

Christ Church, Kilndown - Book of Reports : April 2022 - May 2023

Introduction

*We are the Body of Christ, and each one of us is a part of it
1 Corinthians 12:27*

There are many ways in which we participate in being part of the Body - ways which give glory to God and help to build each other up as we follow Christ together. Not all of those ways are noted in a document! However, each year, we try and capture different areas of our church life in the Book of Reports and this is a key part of what is reported at our APCM.

Those who have kindly led an area of service and ministry and written contributions for this report were asked to:

Give a brief overview of the purpose of this area of church life - what is it, why do we do it?

- Reflect: what has gone well, what has been learnt, and crucially, where have you noticed God at work?
- Note prayer pointers: as you allow your hopes to be shaped by God looking forward in this area of ministry, how would you like the church family to be praying?

This report is not trying to present the best version of ourselves, but trying to be attentive to how God is moving and shaping us.

Please note that our beloved Churchwarden is not able to provide a separate Fabric report, but PCC Minutes are available to review from the previous year. Also that we form part of GK Church, and so some of the ministries to be aware of are listed in the St Mary's Book of Reports.

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Vision: Vicar's report - Revd Rachel Robertson

Jesus was asked: what is the greatest commandment? His response is our overall vision and purpose:

‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment.

And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

(Matthew 22: 37-40)

This reminds us of who we are, and why we do the things that we do.

Alongside this we have **five characteristics of our church life** that I feel God has given us to shape our actions and our reflections on how He wants to be at work. I have selected just some of the examples in which God has been at work under these areas this last year.

Who is our God? - *That we would develop in our understanding of who God is, and be able to confidently articulate this.*

Last year I wrote that I hoped that we'd become even more confident to individually articulate who God is in our day to day, maybe as we share our stories of God at work over coffee and fellowship, and in small group settings. The timing of our three Sunday services means I miss out on hearing these stories after the 9.15, but I am encouraged to be told that more of you are articulating how you are noticing God at work over the coffee time. Keep noticing, and keep sharing - it gives glory to God, and when we practice with fellow believers, it will become more natural to do so with those who may not share our confidence in God.

In building this skill - articulating *Who is our God?* - you are continuing a long held oral tradition of speaking out about who God is, and also refuting characteristics that are sometimes wrongly attributed to Him. Today's society needs to hear not just that there are those who have faith, or believe in God, but what God is like.

*That we are called to **go deeper with God**, establishing really deep foundations.*

Evidence of going deeper with God includes further growth around small groups (numbers meeting, content). Last year in this report I said that someone to help co-ordinate this ministry alongside the tremendous work being done by Martin Loy would help. I am delighted that Becky Addis (in her non work time) has joined Martin in this key area.

When we meet together during the week as well as Sundays to read the bible, pray and share fellowship, our roots with God will become more established. This is a shared joy when times are good, and when times are testing, we need our roots to be firmly established.

This next year I would look to have more of our church adult family join a small group, and for levels of engagement to increase.

*That church has the element of **campfire** about it: welcoming, with space to share stories, a place for all to gather, visible to those from afar who may be drawn to the edge of the campfire - and open to the power of the Holy Spirit.*

This year we have seen the birth of Community Lunches (Tuesdays, St Mary's, 11.30-1.30pm - drop in and free of charge). In this, and through our established ministries, we can encounter those whose faith may not be so established. We can listen, and gently share our experience of God at work in our lives.

It still takes courage for someone to accept an invitation to come, but hopefully our mid week ministries have the sense of the presence of God at the heart of what we do, the Holy Spirit being infectious in those who know the Lord, and an open edge that others may come and see God for themselves as His people gather.

Our mid week and Sunday worship is also open to all, and week by week we see missional opportunities in those who are drawn to the experience of being with others at the campfire. I think of a retired priest on holiday at the 9.15 who then suggested to his wife to come to the 10.45 that day, or of a series of conversations which led to someone new giving the 9.15 a try.

The image of campfire speaks of something drawing us to the centre - and at the centre of all that we do is God: the burning fire of God's love for us, and his Holy Spirit - the presence of God in our hearts. May I encourage you this year to seek encounter with Him as priority.

*As GK Church, we are to be **beacons of Christ's light**, one of many beacons in the area, as Christ's power transforms the nation and the world.*

A dictionary definition is that a 'chain of beacons carries the news.' This is true of us individually carrying Christ's light out into the world, but it also a picture of GK Church being one of many other churches in the area sharing God's good news. If I speak to an engaged couple who will marry in one of our churches, but live further afield, I say confidently - the church is invested in the long term success of your marriage. Your local parish church wherever you live in the future will support you and be a resource to you in the years to come, as well as ourselves.

Encouraging other church beacons of Christ's light is key - we want all of them to flourish. Two examples highlight ways we have hopefully helped encourage this: (1) when choir members joined me to celebrate the installation of Revd David Commander as our new Area Dean in St George's Benenden, and (2) when we pray for the right appointment of a new Vicar for Cranbrook in our personal prayer times and at our monthly prayer meetings.

That one by one, we would see people come to know God and his love, and be able to confidently declare, 'I am the Lord's.'

When someone makes this declaration, the heavens rejoice, and we do too. Each person is called by name. One by one - keep praying them into the Kingdom!

Conversion is one moment of saying 'I am the Lord's' - when someone steps from death to life. It also conveys the moments of confidence when someone stands up for the faith, proclaims it boldly into the world - this is who I am, I am the Lord's!

Choosing to be baptised yourself, and choosing to be confirmed are marker moments. This year confirmation and baptism candidates have not been drawn from the Kilndown parish or church congregation - however, as one church family your prayers are vital - so thank you for prayers which have resulted in people taking leaps of faith in these ways. In other ways too, know this scripture as your encouragement in this area of declaring *I am the Lord's*:

Psalm 89: 15-17

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you
who walk in the light of your presence O Lord
They rejoice in your name all day long
they exult in your righteousness
For you are their glory and strength

Thank you

Thank you all for your love and support, and mostly for your faithfulness to serve and honour the one true living God.

Particular and immense thanks to David as churchwarden; the leadership team of David, Angie, Neville and Tina; and the PCC for your prayer, practical help and wisdom.

Huge thanks to Dan, without whose unfailing support I couldn't serve you in the same way, and to Catriona, David and Kirsty who also encourage me daily.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Worship - Adoring God: Revd Rachel

Worship is about giving God honour, praise and glory for who He is. It is thanking Him for what He has done. It is learning to listen to His voice. It can be offered in the day to day of our lives, but through ordinary and seasonal times of the year, it is *wonderful* to worship together.

In the last year we have also had the joy and sorrow of responding to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, her death and the King's Coronation in worship.

Thank you to those who help enable worship in any way - from up at the front to behind the scenes including many lay, and the wonderful Stephen, Lesley, John, Jean and Neville who as experienced clergy are full of love and wisdom, and a huge blessing to me.

