

REPORTS FOR THE A.P.C.M ON SUNDAY 23 APRIL 2017

1. Electoral Roll Officer's Report 2017

Total number on Electoral Roll in 2016:	188
Names removed:	4
Names added:	8
Total number on Electoral Roll in 2017:	192

Geoff Batten

2. PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC has continued to meet most months, and two Saturday meetings were held to prayerfully consider St John's vision and future direction.

The Ministry Teams report twice to the PCC each year as part of the PCC Meetings.

The Agenda for each PCC Meeting is placed on the Church Notice board in advance of each meeting, together with the minutes of each meeting, once they have been agreed and signed at the following meeting.

We are indebted to Paul Kingman who stepped in as Acting PCC Secretary on 29 February last year, shortly before the 2016 APCM. He handed over to me with effect from the start of the 6 September PCC Meeting.

The main highlights of the PCC year are included in the Rector's Report and other reports below.

Jeremy Tagg, Acting PCC Secretary

3. Rector's Report

In my last report, I stated that St John's stood at an interesting intersection in its life, confronting a complicated mix of challenge and opportunity. In an effort to ascertain what course we should steer, we have continued to review different elements of our church life over the past 12 months. It is fair to say this has not always been easy going and the PCC's endeavours to refine our vision and set priorities have been hard-won.

Vision & Priorities

As I outlined at the beginning of 2017, I believe it is right that we refocus our attention on our collective call to make disciples of Christ. This desire to see people commit themselves to be followers of Jesus, we have caught in a vision statement which reads,

'We aim to help anyone and everyone 'do life' with Jesus so that individuals, our local community and beyond can flourish'.

The phrasing might not be to everyone's taste, but I hope that the heart of this vision is plain - that we believe with every fibre of who we are that devoting ourselves to Christ, and putting him in the driving seats of our lives, is the best thing that anyone can do. Under this overarching vision, I have encouraged the PCC to concentrate on the initial contact we make with people and the ways we enable them to journey to the point of commitment. We want to encourage movement along this road as best we can, albeit that all the evidence points to this being a longer work than we often anticipate.

As a leadership, we have set aside a number of Saturday mornings through the year to consider these matters prayerfully. At our most recent meeting of this kind, the PCC identified three areas that we wish to set as priorities for the coming 18 months. These are as follows:

(i) Equip People to Engage Where they Are
In contrast to more church-based, attractional programmes/events, support our church members to be faithful and brave Christ-followers in the places they spend most of their time - work, home, with friends, etc.

(ii) Develop a Culture of Hospitality
Nurturing a more hospitable and open-armed spirit in us as individuals and as a church, so that we connect naturally and well with people.

(iii) Serve the '18-35' Age Group More Effectively
Improve our engagement with this demographic both inside and outside the church, with an awareness of:
- The state of flux that can be part of this stage of life eg Attending Uni, finding new jobs, moving house, etc;
- The differing needs of those who are single, couples but childless, and those who are starting young families.

Within these priority areas, it was also agreed that there needs to be on-going discussion as to the role our Sunday Services play in encouraging people to come to faith.

The next stage of development is for us to consider specific goals under each of these priority areas. Accompanying this work is a co-ordinating task to ensure that as far as is possible, the energies of our Teams fall in step with these expressed priorities. We will flesh out this direction of travel more fully in the coming months.

On-Going Review & Developments

Alongside this focus, there are other areas of our church life which are in a time of transition, or are yet to realise their full potential. I have been encouraged to see the SJ's Team bed down and work hard to ensure there are solid foundations for the future use of this resource. There seems to be

increasing use of SJ's beyond meetings exclusively for the church, and I anticipate that this will continue to gather pace.

We are in the throes of conducting a review of our Children's and Youth Work. An initial analysis of the results suggest there are some common threads to which we can respond. There are both areas for celebration and points at which we will need to introduce change. As identified last year, we have a very real challenge in finding leaders to support the work we long to be able to undertake with our young people. As it currently stands, come September, we will not have leaders for Club 2000 and 14+. This is a shame, as both groups show signs of life and growth, reaching young people beyond the church.

