

ST JAMES THE GREAT EAST MALLING



**REPORTS FOR THE
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
15TH APRIL 2018**

A Message from your Churchwarden

I am pleased to issue this booklet of Annual Reports in advance of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on **Sunday 15th April 2017 at 10.45am** (after the 9.45am Eucharist service) here at St. James the Great, East Malling. Please take time to read the reports before the meeting. If you have any queries or comments there will be opportunity to raise them at the meeting.

The PCC has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 relating to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The appropriate notice, duly signed, is displayed on the PCC notice board.

Finally, I would like to thank the PCC and the congregation for their support over the past year. I am privileged to serve this parish.

David Chambers

The Parish of St. James the Great East Malling

Annual Vestry Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 15th April 2018 in the church
Immediately after the 9.45 a.m. service

AGENDA

Annual Vestry Meeting

1. Presentation of Notice convening the meeting.
2. Minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting 24th April 2017
3. Vote of Thanks to Churchwardens
4. Election of Churchwardens 2018/19

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Presentation of Notice convening the meeting
2. Minutes of Annual Meeting 24th April 2017
3. Electoral Roll Report
4. Annual Reports of the PCC (available online)
5. Accounts for 2017
6. Election of Independent Examiner for 2019
7. Election of
 - 4 representatives of the laity to the PCC for a term of 3 years
 - 2 representatives of the laity to the PCC for a term of 2 years
 - and 1 representative of the laity to the PCC for a term of 1 year
8. Election of Sidespersons
9. Any Other Business

The first PCC meeting will be held immediately after the APCM to appoint the PCC Secretary and the PCC Treasurer and to adopt the proposed dates for PCC meetings 2018/19.

Next PCC meeting

Thursday 17th May 2018 at 7.30p.m. in the church.

Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting
for the Parish of St. James the Great East Malling
held on Monday 24th April 2017 in the church

Present: Rev. Nicholas Williams(Chairman) and 25 members of the congregation.

Y218 The Secretary produced the Legal Notice convening the meeting.

Y219 The Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting 2016 were agreed and signed,
proposed by Canon Derek Carpenter, seconded Pam Carpenter.

Y220 The Chairman offered his personal thanks to the churchwardens, David and Sue, and also proposed a vote of thanks to them from the congregation for their service to the church as churchwardens, magnificently taking the parish through the interregnum and dealing with a new Vicar and his ways of doing things.

Y221 Election of Churchwardens

The Chairman stated he was saddened to be losing Sue as churchwarden, she had been the most perfect churchwarden that any new incumbent could possibly want. Vote of thanks to Sue Payne proposed by Alan Bramley, seconded Lynda Tidbury, carried.

	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Mr. David Chambers	Mr. S. Gurteen	Mrs. S. Payne

There being no other nominations, Mr. Chambers was unanimously elected Churchwarden for the ensuing year.

Dated thisday of2018

Chairman.....

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
for the Parish of St. James the Great East Malling
held on Monday 24th April 2017 in the church.

Present:- Rev. Nicholas Williams (Chairman) and 29 members of the congregation.
Apologies were received from Mr. and Mrs. Spinks, Mr. and Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Pat Ashbee.

Z655 The Secretary produced the Legal Notice convening the meeting.

Z656 The Minutes of the APCM 2016 were agreed and signed, proposed David Brooman, seconded Belinda Hunter.

Z657 The Electoral Roll Officer, Don Payne, reported that there were now 111 people on the Electoral Roll of whom 72 were resident in the Parish. 4 names had been removed from the register (2 having died and 2 having moved away) and 2 names had been added.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Payne for his work in preparing the Electoral Roll.
He also congratulated the parish for keeping the numbers steady during the interregnum

Z658 Annual Reports to the APCM were presented in a booklet which had been available to download from the parish website.

The Chairman invited questions for each section:-

Fabric, Goods and Ornaments – Canon Derek Carpenter asked about the progress of the Glass Door project, especially as there was a discrepancy in this report and that of the Friends of St. James.
The Chairman stated the most recent position was that the PCC had gone back to the DAC with a proposal based upon the original plan and was awaiting a decision.

Apple Tree Room – Anna Ashbee reported most recent funds raised were £60 for the Easter Quiz, £170 for the St. George's Day Afternoon tea and £750 for the Lent giving jars organised by Canon Derek Carpenter.

