

Annual Church Meeting 2017

TEAM VICAR'S REPORT

First a very big thank you to everyone involved in St. Matt's. I particularly want to express my gratitude to Michelle Shirley who has stepped down from her role as Church Warden this year, and to Clare Caless who gave up her role as Administrator with her move away from Tunbridge Wells last July.

The church weekend is always an annual highlight and last year's guest speakers were Mike and Liz Resch.

In the autumn, we were shocked to hear that Jon and Claire would be stepping down from ministry at St. Matt's but we are excited for what God has for them in the future. We are so grateful for their ministry with the younger generation. Our children's and youth ministry has continued to flourish under their leadership.

It was exciting to see another member of St. Matt's ordained last year – Mark Lavender, the 4th in a decade. We remain committed to raising up a new generation of leaders although it can feel costly when we are called to give them away.

Season of Change

St. Matt's is part of a Team Ministry with St. Peter's and Christ Church in Southborough and St. Lawrence, Bidborough. The model of team ministry we have has allowed for the greatest level of freedom and autonomy within our churches, so it was inevitable that Gerald, the Team Rector's, retirement would usher in a change. As you have may have already heard, this has led to a period of review. One question is whether it would be right for the remaining Anglican Church in Southborough to join the team. But, it has raised questions about the best model for ministry in Southborough and where St. Matt's fits into that. Change is never a comfortable thing, especially when we have all benefitted from established ways of doing things. However, we should never shy away from asking questions about whether there is a better way of doing things. Although the questions about the team and St. Matt's involvement are challenging, we want the best model of ministry both in Southborough and High Brooms – at the moment we don't know what that will look like, but it is right to be asking these questions.

At St. Matt's the shape of the Team Ministry is not the only area of change we are facing – last autumn, Jon and Claire sadly made us aware that they would be leaving their roles at St. Matt's this summer. We are incredibly sad to be losing them and are very grateful for all they have contributed. But again we need to look at this as an opportunity. As well finding the right people to fulfil these roles, it is a time to ask questions about how best to resource ministry at St. Matt's. We are never comfortable when we are faced with change but it seems to be that the changes we are facing may provide us with some exciting new opportunities.

There is a formal statement that was read out at the Team APCM and also at St. Thomas's APCM, which is included below, and I will seek to develop these themes of change and opportunity at our Annual Church Meeting.

Rev Chris Wicks
Team Vicar

Note to be read at APCM's in the Southborough Team Ministry and St Thomas

In February 2016 Bishop James suspended the right of presentation at St Thomas in order to consider options for pastoral reorganisation of the Anglican churches in Southborough, High

Brooms and Bidborough. In February 2017, following the Team Rector's retirement, the right to presentation in the Southborough Team was also suspended.

Following a period of review by the Rural Dean, and conversations in both parishes, it is proposed that during 2017 the parishes explore options for effective future ministry in Southborough, Bidborough and High Brooms. This might take the form of one or more of St Lawrence, St Peter, Christ Church and St Thomas looking at joint ministry opportunities across Southborough. St Matthews will be holding conversations with their neighbouring parishes in Tunbridge Wells.

Following these explorations, proposals for any reorganisation of parishes, in the form of a new grouping of parishes, the formation of a new parish or parishes, or maintaining the status quo, would be drawn up in consultation with all stakeholders (Parishes, Patrons, Rural Dean, Archdeacon, Bishop etc.) for presentation at the APCMs in 2018, thereby giving a year of working upon which to base any decision concerning the way forward.

It is proposed that a Joint Working Group comprising Stephen Hills, Rachel Wilson, Nigel Griffiths and two representatives each from Christ Church, St Peter's, St Thomas and St Lawrence (one representing PCC/DCC's and the other ministry/mission teams) meet monthly to consider ways of working together and future options. The representatives from each parish are to be chosen in a way acceptable to respective parishes. A report on these discussions should go to respective parishes and interested parties well ahead of the APCMs in 2018.

YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT

It's great to take some time to reflect back on all God has been doing within youth ministry this last year. There has been more growth and some of the same old challenges. One of the highlights for me of this last year has been the start of a new group for school years 11-13. Youth House group, as we call it, has been an incredible opportunity to disciple the young people who are growing up and maturing in their faith and as young adults. Losing two key leaders over the summer for the main youth group Ignite was a serious challenge as well as losing two key youth. However we have also gained a couple of new leaders who have been able to begin building relationships with the young people. Overall this year has been a rewarding time of enabling young people to explore a walk with God and for many to deepen their understanding of who they are in God.

Here is a brief description of what has happened in each group and different area of youth ministry:

Encounter: Encounter is a group for all those in year 6 and up and is held every Sunday morning, except for the first Sunday of every month. This year we have continued to break into two different age groups. For this school year we have spent a term looking at prayer and a term going through a new series called 'connected hearts'. Our series on prayer challenged young people in their views on prayer and sought to empower them in their prayer life. Our connected heart series is all about connecting to the heart of God for the young people. Finally, this year we have placed an emphasis on spending time allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to our young people in times of reflection and quiet. We have felt the young people really need this amidst the busy-ness of their lives.

Ignite: Ignite is a mid-week group for all those in years 6 and up. The church is set up with table tennis, table football, a pool table and more. Once a month we provide a tuck shop, and a milkshake bar and we also provide pizza for the young people for free every week. The first half of the evening is spent playing games and having fun together and is an excellent opportunity for

relationship building. During the second half of the evening we either break into three different age groups or meet all together for some fun filled worship and a short talk or testimony. In our groups we have been looking at different life topics such as friendship, anger, anxiety, thankfulness and bring a God perspective into these times. This works particularly well as so many of the kids are not from church backgrounds and are just beginning to explore the Christian faith. In our monthly joint services we have been allowing the leaders opportunities to share their testimonies.

Youth House Group: Youth House group is a mid-week group for all those in school years 11-13 that meets at our flat. Though it is a small group it has been an incredible space for the young people to go deeper with God, spend more time exploring the bible and ask lots of questions. We began the school year by asking what topics or parts of the Bible the young people have wanted to look at and tried to cover as many of these as possible.

Unite: Every month a group of our young people are taken to Unite which is a town wide youth service run by YFC and youth leaders in the town. It is an excellent event which the young people really enjoy coming along to.

The Noise: This year we had about 8 young people from our youth attend the Noise which is a 3-day event that gives young people from across the town a chance to come together to serve the local community practically, to worship, to receive teaching and to have a lot of fun. It was awesome to see God working in the lives of the young people during this event

Mentoring: I have been meeting up with young people for coffee and also for guitar lessons.

Looking toward the future I am hoping to focus on enabling a smooth time of transition as Jon and I will shortly be leaving. I hope to leave the groups with a solid team of committed volunteers and also find extra people to come alongside while the groups transition. I also aim to finish well with the youth and am planning end of the term socials that will give Jon and I a chance to say a proper good bye.

**Claire Carroll
Youth Minister**

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY REPORT

Sunday Mornings

Shine is our group for 0-2 year olds and we continue to work as a team to find creative ways to engage our youngest with God. We are seeking to achieve this by creating a warm loving environment on Sunday mornings with interactive multisensory ways of exploring biblical themes such as God is exciting or God is our comfort. Shine is run by an amazing team of volunteers. Glow is our group for ages 3-6. In the last year we have seen Glow really develop as its own group. Lois Fryett has played a key part in writing material for this group which has gone down really well. The group concentrates on exploring the Bible through play, craft and story. Bright is our group for 7-10 year olds. Each session includes teaching from the Bible, worship, ministry and games. Since January we have been exploring being contemplative in our ministry times. We have been teaching the children to use their imagination in prayer and in the reading of the Bible. This has been a really enriching experience as God has spoken to children in unique ways.