A special thank you goes to Dan and Sarah for all the passion and hard work they have thrown into leading 14+. I am sure a proper thank you will be expressed when they sign off. At this point, I would like to acknowledge their commitment through a time when they've had their hands full with their own family. Seeing some of the 14+ crew take the plunge in baptism at the end of last year was just one indication of the fruit of their devotion to these young people.

Some Changes

Peter, Josie and their family have joined us in the last year. St John's has already experienced the benefit of their involvement and it has been a personal lift to me to have Peter as a close work colleague. We look forward to watching his ministry blossom and I hope there is every opportunity for him to express his gifts in service of God in the next couple of years.

You will have no doubt noticed that demolition of the old All Saints School has begun on the land around our church building. Ownership of this land was quickly transferred from the original purchasers, Regis, to another company Vision Homes. I have made initial contact with them, but efforts to secure a face-to-face meeting have thus far failed. This is needed for us to establish the viability of securing any land and/or a premises for our future use.

There has been a gentle but steadily increasing engagement with St Francis and St Mary's. Discussions have largely centred around elements of engagement with Children/Youth work and forays are being made into joint ventures. We have worked closely with each other around the upcoming Village Day, and there are also joint plans afoot for putting on a series of evangelistic discussion evenings, not to mention our Mens' Groups looking to strengthen each other.

Thanks

Finally, it falls to me to say a few thank yous.

I am cautious about singling out people for thanks, not because I have an aversion to expressing gratitude, but because I fear it will leave others feeling overlooked. However, at that risk, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to Jonathan who steps down from his role as Church Warden after 5 years of tireless service. I doubt he will miss the stress of assuming responsibility for the church not being incinerated at our Christingle Services, but his pragmatism and ready availability have been a

massive blessing to us all. Big thanks go to him and Dawn for the sacrifice which comes with taking on this role. An equally heartfelt thanks goes to all of you who make up the St John's church family. I am conscious this report could extend to many, many pages if I were to outline every last thing that goes on under the auspices of "St John's". You stand behind that, voluntarily giving your time and energy. I hope there is joy in that service, and even when it's tough, I pray that you are able to cling to the 'who for' and the 'why' of all that we do together.

God Bless.

Jon Ward

4. Churchwardens' Report

This report covers areas of church life which are a particular responsibility of the churchwardens. The main aspects of the role are:

- ensuring "good order" in the church building and churchyard (e.g. welcoming, heating);
- ensuring the church building and its contents are cared for and fit for purpose; and
- supporting the Vicar in the leadership of the Parish.

This has been Jonathan's 5th and final year and Richard's 4th as churchwardens here.

As far as "good order" is concerned, our prayer is that the St John's building continues to be a pleasant and welcoming place where we can worship and do the Lord's work. We want to thank all the teams and individuals who support the churchwardens and serve in the practical functions of St John's – in the church building and grounds, for our services at the Assembly Halls, and on various occasions through a busy year:

- the team of Welcomers who warmly welcome us at each service, who count the offering and who tidy up for us afterwards;
- audio-visual teams, coordinated by Bill Derham and Stu Carey, who carry out their duties so faithfully;
- the people who dust, polish, clean and arrange flowers, and whose weekly work make this House of God a lovely place to be;
- Peter Brien and John Barter, who carry out repairs and maintenance. This involves both inside and outside work. We have John Barter to thank for much of the outside work;
- Stu Carey for voluntarily carrying out tests of all our electrical equipment for us;
- the teams from home groups who make thousands of hot drinks every year;
- Margaret Kingman, our Parish Administrator, ever efficient and willing to help out in an increasing number of areas;
- And last but not least, a big thank you to our wives, who have supported us so much in our role as churchwardens.

