

***** INVITATION *****

**to our bring and share lunch on Vision Sunday/Annual Meeting
on 22nd April
from 12.30pm at Northcourt Road.**



Christ Church
Abingdon

Being Disciples, Making Disciples

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 22nd April 2018



April 2018

Dear friends

Breathing. It's one of the most natural rhythms of life.

Breathe in - Breathe out. Breathe in - Breathe out.

Breathing reflects a core rhythm of being a disciple of Jesus. Jesus appointed the twelve disciples *that they might be with him and that he might send them out* (Mark 3:14). Breathing in – his presence, his life giving words, the gift of his Spirit. Breathing out – being ambassadors of his Kingdom, in word and deed.

Breathing is at the heart of our life together as a church. This annual report captures how we *breathe in* together, through our Sunday and midweek gatherings, through the children and youth work, through prayer times and life groups... And it captures some of the myriad ways we *breathe out* as we serve Christ, filled with His Spirit, in our workplaces and families, in the community and the many ministries operating from the church.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this snapshot of our life together in 2017, at Long Furlong and Northcourt Road, and to the hundreds of followers of Jesus that form the Body of Christ enabling every ministry and mission described in these pages.

We've been through a difficult chapter as a church. But as we move towards the summer and autumn we start a new chapter of God's story in Christ Church Abingdon. But the rhythm of life that sustained Christ Church through every chapter so far remains. Breathe.

To God be the glory!

With my love in Jesus

Keith

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CONTENTS

Page

Letter from Keith	3
Wardens' Report	5
Long Furlong Report	6
Sundays at Northcourt Road	8
Worship at Northcourt Road	8
Sunday Driving Ministry	9
Children's Work at Northcourt Road	9
Primary Schools Report	10
GodzKidz at Long Furlong	10
Youth Ministry	11
Prayer and Bible Reading	11
Adult Discipleship	12
Pastoral Ministry	12
Footprints	12
Building Church Community	14
Alpha	15
Confirmations	15
Family Life	15
Home for Good	15
LINK	15
Prime Time	16
Prime Time Holiday	17
MWM	17
Thursday (51) Fellowship	18
Gents Who Lunch	19
Residential Homes	19
The Father's Table	20
The Barns Café	21
Mission Support Group	22
The Church in Abingdon	23
New Wine	24
The Church Office	24
Finance Summary	24
Buildings Committee	34
Safeguarding	35
Health & Safety	36
IT Report	36
HR Group	37
Electoral Roll	37
Annual Meeting 2 April 2017	38
Church Statistics	42

REPORT FROM THE CHURCH WARDENS

There is a much longer report from the Church Wardens available in the Report that the Church sends to the Charity Commissioners. There are copies of this report available on the website and in printed form in the Lobby. Much of what we would want to say is also spelt out in greater detail in the individual ministry reports included in this book.

However we would both like to say how much of a privilege it has been to serve as your Church Wardens in the last year, and to work closely alongside Keith, Kath, Phil, the rest of the staff team, the Standing Committee and the PCC. We truly believe that a Church is the Body of Christ and it is made up of **many** members who offer different gifts, and it is only when **all** the gifts are being used to their full that the body will be complete. *Ephesians 4 v 14-16 - "14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."*

We will all probably look back on 2017 as a year when the **Clergy Disciplinary Measure** brought against our vicar, Tim Davis, approached its conclusion, though the finale was carried over into 2018. You will know that the Bishops' Tribunal announced their judgement on 28th December that Tim was guilty on all five counts brought against him under the CDM, amounting to conduct unbecoming of a Clerk in Holy Orders through the spiritual abuse of a young person then aged 15-16. We are deeply grieved by this situation - for the pain and distress caused to the family of W1 and W2 and to the other people whose lives have been harmed in recent years. We want to allow the Holy Spirit to cleanse, heal and direct us all. Above all, we want to build a church which is transparent, where people can feel free to express themselves honestly, to speak out when they become aware of something that appears wrong, and to know that Jesus cares for them whatever.

We acknowledge the support that we have received from the Diocese through this process. The support has sometimes been visible, such as in the ongoing support for the ministry of Kath and Phil Cooke and the appointment of Nessa Watts as Lay Minister, but is often invisible, but very real to those in the leadership team.

2017 will also be seen as a year of **staff recruitment** and attempted recruitment. The first recruitment was that of Hannah Kitchener as Café Manager, rather than Acting Café Manager or Deputy Café Manager. Her appointment was followed by that of Alex Lister as new Deputy Café Manager. Shortly after that we advertised for a Youth Pastor to replace Matt Luscombe, who was leaving to start ordination training in Bristol. We were fortunate in having a strong field of candidates and are blessed that Bea Ellaby emerged as the favoured choice. Andrew Walker tendered his resignation as Facilities Administrator in the summer in order to accompany his wife in a new posting in USA. At the same time we were aware that Christine was approaching retirement age and had already reduced her hours by 20%. This led us to advertise for a more senior Operations Manager with the task of overseeing all the operational aspects of church life, with help, and to relieve the clergy from administration. That recruitment was unsuccessful, but we will try again in 2018. In the meanwhile, Alison Grieve was recruited to take over Andy's role as Facilities Administrator, and Jackie Sheppard was recruited to fill the missing 20% of Christine Talbot's role, with particular emphasis on publicity material. While not exactly a recruitment, we have also been blessed by the appointment of Nessa Watts to the role of Lay Minister, pending her ordination as Curate. The final recruitment for the year was that of Chris Ellaby as Church Intern, spending three days per week in the Café, one day in the worship ministry, with focus on the Space Band, and one day of external training.

We are very pleased that, during the year, our Administrator and Vicar's PA, Christine Talbot was honoured by the award of a **Fellowship of St. Birinus** by Bishop Colin in recognition of the more than 25 years she has served Christ Church.

2017 will also be seen as a year in which the church continued to flourish in its many ministry areas to those **outside the church**, as reported elsewhere in this book. We would particularly like to mention the solid progress made in the ministry of the Café to the community around us, the quiet ministry of the Foodbank, the work that the Children's and Youth teams do in local schools through Prayer Spaces, Assemblies, Lunch Clubs, etc., and the many small bible study groups that have sprung up as a result of Prime Time and Footprints. Link has grown significantly, particularly since the closure of the Children's Centre at Dunmore School, and Alpha continues to be a means of reaching and teaching those from within and outside the church who wish to know more about Jesus.

Another feature of 2017 has been the significant progress made on **upgrading our buildings**, thanks to the efforts of Andrew Turner, Chair of the Buildings Committee throughout the year, David Wadham, coordinator of several large and many small tasks, Grahame Gibbins, supervisor for the toilet refurbishment, David Illingworth and Chris Fox, leaders of many painting projects, and many others who participated in four Work Party Saturdays during the year. Some of the major jobs completed during the year were: - toilet refurbishment, new ceiling and redecoration of Coffee Lounge, completion of the installation of fire doors throughout the property, insulation and re-cladding of west wall of Barn 4, upgrading of lighting and emergency lighting in various areas. Buildings maintenance work risks going into hibernation unless we can find a replacement for Andrew Turner, who has stood down as Chair of the Buildings Committee. **This is an urgent need.**

The church is very dependent on the ongoing regular donations from members towards the cost of running our church, but we also acknowledge specific donations from people who have seen a particular need and have responded to God's prompting to meet that need - to be noted are the donations that supplied kneeler cushions for the communion rail, donations towards the toilet refurbishment, donations towards the cost of decorating the Lounge, and a donation of needed Communion Chalice.

As we look towards the future, we are sure that the new housing development of 950 homes (plus school, community centre and sports facilities) in North Abingdon will bring new challenges for sharing the Gospel with our community. It is likely that Parish Boundary changes will ensure that the whole of the development will fall within our Parish and could lead to the planting of a new congregation there.

Finally, we want to acknowledge before God the role that Keith has played in leading our church through a very difficult period, with grace and courage, and through his clear biblical preaching style. This verse from the book of Esther has been quoted often in the last few years - *"And who knows but that you have been brought to this position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)*

*Roland and Sue
Church Wardens 2017/18*

LONG FURLONG ANNUAL REPORT 2017

The Long Furlong congregation continues to grow in number, depth of relationship, joy and compassion. Long Furlong is very much a body in which many of all ages are part of its vibrant life.

Sunday mornings are lively and welcoming. The year began with a focus on the practical and challenging book of Proverbs. After Easter we explored 1 Timothy; in the summer, All-Age services focused on 'Disciples who Dare'; and, during the autumn, we grappled with the early chapters of Genesis. It has been very special to celebrate the baptism of 2 babies, and also one of our teenagers by full immersion.

There are a wealth of gifts and, generally, an intrinsic willingness to serve at LF. Many are involved in set-up, welcome, children and youth ministry, leading, preaching, prayer ministry, coffee, sound, music, etc. The leadership team meet monthly, their input and wisdom is invaluable. We are thankful for those who serve faithfully on the many and varied teams. This is not, though, to say there are not gaps and challenges to meet, whether in resourcing gathered activities or encouraging others in their discipleship and mission when dispersed in places of home, work and recreation.

We have valued visits from a number of Mission Partners including the Warner family, Viva, and the Wilson family. The idea of a creating an embryonic '4pm community' is beginning to emerge, and a small group are meeting to pray and listen to God about how this might grow in the coming months.

This year, our contemplative gathering, Wellspring, has continued as a monthly feature. Wellspring has a regular attendance of around 12-15 people each month, but also others who come more occasionally (rota responsibilities prevent many people from coming to every session). Wellspring now begins with tea/coffee, building a greater sense of community. It is much valued by those seeking a more contemplative way of worshipping and the team are continuing to explore ways of developing this service.

Christmas is a very special time at Long Furlong. The Christingle was again held in a very packed community centre. A new venture in 2017 was the Christmas Lantern Trail which saw scenes from the Nativity acted out in different parts of the Long Furlong park area, ending with a moving stable scene behind the Community Centre with a real, live baby who managed to sleep through it all! Many from the local community and church congregation valued journeying through the Christmas story in this original and creative way. It was spearheaded by a brilliant team of Julie Kemp-Harper, Gill Turner and Jane Robinson, supported by others of all ages.

We continue to grapple with issues which emerge in a growing community, particularly how people are welcomed,

belong and grow in discipleship. It has been great to have a number of Welcome Teas at the Wenningers' home, where newer folk have been able to meet some LF regulars, ask questions and enjoy delicious cake. Relationships and contacts have grown through a variety of meals together, including: a Pentecost breakfast, an indoor picnic for LF's 23rd birthday, Italian and curry evenings (though not at the same time!) and a community picnic in the park. November was 'hospitality month' and many had a great time sharing in the 'Link-up Lunch' one Sunday. 'Beer and Banter', a relatively new initiative, has proved a welcome place for men to gather and connect together. Coffee Break continues to meet fortnightly on Tuesday mornings in various homes and offers another good opportunity for folk to get to know each other better.

A significant part of LF are the Lifegroups. During 2017 five groups have been meeting regularly with about half of LF congregation in these groups. The groups cover a variety of material and Andrew Turner supports the leaders through regular gatherings and encouragement. Pastoral support is a key feature of our groups, including prayer and practical help and simply having fun together! The Friday group has a termly outreach brunch and most of the groups have 'adopted' Mission partners. Recently a monthly Bible journaling group has begun, offering a new creative small group.

The pastoral team at Long Furlong is developing, the core team (currently Diana Bingham, Jane Robinson, Andrew Turner, Janice Wenninger and Kath Cooke) meeting regularly to pray and to plan. Ros Steel offers first-class support and supervision. There is much informal care which is shown in and through the LF congregation. Our Food Ministry also continues to be greatly appreciated, co-ordinated by Chloe Wilson who with her team of cooks do an amazing job providing meals for those who have had a baby, are unwell, have moved house or simply need blessing. The pastoral team facilitated a significant day held at the Community Centre which explored 'Living with Loss' – this was greatly appreciated by those who came.

Long Furlong congregation continues to be outward-looking, reaching out to the local community in various ways. We are particularly thankful for the good relationship with staff at LF School which has grown over many years. Several folk from LF congregation serve as school governors, both at Long Furlong other local schools. Heather Hughes and team have been able to go into school for Assemblies and facilitate a week-long prayer space. Singing Circle, too, continues to meet in LF Community Centre weekly in term-time, reaching something like 40 families during the year. Each week follows a theme, with nursery rhymes, singing games and song-time always ending with words from the Singing Circle song: "For ever and for always I know that God loves me." Thanks to Jill Ward for playing the guitar, Jane Robinson for the care and co-ordination of this group, as well as to Tina Hearn and Graham Robinson doing the vital jobs of making drinks and washing-up. The contact at Singing Circle often continues over the years and many of the families who came to the Lantern Trail, Christingle and Big Picnic were originally part of this group.

The monthly meetings of Friendly Cuppa also take place in Long Furlong Community Centre and include a quiz, jigsaw puzzles, and a prayer table. This year there have been 25 on the register with around 10-18 people attending each month - a good mix of community and church people. Sadly one member died in February and others have moved away. Most of the group enjoy meeting on the intervening fortnight by going to a local pub for lunch. Friendly Cuppa is run by members of the Tuesday Life group and is much valued by those who come for the welcome, kindness and friendship found in the group.