Children's Church – Pam Carpenter congratulated the Sunday School, especially its leaders, for working extremely hard. It was a delight to hear their feedback each week. Anna Ashbee was asked to pass on her thanks to all concerned. The Chairman echoed this.

Events Committee – Jacqui Brooman asked for volunteers to help out with events.

Choir Report – Jacqui Brooman said each time she heard the choir she felt they could not get any better, but the subsequent offering was always better.

Z659 Vicar's Report

The Chairman stated his report was based on the six months he had been in post.

He thanked the endless number of people who made the church 'work', mostly done unseen.

This included church sitters, church wardens, sidespeople, flower arrangers, bellringers, cleaners, the music department, servers, PCC members, members of the Friends, the Lay Reader and Canon Derek Carpenter for his assistance. He apologised to anyone he had omitted, but thanked them even so. He was grateful to the people who quietly helped ensure services ran smoothly, he hoped this would continue. The new service pattern in the Benefice would begin in May and would probably require some adjustments. East Malling had been incredibly generous in working with the problem and seeing a way through it. This had made his life easier.

As a result of the recent PCC Vision Day the aim was to move closer to the centre of the community, but the ground for this needed to be laid spiritually first. The Archbishop of Canterbury has introduced the 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative, prayer for the whole country from 25 May to 4 June. Within the Benefice the 'Prayer for Streets' will begin on 25th May. A list of all the streets in the Benefice had been

drawn up and people would be invited to choose a street(s) to pray for. This will be publicised throughout the community.

Additionally volunteers from East Malling and Teston would be prayer walking on the Estates in East Malling.

Following on from the Lent Course, when a clear wish for discussion and understanding of the Scriptures had emerged, a Pilgrims Course would run on Thursday mornings beginning 1st June. (The Diocese was also providing a 5 week bible study course at West Malling abbey, which people could sign up and pay for if they wished)

The Vicar was hoping to get Messy Church up and running at St. James the Great Academy from September. He had some volunteers already.

The Deanery confirmation would take place at East Malling on October 1st. Classes would begin in August, for both adults and children (who would require special permission from the Bishop).

Confirmation classes were also being arranged for pupils at Watringbury school.

Challenges for the coming year included getting the Apple Tree Room project moving to the next phase and pursuing the glass door project.

The Vicar thanked David Chambers for all he did as churchwarden, he did an amazing job, but there was a considerable amount of work to be done within the role and a second churchwarden was needed.

Other matters to be addressed were cash flow, parish visitors and baptism preparation visitors.

Even so the future was extremely bright. The PCC Vision Day had been an absolute joy, they had been very positive, got on with the tasks without any rancour and set realistic aims. The intention is to get the church back into the heart of the community.

Canon Carpenter informed the Vicar that the parish visitors team had been in abeyance during the interregnum but he felt this could be re-formed now.

He also questioned how people would know that their street was being prayed for and how they would be able to communicate any particular requests they might have for their street. The Vicar proposed to put this clearly in the Parish Magazines of the Benefice.

Z660 Accounts for 2016

The Treasurer apologised that these were not quite finalised and had not been inspected. He proposed calling an Extraordinary Annual Meeting after a Sunday morning service so he could present inspected accounts to the congregation. The Chairman stated that legally the accounts should be presented at the APCM, but an extension of three weeks was being granted. Following a request from Shaun Gurteen, the accounts would be available 7 days before that.

Mark Francis requested that the In Touch accounts paperwork and cheque book be passed over to the magazine running team. The Treasurer said they would be given to Mrs. Spinks on her return from holiday.

Z661 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2016

The PCC has elected to subject the financial statements to independent examination and, therefore, having made appropriate enquiries, propose Richard Dunn as independent examiner until the next APCM. Proposed Belinda Hunter, seconded Alan Bramley, carried unanimously.

Z662 Elections to the Malling Deanery Synod

The following nominations were made:-

	Proposer	Seconder
Richard Dove	Sue Payne	Alan Bramley
Alan Bramley	Sue Payne	Belinda Hunter

There being no other nominations Richard and Alan were elected for a term of 3 years.

