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DCC (District Church Council)

PCC (Parochial Church Council)

DEANERY

ELECTORAL ROLL

These reports will be given at the ADCM itself

The work of the DCC is contained largely in the reports in this document. Copies of previous DCC minutes can be found in a folder and box file in the library area in church. Recent minutes please look in the box file. However you will find nearly everything in these reports without needing to look at the minutes.

Team Vicar's Report

The reports attached show much of what has happened at All Saints in 2024. My report this year is really also one that is wanting to look forward, partly because our focus during the refurbishment of the church kept us rather inward looking in our mission and development. So allow my report this year also draws on recent developments in 2025 and has a forward looking emphasis rather than simply looking back.

Exactly this time last year we were moving back into church having worshipped in the hall for six months. Those days seem a long time ago now as we have enjoyed being back in the church for a full year. We can give God thanks for all the good things that have happened in the last year as well as pray for areas of life that concern us going forward.

On a positive note, we have seen the arrival of new people into our congregation over the last year at both our 8am and 10.30am services and one or two at our 10am Thursday service too. Indeed there is quite a range of new people who have joined and as I write we also have a good number of new people signing up for our electoral roll at the AGM this year. We give God thanks for this. Over recent weeks and months we have quite often had an attendance of over 80 across all three services including our Thursday 10am service and over the Advent and Christmas period over 900 adults and children attended our various carol and crib and communion services which is not far off pre Pandemic days. Though we realise there is a long way to go before we can talk about revival we give thanks to God for the new people he has sent us and we pledge our determination to love and respect them. We hope they feel very much part of All Saints church family.

We have had a Thinking Day in the summer which led to a new Spirituality group chaired by Martin Garsed which is coming up with lots of exciting ideas for the future. This renewed focus on developing spirituality can be seen this Lent with a good percentage of our congregation attending some form of Lent group or course. Also you may not be aware yet of the exciting news that a good group of adults are considering being confirmed this coming May. I believe this is a sign of a new hunger and openness for God in our culture. The new interest in Cursillo in All Saints is also good with a number of our congregation actively considering attending the coming weekend.

Another idea that came out of our Thinking Day was to start planning for the church to become dual use, so we can have a second stream of hire income from external groups and so that more people will get to know the church, increasing the chance of them becoming worshippers in the long run. We are currently looking into drainage issues.

Pastorally I am aware that we sometimes miss people out. This is never intentional. If you need a visit please let us know, or if you know someone who needs a visit please let us know (though please ask for their consent or the consent of their next of kin before passing us their contact details). We have just had a Pastoral Assistants meeting and I am pleased to say that Janet Livermore has agreed to be a Point of Contact for you to call her and let her know you would appreciate a home visit, with or without Holy Communion, or if you a visit to you in hospital. Either a lay Pastoral Assistant or Rev Jayne Edinboro or I will be honoured to visit.

I want to thank Elena Markova and her team for their magnificent work with the workshops they run with over 30 children and 40 adults attending regularly and a team of helpers doing an amazing job. I would also like to report that we have built up closer links with our Nursery School and Scout pack in the last year, and you can read about

this in their reports. Please pray that these ministries lead to more interaction with our main Sunday services in the coming year.

One highlight of the year that comes to mind is the ordination of Rev Jayne Edinboro. We give thanks to God for Jayne for her ministry and we look forward to her priesting in the summer and the eucharistic ministry she will be able to share with us. It has also been really good to welcome back Rev Chris Seppala to All Saints. I am also really grateful for all that Denise Barker does in her role as Reader. Also huge thanks to Victoria Hall and Michael Cooke for all they do with the music in the church. It has been great to see new people joining our choir in recent months. Kirsty Mcnicol also deserves special mention for all her hard work overseeing hall bookings, especially as she is continuing to mourn Keith, who we all miss deeply. Malcolm Waller and Barbara Tinson also deserve a special thanks for their hard work behind the scenes as does Carol Sims who has served admirably as a church cleaner for over 25 years and is soon to step back from this role.

Special thanks also goes to Allan Barrows who steps down from his role as churchwarden after serving for three years in this role. We will miss Allan greatly. He has always been a wise and reassuring presence both at meetings and in church and the way he has encouraged us to look outwards at the Foodbank is something I pray he will be able to continue to do. His help as Chair of Finance has been invaluable. Thanks also to Howard Barker for serving a further term as churchwarden. I do hope you enjoy reading these reports and may God bless you as you do so.
Simon Tillotson

Churchwardens' Report

We started 2024 with the Church building closed because the redecoration works were well under way and services were being held in the Church Hall. Many members liked the more "informal" style of the hall services and it was from this time that the current monthly Café Church service was started.

Originally it had been planned that services would return to the main church building before Easter 2024 but it became clear early on in the works that a significant area of plaster on the North Wall above the bookcases was loose and needed replacing. This meant extra time and cost. In addition the limewash paint being used throughout was not compatible with the South Aisle plaster despite multiple applications.

After several meetings, it was decided to use another make of paint in this area and that resolved the problem albeit causing a further delay to final sign-off. However, we were able to re-open the Church for Easter 2024. All good news except we are now left with some uneven edges to central aisle floors and a few other places. It is planned to deal with these areas during 2025.

The past year has seen attendance numbers plateau in the mid-seventies (across three services) on average per week which, as noted in earlier Annual Reports, is about 30 down on pre-covid numbers but much in line with national trends.

However, this does raise concerns for the future of All Saints and indeed for the Church of England (and other denominations) as a whole. For the majority of our congregation Christianity was taught in schools as part of the curriculum and Acts of Worship were a regular feature for staff and pupils. With a few exceptions that is no longer the case and "Humanities" as a Secondary School subject includes and compares most if not all the major world religions but does not explore in any great depth nor challenge personal beliefs.

Society as a whole has become much more agnostic and against this background relatively few under-50's are challenged/motivated to examine the Christian Faith. But, having said that, we do have the joy of seeing and welcoming new people from time to time and Café Church has been an important factor in that respect.

