

# The Annual Report 2010

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## From the Vicar

Since I started on 25th October, life has flown by. In the first six weeks alone we had All Saints, All Souls, Deanery Synod, Remembrance Day and Christ the King, an Advent course, our Christmas celebrations, plus a schools public speaking competition, brass band concerts, services for the deaf, a new baptism preparation course, some baptisms, a good number of couples looking to be married at St John's, meetings with the Town Council and the town's Fairtrade Committee, the usual round of

morning and evening prayer, daily masses, home communions, compiling rotas, writing sermons and not a few funerals, some for much loved members of our congregation. But during all this busyness I have also sought to focus on learning how the parish works, getting to know its people, learning the wisdom of the place and starting to identify areas for development and renewal. This is clearly an on-going process as it is important to win the trust of the people of our congregation, so that we can move forward together with confidence and familiarity with each other.

I hope that we will come to see ourselves as a 'pilgrim' church, a people on the move in a changing culture and social context. In this light our spirituality is not static, fixed and unyielding, but instead has a certain adaptability, flexibility and a sense of 'travelling light'. This does not mean, however that we do not honour and preserve the best of the traditions that St John's has exemplified, but we should just keep in mind that when St John's was conceived and built the spirituality that it embodied was fresh and refreshing, people were stimulated and challenged by the energy and drive of the leaders of the Oxford Movement and the passion that they injected into church life. We too in our own time should seek to re-capture that 'Vision Glorious', that sense of a church going places, with a clear sense of itself and its purpose.

Connected with this is a desire for growth. This is not just a simple matter of growing numbers, however desirable as that may be. The first essential aspect of growth in church life is that the people grow in themselves. Church life should be a place where people are nurtured, fed and encouraged to develop and progress in their faith. To increase their understanding of the scriptures, to understand more of the fundamental teachings of the church, its history and doctrines, so that they become more

confident within their own faith and spirituality, and are more confident witnesses to their faith in our community and with friends and neighbours. Research repeatedly shows that the single most frequent factor that influences people to come to church is through friends and neighbours. As Vicar, I can play my part, but the greatest ambassadors of any church are its people.

Moreover Jesus said that he came that we might enjoy life in all its fullness – some translations render it as having life ‘abundantly’. I love that sense that Jesus wants us to have abundant lives, fresh with hope and vigour, open to all the possibilities of our world, courageous, adventurous, generous and loving.

Thankfully, I sense a very warm and welcoming atmosphere in this congregation, as attracting people to church is one thing – retaining them after a visit or two is a key challenge. I am very gratified to say that I believe St John’s people are equal to that challenge. The church has a loving heart and it shows.

So to build on this strength, education will be a key priority. The Advent course was therefore the start of an ongoing programme of courses and retreats, which will draw upon research indicating how people’s faith and spiritual needs change over a lifetime. In addition to Advent and Lent courses we will also start a series of seminars on the foundations of our faith, how it works, what it means, how it continues to grow and adapt.

In addition, key research into the development of congregations consistently shows that many parishes encounter a 150 member barrier (ie usual attendance is around this number). Those churches who exclusively employ a priest led structure, i.e. the vicar runs everything, inevitably find that they cannot grow past this number. Principally because one person does not have the time to satisfactorily meet the spiritual needs of so many laity and the administrative burden becomes too great for solely top-down decisions. If churches wish to grow past this point, and we should, then they do have to work out some level of delegation, including the sharing of pastoral care as well.

That need not mean undermining the traditions of this church or denying people access to priestly ministry, but it will mean that laity too should be encouraged to share in ministry e.g. baptism and marriage preparation etc.

This model is already working well in Children’s Church and youth work. In addition we have three new Guilds – for the bell-ringers, flower arrangers and servers. I hope that we can build upon this great start and seek to create more guilds, small groups of mutual support and prayer, united in some common task, growing in their faith and seeding the nurture of future leaders for our church.

You may remember that the challenge I posed this Advent was to consider how God may be calling you into his service; as we quote John Henry Newman in our Advent course:

“We are all created to His glory - -we are created to do His will. I am created to do something or to be something for which no one else is created; I have a place in God's counsels, in God's world, which no one else has; whether I be rich or poor, despised or esteemed by man, God knows me and calls me by my name. God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me, which He has not committed to another. I have my mission...”

