

The Parish of Badshot Lea and Hale

We are one Parish of welcoming and inclusive churches.

Our vision is for the growth of God's Kingdom so we aim to:

- Grow in Spiritual Maturity
- Grow in Numbers
- Grow Younger
- Grow in Community Engagement



**Annual Parish Meeting
Reports 2023 – 2024**

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Governance

Officers' reports

PCC Lay Vice-Chair Report

It's been quite a year, in the light of the news that Maxine was leaving the Parish and hence standing down as Deputy Church Warden, I felt called to volunteer as deputy Church Warden to support Kris. As result of being bruised by experiences in previous parishes I was determined to stay in the shadows, whilst helping Kris at St George's. That all changed one afternoon in October when, whilst supervising my grandson at Legoland, I received a call from Alan on which he explained that he and Lesley were retiring and asking me if I would take-on the role of PCC Lay-Vice Chair.

Whilst I am learning all of the time, I am still well short of fully understanding the parish and who does what. For that reason, I am reluctant to thank people by name for fear of forgetting others, so please accept my thanks to everyone who does their bit (large or small) for the parish.

I will make one exception to that by thanking Stella for her extraordinary efforts to managing being both our Parish Administrator and in many ways 'the priest in charge'.

Another think that seems strange is sitting here in April writing a report about the year 2023, especially as I was only actively involved in Parish activities for the last couple of months of the year. So, I will concentrate of the things that I was involved in and looking forward to 2024.

Alan and Lesley managed the handover very well and helped us greatly to get to a point where we were ready to cope without them, for which we are very grateful. Having said that I have to admit already having had cause to curse Alan's beloved spreadsheets.

The PCC and Steering Committee used the 'notice period' well to come up with plans for the year ahead. We hoped and prayed for an early replacement but made sure that we had a plan for the long haul if that was the way that

things turned out. As you are all probably aware, we are now unlikely to have the new incumbent in post before January 2025, so those plans have now proved to be very useful.

In modern times, Church finances are always a key concern for those leading the Parish, but I am pleased to say that we in a relatively good place in that we are paying our full Parish Share and have a budget that is basically breakeven. Analysis of the first quarter of 2024 suggests that we are broadly on target, with some ups and down, but with the planned activities we should have an OK year.

Since taking over as PCC Lay Vice-Chair I have tried to share my time around the three churches, and I have seen each of them during busy services and at quiet times which helps me to have a better understanding of our Parish. I am trying to update everyone on developments by appearing at notices time periodically or when there is something to share.

I will finish by repeating my thanks to everyone who does their bit, small or large for the Parish, but with a plea that for the next year at least, that everyone tries to do just a little bit more to help share the load during the vacancy.

Dave Walter

Clergy Report

This last year has been one of challenge, change, joy and sadness. I started 2023 as a deacon and ended it at a priest, following ordination to the priesthood in July. And all the time I have been learning and serving the parish as curate.

I was joined in July by a second curate, Rev'd Dave Camp, who was ordained deacon the same weekend I was ordained priest. He and I have been taking services together and learning from each other, and I am particularly grateful that he enjoys preaching and is always ready to step into the breach when necessary!

Of course, our training has changed a little as we both lost our 'training incumbent' (TI), the priest who supports our learning. That was Alan until the end of January but we both have new TIs outside the parish.

We are both taking services at all three churches and getting to know the congregations better. It is a real joy to spend time with each congregation and we are both grateful and touched by the warm welcome we have received. Once Dave is ordained priest, he will be able to preside at communion services and at weddings and baptisms. Rev'd John Evans continues to preside at St John's and St George's on Sundays and St Mark's on Wednesday when we have a midday communion service. He also takes communion to those who cannot get to church and goes into Farnham Mill Care Home to lead services and visit people. A huge thank-you to him.

