional.

On the first and third Sundays of each month, the choir sing Sung Eucharist at Christ Church Kilndown, which has a very steady and loyal congregation; we much look forward to the time when two anthems are needed during communion! And in the meantime, we enjoy singing four hymns with them.

David Denton has very kindly been taking choir practice at 10am on each Saturday morning, in the absence of a permanent Director of Music and Organist. Luckily we have the considerable talent of Michael Tester who plays for us on the fourth Sunday and will be covering the Easter Service. Neil Ellwood has filled in on one or two Sundays for us, whilst in May we have an organist starting, who will play on the second Sunday of each month.

We have a second and much needed Bass who joined us a year ago, Jonathan Martin, and Nick and Barbara sing with us as much as they can.

We have tried hard to keep up the larger choir on the fourth Sundays, and they too, are very loyal and come whenever they can, from as far afield as Hastings and Tenterden. This means we can then sing some demanding pieces and try out some descants.

We know that there are good voices and singers in the congregations at both Churches and would ask that they really consider giving of their talents and joining our very friendly and welcoming choir. Whatever the commitment, even if it is

only one Sunday a month or so, would be very much appreciated by the choir; it is fun and there is a great sense of camaraderie and joyful worship in the choir vestry!

Band

On the first and third Sundays the band lead our sung worship under the leadership of Wes Hinsley and Wendy Loy. The band has grown in numbers and confidence over the year, helped by a new fortnightly music night when musicians of all sorts are invited to gather together to sing, play and worship together.

As well as singing and playing, Wes is also a song writer, and we have enjoyed singing his songs this year, including one written for our theme Love much, love well.

The band also lead the music at the new monthly 5 O'clock service, with encouragement for them to be spirit led and bold as they lead us in praise and prayer.

One striking feature of the band is the number of young people who are involved, and with their encouragement they have recently recorded two of the church's favourite songs, including My Lighthouse. We hope these will feature in the short film about church life that is being made at the moment.

Anyone with an interest in music is invited to come along to the Friday music night - coming does not imply a commitment to playing on Sunday mornings and the band loves to welcome people who are just trying music out for the first time.

THE MUSTARD SEED FUND

Helping Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

A year and a half ago, GK Church opened its heart and resources to help some of the young, unaccompanied boys, aged 16-18, who arrive in Kent. We provided food, clothing and gifts at Christmas 2015, as well as starting English lessons and pastoral support, working with a newly established charity, Kent Kindness, of which I, and Susan Roeder are Trustees. In addition, until recently, our own Ana Draper was the Systemic Psychologist, responsible for these boys.

This support was initially aimed at helping the boys housed at the Swattenden Centre near Cranbrook. However, the situation regarding young people coming into the UK is ever-changing and in November 2016 KCC closed the Swattenden Centre (this was partly affected by the forced closure of 'The Jungle' refugee camp in Calais) and all new arrivals are now dealt with at a centre in Ashford. Kent Kindness continues to offer English lessons there.

Last Autumn, following the very successful King's Singers fundraising concert at St Mary's, which raised over £5,000, we set up the Mustard Seed Fund, to administer the money wisely and to establish a process for reviewing, assessing and carefully allocating the funds.

The main parameters for the fund were set as follows:

1. We will fund things that others can't or won't fund - usually because they are too small scale, too innovative or too urgent;
2. We will fund things that will take too long to find money for elsewhere;
3. We are particularly interested in providing seed money for projects that will either do something small which will have a multiplier effect and/or provide evidence for bigger funding appeals in the future.

Most grants will be less than £500 each. Decisions are made by a small committee including the Vicar and Church Treasurer.

So far we have supported, or are supporting, the following ventures:

1. The Sleep Project – this aimed to help to correct the boys' body clocks and help overcome their learned vigilance, allowing them to develop normal waking/sleeping patterns and to perform better.
2. Fast Feet Forward - this provided sports kits for the boys who attended a series of activity based coaching sessions – it is proven that being active and working in groups develops positive cognitions and relationships.
3. An App/YouTube animation/booklet aimed at helping teenagers, new to our culture, adapt to life in Britain (culture, expectations, where to shop etc) and learn how and where to access help.
4. There is currently (April 2017) a request to help fund a SonicPi computer programming project to be run under the auspices of Kent Kindness, by Jenifer and Patrik Sunbury (Will Harris' sister and her husband). The aim is to give around 10 able boys skills that they will be able to use where ever they finally end up living.