How is God calling you to his service, how is he calling you to serve his people and to serve his church? There is such great potential at St John’s, such a wealth of experience and talent that just needs to be released and nurtured to grow and blossom. If we can foresee a great future for our life at St John’s, what part may you play?

We shall speak more of this in 2011 and together consider how we might rightly devote some of our time, talents and yes our money as well with a much greater focus on stewardship, to forge a bright and expanding future for our church, its life and its mission in this town.

*Fr. Kevin*

## Attendance

The average adult attendance for Sunday Morning Services during the month of October was 103 and the average attendance for children during the same period was 15. For Easter Day the attendance was 203. The attendance for Christmas Services was 207. These figures show a continuing decrease over the last few years.

## Bellringers

Our main aim is to ring for the 10 o'clock Sunday Service and we have achieved this on all but 2 occasions. The "missing" 2 were caused by ringers' sickness and holiday. Also I am pleased to report that we also rang for Father Kevin's Induction service and Christmas Bells pealed out at both midnight communion and Christmas morning. This was despite some ringers being unavailable.

On the human front our band has both lost and gained during the year. Firstly after 42 years of loyal service Daphne Hubbard retired. We shall miss her skills. Sarah Purnell returned to active ringing even though she is a mother to 2 lively toddlers. Dan Douglass rang for his first Sunday service in April and has proved to be an asset to the band. Also our appeal for more ringers proved fruitful with Martin Hazel and Tim coming forward and progressing well enough to be Sunday ringers very soon. **However, we still need more ringers!**

We rang for 5 weddings this year but our sponsored ringing for the restoration fund had no takers. The bells also were rung by visiting ringers, local and from far away (Beckenham). There was a quarter peal rang to welcome father Kevin and his family. This included 3 of the band supported by friends from local towers. Lastly a full peal (5152 changes in approx 3 hours) was rung by an experienced band from our Umbrella Ringing body for the Diocese, The Sussex County Association of Change Ringers.

On behalf of the band I wish to thank our friends

at St John's church for their continued and appreciated support.

*Doug Stewart*

## Charitable Giving

For some years now we have organised monthly collections at St John's for charities at home and abroad. The charities have mostly been chosen from suggestions received from the congregation. For Lent and Harvest Festival the charities supported were in the field of "mission" whilst the December and Christmas charity was particularly relevant for remembering the plight of the homeless. The congregation were particularly generous in supporting all of these. Collections were made for the following charities during the year.

*Kit Widdowson*

January	Sri Lanka Pre-school	£152.32
February, March & April (Lent)	Leprosy Mission	£632.87
May	Clic Sargeant	£72.03
June	Dame Vera Lynn Trust	£97.38
July & August	USPG	£120.00
September	Parkinsons UK	£164.14
November	Cystic Fibrosis Trust	£120.58
December & Christmas	Centrepont & Posada	£1,204.40
<b>Total</b>		<b>£2,563.72</b>

## Children's Church

In March 2010 Sigrid Moiseiwitsch took over the role as Children's Church leader. Since then the children's church team have been meeting on a more regular basis, about every 4-6 weeks, to coordinate the running of the children's church; to provide support to the leaders; plan events, discuss the materials used within the Sunday morning groups and much more. Consequently the children's church has felt more coordinated and cohesive.

During the interregnum, beginning at the all age All Saints service in 2009 until Harvest festival of

2010, the children's church thoroughly enjoyed contributing to several of the first Sunday services. We received positive feedback from the congregation and it was a great way of achieving more involvement from the children in the morning worship. Children still read at the first Sunday services and it would be great if more children would like to do this.

In May, Claire Ebdon, in her role as Safe Guarding/Child Protection Officer for St John's, informed the children's church of changes to the policies around child protection and the setting up of a new safe guarding body. She explained the need for everyone to have a CRB check in relation to their work specifically with children in St John's, previously many of the leaders had checks through their employers. All of the leaders in the children's church now have up to date CRB checks.