Deeper

Deeper is our after school club for school years 3-5 held every Monday from 3:30pm – 5pm. We have continued to see Deeper grow through children bringing along friends and we have a good mix of children from St Matthews School, St Johns School and Southborough School. Each week we look at a Bible story and think about how following Jesus affects our lives today. We worship and have time to reflect and pray. It really does feel as though we are able to go deeper with God during these times. I am very grateful for the faithful support of our volunteers over the years which have made Deeper possible.

School

We continue to have a strong link with St Matthew's Primary School. I go in on Tuesdays and deliver assemblies for KS1 and KS2. Each assembly consists of sung worship and a talk based around a biblical story or a story that feeds into the school's Christian values of kindness, responsibility, honesty and respect.

On Tuesday afternoons I run a lunch club. The aim of the club is to aid children in their emotional and spiritual development. We spend the lunch time playing games, doing craft and chatting about our week. It's a small group of students that the school refers to me, allowing for quality time and opportunities to grow in confidence.

The school come to church to celebrate major festivals such as Christmas and Easter. This year we have also had the privilege of having reception come to the school three times; for a lesson on baptism, Christingle and a mother's day service.

Over Harvest we ran a short service for St Matthews pre-school and Little Appleseed's pre-school.

Toddler Group

Our Toddler Group runs every Thursday morning during term time. We had a dip in team numbers but after an advert in the newsletter we now have a full team who help each Thursday creating a welcoming and safe environment for the parents and toddlers who come. Toddler group remains a vital ministry within St Matt's, reaching out to a wide range of parents in our community.

Love High Brooms

In March myself and Claire created an event called Love High Brooms. About 40 people, of various ages, gathered to go out into the community and share God's love through practical means. We mowed lawns, did jobs up at the school, baked cakes for teachers and the hostel, played football on the green and litter picked. There was something really powerful about the cross generational make-up of the team that served that day as it really felt like the church in action and was a great way for young and old to bond together around kingdom ministry. It was exciting to see God's love tangibly expressed to our community.

Transition

In July Claire and I will be moving on from our roles at St Matt's. I have been here since September 2010 and Claire from January 2014. It has been a real honour and privilege to see God work in our children and young people and we have felt so blessed to be a part of this brilliant church. We hope that in the last few months we have at St Matt's, we can work for a smooth transition so that this work can continue, grow and develop in the years to come. We wish our successors every success as they take on the challenge of discipling the children and young people of High Brooms. We also want to say a huge thank you to Chris and Carole, everyone who has faithfully served on children's and youth teams past or present and to our wonderful church family who have shown us such love and friendship over the years.

Jon Carroll
Children's & Families Minister

7 O'CLOCK SERVICE / SEVEN REPORT

Over the last few years as the 7 O'clock service, we had been exploring the idea of being a community. This involved having an array of different services during the month. We had celebrations with teaching and ministry, a meal with a biblical reflection, a worship evening and a sharing evening which offered a chance to share and pray with each other. With Claire and I leaving and numbers decreasing we had to ask some hard questions about the sustainability of Seven as we looked forward. After consultations with the leadership team and the congregation we felt that the best way forward was for Claire and I to step down from our role in leading Seven. The leadership of Seven was then handed over to Katy Johnson, Rob Wilson and Catherine Root to rebrand and relaunch as a gathering that meets on Sunday evenings. It was a real privilege to be involved in the leadership of Seven and we are excited to see Seven develop and grow under this new fabulous team!

Jon Carroll

On 26th February, Seven was relaunched as a gathering of believers creating space to encounter and worship Jesus. Together we share our experiences of God at work and respond as He reveals himself and our own identities. Catherine, Rob and I have taken over the leading of Seven with a vision to continue providing a quiet, thoughtful, spirit-filled atmosphere with worship, teaching and prayer. In order to do this, the format has reverted to a more traditional service structure. The gathering has been well attended so far, averaging at 18 members each week. We look forward to seeing how God continues to develop and strengthen the community of Seven.