Worship - Adoring God: 10am Zoom Prayers - Revd Stephen Hardy

Prayer is an essential part of church life, and the Zoom prayer meeting which first began during lock down still continues, even though the number of people available to either lead or participate is not so large now that life has returned to normal. Currently we meet on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings at 10.00 am. We include a small amount of liturgical prayer, and one of the Lectionary readings for the day, but the main part is to be praying for our church, our community, and any people whom we are aware of for whom prayer support will be a blessing.

Morning Prayer also provides an opportunity for fellowship for a few who are unable to attend church services for various reasons. Prayer is not only about asking for things, and we often find time to give thanks for God's many blessings, and there have also been occasions during the year when we have been praising God for prayers that we have seen clearly answered.

We are glad to receive any specific prayer requests, which can be sent via the church office, and also are happy to welcome any occasional visitors to the morning meetings – which can be accessed through the home page on the church web site.

Jesus taught us that '*where two or three are gathered together, there I am in the midst*'. We assume that meeting via social media is just as valid as when we meet in person, and sometimes we have a very real sense of His presence as we pray.

Discipleship: Revd Rachel

Jesus calls us to more than believe in him (John 14:1) but to follow him (Matthew 28:19-20). This is a key way in which our roots will be established, and in times of testing we will remain firm. One example this year of opportunities to do this were the Saturday Live sessions led by Barney and Henrietta Mayhew. Thank you to them for their leadership and skill in this area and for those who dedicated time to grow in this area.

Discipleship: Preaching - Revd Rachel

I hope that you'll agree that we have had preaching that has been bible based, engaging and with an emphasis on application. This last year I've been encouraged when a home group might use a sermon to reflect more deeply together, and when people have said a sermon has spoken to them, or when they have listened to it more than once!

This next year I'd like to encourage us to dig in a bit further: to bring our bibles to church, take notes, and if we miss a Sunday - catch up with the sermon again.

Thank you to those who have preached this year: Revd. Stephen Hardy, Revd. Lesley Hardy, Revd. Tracey Bateson, Simon Taurins, Sam Davis, Revd. Neville Gallagher, Mark Parsley, Gill Wallis-Hosken, Kat Ogden, Olly Gillett, Joe Champneys, Ben Ratchford on behalf of CAP, Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Bishop Hugh Nelson.

In general we have followed the lectionary for our choice of bible readings. One of the ways we express our unity as a church is that the same readings are used across all four congregations and the same person preaches at all three Sunday morning services.

Discipleship: Small groups - Martin Loy & Becky Addis

It has been fantastic to welcome Becky, in a voluntary capacity, to help with coordinating Small Groups. As we have worked together, and reflected on the past year, it has been hugely encouraging to see what is being done through Small Groups.

Small Groups continue to be a fantastic opportunity for members of GK Church to develop closer and stronger bonds with a small number of people from within the larger church. There remains a strong core of group leaders, with several others potentially keen to consider stepping up and take on groups.

SGs continue to meet in a variety of settings: to enjoy fellowship, learn from the Bible and each other, and support one another practically and in prayer. We have built on the solid foundations of previous years in order to rationalise the groups we have at the moment:

some groups have come to a natural end, whilst we have also set up new groups. There remain plans to introduce further groups to cope with increasing demand.

This continues to be an exciting time of growth and an opportunity to enable this key area of church life to thrive even more. Some groups have been really stuck into the Bible, covering some challenging parts of the Bible through themes, or tackling particular books of the Bible. Other groups have been blessed and encouraged by having a mid-week opportunity to going into more depth from the sermon the previous Sunday.

We remain determined that each SG can be a vibrant expression of fellowship, discipleship and spiritual growth that can make a direct impact in the lives of each person associated with a SG. Please continue to pray for wisdom as groups are enlarged with new members, and for leaders to emerge when more new groups need to be formed. Please pray that, in a year's time, we can report that new groups have emerged, and more people have joined groups as we seek to ensure that everyone in the church community has an opportunity to benefit from being part of SG. Above all please pray for wise decisions to be made when seeking to create the best blend of people in each SG. Praise God for all He is doing in the groups and in individuals from the groups!

Pastoral: Pastoral Care - Revd Rachel

Pastoral care covers services such as baptisms, weddings and funerals, and the related care around them. Answering the phone in the office can be to a newly bereaved widow, an excited newly engaged couple or someone needing access to the fuse box. I am grateful to Becky and her high level of support & care in the area of pastoral care from first phone call to anniversary cards sent a year after a death or marriage.

As well as the ministries listed in this section, planned pastoral care includes ensuring the house bound receive the offer of home communion, offering hospital visits and being Christ's presence at gatherings such as Café Toddlers to be alert to loneliness and depression.

Pastoral care also happens on-the-hoof, such as when someone feels a nudge from God to phone someone and discovers this was a much needed call, or taking the time to talk on the street or in the Quarry Centre.

During this time period at Christ Church we held services and offered pastoral care around:

- 3 weddings
- 1 renewal of wedding vows
- 4 funerals or memorial services (thanks also to Revd Neville)
- 5 burials of ashes

Pastoral care can be the classic cup of tea with the Vicar, but acts of pastoral care are undertaken by us all as we love each other in Jesus' name. If you have visited someone in need, you also represent the church as you go - this is very much a team effort as God uses all of our connections to help reach out to those He loves.

Within the church family, the network of small groups is partly established to offer mutual support and care to one another - to meet each others' needs as the first port of call after (or instead of) family.

Pastoral: Connect - Meal Train - Ali Williams

During the past year GK Church has provided 103 meals to help support people in a variety of circumstances which includes convalescing from a hospital stay, illness, a new baby and a house move. You also cooked 130 meals and baked cakes for the Alpha participants over the 11 week course that took place last summer – on behalf of all the recipients - thank you. There is always more we could do to love each other and our neighbours, and it would be great to have the resources to be able to offer more. A delicious home cooked meal delivered to the door by one of our church family can be the most wonderful gift, especially when things are tough, and if you would like to be part of this team please let me know. The beauty of the meal train is you only need to sign up to cook when you are able to, there doesn't have to be a regular commitment. Also, if you would like to cook for the meal train but circumstances mean you may not be able to deliver, we would love more meals for the church freezer too, which we can use for similar circumstances and as a back up to the meal train. If you would like to know more about the meal train or cook for the church freezer, please do let me know. I say this in every Connect report I write, that 'Connect' as a ministry is really the whole church, learning how to respond to God's love for us by loving others in this way.

Pastoral: Anna Chaplaincy - Sonja Drew (Licensed Lay Minister (Reader))

What is Anna Chaplaincy?

Anna Chaplaincy seeks to accompany older people at this age and stage of their lives. It is an ecumenical, community-based, chaplaincy promoting the spiritual welfare of older people. Anna Chaplaincy is a person-centred and non-judgemental ministry for people of strong, little or no faith at all. Anna Chaplains are named after the widow, Anna, who appears with Simeon in Luke's gospel; both are good role models of faithful older people.

