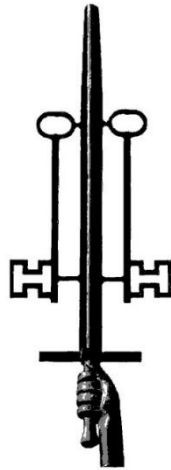




God's growing family; praying, loving, transforming.



# *Annual Parochial Church Meeting*

*Celebrating the Life of our Church*

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019

7:30 pm

The Chapter House

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## **LIST OF SIDESMEN**

Stuart Anstee	Tony Brown	Sheila Briggs
Ian Cook	Anthony Davis	Trevor Davis
Rebecca Edmunds	Dennis Gale	David Golding
Richard Harris	Wendy Harris	Brenda James
Carol Latham	Mary McKeand	Mel Murphy
John Russell	Carol Thompson	Rachel Thompson
Sarah Watt		

**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

to be held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019, at 7:30 pm  
in the Chapter House of St Peter and Paul's Church

**AGENDA**

**Opening Prayer**

**1. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018**

**2. Resolution**

"This meeting resolves that section 3 of the Churchwarden's Measure 2001 shall not apply in the Parish of St Peter and St Paul with St Andrew, Flitwick."

Churchwardens Measure 2001 Section 3 reads:

*Disqualification after six periods of office.*

*...a person shall be disqualified from being chosen for the office of churchwarden when that person has served as a churchwarden of the same parish for six successive periods of office until the annual meeting of the parishioners to elect churchwardens in the next year but one following the date on which that person vacated office at the end of the last such period.*

**3. Election of 2 Parochial Church Wardens**

**4. Election of 2 Deputy Wardens**

**5. Chair's Closing Remarks**

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

held on Monday 23rd April 2018, at 7:30 pm  
in the Chapter House of St Peter and Paul's Church

Rev. Lucy Davis chaired the Meeting and led the opening prayers. She welcomed 41 parishioners which was eleven more than last year.

**1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY  
24<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2017.**

These were signed as a true record.

**2. ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS**

Two nominations had been received for Churchwardens. Ciaran Diver had been Proposed by Jennie Frost and Seconded by Richard Fullbrook and David Watson had been Proposed by Sarah Watt and Seconded by Cheryl Fullbrook. As there were no other nominations it was unanimously agreed that Ciaran and David be our Churchwardens.

Last year was the first year we introduced two Deputy Wardens in order to assist the Churchwardens and to allow them to have some time off and holidays. Mary McKeand had been Proposed by Carol Thompson and Seconded by Cheryl Fullbrook and Richard has been Proposed by Steve Simmons and Seconded by Carol Thompson. As there were no other nominations it was unanimously agreed that Mary and Richard be our Deputy Wardens.

**3. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Lucy said we are extraordinarily blessed with our Wardens Ciaran and David and we are lucky to have Mary and Richard to help with what is a big and onerous task. Their work together ensures that our worship runs smoothly and our buildings are kept in good repair. Ensuring these things means a thousand small jobs behind the scenes, from booking organ repairs to buying batteries for the microphones. As a Church we are hugely indebted to all our Wardens for the time and skill they give.

**THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

to be held on Monday 29th April 2019, at 7:30 pm  
in the Chapter House of St Peter and Paul's Church

**AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018**
- 3. To receive**
  - a. The Electoral Roll**
  - b. A Report on the Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council**
  - c. A Report on the Proceedings of the Deanery Synod**
  - d. The Annual Report and Financial Statements 2018**
  - e. A Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**
  - f. A Report on Safeguarding in the Parish**
  - g. Mission Action Plan**
  - h. Reports from Church Groups**
- 4. Election of 5 Representatives to the Parochial Church Council**
- 5. Appointment of Sidesmen**
- 6. Appointment of an Independent Examiner to the PCC**
- 7. A Report of the Ministry and Witness of the Church throughout 2018**
- 8. Questions**
- 9. Closing Remarks**

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018, at 7:30 pm  
in the Chapter House of St Peter and Paul's Church

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Bill Kosh, Sue Cook, Rachel Thompson, Doreen Simmons and Gill Anstee.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

These were signed as a true record.

**3. To Receive**

**a. Electoral Roll**

The Electoral Roll has been revised this year in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

In April 2017 there were **141** persons on the electoral roll

During the year **7** people left and **20** people joined the roll

The net effect is that the total has risen by **13** in the last year

There are **154** persons on the new Electoral Roll.

Of these, **32** live outside the parish.

This now makes us a large Church which Lucy said is an extraordinary move in three years. She thanked Richard Fullbrook for taking on the role of Electoral Roll Officer from Dennis Gale who had been our E R Officer for a number of years.

**b. Report on the Proceedings of the PCC**

Lucy thanked Jennie for her role as PCC Secretary.

**c. Report on the Proceedings of the Deanery Synod**

Tony, Rachel and Karen are our elected members of the Deanery Synod. The Report was received. Tony pointed out the size of the Ampthill and Shefford Deanery which runs from the A1 down to Woburn Sands which makes it the largest Deanery in the Diocese. Lucy thanks Tony, Rachel and Karen for taking on additional meetings and representing us at the Deanery.

**d. The Annual Report and Financial Statement 2017**

Steve presented the Report and Financial Statement. The Report and Financial Statement had been circulated prior to the Meeting and had been adopted at the April PCC Meeting.

Steve thanked Terry Thurley our Independent Examiner and he also thanked Anthony who undertakes all the book-keeping and provides so much information to the PCC including the production of the monthly Report. He also wanted to thank the people who count the collections

and do the banking. He mentioned that Planned Giving has increased by 20% and that £1,000 had been raised from the sale of the old Church doors. Lucy thanked Steve and said that financially we are in a very good position due to the enormous generosity of our congregation and we are in such good shape it means we can think big. A large proportion of our outgoings is our Parish Share, which has always been paid in full, and in turn goes to fund the costs of ministry in the Parish through stipends. She thanked, Steve, Anthony, Mary and all our counters.

**e. A Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**

The written Report was received, and the Churchwardens had nothing to add.

**f. A Report on Safeguarding**

The written safeguarding report was received. Lucy pointed out that it is a requirement of this Meeting to receive a report. This is how seriously the Diocese takes this matter. Lucy thanked Wendy for acting as our Safeguarding Officer. She said Wendy has both skill and enthusiasm and takes our safeguarding very seriously. It is a complex and rapidly changing area of work, and we thank Wendy taking on that load.