The material used to support the Christian education in the Sunday morning groups has long been a subject of discussion. For the younger groups (year 2 – 6) we had tried some new materials, which were great in terms of being very interesting and engaging, but they did not follow the lectionary adopted by St John's. Recently we have agreed that it is important that the focus of the teaching follows the readings for that Sunday and all groups now follow the lectionary. Currently we are using a range of different resources from which to draw ideas and activities. We have also introduced Christian teaching within some of the crèche sessions as we now have more 3 and 4 year olds.

In June of 2010 the children's church, with support from the ideas from the Mission group, organised a Church picnic. This was in response to a fall in attendance from families and children to church on a Sunday morning and the desire to provide more opportunities for creating fellowship for all ages and a greater sense of belonging to a Christian community.

To inform the parents of some of the ideas the children's church had planned from the summer holidays through to Christmas, a letter was sent to all families linked to St John's. This included organising a Christmas picture/art competition. The winners had their pictures printed on the

Christmas service leaflet that is distributed throughout the parish.

The Children's Church welcomed the arrival of Father Kevin in October and we are very grateful for his ideas and support. Father Kevin encouraged the Children's Church team to help plan, organise and implement Posada in Advent. It was warmly received and two Posada crib sets were circulated among 52 families, quite a few of them non-church families. This initiative was very successful and is a great tool for outreach, so we are looking to repeat this in the run up to Christmas 2011 and increase it to four crib sets.

The Crib Service on Christmas Eve was held in a packed church. We used a new script, which helped us involve both the older and younger children. We were very pleased that a couple of new children wanted to be involved in the nativity service and they and their families have continued to attend on a Sunday.

Thank you to all those who are involved with and support the children's church for all your hard work, time and energy. *Claire Elliot*

## Youth Group

The youth group has been running for nearly 5 years and we continue to meet once a month on a Saturday, alternating between games evenings in the hall and pastoral centre, when we use equipment bought with money raised by the sponsored swim, and activities out of the Parish such as bowling, trampolining, archery, laser questing etc. We are also planning another two-night camp at Broadstone Warren, East Grinstead in July, which has proved very popular over the past few years.

Our games evenings sometimes have a theme and we recently held successful Christmas and Valentine evenings. We continue to coordinate use of the Church Hall with the Bridge Club, who also meet on a Saturday evening.

One of the aims of the youth group is to maintain engagement with the young people of St John's as they move through their teenage years, as this is traditionally the time when children drift away from church. We seem to have been very successful in this and we now have several young people aged 15, 16 and 17

who continue to attend the youth group.

The leaders of the Youth Group have recently met to think about what other activities or group could be formed to specifically meet the needs of this older age group, (15 plus) as the focus of the youth group is more geared towards the 11 to 15 age range.

Events held in the church are open to all young people aged 11 plus and friends are also welcome to attend. Events held off site are open to those young people who have attended Sunday services and have a link with St John's. We charge a small sub to attend events.

In addition to the social activities on a Saturday the youth group also meet during the service on the second and fourth Sunday's of the month. This is the opportunity for more focussed Christian teaching and discussion and the numbers attending this group are very encouraging.

In May the Youth Group also supported Christian Aid week by delivering envelopes to several of the roads in the Parish. This has become an annual event and has quite a competitive edge!

We are pleased that so many young people continue to be involved with the life of St. John's as they are the future of our church. *Claire Elliot*

## Choir

2010 definitely felt like a year of two halves for the choir – even if the second half only really got underway in October! Numbers stayed pretty static during the year, with Patrick O'Brien joining us in the last few weeks of the year, although Christmas marked the last regular appearances of Amy Saunders, and Rick and Jess Colley.

During the interregnum, we maintained the tradition of providing an anthem at each of the Sunday services, as well as leading the Family Eucharist in June to mark Choir Sunday. Services during Holy Week were enlivened by the presence of Bishop Mark, and the joint summer concert with St Wilfrid's School was once again very well attended with over 50 performers on stage and around five times that many in the

audience. Subject to last minute changes, the plan is to complete the "Battle for Israel" Trilogy with the story of Samson in June 2011. We also took part in the Deanery Choral Evensongs held at Holy Trinity Hurstpierpoint, and St Peter's, Cowfold (which I conducted in October).