It involves visiting older people wherever they may be living, whether in residential and nursing homes, sheltered housing, retirement complexes or in their own homes. The emphasis is on spiritual support but, clearly, people's practical struggles will also play a part in their overall well-being.

The chaplaincy is intended to complement and run alongside, rather than replicating or replacing, ministry already being done by the church.

Anna Chaplaincy in the Dioceses of Canterbury was introduced in 2019 and is affiliated to The Bible Reading Fellowship.

Why Anna Chaplaincy?

It wasn't until I retired two years ago that God started to nudge me in taking on more church-based activities, for example taking Home Communion, supporting the Meal Train ministry, and joining the Community Cupboard Team. Opportunities to spend time chatting with, and offering prayer to older people of strong, little or no faith around the village seemed to resonate more with me as an important ministry to a group of people in the third and fourth ages of life. Showing them that they are deeply loved for their experience, knowledge, and wisdom and valued as a member of the local community.

I had I started to feel this calling to the ministry of being an Anna Chaplain over a year ago. I had encouraging conversations with Rev Rachel and the Warden of Readers last year. I also spent time discussing the role with one of the Diocesan Anna Chaplain leads. Following my Reader Annual Review with Rev Rachel this year, the call to this ministry was still as strong. The words from Isaiah 46 v 4 'Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you' have been a constant source encouragement whilst I have been discerning Anna Chaplaincy.

What Next?

The PCC have very kindly agreed to support me in this emerging ministry. There is a Diocesan application process to follow; the closing date is 19 May and with a selection interview for acceptance onto the course towards the end of May. I would ask for your prayers at this time as the Diocese discerns my suitability for this ministry and subsequent training. I hope and pray that God will show us where we need to improve, change, and grow in our ministry to older people. Such exciting times ahead!

Pastoral: GK Emergency Prayer Chain and the prayer box - Kat Ogden

The Emergency Prayer chain operates through a Whatsapp group which has 61 members. Anyone can ask Ali Williams, Becky Addis, Revd. Rachel, Kat Ogden or Sam Davis for a prayer request to be added to the group.

We regularly have prayer requests for people within our church family and their wider friends and family as well as prayer requests for local and wider situations. Some of the prayers are for short term issues but in many cases we pray for people over a long period of time. It is a great comfort for those on the receiving end of prayer to know that they are held so closely by those praying.

There is a prayer box in St Mary's church which tends to be used more by people who are not part of the church family, although most notes are anonymous.

Those leading Zoom prayers will be aware of prayer requests from both the Whatsapp Groups and the prayer box and can include them in the intercessions. I find it really encouraging and comforting to know that we have a committed group of people who pray regularly for those in need and that this prayer takes place both individually and in groups.

We know that God listens to our prayers and we have seen lots of answer to prayer - it is always wonderful when we receive updates on the Prayer Chain Whatsapp where people have recognised that the prayer is being or has been answered. Without giving details on

the specific prayer requests for privacy reasons, here are just some of the messages we have received:

“Tremendous answer to prayer to add to the prayer chain for praise... I can't say how relieved we are filled with thankfulness and praise. Hallelujah!”

“Thank you to everyone for once again praying in faith and expectation. We have a great and loving God.”

“Oh my goodness! What an answer to prayer! A huge thank you for everyone's prayers.... All glory to God!”

Pastoral: Home Communion

Holy Communion can be carried out by a priest in settings outside of church - for example when someone is too ill to come to church, and sanctified bread and wine can be taken by an authorised person to administer communion with a slightly different form of service also. We have two people authorised to do this - Rosemary Southon and Sonja Drew, and I am grateful to both for helping to ensure that those who wish to receive holy communion can do so.

Gospel - also known as mission: Revd Rachel

The Anglican communion recognises Five Marks of Mission:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

We are trying to join in with Christ's mission to the world. There are areas which are defined as mission which are reported on below. There are other ways of engaging which constitute mission (e.g. celebrating the Platinum Jubilee, village events, Coronation celebrations), and there are ways in which the good news is passed on in ways which don't have a title and where you are the ministry lead!

Gospel - also known as mission: The Weald Family Hub - Louise Vickerman

The Weald Family Hub was established nearly five years ago to ensure that mental health support for children, young people and their families is accessible, affordable, and readily available in the village communities of the Weald.

Since it began operations it has provided subsidised professional mental health counselling places to over 200 primary school aged children. The Hub also provides mentoring support for local secondary school pupils offered by a team of trained volunteer mentors and has supported 25 students to date.

At present we offer local primary schools between 18 and 36 weeks of subsidised professional mental health counselling dependent on their needs. Schools pay 50% of the costs, the Weald Family Hub the other 50%. Schools are offered counselling places for a minimum of three children with many accessing support for six or more children each year. We are also able to offer emergency support to schools for children needing immediate help. We are currently working with 11 partnership schools.

Mentoring support, run by our co-ordinator Bridget Stewart, has successfully been set up this year at Cranbrook Grammar school upon the closure of the High Weald Academy where the initiative originally started. We are currently considering extending the provision of mentoring to Mascalls Academy.

We are also set to run a pilot with Old Parsonage Surgery, Goudhurst to offer funded mental health counselling places for secondary aged students in the area. We hope to offer sessions online in the first instance to test the model at which point we hope to offer face-to-face sessions.

Children and young people have faced major challenges following the Covid pandemic and this is now compounded by the cost-of-living crisis. There is a continuing trend that puts a spotlight on the decline in children's mental health and looking to the future, experts agree that underlying mental health problems will remain significantly higher because of this. Campaigns continue also to highlight the need for reforms in NHS children's mental health services where many children wait for support for up to 2 years as waiting lists spiral out of control.

For the coming year and beyond, the work of The Hub will continue to be critical so that together we can help build mental health resilience and hope in our village communities and we are very thankful for our strong, continued partnership with Fegans in making this happen.

Please keep in your thoughts all those who are suffering with issues of mental health and that our work can continue to support as many of them as possible at a time when they need it most, in particular the children, young people and families in our communities; please also give thanks for the expertise, skills and time given by so many people in support of our work, the team at Fegans, our volunteers and volunteer co-ordinators and to those who have financially supported our work ensuring we realise our vision to transform the lives of children, young people and families in the Weald.

Gospel - also known as mission: Community Cupboard - Ali Williams

Not surprisingly demand for help from the Community Cupboard began to rise again last autumn, peaking at some 26 households we were supporting over the winter months. Demand has dropped slightly, and at the moment we are in contact with 20 households, the majority of which we support on a fairly regular basis.

We had bumper Christmas deliveries this year, enhanced by the magnificent donation from Ladysden of wonderful fresh fruit and veg and other goodies. We also had some other large donations of biscuits and Christmas puddings, and plenty of money, which along with other individual food donations, enabled us to provide a wonderful Christmas hamper for 26 households which the team prepared and delivered the week before Christmas.