Our three core fund raising events - Summer Fete, Fireworks Display and Christmas Fayre all went ahead last year and contributed a significant sum towards the Church running costs. a big thank you to all on the Social Committee (and other non-committee helpers) and especially Carol Sims who has been a stalwart organiser for many years. Carol has also been the Church Cleaner for decades and (understandably) has now decided to hand over the reigns on Good Friday 2025. Thank you Carol for all your dedicated service to All Saints.

Allan Barrows and Howard Barker

Allan: As I am not seeking re-election I would like to say a big thank you to all those who have been helpful and supportive as we have navigated roles that we took on initially as "stop gap" roles due to a sudden resignation.

We received no formal handover or induction but have done our best forthwith.

Going forward it would be good to remember that these are voluntary roles, and that the incumbents are now much older than Churchwardens typically were 10 to 20 years ago reflecting the ageing of the congregations. As a Church Body, and not a club, it would be helpful and considerate to ensure that Howard and my replacement are fully supported from the outset, filling in gaps and needs as you see them. A supportive quiet word goes a long way. It has been a privilege to serve you all.

Curate and Anna Chaplaincy Report

The past year has been extremely busy as well as very challenging trying to balance the needs of family, work, church and training.

However despite the challenges it has been a fruitful time for both my Curate ministry and Anna Chaplaincy. Together with our vicar Simon, the leadership team and the congregation, we endeavour to serve our congregation's spiritual and pastoral needs and the wider community. Through prayer, pastoral care, worship, and outreach, we seek to deepen relationships with God and one another. My Anna Chaplaincy ministry has a particular focus on supporting those in later life.

With the assistance of Marian Johnson (which is much appreciated by myself and the residents), I take weekly services at Lyndhurst Care Home at Tankerton. The staff and residents are always pleased to see us, and we have around fifteen residents who regularly attend our home service. It is always a happy occasion, and I am often aware of the Holy Spirit working among us. It is always uplifting to see people who find it difficult to communicate, singing hymns remembered from childhood and saying the Lord's prayer from memory.

Marian also attends the home from time to time to help with their craft sessions which is greatly appreciated.

Curate Ministry

The cumulation of all the studying, attending college, training days was my ordination as a Deacon at the end of June last year. The sun shone, it was a truly amazing and joyful day with so many of my friends from All Saints supporting me at the cathedral, it was a day I will never forget. I will always be grateful for all the love and support I have received from you all.

Since June my training has continued unabated, both academic and practical but with the continuing support of Simon and everyone at church, my family and friends I am enjoying the challenge of my new role as a Deacon. This has included: sharing in

leading worship, preaching, and administering the sacraments, funeral ministry providing pastoral support to individuals and families.

This year has been a time of growth and learning as I continue my formation as a curate. I have been supported by the clergy team and congregation, for which I am deeply grateful. My ongoing theological studies and reflective practice have I believe enriched my ministry and helped me to better serve the church.

I am looking forward to June when I will be priested and sharing the day with you all. I could not have got this far without your love and support.

Thank you.

God bless Rev Jayne Edinboro

Reader Report

I have been blessed as I continue my role as reader, alongside those who regularly take on the role of leader, supporting Simon at our 10:30 am Sunday Service.

I continue in my day Job as a Children's Social Worker managing to somehow juggle my competing responsibilities with both these roles alongside family life, which at times has proved difficult. Which I am sure anyone with more than three diaries can relate.

When looking back over the last year, it was hard to determine exactly what I had done, as it all seemed a bit of a blur, like being in one of those photos at night when you get the light stream, living life at 100 miles an hour. But here we are in 2025 already looking back at 2024. I survived.

Last year, I continued to lead services regularly, preach on average once every three months and also help out at various events such as children's workshops, bbq's, fireworks and fundraisers. I am a bell ringer, on the pastoral care team, the DCC, Deanery synod and also the parish safeguarding officer for children.

It has been a turbulent year for the Church of England, particularly with safeguarding and the resignation of the Archbishop and others. This has led to church being something "to be suspicious of" and can't be easy on any of us, who are trying to build the church. Our church needs to be a safe space for all and I hope we are striving for that. We continue to pray about this and urge you all to do the same.

However, All Saints has experienced some revival with new members in our community, who are looking at the many ways they can get involved and this is heartening. The more the merrier, do come see me to have a chat about roles, but equally it is important to "just be" with God and hear the still calm voice.

I now turn to the end of the year, what Joy! to see our church packed, standing room only, for the carols under the yew tree and the crib service at Christmas. The other services were also well attended. It was lovely for me to attend as a spectator at these events but still able to minister to those who needed a chat following the event.

So as we look forward to the challenges that await us in the year to come

May God bless and keep you all.

Denise Barker

Children and Families Ministry Report

We continue to thank God for his generous and caring hand on the children and families ministry of our church. We are grateful for all the opportunities we get to reach out to our local community and to offer our passion, skills, talents and love to all children, young people and families that we engage with.

Our **Sunday School ADVENTURERS** meets on Sundays from 10.30am. We start in the church, and after the first hymn we go to the hall for our activities. ADVENTURERS is open to and welcomes everyone (you don't have to be a Christian to attend the Sunday club) and is focused on engaging children with the stories and teachings of Jesus and the Bible in a creative way. We learn through art, craft lots of laughter and nibbles. The group predominantly follows lectionary-based lessons that develop children's curiosity and thinking about the morals and modern-day application of what they learn in each session.

Our session lasts for 40-45 minutes. We use story time, games and craft – we paint, glue, cut out, colour, make shapes, decorate, run about, hide & seek in order to make sense of the biblical lesson and have lots of fun. At the end of our Sunday school session, usually around 11.20am, we collect our craft and return to Church, where we join the congregation during Holy Communion. After the notices, the officiant invites the Sunday school to come forward and 'show and tell' the everyone what we have learnt and crafted during our session. The children really enjoy showing off their art and the attention they get from everyone.

Our Sunday school leaders (all DBS certified and safeguarding trained) are Sue Stokes, Virginia Appleton, and Elena Markova, who follow a rota-based organisation for the teaching and craft activities.