Prayer is the foundation of LF. We meet termly on a Tuesday evening to pray in the school. This has included times to prayer walk, use creative prayer stations and listen to God. In April we enjoyed a Quiet Day together, when 22 gathered to 'Stop, Look and Listen' in the peaceful environment of St. Mary's Convent, Freeland. A well-received initiative which will be repeated in 2018. Each Sunday gathering is preceded by prayer, and prayer ministry is offered each week. It was encouraging to see LF and NCR prayer ministry teams joining together for a series of training evenings in the autumn term.

Towards the end of the year LF's Leadership Team began to encourage the congregation to listen specifically to God and ask the question 'What do we think Long Furlong should look like in a year's time?' We are looking forward with hope and expectation for all that God has in store for us, ever thankful for his faithfulness in this past year and trusting him for the future, not least as things unfold and become clearer about leadership in the church as a whole.

Phil & Kath Cooke and Long Furlong Leadership Team (Diana Bingham, Julie Kemp-Harper, David Lever, Jane Robinson, Anne Taylor, Del Walker and Stu Wilson)

SUNDAYS AT NORTHCOURT ROAD

We meet in four Sunday congregations at Northcourt Road, seeking to worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

The **8am Book of Common Prayer communion services** have a steady congregation of around 20 people, drawn by the quiet reverence of encountering Christ in a familiar liturgical service. We've eaten breakfast together several times, giving people time to spend together.

In the **9:30 and 11:15 morning services** we seek to worship the Lord, come before him in prayer, and have regular interviews with our mission partners, ministry area leaders, and hearing about people's workplaces. We've had several times when the children have either joined the adults for communion, or started in church with the adults for the first 15 minutes. We started the year with a teaching series in Proverbs, "Wisdom for Living," and as part of this had an Emotional Health Forum in February with a Panel discussion over lunch. During Lent we explored "The Road to New Life." We continued with "Ways to Pray," an early summer series in 1 Timothy called "Christ's Church", and a fun look at "Disciples Who Dare" during the summer holiday period. In the autumn we had a major teaching series on Genesis 1-11, called "In the Beginning", with follow-up notes for life groups, which was very well received.

At the **6:30 evening service** we started with a teaching series in Proverbs "Wisdom for Living," and then explored Romans 1-8 "Heart of the Gospel." Like the morning services we explored "Ways to Pray", and then spent several months in Mark 4-8 looking at the "Authentic Jesus." We started the autumn with a four week series in Ruth, "Rescued by the Redeemer" and then explored Isaiah 1-35 "Trusting God in Troubled Times." The format of the evening service gives extended time for sung worship, and open ministry times.

This year we've invested a little more in the welcome we offer. We held a meeting of the large Welcome Team, headed by Janice, for which we are very grateful to each member, and towards the end of the year began planning to have a Welcome Corner during the morning services. In early December the evening service had its first "Fizz" – an informal gathering over drinks and nibbles after a service to help people get to know each other.

Keith Dunnett

WORSHIP AT NORTHCOURT ROAD

"Worship starts with seeing You, our hearts respond to Your revelation" (Matt Redman)

At the heart of the music ministry at Christ Church is a desire to see God's people released into true praise and worship of our Father God and Jesus our Saviour. In our Sunday services, we seek through the Holy Spirit to create an environment where we can encounter God and respond to Him with heartfelt worship. One practical way in which we do this is to maintain a music group folder of 100 songs, which we refresh every year to ensure that what we sing reflects our beliefs and direction as a church. As worship leaders, we also keep listening to God during times of sung worship to discern what direction He would like us to take; this may involve something quite different from what we planned during rehearsal!

We continue to be blessed by having many people willing to give their time to the music ministry here. There are 49 active members in total: 31 musicians (including 9 worship leaders), 13 sound people, and 12 projector operators. We have been delighted to welcome no fewer than 9 people to the team this year which has helped the group considerably. We also said goodbye to Jonny Grange, Dave Lake and Rebekah Tennyson (all of whom are now at the new Hope Vineyard in Oxford) as well as projector operators Aidan Melville and Matt Kendall.

We are very excited about the return of Space band (14-18s) under the leadership of Chris Ellaby. As well as being our café intern, Chris is a student on the Worship Central Academy course and has joined us as a worship leader.

The music group engages in various activities outside of Sunday services. The monthly Hungry evenings are a chance to soak in God's presence and come close to him through worship. The group has also been involved in Burn 24/7 Oxford events, another opportunity to spend significant time in God's presence and to pray for the city of Oxford. Finally, many thanks to all who were involved in the music (particularly the choir) for the very successful Carol Service last December.

As ever, we'd greatly appreciate all your prayers for this ministry.

Ed Wiles, Worship Coordinator

SUNDAY DRIVING MINISTRY

Each Sunday there are three cars collecting one, two or three passengers to bring them to the 11.15 Service and to return them home afterwards.

There have been some changes in the rotas during the year, as some passengers have unfortunately died, or moved into care homes, while others have joined.

We are grateful to the 11 drivers currently on the list, who are on the rota, usually, for one Sunday per month. There are several other drivers on the reserve list, willing to step into the breach in an emergency, but unable to commit to a regular slot.

Roland Knight, Coordinator

CHILDREN'S WORK AT NORTHCOURT ROAD

Overview

We've had a great year in Christ Church Kids. We have 112 volunteers on our regular Sunday team across both sites, which is a mixture of 18+ leaders and 11-17 year olds. Plus all the extra volunteers who help with seasonal events, assemblies, prayer spaces and LINK. James Elward assists with the leading of the Children's Ministry and splits his time equally between children and youth.

A massive thanks for your support and prayers across the year and a special thanks to our volunteers of all ages who work alongside our 0-11s.

Sunday Groups

Northcourt Road

In Ignite in 2017 we looked at:

- The Sermon on the Mount
- Epic Bible Stories (and Emotional Health with years 5 & 6)
- Old Testament Models of Prayer

All the material is written in-house, which is hard work, but enables us to tailor it to our format and children.

Sparks have continued to follow the Beginner's Bible curriculum and enjoy stories and songs. This year Katharine deVilliers took on leadership of Sparks from Clare Simpson. We are very grateful for Clare for her leadership. The group continues to be a great space providing a safe fun place for our under 5s to grow in faith.

Long Furlong

Every month I go and join the Long Furlong kids team. I love spending time with the children at Long Furlong and feeling like part of the Long Furlong family. A huge thanks to Anne Taylor, who oversees the day-to-day running of the groups on that site, for her leadership. Please read her report for further details.

Seasonal Events

Sleepover

The annual sleepover is for years 4, 5 and 6. In 2017 we had 19 children for the event. Our focus for the day was on the Lord's Prayer. The children enjoyed worship, workshops, painting, wide game, takeaway and a movie. We also enjoyed simply hanging out together and we loved going in to church the following morning and leading prayers in the service.

Light Party

The Light Party in 2017 was a Messy Church style service in the church building preceded by a bring-your-own picnic tea. Many families of all ages were there worshipping together from both sites and from outside of the church. As usual it was a lot of fun and such a lovely way to worship Jesus, the Light of the World.

Holiday Club

Holiday Club 2017 received 112 children with a team of 82 (of which 26 were youth). We wrote our own material around the theme of Deep Sea Quest. We looked at how God Knows Me, God Loves Me, God Forgives Me and God Has a Plan for Me. The week ended as usual with a fantastic party and final celebration in church.

We have an amazing Core Team who lead the event, including 'Youth Apprentices' who lead alongside the adults, being trained in leadership and given opportunities to give talks and run activities. We had some major illnesses that impacted on the team but everyone pulled together and God strengthened us, guided us and blessed us.

Apprentice

In Summer 2017 we started Apprentice, a Life Group for Years 5 & 6. We meet once a month for 1.5hrs and it's a great opportunity for the children to ask questions and dig deeper. We have between 10 and 17 children each month, from across both sites.

Heather Hughes

PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT

Schools

We are blessed to be surrounded by great schools that have an open door for us to go in and support them.

Schools Ministry, however, isn't just about coming in occasionally and providing an assembly or lesson. Many people from Christ Church are governors, members of the Parent Teacher Associations, help in classes, or work at the local schools. Please pray for them as they witness day to day. There are also parent prayer meetings in Dunmore, Rush Common, Thomas Reade and St Nicolas Schools.

Assemblies

During the Year the Open The Book Team have taken fun, interactive assemblies in Rush Common, Dunmore, Long Furlong and St Nicolas. We are blessed with a great, enthusiastic team and the children always enjoy the assemblies. In 2016/17 we focussed Old Testament stories for the first time and in 2017/18 we are doing 'Living well with each other' looking at Jesus teaching on good relationships.

Peachcroft Christian Centre serves Thomas Reade and Rush Common.

Prayer Spaces

A Prayer Space is a space for children to take time out for prayer and reflection. The children move round the space in small groups with a volunteer from one of the local churches.

Across Abingdon the churches run lots of prayer spaces. In an average academic year the Abingdon team will have run 9 primary prayer spaces and 2 secondary ones. Due to the vast quantity of events of the year the role of the volunteers is vital, along with the necessity of churches working together.

The themes for the prayer space are varied due to how new the school is to prayer spaces and the type of school. In order to cut down the amount of work in preparation for 2017/18 we are running exactly the same Prayer Space in all the schools. We are using an under the sea theme (and therefore re-using all the props from Holiday Club) and fitting in with the S.T.O.P prayer tool (Sorry, Thanks, Others, Please). Between Heather, James and Sarah this has probably saved around 4-5 weeks of preparation work.

Please be praying for this ongoing ministry, that it would continue to be a blessing to the school and that more people would get involved to enable it to happen.

We have been blessed to receive money from Church in Abingdon through Desire over the last 3 years to buy the equipment we needed for the Abingdon Prayer Space team to be independent and not need to borrow much kit from the national team to put on a Prayer Space. In 2017 we spent the money on secondary prayer kit and a huge bubble tube!

School Visits

During 2017 we had the annual visits to Christ Church from Abingdon Prep for talks on Baptism and Communion, visits from Rush Common, St Nicolas and Dunmore. We also had a visit from St Hugh's school.

Heather Hughes

GODZKIDZ AT LONG FURLONG

We have 3 groups of children: Bubbles (pre-school); Splash (reception to year 2); X stream (year 3 to year 6). Chloe Wilson has been co-ordinating Bubbles and Anne Taylor is the children's worker for Long Furlong and co-ordinates Splash and X stream.

We currently have 11 children in Bubbles; 17 children in Splash and 22 children in X stream. We also have some visiting children.

Splash and X stream have been looking at the following topics since April 2017: Nature of God; Encountering Jesus; Beatitudes and the Psalms.

There are some social events that the children go to. They went to a pizza restaurant and will be going on a night hike in March. Some of our years 5 and 6 children go to the Apprentice group and a number of our children go to Holiday club and the annual sleepover at Northcourt Road.

We have a very dedicated team who serve in all 3 groups and I would like to thank all of them. I would particularly like to thank Chloe Wilson for all her hard work co-ordinating Bubbles and wish her and Stuart well when they start a new role in 4-filled at Long Furlong. I would also like to thank Jan and Kate who are stepping down from Bubbles and X stream and a warm welcome to Katie who helps in X stream. We have 3 youth helping – one in each group, which is very beneficial.

Anne Taylor

YOUTH WORK 2017

In August 2017 we bid farewell to Matt Luscombe after 7 years in post as Youth Pastor. Some highlights before Matt left included: the Genesis weekend away, a wonderful trip to Thorpe Park and the annual camp at New Wine. In March, Matt arranged a training event for parents and youth leaders focusing on Emotional Wellness, and in May the young people assisted in the recruitment of the new youth pastor, Bea Ellaby.

Shortly after starting in September, Bea and Keith arranged a gathering to meet youth parents and hear their hopes for this new season of youth work. After feedback, September saw the launch of a new group for Sixth Formers called Equip which explored topics such as Identity, Mental Health and Relationships. Space Band was also re-launched in September under the leadership of Chris Ellaby, the Café Intern. The young musicians have been using their sessions to grow closer as a group, and explore what it means to worship with a view to leading worship at the Youth Weekend Away and the 6.30pm services in 2018.

During October half term, Bea and Heather Hughes co-ordinated the redecoration of the Corner Suite which included a dedicated Youth Day where young people from a mixture of groups took part. A number of adult members of Christ Church also worked hard on the project, and the results have seen an increase in bookings and a huge impact on existing users. The Abingdon Bridge counsellors who use the building have noticed a big change in the atmosphere of their counselling sessions, and the youth now love hanging out in the Barnabas and Timothy rooms. The project was predominantly funded by an anonymous donor whom we're incredibly thankful for.

Our schools work continues to thrive. John Mason welcomed the Desire team for a week with Youth For Christ In February. The YFC Nomad team brought a football cage into the school and Matt led RE Lessons. This created an opportunity for Desire to host a Prayer Space at John Mason in November. Bea and the team were invited to lead Humanities lessons for all years 7 and 8, and some years 9 and 10. We reached over 500 young people and teachers over the week as we explored the theme of "Remembrance". We continue to serve John Mason with a weekly lunch club attended by 10-15 young people in years 8-9, some of whom also started to attend Youth Alpha at Genesis on Thursdays.

Shortly before Christmas the young people in Pathfinders lead a Christmas service around the theme of Jesus being the ultimate super hero. Heavy snow threatened to stop the service happening, but the devoted young people and helpers walked from as far as Sutton Courtney and Kennington to make sure it went on!