My first conversation with Fr. Kevin back in the summer confirmed that music would continue to be an important part of the life and worship at St John's – we've all read the horror stories of organist and new vicar falling out within hours of the latter's arrival – and in his first 12 weeks as our new incumbent, we premiered a new anthem for the induction service, debuted a Schubert setting of the Mass to mark the Feast of Christ the King, held an extended Full Choral Evensong for Advent Sunday, (ably assisted by members of Southwater, Hurstpierpoint and Cowfold church choirs), and defied the snow and ice for a very uplifting 9 Lessons and Carols service.

Unfortunately the state of the organ has deteriorated considerably over the past 12 months, and indeed it decided not to continue on two consecutive weekends in December midway through the services. I had already planned to involve instruments for the 9 Lessons and Carols, and (apart from for O Come All ye Faithful) in the end, the whole service was accompanied by Phillip Sear on keyboard, Tom Wood on trumpet, Mike Wood on electric bass and cello, and Sigrid Moiseiwitsch on flute and recorder, notably for an ambitious arrangement of In Dulci Jubilo. Orchestral accompaniment will feature more heavily over the coming months.

My thanks to Sigrid, Claire Elliott and Tony Cripps for their sterling First Sunday band, and to Stella and Fiona Cross, Rebekah and Imogen Orchard, Alison Simpson, Tom and Mike Wood, and Alice Paterson (making her bassoon debut in church) for playing at the Crib Service.

Also my thanks to Carol Matthews for standing in at practices and services as necessary, Cherry Greveson for her care of the robes, and Rachel Staplehurst for assistance with the younger choir members.

*Paul Simpson*

## Churchwardens

The majority of last year was spent without an incumbent and much of the churchwarden's time was spent ensuring that the parish maintained the regular church services, weddings and funerals. Particular thanks to Fr Jeremy and all the 'stand in' vicars who so willingly celebrated many of our services.

During the whole of this year we had to address major building defects in the way of dry and wet rot in the south aisle which cost over £25,000. We received two generous contributions towards these costs but the remainder of the congregation assumed someone else would generate the balance. In the event the PCC had to spend the only contingency fund in the accounts.

Other work that was scheduled included the redesign of the organ roof to prevent leaks in storm conditions. The severe frosts in January and February caused several sections of stone masonry to shale off the building. This will be rectified in 2011 with the help of a grant that the churchwardens have secured. The water main under the dais was repaired, the heating system was drained down and leaks repaired and the vestry floor was replaced having suffered water ingress from the vestry roof, due to snow build-up.

The vicarage, being empty for most of the Spring and Summer needed to be kept warm and secure and a working party kept the hedges, lawn and shrubs under control. Thanks to all of you who helped with this. We then had a team decorating the ground floor of the vicarage in readiness for Fr Kevin's family moving in.

Following the completion of the building works and being thoughtful of the induction we organised a thorough clean and spruce-up of the church, washing down, polishing floors and cobweb removal.

Then the wardens were responsible for working with the Bishop in preparation for the induction. Apart from the service a considerable effort was put into organising the refreshments so that everyone could stay a chat. Thanks to the team who arranged the lovely spread.

During this past year all our volunteers who prepare the magazine, pew sheets, various rotas, flowers, servers duties, hall activities and cleaning have supported the PCC and Churchwardens to keep the church running smoothly. Let's hope that support remains at least during the early months of Fr Kevin's incumbency.

The Churchwardens take this opportunity to thank the duty wardens, sidesmen and readers for their important work looking after the congregation before during and after services.

*Graham Todd and Robin Powell, Churchwardens*

## Fabric Report

The churchwardens have a duty under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 to annually report on the condition of the church fabric including the work done. The report has to be submitted to the PCC at the meeting prior to the Annual General Church Meeting.

During the year the following work has been carried out under the guidance of our Architect; Robin Nugent RIBA. Robin's performance could have been better.