Our **Half Term Outreach Initiative**, which we started in Oct 2023, of themed workshops for children, young people and families as part of our all – inclusive service and outreach to our local community is growing from strength to strength. Since we started in October 2023, we have delivered eight successful workshops – 'Everything Pumpkin' Oct 2023, 'Everything Christmas' Dec 2023; 'Everything Valentine'S' Feb 2024; 'Easter Workshop' March 2024; 'All About Nature' May 2024; 'Halloween Workshop' Oct 2024; 'Christmas Party – Ho, Ho, Ho' Dec 2024 and 'The Creation Story Workshop' Feb 2025.

Our workshops usually follow the liturgical calendar of the year and have a rich variety of activities to offer to children – anything from baking Easter bread and decorating cookies and biscuits to making amazing paper cards, baskets, pot planting, hotels for bugs, giant floor art and so much more. We usually advertise on social media and have been very well attended, with some workshops even exceeding our maximum capacity of children. We have followers now and families who come back again and again to share in the fun of our activities. We are very blessed with outstanding feedback and excellent suggestions by parents' feedback forms they fill-in anonymously at the end of each workshop has been outstanding. This is greatly encouraging for our Dream team of volunteers - Kirsty McNicol, Jo Springthorpe, Sue Stokes, Virginia Appleton, Denise Barker, Pauline Newman, Lucy Caterer, Jayne Edinboro, Echo Cheng, Carol Bristow, Karen Washington, Bill Washington, Sue Goodearl and Elena Markova.

Every **Summer** we also organise an **Away Day** and a **Family 'Back to School' BBQ** at the Vicarage Garden. In addition to this we also take part in the All Saints **Summer Fete** and **Christmas Fair** with our popular Kids Corner packed with fun activities, games and prizes for children and families.

We thank God for his provision, guidance, care, dedication and love with which he is enabling us to serve and offer all-inclusive hospitality to everyone. We pray a blessing over all children & families who have been reached and enriched through this amazing outreach. And we pray a blessing over all our CFM members, volunteers and their families.

It is a true honour and privilege to be blessed with the opportunity to serve God and Creation with you all and to be a Children & Families Minister of All Saints.

With much love and blessings,

Elena

Treasurer's Report on 2024

Firstly, my usual thanks to the whole finance team and everybody involved in Church finance, for your help and support during 2024. Also, a special thanks to everybody for your generous giving and donations throughout 2024.

A year of returning to normal – after completing the work on the Church and hall, putting everything back and fixing all those things that were broken or misplaced. Finishing work on the gutters and rainwater drains all had a significant effect on our finances. Unrestricted funds – this is now solely the general fund.

This year I must report a deficit of £12K (2023 deficit £11K).

Total income was £115K while total expenditure was £127K.

Planned giving and donations were lower than last year, but general collections increased. Gift aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS), now claimed by us direct from HMRC, seems to be running smoothly. The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is now up and running with 14 members of our congregation using this method of giving.

A good year for occasional offices, hall income and fund-raising events with income levels similar to last year. Thanks to the social committee and everybody that helped to set up and put away afterwards. Unrestricted expenses were similar to last year at £127K. Utility bills were of course very high but down £2k from 2023. Parish share

amounted to £74K. Restricted funds – these include the Shirley Hall, the trust funds migrated to the church in 2009 and legacy funds. For 2024 I can report a deficit of £92K (2023 deficit was £188K). Restricted fund income was £7K. Planned expenses amounted to £99K. Completing Church wall repairs and redecorating amounted to £73K. Another £5K of work was necessary on the hall. Total Legacy funds carried forward into 2025 is £85K. Other restricted funds total £37K.

Total Funds - at 31 December 2024, these amounted to £336K.

Excluding fixed assets (Shirley Hall - £37K), unrestricted funds stood at £17K. The various restricted funds totalled £282K (of which the Shirley Hall = £162K). Year-end liabilities are £2K. The Trust Funds – the only trust fund remaining at 31 December 2024 is the Sunman Music & Media Endowment trust which has been loaned to All Saints Church since December 2010. This is now held to maintain the Church music and audio systems.

All Saints Whitstable – Reserves Policy –

It is the policy of this Church to keep two months running costs (25K), a further one-month payroll costs (2K) and two months hall income (3K) in reserve to cover unforeseen emergencies. It is also deemed necessary, because the Church is a listed building requiring regular repairs, to hold a building fund reserve (10K) to cover urgent essential work. The remaining reserves will be used to fund maintenance and development projects for Church and hall. This policy will be reviewed prior to the ADCM held in March 2024.

Malcolm Waller

All Saints Whitstable, District Church Council
 Financial Statement for the year ending 31st December 2024
 Income and Expenditure Account

	2024 General Fund	2024 Restricted Funds	2024 Total	2023 Total
<u>2024 Income</u>				
1 Tax Efficient Planned Giving	34,090	0	34,090	37,048
2 Other Planned Giving	4,941	0	4,941	5,309
3 Collections at Services	6,874	0	6,874	4,470
4 Donations	6,287	55	6,342	7,134
6 Gift Aid/GASD recovered	9,117	0	9,117	7,934
7 Legacies	0	0	0	0
8 Grants	0	1,000	1,000	30
9 Fundraising Activities	6,834	631	7,465	7,565
10 Dividend, Interest, Income from S Hall	6,001	2,457	8,458	9,435
11 Fees from Weddings/Funerals	12,004	924	12,928	14,639
12 Hall income	28,831	0	28,831	26,638
13 Other Income	0	1,700	1,700	0
Total Income	<u>114,979</u>	<u>6,767</u>	<u>121,746</u>	<u>120,202</u>
<u>2024 Expenditure</u>				
17 Costs of fundraising Activities	1,939	368	2,307	1,691
18 Mission Giving and Donations	610	822	1,432	200
19 Diocesan Parish Share Contribution	74,200	0	74,200	74,664
20 Salaries, Wages & Honoraria	10,811	7,948	18,759	13,999
21 Clergy & Staff Expenses	619	2,427	3,046	3,766
22 Mission & Evangelism Costs	432	236	668	337
23 Church Running Costs	12,083	6,505	18,588	12,329
24 Church Utility Bills	8,111	1,030	9,141	10,116
25 Cost of Trading	17,994	2,327	20,321	25,871
27 Repairs to Church Building	0	72,765	72,765	102,387
28 Repairs to Hall/Shirley Hall	0	4,675	4,675	78,515
29 New Building work to Church, Halls, etc.	0	0	0	0
99 Other Payments	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	<u>126,799</u>	<u>99,103</u>	<u>225,902</u>	<u>323,875</u>
Balance (Income - Expenditure)	<u>-11,820</u>	<u>-92,336</u>	<u>-104,156</u>	<u>-203,673</u>
Fixed Assets (Shirley Hall & Mower)			200,604	201,174
Current Assets			138,108	232,543
Liabilities			-2,221	-1,931
		Net Assets	<u>336,491</u>	<u>431,786</u>
Represented by - Unrestricted Funds			17,547	8,009
Represented by - Designated Funds			37,140	37,140
Represented by - Restricted Funds			281,804	386,636
		Total	<u>336,491</u>	<u>431,785</u>