The youth work at Long Furlong continues to grow with most of the older youth now serving alongside adults in a variety of ways. At Christmas the Year 7-9 Lasers group contributed to the Christmas celebration with a fantastic performance.

We have amazing adult leaders on our teams, however, one of our biggest challenges this year has been a shortage of leaders. We are starting 2018 with a full review of our vision and strategy for youth work in consultation with the young people, parents and existing team.

Bea Ellaby

PRAYER AND BIBLE READING

Prayer and daily Bible reading are important to us as a church. We're grateful to Gill Shore for overseeing the distribution of **daily bible reading notes**, which was handed over to Lesley Chapman during the year.

Our ministry area leaders root their teams in **prayer**. As a church we pray together on **Sundays**. We are grateful to Janice Gordon for the comprehensive **monthly prayer diary** that informs our daily prayer. Each month we also gather for **Hungry** praise and prayer, and **Silent Prayer** (thank you Sarah Turner). We took part in the **Thy Kingdom Come** prayer initiative launched by the Archbishops praying for the re-evangelisation of the nation; the week included 24/7 prayer in the Prayer Room, prayer installations in Barn 2, and twice daily opportunities to experience different types of prayer under the banner TryPraying.

During the autumn we ran a three session **Prayer Ministry course**, seeking to equip people to be confident in offering to pray for people.

Keith Dunnett

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Our midweek small groups are a core strand in our pastoral support and in helping us grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Around 300 people are a part of a small group, although with the challenges of work and family life not everyone makes it each week.

We started the year with 29 **life groups**; over the course of the year four stopped, two started, and two had a change of leaders. Some meet weekly and some meet fortnightly.

Keith oversees the Northcourt Road Groups, meeting with life group leaders three times a year for training, encouragement, sharing of ideas, and keeping good communications working. Andrew Turner oversees the Long Furlong Life Groups. I'm grateful to the small group leaders and all that they do, the way they reflect the care and training of Jesus.

The missional communities have largely come to an end, although there is still a real interest in resurrecting some of them. The Fragile Earth missional community has morphed into the EcoCare group of the PCC.

Looking ahead, with my time taken covering Tim's role, we need to appoint someone to oversee the life groups. We are also looking to develop a link from the new Welcome Corner to help people join groups.

Keith Dunnett

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Henri Nouen, the Dutch theologian, writes powerfully of the role of hospitality in the development of the spiritual life of both individual and church, not in the sense of cosy tea parties, but rather in the Biblical sense of welcoming strangers into our lives and our homes. He sees hospitality as "a fundamental attitude towards our fellow human being, which can be expressed in a variety of ways."

It strikes me that the various modes of pastoral ministry, described here, reflect that attitude. All of the teams would gladly welcome some additional help. If you would like to explore being part of the ministry of hospitality, creating space for strangers, do get in touch with Ros or the team leader.

The Visiting team expresses hospitality as love and concern for others in prayerful and practical ways. A phone call, a card or personal visit reminds others that they are being remembered in love by the wider Church family. Particular thanks go to Maggie Snowball and Katrina Hancock for co-ordinating the team while Gabrielle was away with Mercy Ships.

"As Pastoral Visitors we continue to reach out to those who suddenly through illness or injury require support; have ongoing needs due to advancing years, or long term health concerns. We become aware of these needs mainly by word of mouth, and friends informing us of concerns they have for other Church members. However, this anecdotal way of finding out about people's needs has its downside; we don't always get to hear about a need as most people do not often ask for help themselves. Please do get in touch if you are aware of a need."

Gabrielle Dent, Visiting Team leader

Nouen describes hospitality as primarily the creation of a free space where the aim is "not to change people, but to offer a space where change can take place." The Prayer Ministry team offers just such a prayer-filled space for anyone after communion services. The prayer is confidential; listening to God and to the person who has come forward. In a similar way, the Pastoral Prayer Ministry team, led by Christine Bell, offers a longer period of time for listening and prayer. Prayer times are arranged by appointment during the week, and people come to receive that free space that they need to resolve issues, with the Holy Spirit's help.

"We have seen some amazing healings over the year as we press into God; backs and knees healed, a leg grown out - and as a team we are growing in confidence in listening to God. It is also encouraging to see the team growing from about 12 to 23 over the year.

Following Prayer Ministry training based around video material from Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) and some practical "hands on" experience in small groups, the team has grown in number and confidence.

The plan for 2018 is to grow the team to be able offer prayer ministry after every service, starting with a pilot in the 6.30pm service."

Mike Litt, Prayer Ministry team leader

The Footprints team (led by Pauline Croucher and Hilary Hart) offer a warm, hospitable space for bereaved people, on the second Tuesday of every month. Please see below for their full report.

The Intercessory Ministry, co-ordinated by Richard Howard and Jeremy Starling, has continued with a steady flow of requests and needs. This is about creating a space before God to bring all those hurting and in need, and is another aspect of hospitality. If you would like to ask for prayer for yourself or someone you know, do contact the leaders. My thanks go to all who offer hospitality in any form in His name. As we do so, may we all meet with Jesus himself.

Ros Steel, co-ordinator of Pastoral Care

FOOTPRINTS 2017

"Footprints", part of the church's ministry to bereaved people, had their 4th birthday in January 2018! We have grown steadily over the 4 years and now have a regular attendance averaging around 35 which includes up to 10 Team members.

Meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month in the New Barn from 10.30 to noon but guests often start arriving around 10.00. We are encouraged that guests themselves invite others to join us and that we see real friendships developing within Footprints. Members meet at other times during the month to support one another and have coffee, lunch and days out together. Additionally, Footprint-wide pub lunches and a summer tea-party organised by the Team were very much appreciated.

As a Team we particularly try to welcome the new guests and look out for those who are isolated and lonely, though everyone who comes expresses difficulty with loneliness. We ask guests to tell us of particular topics of interest and during the year we gently introduced Christian items, particularly around Festival times. We invite them to other activities at church and were greatly encouraged that a significant number attended the Advent Service of Thanksgiving and Reflection.

Many guests are not members of any church but have expressed their appreciation of the hospitality offered by Footprints and the opportunity to meet and talk with other bereaved people. The meetings have elements of fun, always food and developing fellowship and friendship.

For the team a highlight this year was an Away Day, led by Ros Steel on a lovely Spring day at Stanton House. We have a real sense of working together but would appreciate another man within the team because of the number of men coming to Footprints. We pray that our appreciative guests might realise that the Lord Jesus offers them so much more than we can.

Pauline Croucher and Hilary Hart

BUILDING CHURCH COMMUNITY AND OTHER MISSIONAL INITIATIVES

The church engages in mission both *scattered* and *gathered*. Scattered, as people live for Christ each day on their front lines. And Gathered as we seek to be light together and give people the opportunity to hear the gospel, 1:1 and drawing them into the family of God's people.

We took part in the Pre-election Hustings, hosted by CiA and chaired by our Chris Bryan. We ran a Messy Church all age worship at Dorchester Abbey on behalf of the Deanery during the Thy Kingdom Come initiative.

We've hosted several events during the year which we've been able to invite people to: **The Passion** – a powerfully emotive play by LAMPS just before Easter; we offered a TryPraying tent at the family **Fun in the Park** event in June; in the autumn we had an Advent Eco Bake Off, and rolled about laughing in church watching **Scrooge** by LAMPS in December. These were all events to help draw in people to the fringe of the church, and build good relationships. During the autumn we also held a ladies Alpha, aimed at mums with young children.

We've been putting quite a lot of energy into the plans for the **950 new homes in North Abingdon**. Local clergy have met together regularly to pray. We've held a church-wide prayer meeting seeking the Lord's leading. We have had several meetings with the developer CEG as they seek community input into the concept and design. We've supported the diocese in preparing a bid for the new primary school, including distributing a community questionnaire to determine the local demand for a church school. There have been preliminary discussions with adjacent parishes to consider moving the parish boundary to facilitate mission. 2018 will see a greater focus on seeking what the Lord is calling us to do in terms of mission on the new estate – we anticipate the first homes will be built in 2019.

Keith Dunnett

ALPHA 2017

Alpha 2017 began with a launch event in January organised jointly with Church in Abingdon and held at Abingdon and Witney College. 115 people attended and enjoyed a delicious meal, testimonies and an inspiring talk from Anne Wafala Strike a Paralympian.

Christ Church were then involved with 2 Alpha courses, one jointly with CIA for women held at the Broad Face pub on Monday mornings and the other on Wednesday evenings at Northcourt Road. The evening group was smaller than in previous years and for some this was their 2nd Alpha course. Both the morning and evening groups offered people the opportunity to explore faith, ask questions, build friendships and move forward on their journey of faith.

The practical team were amazing, offering a great welcome and warm hospitality each week. It was brilliant the way the Lifegroups provided such wonderful food for the guests and this was a real witness to God's love. The table hosts enabled folk to ask questions in a safe environment, there was much laughter and some tears as life was shared together. We used some of the new Alpha Film series which was very well-received, but also benefitted from a number of engaging speakers.

The Alpha Away Day at Ripon College, Cuddesdon was a very special day when people experienced the work of God the Holy Spirit in significant ways. The worship led by Ed Wiles and Sally Mears was beautiful and the sun even shone! We ran the day jointly with Peachcroft and St Edmunds which made a huge difference to the day and we greatly valued this partnership.

At the end of the course some from the groups joined the Explorers lifegroup which has enabled them to continue growing in faith. One lady from Alpha was confirmed in June.

In the autumn term another Alpha course ran on Monday mornings for women and a crèche ran alongside it to enable those with young children to attend. This was facilitated by Sharine Barth and Pamela Shirras and a great team who cared for the children and provided delicious cakes. The group used the Film Series, some had attended the evening Alpha, but for a couple of people this was their first experience of Alpha and they greatly valued this group and all that was shared.

Kath Cooke

CONFIRMATIONS

The confirmation and baptism service took place on 25th June 2017 with Bishop Colin. There were four young people confirmed and two were also baptised. There were also five adult candidates confirmed, one of whom joined us from All Saints, Didcot and it was lovely to have a number of folk from her church joining the celebration. It was a great service with moving testimonies shared and journeys of faith celebrated. After the service friends and family enjoyed refreshments in the hall.

Kath Cooke

FAMILY LIFE

Bill & Rosemary Buchan, with Paul & Karen Brombley ran a Marriage Preparation Course in their home for 5 couples who had weddings at Christ Church in 2017. This took place over 2 Saturdays in the spring and was followed by seeing the couples on a 1:1 basis for 2 evenings who had opted to complete the FOCCUS inventory as part of their preparation. The Marriage Course also took place in the spring over 7 evenings, which once again was full to maximum capacity and attended by 13 couples. The feedback was very positive and reflected the tremendous help it had been to their marriages and how special and pampered they had felt. A huge thanks to the team for their time and commitment that helped make this happen.

After 18 years of heading up the Marriage Ministry at Christ Church, Bill & Rosemary are now stepping down and passing the baton on to Paul & Karen.

We ran several one-off events to support parents, including a Grubby Faith evening with Sam Richards from Oxford Youthworks helping parents of 11-18 year olds encourage faith in their young people. We hosted a Young Persons Emotional Health conference in May. The Children's Team organised events for families: a Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday, and a Light Party as a brilliant alternative to Halloween on 31 October. We encouraged people to attend the Care for the Family Wisdom House event in Oxford.

Keith Dunnett

HOME FOR GOOD

The Home for Good group exists to provide a friendly, welcoming group for anyone who is interested in finding out about fostering, adoption, or in supporting those who are involved; as well as for carers themselves.

We were all very sad to say goodbye to Juliette, Helkias and the family, as they moved away at the beginning of the summer, and are very grateful for their amazing work in setting up and running our Home for Good group over the past few years.

Tania and I decided that it would be great if the group could continue, so we planned a program of events; a variety of family events and more adult focused evening events.

These have included a lovely day having fun and lunch together in Cutteslowe Park, in the October sunshine and enjoyable family afternoons sharing food and crafts and good company. Our most recent event was an evening for adults, where a few of us were able to chat, pray and eat cake in a relaxed setting.

We have been very grateful for the support of Katrina and Hilary, who regularly help set up, make tea, coffee, and baby

sit as well as offer moral support!

As with any parenting, fostering and adoption can be challenging at times, and it is great to be able to support each other, and explore together how our faith can impact on the challenges we face, enabling us to share God's love with the children in our care more effectively.

Jill Ward

LINK

Link continues to thrive with regular attendance on Wednesday mornings of 50-60 children, plus adults. The vision of the group is to be alongside parents/carers – sharing God's love, showing welcome to all, building relationships of trust and shining with Jesus' light. This year has seen an increasing diversity of parents and children attending, probably due in part to the closure of local children's centres. Link is very international with nationalities such as Polish, Indian, Brazilian and Iraqi - many arrive in Abingdon not knowing anyone so are extremely glad of the warm welcome they discover. Each week the group provides toys for the children to play with, delicious snacks and drinks for both adults and children and Jill leads an amazing singing session with nursery rhymes and Christian songs.