Obviously, Lesley and Alan's departure has meant a great challenge and there are things that we just can't do because we don't have the capacity. However, all around I see people rising to the challenge and we seem to be managing well. I am especially indebted to the members of PCC: Dave Walter, who has taken the brave step of being Lay Vice-Chair; Pamela Marsham, churchwarden of St John's; Kris Lawrence, churchwarden of St George's; Sarah Kay, churchwarden of St Mark's; Richard Myers, treasurer; Jacquie Munroe, who until recently was our stewardship officer; Michelle Chapman, our youth minister; June Jasper, PCC Secretary; Carolyn Weston and Bob Shatwell. A big thank-you, too, to Jo Taylor, our safeguarding officer, who has worked so hard to keep our safeguarding up to date.

Thank you, as well, to all who are involved in any way. Many people are working away behind the scenes with little recognition, but without whom we would not be functioning nearly as well. I'm thinking of all of you who run groups, cater, wash up, garden, shop, prepare for services, wash and iron linen, telephone people you haven't seen in a while, lock and unlock churches, clean, sweep paths, and do a multitude of other vital tasks.

This parish is one of welcome, creativity and life and, as we continue through the uncertain time of vacancy, I am confident that we will keep meeting and manifesting the God of love in our community.

With blessings

Rev'd Stella Wiseman

LLM Report

Consideration of goals set last year

My goals for 2023 were:

- to continue to serve the Parish of Badshot Lea and Hale in the most appropriate way to the best of my unique ability;
- to continue to create opportunities for people to explore their own creativity whilst exploring mine as well;
- to assist in building the community of the parish, with particular respect to St Mark's, by sharing the joy of Christianity and having fun.

All of which I believe I met.

Personal issues, family, work & time management

I am getting tired and I long for the Sabbath from ministry.

Spirituality, worship & prayer

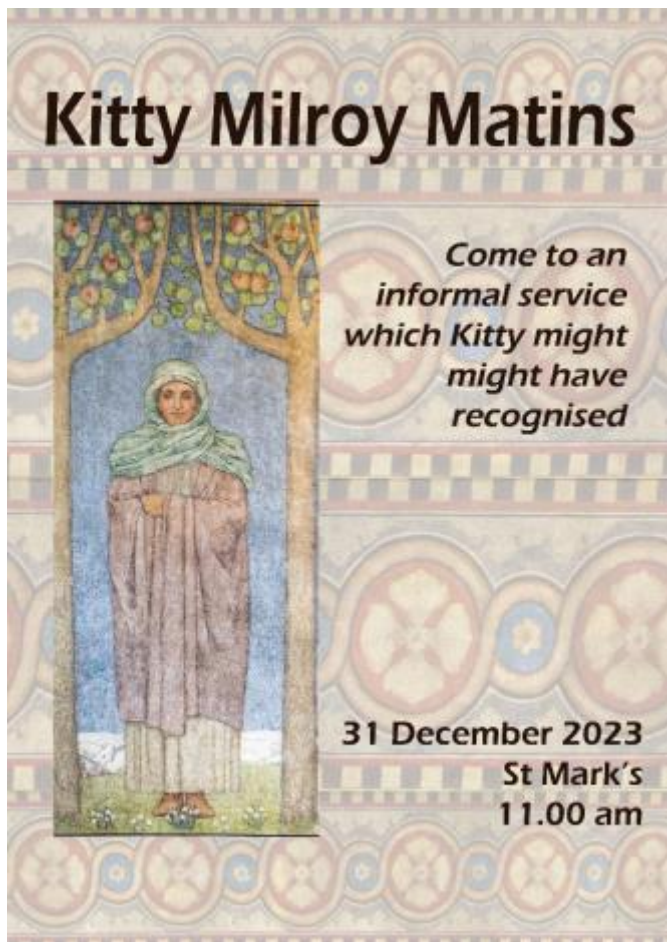
Sometimes when I listen to some music, or very occasionally when I play music myself, I am aware of a place of “sheer silence”. I had no idea what that was, but I knew I wanted more of it. I discovered this silence in the strangest of places, in a smile, in the kindness of strangers, in nature, in the light of a dull winter's day.



If you look for it, you can find it, but you can't find it to order. I looked for it with my Buddhist friends, sitting in uncomfortable silent meditation. I wasn't a very good Buddhist. The silence I was seeking has a kindness. Yes, it takes your breath away and transports you somewhere else entirely for a moment, so all powerful, but kind. I remembered the passage from 1 Kings 19:11-13. For me, God is not in all the power and bluster, God is within the place of sheer silence.