**g. Mission Action Plan**

The plan was circulated to the Meeting and Lucy said she would be coming back to this item later but she asked everyone to take it home and have a look at it.

**h. Reports from Church Groups**

Lucy said the reports were really encouraging. She thanked those who had written the reports and said it shows just how our Church life is flourishing. It gives an amazing snapshot of what is happening here.

**4. Election of 9 Representatives to the Parochial Church Council**

We are electing nine representatives to the PCC. 4 members for a three year term; 3 members for a two year term and 2 members for a one year term.

For a three year term: Ian Cook Proposed by Ciaran Diver and Seconded by David Watson. Richard Fullbrook Proposed by Mary McKeand and Seconded by Sarah Watt. Wendy Harris Proposed by Carol Thompson and Seconded by Linda Foale and Heather MacIntosh Proposed by Linda Foale and Seconded by Marion Tucker.

For a two year term: Chris MacIntosh Proposed by Linda Foale and Seconded by Jennie Frost and Carol Thompson Proposed by Mary McKeand and Seconded by Linda Foale.

For a one year term: Nicolette Wade Proposed by Mary McKeand and Seconded by Wendy Harris and Sarah Watt Proposed by Cheryl Fullbrook and Seconded by Marion Tucker.

A vote was taken and agreed unanimous.

**5. Appointment of Sidesmen**

List of Sidesmen was published. This is an important function as it is the first face on the door when people enter the Church and it is all about the welcome. As a group they had a training morning in the Autumn about our welcome which was very encouraging. Ian Proposed and Carmel Seconded the list of sidesmen which was agreed unanimously.

## **6. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Mary Proposed Terry Thurley to be the Independent Examiner which was Seconded by Brenda James and unanimously agreed.

## **8. A Report of the Ministry and Witness of the Church throughout 2017, offered by Revd Lucy Davis, Vicar**

I'm going to start with a Bible quote. Well, after all this is a Church meeting and I am a vicar!

In John Chapter 10, verse 10, Jesus says this: "I have come in that you might have life—life in all its fullness." 2017 was a year in which we as a Church family, through the grace of God, did indeed experience life in all its fullness. One of the ministers in training who spent time with us over the course of the year told me that it was with regret that they were leaving Flitwick Church, because their time with us had reminded them what Church could be like. They had been enlivened by the life they found in our midst, and that life had renewed their faith in the life of the wider Church. That does not mean of course that we are perfect – as individuals and as a human institution, we are always far from perfect – but rather that the life of Jesus, through the Spirit shines through our life with one another.

One place that communal life is expressed in a formal manner is in our Mission Action Plan, which we adopted in March 2017 as a roadmap for where we hope our life in God will take us. This is a plan for the next 5 years, but an incredible amount has already emerged in this first year.

Having temporarily closed the doors on our Messy Church at the beginning of 2017, we reopened with a Halloween special on a Saturday afternoon, inviting all our previous members, as well as all the Baptism families we've had contact with over the last few years. The result was extraordinary, with more than 80 people, young and old, enjoying the activities and engaging really well with worship of God. The sessions we've run since have gone from strength to strength under Jane Thompson's leadership and with the commitment of all the team. It is wonderful to see the life this Fresh Expression flourishing once more.

As we seek to share God's life with those outside Church, our Open the Book team now visits both Kingsmoor and Templefield Lower Schools regularly, sharing Bible stories in assembly time. The children thoroughly enjoy these assemblies, as do the adults who lead them! At a different point of the age range, we have seen the introduction of monthly Soup Lunch in the Chapter House, headed up by Val Hyde and the pastoral team. The lunch has a regular attendance of about 25, and the companionship offered is greatly enjoyed and appreciated by those who come, as is the wonderful homemade food.

The Church has had a presence out and about in Flitwick in a number of other ways, including a stall at the carnival (where we won the Best Dressed Stall competition!) and, thanks to Steph Diver and others, delivering fliers about the Church to houses on the new estate and elsewhere in the town.

During the national 'Thy Kingdom Come' week at the end of May, we open St Peter and St Paul's during daylight hours. This was very well received by the local community, as was the opportunity of lighting candle in prayer offered at the Summer fete, and the PCC agreed in July to explore the possibilities of opening the building on a permanent basis to those who want to come during the day to pray, remember, or find some peace in the chaos of life.

I need to say at this point that abundant life, life in all its fullness, is not about being busy. Just because there is a lot of activity around Church, it does not mean that our life is abundant. The abundance of our life comes from Christ and so emerges directly from our worship together week by week. The language the Church of England uses is spiritual and numerical growth, so let us touch on both of those.

One of my greatest joys is to see members of the Church family, of all ages, growing in faith, and I will remember for a long time the confirmation service here at St Peter and Pauls last June where 7 of the Church family, ranging in age from 14 to 80 affirmed their faith in God. September saw many gathering for a Bible Study supper, from which two groups emerged who now meet regularly for fellowship and Bible Study. The two Lent courses were very well attended, as were the Lent Quiet



Day, Advent Study Day and Puzzling Questions seekers course, all opportunities for exploring and deepening faith.

Two people who have taken a further step in the public expression of their faith are Sophie Tucker and Rachel Thompson, who on completion of their training were commissioned as Lay Leaders of worship at a joyful service in May. Rachel's ministry among us includes, among other things, taking home Communion, leading Morning and Evening Prayer and heading up our healing services. Sophie's leadership is expressed in our Sunday Celebrations, which in 2017 year saw a series exploring elements of worship in our year of learning. Sophie also heads up Open the Book and our regular Sunday evening contemporary worship services. I know that as well as the ministry they offer, Rachel and Sophie have been catalysts in encouraging others to consider their vocations, God's call on each of our lives.

Spiritual growth and numerical growth are often two sides of the same coin, and at the Parish Church we have continued to see our Sunday morning congregation grow strongly. The average attendance at our 10:30 service in 2017 was 83, up 10% on the previous year. The congregation at St Andrews continues to gather faithfully at 9 o'clock on a Sunday morning, and our Wednesday morning service of Holy Communion is thriving, with a number of new regular worshippers, attracted by the atmosphere and fellowship.