We have continued with work to improve the look and use of the church building. We now have new notice-boards in the baptistry and at the back of the transept, and new lighting on the steps down into the nave. Upstairs we have completed installation of new storage cupboards, enabling us to free up more space downstairs. We have completed a new health and safety risk assessment of the church building and are on course to implement the recommendations arising from this. We

have appointed Sherry Bates as our new church surveyor and the PCC has agreed to his appointment to project manage a range of repair work of the exterior of the building in line with recommendations from our last "Quinquennial" inspection report. Looking ahead, we have our next Quinquennial inspection in 2018 and also intend to start planning for the repainting of the complete interior of the church building. We are grateful that the building is, overall, in a good state of repair.

We have continued to meet regularly with Jon Ward, our Vicar, to talk through live issues and support him in his leadership of the parish.

We thank everyone for their prayers, encouragement and support.

Jonathan Tickner and Richard Cienciala

5. Safeguarding Report

The PCC takes very seriously the requirement to safeguard children, young persons and potentially vulnerable adults who attend any activity organised by the church. Accordingly it continues to actively monitor the application of the Dioceses Safe Church policies and procedures. Part of this monitoring process has been a Diocesan self audit and the production of an annual action plan to ensure that the policies and procedures are being implemented.

All persons who have direct contact with the above groups are required to obtain a clear Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) report and are now interviewed by an independent member of the church who is not directly involved in activities for the above groups. Detailed records are kept and confidential documents are filed in a locked facility. Church Officers continue to attend training provided by the diocese. Leaders of various groups are briefed on the safeguarding practices set out in the diocesan documents. All volunteers are encouraged to take seriously the whistle blowing procedures available in the Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines, "A Safe Church", a copy of which may be found in both the church and SJ's.

Members will be aware of the enormous damage allegations of abuse can inflict on any organisation and they are encouraged to bring forward any concerns they may have. DBS checks continue to be updated and The Safeguarding Officers are continuing to seek job descriptions from the various church organisations which deal with children and vulnerable adults. Church members who involved in running SJ's have been trained in safeguarding procedures.

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 Bishop's guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Sarah Fletcher and Michele Fox, Parish Safeguarding Officers

6. Croydon Addington Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod met three times during the year, in June, October and February under the leadership of the Revd Jenny Rowley, Area Dean. At the June meeting, it was reported that Safeguarding training held at St. George's Shirley had done well and was well attended. The Deanery is willing to provide training on a deanery basis. There was currently no Treasurer and members were asked to see if anyone they knew was willing to take on this task. There was no

report from General Synod, nor on the Diocesan Synod. The various churches represented reported on encouraging events and celebrations held by their churches over the last few months. Jenny asked that pledges for the Parish Support Fund be sent to her as soon as possible. George Dow, Area environmental advisor gave a talk on environmental issues.

The October meeting was held at St. John the Divine Selsdon. Ray Wheeler has volunteered to be Deanery Treasurer. Jenny Rowley was able to reassure the group that the Deanery bank account was in credit and signatories together with Ray Wheeler's appointment were approved by Synod. Lesley East volunteered to pass on reports from General Synod meetings. Andy Dovey's report on Children and Young People Mission would be given at the next meeting. A discussion was held on the Parish Support Fund. Good news stories from various churches were shared. Tim Goode, member of the General Synod and Diocesan Advisor on disability issues gave a talk to Synod members, focusing on accessibility, hearing and sight impairment issues. There is still work to be done in these areas by various churches. Churches are encouraged to offer hospitality for Synod meetings

At the February meeting everyone agreed that it would be helpful if Jenny were to circulate details of the latest parish support fund figures prior to each meeting. Ray Wheeler circulated his Treasurer's report which that the account was in credit of £858.59. Each year the Diocese pays in a £500 area dean's allowance. The report from Diocesan Synod was circulated showing that it was able to balance its budget thanks to the generosity of each parish. Lesley East's report on General Synod was circulated. There was no report from Andy Dovey, our Children and Young People Mission and Ministry Champion. He will in fact be stepping down from this role. Do members present know of anyone in their church who might be interested in taking on this role? Good news from 3 churches were then shared. Those stepping down were encouraged to inspire and enthuse new people to stand as Deanery Synod representatives. A pack was distributed for lay persons to take back to their churches explaining Deanery Synod.