Katy Johnson
Seven Leadership Team

PRAYER REPORT

Ministry Teams

Our ministry team remains very small, but I still have plans in the pipeline to grow this team again, and we have a New Wine Training Day in the diary for July, which I'm hoping some St Matt's members will attend. Ministry and prayer continue to happen "in the seats" amongst the congregation which is encouraging.

Hungry

Following a trial run of Hungry evenings during Lent 2016, we are now holding them monthly and have a good number who regularly attend. The evenings have a relaxed format with worship and prayer opportunities, and people seem to appreciate the opportunity for space to meet with God.

Facebook Prayer Requests

Facebook continues to be a great resource for the congregation to share prayer requests and offer prayer for one another. The discipleship page is used on a regular basis.

Thy Kingdom Come

I'm looking forward to co-ordinating 10 days of prayer activities in line with the national campaign from Justin Welby – Thy Kingdom Come. We plan to have a variety of events to cater for the prayer styles of as many members of our congregation as we can. We may also be able to link with St Luke's and St Philip's for some of this, which would be great.

Sarah Johnson
Prayer Co-ordinator

HOUSE GROUPS REPORT

We currently have 6 adult groups which meet on different Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evenings and a small daytime group which meets on a Friday morning.

In the past year the termly programmes have comprised the following:

- Summer 2016 'MasterPlan' – God's Purposes on the Earth – a mini-series
 (*produced by 'Agape' Ministries*)
 'The Holy Spirit' – mini-series (*The Holy Spirit & me / The Holy Spirit & the church / The Holy Spirit & the world*)
- Autumn 2016 Studies on 'Romans' – very kindly researched and produced by our own Bill MacDougall. [*These ran alongside the 10 o'clock Service Sermon programme and were particularly thought provoking and valuable in encouraging us to explore our faith more deeply.*]
- Spring 2017 1st half of term: Studies on Romans continued.
 2nd half of term: Lent: Some groups used local author Keren Dibbens-Wyatt's book "Whale Song: Choosing Life with Jonah" as a focus for discussion. Others used the diocesan Lent Course – 'Place in the Crowd'.

Hungry for God - (*evenings where we have had time to seek the presence of God together in worship and prayer; - with no agenda of our own but looking for the leading of the Holy Spirit*) have continued as part of our corporate church 'Prayer' with some house groups not meeting that week so that they can attend 'Hungry'.

The groups continue to vary in how often they meet and give different emphasises to prayer, bible study, worship, socialising, and evangelism.

What all the groups have in common is fellowship within a small group where people can support and encourage each other on their journey of faith.

Our thanks again to our fantastic leaders and hosts!

Mary Wilson
House Group Co-ordinator

PODS REPORT

Pods are our small discipleship groups. As far as I am aware, the number of Pods have remained fairly stable this year. Most Pods spend time chatting about life and their walk with God and praying. Some use talks or other devotional materials to focus their thoughts and discussions. The things members most value are openness, accountability, support, deeper relationships and prayer.

The easiest and most natural way to start a Pod, is to see who you get on with and could share life with, and see if they would like to join you on the journey! If you would like to know more about Pods, please come and chat to me.

Hannah Mwesigwa
Pods Co-ordinator

PASTORAL CARE REPORT

At different times in our lives we can find ourselves in challenging situations, some long term, others more short term. As a church we endeavour to not only support our congregation but those around us who are facing difficulties.

- House groups and Pods continue to offer prayer and support.
- Rosemary Blanchard holds coffee mornings which reach out to those in the community and offers an opportunity for friendship and company.
- Chris and Carole held their usual Easter and Christmas afternoon tea for the retired.
- For the women – Revive held 4 breakfasts with speakers, one Quiet day which Alice Bates led, as well as a film night and the Christmas Event. These events cater for both Christians and their non-Christian friends, and we hope gives opportunity for people to make friends as well as strengthening their faith.
- Prayer ministry continues to be available after each service and on an individual basis at other times when requested.
- The Lone Parent Group has now stopped running due to the core group being unable to continue due to other commitments, but we thank them for all their dedication in running it.
- Offers of meals are always welcomed in times of celebration such as a birth, as well as during the difficult times such as after hospitalization.