Attendance over the major Church festivals has increased significantly, and this is due in part new to services led by the choir: a Harvest Songs of Praise and a service of 9 Lessons and Carols drew very appreciative congregations, including some who do not worship with us regularly. The music in the Church has gone from strength to strength, and we must extend our thanks to Susan Sims, Helen McKay and the choir, whose numbers have been swelled this year, especially on special occasions, with new members following successful open choir rehearsals in September. I'd also like to thank Richard Luscombe and the music group who lead our worship with such skill on Sunday Celebrations. While our adult congregations continue to grow, the median number of children worshipping with us has remained more or less constant. Our Children's Church team, led by Wendy Harris since the Summer when Alison Billington stood aside after many years of gifted ministry, has continued to provide imaginative Bible based sessions for those children who attend. While the number of families on our register grows, we, as all Churches, are affected by the pressures on modern family life which sees fewer children attending Sunday morning Church on a regular basis than was the case for previous generations. However, the number of children who come to Church throughout the year, not only to Children's Church, but also our all age Sunday Celebrations, school services, visits by uniformed organisation and Messy Church, has grown significantly and we continue to seek ways to make new disciples from our younger members as well as those more advanced in years.

Vital to the ministry of this Church, as any Parish Church, are the pastoral offices, those services we take for members of the community to mark important life events. In 2017 we took 34 Baptisms, 13 weddings and 37 funerals. During the course of these services, thousands of people encounter the pastoral care of the Church and have the opportunity of being touched by God's love. Our care for those touched by bereavement extend beyond the funeral service itself, with on going pastoral care, and also this year with a service of remembrance in October for those who have experienced the loss of a child.

Ian Smith came to the end of his year long placement with us in the Summer of 2017. His last day, which coincided with our Patronal Festival, was marked by a cream tea, a concert by Toddington Town band, and ended with Sung Evensong on a beautiful Summer's evening. A number of the congregation made the journey to St Alban's Abbey to see Ian ordained Deacon, along with others from across the Diocese, in a packed and uplifting service. Ian very much valued his time and training with us, and our prayers go with him as he begins his curacy in the Benefice of Flitton, Silsoe and Pulloxhill.

In the Autumn, we were delighted to be able to announce that we will be joined here in Flitwick by our own full-time curate in training in July 2018. Andrea Maffei and her family will be moving to a house purchased by the Diocese on the new Steppingly Rd estate, and she will minister amongst us

for three years, in preparation for taking on her own parish once her curacy with us comes to an end. Andrea has a huge amount to offer us, and we look forward to welcoming her to the Church family. The heart of our abundant life as a Church Family is of course about God and people. However, we also do live, for now, in the age of bricks and mortar and finances. The Wardens, assisted by the fabric committee and church yard team have continued to care beautifully for both the Parish Church and St Andrews. Much of our focus in 2017 was on fund raising and permissions for repairs to the historic Lych Gate at St Peter and St Pauls. Fund raising efforts were master minded by Jeremy Dann, Karen Rabjohn, Mike Catlin and Anthony Davis, to whom huge thanks are due. We were delighted to raise the entirety of the funds required in just 8 months, with immense support from local residents, businesses and organisations, as well as grant making bodies. Our fundraising for the Lych Gate also included a wonderful jazz concert given by a near neighbour to the Church, Dave Rance, an evening that was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who came. We look forward to the completion of the works this Summer.

Thanks to the generosity of our congregations, and the work behind the scenes of our planned giving team, we are now meeting our regular day to day outgoings. Our income has also been boosted by our Summer Fete and Autumn craft fair, organised by our Events team. The two events raised £4,000 in valuable funds, but were also wonderful occasions in and of themselves, which saw the whole Church family coming together to work and to have fun, and attracting very many members of the local community.

Behind all those aspects of our communal life which are immediately visible are innumerable ministries by members of the congregation which are less visible but vital to the whole. Those who cut out crafts each week for Little Fishes. Those who come and lovingly clean our beautiful building. Those who ensure our children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded. Those who mow the grass, or taking phone calls about hall bookings, or arrange flowers, or deliver magazines, or write Baptism anniversary cards, or pay cheques into the bank or help at weddings, or serve coffee. I never cease to be amazed by the faith, commitment and generosity of the Church family here in Flitwick, and consider myself blessed indeed to have the privilege of being your vicar.

To end, a second quote. Not the bible this time, but from a Swedish diplomat and Secretary General of the United Nations, whose name I'm not even going to try to pronounce. But this he did say: "For all that has been, thanks. For all that will be, yes!" We give thanks to God for all that the Spirit has done among us in the year that has past, and we walk together into the unseen of what is to come, sure in the hope that God is with us and for us in Jesus Christ.

## **9. Questions**

Nicolette was wondering what LLW stood for in the MAP plan. Lucy said it stood for Lay Leaders of Worship.

Mel Murphy asked "What's our biggest challenge"? Lucy replied that we have grown substantially in the last few years, and are now that our electoral roll is over 150, are classed as a 'large Church' Up to this size we have been able to work as a 'pastoral church', with the incumbent knowing everyone personally. The challenge is that as we continue to grow, we ensure that we look after each other and all take our roles in leadership to ensure that our special character is maintained. This is an exciting place to be, but we do need to make sure that we adjust to the size we are becoming.

Ian Cook said he lost a little faith with Flitwick Church a long time ago but since he has been coming back his faith has now grown and he is at the stage he was when he left and he said it was all due to the people here.

Richard Fullbrook was concerned that we didn't lose sight of our intimacy.

## **10. Closing Remarks from the Lay Chair**

You will have heard from Lucy about everything we have accomplished over the past year. In particular, we have continued to see remarkable growth in our Church both in terms of the numbers attending services on a regular basis and our outreach within the community. This growth sets us apart from the rest of the diocese as many Churches find it difficult to maintain, let alone grow, their congregations.

As many of you will recall, four years ago, when we set about looking for a new vicar, we said we wanted someone with energy and drive to help us to transform and grow as a Church, both spiritually and physically. It is fair to say, that we were blessed when God answered our prayers and pointed Lucy in our direction. With Lucy's enthusiasm and under her leadership we have certainly made significant progress, putting our Church firmly on the map.

As churchwardens, and on behalf of our Church community, we would like to thank Lucy for her unending effort, hard work and dedication. It is not easy being a vicar, keeping abreast of everything that is going on within a busy parish such as Flitwick, but Lucy goes beyond this, personally taking an active part in much of Church and community life. So, from all of us, thank you Lucy.