Special events during the past year have included:

- Harvest, Christmas, Easter and summer celebrations in church facilitated by Heather and James – Easter included Monty the donkey!
- Photographer
- Visit by health specialist (e.g. dental nurse)
- Prosecco, Nibbles and Puddings evening for parents
- Craft mornings e.g. Advent craft, Mothering Sunday craft

There are 10 wonderful people who are part of the Link team, Jason is very faithful and efficient at setting-up and clearing-up each week which makes an incredible difference. The rest of the team also set-up, clear-up, make numerous drinks, shop for refreshments, welcome everyone, chat and listen. They really do shine with God's love and their patience, kindness and wisdom is invaluable.

Prayer is vital to all we do, the team pray together before the morning begins and this year we have introduced a Prayer Box where people can write prayer requests for the team to pray for, this has been used and a number of moving requests shared.

It is a huge privilege to be involved with Link, it is a really incarnational ministry walking alongside people and sharing Jesus' love. We are thankful for all that God is doing in and through Link and continue to pray about how it develops in the future.

Kath Cooke

PRIME TIME

We had another exciting, vibrant Holiday Activity week in August with 270 participants signed up. Not all came every day but 200 plus attended each day which is enough in the space at coffee and lunch time. Over 150 attended the Pig Roast on the final day.

Many thanks to a great committee who helped make this happen: Janice Gordon, Ollie Lomax, Chris Waite, Di Bryan, Deborah Harford, Susan Hammersley, Maureen Weston, John Rogers, Ian Snowball, Michael Chown, David Turner and Rob Beale. Also a big thank you to Eileen Bontempelli for her wonderful administration leading up to the week and to Gabrielle Dent who headed up the pastoral team. Each of these people had teams under them and showing how many are involved in getting the week to run smoothly.

A talk by Philip Candy on the original Northcourt Farm and where the Christ Church buildings now stand was very popular. The Wimbledon umpire was very interesting and a local Doctor gave us a realistic picture of her life as a GP; she also gave us 10 tips on how to get the most of your visit to your GP.

I am now going to quote from some of the comments that I received after Prime Time, these give a real expression of how people felt.

“Prime Time was amazing”

“The Sunday service was exceptional, I can only guess at the time and effort that is put into organising Prime Time and I want you and your team to know how much it is appreciated”

From a Church goer elsewhere “the work is massive and it all went like clockwork. I hope that many people will seek to know God better”.

“Providing food and drink for so many was a marathon task”.

From a first timer: “We have been clearly shown this week an example of God’s love being strongly conveyed through the work of His people of great faith here at Christ Church.”

“Some sessions were of a practical nature allowing us all to join in and have a go, whilst others offered time to listen, think and reflect.”

“I looked forward to Kath’s Thought for the Day- beautifully and appropriately presented to catch our attention and make us think”.

“Prime Time was my holiday this year and I have been blessed with a 5* experience – a newcomer”.

These are just a glimpse at some of the comments that came to me. So a good time was had by many. We have continued in the year with Coffee, Cake and Chat, walks, table tennis and 3 small day Bible study groups.

Maggie Snowball

PRIME TIME HOLIDAY

In 2017 we repeated the innovation of 2016 by spending a whole week away. A party of 42 went to Paignton in south Devon where we returned to the Park Hotel, last used by us in 2014. The staff at the hotel were extremely helpful though the hotel itself was looking somewhat tired. The talks morning and evening were given by Rev Geoff Maughan, who was accompanied by his dog Pepsi. His morning Thought for the Day series took the theme of “The Harbour” and in the evening Epilogues Geoff addressed the question “Who am I?”.

We had three main organised days out. First a trip to Dartmouth and Totnes by steam train, ferry, river cruiser and open-topped bus. Great fun and quite energetic, if a little cold on the top deck of the bus coming home in the rain; the good humour shown by all was testimony to the warmth of our Christian fellowship! Then a long day out at the Eden Project – we slept well that night. And a day in Exeter to look around under our own steam, visiting such sights as the cathedral, the historic “Underground Passages”, the old Custom House, the excellent Museum and Art Gallery. Not to mention the cream tea shops... We had two free days, with suggestions provided of what to do, and on one an optional extra coach trip was organised to go into Dartmoor and another cream tea!

On the Sunday details of local churches were provided; the afternoon was free. In the evenings we had various activities and entertainments, including Songs of Praise, the ever-popular “DIY Show” when we discovered all sorts of hidden talents, and Holy Communion on the Sunday. A good time was indeed had by all!

Neil & Maureen Weston (Leaders)

MWM

MWM is a group for older male members of the church, particularly those who are free to take part in daytime activities during the week. Its aims include enabling men of the church and on the fringe to get to know one another better and to enjoy one another’s company through a range of activities.

2017 was a good year with new friendships made, older ones deepened, and several men joining us for the first time. There are nearly 50 on our emailing list, and we are always pleased to welcome new faces.

We generally meet once a month, varying the day of the week. In 2017 we met on three occasions in homes to share our favourite books and music etc., with plenty of time for discussion. Our external visits were wide-ranging. Fourteen of us had an interesting visit to the ERF waste re-cycling Centre at Ardley; a similar number were at Blenheim Palace on

a day of cold winds, when we largely stayed inside and the café was particularly appreciated! The Japanese Pottery kiln was seen in operation at Wytham, we visited the lovely Waterperry Gardens on one of the hottest days of the year, and we had a fascinating visit to the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. In September, after our summer break, we played (that is, we tried to play!) Aunt Sally and had lunch at The Plum Pudding pub. The following month, amid autumn colours, we walked around Harcourt Arboretum and visited the old church nearby- before another pub lunch. In November we had a particularly enjoyable tour of Christ Church cathedral, including the Upper Library, followed by tea in the Great Hall.

Our thanks go to the small planning group, whose committed members take turns in leading MWM events.

Michael Chown

51 FELLOWSHIP – THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP

What's in a name?

Many people puzzle at why we are known as 51 Fellowship? In the early days of David Price's ministry "Mid-week Break" was started for young mums to meet for teaching and fellowship. There was a similar need for older people expressed and a group was started for them. It became known as "51 Fellowship" as it initially met in a home "51" Northcourt Road! We have made the decision to change our name to the THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP. We hope it will end the confusion, and sound more inclusive.

It is my privilege to lead this shared ministry to older people, from within Christ Church, other churches in the area, sometimes visiting friends or relatives and for some it is their Church. I am supported and encouraged by the other committee members and helpers and the love and prayers of so many.

Our numbers are still around 80 with 10 housebound or in care, that we visit and keep in touch with. Several members have died or moved away through the year and new people have joined us. Our average attendance is 45-50 people. Generally people are only missing through illness, medical appointments or holidays.

God is Faithful. We are grateful to the various speakers, both Clergy and Lay from within our Church and the area, who bring God's word to us and are such a blessing. Themes this year have been "Our Loving Father" and two terms on "Promises"

On alternate weeks we meet in Elizabeth's home for Prayer Fellowship. A time to share, plan and pray for the ministry and any special needs.

We have a team of drivers for those needing transport that Margaret organises. *We are always grateful for any offers to help or a willingness to be on a reserve list.* A lot of those depending on lifts are only able to sit in the front seat and have walkers that need boot space. These can be heavy to lift.

We are extremely grateful to Stuart who on most weeks is free to set up for us. *We would though be grateful for help at the end of the morning, especially when we have our lunches.* We are really grateful for the nice appearance of the recovered "blue" chairs. They remain comfortable, but so heavy for us oldies to lift!

We are grateful to Ernie and Alison who prepare our lunches and Betty who comes to help with the washing up.

We support mission partners: Pat Herbert in Ghana the Warners in Spain, The Leprosy Mission, TEAR fund and the NSPCC. For some of us, there is an overlap of involvement with Prime Time Activities, The holiday and various Bible Study Groups.

Our prayer is that everyone who attends 51 Fellowship will feel welcome, accepted, loved and cared for and will respond to God's love for them and grow in faith.

Doreen Cooper

GENTS WHO LUNCH

This is an informal group of men (either “between jobs” or retired), based mainly at Long Furlong, that meets monthly to develop friendship and share support over an inexpensive lunch together at 12:30 in the Spread Eagle on Northcourt Road (on the third Tuesday of each month except for December).

During this last year we have been joined by new friends who are not members of Christ Church, but have links with us - bringing us up to 20. Of these, typically 6-10 managed to meet up on a typical Tuesday.

In October, we lamented the death of Paul Gibbons, who died peacefully at The Churchill Hospital aged only 54 years. Paul was one of the early successful heart transplant patients – so had been blessed with many years he otherwise might not have had with his wife and family.

Andrew Turner

RESIDENTIAL HOMES

ABINGDON COURT

Abingdon Court is a Care Home on Marcham Road, catering mainly for residents with various degrees of dementia. A small team from Christ Church has been going in once a month for about ten years to take a short (20 – 30 minute) service for the residents. The number of residents attending varies greatly. A rough average would be 6, and the maximum 13. Numbers on a particular day depend on the current state of health of the residents and how many staff are available.

The team consists of John & Gill Shore, Barbara Gyde, Maggie Baker-Rawle (guitar), Judy Riggs, Joyce Higgs, Dorothy Warner (piano)

The team members take it in turns to plan and lead the services.

Since the beginning the services have started at about 10:30 am, but we are, at the suggestion of the current Activities Coordinator about to change to 2 pm for a trial period, as she says that patients with dementia tend to be more awake at that time.

The theme of the service is chosen by the leader, and always includes a number of hymns, choruses or worship songs, plus short bible readings, (very) short talks and prayers. Over the years the talks have got shorter and the amount of singing greater!

Most of the residents are not obviously responsive, though some will react to songs and hymns that they have known in their younger days.

Some can take part in conversations to a limited degree.

It is of course usually impossible to know how much residents are 'taking in': we can only pray for the Holy Spirit's presence and power. He can communicate in ways that we cannot.

We must record our grateful thanks for the co-operation of the staff, particularly the Activity Coordinator. Without them this ministry could not take place.

John Shore

FOUNTAIN COURT (Retirement Home)

A service is held by us for the residents of Fountain Court on the 1st Wednesday of each month, with a communion service once a Term. This is always followed by refreshments and a time when meaningful conversations are had on a personal level.

We didn't feel the need to continue with the social afternoons after an Events Coordinator was appointed.

Although the numbers of those who attend the services are few, we know they value our visits and look forward to it.

We have been meeting together on the Monday before the service to pray for the needs of the residents. We feel very blessed to have Rev Kath Cooke joins us to lead the communion service, and the residents love having her.

The highlight of the year was when we had a special daytime service in December, instead of the usual evening carol service. This was followed by a snack lunch which was enjoyed by all. The service was again led by Rev Kath Cooke.

We had invited Ana from church to join us with her mother for this special service so that her mother could meet one of the residents who doesn't speak English. We were very pleased that Ana was able to interpret into Portuguese for both her mother and this resident, and that she is willing to join us whenever possible.

This resident who does not understand English is often there ahead of us, awaiting our arrival. Even though the language barrier prevents us from communicating verbally, it has shown us how God's love has no barriers.

I cannot fail to mention that this year one of the residents, and two of the team will be celebrating their 90th birthdays - GOD's LOVE KNOWS NO BARRIERS!

Leilani Jeevaratnam

THE FATHER'S TABLE

The Father's Table encompasses a range of projects in and for the community through which we hope to share the love of Jesus in practical ways.

The Abingdon Emergency Foodbank

Foodbank continues to be busy. Last year we had nearly 700 referrals, feeding over 1500 people. In addition, at Christmas, with help from Sophos, we gave out 175 festive parcels. New last year was a trial of 'Summer holiday' vouchers to encourage financially vulnerable families to make use of the foodbank in the long break. Also, we partnered with Julian Housing to provide 'New home packs' for people moving out of their supported accommodation in Abingdon. We now have a twice weekly supply of fresh bread from Degustibus bakery. We're hugely thankful to our dedicated team of 35 volunteers and the local community, schools, community groups and businesses who enable us to do what we do. If you'd like to make a donation, please do enquire about our current needs.

Hilary Beale and Sarah Fry

Abingdon Archway

The Archway Foundation was founded in Oxford to work with people affected by loneliness. During our 35th birthday celebrations this year we were reminded of the numerous folk who have been helped over this time either by attending a social group or having a regular visit from a Befriender. For many their contact with Archway is a lifeline especially if they are unable to leave their homes and are socially isolated. Sadly the problem of loneliness has not gone away but rather is more prevalent right across the age ranges.

Over the past year Archway in Abingdon has run social groups most weeks alternating between an afternoon 'drop-in' and an evening programme of entertainment. Our drop-ins for 'Tea and chat' have become a firm fixture on a Friday afternoon with home-made cake a great attraction! Some like a relaxed chat whilst others enjoy the opportunity to play a game. We are delighted to see new folk joining us.

In the evenings we have had an amazing range of speakers and musicians to whom we are very grateful. With subjects ranging from bee-keeping to lace-making, armchair travel trips to sing-a-longs of all sorts of music to stimulate conversation and encourage folk to participate.

None of this would be possible without the wonderful volunteers who drive passengers, welcome people, serve refreshments and chat to those who attend. Their work and commitment was recognised and rewarded with a presentation at the Vale of White Horse Unsung Heroes lunch in Wantage in the autumn.

Joy Dadswell, Abingdon Archway Coordinator

THE ABINGDON BRIDGE

The Abingdon Bridge supports vulnerable young people who find themselves in challenging circumstances. We help young people who have problems with alcohol and substance abuse, and increasingly offer 1:1 counselling – particularly for girls. The Corner Suite provides a discrete setting for some of our counselling work.