(There may be minor discrepancies in totals as pence are not being shown)

(A full set of accounts is available from Malcolm Waller)

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Thank you for your continued financial support over the past year. 2024 proved to be yet another busy year following the closure of the Gift Aid department at Diocesan House. New methods of payment and administration were, and are still being established at All Saints. Gifts via envelope and bankers order continue with Malcolm dealing directly with HMRC for Gift Aid and GASDS claims which can take some time to arrive in our funds. The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) administered by an external company continues with donors paying by direct debit on the first of the month. Payments and Gift Aid is passed onto the church monthly proving a quick and efficient method. During 2024 planned giving was £38,839.84 compared with £42,125.00 in 2023. Stewardship members are also down, some leaving, moving or unfortunately dying. The good news is that we have a number of new people who have joined the church in the last year and we are hoping to run a stewardship campaign in 2025 to address some of these difficulties we are facing. We must also consider the difficulties people are under at present. At the end of December, we had 83 members giving regularly.

Patterns of Giving during 2024

	<u>Members</u>	<u>per wk.</u>	<u>2023</u>
£0.01 – 1.00	7 gave	3.85	6 gave 2.94
£1.01 – 3.00	16	36.08	19 41.33
£3.01 – 5.00	7	28.83	12 51.28
£5.01 – 10.00	30	221.71	33 236.10
Over 10.00	<u>23</u>	<u>456.45</u>	<u>25</u> <u>463.16</u>
	83	746.92	102 849.86
		x52 Sundays	x53 Sundays
		38,839.84	42,125.00

Gift Aid and Tax reclaims.

Gift Aid enables us to reclaim tax already paid by donors which at present stands at 25p/£. This is a vital source of income for our church so please could I encourage anyone who is a tax payer to complete a simple declaration form. Likewise, if you are an existing member and your circumstances change – especially if you become a non tax payer please let me know. In 2024 we received tax reclaim payments of £9,216.43 compared with £6,057.00 in 20023. This increase is due to receipt of outstanding claims made in 2023. At the end of 2024 sixty-six of the 83 stewardship members were able claim Gift Aid on their giving.

GASDS --- Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme

This scheme allows us to reclaim a limited amount of tax on small donations for which there is no Gift Aid declaration. This includes our weekly plate collections, certain offertory envelopes & certain donations. GASDS stands at 25p/£ and during 2024 we

received GASDS payments totalling £2,189.94 compared with £576.21 in 2023. Again this increase is due to receipt of outstanding claims made in 2023.

New boxes of envelopes will be available in May for a June start. Please let me know if you do not want your box this year or if you wish to donate via bankers order or the PG Scheme.

Thank you once again to those that give so generously to the work of our church both financially and commitment to the many jobs that go on behind the scenes. Barbara Scott and her faithful rota of helpers are one such group working unseen for the Stewardship Department. Without their hard work and dedication life would be difficult & complicated. – a big thank you to you all.

Social Committee Report

The Social committee have been busy again this year organising events raising funds to help our finances as well as being social gatherings.

We held our first event of 2024 in February with the Valentines Quiz which was well attended by members of the congregation and visitors. In July it was our Garden Fete which should have been in the Vicarage garden but due to high winds was moved into the hall but still very successful with a lot of visitors.

October saw us arranging a harvest lunch after the Harvest Festival service with 40 people enjoying a hot lunch.

Two events in December first the very successful Christmas Fair and then Carols under the Yew tree unfortunately again the weather intervened and it was in the church which was full. At this event we always collect for charity and not for the church, this year it went to Crisis.

Last but not least we take a share in doing coffee after church which includes cafe church.

We are a small group within the church and would welcome anyone who feels they could commit to help please speak to me

Carol Sims

Fabric Report

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the current condition of the fabric of All Saints Church. As mention has already been made of the six month refurbishment this report will concentrate on the current challenges facing the church going forwards:

Exterior

Roof

The roof is in good condition overall, with no significant damage or leaks observed.

Walls

The exterior walls are generally sound, but there are some areas of mortar that have deteriorated and required repointing and we were grateful to receive the Archdeacon's Certificate for that work.

Windows

The windows are in good condition, with no broken panes or significant damage to the frames. However, some of the leaded lights are bowing and may need to be repaired in the future. One of the windows that has an opening section was jammed open and causing a draft (Probably by the builders when they were drying out the plaster and paint). Some WD40 did its job and it was decided to do away with the cords so they cannot be opened again easily.

Interior

Electrical installation.

Both the Hall and Church had electrical reports. Problems were flagged up in both and the necessary work has been carried out.

Floor

The flooring is in good condition overall, but there still remains some additional repairs to the flooring which will need attention in the coming years.

In the Hall the white lining has been replaced for the badminton players.

Overall, All Saints is in good condition, by addressing any issues promptly, we can ensure the continued preservation of the Church and Church Hall fabric for future generations.
Howard Barker

Sacristan Report

Throughout the year the sacristy work has continued behind the scenes.