And with Lucy, comes Anthony, who behind the scenes supports us and Lucy in so many ways. I'm sure Anthony will tell you that it's also not easy being a vicar's husband! So, thank you Anthony for all the support you provide.

And not forgetting Lucy's children, who also play their part. Again, commuting to school, not being around the corner from friends, and having people from Church invading their house on a regular basis is not easy either. So we would like to extend our thanks to Jamie, Ellie and Libby.

Looking back over this past year, we have seen many new people join God's growing family here in Flitwick. This growth didn't happen by chance, but through your prayers, your love and your commitment. We should be proud of everything we have achieved, and, as churchwardens, David and I would like to thank each and every one of you for your own contribution in making this possible.

Looking forward, there are still so many opportunities to further God's mission as our town continues to expand. So I encourage you all, to continue to offer your prayers and love as we transform and work together towards our vision: God's growing family: praying, loving, transforming.

Thank You.

## REPORTS TO THE 2019 APCM

### ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The Electoral Roll has been renewed this year in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

- In April 2018 there were 154 persons on the electoral roll.
- There are 152 persons on the new Electoral Roll.

Of these, 31 live outside the parish.

*Richard Fullbrook*  
*Electoral Roll Officer*

### PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT

#### Background

The Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibility of the maintenance of the Parish Church and Chapter House, and for St Andrews Hall, Windmill Road.

#### Membership

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules or co-opted during the course of the year.

The PCC have had six meetings in the year and the Standing Committee consisting of the Vicar, Churchwardens, Treasurer, Secretary and one member of the PCC have met five times. We have been pleased to see our Church growing here in Flitwick and Lucy and the PCC continue to work together to do God's work in Flitwick. All members of the PCC have been DBS checked and all have attended a safeguarding training course. In October 2016 The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Peter & St Paul with St Andrew, Flitwick became a registered charity and has been entered onto the Register of Charities with a Registered Charity Number. On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July we welcomed our Curate Andrea with a BBQ and bouncy castle after the morning service.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC (number of meetings attended in brackets):-

Incumbent	Revd. Lucy Davis	Chair	(6)
Curate	Rev. Andrea Maffei		(5)
Churchwardens:	Ciaran Diver	Lay Chair	(6)
	David Watson		(6)
Representatives of the Deanery Synod			
	Dr Tony Brown		(6)
	Mrs Rachel Thompson		(4)
	Mrs Karen Rabjohn		(3)

Elected Members	Mr Anthony Davis	Co-opted Treasurer 11/18	(3)
	Mrs Jennie Frost	Secretary	(5)
	Mr Ian Cook		(4)
	Mr Richard Fullbrook		(6)
	Mr Richard Harris		(4)
	Mrs Wendy Harris		(5)
	Mr Chris MacIntosh		(4)
	Mrs Heather MacIntosh		(4)
	Mrs Mary McKeand		(5)
	Mr Steve Simmons	Treasurer (resigned 10/18)	(2)
	Mrs Carol Thompson		(4)
	Mrs Nicolette Wade		(6)
	Mrs Sarah Watt		(6)

*Jennie Frost*  
*PCC Secretary*

## **DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

Amphill and Shefford Deanery Synod met three times in 2018. We have received presentations from Carrie Steer at St James, Silsoe, discussing contemporary worship. Also from Chris Hodges from Amphill discussing the bi-monthly Taize services at St Andrews. In November Rev Nicola McIntosh, Chaplain at Bedford Hospital gave a presentation to Deanery Synod about hospital Chaplaincy. She has been referred to as ‘a touching stone’, a reassuring presence.

Agenda discussions have included Deanery finances and Parish Share, General Synod and Diocesan Synod. Time has been spent sharing ideas for ‘Leading your Church into Growth’. Security issues following the theft of lead from the Church roof in Houghton Conquest and partial theft from Gamlingay. As part of the Deanery MAP a youth group has been formed across the Deanery, reported to be well attended. Parish reports have been given by Maulden, Meppershall, Shefford, Southill, Pulloxhill & Shillington.

*Rachel Thompson*

## **REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report provides an overview of the work undertaken at both the Parish Church and St Andrew’s over the past 12 months. Although maintaining an ancient building is time-consuming and costly, we should be proud of the fact that:

- We have the only Grade I listed building in Flitwick;
- Our church was deemed “in very good condition” at our last Quinquennial inspection;
- We take special care of our churchyard to balance nature with the needs of our church;
- We have received glowing reports from our annual Archdeacon’s inspections;

- We have a wide group of dedicated individuals who, behind the scenes, take care of our church in so many ways;
- We are open to all, every day.

## **ST PETER & ST PAUL'S: Major Projects**

In line with key recommendations from our Quinquennial Inspection two years ago, we undertook two major projects over the past year:

- The Lychgate repairs, which commenced last September and are almost complete at the time of writing this report. There were a number of delays for various reasons but, even with some additional works, the project came in only slightly over budget at a cost in the region of £24,000. As reported last year, the vast majority of this cost was covered by grants obtained through the magnificent efforts of the Fundraising Committee.
- The rubber-backed carpets in the Sanctuary and under the Tower were replaced and both the wooden and tiled flooring were restored at a combined cost of just over £12,500.

Further to the above two Quinquennial projects, we also upgraded our sound system with additional speakers in the church and Chapter House at a cost of £1,248.

### **2.1 Open Church**

One of the major success stories in the past year has been Open Church. In July last year, we opened our doors throughout the week during daylight hours. This has resulted in a steady stream of occasional visitors that ordinarily would not be able to access our church.

Thanks to a donation by Terry Thurley in memory of his late wife, Barbara, we were able to purchase a votive candle stand to enable people to light a candle whenever they visit or come to our church.

### **2.2 Church Maintenance**

One-off unbudgeted repairs over the year included:

- Adjustments to the organ which proved temperamental as a result of heating the church for a prolonged period whilst the flooring was being restored;
- Replacement of the emergency light in the tower;

### **2.3 The Churchyard**

Last year a full tree survey was undertaken and its recommendations incorporated into our Churchyard Management Plan for regular and routine maintenance. As a result, some urgent pruning was carried out to the trees aligning Church Road.