I ran this workshop, sharing these thoughts with our parish.

Practical ministry & skills – what is going well?



I have enjoyed creating and leading services and I believe that my performance skills as a musician have transferred well into this part of my ministry.

Kitty Milroy painted the murals we have in St Mark's and for the service after Christmas I thought it would be an opportunity to share a Service of the Word using the format which Kitty might have recognised from the early 20th century. I was pleased that this service combined a genuine act of worship with outreach to our community who have an interest in the murals.

For a number of years, I have run a “Longest Night” service as a quiet time for those who are troubled by all the commercial razzmatazz of our society at Christmas.



During this service, we remember our loved ones who have died; those who might be sleeping rough; families with insufficient food and so on. We hold them in God's love and we light candles for them all.

I also make posters (such as the ones included in this article) and I have been creating the Prayer Page for our church magazine. I use my own photographs and generally write the prayer, that way I know that we are within the copyright laws.

Music has and always will be my first love. My earliest memories are of my Dad coming home from work and sitting down to play the piano. For me as a toddler then, all was well, safe and secure, drifting off to sleep with my Dad's music wafting upstairs. I share my love of music through my ministry by playing each week for services; playing for church barn dances; carol singing; the Craft Markets and so much more. As a musician out in the world, I am able to get closer to people pastorally as they feel safe to open up to me and share their thoughts. Music opens doors.

Lesley Shatwell, LLM

St George's churchwarden's report

This year has been marked by the significant changes, firstly Maxine's departure, secondly Lesley & Alan's retirement and thirdly Craig's retirement as LLM.

As time passes, I miss Maxine more & more. Not only for everything she did for the parish but also for me personally; she was always there to bounce ideas off. But, of course, we are delighted that she has moved to be closer to her children and grandchild.

Lesley and Alan's departure came as a surprise – I have always known that they would move on, but it came sooner than I had anticipated. I am really grateful for everything they put in place to support us while we are in vacancy.

At the start of the year, I was the only church warden in the parish so I am really grateful to Pam, Sarah, David and Bob taking on churchwarden / deputy church warden and lay vice-chair of the PCC. Along with Stella and our treasurer Richard, I believe we have a really strong leadership team and the parish is in 'safe hands'.

That does not mean that everything has run completely smoothly, but we are all volunteers, and we are all trying to do our best, so we thank everyone for their patience and understanding.

Sadly, Craig resigned as LLM and with Debbie decided it was their time to move away from St George's. I found Craig a real inspiration and his encouragement towards me leading worship was very much appreciated. One of the things that I am enjoying during the vacancy is the opportunity to lead worship; this is something I have missed since we stopped running the 'Family Praise' service.

Some good news was the 'Community Payback' team that offered itself to the parish. They have taken on the lawn mowing and other garden maintenance and have re-painted the hall for us. This is such a great help and we are really pleased to receive this support.

St George's has proved a popular building for people to hire for a variety of different events. This has on occasions cause some issues with regards mess and some breakages, but Stella has good relations with many of the groups and she works hard to get them to realise our expectations. I have, on the whole, seen much improvement and I would much rather see our buildings in use than sitting empty 6 days a week.

We continue to have good relationships with Badshot Lea Village Infant School and Gemma Ball, Headteacher, has been actively involved in the process so far to find our next incumbent. We are very grateful for this support.

During a vacancy we can take a step back from our 'Parish Needs Process', however Stella has recently introduced a prayer group and this fits with our goal to develop a culture of prayer. Prayer is so powerful and is a service that anyone can provide. It would be lovely for people to get involved with this group and make a real difference to our parish and the wider world!

On a more practical side, I still struggle with a solution to the chairs at St George's. I couldn't bear the idea of throwing away perfectly good chairs that just looked a bit tatty, so we have been making an effort to cover them (the majority of this done by David, Helen and their daughter – many thanks). They do look a lot better, but I still feel that folding chairs do not really 'fit the bill' when it comes to worship. If only money was in abundance! However, it may be that for others this is not such a big issue.