As we have done in previous years, the Reverse Advent project provided sacks full of gifts for 18 children, and 34 adults living in the villages of Goudhurst and Kilndown – thank you so much for your generosity, it is always such a privilege to be on the front line and to see love in action like this. We saw some beautiful ways God was moving in this ministry. With your donations, there were enough gifts to go round, to the point where there was nothing left, but everyone had plenty, nothing was wasted.

We heard some wonderful stories of how delighted our clients were with their gifts. This included a pair of binoculars given to someone who found great pleasure in watching the wildlife in his garden with them, a child thrilled with a book they received and a cross and chain cherished by a teenager. This ministry is totally reliant on your generous donations and the dedicated team who work tirelessly to support those finding life difficult in our community, thank you.

Gospel - also known as mission: Community Lunches - Ali Williams

Community Lunch started in September 2022, and is a weekly lunch held on a Tuesday in St Mary's where we gather to eat delicious soup, bread and the chance to sample some amazing cakes too! We have a dedicated core team who turn out weekly and a very much valued wider team who regularly make soup and cake and help on the day too.

Community Lunch is a marvellous example of church in action, and we have seen some quite beautiful ways we have witnessed God moving among us - like the day someone new to Community Lunch just happened to sit beside one of our church family who they quickly discovered was able to speak fluently in their first language which wasn't English, and a valuable conversation ensued: what a gift. Or the occasions one-off visitors to the church have come just at the right time and shared in our hospitality. And of course the uplifting stories of people leaving feeling better than when they arrived!

Jesus taught us so much by sharing many meals not just with his friends, but with people from all walks of life, sometimes seeming to raise a few eyebrows in the process. Community Lunch gives us all the opportunity to learn to be more like Jesus by being part

of a space that welcomes everyone as equal, sharing in God's provision and a starting point to talk about God's story of love and salvation for anyone who wants to hear.

Read about the Care Fund, fairwear, Café Toddlers, Collective Worship at Goudhurst and Kilndown Primary School, Blend, Crafty Mondays, Alpha, Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Life Skills Courses in the St Mary's Book of Reports.

Infrastructure: Revd Rachel

Not such a catchy title, but a vital interwoven structure that holds everything in place.

Infrastructure: Safeguarding - Andrea Kirkby

The annual Safeguarding Conference was held in January, again via Zoom as this format works well. There was a LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who manages and gives advice on any allegations made with anyone works within the children's workforce i.e. hospitals, schools, or organisations similar to ours who gave the first talk. It is good to know there is a lot of expert advice we can call upon. We then had a talk from a Professor in Trauma on how the brain copes with abuse. He had worked with the Greenfell Support Team and Social workers preparing Ukrainian Refugee hosts. It was incredibly insightful and very interesting. Everyone seemed to have the same complaint that it is difficult to get people to do the training! There is now a Modern Slavery training course I need to complete.

I ran a Basic Safeguarding Training course in Church which worked out very well as it gave the participants an opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the training. I plan to run another course later this year and a Domestic Abuse Training course as well.

Some of my DBS checks are still being queried but we always use the Safer Recruitment Policy set out by the Diocese so we are following the correct procedures.

The spreadsheet containing information on anyone involved in Ministry in Church is now completed. This holds information as to who has completed what training and DBS check details and can be accessed by those who need that information.

We are required by the rules to include this statement: The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Infrastructure: PCC - Christina Gallagher

Christ Church Kilndown, is situated in Church Road Kilndown, Kent, TN17 2RZ. It is in the Benefice of St Mary's Goudhurst with Christ Church, Kilndown in the Diocese of Canterbury and in the Weald Deanery within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, Back Lane, Goudhurst, Kent, TN17 1AN.

Christ Church PCC comprises:

Revd. Rachel Robertson (Vicar and Chair)	
David Denton (Churchwarden and Vice Chair)	
Helen Robertson (Hon. Treasurer)	Christina Gallagher (Hon Secretary)
Robin Mitchell (Deanery Synod Rep)	Lynette Edwards
Revd. Neville Gallagher (co-opted)	Angela Pakenham-Walsh
Angie Westmacott	Clare Gates
Mark Parsley	

The 2022 APCM was held on 8th May.

We were not able to appoint a second Churchwarden at the APCM in 2022.

The PCC has met 6 times since the last APCM either in person or on Zoom; our main preoccupations have been:

- **Ministry:** To support Revd. Rachel in the work of renewing and growing the life and worship of the congregation at Christ Church and its service to the surrounding community. Rachel's presence with us as our Vicar for over 2 years has been very uplifting and encouraging and we thank her for her leadership and inspiration.
- **Worship:** To enable as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community.
 - i. **9.15 Holy Communion Sunday Morning:** Worship has continued at Christ Church every Sunday since the last APCM apart from a joint service at St Mary's to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee in June. Holy Communion in both kinds, by intinction rather than using the chalice, continues as most of the congregation were happier receiving communion this way. Fellowship continues after worshipping together by enjoying refreshments and home-made cake afterwards. The average attendance at the 9.15 Holy Communion Services has risen to 33.
 - ii. **Other services:** have taken place throughout the year apart from the weekly 9.15 am service. An Advent Sunday Service was held, and we were delighted to welcome Father Patrice and some of the congregation from The Sacred Heart and St Barnabas's to take part in that. Our Carol Service took place on Sunday 11th December, The Christingle Service for The Benefice took place at Christ Church on 23rd December, and a 'Midnight Mass' on 24th December. The Benefice Ash Wednesday Service took place at Christ Church and there was also a Taizé Service and a Good Friday Service

in Holy Week that took place at Christ Church all of which were appreciated by those who came and these extra services were an opportunity to see God at work by encouraging local people to come along especially in the lead up to Christmas. Other services throughout the year are held for the Benefice at St Mary's to which some members of Christ Church Congregation attend when possible.

iii. **Choir:** Many thanks to the choir -Angela, Barbara, Jill, Lindie, Vera, Neville, Nick, Quentin and Tina for practicing every Saturday morning under David's excellent leadership and for enhancing the worship on Sundays using the Kilgreggan Mass Setting and singing anthems during Communion as well as supporting the congregation in singing the hymns.

iv. **Readers and Intercessors:** Many thanks too to all those who are willing to read the Bible Readings and lead the Intercessions during the year, the variety of voices and presentational styles very much enhances our worship.

v. **Preaching:** Revd. Rachel has organised several 'Sermon' series during the year based on various themes and it has been enriching and inspiring to hear different preachers at these times as well as learning from Rachel's inspirational sermons most Sundays. It was a joy to welcome Bishop Hugh back in March and hear him preach too.

We also thank Neville for taking services so beautifully when invited or when Rachel has been unable to do so.