More recently, a section of the south boundary wall that had been leaning for some time finally collapsed. This will be addressed over the coming year.

The Churchyard Team continue to perform an excellent job in maintaining the churchyard and ensuring that it is presentable throughout the year. Our thanks to:

- John Russell for continuing to manage our churchyard plan;
- Don McKeand for managing the mowing rota;
- The Mowing Team for keeping the grass neat and tidy throughout the year.

### **2.4 General Housekeeping**

Routine housekeeping activities included:

- Tuning the organ;
- Portable Appliance Testing;
- Servicing of the roof alarm;
- Annual inspection of the fire extinguishers;

- Archdeacon's Inspection;
- Servicing the church, Chapter House and kitchen boilers;
- Checking and clearing the drains and gutters.

## **ST ANDREW'S**

As many of you will be aware, St Andrew's was closed in May 2018 on health and safety grounds. Following the collapse of a ceiling panel exposing the external roof, which was known to contain low-risk asbestos, the building was made safe and a full asbestos survey conducted. This revealed the presence of asbestos in the roof, ceiling panels, wall panels and flooring. Normally this type of asbestos is deemed not to be a major risk if left undisturbed and carefully managed. However, given the current condition of the building and the stability of the internal panels this presented an unacceptable risk.

In addition, the car park had deteriorated significantly and needed considerable repairs to return it to a suitable condition. As a result, the entrance to the car park was secured.

Whilst the building has been closed, we have paid for professional advice from the diocesan solicitor, diocesan surveyor and asbestos specialists. In accordance with instructions from our insurers, we disconnected the utilities, moved all furnishings into temporary storage and continued to undertake routine maintenance,

A sub-committee reporting to the PCC with representation from the St Andrew's congregation and members of our Church, who are specialists from the construction industry, was established in February 2019. It is currently exploring the various options available and will report to the PCC on a regular basis.

## **THE YEAR AHEAD**

There will be two focus areas for the coming year:

- Agreeing and implementing a plan for St Andrew's;
- Repairing the section of the south boundary wall that collapsed.

## **THANKS**

Our thanks to:

- The Fabric Committee for their work in maintaining the fabric of our churches;
- Rosemary Ingram, Dennis Gale and Rita Gale for their work at St Andrew's (prior to its closure);
- Judith Carpenter, booking secretary for the Chapter House;
- Steve Simmons (for the early part of the year) and Anthony Davis who have kept our accounts in order and helped sort out all the necessary payments for our repairs;
- And finally to all the unseen volunteers from our Church, too numerous to mention here, who gave of their time and talents to perform invaluable work in keeping both our churches presentable and welcoming throughout the past year.

Thank you to you all.

*Ciaran Diver and David Watson (Churchwardens)*

## **A REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING**

I am pleased to report that during the last year we have had no serious issues to report. However, this does not mean we should be complacent as there is always a need for all of us to maintain awareness of possible incidents and be prepared to pass concerns on to the correct people or agencies. As

always I am very grateful for the positive response I receive from our church members to changes, new procedures and training requirements that are asked of them.

We continue to review our practices in line with requirements and recommendations from both the Diocese and the Church of England as a whole. This year in particular, the Diocese of St Albans has increased the training requirements to include guidelines and courses on Safer Recruitment which we have embraced. The Church of England has also published a Parish Safeguarding Handbook which all parishes are asked to adopt. This is a comprehensive document which pulls together all our previous policies and procedures and I am pleased to report PCC has adopted this and it will be electronically available to the PCC and all those working with children, young people or vulnerable adults for reference and a printed copy is available in the church bookcase for anyone to look at or refer to (but not remove please).

All this means we are once again in a good position to complete and return the diocese Safeguarding Declaration Form, which forms part of our annual return, stating that we are compliant in all safeguarding requirements. However, I must once again stress that policies, procedures and manuals are just part of safeguarding the young and vulnerable in our parish and it is important that everyone, whether or not specifically involved in activities, remain aware and discuss with Lucy or me any worries or concerns they may see or hear either within the church or in the parish in general.

*Wendy Harris*

## **MISSION ACTION PLAN**

Our MAP (Mission Action Plan) was launched in March 2017, following extensive input from the whole congregation, and covering the 5 years through to 2022. Having made a very encouraging start in 2017, this year we have also:

- seen the establishment of a second home group home group and a bible study group.
- chosen two charities to support in 2019: Mary's Meals and St John's Hospice.
- succeeded in having the Church building open daily in daylight hours.
- begun to consider the future of St Andrew's Church.
- run well received Lent and Advent courses.
- held very well attended Messy Church sessions.
- offered new forms of worship, including Healing Eucharists and a special service for Palm Sunday.

*Lucy Davis*



## **REPORTS FROM CHURCH GROUPS**

### **Bell Ringers**

We currently have 10 ringers, of whom 3 are learners who came to the ringing taster session held last spring.

The bells were rung for most Sunday services and for weddings where bells were requested, including the midweek weddings where it is more difficult to raise a band. The bells were rung three times on Armistice Day, for the 11:00 service at the Flitwick War Memorial, at 12:30 for the national “Ringing Remembers” remembrance and at 19:05 as part of the national “Battle’s Over” event and the lighting of the Flitwick beacon.

The bells and fittings are inspected by the ringers on a regular basis to ensure that the frame, ropes, wheels, pulley blocks, stays, sliders, headstock and clapper bolts are in good order. Whites of Appleton carried out a bi-annual inspection in April 2017. All fittings were fully inspected and found to be in good order. The next inspection is due in Spring 2019 and the ringers will arrange for this to be carried out. Some of the rope tail ends are showing signs of wear and it is likely that new ropes and sallies will be needed within the next 2-3 years.

*Ian Holman*

### **Children’s Church**

Children’s Church continues to meet at St Peter and St Paul Chapter House during the morning Holy Communion Service every Sunday in school term time except the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday when everyone is welcome to join in with the Sunday Celebration in church. We start at 10.25am and aim to join the service at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer.

At present there are 6 Children’s Church Leaders, all of whom have successfully undergone the required Safeguarding checks. There is a minimum of 2 adults each session organised on a flexible rota system, which is set at the beginning of each term. I would like to take this opportunity to thank to all the leaders for their commitment and enthusiasm.

We have recently changed the materials we use to a new Scripture Union Course which although it does not follow the Lectionary gives us greater opportunities to include both Old and New Testament Bible stories.