The meeting concluded with a very dynamic presentation by Jude Barber a member of the Diocese's Children and Young People's advisory Group, on how Grandparents and older carers can share faith with a younger generation.

Church members are encouraged to attend any meeting if they are interested, but they are not allowed to vote.

Sybil Andrew and Ann Gardner

7. Churches Together in West Wickham (CTWW)

The churches of West Wickham have joined together for various events since the last APCM.

On Good Friday we took part in the Procession of Witness from St Mark's Church, down the High St to The Swan Pub for an outdoor service in the pub garden and we are grateful for the Swan's continuing support of this event, which is a public witness to our faith. This was followed by a service in St Francis, and children's activities for children run by Children's Link.

Children's Link also organised a games afternoon on Sparrows Den on 10th August and a February half-term lunch for families in St John's with lots of activities, and loads of food. The theme was Jesus calling the disciples and calming the storm which lent itself to many boat and fish related creations and enthusiastic participation in the story. This was attended by approx 40 children, plus adults.

Starbucks Youth takes place on alternate Fridays in Starbucks as a way to reach local youth.

The Christian Aid collection in May 2016 raised £7,556.32 with collectors from St John's raising £2,334.86 ably organised by Ann Ford and Jeff Seabrook. St Francis again organised "The Big Sing" in early December with combined choirs from St Francis, St Mary's, Emmanuel and Pickhurst Junior Academy and raised over £1,000.

In January 2017 The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity services were varied in structure, hosted by a different church each evening and were well supported.

The Women's World Day of Prayer was hosted by Emmanuel Church on March 3rd. The women of the Philippines had prepared the service based on the question, "Am I being fair to you?" related to Jesus' story of the landowner in Matt 20. Each person was given a small bag of rice to remind them of the fruits of the Harvest and the fact that Philippine farmers pool their harvest to share out according to need in their villages.

Community Lunches are provided three times a year by the churches of West Wickham in rotation and since the last APCM have been hosted by Emmanuel, St Mark's and Hawes Lane Methodist churches. These lunches enable representatives from local churches to meet with local organisations and individuals serving the community, to forge links and share information. Usually one organisation each time is asked to give a presentation about their work, and it is very interesting to hear about resources in our area.

The Work club continues on Monday evenings in the Library 4.00 -6.00pm and has seen over 80 clients since starting. They have also run "Ignition" courses which run for several weeks to give more in-depth help with the skills required when looking for work. Since the Careers Cafe started at SJ's on Tuesdays, the two services have been co-operating to offer their distinct services as best suits their clients' needs. The work club needs more volunteers to allow each to work shifts less frequently. Training and support is given if you think you may be able to help in this way.

Thanks must go to the many people who have given time and effort to enable the activities happen. It is good to have these opportunities to share with each other but, even more, to together share the Good News of Jesus.

Ann Gardner and Penny Seabrook

8. **SJ's Report**

The small SJ's management team meet regularly to establish smooth running of the centre, this includes implementing all the associated paperwork.

Some of the previous activities which took place in the Beacon Centre have resumed and in the last couple of months we have launched some new ventures which include monthly Police Drop In and a very popular weekly Careers Café.

The Monday Morning Open Coffee morning is slowly gaining momentum, and we have a new large bright advertising board which we hope will draw more people in. There will be some smaller posters printed which will be distributed in targeted locations i.e. local nurseries, shops and schools. We would like to encourage a diverse group of people to join the existing team hosting the Monday

Coffee Mornings and build friendships and links with the people of our community.