Further details of these projects and their effects are regularly included on the Church website.

In addition, GK Church provided 40 boxes of toiletries in December 2016 as Christmas gifts to the boys living in the community and attending the programmes run by Kent Kindness Maidstone. We have also donated winter coats, T-shirts, hoodies and jeans for their Information Fair held in the Autumn.

English lessons are held at a number of venues and we have provided teachers for the UASC Tunbridge Wells Summer School and for the ESOL course (also

in Tunbridge Wells) – although the latter has recently had to be curtailed quite radically, again due to KCC requirements and policy changes.

Members of the congregation are involved in administrative work for Kent Kindness and website design.

GK Church continues to play an instrumental part in the support of these disadvantaged boys and their acceptance into the UK – it has not gone unnoticed and a real practical demonstration of Christian love! Thank you all for your help with this.

Val Lodge

PARISH MAGAZINE

Magazine numbers still seem to be falling as annual subscriptions are not renewed. A few years ago 640 copies were printed each month. This is now at 470. I suppose with copies available on line at the Church website, for some the need is no longer there.

The Trade Directory continues to flourish under the care of James Cooke. It now occupies eleven pages of the usual total of forty pages with the possibility of including occasional pages for special events. This is so important as the income from advertising enables us to keep the cover price of the Magazine down.

In the past a number of organisations have submitted full page items (effectively posters) for special events and these have been printed. However, a number of other organisations have decided they would like this coverage each month. It has become necessary to ask these groups to submit their items in two formats such that everyone has the chance to get their information in, even when space is very limited. Although it is possible to increase the number of pages we soon hit the limit for posting at second class to those subscribers wishing to receive their copies by post. This has worked quite well with shorter items when space is in great demand.

The success of our Magazine is down to the tireless effort of many people who give their time freely to ensure you get your copy. Special thanks goes to Anne and Joe Meyer (assistant editors dealing with items left at the Newsagent), James Cooke (Trade Directory and advertising), Richard Vinton (What's On - centrefold), Pam Stubbs and Hilary Bird and their delivery teams (distribution in Goudhurst and Kilndown), our advertisers in the Trade Directory, and, of course, to all who contribute items of news or pictures for publication in the Magazine.

*David Denton
Editor/Printer*

P.C.C.

The P.C.C. meet every month, with the exception of August and December. These meetings alternate between Strategy Planning, and Business.

We discussed our priorities in January, recognising our overwhelming strength is our children, and agreeing that all those involved with our children should draw up detailed plans.

In March we received a report from the Preaching, Teaching and Discipleship Team, who have adopted the slogan “Not only love much but love well”

We also received the Terms of Reference for the refounded Property Team, which Richard Hillier has agreed to chair.

In May the P.C.C. were very happy to approve Rosemary Southon as our church verger.

It was also agreed to close the Sri Lanka Link, but to continue to cover the cost of the fieldwork at £800 per annum.

After discussion the P.C.C. also agreed suggestions from the Charitable Sub-Committee for our giving for 2016.

A report was received from Ali on Small Groups, and a proposal for future Alpha groups.

The Friends of St. Mary’s agreed to take over the running of the Tower Opening.

The pattern of our services was discussed in July, also the possibility of appointing a Parish Development Manager.

It was recognised that the screen in church cannot be seen by everybody, and so in September we discussed purchasing new screens for the pillars on the north aisle, and this was the subject of a meeting in October. Due to Kevan Draper stepping down as Families Minister, the role of a new Lay Minister was discussed.

In November, Richard Hillier reported from the Property Team, and we learnt of the Mustard Seed Project set up by our church.