<i><b>Description and work involved</b></i>	<i><b>Cost</b></i>
<b>Modification and renewal of organ roof along the west side gutter</b> The width of the west side valley gutter and its poor design was not accommodating flood and high wind conditions, allowing water ingress. There was also a split in the leadwork on the floor of the gutter. The lead was removed, the gutter widened, a higher side wall was inserted adjacent the tiling and a heavier grade of lead replaced. An improved entry into the hopper head was achieved.	£9,000
<b>The south aisle roof works</b> Dry rot manifested itself internally over the south doors. The lower external tiling was removed which showed extensive dry rot fibres along the south plate line. This was treated and the roof design changed to	£31,000

<p>provide better ventilation. During the works extensive wet rot was also found along the inner wall plates which necessitated 80% replacement with concrete plate construction. Then it was found that the roof had dropped on the rotten timber so the trusses had to be tied back to the nave wall and additional metal brackets inserted along the south wall line. The ashlar were replaced and the timber infill put back. The purlin bearing on the west wall had rotted and this was strengthened using a metal sleeve bearing onto the west wall.</p>	
<p><b>Heating pipework repairs under the dais.</b> The convector heaters along the north wall stopped working due to serious airlocks. The dais was lifted and the system drained down. There was a very corroded heating pipe feeding the south side of the centre aisle. Due to access difficulties and likely high cost, this side of the heating coil was cut and sealed off. The draining down released the major airlock in the north side heaters. The system was cleaned out.</p>	£1,064
<p><b>Water main repairs under the dais</b> When the dais was lifted for heating repairs the water main was leaking badly and was therefore replaced in plastic piping.</p>	£180
<p><b>Kitchen porch roof covering replacement</b> Whilst other roof work was being done and because there was many thefts of lead from churches in the area and an attempt made to take this leadwork from the porch, we decided to carry our minor timber repairs and put a felt specification back.</p>	£560
<p><b>Vestry floor replacement</b> Snow build up in the valleys over the</p>	£470

<p>vestry, together with freezing up of the outlets between the roofs caused flooding over the roof flashings onto the softwood block flooring. The damage in part of the vestry was irreparable so the blocks were taken up and a floor screed laid.</p>	
<p><b>Improved florescent lighting in belfry</b> It was prudent to install better lighting in the belfry beyond the emergency lighting, to minimise the risk of accidents in servicing the bells.</p>	£250
<p><b>Total</b></p>	<b>£42,524</b>

### Other Issues

The wardens have identified shaling stonework on various elevations. This was caused by very wet and cold weather during the past two winters. This work is scheduled to be rectified in Spring 2011.

There is an issue regarding access to the spire clock. A risk study has been completed and works identified and prices obtained. Now we await fund availability and the Council involvement as they wish to modify the clock mechanism.

Regular external working parties were organised to keep the churchyard tidy and clean the gullies etc.

*Graham Todd and Robin Powell, Churchwardens*

### Deanery Synod

Currently St. John's is represented by four lay members; Sigrid Moiseiwitsch, Claire Elliot, Kate Cannon and Janice Bartholomew. All Deanery Synod members serve the same three year term of office at the end of which the entire Synod must be re-elected. At the next APCM (April 2011) St. John's will elect representatives for the next three year term.

During the last year a number of clerical changes have been made in parishes in the deanery. The Revd. Alastair Cutting was installed at St Peter's Henfield in July; in September The Revd. Sophie Jelley was appointed to St Andrew's, Burgess Hill and of course here at St. John's, Fr. Kevin O'Brien has been officially our parish priest since October. The temporary appointment of Canon

Dr Peter Sills as acting Rural Dean has come to an end and we wait to find out who will replace him.

Four meetings of the Deanery Synod took place during the year. Each meeting was hosted by a different parish and a representative of the church gave a brief outline of life in their parish. Meetings were preceded by a celebration of the Eucharist and a cup of tea. This year's meetings have been opened by our Rural Dean who has given a short address followed by prayers. There has usually been an invited guest speaker giving a talk about an area of work within the Diocese.

In April, the Revd. Richard Jackson, Diocesan Advisor for Mission and Renewal gave a presentation entitled 'Growing Healthy Churches', encouraging the churches of Hurst Deanery to go forward in growth. There is no doubt that numbers are declining and we need to look at why this is happening and how to facilitate growth. We were asked to remember the Parable of the Sower; some soils grow seeds more easily. The characteristics of growing Churches were given as:

- Informality/ humanity
- Leadership
- Addressing and removing structural barriers
- Shared ministry
- Fervent intercession
- Ministering in gifting and strengths
- Driven by children and youth work.