Looking ahead;

- We are meeting with people to listen to their ideas and suggestions for SJ's.
- Working alongside other teams, the SJ's & MOP teams are hosting coffee & cakes after church on Sunday 14th May. This will be an opportunity for the church family to see the initial drafts for the Vision Statement for SJ's, and also will be the Christian Aid Launch Event.
- There will be an SJ's tent at Village Day where all that SJs does will be promoted (volunteers appreciated).

Camilla Johnson and Heather Showell

9. Ministry Teams

a) Prayer

Prayer ministry is always available in the church after the morning service. There are always 2 people available and others on standby. Members of the ministry team are also available to pray at other times.

We partnered with the worship team in the 24-hour worship-a-thon in August 2016 and have met with the SJ's team helping to produce a monthly prayer guide that is issued at the start of each quarter.

The email prayer list is widely used – if you would like to be added to the list please speak to Barry, Richard or Tony Holloway.

There is an advertised monthly prayer focus for St. John's and a prayer meeting every first Sunday evening at the church. There is also a regular weekly prayer meeting at SJs most Monday evenings from 8pm.

If you have any ideas about ways the prayer life of St. John's could be enhanced we would be pleased to hear from you.

Barry Clements and Richard Greenhalgh

b) Worship

The focus of the worship team has been on continuing to lead worship on Sundays. Our thanks go to all the worship leaders, musicians and the people who operate the sound and visuals week by week. We are fortunate to have a number of people committed to serving the congregation in this way. During August many of us took part in a 24 hour Worshipathon and this proved to be a significant time. There was something special about devoting a whole day (and night!) to worship and the event ended with some rousing praise and feelings of exhaustion! Later in the year it was a joy to be able to have a group of people singing in the choir for the Carol Service. This time we decided to rehearse on Sunday afternoons, and on the Sundays when we were not able to practice in St John's (for example when Friends and Heroes was being held), we were pleased to be able to use the main worship area at Coney Hill Baptist Church. Our thanks go to them for helping us in this way and to Paul for leading us again. The number of visitors at the service was very encouraging and we are mindful of the fact that this might be the only time during the year when some of them come to church.

Meanwhile the worship leaders have been meeting regularly with Jon and Peter to discuss our vision for worship in the church. We have had some good discussions about the way forward for worship at St John's and would ask for your prayers and for wisdom as we seek what God wants from us. It seems that time (or rather lack of it) is a pressure for everyone and we often struggle to meet together as a team. At the moment we are focusing on how to use the fifth Sunday in the month.

This year there are five of them and we see these as an opportunity to try some different things. On Sunday 31st January Barbara led an open time of worship after the morning service, which seemed to be appreciated. We are currently discussing the second fifth Sunday (30th April) and welcome everyone's thoughts on things that might help us all to grow in worship.

Jonny Faint and Barbara Bassot

c) Children & Youth

We continue to be blessed with a significant number of children and young people who are connected to St John's. Numbers will fluctuate for each group and this is a given. Equally, the driving vision is, through community links to reach out to the greater community and serve children and their parents where they are.

For venues we use not only St John's and SJ's, but also Parklands Nursery, the Assembly Rooms and Coney Hall Baptist Church.

During the last year it has been very clear that joining up with other churches in order to pool expertise, resources and create a worshipping working unity is beneficial to all. Both Momentum and Soul Survivor are creating inroads here. Spree this Year has been cancelled but the interest from other churches to join our camp "Sprung" has been very encouraging.

Always we need more adults to step up as leaders. We cannot grow further if the individuals are not there to support the various teams. Club 2000 has been a particular group of growth this year. It is essential to note that a hint of helping in any group does not sign you up to a life of servitude ... there are many roles available ... refreshment person to musician ... all are welcome.

Julie Lancaster and Anna Seabrook.

d) Care and Befriending Team Report

The past year has seen us continuing to develop our team and is still a work in progress.