Following a significant increase in our income this year, TAB has been able to appoint Gary Hibbins as the Centre Manager as a response to a rapid increase in the number of young people requiring individual counselling. Some of this arises from high levels of stress, anxiety and depression directly linked to social media. To meet this need, 2018 sees the launch of SMART – our Social Media Anxiety Response Team – who will be working in schools and youth groups to help young people recognise the risks of constant interaction through social media.

TAB could not continue this essential work without the generous support of local churches, schools, businesses, voluntary organisations, charitable trusts as well as individual donors. TAB has become a lifeline for those young people who need our help and support in order to refocus their lives and get back on track. TAB also values the prayers of those who support this challenging work. Together, we can bridge the gap.

Chris Bryan, Chair of the Trustees

ABINGDON STREET PASTORS

Abingdon Street Pastors is a Church in Abingdon initiative under the umbrella of the Ascension Trust. Our core principles are "caring, listening, and helping." We aim to have a team of 3 or 4 Street Pastors in the town centre and ideally 2 or 3 prayer pastors providing support in a local church hall 10pm-2.30am Saturday into Sunday each week. Our relations with police, pub staff, and the public are excellent and we are often approached to be told how much we're appreciated. While we still regularly meet people who don't recognize us, we are increasingly a well-known part of the Saturday-night landscape in town and people frequently seek us out to be a listening ear or for help, often in situations where they would previously have had to involve the police or emergency services. A slight drop in trained volunteers has put significant pressure on filling the rota over the last year, but we rarely have to cancel a shift.

David Hancock

THE BARNS CAFÉ

Our vision is for the café 'to be a welcoming place that is a pleasure to come to, which demonstrates the love and values of Jesus and succeeds as a business'. We have five Missional Aims to help us focus on this: to be the best hosts we can be, to show kindness, to aim for excellence, to provide a place of sanctuary, and to act as one.

The café is open Tuesday-Friday 9am-4:30pm and Saturdays 10am-3pm, run by a superb team of around 40 volunteers (6 of whom are café supervisors) from churches in and around Abingdon, an intern, a deputy manager, a manager, and our cleaner. We have been welcoming a whole range of customers from across Abingdon and a lot of the volunteers say one of their favourite aspects of serving at The Barns is getting to know our different regular customers each week. Most days we meet someone new and it an absolute joy to see them return to introduce a friend, and become part of the Barns community.

Three times a year we gather as a whole team to eat together, worship, seek God's will and pray for the community, the café and each other. Each day, the team on shift pray together in the morning and evening, inviting the Holy Spirit in to the café, and interceding for each other. Every week we see how God has his hand in all the details, giving us all we need and enabling us to show His love and care in a practical way. It's amazing to hear customers comment on the peaceful atmosphere they experience in the café, even when they've been in over a really busy time. God has breathed his life into the café and people are stepping into this when they come in. We have continued to do our 'random act of kindness' giveaways, and are finding more and more ways to introduce our customers to the person of Jesus, and his unconditional love.

Our café activity groups continue to flourish, and we are praying about how to go deeper in these relationships to reveal God to the group members. You can find out more about our activities programme on our website www.thebarnscafe.co.uk. An exciting addition this year has been re-launching Resonate after a two-year break, as Resonate Lounge. It is a monthly creative live arts café evening aimed at the 18-30s(ish) of Abingdon. It's been great to gather this community which otherwise feels quite disjointed in Abingdon, and we're excited to see what God will do with it!

Every year we get busier and busier! We took £114,000 last year after VAT, and we have given a tithe donation of our profits to BEAM (Business Enterprise as Mission), a charity to support and start similar Christian missional businesses, as well as a donation to the PCC.

Find us on [facebook.com/barnscafe](https://www.facebook.com/barnscafe) or follow us on instagram and twitter @thebarnscafe if you'd like to keep up with what's going on!

Hannah Kitchener, Café Manager

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP (MSG)

The MSG is a sub-group of the Church Council, and seeks to:

- promote mission beyond the borders of Abingdon
- create a greater awareness of the world church
- ensure prayer and financial support for selected Mission Partners
- encourage church members to participate in short-term mission
- distribute the church budget for mission

The church has continued to support 11 Mission Partners, including Ashleigh Gibb who was commissioned by the church in January, shortly before leaving for Thailand with BMS. Over the year the MSG have met with several of our Mission Partners, including Gareth Rouch, Andy and Andrea Warner and Sarah and Jason Thomas. 94% of the budget of £74,436.00 was used for regular financial support of our mission partners, with the remainder allocated to short-term mission projects.

We have continued to encourage short-term mission trips, and financially and prayerfully supported Beth Dunnett on the 24/7 Prayer training and placement in Ibiza and Gabrielle Dent on her eight-week placement with Mercy Ships in Cameroon. We also provided some funding to three other projects connected to the work of our Mission Partners: Eileen Bontempelli to help Pat Herbert finalize the Vagla Bible, Sue Quantick supporting MAI's work in Embo in South Africa and a team of four to support the Warner's witness at the Benicassim Festival in Spain. We also supported Nottingham University CU Events Week

We held a Missions Weekend in May, when Paul Bendor-Samuel of OCMS spoke at Northcourt Road and Mim Friday of Viva spoke at Long Furlong. We held a Missions Evening on the Saturday, where we featured the work of Viva, Ashleigh Gibb and Short-Term Missions. We were disappointed at the low attendance and propose to explore a different type of event in 2018. In conjunction with the Missions Weekend, we published a new edition of the "Faith in Action" booklet.

A major initiative in 2017 has been the "Mission of the Month" leaflet which we launched in October, and has been welcomed by many in the congregation.

During 2017, MSG took the difficult decision of ending the partnership between the church and Gareth Rouch. For several years MSG has seen this relationship as one-sided with little information from Gareth. Despite a very clear and frank discussion with Gareth in January, there has been no improvement in communication from him. With his impending relocation to the UK, it was decided to terminate financial support with effect from the end of March 2018.

John Earwicker, who has been an exemplary Mission Partner, retired as Chief Executive of MAI and as a Mission Partner of the church at the end of December, and Pat Herbert will be retiring as a Mission Partner during 2018. Even with a reduced budget these changes have meant that we are able to maintain, and in some cases, increase the level of support to our Mission Partners for 2018.

Mission Support Group

THE CHURCH IN ABINGDON (CiA)

The CiA is a group of 13 churches who work together to bless the people of Abingdon. To proclaim the Gospel and encourage neighbourly care.

The CiA supports a wide range of groups and projects from across the town:

35 Ock Street

Back to 35 (in liaison with Age UK) and Archway (for those with loneliness issues).

The Abingdon Bridge

Abingdon Street and Prayer Pastors

The Christian Aid group

The weekly Christian Forum column.

The Church Twinning group

The Passion Play committee.

The DESIRE network

Experience Easter

Prayer Spaces

Abingdon Emergency Food Bank

What the churches have been working on together over the past year

January

Christian Aid had their annual New Year's Day Walk.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was marked by three events.

The Annual Quiz.

A United Service held at Abingdon Baptist Church.

Prayers took place each day at St Nicolas' Church.

The Annual Abingdon Alpha Launch took place at Abingdon/Witney College.

February

CiA AGM.

Christian Aid organised a collection at Tesco's.

March

CiA Lent Lectures took place at Salvation Army Headquarters.

The Women's World Day of Prayer was marked with a service at Abingdon Baptist Church.

The 8th Easter Experience took place at Trinity Church.

April

On Maundy Thursday shoe cleaning in the Market place.

On Good Friday, there was a procession of witness through the town followed by a service in St Nicolas Church.

May

Pre-election hustings at the Amey Theatre.

Christian Aid week celebrated its 60th anniversary with various events

Several Abingdon churches took part in 'Thy Kingdom Come' a national prayer initiative initiated by Archbishop Justin Welby.

June

Various churches worked together to represent the CiA at Abingdon's Fun in the Park.

The Vineyard Church led in supporting the South Abingdon Play Day event.

Church Twinning organised a visit to St Niklaas.

October

Michaelmas fair service in town.

November

The Abingdon Prayer Space team ran another full week in a secondary school.

The Annual Bereavement Service was organised in conjunction with local funeral directors.

Several activities were hosted at St Nics as part of the Abingdon Extravaganza.

Church Twinning welcomed Christians from Argentan.

December

Christian Aid organised carol singing at the pre-Christmas Farmers' Market.

Sandra Pike, CiA Rep for Christ Church

NEW WINE

This year we had almost 130 people from both sites at Christ Church, and were joined by 17 from Peachcroft. This was a lovely opportunity to spend time with one of our partner churches. The weather was a little challenging but a little bit of mud didn't get in the way of fellowship, word and worship.

Once again we managed to share a number of social events we had - the cream tea for over 100 was a great event, as was the cheese and wine evening, board games and colouring event and, my favourite, a picnic lunch followed by an agape meal - sharing bread and wine together.

There were many more informal gatherings - probably one of the most valuable bits of New Wine - spending time together as God's family. There's never enough time on a Sunday, and it's easy to stay with the people you know. New Wine gives a chance to mix with people from all the services, across both sites.

As he did last year Keith encouraged people to share their own stories of what happened to them, afterwards. Stories of healing, pictures from God, words of encouragement, friendships deepened, and fantastic worship times. God is faithful and unchanging, and never lets us down. New Wine is one of the places that we make time to let God remind us of this. We look forward to gathering at New Wine again this summer. We hope to see you there.

Karen Brombley

THE CHURCH OFFICE

Those in the church office continue to support and ease the burden of administration in the church for the clergy and staff team. We are here to help! The church office is the central point for making arrangements for weddings, baptisms and funerals; for facilitating room bookings, and repairs and maintenance of the church premises and property; for preparing the weekly newsletters and service sheets; for dealing with enquiries and telephone calls, and for solving the miscellany of issues that arise.

In September we were sad to say farewell to Andrew Walker, Facilities Administrator, who left to accompany his wife to her new job in Baltimore. In October Alison Grieve took up this post on a temporary contract for one year; likewise Jackie Sheppard joined us as admin assistant for one day a week, as Christine had reduced her working week by one day, so she could look after one of her grandsons, and prepare for retirement!

We appreciate greatly the faithful service of Mark Chapman and Stuart Twinn our cleaning staff who keep the premises clean and welcoming to regular users and visitors.

Christine Talbot, Church Administrator

FINANCE SUMMARY

[Further information in the Report to the Charity Commissioners available separately]

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	Total
	Note	2017	2017	2017	2016
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS					
Voluntary income	2 (a)	449,448	30,803	480,251	468,739
Activities for generating funds	2 (b)	-	-	-	-
Income from investments	2 (c)	15,925	-	15,925	14,281
Church activities	2 (d)	75,644	-	75,644	83,114
TOTAL INCOME		541,017	30,803	571,820	566,134

EXPENDITURE					
Church activities	3 (a)	548,227	35,761	583,988	560,228
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>548,227</u>	<u>35,761</u>	<u>583,988</u>	<u>560,228</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(7,210)	(4,958)	(12,168)	5,906
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS		140	(140)	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(7,070)	(5,098)	(12,168)	5,906
Balances at 1st January		2,655,928	39,167	2,695,095	2,689,189
Balances at 31st December		<u>2,648,858</u>	<u>34,069</u>	<u>2,682,927</u>	<u>2,695,095</u>
BALANCE SHEET					
AT 31ST DECEMBER 2017					

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017	Total 2017	Total 2016
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible Fixed Assets	5	2,417,248	-	2,417,248	2,437,742
Investments	6	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
		<u>2,417,249</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,417,249</u>	<u>2,437,743</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	7	80,576	1,746	82,322	83,435
Short Term Deposits		113,694	18,181	131,875	88,121
Cash at bank & in hand		<u>38,839</u>	<u>14,142</u>	<u>52,981</u>	<u>89,729</u>
		<u>233,109</u>	<u>34,069</u>	<u>267,178</u>	<u>261,285</u>
LIABILITIES					
Amounts due within one year	8	1,500	-	1,500	3,933
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>231,609</u>	<u>34,069</u>	<u>265,678</u>	<u>257,352</u>
NET ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		2,648,858	34,069	2,682,927	2,695,095
LIABILITIES					
Amounts due after one year	8	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		<u>2,648,858</u>	<u>34,069</u>	<u>2,682,927</u>	<u>2,695,095</u>

FUNDS

Unrestricted	9, 10	2,648,858	-	2,648,858	2,655,928
Restricted	11, 12	-	34,069	34,069	39,167
		<u>2,648,858</u>	<u>34,069</u>	<u>2,682,927</u>	<u>2,695,095</u>

Timothy Shipman
Treasurer

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The Parish is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS 102.

The financial statements have been prepared under The Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and with the Regulations "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standard and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP (FRS102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown as fair value.

The parish adopted SORP(FRS) for the first time in the previous financial year.

The transition date to SORP(FRS 102) is therefore 1 January 2015. No adjustment has been made to comparative financial information in respect of the Parish's transition to SORP(FRS 102).

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the Parish that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the Parish. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the Parish are also unrestricted.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with special restrictions imposed by the donor.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parish is responsible in law.

They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal church members.

Income

Voluntary income and capital sources

Collections and planned giving are recognised when received by or on behalf of the Parish.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the church are accounted for as soon as the Parish is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due.

Funds raised by fund-raising events are accounted for as gross.

Sales of books and magazines are accounted for gross.