A big thank you to all the members of St Matt's who visit, cook, pray, help with transport, child care, and in whatever area is needed. The use of Facebook has really helped this ministry to grow, where requests can be made and offers of help given.

If you would like to be involved in Pastoral Care or have a pastoral need, please speak to Carole Wicks.

Carole Wicks
Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator

EVANGELISM REPORT

If you are reading this "**well done**" for trawling through all the reports - it probably takes a few minutes to scan through what is going on in different areas of church life.

Since outreach started on Barnett's Wood two decades have passed and some of the original team are now with the Lord.

All these years later looking back at what has happened and thinking back to those early days, when the expectation was that we would visit people to show the love of Jesus and make contact by giving a small gift to break the ice. To encourage people to come along to St Matt's or read the material we handed out and think about Jesus.

To me it's been a real learning curve, because what has happened is that strong lasting friendships have developed and, although there has not been a great influx of new worshipers, there has been much praying, caring and sharing. This was the heart of our mission.

Where are we now? Personally over those many years I have shared something of lives, shared the joy of births and many other highs but also attended and shared in deaths and grief. Most of all, I have walked the path of sharing the ordinary, the daily up and downs of everyday life. Is it enough? Yes, because Jesus is there and will always be where his people go.

Thanks to everyone who has supported me in so many ways over the years.

Every Blessing.

Trevor Long
Evangelist

Link with Nourish Community Foodbank, Tunbridge Wells & St Matthew's Church

The final figures for the year end are not complete at present, as Nourish are swapping over to an online system and working hard to transfer all data for the years 2016/17 manually, so Dawn was only able to give me an estimated figure. They know from monthly estimated tracking, however, that they are looking at an increase **again** of at least 40% overall in clients needing the resources of the Foodbank for 2017/18.

Weight of Food donated from St Matt's since middle of June 2016

Our total weight was a whopping 585.90kg.

Monetary donations from St Matthew's, have gone towards the Fresh Food Voucher Scheme, which is an essential addition to the Food bags. It means a family or individual can have fresh produce to supplement the dried foods and, for those in poor health or suffering malnutrition, it is even more essential.

Food donated by St Matt's on the first Sunday of the month continues to be collected by me and delivered to the Big Yellow Warehouse Unit, except for the past two months when I was recovering from surgery. Thankfully Nourish team members came to the rescue.

Nourish Community Foodbank's main campaign for 2017/18 is the "meal a month". They are asking people to sign up to commit to a £3 a month donation in money. This has been worked out to cover one meal for a client. Details for this are on their website

<http://www.nourishcommunityfoodbank.org.uk/>

They are also running a schools out for summer to collect extra food for the extra numbers Nourish see over the summer holidays; those families that are unable to provide the extra provision for their children with the absence of breakfast clubs and free school meals.

Volunteer Team Leader, Trussell Trust Foodbank, Crowborough branch

I am continuing to volunteer as one of many Team Leaders with the local branch of Trussell Trust Foodbank. However, due to lack of uptake for no obvious reason the Foodbank Centre is now only open on Fridays. Some people are of the opinion that the reason for this is the agencies not acting more quickly and efficiently to spot those in need. This is highlighted by a press release from Head Office below, confirming our suspicions.

- More than 500,000 three day emergency food parcels were distributed to people in crisis in the first half of 2016 – over 188,500 to children! Nicola Neal quoted this statistic at our Church Weekend – poverty exists outside of Africa too.
- Issues with benefits account for 44% of all referrals
- The Charity is calling for a foodbank telephone 'hotline' to local Job Centres to support people in crisis more quickly and efficiently, reducing the negative impact on mental health and wellbeing
- Anti-poverty charity, The Trussell Trust, has today proposed a direct telephone line between foodbanks and local job centres – as it reveals that more than half a million emergency food parcels have been issued in the first six months of the year. The staggering number means that the foodbank network is on course to distribute the highest number of food parcels in its 12-year history during 2016-17.