Most of the work is concerned with ensuring that everything is in order for the celebration of the Eucharist. The vessels used at the service are cleaned each week and the linen is laundered and ironed.

The appropriate vestments are set out for the celebrant in readiness for the service. We also ensure that the supply of wafers and wine is in place.

We are responsible for attending to altars making sure that the cloths are in good order and changing the frontals as required during the seasons of the church's year.

During the church closure, items had to be brought across to the hall each week and returned to the church after use. We were glad to be able to dress the altars again for Easter when the church opened. Doreen Austin (sacristan)

All Saints Prayer Shawl Ministry

Introduction

"In 1998, Janet Bristow and Victoria Galo, two graduates of the 1997 Women's Leadership Institute at The Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut gave birth to a ministry as a result of their study of applied Feminist Spirituality."

"Care and the love of knitting (and crochet) have been combined into a prayerful ministry that reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace. Many blessings are knitted into every shawl. The knitter begins each shawl with prayers for the recipient. Intentions are continued throughout the creation of the shawl."

(www.shawlministry.com)

All Saints Prayer Shawl ministry involves prayerfully knitting and crocheting shawls, lap blankets and scarves for local people who are poorly, bereaved or in need of a "hug of love". It is good to know someone is thinking of you and praying for you in a time of need. A happy event such as marriage or new baby is celebrated with the gift of a shawl or pram blanket. We currently have 12 members in Whitstable and one living in Alton, Hampshire who sends us her knitting by post. The ministry grows!

This year we have enjoyed a new project, making woollen hats for British Farmers. This "Wool and Wellness Campaign" was instigated by the Farming Community Network which I heard about through the Mother's Union. It is a voluntary organisation and registered charity that supports farmers and farming families in rural communities through difficult times.

"Farmers are regularly forced to deal with issues on the farm that are beyond their control, such as animal disease, fluctuating market prices and the weather. Farming can also be a very isolating and lonely occupation..... All this means farming families are highly susceptible to stress, anxiety and depression." (FCN website 2025)

The FCN has a free confidential helpline which provides support to anyone who seeks help regardless of whether it is personal or business related. We have been pleased to support them by making hats to FCN specification from 100% British wool and attaching labels containing their helpline phone number. These were posted to their regional centre in Arundel, West Sussex.

Since my last report we have gifted 22 shawls, 8 blankets, 16 scarves and two soft toys to local people. Additionally two bags of hats and scarves went to The Haven and Catching Lives centres for the homeless and Jayne and Marion have taken twiddle muffs and blankets to care homes in Whitstable. Baby jumpers continue to be sent to villages in Sierra Leone with support from the Soroptomists organisation. We have some lovely photos of the babies wearing 'our' jumpers.

We are grateful for donations of knitting wool and money which is also needed for gift wrapping and sometimes postage.

It is a very rewarding ministry and some of the thank you cards we receive are very moving. We are an informal and friendly group, so if you are interested in knitting or crochet and your family no longer want hand knits why not come and join us? We meet in All Saints church hall from 1.30pm to 3.30pm on the first and fourth Wednesday of each month.

Sue Smith

Lectio Divina (*Reflective Scripture Group or Sacred reading*)

The group meets regularly at home, usually on the first Monday of the month from 8 to 9 pm, at home.

Following an introduction prayer, we listen to the Gospel reading set for the following Sunday.

It is slowly read aloud, twice, by different members present while the others listen.

Only then each person, reads the passage silently to themselves. After a time of meditating or pondering on the passage, anyone, when and if they wish to, repeat a word or phrase that might have touched them in some way.

There is no obligation to say anything, nor is there any commentary or discussion on what a person might have said.

It is led by the Holy Spirit, in each participant, enabling a prayer "of the imagination" to take shape within. This way of prayer is part of the early Benedictine and later Jesuit traditions and is still an important way of praying across the Christian world.

There is usually some sharing at the end over a soft drink.
Participants attend as and when they wish or are able to.

Do think about coming and exploring this unique way of praying "The Word of God". It is sometimes called "Sacred Reading". There is no need to bring a Bible.

Please ask us about it at any time, if you would like to know more. You are most welcome. The dates are published in the weekly notices.

Martin and Berit Garsed

SACRED SPACE REPORT

Sacred Space is a time of reflection and quiet when the church is open for people to come and go during the hour. Candles light the church and people are encouraged to bring torches with them. Reflective music is played in the background. There are periods of silence for people to pray.

Over the years Sacred Space has run many people have found times to meet with God in a special way. By just making ourselves available in God's presence the Holy Spirit can minister to us in ways that can bring comfort and hope.

Sacred Space has appealed to many in our community who would not normally consider church attendance and as such it has been an important outreach event. Please pray for its continued success going forward.

I would encourage you also to consider attending Sacred Space. The dates for 2025 are as follows: 24 March

12 May 30 June 11 August 13 October 17 November 22 December

Simon Tillotson

CHOIR REPORT

Referencing Psalm 100 is an accurate way to begin this report; another year with our wonderful choir worshiping the Lord with gladness. Our loyal and faithful members have certainly continued to come before him and us all with joyful songs leading worship at our lovely church.

We are blessed that the choir is growing in numbers; our processions are longer and there is an ever growing sea of blue robes. Have you ever considered joining us? We rehearse Thursdays 7.15pm in the church and are always looking for new sheep to join our flock!

As usual, we have sung a complete variety of music throughout the year, including leading the congregational singing in some new hymns, some of which have been those composed by our very own Rev Simon Tillotson and arranged by Michael Cooke. During communion, we have sung everything from anthems by Tallis, plainsong psalms, Easter Carols, pretty hymns from the New English Hymnal that are not often sung and several beautiful pieces by the amazing Michael Cooke such as 'Is this a fast?'