Z663 Elections to the Parochial Church Council

Retiring members of the PCC were Nick Ashbee, David Brooman, Jacqui Brooman and Martin Guyton. Additionally Scott Walker had stepped down from the PCC leaving a vacancy for 2 years.

The following people were nominated

<u>nominee</u>	<u>proposer</u>	<u>seconder</u>
Nick Ashbee	Sue Payne	Denise Hynard
David Brooman	Jacqui Brooman	Mark Francis
Jacqui Brooman	David Brooman	Mark Francis
Sue Payne	Denise Hynard	Maureen Banfield

There being no other nominations the candidates were duly elected for a term of three years. A vacancy for a 2 year term remains.

Z664 Election of Sidespersons

The following persons were nominated and elected:

Maureen Banfield	Angus Bennison	Lisa Boorman
Linda Bramley	Suzette Budd	Christine Burchett
Ros Connors	David Gill	Pat Gill
Allan Greenwood	Shaun Gurteen	Don Payne
Lorna Readman	Jean Spinks	Lynda Tidbury
David Welch	Richard Yates	

Proposed Pam Carpenter, seconded Alan Bramley, carried unanimously.

Z665 APCM 2018

The meeting agreed the APCM should be held after a Sunday Morning service. The date for the APCM 2018 was fixed for Sunday 15th April 2018.

Z666 Any Other Business

- a) David Chambers presented the Church Terrier, a record of the land owned by the church for inspection. The church owns the church and the churchyard. The Vicarage belongs to the Diocese.
- b) David Chambers presented the Church Logbook, a diary of maintenance and work, and a detailed Inventory for inspection.
- c) Changes to the Log Book for 2016-17.
 1. Temporary patch repairs to the roof using Liquid Applied Plastic, with Diocesan approval. (MSB Roofing/Michael Batty). Nov 2016.
 2. West door locking bolts repaired. Thanks to Richard Leek.
 3. South porch outer door lock replaced. Thanks to Michael Rogers.
 4. Sacristy outer door lock replaced. Thanks to Shaun Gurteen.
 5. Loose tie-beam in the porch roof timbers, noted in the 2013 Quinquennial Report, declared safe by a structural engineer (John Wardle).
 6. Flexible joint inserted in the heating pipework in the north aisle and an air-release valve replaced in pipes in the sacristy. (Godfrey Cheesman)
 7. Parish name board (external) and incumbents' names board (internal) updated with details of our new vicar, Rev. Williams. (John Weddle)
 8. Tower clock motor rewired. (Graeme Bramley)

9. Churchyard railings of the Perfect family tomb refurbished at instigation of the family and paid directly by them. (Yalding Forge).
10. Gas safety inspection 21.6.16.
11. Fire extinguishers serviced 22.12.16.
12. Portable electric appliances PAT tested 12.1.17.
13. Sound system induction loop extended into the chancel

Inventory changes:-

Additions: Goose-neck microphone holder for the lectern. Thanks to Ros Connors.
Red frontal for the high altar. Thanks to Nick Williams

Deletions: Nil

d) Church Archives David Chambers reminded the meeting that he kept items, both historic and recent, relating to church and village life and he would be grateful for any such items. He drew attention to photographs he had acquired showing the font with the original steeple and metal top piece.

e) Acknowledgements

David Chambers particularly thanked everyone for supporting the churchwardens, especially by performing their rostered duties. He was grateful to Sue Payne for her support as co-warden, typing minutes and keeping him in contact with electronic communications. He thanked Linda Bramley for acting as a Deputy Churchwarden. He stressed the need for people to consider becoming a churchwarden, and to have training for this formal position.

Mr. Chambers thanked Fr. Derek and Alan Bramley for their invaluable support during the interregnum. He also thanked Alan Bramley for doing some of the things the wardens might otherwise have had to do.

Finally he thanked Rev. Nick for chairing his first APCM at St. James and for the first 6 months of his ministry at East Malling.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

Dated thisday of2018

.....Chairman

Grounds and Buildings Committee

Once again the Grounds and Buildings Committee has been busy keeping the church running and doing essential maintenance. As ever, tasks have ranged from the everyday to large, expensive projects. Huge thanks to everyone on the Committee and in the wider church who've helped us over the year.