Other ordinary income

Rental income from letting church premises is recognised when the rental is due.

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal and constructive obligation and settlement is probable and quantifiable.

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded.

Activities directly related to the work of the Parish

The diocesan quota or parish share is accounted for when payable.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

Fixed Assets

Tangible Fixed Assets

As of 1st January 2015 only items costing more than £1,000 are capitalised as assets.

Items are depreciated on the following basis:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Basis</u>	<u>Period</u>
Office Equipment	Straight Line	3 Years
Fixtures and Fittings	Straight Line	3 Years
Plant and Machinery	Straight Line	5 Years
Cost of Buildings	Straight Line	100 Years

The parish owns various freehold properties, the majority of which were acquired prior to the requirement to capitalise such expenditure. These properties have therefore not been included in cost.

Freehold property acquired more recently is included at cost.

Fixed Asset Investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at historical cost less provision for any diminution in value.

Current Assets

Amounts owed to the Parish at 31st December in respect of fees, rents and other income are shown as debtors.

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

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

2. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017	Total 2017	Total 2016
(a) Voluntary income				
Planned Giving:				
Covenants and Gift Aid	265,355	6,515	271,870	266,210
Income Tax Recoverable	69,098	2,386	71,484	73,197
Other Giving	68,428	-	68,428	76,988
Collections (open plate)	15,336	-	15,336	16,871
Sundry donations	31,231	21,902	53,133	35,473
Grants	-	-	-	-
Legacies	-	-	-	-
	<u>449,448</u>	<u>30,803</u>	<u>480,251</u>	<u>468,739</u>
(b) Activities for generating funds				
Fetes & other fund-raising activities	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

(c) Income from investments

Dividends & Interest including any reclaimed tax

Rental Income - Temporary let

311	-	311	447
15,614	-	15,614	13,834
<u>15,925</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,925</u>	<u>14,281</u>

(d) Income from church activities

Events, Conferences, Courses etc

Bookstall

Church Hall Lettings

The Barns Café

Fees

39,077	-	39,077	36,602
769	-	769	1,686
25,106	-	25,106	33,551
7,200	-	7,200	7,200
3,492	-	3,492	4,075
<u>75,644</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>75,644</u>	<u>83,114</u>

TOTAL

<u>541,017</u>	<u>30,803</u>	<u>571,820</u>	<u>566,134</u>
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017**3. EXPENDITURE**

	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017	Total 2017	Total 2016
(a) Church Activities				
Church Overseas	67,689	4,024	71,713	56,482
Home Mission	46,472	5,982	52,454	51,225
"Opening the Doors" Tithe	-	-	-	-
Secular Charities	-	3,398	3,398	248
Ministry				
Diocesan Quota/Parish Share	159,927	-	159,927	147,958
Incumbent Working Expenses	262	-	262	639
Assistant Staff	14,339	-	14,339	13,527
Church Running Expenses	25,899	-	25,899	32,504
Church Maintenance	16,462	-	16,462	8,252
Upkeep of Services	20,254	-	20,254	19,785
Bookstall	976	-	976	2,261
Support Costs	-	-	-	1,920
Property Rental	11,302	-	11,302	-
Other PCC Property Upkeep	20,149	-	20,149	29,780
The Barns Café	5,271	-	5,271	1,973
Salaries, wages and Honoraria:				
Associate Minister	-	-	-	-
Youth & Children's Work	65,017	-	65,017	65,652
Parish Administrators	45,539	-	45,539	50,760
Cleaners	11,350	-	11,350	11,496
Staff Recruitment	1,977	-	1,977	746
General administration	8,807	-	8,807	10,125

Equipment & Replacements	3,513	22,357	25,870	8,466
Depreciation	20,494	-	20,494	43,349
Management fee	1,500		1,500	2,174
Bank charges	1,028	-	1,028	906
	<u>548,227</u>	<u>35,761</u>	<u>583,988</u>	<u>560,228</u>
TOTAL	<u><u>548,227</u></u>	<u><u>35,761</u></u>	<u><u>583,988</u></u>	<u><u>560,228</u></u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

3(b). ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COST EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017	Total 2017	Total 2016
Independent examiner's fees	1,920	-	1,920	1,920
Other Support cost	-	-	-	0
	<u>1,920</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,920</u>	<u>1,920</u>

4. STAFF COSTS

During the year the church employed an average of 11 members of staff (approximately 8 full-time equivalent staff): a full-time youth pastor, a full-time children's minister, a full-time manager and deputy manager for the Barns Café, two full-time administrators, a full-time parish assistant and three cleaners. No staff member earned more than £60,000.

	2017 £	2016 £
Salaries, wages & honaria	113,282	119,284
Social security costs	8,372	8,372
Pension cost	252	252
	<u>121,906</u>	<u>127,908</u>

None of the Trustees received any remuneration or employee benefit during the year, where applicable the lay trustees, acting as agents to the Parish, made approved expenses in accordance with Church of England guidelines. These are shown in note 3.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2016

5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Freehold Property	Plant & Machinery	Office Equipment	Fixtures & Fittings	Total
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<u>Cost</u>					
At 1st January 2017	2,491,951	6,747	7,730	76,374	2,582,802
Additions in the year	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals in the year	-	-	-	-	-
At 31st December 2017	<u>2,491,951</u>	<u>6,747</u>	<u>7,730</u>	<u>76,374</u>	<u>2,582,802</u>

<u>Depreciation</u>					
At 1st January 2017	58,228	6,747	6,816	73,269	145,060
Additions in the year	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals in the year	-	-	-	-	-
Charge for the Year	<u>18,250</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>914</u>	<u>1,330</u>	<u>20,494</u>
At 31st December 2017	<u>76,478</u>	<u>6,747</u>	<u>7,730</u>	<u>74,599</u>	<u>165,554</u>

Net Book Value

At 31st December 2017	<u>2,415,473</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,775</u>	<u>2,417,248</u>
At 31st December 2016	<u>2,433,723</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>914</u>	<u>3,105</u>	<u>2,437,742</u>

Freehold property includes land of £712,318 which is not depreciated.

The Market Value of the Freehold Property is considered to be in excess of the above carrying value, however it is not considered practicable or cost effective to quantify the difference.

6. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Total 2017	Total 2016 £
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

The Parish of North Abingdon owns the whole of the ordinary share capital of The Barns Café Limited, a company registered in England which operates as a café.

The profit for the financial period of The Barns Café Limited was £1,090 and the aggregate capital and reserves at the period end was £5,440.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

7. DEBTORS

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
Income Tax Recoverable	69,043	1,746	70,789	71,306

Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	4,337	-	4,337	4,431
Amount owed by Subsidiary Undertaking	7,196	-	7,196	7,698
	<u>80,576</u>	<u>1,746</u>	<u>82,322</u>	<u>83,435</u>

8. LIABILITIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
Amounts falling due within one year				
Sundry Creditors and Accruals	1,500	-	1,500	3,933
Loans	-	-	-	-
	<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>3,933</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year				
Loans	-	-	-	-

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

9. ANALYSIS OF UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	Fixed Assets £	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Total £
General Funds	2,417,249	184,750	(1,500)	2,600,499
<u>Designated Funds</u>				
The Barns Café - Surplus	-	5,931	-	5,931
The Barns Café - Equipment	-	22,428	-	22,428
Tithe Barn Refurbishment	-	20,000	-	20,000
	<u>2,417,249</u>	<u>233,109</u>	<u>(1,500)</u>	<u>2,648,858</u>

10. MOVEMENT ON UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Transfers £	Income £	Expenses £	Carried Forward £
General Funds	2,627,098	(19,860)	536,217	(542,956)	2,600,499
<u>Designated Funds</u>					

The Barns Café - Surplus	11,202	-	-	(5,271)	5,931
The Barns Café - Equipment	17,628	-	4,800	-	22,428
Tithe Barn Refurbishment	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
	<u>2,655,928</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>541,017</u>	<u>(548,227)</u>	<u>2,648,858</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2016

11. ANALYSIS OF RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Long-term Liabilities £	Total £
Centre Project	-	-	-	-
Children's Society	-	-	-	-
Charity Collections	(2)	-	-	(2)
Equipment	(1,091)	-	-	(1,091)
Foodbank	9,021	-	-	9,021
GodZone	205	-	-	205
Home Mission	(76)	-	-	(76)
Link	1,640	-	-	1,640
Overseas Mission	776	-	-	776
Pastoral	135	-	-	135
Refurbishment	21,094	-	-	21,094
Vicars Discretionary Fund	2,367	-	-	2,367
Youth Work	-	-	-	-
	<u>34,069</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,069</u>

12. MOVEMENT ON RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Transfers £	Income £	Expenses £	Carried Forward £
Centre Project	2,391	-	-	(2,391)	-
Children's Society	397	-	213	(610)	-
Charity Collections	-	-	500	(502)	(2)
Equipment	-	-	1,984	(3,075)	(1,091)
Foodbank	5,583	-	4,760	(1,322)	9,021
GodZone	205	-	-	-	205
Home Mission	225	(140)	1,084	(1,245)	(76)
Link	1,633	-	431	(424)	1,640
Overseas Mission	2,202	-	4,252	(5,678)	776
Pastoral	106	-	2,026	(1,997)	135
Refurbishment	23,391	-	14,594	(16,891)	21,094
Vicars Discretionary Fund	2,382	-	-	(15)	2,367
Youth Work	651	-	960	(1,611)	-
	<u>39,166</u>	<u>(140)</u>	<u>30,804</u>	<u>(35,761)</u>	<u>34,069</u>

13. DESCRIPTION OF FUNDS

Designated Funds - Set aside by the PCC

The Barns Café - Surplus

The café bar was set up with the express intention to serve the local community and not to make a profit from it. During the first year of operation there has been a surplus due to unique conditions that are unlikely to be repeated. This fund includes the surplus from the cafe and will be reinvested in community work in the future.

The Barns Café - Equipment

This designated funds has been set up for the replacement of equipment in the Barns Café. The intention is to have a total fund after five years of £25,000.

Tithe Barn Refurbishment

This designated fund has been set up for future refurbishment of the tithe barn at Northcourt Road site. The intention is that in 2019 there will be a major overhaul of internal (heating, layout) and possibly the external (roofing).

Restricted Funds - Given with a particular purpose

Centre Project

To fund the redevelopment of the Northcourt Barns and Dairy Yard.

Children's Society

A special collection for this charity.

Charity Collections

Special collections by Christ Church for various charities

Equipment

Donations used to replace/improve equipment at Christ Church

Foodbank

Donations to the Abingdon Emergency Foodbank.

GodZone

Donations to support children's work at Christ Church.

Home Mission

Funds raised for mission opportunities in the parish and the diocese.

Link

Funds raised by the Christ Church Link group and used to support ongoing work.

Overseas Mission

Donations made to support Christ Church mission partners and other Christian mission organisations working overseas.

Pastoral

Donations made to support specific pastoral situations within the church

Refurbishment

Donations to be used for improvements to buildings.

Vicars Discretionary Fund

Donations to be used at the Vicar's discretion.

Youth Work

Donations to be used for youth work.

14. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Philip Bingham (a trustee and churchwarden of the church) is also an employee of CMS. During the year the church made donations to CMS totalling £5,000 (2016: £2,000).

The PCC pays 'Parish Share' to the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance.
Our clergy are PCC trustees and employees of the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance.

Donations received from the PCC trustees totalled £60,766 during the reporting period of which an additional £14,252 was recoverable through gift aid.

During the year the Barns Cafe Limited paid £XXXX to the Parish of North Abingdon in respect of donations £XXXX (2016 - £7,200), £4,800 repairs cost (2016 - £4,800) and £2,400 heat and light (2016 - £2,400). At the balance sheet date the amount due from the Barns Cafe Limited was £XXXX. *[awaiting figures from the accountants]*

There were no unclaimed expenses by trustees

BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The buildings committee of David Wadham, Chris Fox, David Hancock, Graham Gibbins, George Feeney, Colin McManus and Roland Knight, chaired by Andrew Turner, met on 18th January and 9th March to plan work during 2017 and again on 25th October to review and update priorities for a ten year plan and recommend a budget to the PCC for 2018. Andrew Turner stood down after this meeting as chair, having served for six years. A replacement has not as yet been found.

A log of all maintenance and repair tasks was administered by Andrew Walker until his departure in August, and since then by Grahame Gibbins. This is derived from Quinquennial inspections (most recently November 2016), issues reported by users, cleaners or observed during periodic inspections by Andrew, and since August by Alison Grieve. These were prioritized by the committee (either during meetings, or by e-mail) and allocated as appropriate to volunteers or contractors.

As well as tasks undertaken by Committee members or other key volunteers, a series of Work Days were organized on Saturdays (18/3, 29/4, 20/5, 23/9) in addition to two major projects led by David Wadham replacing the cladding and insulation to the rear of Barn 4 (Facing Northcourt Farm) and also upgrading the Lounge Ceiling and Lighting. David Illingworth led the decoration of walls and woodwork in the Lounge. All of these involved significant volunteer support, with a number of smaller teams undertaking specific assignments at other times. Altogether, 106 tasks were completed (31 outside and 75 inside) - 24 by Contractors, with 82 by volunteers - saving an estimated £50,000. Scheduling of regular maintenance tasks e.g. servicing of the church/property boilers and annual PAT testing of electrical appliances, are posted on a Google Diary.