- **Our Vision:** As part of the joint benefice Rachel has encouraged the Christ Church PCC by using five pictures to inspire our mission and ministry being: 'Who is our God', 'Going deeper with God', 'One by One they will say "I am the Lord's"', Church as a Campfire and Church as a Beacon. The congregation are also invited to take part in small groups which are co-ordinated by Martin Loy.
- **Finance:** To ensure good governance and financial management of the assets of the church with many thanks to our Treasurer Helen Fisher who manages the accounts with great efficiency. An update of the church's financial position is circulated monthly by email to PCC members for review at each PCC meeting. The Annual Accounts for 2022 have been expertly prepared by Helen and Independently Examined by Clive Roberts and Helen has produced a very useful Budget for the Toilet Extension. We express our thanks to Helen for the hard work and commitment and time that she puts into her role as Treasurer.
- **Fabric:** To oversee the care of the fabric of the church, ensuring that it is kept in best condition whilst looking for ways of making the church building fit for purpose in the light of contemporary needs and a healthy and safe place for worship and other activities. The PCC acknowledges the important role taken by David Denton (Churchwarden) in the oversight of this and in the initiation of new projects. The major project of raising funds to install a toilet in the church is in abeyance whilst we await acceptance of revised plans from the architect.
- **Fund Raising for the Toilet Extension:** The fund-raising committee has not continued as a committee since before our last APCM due to concerns about asking people for money in the present financial climate. However, funds were raised during the year through a Flower Festival and Community Choir Concert held to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. Over £4000 was raised altogether. A talk on the Beresfords of Bedgebury Park by Neville Gallagher in September 2022 also raised

£428.50 for the project. £538 from Tina's Ride and Stride sponsorship also went towards this fund. With these funds plus other donations and a generous bequest from Marie Beaman's estate the current amount after expenditure is £46,515 with a promise of a grant of £10,000 from the Friends of Kent Churches (depending on whether they agree the revised plans). Thanks to all who have donated or worked hard to raise funds for this much needed project thus far.

- **The Queen's Platinum Jubilee:** Particular thanks to Lynda Shepherd who masterminded the wonderful **Flower Festival** held at Christ Church in June 2022. Thanks too to all the talented Flower Arrangers and to those who sponsored or supported the Flower Festival and the Refreshments in anyway. Thanks also the Kilndown Community Choir -particularly Julian Wells and Sarah Heaton, for their celebratory Concert this weekend. Both these events were in aid of the toilet extension as mentioned above.
- **Harvest Lunch:** An enjoyable Bring and Share Harvest Lunch took place in Christ Church after the Harvest Service with around 25 people attending. Thanks to Angie and Lynette for organising this.
- **Bells:** We were very grateful to Johnny Baldwin and his colleagues and to Mark Parsley who cleaned the bird detritus from the bells and the belfry in May 2022 which enabled bells to be rung for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and two weddings in 2022. Unfortunately birds got in again during the year and did more damage. With thanks to David Denton and the help of architect John Bailey we were able to arrange a Steeplejack to close off all entries for birds in March 2023. Johnny Baldwin and his team have kindly voluntarily cleaned the area again on May 3rd 2023 so hopefully the bells can be rung for the three weddings this year. However, Catherine Heathcote - the Bell Captain – has reported that new bell ropes will be required and the PCC have agreed for her to organise this once the bells are clean. Please see other reports about the Belfry and the Fabric Report.
- **Safeguarding:** The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). In line with Diocesan guidelines the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults is an agenda item at every PCC and members of the PCC have undertaken DBS checks and online Basic Safeguarding Training as well as training on awareness of Domestic Abuse. Thank you to Andrea Kirkby our Safeguarding Officer who keeps us up to date with these matters.
- **Ministry Leadership Team:** The Christ Church Ministry Leadership Team (The Vicar, David Denton, Neville Gallagher, Tina Gallagher and Angie Westmacott) has met 4 times since the last APCM to pray and to discuss ongoing issues and possible future initiatives for worship and ministry at Christ Church which are reported to the PCC as necessary. Thank you to all those on the Ministry Leadership Team for giving their time and talents and prayer.
- **Prayers:** Since the last APCM we have continued to put faith into practice through prayer and scripture particularly during Zoom prayers which takes place for half an

hour 3 days a week. Since the COVID pandemic restrictions were lifted the number of participants has fallen but Zoom prayers are still appreciated by those who are able to partake. Thanks to Revd. Stephen Hardy who organises the rota for these Zoom sessions and to all those who lead, read the Bible, or pray on these occasions. Since March 2023 a monthly Prayer Meeting at St Mary's has been well received and will continue on the first Wednesday of each month. A Prayer Meeting to commemorate the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine was held at St Mary's and was a very moving occasion.

- **Church open:** Since the last APCM we have been able to keep the church open every day which has enabled people to enjoy the wonderful building not only for private prayer and spiritual reflection but to take in its unique features and architectural importance.
- **Pastoral care:** Working with the Benefice 'Connect' Team and village contacts we have ensured that pastoral care has been ongoing. The Community Cupboard which is run from St Mary's has helped many more people both during the Covid pandemic and currently as the cost of living is rising. Members of Christ Church and Kilndown village have been generous in their donations towards this both in terms of goods and monetarily. Thanks to Lynda Shepherd who encourages shoppers at the Quarry Centre to donate to the Community Cupboard. Thanks to Ali Williams and her team who organise the Community Cupboard and its distribution to those in need. The Meal Train initiative has been invaluable in providing meals for those in urgent need and many thanks to Ali Williams for organising this and to those who cook and deliver to those requiring a tasty meal. A Connect Lunch initiative started by Ali in October 2022 has continued nearly every Tuesday at St Mary's since then and has been very well received. Members of the Christ Church Congregation share in this important ministry. Visits to those in Residential Care or at home have taken place throughout the year and prayers have continued for the sick or bereaved.
- **Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:** As well as our regular services we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through Baptism we thank God for the gift of life itself and our spiritual rebirth, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. Lord Christopher Wakehurst a long standing supporter of the church and the community - died since our last APCM and his commitment to the church and to the community was hugely appreciated. We thank God for his time amongst us.
- **Publicity:** To encourage all in our community to come to join with us in worship and prayer a Christmas card was delivered by hand to every house in the parish including details of services and activities at both Christ Church and St Mary's and the Roman Catholic Church (Sacred Heart) in Goudhurst. Many thanks to all those who kindly volunteered to deliver these. Events and services have also been advertised by poster and board, posted on the Kilndown Village and GK Church Facebook pages and via the weekly GK Church News and have been included in a free Newsletter which is delivered to all houses in the parish 3 times a year.