We installed a new alarm system that is up to current standards and maintained under an annual contract. Three companies quoted and we paid a competitive price for our system. We are very grateful to the Friends of St James for funding this project. We would also like to thank the Friends for funding the emergency lighting system in the church. This is a complicated piece of electrical work that can go ahead as soon as we have permission from the Diocese.

Replacing the church porch will once again be the most challenging project the Committee has to deal with. The Diocese has made it clear through discussions over several years that it is unhappy with aspects of this project, in particular removing the porch. Since we already have functioning doors and a porch, the scope for negotiation or appeal is limited. Following the untimely death of the architect we were using, the Committee is working with a new architect on this project. They advise presenting a materially different proposal to the Diocese from the one rejected. This may involve doors with wooden frames (which will also solve the security, accessibility and insulation problems with the original design).

We're very pleased the repairs to the roof in 2016 appear to have been successful and much cheaper than replacing the entire roof. The plaster and stonework will now have a chance to dry out. The vestry roof will need repairs in 2018.

After well over ten years of use the red chairs are beginning to show their age. A number of the joints have worked loose and one chair failed during the year. We checked all the chairs in the church, found any that showed signs of movement and screwed them back together. These repairs appear to be holding firm, which is excellent news, but in the medium term we may need to replace the chairs.

In a pointless act of vandalism, the portaloos were burnt down. Fortunately no-one was harmed and there was no serious damage to the surrounding trees and wall. The cost was covered by our insurance, though we had to pay an excess. Unfortunately there is no way to prevent this happening again so the PCC has decided to rent a portaloos only when the church is particularly busy. A portaloos was rented for three weeks over Christmas without incident.

Repairing the damage to the window in the north aisle caused by the attempted break-in and fitting window guards to protect those windows will require funding from the Friends (which has been requested).

Every five years the church is required to have a "quinquennial" inspection by a Diocese-appointed architect that identifies maintenance work required on the church. These inspections form the basis of the Committee's maintenance programme and we are due an inspection this year.

And finally, a huge thank you to everyone who helped us maintain the churchyard over the year.

The Apple Tree Room

2017 has been the most frustrating year yet in terms of dealing with Diocese. We are so close to being able to go out to tender, but every round of correspondence with the Diocese to date has led to further questions, most of which are on minutiae. We resorted to writing directly to the Bishop in an attempt to move this project along. We were granted permission to apply for a faculty towards the end of 2017, but even this correspondence resulted in further queries from the Diocese. We continue to pray for a more constructive and enabling attitude from those concerned at the Diocese, and trust that the 'Called Together' initiative will facilitate this.

In terms of fundraising, we hosted a concert from the South London Singers, and the Apple Tree Singers performed at the Teston Flower Festival. We offered an Easter Quiz, hosted a Fashion show, and held a St George's Day afternoon tea. We continued to fundraise at events in the community, selling cakes at Picnic in the Park, beer snacks at the CAMRA East Malling Beer Festival and glow sticks at the Turning on the Lights. We also sang carols at Lunsford Tesco.

Thanks yet again to everyone who has supported us during this project – whether by donations, time or moral support – we are very nearly there!

Anna Ashbee

Circle Of Prayer

The Prayer Circle is made up of members of the congregation who will pray for your personal request daily.

When we are given a name to pray for, we pass it on by telephone to the next person so it becomes a chain of a number of people praying for the same person daily.

We endeavour to have all the Prayer Partners praying at the same time, but because of peoples circumstances this is not possible, but it still re assuring that we do have in our church community someone is praying for somebody each and every day.

If you wish to add someone to our prayer list please ring Michael or Jenny 01732 841204.

If you wish to share the particular reason needed for prayer, we can pray for that particular condition, but this is optional, a name is sometimes all that is needed.

The Lord Said "*Come to Me All Who Are Heavy Laden, And I Will Give You Rest*" Matthew 12;28

Michael and Jenny Latham

East Malling, Wateringbury & Teston Benefice Branch of Mothers' Union

- Our branch currently has 20 members, on average we have around 10-12 members at our monthly meetings.
- We have been making blankets for babies in Malawi and knitting for premature babies
- We have raised funds for AFIA (Away From It All caravan holidays for families in Rochester
- We continue to support the work of Mothers' Union around the world with daily prayers

We have had a number of interesting meetings some with speakers on a variety of topics:

2017

- Feb: Talk on Dementia by Min Stacpoole, tea, bring & buy & raffle
- Mar: A talk from "Women at the Well" by Caroline Hattersley from London
- Apr: "Diocesan Links" by Canon Brian Stevenson
- May: "From Cell to Ward" A talk on Prison Chaplaincy by Jean Brown
- June: Healing Service and lunch at Burrswood
- July: Julia Jamieson came to talk to us at our annual garden party and fund raising even at Audrey Allen's house, Larkfield
- Sept: Discussion Afternoon with Poems, Prayers and Hymns
- Oct: A talk on the work of Kent Association for the Blind
- Nov: A talk on Hospital Chaplaincy by Jean Brown
- Dec: Christmas lunch with partners and friends at Spadework in Offham

2018

- Jan: New Year's lunch at the North Pole Pub, Teston
- Feb: Afternoon of Bible Reflection with Fr Nick Williams

My thanks go to Audrey Allen (Committee member) & Liz Allen (Treasurer) for helping to plan and run our Benefice Branch of Mothers' Union, and also to Rachel Arundell who has undertaken a number of administration tasks in the last year. Also to all those who tirelessly help with opening up the churches and providing refreshments at our meetings.

Frances Selman (Secretary)

20th February 2018

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod meet 3 times a year.

The officers of the Malling Deanery Synod are:

Rural Dean	Rev'd Matthew Buchan (Vicar of Leybourne)
Lay Chair	Barry Fisher
Secretary	Sheena Stewart
Treasurer	Martin Gillespie

These meetings are a great way to meet up with representatives from the parishes within the Malling Deanery to compare how we approach issues and challenges and see what we can learn from each other.

The main discussions of our meetings have been:

Home for Good Presentation – Billy-Jo O’Leary Project Co-ordinator

Billy-Jo explained her background and how she came to be involved in Home for Good which is a unique project being rolled out across the diocese. They are linked with Diagrama Foundation which is a Christian based charity and the initiative is supported by the bishop. They are looking for support for fostering and adopting and Billy-Jo outlined the timeline and process leading up to Adoption Sunday on 5 November 2017. The activities are culminating with a celebration in the cathedral on 3 March 2018.

Reform and Renewal – Mark Barker General Synod

Mark has been on General Synod for four years and is a vicar at St Stephens at Tonbridge. He is also on the Bishop’s Council.

Mark explained he had been asked to speak on the church’s Renewal and Reform programme. He said that people are no longer automatically Christian and are more secular. Advances in society have led to a decline in church attendance with an increasing average congregation age and it has been recognised that something has to be done now. This is a new initiative supported by the Bishop and more will be heard about it.

Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan (DMMP)

Malling Deanery Synod commissioned a working group to research, explore and come up with options for a new Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan (DMMP). A new DMMP was required to plan twenty to thirty years into the future because of a particular set of circumstances that we must face together, including large population growth and major staffing issues.

This group have produced a plan for discussion which we will have now seen. On 7th February 2018 a special Deanery Synod meeting was held to discuss the plan.

The meeting involved the Deanery Chapter and Deanery Synod representatives, as well as all Lay Ministers, Churchwardens and Treasurers in our Deanery. The Archdeacon of Tonbridge, The Venerable Julie Conalty, was also present.

The DMMP will now enter a consultation and feedback phase.

Our next Deanery Synod meeting will be on Monday 11 June 2018.

Alan Bramley

Children's Church

Sunday School continues to be popular, providing games, craft activities and Bible instruction for children aged 5-11. The Good Friday Project was another success – 50 children from the Benefice took part, singing songs, doing an Easter egg hunt, making chocolate nests, and building the Easter Garden (as well as many more craft activities!). Thank you to all who play such a valued role as Sunday School leaders or helpers (at Sunday School or at the Good Friday Project) – it is impossible to run these activities without your dedication and assistance, and your help is much appreciated!

This year, we experimented with East Malling's first Café Church. We reorganised the church into 'café tables', provided tea, coffee and pastries throughout, and welcomed people of all age to informal worship on the theme of 'the Road to Emmaus'. We had a great turnout, and hopefully we can repeat this again.

Anna Ashbee

Choir

I'm going to start this year's report with my thanks, as for various reasons, without the wonderful help from all my friends in the Choir, and in particular from Sue, Anna & Pat, who have kept everything going, when I was definitely not functioning at my best, there would not have been a lot to report on during the past year!!