Between April and September 2016, Trussell Trust foodbanks across the UK distributed 519,342 three day emergency food supplies to people in crisis compared to 506,369 during the same period last year. 188,584 of these went to children.

Benefit delays and changes have been the biggest reasons for foodbank use in the UK, accounting for 44% of referrals to Trussell Trust foodbanks (27.4% benefit delay; 16.6% benefit changes). In response the charity is calling for a hotline to each foodbank's local Job Centre Plus.

Low income was the second largest cause of a crisis, accounting for nearly one in four of all referrals to Trussell Trust foodbanks, driven by problems such as low pay, insecure work or rising costs.

Dee Harper
Evangelist & Pastoral Assistant

WELCOME TEAM REPORT

The Welcome Team's role at St. Matt's is to greet members of the congregation and make any visitor feel like "one of the family". The serving of refreshments is key to this – just as you would do to a visitor in your own home.

This January's St. Matt's **Team Sunday** provided much needed growth to the Welcome Team. Joining us for 2017 are Matt Fryett, Jane Lawson and Clare Smith. What has proved very exciting this year has been the addition of several members of the Youth onto the team - Bethany has been a valuable stand in for some time but has now formally joined along with Noah & Zara, plus Anna and Ella have recently been supporting Clare.

Members of the Sunday Morning Congregation will not have failed to notice the introduction of a "coffee shop" approach of putting names on cups. Contrary to popular belief this is not a way to police who leaves cups on the floor – although maybe next year's report may include a list of culprits!!

There are three key reasons why this has been introduced.

1. We, the Welcome Team, get the opportunity to learn your names and greet you by name.
2. It gives members of the Church the opportunity of reading somebody's name on their cup – saving the embarrassment of admitting after five years of saying hello you don't know a person's name – or is it just me!!!
3. There has been a reduction in cup usage as cups are easily identifiable for refilling.

We continue to sell St. Matt's Travel Mugs, although current stock is limited. A new St Matt's pen is in the design stage and should appear in time for filling "Back to School" pencil cases. Proceeds from both help Church funds.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone in our Welcome Team and special event hospitality teams (especially those who stepped up at the recent Church Weekend) for their dedication and hard work over the last 12 months. A special thank you to Jan and John Ash who step up and help to bring order out of chaos time and time again.

The Welcome Team challenge for 2017....anyone who finds me within 20 minutes of the ACM ending and recites the following verse will receive a prize.

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. (Hebrews 13.2)

Bee Shaw
Welcome Team Co-ordinator

MISSION GROUP REPORT

Summary of Main Mission Links:

Our official church links currently comprise three main overseas links:

- South America** **Pat Blanchard** (CMS mission partner) based in Lima, Peru
(Church contact for info: Mary Wilson)
- South Africa** **Steve & Diana Morris** (The Sozo Foundation) based in Cape Town, South Africa
(Church contacts for info: Chris & Carole Wicks)
- Africa – Tanzania** With the **Diocese of Geita** (Africa Inland Church of Tanzania)
With **Samuel and Pendo Limbe** based in Mwanza (AICT)

One UK based link:

- Birmingham Children's Hospital** **Ruth Radley** (CMS mission partner) based in the chaplaincy team
(Church contact for info: Sarah Johnson)

And one main local link:

- Tunbridge Wells** **Life & Soul** charity, working with children and young people aged 5-25
(Church contact for info: Emily Cheeseman)

As a church we also give significant support to **Tearfund**

(Church contact for info: Liz Johnson)

Giving of tithe

It is a great joy for the Mission Group to be able to prayerfully allocate the giving of our Church Tithe to both our main links and to a large number of other charities / people (local, national and international).

We currently give £1,800 to each of our Main Mission Links as the financial part of our commitment to their support. Smaller amounts are then given to a variety of other people and groups involved with Mission.