He told us it is important for individual churches to know where they are; that healthy churches with vision are giving churches and that every parish can grow irrespective of its size.

In July a team from Chichester Cathedral led by Canon Tim Schofield, the Precentor gave a presentation about the Cathedral's role and ministry. Amongst its many activities the cathedral will organise retreats, visits and pilgrimages. George Bell House, a centre for vocation, education and reconciliation, can be used for away-days, meetings, quiet days and residential weekends. Lesley Webster, a lay member of Chapter, said The Dean and Chapter are keen to foster links and want to know what they can do for us. Ruth Poyner, Visitors Manager, said The Visitors Centre includes the

Parish Links Centre Organiser to which each parish has a named link.

In November the meeting was held in our church and it was good to see there was standing room only in the hall. The Revd Will Kemp spoke about The Point, the church he started as a church plant 6 years ago. The Archdeaconry pastoral committee has now accepted the Bishop's Mission Order for The Point as a Network Church for Mid-Sussex to include Hurst and Cuckfield deaneries.

The diocesan financial situation continues to be a challenge we need to face. Chichester Diocese anticipates deficits in excess of £800,000 for 2010 and 2011. Fortunately it is able to fund these deficits from reserves but the reserves are dwindling and we need to plan now how we can become self sustaining. At the most recent deanery synod meeting our treasurer Peter Griffiths reported that Hurst Deanery has met its diocesan contribution commitment for 2010. However, the Chichester Deaneries have been asked to increase contributions in 2011 by an average of 2%. Hurst Deanery, having a stronger financial base has been given a minimum target of 3%. The parishes have offered a total of £521,500 in 2011, which is an increase of 2.7% and certainly a challenging amount given the current difficult financial climate.

*Janice Bartholomew*

## **Electoral Roll**

This particular year there have been a number of changes to the Electoral Roll database. Sadly a number of our church members have died during the past year and some families have moved out of the area so the deletions to the Roll were unusually high in number. However on a positive note, this has been countered by the welcome addition of many new people including families into our church family. This has been partially achieved through my involvement with the St John's Draw before Christmas, by inviting relatively new and regular worshippers in our congregation to participate in the draw and then to join the Roll.

At the APCM last year I mentioned that I was to attempt to invite people onto the Roll by

'advertising' in the weekly Pew Sheet. This I regret I have not yet done. However the one-to-one personal approach seemed to work well so I now intend to pursue this more effective method as well as using occasional Pew Sheet and Parish magazine articles. Hopefully, this will increase the roll numbers for the future.

The total on the Roll now stands at 210, a modest increase from last year.

*Alan Tipler, Electoral Roll Officer*

## **Flower Team**

Although we receive a regular contribution from the PCC to provide flowers to decorate St. John's we are thankful to those members of the congregation who give so generously to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and remembrance which are special dates for them so that we may celebrate these dates together as a family.

The congregation are also particularly generous to our appeals at Christmas and Easter enabling us to enhance the decoration at these special occasions.

I would like to thank all our stalwarts for all their efforts and commitment during the year. We are very happy to welcome Mandy and Sue to our team and would add that there is always room for more members who would like to give it a try.

*Kit Widdowson*

## **Mission Group**

The Mission Group has met five times this year, the December meeting being cancelled due to weather conditions.

Caroline Bates has kept the parish website updated each month with details of services and the monthly Vicar's letter from the magazine. Together with Kit Widdowson, the Mission Group has continued to administer St John's charitable giving for the year, details of which appear elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Other projects initiated by the Mission Group in 2010 were: a new method of organising the sick list, awareness-raising and organisation of the Back To Church Sunday event in September, and planning a Parish AwayDay to energise the

people of St John's as the interregnum dragged on. Unfortunately, this last event was postponed indefinitely for logistical reasons. In addition, to maintain morale and momentum as the vacancy entered its second year, the Mission Group, in conjunction with the Children's Church, organised two social events - St John's Family Picnic, and the Harvest Ploughman's Lunch.