Our weekly attendance has increased to an average of 7/8 and the age range has risen to generally between 6 and 12 year olds. It is also a great joy to us that 5 of our children undertook the First Communion Course during the Autumn of 2018 and received Holy Communion for the first time at the beginning of December.

*Wendy Harris*  
*Children’s Church Co-ordinator*

### **Choir**

The Choir had an amazing first half of 2018 with Susan and Helen. We had some very special services, including a service of hymns, anthems and readings for Palm Sunday. We said goodbye to them both in July with Susan retiring with Kevin to Cambridgeshire and Helen leaving to have her baby. Baby

Oliver was born in September and we have seen him several time in Church already. The choir managed to stay focused throughout the summer holidays without choir practices. In the Autumn Bill Fudge kindly came and took choir practices frequently enough to keep us ticking over. We are very grateful to him for the time he was able to give us. We also had different organists during this time. However, we managed to get through until the New Year and were pleased to welcome Becky Mynett as our Director of Music. We also welcome Rupert Smith as our Organ Scholar. We look forward to making a real contribution to our services throughout 2019.

*Jennie Frost*

### **Churches Together in Ampthill and Flitwick**

This group is made up of representatives from both Ampthill and Flitwick for the Anglican churches, the Methodist churches, the Roman Catholic church and Ampthill Baptist church.

Excellent news is that we now have two representatives on this group since Carmel Golding joined last May. We were sad to lose Revd Graham Claydon-Knights (Methodist church) as he moved to a new appointment in Stevenage. Revd Lucy continues to be very supportive of the group and her input is much appreciated.

During the year several events have been organised by the group:

- A group from Liddington church were financially and prayerfully supported as they manned a Christian stall at the Mind Body and Soul Fair in Flitwick.
- A Pentecost celebration service was held in Flitwick where the worship was led by Revd Lucy and our Open the Book group presented the Pentecost story.
- At the Remembrance Day Services in both Ampthill and Flitwick wreaths were laid jointly by our six churches.
- At the Christmas Lights switch on, in both Ampthill and Flitwick, mince pies and leaflets about Christmas activities in all our churches were distributed.
- During Advent a children's sheep trail was arranged in Ampthill.
- Carol singing was organised at the Hub in Ampthill Park.
- A service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held at Sacred Heart church in January.
- In 2019 it was decided not to hold the Lenten prayer spaces, as had been done in recent years, but instead to hold special Sunday evening services at each of our six churches in turn during Lent.
- The walk of witness was again held on Good Friday in Ampthill.

*Mary McKeand*

### **Events Team**

In 2018 the Church Fundraising Team held and supported four events, raising £3,742 for Church funds, despite some changes to the team.

In February the team held a great pancake and quiz night for a packed house. This was followed in May by a 'right royal wedding' Summer fete, again held on the lawn of Flitwick Manor as well as using the lawns outside Church and in the Chapter House. The Mothers Union staffed the BBQ and Wendy and her angels provided cream teas in the Chapter House. There were many stalls with tombolas, plants, children's games, face painting, coconut shy, raffle and the usual beer and Pimms tent. We held an adult and under 16 cake competition and a best dressed teddy bear competition, all serenaded by Rance's Rockin' Chair Jazz Band who played fantastically on the lawns of the Manor House.

The summer Fete was followed in June by a concert from the Luton Male Voice Choir who performed beautifully for us in the Church in a well attended and very much enjoyed event.

The annual Craft Fair took place on the first Saturday of November (a change to its usual second Saturday in November). There were 17 outside stalls and the Church ran a bottle tombola, a chocolate tombola (stocked with chocolate brought over from America by a friend), a raffle, children's free craft activities, cake stall and the fabulous handmade craft items for sale. We also had the usual amazing team in the kitchen providing high quality and low priced lunches and afternoon teas.

There are too many people and groups to thank individually so the committee would like to thank everyone who made and donated items, ran stalls, sang, played instruments and thoroughly entertained us, bought tickets, cooked food and of course attended the events we ran in 2018. Without you we couldn't do any of the things we do and raise much needed funds for the Church. Thank you, you are all amazing. Do keep on supporting us in 2019!

*Karen Rabjohn*

### **Flower Arranging Team**

We currently have seven permanent members on our flower team – Marion Tucker, Wendy Harris, Anne Hardy, Carol Thompson, Pat Payne, Noreen Clark and Pam Parker and thanks go to them all for their time and dedication over the past year. We were pleased to welcome Belinda Jenkins to help us in 2019. In 2018 we provided flowers for 41 weeks of the year including major festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas. We are grateful to all the individual sponsors, those who contributed to the basket collections for the major festivals and the Royal British Legion for their generous donation, all of which, ensured the flowers incurred no cost to the church.

Over the past year Marion and Carol have continued to offer wedding couples their services to decorate the church for their wedding. This has resulted in extra funds being raised for church. They will continue to offer their services to wedding couples in 2019.

In December they also ran again a Christmas Wreath workshop in the Chapter House attended by 18 people which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. As a result of the profits from the session a further £180 was donated to church funds.

Church flowers are an integral part of church life and we are very lucky to have an enthusiastic team who provide lovely and varied decorations during the church year. A sheet is kept in the porch and anyone wishing to sponsor a week's flowers should put their name on the list.

New volunteers are always welcome and we encourage anyone with an interest in flower arranging, expert or beginners, to join us.

*Carol Thompson*

### **Friends of Flitwick Church**

After many years of wonderful service in terms of hard work and fundraising, in the middle of 2018, the Friends Committee decided that the time had come to hang up their collecting tins. At that time, we were unable to recruit new members with the time and energy to commit to continue the work of raising money for the fabric of the Parish Church. It was therefore decided that the Standing Committee would take over as Trustees of the charity, to administer remaining funds and any

legacies that may emerge. If at any point interest emerges to reinvigorate this potentially important fundraising function, the Charity remains in place as an independent entity. Our thanks are due to the outgoing trustees and all those who have offered time, energy and skill to the Friends over the years.

*Lucy Davis*

### **Healing Team**

The Healing Team consists of a small number of parishioners who pray individually and collectively for those in our congregation who are unwell and in need of God's healing touch. We pray for all in our parish and the wider community. We meet on a monthly basis for a short healing prayer service and amend our prayer list. Healing Services are now also held at the Parish Church on occasional Sunday evenings, when prayer and the laying on of hands are offered in the context of a Eucharist.