- **Electoral Roll:** At present there are 52 people on the Christ Church electoral roll. 21 are resident in the parish of Christ Church, 19 are residents in the parish of St Mary's Goudhurst and 12 are resident outside the benefice. 4 new members have been added this year and, following the death of Lord Wakehurst, one removed. The average weekly attendance at church services since the last APCM has been 33.
- **Thanks:** I would like to thank again all our volunteers and workers who have not been thanked elsewhere in this report:
 - PCC Members:* Thanks so much to all the PCC for giving their time, not only to attend PCC meetings but for all they do to keep Christ Church a welcoming and God centred church – even though some of the work necessarily has to be about bricks and mortar!
 - Flower arranging:* Thanks to Lynda, Angie, Ann, Angela, Carolyn, Vanessa, Helen, Josie, Sarah and Maggs and any others for their wonderful flower arranging skills – particular thanks to Lynda who organises the rota and works hard to encourage people have a go.
 - Cleaners:* Thanks to Angie, Della, Colin, Anne, Grainne, Vanessa and Gill for working so hard in keeping the church beautifully clean and we welcome and thank two new cleaners this year Gill Field and Sarah Heaton
 - Coffee and Cake:* Thanks to the coffee and cake makers who make delicious cakes and serve coffee after the service on Sundays – Angie, Lynette, Della and Colin, and Janet.
 - Readers and Interceders:* Thanks to those who read or intercede so beautifully on a Sunday morning.
 - Sidespeople:* Thanks to Penny and others who act as sidespeople and are so welcoming as the congregation come into church on a Sunday morning.
 - Churchyard:* Thanks to the contractors who keep both the old and new churchyards mown and tidy and to the volunteers who turned up and worked hard at a Churchyard clear up morning in October.
 - Bells and Belfry:* Many thanks to Johnny and team, who have cleaned the bells and bell chamber from bird detritus and the steeplejack who closed gaps to prevent the doves from getting in the bell tower and to Mark for his help in keeping a check on the area and organising the clean up. Thanks to Catherine and Carol Eglise for their interest in getting the bells in good condition and for organising ringers for weddings and special events.
 - Clock:* Thanks to Mark for keeping the church clock ticking and chiming when possible.
 - Administrator:* I would particularly like to thank Becky Addis our Benefice administrator for all her tireless work in keeping us informed through the weekly email and providing all the administrative support for all that is needed in running a church.
 - David:* Huge thanks must go to David Denton for all he does for the church – not only as churchwarden but for all his wonderful posters and printing, for finding music to fit the theme, for his skills as organist and choir master, for getting the church ready for worship every Sunday. The list is endless. Thank you, David!
 - Rachel:* We are indebted to Rachel for her creative and caring ministry. It is such a privilege to work with her and a real blessing to have her amongst us.
- **Children and Youth:** Although there are no Children's or Youth groups taking place at Christ Church, we are delighted that this work is thriving at St Mary's. We thank Kat Ogden and Tracy Smith and Val Lodge for their work in leading children and youth events and clubs at St Mary's and all those who support and help them in this incredibly important ministry at St Mary's. We pray for Kat as she prepares for

Ordination.

- **Deanery Synod:** Robin Mitchell provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. The Deanery Synod Report will be available at the APCM and can also be read in the book of Reports. Thank you, Robin.

Proceedings of the PCC (2023)

What is the PCC and what does it do?

PCC stands for Parochial Church Council. 'Parochial' simply means 'of the parish' so the PCC is the council of the church in this parish.

Essentially, we are the governing body of Christ Church, Kilndown we aim to help the church family to carry out its mission as well as possible.

In practice this means we:

- Meet every two months, usually on a Thursday evening.
- Prayerfully debate and approve any major plans or initiatives.
- Oversee all aspects of the church's life, including worship, evangelism, finance, employment of staff (if necessary), the church's buildings, charitable giving, fund raising and special events. We may delegate some of these topics to smaller groups who then make recommendations to the PCC.
- Are the charitable trustees for the church, with the legal responsibilities that that involves.

The Vicar and Churchwardens are automatically members, as are our representatives to the Deanery Synod. The rest are elected, though a limited number of further members can be co-opted during the year.

Since the last APCM much of our attention has been to enable the church family to worship, to grow in our faith, to support each other and to support the wider community, to look after our historic building and our finances; and to envision how the church family can grow and flourish into the future. Sometime and effort has been spent in fund raising for a much needed but very expensive toilet extension to the side of the church which will be an ongoing project. However, during the year it was considered too difficult, in the present financial climate, to continue fund raising and asking for sponsorship and after consultation with the architect it was agreed to see if a cheaper alternative could be found. At the time of writing we are awaiting revised plans to be drawn up by the architect with a weather boarded exterior rather than the traditional stone exterior. If these plans are approved fund raising will continue.

The PCC's main formal roles are to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish, and to co-operate with the vicar in "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical". Minutes of PCC meetings are available for inspection by anyone whose name is on the church electoral roll.

The summary of the PCC's proceedings is that it oversaw the activities recorded in the reports.

Who are the members of the PCC at the moment?

Those who have served on the PCC or regularly attended PCC meetings since the last APCM in May 2022 are:

Ex-officio members:

- The Revd Rachel Robertson, Vicar (2021)
- David Denton, Church Warden
- Robin Mitchell, Deanery Synod Representative (2021)

Co-opted member:

- Neville Gallagher (2021 – first co-opted 2016)

Elected members (and the dates they were most recently elected):

- Lynette Edwards (2021 – first elected 2017)
- Tina Gallagher (PCC Secretary 2021 and electoral roll officer) first elected 2012
- Clare Gates (2021)
- Angela Pakenham-Walsh (2021 – first elected 2018)
- Mark Parsley (2021 – first elected 2015)
- Angie Westmacott (2021 – first elected 2015)
- Helen Fisher (Treasurer) (2021, co-opted as Treasurer 2019)

How new PCC members are elected

Each year at the APCM, all those who are on the church electoral roll are entitled to take part in the election of candidates to any PCC seats that are available at that APCM.

To become a candidate for the PCC a person must:

- Be aged 16 or over
- Be a current communicant in the Benefice (in other words they regularly worship at Christ Church or St Mary's church)
- Have been on the church electoral roll for at least the preceding six months (unless they are under 18 years of age at the date of the APCM)

- Have indicated that they are willing to serve on the PCC
- Be nominated, either before the meeting in writing or at the meeting, by two people who are on the church electoral roll for Christ Church.

The APCM then elects the candidates, holding a vote if there are more candidates than PCC seats available.

We encourage all church members to pray for the right people to come forward for election to the PCC (just as we pray for the right people to come forward for all other areas of the church's ministry). We also encourage a discernment process and dialogue between potential candidates and the leadership team well before the APCM.

Once elected, the term of office of a PCC member is three years. They can then stand for re-election in the normal way for a further period of three years, and so on. So at each APCM there may only be some PCC seats available because some the three-year term of some PCC members may still have a year or two to run.

The PCC may also co-opt other PCC members during the course of the year: if so, those members' term of office lasts until the next APCM.

Note that the above is a selective summary of the rules – the full rules are set out in the Church Representation Rules 2020 which are available online.