We are currently finalising preparations for St John's contribution to the 2011 Fairtrade Festival in Burgess Hill – an evening concert and a Combined Church Service, at which the Bishop of Horsham will preach.

Looking to the future, we met with Fr Kevin at our February meeting and he introduced us to the Five Marks of Mission (evangelisation, education, social action, social justice, issues of sustainability and greenness). These will guide us as we focus on the task he has set the Mission Group for the next two years: to develop the spiritual health and energy of the people of St John's in order to equip them to fulfil the mission of our church in Burgess Hill.

*Sylvia Wells*

## **Parish Hall**

Because of a small band of dedicated people we have been able to keep the Parish Hall open during part of the day on most weekdays enabling the church itself to remain open – an important part of Outreach. The Hall activities and the hard work have paid dividends in that the fund raising continues to produce a steady income allowing the Hall Trustees to be able to give financial support to the considerable building repairs required in the church this year.

Many thanks, as always, to the stalwarts who give up their time to help in the Hall. We have been pleased to welcome a few new helpers but we always need more so that it doesn't become too much for the faithful few.

*Felicity Fernee*

## **Parish Magazine**

The Parish Magazine has continued to be produced each month and circulated to the congregation. It is currently going through a re-vamp and will be re-launched in April 2011 in more of a newsletter format. This is long

overdue but is now possible due to the upgrade of the office machinery. This means the magazine can be reproduced at a higher standard and include detailed graphics and photos which wasn't really possible before. The magazine will also be available on the new website in PDF format.

Of course, even with a new design what I always need is contributions from the congregation so if you have any news, articles and of course photos please let me know.

Thanks to Val Gordon and her team for the great job they do in printing and collating the magazine and thanks to Richard Ellis who will be taking over this role. Thanks also to Graham Todd for managing the advertising.

*Anne Gartrell*

## **Parochial Church Council**

### **Standing Committee**

This committee meets six times a year to plan the agenda for the PCC Meetings, and in extraordinary session, to transact the business of the PCC which cannot wait until the next meeting.

Members: Incumbent, Churchwardens, PCC Lay Chairman, Parish Administrator, PCC Treasurer and PCC Secretary.

### **PCC**

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Vicar in realising the Mission Statement for the parish. It has full responsibility for the income and expenditure of St John's Church and it has maintenance responsibilities for the church building, the churchyard and the internal decoration of St John's Rectory.

The PCC receive reports at each of their meetings from representatives of the Deanery Synod, the Children's Church and Youth Group, the Mission Group, the Outreach Group and a report on the condition of the fabric of the church from the churchwardens.

The interregnum, which had commenced in August 2009, continued into 2010 and the Churchwardens, with full PCC support, ensured that everything ran efficiently. Nicholas

Moiseiwitsch, as Lay Vice-Chairman, effectively presided over the meetings during the year and Graham Todd, as one of the churchwardens, took the lead in co-ordinating the teams which organised the various activities in the church ensuring the smooth day to day running of the parish.

The PCC had approved the reconditioning of the organ rather than a replacement and initial steps were taken to set up an Organ Fund. However, the problems with the South Aisle roof repairs and other essential building works described in the fabric report necessitated the fund raising for the organ to be deferred. Particular thanks must be given to Graham Todd for the time and effort he put in to oversee these various repairs required to the church building.

Thanks must go to Sylvia Wells and Graham Todd who, as a Parish Representatives elected by the PCC, took on the difficult task of selecting our new vicar. This involved several meetings and interviews during the year. *Tony Cripps*

**Members of the PCC** are either *ex officio*, elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting or appointed by the PCC. During the year the following served as members.

### **Ex Officio Members**

<i>Incumbent</i>	Rev. Kevin O'Brien, Chairman (from October 2010)
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mr. Robin Powell Mr. Graham Todd
<i>Deanery Synod</i>	Ms. Janice Bartholomew Mrs. Kate Cannon Mrs. Claire Elliot Mrs. Sigrid Moiseiwitsch

### **Elected Members**

Mrs. Judy Cripps, Parish Administrator  
Mr. Tony Cripps, PCC Secretary  
Mrs. Felicity Fernee  
Mr. David Gee  
Mrs. Elizabeth Gee  
Mr. Ray Gregory, (resigned July 2010)  
Dr. Nicholas Moiseiwitsch, Lay Vice-Chairman  
Mr. John Orchard, PCC Treasurer  
Mrs. Rachel Staplehurst  
Mr. Doug Stewart