Advent and Christmas are always a busy time in the life of the choir and this year was no different. We enjoyed joining our fellow choir members singing in the joint choir at the Team Advent Service at St Peter's Church; this was a wonderful event with a really large number in the choir. Back in All Saints, we navigated the new layout of the Church experimenting with finding the best place to sit and after some shuffling around, settled nicely in the South Aisle. From here, we made our debut in the new location for the wonderful Candlelit Christmas Carol Service and what an amazing job the choir did.

I close this report by congratulating and thanking the wonderful Choir who continue to dedicate their time and talents to enriching the musical life of All Saints, Jo Piper for her organisation of attendees at Weddings and Funerals, Pauline for her work as the librarian, Barbara for helping with office tasks and Simon for his ongoing support. My heartfelt thanks also goes to my friend and colleague, the musical genius and kind Sir

Mike for all of his continued help, talents, compositions and dedication to the music life of All Saints.
Victoria Hall

MUSIC GROUP REPORT

Psalm 98 talks about making music to the Lord and our wonderful Music Group have again, certainly excelled in doing this.

The Music Group can now be found in our former home at the other end of the South Aisle having moved back there after the refurbishments were completed; we are enjoying being there!

Throughout the year, I have again added to our repertoire with another 23 brand new pieces of music for us to play including a few of my own compositions and some musical orchestrations and arrangements of hymns in a Gospel style which have been very popular with the congregation.

Over Easter, the music group, along with Michael, Pat and Aubrey, had the wonderful experience of joining St Alphege and the Team as a part of the Orchestra for performances of the Roger Jones's Christian Musical 'From Pharaoh to Freedom'.

Pauline joined the performance in the choir too and sang some wonderful solos.

Over the August choir break, the Music Group once again played and sung a beautiful series of solos which was ever popular and well received. Throughout the year we have also enjoyed some instrumental pieces including some delightful Flute Solos by Jan and a stirring rendition of Walking in the Air played by Nick on the bassoon as the congregation awaited the beginning of the Midnight Mass service.

Playing at monthly Cafe church services has continued to be a great addition to worship at All Saints and the Music Group continues to provide enjoyable background music as people arrive in addition to playing for some of the hymns within the service.

I'd like to close our report by thanking Jan, Nick, Pauline and Mike for their amazing musical talents and their continued dedication to our worship and to Simon for his continued support. I'd also again like to thank my wonderful husband Chris who continues to regularly gift his time and talents by producing additional wonderful musical orchestrations for us to play.

Victoria Hall

SIDESPERSONS AND SERVERS REPORT

Huge thanks to all those who have served as sidespersons and servers in 2024 at our 8am and 10.30am service on Sundays and as servers at our 10am service on Thursdays. Your help has been greatly appreciated. We have recently recruited some new sidespersons but we are in need of more servers so if you think you would be interested please talk to either myself or one of the servers. Being a server is a privilege and brings great fulfilment.

Simon Tillotson

Bell-Ringers Report

What joy, regular bell ringing recommenced at Easter in the newly decorated 13th Century bell tower. Experienced bell ringers all subscribe annually as members to the “ Kent County Association Of Change Ringers “, for update information and insurance and complete the “ Church Of England “ Safe Guarding documentation. Denise Barker is our named Tower Captain with our team working as a co-operative. This means we take turns in being in charge from 9.45 to 10.30 for the Sunday service ring and 7.45 to 9pm Wednesday practice ring. Many of our ringers also ring regularly at other towers and we have welcomed many visitors to All Saints this last year, allowing all to widen their range of methods and have more fun.

We have been privileged to ring for four weddings, with more booked for this year. We also have rung half muffled bells for the funeral of dear Christine Williams who rung at All Saints from 1968 and was Tower Captain 1997-2007 and Rev Keith McNicol’s memorial service. It was a pleasure to welcome back family members to ring with us. The art of ringing appears to remain with many.

The September “ Open Tower” proved very popular. We explained ringing and offered a ringing session under supervision. A belfry camera link to the monitor on the ground floor showing the working bells proved a great asset. As a result we have welcomed back a good ringer and have several keen focused learners.

This October, All Saints, Whitstable and Friends, Cotswolds bell ringing event took place, staying at Warners Heythrop Park, Enstone. A great group of 30 ringers and partners (not all ringers) socialising, visiting locally or ringing at 10 prearranged towers. We look forward to ringing in Nottingham this year and meeting up with old friends again.

This year the D Day landing anniversary and festive ringing was good. We enjoyed a festive and AGM buffet. We even did well in the latest church wine and wisdom. The support and friendship within the band/church has been very positive through 2024.

Pat Miller Librarian

Cameo Report

CAMEO – Come And Meet Each Other - We meet at All Saints Church Hall weekly on a Monday afternoon, 2pm to 3.30pm, to chat, drink tea and eat cake. It is a good opportunity to catch up or make new friends and share experiences of other local activity and luncheon groups, encouraging each other to get out and about. We are very pleased to have new people visit and join us and there is no obligation to come every week – just when you feel like it ! There are 35 people currently on our member’s list and an average of 20-25 meet up each Monday. Membership fees are not required but a suggested donation of £1 each goes towards the cost of refreshments and activities.

Every week there are table-top games and a jigsaw table for anyone who cares to join in plus a bi-monthly quiz which one of our members, Sue, devises and presents with a prize to the winner. Also, at the end of the year, we join together for a Christmas meal; this year we went across the road to The Monument Pub and had a delicious meal.

CAMEO only happens every week due to the CAMEO members who shop for food, set up/clear down, serve drinks, handle the funds, provide lifts and also the friends who, on a weekly rota, put up and take down the heavy tables and chairs ; many thanks, your help is much appreciated.

Linda Young

Singing for Fun and Health Report

It has been a joy running the singing sessions over the last year or so since I took over the leadership of this group. We have a wonderful group of volunteers and we can have up to 40 people attending to sing songs from various decades over the last eighty years. It always takes place on the 3rd Wednesday of each month so please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or wish to come along.