Before every Business meeting, reports from Hugh and others are circulated to P.C.C. members and items regularly on our agenda are Mission and Ministry, Service to the Community, Teaching and Worship, Community and Belonging, Fabric and Finance, and the Church Room. Reports on these subjects are to be found elsewhere in the Reports Book and Annual Reports.

Jill Dunstall
P.C.C. Secretary

PROPERTY AND FABRIC

Whilst there have been a number of projects under discussion, progress has been disappointing slow. They are summarised below:-

1) Churchyard Wall

After lengthy discussions with our Architects, representatives of the DAC, the TWBC Conservation Officer and our Insurer's Loss Adjusters, Quadra, the only acceptable option is to rebuild the wall in its original position.

Traditional Stone have been appointed to carry out the work at a cost of £14,872.49 + VAT and work is likely to start in May and will take 2-3 weeks. Traffic Lights will be erected and removed daily, and to avoid the morning Primary School rush-hour it is hoped that commencement of work can be delayed till after 9.00am.

Quadra have accepted this cost on behalf of our Insurers together with Architects Fees to date plus an additional cost of £1150+VAT to supervise and sign off the work.

The project has been approved by the DAC.

2) External Floodlighting of the Church

B & K Electrical are contracted to replace the existing floodlights with Pulsar Ecofloods at a cost of £6700+VAT, the cost to be shared equally between the PCC, Gouhurst PC and The Friends of St. Mary's.

Unfortunately the work has been delayed as the lighting units have not arrived from the Manufacturers.

It should be noted that there may be an increase in cost to cover the repair of the concrete light surrounds where necessary, checking the existing underground cabling, providing an extra floodlight on the Tower, and installing any additional lighting controls such as dimmers or timers.

3) Monitor Screens

The DAC are meeting again in early April to re-consider our preference to fix the screens to the pillars as demonstrated by our dummy screens. They would prefer to mount the screens on poles. No final costing available until a solution is agreed with the DAC.

4) External Notice Boards

It has been agreed to replace the existing Information Board near the Star & Eagle with a new, easily maintained, Aluminium Board plus a similar new one at the Eastern end of the Churchyard. Both should be capable of being lit (if and when a new underground power supply is installed to provide lighting along the paths through the Churchyard), but the final design has yet to be agreed by the PCC and, indeed, the DAC.

5) Candelabra

The current location of the beautiful brass candelabra obstructs viewing of the big screen and presents a slight problem for pall-bearers at funerals. There are two solutions:-

- a) Keeping it in it's present location, but removing the top cast-iron link and install a small, remotely controlled electric pulley and chain hung from the existing hook in the ceiling. The candelabra could then be lowered for cleaning and topping up the oil-filled candles and raised during services when the big screen is in use and for funerals.
- b) Take down the entire candelabra and links, and refix it in a position nearer the West end of the Church between the two main cross-beams and hung from a new hook to be installed in the ceiling, together with similar mechanism for lowering it. However, whilst this would meet with DAC approval, it may prove expensive and difficult to install a new hook in the ceiling.

6) Bedgebury Chapel

Our Architect inspected the "blown" plasterwork at the top right of the eastern window with the contractors, Traditional Stone, and they confirmed that they are experienced in repairing this type of repair. As scaffolding will be needed it may make sense to repair all cracking plaster work on the Bedgebury Chapel and perhaps, decorate the walls in a calming, pastel shade leaving the stonework in it's natural state.

This work could coincide with a re-vamp of the entire area, which has been talked about for some time.

7) Quinquennial Review

Our Architect is aware that this is due in 2017and, no doubt, will be preparing an inspection in due course.

8) Minor Repairs

During the last year the following minor works have been carried out:-

- a) Duck-boarding renewed to the main roof valley, kindly funded by the Friends.
- b) New gate leading to the Church Rooms replaced under Insurance,
- c) Stained glass window damage repaired under Insurance.
- d) Gravel spread to replace earth below the Camelia shrub at the South-west corner of the Church, financed by the Friends.