We have all played a part in leading the worship on each Sunday in the year; we have been taken outside our "Comfort Zone" on occasions, and without exception (even if with a few groans!), have risen to our challenges! We are sad not to have had so many Weddings to sing at, with the notable exception of our own Catherine's marriage to Tom at the beginning of August. This was a really wonderful occasion and much enjoyed by us all! Thank you so much for sharing it with us, Catherine & Tom!

- In the early spring, with members of the other Benefice choirs, practised and performed Stainer's much loved Crucifixion. As usual, huge thanks go to our friend and honorary choir member, Joan Ratcliffe, who spends so much of her time giving us all the help we need in Friday Choir Practices & for the final performance! We had some lovely singing from our two soloists, Nick Ashbee & Richard Payne, ably assisted by the small solo parts of Pilate, thieves and others!
- This year, we have devised our own "Passiontide Patchwork" of Anthems, hymns & readings, which we will be performing on Palm Sunday – 25th March at 6.00PM in Church! We look forward to seeing you all!
- We had our usual two evenings of carol singing around the village and, again, we thank Alan & Linda for their warm welcome & delicious refreshments after our two hour singing stint! They were much appreciated by us all!
- Constance & Sophie continue to make excellent progress, and we were delighted to welcome their younger brothers, Alexander & James into the Choir Family at New Year. They too, are settling in well, and enjoying their training as they gain confidence
- We were also very pleased that Sophie & James' Mum, Jemma joined our soprano team!
- The Choir Festival wasn't possible again this year, largely due to poor publicity and organisation on the part of Cathedral personnel, meaning that we didn't hear about it in time to learn the music! We hope for better luck in 2018!

Thank you all again choir, for everything you do to enhance the worship at St. James the Great!

Belinda Hunter

Events Committee

As usual the Events committee, supported by co-opted members, have been kept busy by the usual afternoon teas, summer fayre, and of course the Christmas market. Apart from producing much needed funds for the church, each provided a good contact with the local community.

The Events committee would like to thank everyone who supported these functions in any way, and hope to have another successful year.

Jacqui Brooman

Flower Arrangers

Our numbers fluctuate due to the vagaries of life but we currently have a working team of 14 and so maintain a strong membership who are willing to support each other when needed. We have three teams who work on a rota basis opting for the weeks that suit them best. We hold two meetings each year to set the rota for the next six months, when we also choose our placements for any festivals that fall into that period. This is a time for us to reflect on what we are providing, plan for any future events and get together as a group. We also review our funds which are made up by donations, especially at festivals in the church calendar, for which we are very grateful. Wedding flowers are a service provided voluntarily by the arrangers and this generates a small amount of income to help with the provision of our normal arrangements. The uptake for wedding flowers has been very low over the past year which has impacted on our funds. These monies are needed to provide essentials such as oasis and to ensure arrangers can ask for money for flowers if they need to. Currently there is a review of what we offer for weddings to give more options. There will always be our normal flower arrangements in church for any wedding at no cost unless a wedding should fall in Advent or Lent; our normal arrangements being a pedestal at the High Altar and a windowsill arrangement in the Lady Chapel. When possible, we also place a window arrangement in the refreshments area. We are frequently requested to provide a memorial or celebratory pedestal and all the money given by the sponsor is spent on the flowers in those arrangements. A new addition to our remit for Easter 2017 was a free-standing floral cross at the High Altar for which we received a donation for the flowers. We are considering a one-off fundraising venture within the church that will provide a boost our funds. The flower arrangers provide all the foliage needed for any arrangements in church and will always seek to be creative with greenery should there be insufficient funds for the cost of flowers although our arrangers often contribute themselves towards the weekly flowers.

We maintain our profile with the occasional article published in the church magazine 'In Touch' and the Christmas 2017 issue included a write up on our Harvest Festival displays. Elaine Welch continues to be our point of contact for those wishing to sponsor a special display on 01622 719648. Barbara Trimmer is our administrator and can be contacted for any other enquires by emailing barb.r@hotmail.co.uk.

Barbara Trimmer

Bell Ringers

In August 2017, six ringers from Rochester Cathedral joined our Thursday evening practice.

We have also welcomed visitors from Aylesford, Mereworth and West Malling to our Thursday evening practices.