How PCC members are briefed and trained

All PCC members are required to do the Safeguarding Basic Awareness Module, which is an online course provided by the Diocese of Canterbury. Some PCC members are required to complete higher levels of safeguarding training, depending on the roles they fulfil.

Statement of safeguarding compliance

We are required by the rules to include this statement: The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

And finally

We are very thankful to God for all his blessings, for the unity that he has given us, for the faith and love and service of so many, and for the hope that God provides throughout both good and difficult times.

Christina Gallagher (PCC Secretary) April 28th 2023

Infrastructure: Leadership Team - Revd Rachel

We are blessed with a fantastic PCC, thank you all! Amongst their number is a sub group who offer support, wisdom and prayer for matters arising in between PCC meetings. This group is officially a standing committee and has delegated authority from the PCC to act in this way, and they are: David Denton, Neville Gallagher, Tina Gallagher, Angie Westmacott - wise counsellors, prayer warriors and those who share the workload of leading the church. Thank you to this amazing team on my behalf and on behalf of our church.

Infrastructure: Church Office - Becky Addis

Life in the Church Office continues to be joyful as Kat and I continue to serve God in a variety of ways. For me this involves, amongst other things, keeping on top of communication, whether through the GK Church weekly news or social media, organizing rotas, dealing with pastoral services such as weddings, funerals and baptisms, or ordering in the various supplies needed for church life – no two days are the same.

It continues to be a real privilege to serve God through my work, and I feel so blessed to be part of the Staff and Leadership Team here at GK Church. It's always so encouraging when rotas come together with the brilliant church family stepping up to serve, when requests go out for people to bake or cook for a church event and people simply put their hands up – and the recent response to furnish the new home of one of our Ukrainian families, well that was amazing! All these administrative requests sent out by me being fulfilled by kind, generous people who love God and wish to serve him.

Please keep praying for the work that goes on within the four walls of the Church Office. We laugh a lot as we work together and enjoy working as a team and seeing where God is moving. And if you want to pray about something really big – how about a new Church Office in the Church or maybe in the village somewhere!

Rachel notes: Becky's salary is paid for by St Mary's. She works part time Monday - Thursday, and gives time as a volunteer in addition, serving with Martin Loy as our Small Groups co-ordinator, serving on Sunday teams such as refreshments, and with children's groups, and leading a small group. On top of this she is a joy to work with - thank you Becky!

Infrastructure: Ordinand - Kat Ogden

In September of last year my role changed from being Children's and Youth Pastor to Ordinand (or trainee-vicar as I like to explain it). My Ordinand training involves a context-based three year degree in 'Theology Ministry and Mission' and I now spend one day a week at St Mellitus College in London, two days plus Sundays in my church placement here at GK Church and two days studying at home.

As an Ordinand at GK Church I get to gain experience across a wide area of ministry. I have kept on some of the youth children's work such as leading Collective Worship and School services in church and leading in Sunday Groups which continues to be very rewarding. It is a joy to attend Connect lunches on Tuesday - both for the food and the company! And I am learning lots about church leadership and what goes on 'behind the scenes' in day to day ministry through being part of the Staff and Leadership team and from Revd. Rachel's wisdom. I have also enjoyed stretching my worship muscles by becoming a regular at the 8 o'clock service and falling into the rhythm of the familiar yet somewhat foreign liturgy.

Something which has struck me since spending time with lots of other Ordinands, many of whom are at much bigger and highly resourced churches, is just how much we manage to do at GK Church with a very small staff team. You may notice this when you see Becky's rotas sent out each week and that just covers the 10:45 service. Day in, day out, there are many people forming part of our GK Church family who are serving and ministering in some way and it is here that I really see the Holy Spirit at work. That people have such love for Jesus and God's people that they consistently give up their own time and resources to serve in such a variety of ways is inspiring and humbling. I feel that people have a real willingness to try and see where God is at work so that we can catch up with him and serve where he wants us.

I also see God at work here in GK Church when people show what is known at theological college as 'generous orthodoxy'. That is, an acceptance of, and willingness to hold together different styles and traditions of worship. Revd. Rachel demonstrates this through the way she genuinely values and appreciates presiding over all of our services from the 8 O Clock, Thursday Holy Communion and the 10:45 at St Mary's to the 9:15 at Christ Church. However I regularly see it in members of our congregations too and it makes me think of St Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 12 where we are reminded that all of the different parts of the body have roles to play but it is by working together that we form the body of Christ.

I am incredibly blessed to be working alongside Revd. Rachel and Becky and to be supported by our wonderful church wardens and leadership team. I still have such a huge amount to learn and would ask for you to pray for me as I attempt to grow my theoretical and practical knowledge and experience of ministry. Please pray that I see where and how God is at work around us. And please pray for Tom, Kitty, Posey and Seraphina who have been so supportive of me as I head off to college each week and regularly leave them for weekends to go off for more study.

Rachel notes: I was delighted to recruit Kat as Children and Youth Minister, and then privileged (& delighted) to observe and be a part of her discernment to the priesthood which started years ago and reached a point of affirmation when she was approved by the national Church of England to undertake training for the priesthood. We are very blessed to have her reflective mind and many gifts based here during her initial training period.

Infrastructure: Stewardship (Finance) - Helen Fisher, Treasurer

To maintain and run the Parish costs a considerable amount.

Every Parish is expected to contribute a calculated proportion of its income, known as the Parish Share, to the Diocese each year and this, together with the responsibility of maintaining our Grade 1 listed church building places a burden on the Parish.

- In addition to meeting our Diocesan obligation, there is always a need for maintenance and repair work, which means we need to raise funds for particular restoration projects from time to time, such as the clock, bells chamber and organ and also for the provision of toilet facilities.
- It typically costs c£21,000 each year to keep Christ Church running.
- We typically receive c£24,000 as income to the church by way of planned giving, collections, Income tax recovered and other donations and fees received.
- Some additional key costs expected over the next few years also include church redecoration, Bells/Tower work, organ repairs and boiler replacement.

Some of our income comes from investments, but the majority comes from the generous people of the parish, by way of planned giving and donations. We claim back the Income Tax on donations which are Gift Aided which enables us to claim some additional money back each year, but making the money stretch to cover the Parish Share and ongoing maintenance expenses each year is always something of a juggling act.

Planning and monitoring of our finances occurs at the regular PCC meetings.

If you would like to know more about the Planned Giving scheme or about how Gift Aid works, you can talk to me, Treasurer Helen Fisher - (07766 690406).

If we are to continue God's will in Christ Church, then we cannot afford to do nothing or leave it to someone else. Individually & jointly we can make a difference.

How you can help:

- Give regularly
- Use the Parish Giving Scheme
- If a taxpayer use the Gift Aid scheme, giving 25% extra income at no extra cost to you.

But money isn't everything – and you could also think about ways to give of your time, talents and energy to contribute to the life and growth of the church.