In addition to a myriad of electrical, plumbing and woodworking repairs and decoration, the more significant tasks undertaken included: WC refurbishment by Hillsdon's (project managed by Grahame Gibbins), completion of Fire Door

installation (A G Lee), wood rot repair and general painting externally and internally, completion of a soak-away to the west side of Church, a thermal survey and draft proofing of the Tithe Barn as an interim measure before the refurbishment planned for 2019/2020, installation of automatic door closers (Pyrotec) in the corridor between the Foyer and Hall, emergency lighting installation, installation of a new man-hole cover outside Lounge, replacement of the green chairs with new chairs (gifted from MRC); reupholstering and recovering of other chairs by Hilary Beale and team.

Major Jobs Planned for 2018

Foyer information screen, welcome desk, seating
Refurbishment of the kitchen area and replacement of the carpet in the Lounge
Tarmac W side of Church for additional car-parking spaces
Completion of upgrades at 34 Geoffrey Barbour Road (Youth Pastor's house).

Ten year Plan Main tasks

2019/20: Church roof retile; Redecorate/refurbish inside Church; replacement chairs
2020: Is there a business case for Barns Phase III (Kitchen & Loos) refurbishment?
2025: Replace Lounge/Upper Room/Link Corridor/Corner Suite, as these will have reached end of life.

Andrew Turner

SAFEGUARDING AT CHRIST CHURCH ABINGDON

Safeguarding is fundamental to the life of the church, with the aim that no-one (child or adult) should feel threatened or harmed in any way. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, and it is for this reason that our policies and procedures are displayed widely on notice-boards and on the website. Everyone ought to be able to make their concerns known to a relevant person if they become aware of anything that seems wrong.

During the calendar year the following activities took place

1) Policies:

The PCC reviewed and approved minor changes to the following policy documents:

- Parish Safeguarding Policy
- Guidelines for Working with Children
- Guidelines for Working with Vulnerable Adults,
- Policy for Use of Social Media with 11-18s

These were all approved at the PCC Meeting on 8th May 2017 and are available for public view on the Christ Church website.

2) Documentation

a) Full "safe recruitment" process was completed for 26 new individuals for work in the children's and youth departments (C&YP) and 6 individuals for Vulnerable Adult (VA) ministry. The VA volunteers processed were to enable the formation of a Pastoral Visiting Team for Long Furlong. The process includes enhanced DBS checks, references, etc.

b) Renewal of DBS checks (at 5 year intervals per Diocesan guidelines) for 12 individuals for C&YP work and none for VA work.

c) There are currently 223 individuals between the two church sites holding a valid DBS check for work with C&YP, and 48 individuals for VA work, though not all of them are currently active.

d) During this year the Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS) in London, who had been the Diocesan "agency" for DBS applications, closed their service, and the Diocese recommended a changeover to a commercial provider called APCS. PCC approval for the change of agency was given on 25th September 2017. APCS have processed about 15 applications for us thus far, and have proved very efficient and helpful and are considerably cheaper than CAS.

3) Training

We are fortunate in having two approved Diocesan safeguarding trainers in the congregation - Anne Taylor and Val Challis. This means that it is relatively easy to organise training for those who need it, and our Barn facility means that we can make the training available to other churches in the area. It is part of our policy that each individual involved in either C&YP or VA provision should receive refresher training every 3 years. 4 training sessions were organised during the year, as follows:

January 2017 - training for VA volunteers - 35 CCA individuals trained, none from other churches

January 2017 - training for C&YP volunteers - 19 from CCA and 5 from other churches

September 2017 - training for VA volunteers - 7 from CCA and 11 from other churches

September 2017 - training for C&YP volunteers - 22 from CCA and 8 from other churches

The Diocese approved a new training curriculum in 2017, which is being implemented for future training. Those who have not yet received any training, and those whose training was in 2015 or earlier, will receive the new C1 course.

4) Safeguarding Incidents or Reports

Everyone is probably now aware that the CDM complaint against Tim Davis had safeguarding concerns at its heart, though not of a sexual nature. It is a deep regret that a young person has been harmed within our congregation, and we want to ensure that healing can take place and that it cannot happen again.

It was agreed at the January PCC meeting that we should ask for an external audit of our safeguarding processes to restore public confidence in the Church, and to ascertain whether there were any deficiencies in our safeguarding guidelines, procedures, training and monitoring. This audit is to be carried out by CCPAS, and should take place in March or April 2018.

There have been 3 other reports of safeguarding concerns during the year, but none of them have led to further action. One safeguarding agreement is in place and is regularly reviewed.

5) Acting Parish Safeguarding Officer

During the 2 month absence of the author in October and November 2017, Val Challis stood in as acting PSO. Many thanks to her.

6) Diocesan Safeguarding Audit

The safeguarding policies and practices of the Diocese were audited by an external agency during the summer. The same agency is in process of auditing every Diocese in the country. Their comprehensive report is available on the Diocesan website. (<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Oxford-FINAL-PDF.pdf>)

7) Year ahead

During 2018, I will be reviewing with Bea Ellaby and Heather Hughes the possible needs for additional training, for a review of our consent forms, and additional items for inclusion in the policy on the use of Social Media. There may also be changes required by the audit of our safeguarding processes, and of our data processing as the GDPR regulations are implemented.

Roland Knight, Parish Safeguarding Officer

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Much of the work this year has been reactive to specific needs. We had planned some changes to procedures, but these have been delayed due to not appointing an Operations Manager. An automatic closing system has been introduced on the Fire Doors between Church and the Hall enabling the doors to be locked open and automatically close in case of fire. We have had a couple of staff join with specific health needs. Peter Butler (H&S Co-ordinator) has worked with them to ensure that their requirements are met. Peter has also been walking the site on a regular basis to ensure health and safety is maintained and liaises with the facilities administrator for necessary changes to be actioned.

Accident Reporting – We have had 9 accidents reported this year as well as a couple of near misses. Most are of a minor nature. All are reviewed, and suggestions are made to help avoid similar instances in the future. None of the incidents required reporting under RIDDOR regulations.

Paul Brombley, Chair – Health & Safety subgroup

IT GROUP

The IT Group continue to deliver general desktop support and advice to CCA staff, maintaining and reviewing the existing networks and equipment in the church. In October we managed to gain some savings and speed improvements in replacing the CCA office broadband contract. Currently we are supporting the GDPR Team looking at securing our systems and strengthening working policies in preparation for GDPR compliance in May-18. Additionally we are evaluating a selection of Church Management Software suites so that we can centralise and manage our contact data to ensure communication preferences can be respected, and that sensitive data can be secured.

Simon Farres

HR GROUP

1. Annual Staff Reviews: All employees at Christ Church now have an annual review with their line manager. This process was introduced in June 2016 after a period of consultation and training. This provides an opportunity to reflect on the previous year and to set appropriate agreed targets for the year ahead.
2. During the year, the Policy for annual leave has been reviewed in order to resolve some anomalies particularly for part time staff.
3. We are seeking to introduce a Dignity at Work policy and a Whistleblowing policy which promote acceptable practice for all employees. However we are also exploring ways in which all our staffing policies can be aligned to the policies adopted by the diocese for its own staff. In this way, there is less likelihood of any issues being overlooked.

Chris Bryan, HR Group Coordinator

STAFF TEAM

We have had considerable changes to the staff team this year, with Matt Luscombe heading off to train as a vicar, Sarah Grange choosing to not return after her maternity leave so she can look after Isaac, Andy Walker immigrating to the USA, and Jacob Edwards completing his apprenticeship.

Over the year we have recruited seven staff members, with a thorough recruitment process overseen by our HR team including advertising, job specs, shortlisting, and interview panels. The new staff are: Youth Pastor (Bea Ellaby), Barns Café Manager (Hannah Kitchener), Deputy Café Manager (Alex Lister), Intern Barns Café (Chris Ellaby), Lay Minister (Nessa Watts), Temporary Facilities Administrator (Alison Grieve) and Temporary part time Administrative Assistant (Jackie Sheppard). The latter two positions are on a temporary basis as we were not able to make an appointment to the Operations Manager role.

Keith Dunnett

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT FOR THE PARISH OF NORTH ABINGDON FOR THE APCM ON 22 APRIL 2018

During the last year there were a total of 41 additions and 37 deletions to the 2017 electoral roll of 558, giving a new roll of 562, including Peachcroft Christian Centre.

Worship Centre	Roll data from April 2017	Additions	Deletions	Transfers	Net Change	Electoral Roll at 22 April 2018
Northcourt Road	396	+33	-30	+4	+7	403
Long Furlong	136	+8	-7	-4	-3	133
Christ Church Total	532	+41	-37	0	+4	536
Peachcroft Christian Centre	26	0	0	0	0	26
Parish Total	558	+41	-37	0	+4	562

Signed: **Alison Grieve, Electoral Roll Officer**

10 April 2018

CHRIST CHURCH NORTH ABINGDON PCC

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2017

Introduction: Roland Knight (NCR am)/ Philip Bingham (LF & Eve)

The AGM was being held as part of the services during the day i.e. 9.30am, 11.15am and 6.30pm at the Northcourt Road site and the 10am service at Long Furlong School.

Roland/Philip explained that this is Vision Sunday, when we look back with praise for what God has done, and forward to catch a glimpse of what his plans are next. We have two formal meetings to complete here this morning (evening): Officially, the first meeting (Annual Meeting of Parishioners) is open to anyone on the Church Electoral Roll **and** anyone resident in the Parish and entered on the local government electoral register. Anyone in those two groups is eligible to attend the AMP and to vote. The second meeting is the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), and those whose names are on the Church Electoral Roll may attend and vote. Anyone else may attend, but is not eligible to vote: no-one is excluded. The APCM is also referred to as the AGM and certain business must be completed.

An attendance log of parishioners and Electoral Roll Members was available at each service with people asked to sign in as a formal record of attendance. There was also a bring and share lunch at 12.30 at Northcourt Road with a question and answer session with the clergy and church wardens.

AMP: Election of Church Wardens

There were 2 vacancies for Church Warden and 2 candidates: Roland Knight and Sue Gibbins. They were both formally elected by acclaim. The AMP was closed with thanks to the wardens.

Letter from Colin, Bishop of Dorchester

A letter from the Bishop was read out to everyone; it is reproduced below:

I am deeply conscious that this will now be the third year running that your Vicar has not been able to be at your Annual Parochial Church Meeting and I did not want to let the moment pass without saying a huge 'thank you' to all those who have made such a significant contribution to the life of Christ Church and of Long Furlong over more than two years.

I think, in particular, of the Churchwardens, the staff and members of the various ministry teams, Jit Patel, in his time as curate, the galaxy of so-called 'retired clergy', Kath and Phil Cooke, and, most particularly, Keith Dunnett who, in sporting terminology, has played a blinder over that period. I salute what they have been doing to date, often at a profound personal cost to themselves, and I wanted to use the opportunity afforded by this letter to express my profound thanks to you all.

All of which begs, of course, the questions of what is happening with regard to Tim and what the future may hold. You will all be aware that Tim has been ill, and consequently it has not been right to push ahead too rapidly. In addition, there is a wider disciplinary enquiry under way. As a result, Tim has been formally suspended from his duties and is prohibited from working as your vicar, even if he was fit enough to do so. As anyone who has ever been involved in a legal process knows there are a lot of things that cannot be expressed publicly whilst things are happening without running the risk of prejudicing the whole case one way or the other.

Looking to the future, however, I would hope that by this time next year we will be in a much stronger position to go forward together into what is, I believe, a very exciting future for Christ Church and for Long Furlong. I know that a number of you have asked Keith why you cannot appoint a curate. The answer to that is simple, but frustrating. Any curate I appointed at the moment would, legally, be the responsibility of Tim rather than Keith, and I cannot do this with the uncertainty over Tim's future at the moment. In the meantime, I have extended Kath's time with you to the end of the year and I am also licensing Phil to serve in the parish. I am also seeing if there are ways in which we can get some additional support, not least for the work among the 20s and 30s.

I could go on – but I shouldn't.

May I say, once again, a huge thank you to all – and may you know the Power of the Resurrection in fresh ways following the pain of recent years.

With Every Blessing

The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE

Bishop of Dorchester

APCM

1) Election of new PCC members.

Roland (Philip) explained the of the PCC elections, for those who are less familiar with our local structures:- Clergy and churchwardens are automatically members of PCC. (Tim / Keith / Simon / Kath and Phil) (Rebecca Peters) (Sue & Roland)

The minister at Peachcroft is invited to attend PCC meetings, especially when there are matters of joint interest. The current minister there is Rebecca Peters who moved from Drayton to Peachcroft in November.

Anne Taylor is the representative of the Local Lay Ministers in the Parish.

The Deanery Synod looks after a wider area including all of Abingdon and the surrounding villages. This year there are 8 Deanery posts. Three members of the Deanery executive body (The Standing Committee) have strong connections to Christ Church Rev Geoff Maughan (Acting Area Dean), Martin Steel (Treasurer to the Deanery), and Karen Landon (Secretary to the Deanery).

PCC - Parish Church Council – relates to North of Abingdon. Due to the size of Christ Church there are 15 lay posts. The numbers of Deanery Synod Reps and PCC Lay Reps are dictated by our Electoral Roll numbers.

Deanery Representative Election

Deanery Reps are elected for a 3 year period and then all are replaced at once – it is **not** a rolling representation, and this is the year for a fresh batch of reps (some have offered to be re-elected).