Mission Prayer Breakfast

We believe that our support of those in Mission should be more than just financial, so the Mission Prayer Breakfast provides one opportunity (for those who can manage early mornings!) to gather over a simple breakfast, share news and be able to pray together for our Mission Partners, often ministering in tough situations. We believe that prayer makes a difference, so if you have a heart for praying for Mission, you would be incredibly welcome to join us! (8am on the 3rd Sunday of the month in the Church Centre).

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR!

Nourish

We have continued our commitment to this local food bank charity by giving food donations to 'Nourish' on the 1st Sunday of every month as well as on Harvest Sunday. With ever increasing demands on Nourish, we also gave a financial gift from our tithe.

Flying Visit from Pat Blanchard in October

We were fortunate to catch up with Pat when she stayed over in Tunbridge Wells during a private visit to the UK. We rejoiced in hearing first-hand about the lift finally being installed in the 'Shalom' disabled project building along with other news of the ministry in Lima.

Christmas Offering for Refugee Children in South Sudan

In response to the ongoing plight of refugee children in South Sudan, the offerings from our services during the Christmas period were given to those working amongst displaced children living in refugee camps in Northern Uganda. £2,123.59 was raised (including gift aid).

Life & Soul took over the 10 o'clock service!

The Life & Soul team took over a service in March, highlighting the different projects that they operate. These included an actual Primary School assembly (before our children and young people went out!), Play Therapy, Mentoring, PSHE lessons and Pink' (Homeless Hostel work). This was a great opportunity for them to update the congregation with the projects, the challenges and encouragements that they are seeing, as they share in the lives of children and young people in Tunbridge Wells. They are hugely appreciative of the support (vital praying as well as financial) that St. Matt's congregation give.

Mary Wilson
Mission Co-ordinator

WORSHIP REPORT

I am continually reminded about the many ways in which God blesses us a church with such a dedicated and gifted worship team. From being part of the band at the front, to running the sound and visuals, to leading at small groups and non-service events, I cannot express my thanks enough to the whole team for their passion and enthusiasm in all they contribute towards the worship life of St. Matt's.

We have seen a few team changes in the past year, with the Team Sunday bringing forward a number of new people for PA, AV and band. We still need drummers and bassists at the moment, although anyone interested in being part of the team would be welcome to join us at one of our monthly Evening Sessions.

We have slightly changed the 10am Service format to try to make more space for worshipping and responding to God. The general feedback has been positive, and it feels like the transitions between worship and other aspects of the service are smoother.

With the review and relaunch of the 7pm gathering, Suzy Johnson has taken on organising worship for these events. The worship team for Seven is really small and we would like to see it grow - if you would like to be part of it, please talk to Suzy or me.

The sound desk was replaced at the start of 2017. The new desk is much more feature rich and can be tailored towards different uses and users based on their familiarity with the desk. This has made it much easier for non-PA operators to use the desk for all sorts of activities. I particularly want to thank the PA team for their time and effort in making this happen and getting it up and running.

Worship is a core value at St. Matt's and I love to see how God is at work among us and how He uses worship as a part of his workings. I feel we saw this recently at our church weekend away, and I've seen this in our services and Hungry throughout the past year. I am especially grateful for the encouragement we get from the church. I am really excited about what God will be doing in the coming year.

Ali Granger
Worship Co-ordinator

FRIDAY BREAKFAST CAFÉ

We have a core of regular customers and occasional new faces either sitting at tables or benefitting from our 'take-away' service. On average we deal with 50 – 60 orders each week, varying from a simple bacon baguette to a full English breakfast consisting of bacon, egg, sausage, beans and toast, with tomatoes, hash browns and mushrooms as optional extras. Our prices have not changed since the start, which we feel is right in the present economic climate.