Keep in mind that everything you have comes from God (James 1:17)

Infrastructure: Flowers - Lynda Shepherd

A lot has happened since we were raising money by holding Cake Sales at the Quarry Centre in order to provide flowers for the late Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in June 2022. £,1000 later Christ Church was bedecked with floral arrangements depicting life in Kilndown during HM's reign. The displays ranged from the simple to the extravagant,

from the sublime to the ridiculous, all immensely enjoyed by the 100's of visitors. Our usual team of arrangers was augmented by a few new faces, one or two of which have now 'signed up'. As usual the church was ably decorated for Christmas and then thoughts turned to Easter. Another Cake Sale was held raising just over £200. Not a lot of this money was used, and was kept back to spend on flowers for the Coronation of HM King Charles III on 6 May, 2023. Many thanks to all who baked, washed up, arranged, swept up and all those other behind the scenes 'things' that go on to make all this possible.

Partnerships: Goudhurst, Kilndown & Lamberhurst belfry report - Catherine Heathcote

After several years of disruption resulting from repeated lockdowns and the need to socially distance during the COVID pandemic, we began 2022 having returned to regular ringing at the end of May 2021. The local bands were much depleted following the pandemic, making it difficult or even impossible for individual bands to operate. As a result, we decided to form a joint band consisting of Goudhurst, Kilndown and Lamberhurst ringers. Not only had our numbers decreased but we also found that many skills of our ringing skills had deteriorated after such a long time away from ringing, there was ground to make up.

It was agreed that this joint band would meet regularly at Lamberhurst to practise, but ring as required at all three churches. Although we were able to meet together on practice nights there was still no regular Sunday Service bands. The band was made up of seven Lamberhurst ringers, one Kilndown ringer and two ringers from Goudhurst..

Following the long absence, it was possible to resume ringing at Lamberhurst and Goudhurst relatively easily, however after nearly 3 years of silence, Kilndown bells were not readily able to be rung. Bellhangers, Nicholsons Engineering Ltd, came to inspect the tower and made a series of recommendations. The ropes were found to be in need of replacement and the tower was infested with pigeons and filled with pigeon detritus, a danger to human health. A team of volunteers from the village undertook to clean the belfry to allow ringing to take place for a number of important events during 2022 however work to block the entry of birds and replacement ropes was still required before regular ringing could resume at Kilndown.

The Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II was marked on the weekend of 4th and 5th June 2022. The band was delighted to join ringers from all over the country to mark this occasion by ringing at all three towers, Lamberhurst, Kilndown and Goudhurst on Saturday 4th June.

On Saturday June 18th Goudhurst hosted the Kent County Association 8 Bell Striking Competition and Ringing Festival. Four teams from Kent competed by ringing a set piece of Stedman Triples on the 8 bells at Goudhurst, with the winning team coming from Canterbury. Many local towers were also open for ringing: Brenchley, Cranbrook,

Horsmonden, Frittenden, Staplehurst, Hawkhurst and Lamberhurst and ringers gathered for real ale, a barbecue and ringing on the Charmborough mini ring at nearby Taywell Farm Shop.

Following the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations it was, with great sadness, that the ringers learnt of the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday 8th September 2022. Following the agreed protocol a single bell was tolled at 12 o'clock midday at Lamberhurst on each of the 10 days of public mourning to mark the death of HM the Queen. A single bell was also tolled at Christ Church, Kilndown and St Mary's, Goudhurst to mark the passing. All the bells were also rung at Lamberhurst and Goudhurst fully muffled, with the tenor open at backstroke, traditional on the death of a monarch. A single bell was tolled for an hour before the state funeral of HM Queen at all three churches from 10am until 11am on the morning of Monday 19th September 2022.

In addition to the formal ringing that took place during 2022, the band rang for many weddings at all three churches and welcomed a number visiting bands to ring at each tower.

Over the year the band has also been joined by five new prospective ringers, three from Goudhurst, one from Lamberhurst and one from Horsmonden. All these new ringers have made good progress and will be ringing as part of the main band in the very near future.

The fixtures and fittings at Lamberhurst and Goudhurst remain in good order and are regularly inspected by the Tower Captain and Steeple Keeper. The 4th bell at Goudhurst continues to prove tricky for some ringers, repeated detailed inspections have not yielded any satisfactory answers. At the time of writing, and in preparation for ringing for the Coronation of HM King Charles III on Saturday 6th May, gaps and holes in the spire and around the louvres at Christ Church, Kilndown have been made good and preparations for the ordering of new ropes has commenced.

Mind the Gap

We think we have gaps in the following areas. You may be called to help in this area, or may discern another area of calling. Please explore this in prayer, in guidance from scripture, and in conversation with other Christians (ask them: where would I be suited, where would I need others to complement what I can offer?) and with myself.

- Sound / tech expertise
- Sacristan (setting up for Holy Communion, making sure we have enough supplies)
- Head of those who read the Word (organising the rota and encouraging clear delivery of bible readings)
- Zoom prayer leads
- PCC Secretary

THANK YOU to all those involved in the ministries described. This is not an exhaustive list, but thanks also for

Welcoming those from Ukraine and praying for and with those affected by the war + Giving lifts to or washing up at Lunch Club + Taking someone to the doctors or hospital + Prayer-walking + Delivering Christmas cards + Packing Christmas hampers + Baking for an event + Setting up chairs + Setting up for Communion + Tidying away + Decorating the church + Cleaning the vestry + Taking excellent photographs + Helping with a bring & share lunch, a welcome lunch or a Vicarage tea + Leading a John's gospel evening + Being a door keeper (opening and shutting the church) + Printing posters and service books + Writing for and delivering the Village Magazine + Cleaning the church + Tending the grounds including the flower beds + Providing and making cakes + Fixing things including the radiator, the organ keys, the clock + Ringing the bells + Donating funds + Generously giving on a weekly or monthly basis + Taking part in a sponsored events + Completing health & safety or safeguarding training + Passing on encouragement + Speaking up + Covering for the absence of another + Making soup + Writing *A Brief Bible Guidebook* and gifting us with copies + Not minding that your contribution was overlooked even on a long list like this + Helping with Crafty Mondays / Community Lunches / Blend / Thursday Communion / Café Toddlers / Sunday groups / Zoom prayer + Caring for someone frailer than you + Praying + Cashing money at the bank + Providing flowers for Mothering Sunday + replacing fire extinguishers a + Singing or playing an instrument from the front + Counting money + Buying & sending cards or gifts on behalf of the church + Being faithful + Leading intercessions + Washing up + Dealing with mice and pigeons + Reading + Bringing someone to church

Administrative information

Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc, Cranbrook
Independent Examiner	Clive Roberts
Architects	John Bailey (or Chris Kiernan) Thomas Ford & Partners (Chartered Architects and Surveyors), 177 Kirkdale, London SE26 4QH