*Crista Long*

### **Home Groups**

St Peters and St Pauls has two homegroups. The first homegroup has nine members and the second (Grow Together) has seven members. In 2018, the first homegroup has studied Women of the Old Testament and a course giving an overview of the structure of the bible (Bible Society). Grow Together, led by Revd Andrea Maffei (curate), started in mid-2018 and has completed a course on the structure of the bible (Bible Society).

The homegroups have got together for meals in each-others homes, helped out at the church family BBQ and helped to lead the all age worship service. At the beginning of 2019 the homegroups hosted a church family meal. This was an opportunity to get to know one another, whilst also undertaking a mini-homegroup on the tables.

The feedback from homegroup members has been positive, with comments highlighting that these groups give the opportunity to grow deeper in faith with one another, whilst also having the opportunity to pray together.

As the church continues to grow the homegroups provide one avenue to ensure connectivity within the church family. These groups provide support, challenge and the opportunity to grow faith.

*Sarah Watt*

### **Little Fishes**

A 'Mother and Toddler' Group for preschool children and babies with their mums, dads, grandparents and carers. We meet in the Chapter House on Monday mornings 10 – 11.30, term time only. This is run by a team of Church members of Enid Clark and Lesley Cogan helped by Christine Denton and Rita Gale, all of whom have been doing this for some years.

We have at present regular attendance from grandparents, mums and dads. We have a variety of activity ride-on toys, jigsaws, books, play cooker with utensils, dolls cot etc. which are used by the children for the first 45 minutes or so. We also have a craft table for a specific pre-prepared activity each week which the adults help the children.

The children also have fruit and water sitting at the tables altogether, with the adults having tea/coffee standing away from the children by the kitchen hatch. We then have a more structured / learning activity for a little while followed by a short singing session with a children's prayer at the end.

Our numbers have increased over the last year and can vary from 12 or 13 children up to 20 plus, with most being under 3 years of age. They attend when able and numbers can vary widely, only knowing on the day. The increased income has meant we can replace some of the old equipment which was purchased when Little Fishes started, including the substantial floor mats. The charge of £1.50 per child (free for under 3 months) covers the refreshments and all craft materials. We are also able to contribute towards the church heating with a cheque for approx. £130 per term.

We appreciate Lucy and Andrea joining us occasionally when they can meet the adults and children.

*Enid Clark*

## **Magazine**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

As one form of outreach into our community, our Parish Magazine continues to maintain a healthy readership. Alongside more modern methods of communication, including social media such as Facebook and Twitter, emails and the website, the Magazine remains a popular way of keeping people abreast of news and events without the need for a computer or smartphone. It also serves as an historical record of Church life as most electronic copies of communication have a short life as those are typically discarded once they have served their purpose. For those that read the Magazine there is a regular extract from the archives giving a useful insight into Church Life at that time. I doubt if Facebook will offer that feature in 20 years' time, let alone 100 years.

### **2 THE FIGURES**

The Magazine continues to cover its production costs through advertising and subscriptions as detailed below. As a result, our annual subscription will remain at £5.00 for the coming year. Note that the figures below may vary slightly from those published in the accounts as the Magazine year runs from April to March.

#### **2.1 Income**

The Magazine has two sources of income, namely subscriptions and advertising.

Subscriptions: Over the past year we had 225 paying subscribers and collected £1,014 (£48 less than the previous year). The numbers remain fairly well-balanced from year to year with new subscribers signing up to replace those that move away.

Advertising: As at 1st March 2018, we had 14 advertisers. During the year, we lost four and gained two new advertisers. The income from advertising for the period 31st March 2017 to 1st March 2018 was £869, which was £5.00 down on the previous year.

#### **2.2 Expenditure**

Printing: Printing ten issues cost us £1,690. This was our only cost and was slightly lower than the £1,730 from the previous year as some editions contained less pages. We use Copykatz in Bedford to print 350 copies of our Magazine each month. Whilst this quantity is greater than the number of subscribers, spare copies are kept at the church for visitors as well as being distributed to the Library and the Health Centre.

Other: There are no other costs associated with the Magazine as our distributors kindly give their time freely.

### 3 THE YEAR AHEAD

Over the coming year, we will continue to produce 10 editions, look to maintain our subscription and advertising base, and look to distribute complimentary copies to newly built properties in Flitwick as we have done in the past.

### 4 THANKS

Thanks to:

- Don McKeand for managing the advertising including the raising of invoices
- Richard Harris for managing the distribution including collecting printed copies from our printers in Bedford, batching them up and delivering them out to our distributors
- Our advertisers for selecting our Magazine as a means for promoting their products and services
- All 20 of our distributors who, come rain or shine, deliver the Magazine to our subscribers in Flitwick and beyond
- Those that contribute articles to help keep the Magazine interesting and relevant for its readers
- Our printers, Copykatz, who complete the print-run within the week so we can get the Magazine delivered on time

And finally,

- All our subscribers for their continued support over the past year.  
Thank you to you all.

*Ciaran Diver (Editor)*

### **Messy Church**

Messy Church has had another busy year. We were very pleased to welcome some new members to the leadership team.

Our themes this year have included:

Easter – Good Friday saw over 35 children and their families taking part in some traditional, and some not so traditional activities, which told the Easter story and of course included chocolate!

Pentecost - we made kites, blew bubbles and decorated a large wooden cross with flowers, flames and ribbons. The quiet corner proved very popular with lots of sensory activities on offer. The session ended with everyone enjoying a birthday tea, to celebrate the Church's birthday.

Halloween – we used Superheroes as our theme and everyone enjoyed dressing up as their favourite Superhero – we made masks, cuffs and ID cards. The photo booth proved very popular with Superheroes flying across the sky in amazing superhero poses. We soon came to realise that Jesus was the greatest superhero of them all!

Christingle: we took part in a variety of activities based around the components of the Christingle, once the activity was completed the relevant Christingle component was collected. Finally, everyone put all their pieces together to make their Christingle which was taken into church for the Christingle service.

In June members of Messy Church led the Sunday Celebration service, thinking about Jesus and the law. Several children took part in the drama as the friends of Jesus and crowds in the temple. During the autumn term 3 members of the leadership team attended a Diocesan training which was focused around all age worship. It was lovely to share ideas (and challenges!) with other Messy Church teams.