A number of activities run by the team during the year were:

- A successful Welcome Tea held at The Vicarage for newcomers to our Church.
- A second Thanksgiving Service in November. People in our church and Parish who have been bereaved in the last three years all received a personal invite and others came who wished to remember loved ones who had died. The service was followed by tea and cake and judging by the numbers who came it was a service that was much appreciated, not only by our own church members, but also by those in our community who do not normally come to church.
- Some time has also been spent in planning a Bereavement Awareness Day. This was held at SJ's in March and was attended by 17 people from St Mary's, St Francis, and St John's. It was run by Care for the Family with the aim of providing a better understanding of those who have been bereaved, and what churches can do to support them. The occasion left us all with a lot of food for thought.

Throughout the year love and care has been shown in both practical and prayerful ways not only by the Care and Befriending Team but also by our home groups, and by many others in our church family. It is wonderful that the love of Jesus is being shown in so many ways.

Sue Watson and Maureen Lang

f) Faith Sharing

Our brief was to encourage the momentum of Faith Sharing at St John's, rather than arrange evangelistic events, although that may well happen in the future. We want to help an ever-developing mind-set within St John's, that will cause faith sharing becoming a passionate part of our spiritual DNA, not an add on, nor something we do out of duty, nor merely to keep the church going.

The Team has not met as often as we would have like due hospitalisation, family pressures, etc.

We have looked at the experience of other churches, and had an excellent visit with the clergy at St Georges, Deal. This church is 10 years down the line in developing missional church, and has, currently, about 10 interest groups which meet during the week in locations such as the local park (Mums and Toddlers), an upper room in a pub (After Work Club), on the beach (Environmental Protection Group). All groups meet because of their mutual interest. Some are Believers and others aren't, yet. But friendships are built and trust is forged so that there is an open door for the gospel to be shared and put into practice. These groups are actively supported and monitored by the leadership team. The Church has central meetings on Sunday, but recognising that the weekday activities may use all available time, Sunday attendance is not compulsory!

As reported last year we have continued to investigate a small number of possible alternatives to the Alpha Course in order to find suitable Introduction courses to suit our time-strapped culture. A couple of these are possibilities, but nothing leaps out as an appropriate replacement; this is still under consideration.

We have also reviewed some excellent books on Faith Sharing and will communicate these to the Church in the News Sheet in due course.

The sermon series on Sundays continue to teach us of the importance of Relationship with God over mere religious observance and as we express our discipleship in the light of this we will become more motivated to share our faith.

Everything we've read and heard points us in the direction of Friendship Evangelism and we need to be ready look for opportunities to make long term friendships with neighbours, relations and colleagues, etc.

In the coming year we will try to meet with other the Teams to find more ways to cooperate in overlapping areas

Team: David Biddle, Tony and Beryl Holloway, Joy and Mike Slatter

g) Mission Outside the Parish

We are blessed with a strong committed team, all with a passion for mission.

Recently we have reviewed our Monthly Mission Focus, each mission partner has an allocated MOP member who builds close links and friendships with them, also keeping the team up to date with prayer requests, news etc.

The Skype link with the Jeggo family, our mission partners in Japan, was a real success. We hope to do more of the same in the future, as we want the St John's family to feel they have a connection with all our mission partners.

We are working with the prayer team, seeing how we can support each other, and are planning a Christian Aid launch event at SJs, alongside an SJ's event in May.

Milly Johnson and Elzbieta Cienciala

10. Parochial Charities

Year to 31st December 2016

Trustees: The Rector and Churchwardens

BEST'S GIFT

Balance brought forward	£ 392
Income year to 31st December 2016	£ 188
Distributions	* £2
Balance carried forward	£578

St John's now only has 1 charity, Best's Gift, which was originally set up to provide boots for apprentices. These days it is used to provide grants for the purchase of books for young people who are part of St John's and are going to university or college. During 2016 one grant was made. Like last year, the student was also given a booklet recommended by the Universities & Colleges Christian Fellowship about starting as a student, along with their grant cheque.

*N.B. The £2 above represents the cost of the booklet. The grant cheque wasn't debited to the account until 2017.