Simon Tillotson

Film Club Annual Report

Meetings are held on Thursday mornings and the film show starts promptly at 11.15am - and ends at around 1.30pm. Members have a break around 12.15am for refreshments and enjoy a friendly social chat etc. Members are asked to make a voluntary Donation of £5 in January and again in September and a weekly donation of £1 for interval refreshments. All money collected is passed at the end of each meeting to the Treasurer and no funds are held by the Club. Average attendance has been of the order of slightly less than twenty people of recent times though it has been lower on some days due to illness, bad weather and other commitments. All films shown are at least three years old from their original Cinema release date. Only films with a Certificate U, PG and 12 are shown. Some 12 Certificate Films may have a limited amount of bad language/ violence/sexual inference & content. Most films are shown with English Sub-titles and are chosen for being cheerful /feel good light entertainment from fairly recent releases to films the Golden Age of Hollywood...The year started with a tribute to the late Dame Maggie Smith 'Lady in the Van ' (2016) followed by 'Victoria and Abdul' (2017) which proved very popular with those present. Other titles to be shown in this session include 'The Duke' (2022) – 'The Roaring Twenties' (1939) - 'Living' (2022) – 'Gorillas in the Mist' (1988) ...The last film being shown before Easter is a superb 4K restored version of 'Singing in the Rain' (1952).

As mentioned in last year's report The Church Hall was re- decorated in August 2023 and the curtains taken down and washed before being put back up. Unfortunately these improvements resulted in the blackout in the hall being far worse than before the redecoration and now is particularly inadequate when the sun shines brightly through the now clean curtains(more transparent?) . Also not all the curtains close properly when drawn and this spoils the projected picture so that it looks washed out. There is a need for measures to improve the blackout by possibly attaching thicker/darker lining to the curtains; this would also help to reduce the heat loss from the windows in the in the hall when they are drawn. Alternatively ideally the existing eleven curtains that have seen better days should be replaced to improve the appearance of the hall and blackout and would also improve the insulation of the hall. Lottery Grant???

The Club breaks for two weeks over Easter and Christmas and then for the Summer Holidays in August starting again in September to December. The Club is run by Tanya and David Welford and members assist in serving refreshments. The Films are shown on a 4K projector for an enhanced brighter picture quality....most of the films shown come from David's large personal collection of Blu-ray /DVD films at no cost to the Club/Church.

David and Tanya Welford

German Exchange Report

We give thanks to God for Rev Keith Mcnicol's leadership of this exchange over recent years. His sad passing has let us all feeling very bereft. It has also meant the leadership of the exchange has reverted to Simon. All Saints is currently preparing for the visit of about 17 friends from Germany to All Saints in May 2025 and we are grateful

for the involvement of St John's Methodist church in this programme. Please pray for this visit and for all who are hosting and helping with refreshments and food.

Simon Tillotson

Flower Team Report

The flower team have had a really pleasant year. We did extra displays for Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Day and Christmas. The open day in September was an exciting day and we enjoyed doing a special demonstration to show what we can achieve for weddings. We have on several occasions done arrangements to remember lost loved ones or to celebrate family events.

Our thanks to Berit and Linda for their assistance at busy times.

Carols Sims, Marian Johnson and Katy Holness

All Saints Groundsman Report

It's been another difficult year maintaining the grounds due to inclement weather and frequently changing conditions that climate change brings.

Saturated ground has led to a larger number of graves than normal requiring topping up regularly throughout the year. This has been a physical challenge both in man power and for our machinery.

Mowing also remained a challenge with long spring grass being unable to be cut due to saturated ground and challenging unforeseen mechanical breakdowns. Perseverance and flexibility won through, with Mike Binks and I taking shifts on days it was possible to work.

In terms of anti social behaviour occurring, I'm pleased to say that very little has been observed this year. Long may this continue.

With the help of the church committee and Simon's help, I'm pleased to report a significant reduction in glass and other dangerous items on and around graves. This support is greatly appreciated by myself and my team, as health and safety of us working must always come first.

In terms of maintenance all hedging /pruning was undertaken and overall the grounds have been maintained to a high standard and we continue to receive compliments from visitors to the grounds.

Finally a big thank you to Mike Binks for all his help this past year. I was seriously unwell for some months and unable to work and Mike ensured that our grounds were kept to the high standard we all expect.

Jason Tongue Groundsman.

Outdoor Vergers Report

All Saints' Churchyard is the largest open churchyard in the Canterbury Diocese. Many people find visiting the churchyard to attend the grave of a loved one a helpful part of the mourning process. In 2024 there were 18 burials and 14 interments of ashes. We have records of burials going back hundreds of years, and sometimes get asked by relatives to help locate the grave of a family member. Please do contact Simon our Vicar if you would like further information or support. Dave and Helen Parry

Weddings and Baptisms

There were only 4 weddings at All Saints in 2024 but this may well be because the church refurbishment was putting couples off booking. However, I regret to inform you that nationally the number of weddings in churches is decreasing as secular venues become more and more popular.

On a positive note we had 26 baptisms at All Saints in 2024 which was a good sign of the church re-engaging with our pastoral district.

I would like to thank all those who help with weddings and baptism for their assistance. Karen Goodwin our wedding administrator and our volunteers on the baptism team who assist at our baptism services on Saturdays and Sundays, Helen Parry, Peri Hawkins, Robert Newman, Cheree Moyes, Trevor Stroud, and Susan Goodearl.
Simon Tillotson

Hall Bookings Report

The hall continues to be much appreciated by our hirers, particularly for parties and other one-off events, of which there were 43 last year. Enquiries have been increasing after the DCC agreed to allow bouncy castles again, as those companies are recommending our hall. The hall was hired twice as a polling station, and for 24 hours while Whitstable Pearl was being filmed overnight in the graveyard.

We have 11 weekly hirers and 2 monthly hirers, and had one change of hirer on Thursday evenings. This means there is now a weekly slot available on Monday evenings, as well as on Thursday afternoons. If you hear of anyone who might be interested in these, please let me know, also for a monthly slot on Monday mornings.

The hall is also regularly used by 6 church (or church supported) groups, and for several church occasions through the year, which last year included services up to Easter while the church was being refurbished.