Thank you to everyone who has helped with Messy Church in any way and especially those members of the team who continue to help with sessions year on year. Thank you also to all those who have supported and prayed for us. Finally, a big thank you to the many children and their families who have enthusiastically joined in all the Messy Church activities.

*Jane Thompson*

### **Mothers' Union**

MU is a movement of 4 million Christians in 84 countries worldwide. It was founded 142 years ago by Mary Sumner, by then a new grandmother and a vicar's wife. The branch in Flitwick is a very small part of the global MU but our members aim to be active and involved in helping people both here and worldwide whose lives have run into difficulties.

In our project work this year we have created many emergency toiletry bags for those who unexpectedly find themselves as inpatients at Bedford hospital. We were delighted with the response from our congregation who generously provided many of the toiletries for this project. Also we have knitted bonding cloths for mothers with babies in special care to keep a link with them and have made memory books for dementia sufferers. We have also knitted special hats for the babies who needed extra care in Watford hospital.

Prayer underpins the MU and alongside our regular monthly meetings we have held a Lady Day Service at which Nicolette Wade was enrolled and Heather Macintosh was welcomed to the branch. In April we took part in the MU Wave of Prayer when it was our diocese's turn to be a link in a continuous time of prayer with which MU surrounds the world and in August, we hosted an MU archdeaconry quiet day in St Peter and Paul.

We were sad when Val Hyde moved to Lincolnshire but have recommended her to the MU there.

We meet in the Chapter House on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 2pm and would be glad to welcome others to join us.

*Mary Mckeand*

### **Music Group**

Our Music Group leads the music in worship for our All Age Sunday Celebration service each first Sunday of the month.

Rosa signified her leaving for Norland in a special way, at the 'School Bag' Sunday Celebration led by the Music Group. Then, in a pattern repeated so often through our 22 years, two more people expressed interest in joining us. It matters a lot to us that people feel encouraged to join the group; not only do we see them gaining confidence, but also taking a growing part in the worship and family life of the church.

Members of the group have been involved in other events, including the Baby Loss service, a wedding at Sacred Heart church and, as we regularly do, the Christmas 'Connect' event at Lidlington Village Hall. I am also invited to join worship planning for each Sunday Celebration, helping us to choose music that is relevant to the message of each service.

*Richard Luscombe*

## **Open the Book**

Our Open the Book team started in March 2017 and has grown in number of storytellers and engagements over the last twelve months appearing not only in schools but also leading the November Sunday Celebration service and providing the story for the Pentecost in the Park service.

Our team is now 13 strong including storytellers from Flitwick Baptist church and Flitwick Methodist church. However, no-one is expected to be there for every assembly so, on average, we have 7 or 8 story tellers at each assembly. This is a strong team with many Open the Book teams managing with teams of just 4 or 5.

For the academic year 2018-19 we have an assembly planned every month in Kingsmoor and 8 times through the year at Templefield.

It has been a real privilege to serve God in such a fun and uplifting way. It is so wonderful to see the children's faces light up when they realise it is an Open the Book assembly. The children love being involved in the story telling whether it is dressing up and acting at the front or just making the sound of a horn from their seat for the story of Joshua and the walls of Jericho. And they always leave the hall with big smiles, waves and the occasional high-5 for us.

*Sophie Tucker*

## **Pastoral Team**

The Pastoral Group cares for members of the congregation and those beyond through visits, phone calls and taking Holy Communion to those who are unable to come to Church.

They also run the popular soup lunch which has run throughout 2018 on the first Wednesday of each month. The lunch sees up to 30 people enjoying good company and wonderful homemade food; it is a really important event for many of those who look forward to coming each month. We are delighted that the lunch continues under the leadership of Heather McIntosh after Val Hyde retired away from Flitwick. We are grateful to all who contribute cakes, soups and their time helping with this event.

*Lucy Davis*

## **Planned Giving Team**

The planned giving scheme had 80 members at the end of 2018, 4 fewer than at the end of 2017. The members of the scheme give between £10 to over £300 per month to church (on average about £42), either by standing order or weekly envelopes. Total planned giving increased by 5% in 2018 to £40,378, excluding Gift Aid. The planned Giving Team are currently planning a giving campaign for March / April 2019.

*Anthony Davis*

## **Website, Electronic Communications and Social Media**

Managing the website content changed hands in June 2018 following Susan's departure. The website continues to provide an open, welcoming insight into our church community. It is a source of up to



date information for those who live in Flitwick and worship with us, for visitors and for anyone wishing to arrange a life event such as a Baptism or a Wedding.

The website is updated on a weekly basis but small changes can easily be made at any time. Statistics provided by the website provider show that the site has approximately 50 unique visitors and an average of over 100 page views every day.

Flitwick Church produces regular email newsletters, with the aim of keeping our Church Family informed of upcoming events. During 2018, the number of subscribers to the main Church contact list increased from 123 to 137 people. The number of subscribers to our Christening list, for families of children who have been Baptised at church and focussing on activities relevant for families and young children increased from 73 to 88 people. Messy Church families are also contacted in this way.

We continue to engage through social media, posting on Facebook two to three times most weeks. The number of Facebook followers of Flitwick Parish Church rose from 269 to 387 in 2018. This is a great way of keeping in touch with people in the broader community who may attend services less frequently, but are still interested in what goes on at church. The number of people reached by posts varies depending on subject matter and timing and is frequently more than 1,000 people per week.

*Kathryn Jarvis, Webmaster  
Anthony Davis, Electronic Newsletters  
Lucy Davis, Social Media*

### **Youth Group**

Our youth group saw a transformation in 2018 as a number of our older members moved on to university. We have therefore re-emerged with a focus on those in the Middle School years, aged 9 to 13, meeting monthly for fun and fellowship. Activities this year have included leading a Sunday Celebration involving light sabres and jelly worms, a sleep over in Church, and welcoming Andrea and her family with a picnic made by the young people. We often undertake Bible Study together, and discussion are wide ranging and illuminating. This year, we have also been part of a Deanery wide event, gathering young people from across the area, and including a visit to Soul Survivor in Watford. Our thanks are due to Amy and Matthew Rabjohn who offer their Sunday evenings to lead and encourage our young people.

*Lucy Davis*