Thanks were given to our 7 Deanery members who have just completed their 3 years who are: John Alcock, Andy Jones, Rachel Taylor, David Hancock, Mark Stavers, Leilani Jeevaratnam and Andy Voyce.

The following are standing: David Hancock, Martin Steel, Andy Voyce, Ron Clark, Ian de Villiers, Emil Jeevaratnam and Terry O'Neill plus there is a spare position for the new Treasurer (when appointed). As there were the same number or fewer candidates as there are vacancies they were formally elected by acclaim.

PCC Elections

There are the 8 Lay PCC members who are continuing in post - having completed 1 or 2 years of their 3 year term. They are: Andy Dent (Secretary), Janice Gordon, Andrew Kitchener, Lizzie Shipman, Paul Brombley, Andrew Dubock, Hermann Matheson and Sandra Pike (CiA rep) Thanks were given to them for their work and accumulated wisdom, and additional thanks were given to Andy for his work as Secretary, and Sandra as the Church in Abingdon rep.

Four PCC lay members were standing down as they had served 3 years and there were standing down for other reasons. They are: Diana Bryan, Simon Farres, Helen Mitchell, Martin Steel (*standing for Deanery*), Rosemary Green, Sue Gibbins (*standing as Church Warden*), Aidan Melville. They were thanked for their service. Seven people had stood for these positions: Sandar Wade, Chris Hodgson, Sue Robbins, Philip Bingham, Claire Proudman, Jaz Bance and Val Challis. They were formally elected by acclaim.

For NCR: 230 Electoral Roll members signed in and 62 non-roll members attended.

For LF: 82 Electoral Members signed in and 21 non-roll members.

The Church Wardens thanked everyone who had served and continued to serve on the PCC.

Electoral Roll Information

Summary of the numbers of church members on the electoral roll are as follows:

	NCR	LF	CCA Total	Peachcroft	Parish Total
Roll at 4/2016*	404	134	538	24	562
Roll at 4/2017	396	136	532	26	558

*These figures are slightly different from what was reported in the 2016 report as there were some minor errors found. The numbers in this table are now correct.

Additions = 31

Deletions = -8

Net change = -4 (-8 NCR; +2 LF; +2 Peachcroft)

Thanks to Andrew Walker for his service in administering the electoral roll.

Annual Report

Roland/Philip then highlighted the yellow Annual Report document which gave a much fuller account of the work of the Church and encouraged everyone to read it and pray for the work.

This was available from the church website and also in hard copy format. There were also copies in the Lobby of the financial report which had been already submitted to the Charity Commissioners. The church wardens thanked Keith

especially for his leadership over the last year and all members of the congregation for their service to the church in all areas of ministry.

Financial Report

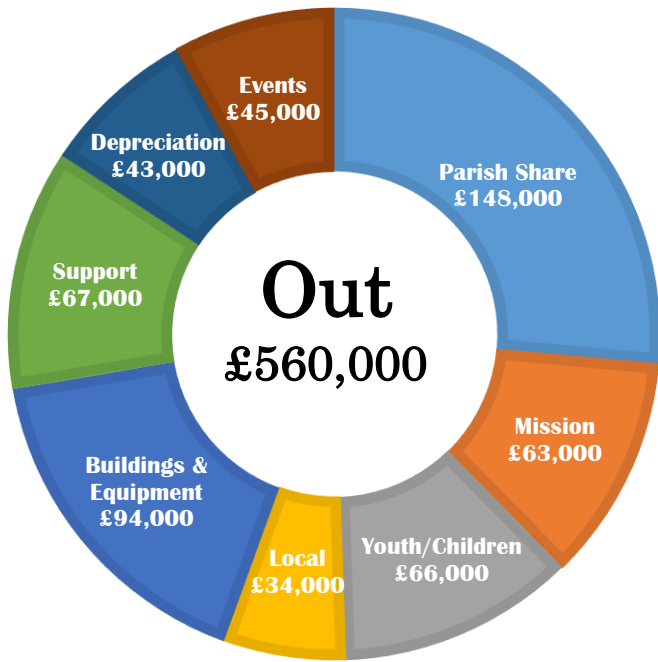
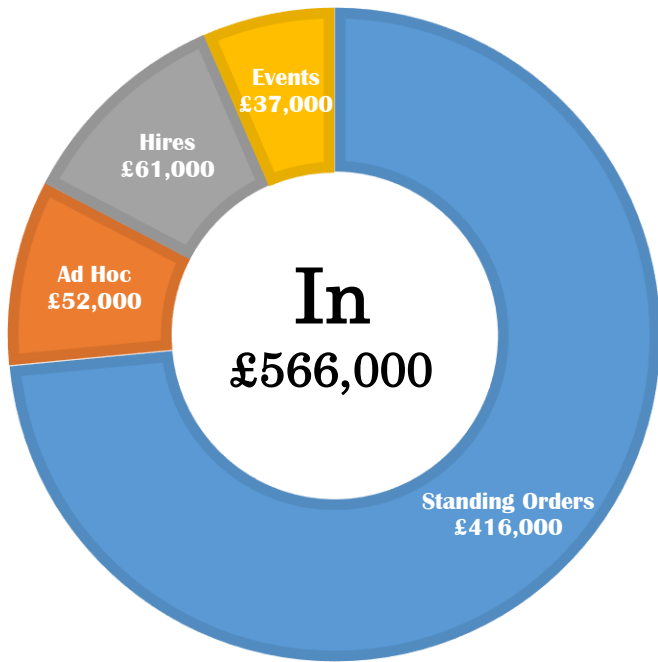
Presented by Mark Stavers, treasurer.

Mark started by speaking from Psalm 24:1 “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.”, and that it was good to be reminded of this when speaking of money as it is just stewardship. He has produced the accounts in a simplified leaflet and a summary is given below:

2016: What actually happened

2017: What we plan and pray will happen.

2016 – Last Year



2017 – This Year

Income of at least £560,000. (This is higher than the amount approved by PCC in March, but is OK as income is predicted to be higher so far this year based on the pledges from Giving Sunday.)

Expenditure of £560,000 which includes:

Increase in our parish share to £167,000

15% allocated to mission support £74,000

2% pay increase for staff

10% increase in ministry budgets

£10,000 put aside for tithe barn renovation in ~2019

Mark also pointed out that the Barns Cafe is run as a separate business, owned by the church and is run on a non-profit basis to serve the community. On an income of £106,000 it did however return a one-off payment of £7,200 to the PCC and made a further £1,000 surplus from its operations in 2016. The PCC will consider what to use the £7,200 for in a future meeting.

Mark thanked his co-workers on the finance team who were available to answer questions and in particular Mike Warner who along with himself was standing down:

Andy Lowe (Utilities and general matters)

Gill Privett (Gift Aid and Payroll)

Christine Talbot (Payments and Book-keeping)

Mike Warner (Pensions and Legacies)

Neil Weston (Banking and general matters)

Mark Stavers (Treasurer)

Martin Steel (Deanery Treasurer)

Finally a formal decision was required to propose to continue to use Wenn Townsend as “Independent Examiners”.

Proposer: Paul Brombley; Seconded: Andrew Turner; Vote passed unanimously.

Sermon & Thanks – Keith Dunnett Acts 1:1-14 and 12-26

Keith thanked those who have served on the PCC over the past year, and those who offered themselves for election. He particularly thanked Philip Bingham and Roland Knight as wardens for their steadfast and faithful service and support. Keith opened his sermon with a quote from Nicky Gumbel, “Jesus didn’t write a book, he formed a community.” Jesus gave his disciples a compelling vision to go into every corner of the world and train disciples. This is summarised in Christ Church’s statement, “Being disciples, making disciples”. We want to engage even more in communities and workplaces and to be more confident in evangelism and to help people grow as disciples. In an analogy to the “Ready, Steady, Go” saying Jesus before Pentecost encouraged the disciples to, “Ready, Steady ...Wait”, and a few days later the Holy Spirit came. We have the Holy Spirit but we are in a season of waiting and with the situation still ongoing with Tim there are four things we can do; four ways to tend the roots:

- 1) Stay together vs 12-14. The disciples all joined together even though they were missing two of their number (Judas and Jesus). They had the pain of Judas’ betrayal and the questioning of themselves (How did it happen on our watch?) and the loss of Jesus. We lose close family and friends, others move on. The temptation is to become isolated, just look after you, but the Bible insists we stay together. Let us keep meeting in Church, coffee together, life groups, prayer groups. The early Church stayed together and so should we.
- 2) Search the scriptures vs 15-20. The scriptures had to be fulfilled (v16). This is Christ’s church, he is the leader. We aim to bring the whole of creation. It doesn’t matter if it is a good time or a bad time - the Holy Spirit can teach us and we can keep growing in faith.
- 3) Sort out leadership vs 21-26. The disciples chose a new disciple to replace Judas. They chose people who knew Jesus well, good discipleship, then they shortlisted between Joseph (Justus) and Matthias and then they prayed. They choose Matthias. As an example Keith spoke about the role of Church Wardens. The Church Wardens guard and watches people in Church. As part of how the Anglican Church operates the Wardens have a direct link to the Bishop, distributing power and authority in leadership which makes the church a safer place to be.
- 4) Seek God in Prayer v14. In Acts people were always praying, they had a hunger for new mission. Prayer needs to be what we do. We have Hungry and also the 24/7 prayer week 28th May - 4th June. In due season God will bring the fruit and growth. Let us turn up the volume in prayer of what we do.

Question & Answer Session at bring and share lunch (Northcourt Road Hall).

Following questions were asked and the response from the clergy / church wardens as follows:

1. Howard Delafield: Howard expressed concern that things were taking so long with Tim being sick. Keith replied that it was complicated with him being sick and suspended. It is slow as it has now gone to a National level. It is not helped by the link between his health and the issues.

2. Barry Taylor: Barry said it was disgraceful that the process was dragging on for so long.
3. Maggie Snowball on behalf of Anne Green: Are there any needs in the church not currently being met?
Keith: He was missing the work Jit did in looking after the baptisms, marriage preparation and we really needed someone with time to be involved with the 20-30s.
Mark: Need two new people for the finance team.
Roland: Need people to be involved with taking the ideas for the renovation of the Tithe Barn forward. We also want to renovate the lounge and require people with good ideas and practical knowledge to take it forward.
Heather: Always need helpers on the Children's Team and she really wants to have a group of prayer Warriors who meet once a month and pray for the kids.
Matt: A youth leader needed for Sept and similarly always need help for the youth work.
Ed: Need three operators for the projector
Sue: Need more help for link which currently has 60 families and is a great outreach for young Mums and carers.
Janice: Need someone from Long Furlong for the 24/7 prayer event.
4. Marion Coleby: Should we be having corporate prayer: praying for Tim for a day, fasting or a 1/2 night of prayer?
Keith replied that this hasn't happened because the issue is so confidential. We have relied on individuals praying. It is a difficult dilemma and maybe we should have a day of individual fasting? Pamela Shirras: The Tuesday morning prayer meeting became a special time of prayer. It didn't involve the Church leadership, but God worked in it.
5. Neil Weston: Can we have a breakdown of the 15% given for mission.
Roland replied that this was managed by the MSG and the PCC sees how it is broken down, but as it relates to people's salaries it was kept confidential. Roland said that 90% goes to mission partners and 10% to short term mission that people can apply for.
6. Hilary Hart: What can we help Keith with and what "not" to do?
Keith expressed that encouragement was helpful. His dilemma was getting the right balance between running the Church (behind the scenes) and being out in the community a lot more. He would like to spend more time with people, but finding there is a lot of "behind the scenes" work at present, so please bear with him. Christ Church's strength is its whole body ministry – we together are the body of Christ. We need to keep doing it together.
7. Michael Green: Gave praise for the AGM.
8. Peggy Woolnough: Do you (Keith) have enough support?
Keith replied that he gets together with other clergy every two months to pray together. This was a strong community plus the Bishop likes having breakfast and Bishop Stephen was a very good missional leader. Bishop Colin was very open and encouraging and has a good understanding of the situation.
The Q&A session ended with an open prayer time together.

Andy Dent, PCC Secretary

CHURCH STATISTICS

You may be aware that the Welcome Teams count the attendance at all our services during October, at Christmas and Easter time, and on other occasions. The same is done regularly at Long Furlong. You may wonder what happens to these figures. They are fed into a huge database held by the Church of England Statistics Department, called the Parish Returns System. The statistics are then used by the Diocese for planning purposes. The data for our Parish, with numerous charts, is available to those with log-in permissions. However, I thought it might be informative to share some of the data with the wider church, as follows. Please ask me if you want more detail.

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Electoral Roll				
Christ Church (NR & LF)	497	507	538	532
Parish of North Abingdon (with Peachcroft)	521	531	562	558
Church Attendance				
Christmas	635	1409	1655	1777
Easter	724	525	720	606
Average Week (October Count)	599	480	460	472
A Usual Sunday	572	481	540	571
Our Worshipping Community				
0 - 17	302	275	298	312
18 - 69	556	470	492	513
70 +	62	53	130	125

Joiners during the year	110	50	38	54
Leavers during the year	37	46	65	52
Attendance on a usual Sunday				
Adults	431	366	400	435
Children	141	115	140	136
Average Weekly Attendance (October)				
Adults	451	365	352	351
Children	147	115	108	120

Roland Knight, Church Warden