Ringers from Send in Surrey visited us on 7th October during their tower outing.

A quarter peal rung on 2nd September by a band from Ashford was actually their sneaky practice for the County 6 bell competition. The Hadlow band also came for a practice on 12th September.

On 23rd September East Malling tower was host to the Kent County 6 bell Striking competition. One band from each of the 6 districts in the Kent County Association (Rochester, Tonbridge, Maidstone, Ashford, Lewisham and Canterbury) rang their 'routine' after having a few minutes to practise first. Having no knowledge of the order of the teams, the judge, who was from Sussex, listened in the churchyard and awarded marks for striking. Ringers from East Malling provided tea, coffee and cakes throughout the morning and we were able to make a donation to the church towards the cost of coffee used from the contributions received from the visitors. The band of ringers from Hadlow church, representing the Tonbridge District, were judged to be the winners.

Blacklands Cubs (Bear Pack) held an investiture in the church after coming up the tower to see and chime the bells. I am grateful to the ringers who helped out with this.

We rang for 5 weddings this year, a considerable drop on previous years. I am grateful to our ringers for providing bells before and after Catherine's wedding to Tom in August, most unexpected.

The bells were rung half-muffled for Remembrance Sunday.

A band of 6 regular East Malling ringers rang in the New Year.

Liam Corrette became a member of the KACR this year and, supported by other members of the band, now visits other local towers to gain bell-handling experience. He also had an opportunity to ring at Rochester Cathedral with the local young ringers band.

Barry Allen is now a regular Sunday morning ringer. Bob Bishop, a resident of Cottenham Close, is learning to ring and attends Thursday practices regularly, as well as going to Mereworth on a Tuesday to gain more experience. Denise and Paul Cook who are learning to ring at St. Mary's, West Malling have also come regularly to Thursday practices, again to improve and gain extra experience. I am extremely grateful to Terry Barnard, one of the District Ringing Masters, for teaching and helping these ringers.

Sophie Tallon is learning to ring the bells as part of her Duke of Edinburgh award 'learn a new skill' challenge. Her dad, Lee, is also having a go.

I am grateful to Terry Barnard and Barry Evans (Mereworth) for keeping ringing practices going during the 12 weeks I was out of action with a broken leg.

At our AGM this October Robin Hughes and Albert Gordon took on the role of deputy tower captain, Joy Barnard became tower correspondent and Don Payne is now the Treasurer, relieving me of some of the hats I had acquired over the years.

We have a lively band of ringers who ring the bells every Sunday morning before the service, often we have more than 6 which is really great.

Our regular ringers are Joy & Terry Barnard, Albert & Joan Gordon, Robin Hughes, Liam Corrette, Emma Tilston, Andrew Millgate, Katy Millgate, Catherine Kitchen, Don Payne and Barry Allen.

Sue Payne

Tower Captain

The Friends of St James

The Friends committee has continued to work very hard during the year.

Our current committee is:

President	Rev Nick Williams
Chairman	Alan Bramley
Vice Chairman	Clive Spinks
Secretary	Jean Spinks
Treasurer	Shaun Gurteen
PCC rep	Alan Bramley
Church Warden (Ex Officio)	David Chambers
Elected Members	Jacqui Brooman, Michael Latham, and Audrey Allen

A big thank you to all those who have served on the committee over the year.

Audrey Allen, a member of The Friends, who was co-opted onto the committee has agreed to become a full committee member.

Jacqui Brooman is moving away from the area and so there will be another vacancy in the near future.

We hope that all goes well for Jacqui and David in their move to Hampshire.

Richard Leek and Suzette Budd have retired from the committee and I thank them for their contribution over the years. Clive Spinks has kindly taken over as Vice Chairman.

The total membership is currently 138, comprising 14 Singles, 38 Family, 68 Concessionary and 18 Life members.

We continue with our very successful coffee mornings on the first Saturday of each month as these are very popular and many people who are Friends but not necessarily regular church attendees come along and enjoy the morning.

Our fund-raising plans for 2018 include a Quiz Night on Saturday 28th April.

It's The Friends turn to run the Summer Fayre on Saturday 23rd June.