R.J.Hillier

SAFEGUARDING

The Diocese have now started doing all DBS checks online. All Child Protection Disclosure Officers have to attend a training course on how to carry out a check and then that Parish can start using the new system. I completed my training at the beginning of March and we are now online. Checks come back a lot quicker and I have already carried out two. The DBS also notify the Diocese when the Disclosure Certificate has been issued and let them know if there are any blemishes. This takes out the time wasted whilst having to post the certificate to the Diocese and waiting for it to be returned. If there are any blemishes the Diocese then need to contact the DBS office who will give them more details and I would be advised accordingly that there is a blemish. For an online check the applicant is given a unique reference number, they then complete their details of address, DOB, driving licence and passport details and submit this information online. I then receive an email asking me to verify the documents. I then need to meet with the applicant to see their documentation and confirm online that this has been done and then if everything is fine a certificate is issued.

There are now several children who bell ring each week, however, I have confirmed with the Diocese as long as two members of the bell ringing team are DBS checked that is sufficient. Three of the bell ringers are already checked so I am happy that we are covered.

The Climbers group are now meeting in the Church Rooms and the Pioneers are meeting in one of the upstairs rooms in the Vine. This works very well as the Climbers have the benefit of the play area outside which was wasted on the older children and the Pioneers are very pleased with their trendy new meeting place!

With the change to the services the Climbers and Pathfinders now meet every week, which means we now need a leader and helper for both groups. This adds pressure to the existing leaders and helpers to be available each week. We are always looking for new people to help with Sunday Club so if you are interested please speak to Hugh or myself.

On Saturday 22nd April we are carrying out Safeguarding Training for all leaders/helpers of Sunday Club, Youth Group, Band Members and anyone else interested in attending. In the near future this training will become mandatory for anyone who works with the children.

Andrea Kirkby

Safeguarding Officer – St Mary's Goudhurst

SMALL GROUPS

There are currently 11 groups meeting at various times throughout the week, predominantly on a fortnightly basis with some variations. Most groups now see regular commitment from group members, the greatest challenge is building the commitment for new groups, and the difficulty of growing already established groups of only a few members by introducing new people.

Resources for the groups are left for the leaders to decide, and we have quite a variety of topics. For example some groups use the weekly sermon which is a really good way of going deeper into the Sunday teaching. One group has had a session specifically on prayer, whilst another is taking a 'big question' submitted by one of the group at each session.

We had a leaders training session in October 2016 which was conducted by Andy Peck from CWR. It was interesting and informative and well supported.

We also had a small group leaders get-together supper in February this year which was well supported and good fun, and a served as a welcome to Huthrie Coplestone who has taken over as Small Group Co-ordinator. We wish her well and look forward to some new energy and fresh ideas for the small groups as they continue to thrive and grow.

Ali Williams

And a huge thank you to everyone who does so much to keep this church community thriving and flourishing.

Fund raisers	Intercessors	The bookstall team
Flower arrangers	Readers	Photographers
Organists	PCC members	'Like' our posts on Facebook
Musicians	Everyone who gives financially	Invite people to church
Singers	Pastoral visitors	Everyone who prepares the church for services
The Choir	Churches Together members	Video makers
The Connect team	The Lend with Care team	Say 'yes' when asked to do something at the last minute
People who pray quietly at home	School Governors	Rota writers
Washer-uppers	Pre-school Governors	The Property and Fabric team
Welcomers	Cooks & servers	The Preaching, teaching & discipleship team
Sidespeople	Worship Leader	People who look after the graveyard & flowerbeds
Sunday Club Leaders	Treasurer	Worship & service leaders
Sunday Club Helpers	Church Wardens	Provide the food for Sunday Club
Youth Group leaders	The Finance Team	Social event organisers
Small Group Leaders	People who prepare notice sheets and print them	
The AV Team	The Parish Magazine Team, including the delivery team	
Preachers	Cake-bakers	
Practical people	The Friends of St Mary's	
People who change light bulbs	People who take notes at meetings	
The Cafe Toddlers Team		
Cleaners		
Brass polishers		
Coffee servers		

Thank you !



Goudhurst
& Kilndown
www.gkchurch.org.uk