Mrs. Mandy Thomas-Atkin  
Mr. Charles Vigor  
Mrs. Sylvia Wells  
Mr. Nick Willmore  
Mr. Bernie Widdowson

## **Pastoral Care Visiting Team**

Members of the team continue to meet once a month to report on visits made to nursing homes, the housebound, sick and others known to us who welcome company from time to time. We undertake to make two calls in pairs by the next meeting and aim to visit all on our 'books' once a month. We are always pleased to hear of anyone who would like to be seen either in their homes or in hospital.

Some of us have been taking Holy Communion to the people in the Nursing Homes and now we accompany Father Kevin on his visits.

We do try to keep in touch with people who used to attend St. John's Church but who are now in homes further afield such as Lancing, Hassocks and Haywards Heath. *Phoebe Milne*

## **Servers**

I would like to thank all the servers for their help and support during the fifteen months of the interregnum. It was pleasing to be able to provide a full team for all the main services. Extra commitment was shown by all to cover the Easter ceremonies which were all celebrated by Bishop Mark Sowerby. The weekday masses were also covered, thus helping Fr. Jeremy and the visiting clergy.

It is great to report that we now have five new servers joining the team and a very warm welcome is extended to them.

We meet socially on a regular basis to enjoy a meal together locally and in the summer we venture further afield.

If anyone would like to consider their ministry as an Alter Server they would be more than welcome. Please contact Fr. Kevin or Bernie Widdowson. *Bernie Widdowson*

## **Services and Retreats**

In terms of services the year clearly is divided into two parts, the interregnum and then the period following Fr Kevin's induction.

Mass is celebrated every Sunday at 08:00 and 10:00, with the main service on First Sundays being an all-age celebration. The normal pattern of Sunday worship was maintained during the interregnum, with the valued help of retired priests, although Sung Evensong on the first Sunday of the month was normally cancelled. Weekday Masses continued on four days a week up to the interregnum but, due to the difficulty of finding available priests on a regular basis, were reduced to Mondays and Wednesdays only until a new vicar was in post. We are very grateful to Fr. Angelo Fr. Wilkie Denford, Fr. John Edwards, Fr. David Swyer Fr. John Taylor and Fr. Jeremy Wells for keeping these weekday services going. It was also very helpful that communicants wishing to attend Mass on other weekdays received a welcome at St Edward's Church. Said Evening Prayer was kept going by members of the congregation.

Whilst the main services will continue in the same pattern for 2011, there will be necessarily be some changes to other arrangements. Fr Kevin's day off has moved to Mondays and so the Mass at 9.30am on Monday has moved to Tuesday at the same time. The latter part of the week is currently under review and it is likely that additional masses will be phased in, although the times may vary from previous years. Feedback would be appreciated about what demand there might be for new service on Thursday, Friday or Saturday and at what approximate times –an evening mass on Fridays may be worth considering.

Whilst we are unlikely to be able to sustain an Sung evening service every Sunday, a range of services are being considered for two Sundays each month – this will partially depend on the availability of a team to support them and so will need careful consideration.

Since the beginning of the interregnum, the Children's Church made a valuable contribution to our all-age worship Sundays by providing a presentation on the day's theme during the

sermon slot. This has been very well received and much appreciated. Now that Fr Kevin has arrived he generally gives an informal talk designed to involve the children. The pattern of 'World Mass' has started and will run once per quarter, as an opportunity to reflect upon our membership of a global church and to share something of the music and worship of other Christians around the world. In addition we will be looking for new ways in which the children might be involved in the services.

The Deaf Community with their Chaplain continue to use St John's for their monthly area celebration of Mass.

Parents and Toddlers meet on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons for a simple service of prayer, praise and teaching. We share services with neighbouring parishes on a cyclical basis for the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. During the year, members of the congregation attended the pilgrimage to Walsingham in July and a silent conducted retreat at Glastonbury Abbey. Walsingham is planned to continue in 2011.

*Fr Kevin O'Brien*