We were hoping to have a Barn Dance in October but this has been particularly difficult to arrange with a suitable band so we have had to abandon the idea (for now). But this does mean that our ever-popular Starters and Puds evening is likely to be held instead. Watch for the adverts.

The main project that The Friends are funding remains the installation of the glass doors. We now have a new architect who is appraising the project and will be detailing how this can be progressed as quickly as possible.

Although it is not our intention to hang on to funds unnecessarily we've only been able to make limited donations for other church projects until we have detailed and firm costs for the provision of the doors. The Friends have recently paid for the installation of emergency lighting and updating the alarm system. This amounted to £2,327. We have also told the PCC that any work needed that costs up to £100 will automatically be funded by us.

Alan Bramley

Chairman

Church Opening

There were 51 visitors to the Church this year who signed the Visitors' Book (*97 signatories Last year*) but possibly there were more visitors who didn't sign the book, I do know some who have previously visited the Church and often don't sign it again. Many of the visitors come from all parts of the UK usually holidaying, some were local who don't attend the Services and many from other walks of life who visited our Church for many reasons including to admire and photograph inside the building and the stained glass windows, to trace past family members through the extensive genealogical records of baptisms, marriages, burial's, as well as many casual visitors including events' organisers and attendees and our flower arrangers etc.

The PCC thanked Mr and Mrs Dennis and Christine Freere for sharing their valuable time and wished them very well for the future as they have now stepped down from Church Sitting for health reasons. This has been minuted in the January 2018 minutes.

Since taking over the Church Sitting Rotas in the Summer of 2017 and with fewer Church Sitters with available time, I can currently only fill the Rotas and open the Church for the first two Tuesdays and Thursdays of each month until more Sitters come forward.

This will be done on a three-monthly at a time basis, however should there be more Sitters available I can then hope to extend the Church opening weeks.

This proposal was accepted and agreed by Mr David Chambers – St. James the Great Church Warden.

I would like to sincerely thank all the Church Sitters past and present who have given and give their valuable time to ensure a warm welcome with cups of teas to the many visitors to St. James the Great Church

Mark Francis

Booklet continues over

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and Safeguarding

This year is going to be a busy one for all those involved in Safeguarding and DBS applications, myself as Lead Recruiter, and Michala Neaves as St James' Safeguarding Representative.

Up until now, I have been responsible for a total of 15 DBS for St James (35 in all for the Benefice), via the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) ensuring that best practice is always used for our application and checking processes.

As you may be aware, this number is due to increase to include those on the PCC who currently do not have a DBS. Based on the PCC members at present, this will take the total DBS for St James to 20.

DBS certificates do not expire, but the Diocesan rules state that all DBS must be renewed every 5 years. Michala will now be responsible for handing out the relevant application forms for renewals, and new applicants, (ensuring they are completed correctly) and will then forward them to me, where I will obtain the references and take the DBS application forward.

In addition to the extra roles that now require a DBS, the roles that require a level of Safeguarding awareness has also been added to, and now includes roles such as Choir members, Refreshment helpers, Bell ringers, Welcomers, Servers, PCC members etc.

The first two levels of Safeguarding, C0 Basic Awareness and C1 Foundation, are predominantly done online. The C2 Leadership Training and C3 Clergy & Lay Ministers Training courses are run by the Diocese in various locations.

The level of Safeguarding that will need to be obtained will depend on the role carried out within the church. I will be contacting everyone individually to tell them what level/course they need to complete.

Those 15 people with existing DBS have already been advised of the courses relevant to them. At the time of writing this report, 2 have completed all their courses, 3 have partially completed, and the remaining 10 have yet to confirm. Admittedly, the online courses can take some time to complete, but it is possible to dip in and out of the courses, at a pace that suits, if it is not possible to complete it one go.

In view of the additional roles now requiring Safeguarding training, I will be contacting an additional 50 people at St James to advise them what Safeguarding course(s) they need to do. As you can imagine this will be quite a task, as I also have to do the same for Wateringbury and Teston, so everyone's co-operation would be greatly appreciated.

I am aware that some people do not have access to a computer, and those people are more than welcome to come along to "Parish Office" at my home, to use the Benefice iMac to do their course(s). Please contact me on 01622 815218 if this will be of help to you.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to everyone for their help, support, friendship, and kind words throughout the year.

Sandra Corby
Lead Recruiter and Administrator for the Benefice