The café could not run without the commitment of the team of regular volunteers who selflessly give up their Friday mornings to ensure its continued success. Grateful thanks are due to Julie Sewell, Hazel Hoad, Jan Ash, Richard Foot and Christine Marshall who help with the cooking, drinks and keep the kitchen running smoothly, to Gordon Blanchard who keeps us on our toes taking orders and ensuring nothing slips through the net, and to Paul Sullivan who ably devotes himself to the washing up, and finally to those who ensure there are flowers on every table. Our thanks also go to Chrissie Veness who occasionally steps in if anyone is away.

We were sorry to learn that Julie and Jan will be unable to continue as they become involved in other activities. We are very grateful for all their help.

We continue to pray that the love of Jesus will be felt by all those who come in, and that those who don't yet know Him might want to know more about what He has done for us and to get to know Him for themselves.

David Johnson
Churchwarden

FABRIC REPORT

Church Fabric

The fabric of the church is in generally good condition and only a few minor repairs have been necessary during the past year:

- Following a few problems with the Church heating, including leaking radiator and a leaking combustion chamber in one of the boilers, a new boiler has been installed and other problems resolved.
- Carbon monoxide alarms have been fitted in the kitchen and in the office.
- One of the fence panels to the West boundary blew down in a storm and has been replaced, and the overgrown plants and bushes at the rear of the church have been cut back.
- A new tea-point boiler has been fitted to the church hospitality area.
- The church notice board has been refurbished with new framing and plywood backing.

Church Hall Fabric

The following minor repairs have been carried out during the year:

- The gas heaters have been overhauled and a carbon monoxide alarm has been fitted in the hall.
- Three fluorescent tubes at high level have been replaced.
- The cold water tap in the middle toilet has been replaced after a cracked washer seat meant it was leaking.

I would like to extend my thanks to all those who have assisted with the various jobs around the church and the church hall. In particular, Mike Southwick and Lance Savage, without whose help I would not have managed.

David Johnson
Churchwarden

OPERATIONS/ADMINISTRATION

General

My first 9 months of working in the office here at church have been busy, to say the least. Claire left me wonderful handover notes, but a lot of this time has been learning on the job, and asking Chris lots of questions!

A big portion of my time is taken up with admin for Sunday's services and generally managing church life. Thank-you to everyone who contributes their time and skills to make St. Matt's what it is - a welcoming, loving family. Thank-you too for all your patience and advice, as I have learnt the ropes and realised all the many different parts of the job!

We have recently had our Church Weekend Away, and this was a big part of my first year here. It went very smoothly and was worth all the effort! Thank-you to those who put in huge amounts of work to make it all happen.

Another area which has taken lots of time this year has been recruiting new youth and children's ministers. It has been great to be involved in this process, but has added a fair amount of paperwork to my time so far.

Pre-school / Hall

I have responsibility for lettings of the hall, including being the contact with the pre-school regarding their ongoing hire. This has its frustrations, as the hall is old and often needs odd jobs doing. I liaise with David Johnson regarding repairs and maintenance.

The hall is also currently let on Saturdays on a regular basis to a children's theatre group.

The uniformed organisations have all now stopped using the hall, and now meet in the school.

Budgets / Finance

I manage the office, stationery and catering budgets, with Kate on hand to answer questions! The catering expenses for last year were under budget, however, there was some overspend on stationery.

Before Claire left, she started liquidising redundant assets such as unwanted equipment, to help raise much needed funds. This is something I hope to come back to in the near future, as we still have some equipment which could be sold.

Health and Safety

There have not been any health and safety issues since I started this job. I am in the process of making sure our health and safety policy is up to date.

Personnel / HR

I manage Susan Green, the Church Cleaner, and Chris Skilton who comes in sometimes to act as Groundsman for the Church, the Church Hall and the Bethel. Both work very hard to keep the building and the grounds clean and presentable.

I also maintain the staff leave and sickness records.

I have enjoyed my first months in this job, and hope that the next year will be just as exciting and varied as this one has been!

Hannah Mwesigwa
Ops Manager/Administrator

FINANCE REPORT

Please see the attached accounts summary for 2016 and the budget for 2017.

Kate Whitehead
Treasurer