I am extremely grateful to Helen Parry for all her assistance, especially for taking over the hall bookings for 3 months with no notice, when Keith died. Thanks are due to Simon as well, for all his support at this time and throughout the year, to Howard, our cleaner Mandy and Steve Reith for ably looking after the hall finances. Kirsty McNicol

Hall Cleaner Report

I've had the pleasure of working at All Saints Church for 3 years next month. In my duties I clean the main hall, Thorpe room, office, entrance and all toilets; I take pride in my work by ensuring the hall always looks clean and tidy for the hall users. Kirsty has kindly passed on lovely comments from people who have hired the hall. I am grateful for every person I have met along the way and I look forward to meeting new people that I haven't met yet. God bless you all, Mandy.

Brownies Report

3rd WHITSTABLE BROWNIES REPORT

In 2024 Brownie have been busy working on badges, some went on pack holiday to an activity centre and general having lots of fun. They learnt new games/song and revisited old ones.

We completed our Skills For Our Future badge eg using tools like hammers and screw drivers, learnt about money and the cost of items. Also completing our Communication badge too. Some completing solo interest badges like performing, baking and painting at home. This then enabled girls to complete sections of their badge books, we have awarded two Gold Awards to Brownies who have completed their badge book, some silver awards and bronze awards too. Enrolled quite a few new ones which meant that some of the others made cakes/biscuits, decorated the table and served the family of those enrolled tea or coffee to gain their hostess badge.

For the Gold Award the girls had to organise a night and they organised a Ball with music, their dads as waiters, food and wearing party dresses.

We have welcomed new girls who want to be brownies and said bye to some who out grown us. We went to the beach where we had hotdogs and played in the sea. We had a Christmas party wearing sparks and glitter with party games.

So as a unit we have had lots of fun, played games, made crafts at Christmas and had a bonnet parade at Easter, we did Boxercise with their leader, had games nights, learnt about and to recognise flags of the world and make our own individual flag that represents us as a person, etc we are always open to new girls ages 7-10 who want to join us, as we celebrated our 88th birthday in 2024 we are still going strong. (90years on 6th February 2026) Sharon Gray

3rd WHITSTABLE (ALL SAINTS') AMY JOHNSON SCOUT GROUP

Founded in 1945, the Scout Group at All Saints is open to all young people (regardless of faith) between the ages of 6 and 18 and we have both male and female members in all sections. Attendance at the Group is now over 90 young people each week – the largest the Group has been for many years.

During the year, we converted from traditional Land Scouts to Air Scouts and have received a new flag, which will be dedicated in Canterbury Cathedral during our Scout St Georges Service there.

Of special note is our association with All Saints Church, which we greatly value. During the last year, we attended the Remembrance Sunday Service, bringing 80 young people, 15 leaders and their families, with a Scout Leader reading the Gospel. This is a service which we especially cherish. In December, we held our own Polish Christmas Carol Service in the Church, attended by 100 young people and their families, when we were treated to the history of scouting in Poland, some Polish Christmas carols and a song sung by our own Rev Simon.

Members from all sections of the Group have taken part in numerous activities as well as all the normal Scout training work, aiming for the Chief Scouts Award for the relevant section. Explorer Scouts can also work towards the Duke of Edinburgh awards. The Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers all enjoyed camping experiences during 2023. If you have a young member in your family who would like to join either now or in the future, please get in touch - we currently have a waiting list for all sections, so the earlier their name is on the list the better chance they have of getting a place.

Section	Age	Day and Time
Beavers	6-8 years	Monday 17:30 – 18:40
Cubs	8-10 ½ years	Tuesday 18:15 – 19:45
Scouts	10½-14 years	Friday 19:00 – 20:30
Explorer Scouts	14-18 years	Thursday 19:15 – 20:45

It is only the dedication of our Leaders that make the many activities the Group takes part in possible. We always need more Adults to join our team to organise and direct these activities such that Scouting can continue here at All Saints. If you would like to help, please get in touch.

Simon Haseltine

Skipper, 3rd Whitstable (All Saints) Amy Johnson Scout Group

Annual Report for All Saints Nursery 2024- 2025

All Saints Nursery continues to be an integral part of the All Saints Community. During the academic year 2023-2024 we finally changed our charity status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) this meant that we had to re-register with OFSTED and are currently awaiting an OFSTED inspection under our new organisation and charity number.

We have a committee of six dedicated trustees who have supported us through this process. Our numbers continue to be good, and we are full this academic year. We currently have 46 children on roll aged two and a half to five years old.

Due to the new government changes in EYFS funding the nursery has adapted and now takes children from two and half all day.

After the previous year staff shortages due to maternity cover and sickness we are back to a complete team, and they continue to be extremely committed and supportive of each other. The nursery continues to be a part of a highly successful and productive Collaboration of other nurseries in the local area. These nurseries meet regularly to support each other and offer advice about new EYFS regulations which are enforced. Due to being a charity we still regularly organised numerous fundraising activities over the year.

Our Light Up All Saints and our Christmas Workshop were again very successful. New events this year have included a Valentines Disco and a theatre trip. New government regulations state that all settings such have a climate action plan in place by March 2025 so All Saints Nursery have signed up to be an Eco School and we are working towards a Green Flag status.

The nursery continues to part of a community scheme which recycles and provides free children's clothing to those in need.

Alongside this we were lucky to also secure a Biodiversity Grant from the local council in order to start Forest School. We are working with the local Scout group and the church to make this possible. We feel have a good relationship with the church and continue to utilise the church for celebrations such as Nativities, Harvest Festivals and Easter Services. Our parents donated a considerable amount of food to the food bank for the Harvest service. We are also lucky to have access to the Vicarage Garden for events.

The nursery and the church have regular meetings with regards to maintenance and upkeep. Our back gate has been replaced and a fire risk assessment has been carried out. We are now waiting for the fire safety work to be completed. We also need new guttering, and a few odd jobs completed.

We continue to try to offer the children a wide range of exciting and stimulating activities as they take those first steps to independence in a supportive and nurturing environment, where each child feels part of the All Saints' family.

Sallie Smith Nursery Manager