You may have seen a 'Payaz' machine either in the church or the hall. This has been introduced to the parish to encourage a generosity of giving from our

church users. It is portable, so will be placed in whichever church has an event running, but primarily at St George's as we have the greatest number of hirers. The plan is to move this into the narthex once a hole has been drilled in the side of a cupboard for locking it in place securely.

I do in general have a very positive nature and 'can do' attitude. For example, every week I insist that tables are put out for children to sit out during our services and enough chairs out so it looks as if we are expecting people. But I have to admit, of late I have become a bit despondent, with congregational numbers down. I know this can happen during a vacancy, so I will endeavour to stay positive and look to the future.

I will finish by apologising if I have not named anyone that I maybe should have – but each individual in our church family is as valued as the next no matter what part they play, so all are worth a mention! Thank you to everyone for your help, support, love and prayers.

Many blessings

Kris Lawrence

Churchwarden – St George's Church

St John's churchwarden's report

At the end of October 2023, I found myself agreeing to be Churchwarden at St John's again. Alan and Lesley had dropped their bombshell news that they were retiring at the beginning of February and so it was important that all three churches had Churchwardens. So much to my amazement I found myself agreeing to take on this role yet again. I have been incredibly fortunate in that many people have helped and supported me and I have been, and still am, very grateful to each and every one of them. Thank you.

There then followed a couple of months when we were preparing for the time when we would have to cope on our own without the care and leadership of Alan and Lesley. The thing that I noticed most was that although our three churches have their own very definite identity we are now much more united than we have ever been and we were working together and planning together as a Parish not as individual churches. This is something from which we can all benefit.

A few years ago it was decided to remove the pews from the North side of St John's. This was to open up the space and make it more versatile in the way it could be used. Most of the pews were sold but three 17foot long pews remained. Nobody seemed to be interested in them as they were so long. Then Lesley learned of a charity called "Reskilled" and approached them. They were set up to help to develop the skills and raise the confidence of people who were unable to work for various reasons. The people they help are able to use the wood like the wood from our pews and make it into other items which can then be sold. They have a website if you are interested and would like to find out more. Lesley made contact with them and two men came to St John's one day during the Summer, took the pews apart and cut the wood into manageable lengths and took it away to their workshop. Personally, I think it is great that our pews can be used to help people to learn skills that can be used to help them find employment in the future.

During the year "Community Payback" also got involved with helping us. During the Summer they mowed the grass in the churchyard and helped to keep it looking tidy and during the Winter when they were unable to work outside, they painted the walls inside the church and then stained the wooden floor. We are very grateful to them for doing that as our church walls now look much cleaner and the whole building looks more loved.

In the churchyard one small tree came down during one of the storms.

Our Christmas Carol Service was the highlight of the year. It was wonderful to see the church full of happy people. We were also delighted to welcome the head, plus some members of staff and the school choir from William Cobbett School who came and sang for us and also read a couple of the lessons. This year we were also given a lovely new "stable" for our Nativity scene. We were very grateful to receive this.

During the year we also welcomed children from William Cobbett School, Heath End School and Tootsies Nursery who all held services in the church.

UCA have also used the church for filming as part of an MA course being done by some of the students.

Stella has worked hard to find people who would like to use our church and thus give us an income. This has proved to be difficult, however there is now a group from Farnham hospital who are using the Ark and the Sumner Room for a few days each month.

As a result of Alan and Lesley retiring, we have made some changes to the services on Sundays and now hold a Service of the Word on one and sometimes two Sundays each month. In recent years we have held the Ascension Day service, plus a BBQ, in the Rectory garden – this year it was held in St John’s with the BBQ in the Church grounds.

Pamela Marsham
Church Warden – St John’s Church

PCC Secretary’s report

I took over the role of the PCC Secretary in January 2023.

- The APCM meeting was held in May 2023.
- There were seven PCC meetings in 2023.
- The agendas for the meetings covered;

The Church Development Plan, Finance steering, Governance to include; Safeguarding, Approve new Activities, Risk Assessments Reports, New External Hall bookers, Electoral Roll Reports, Deanery Synod Reports, Health & Safety Reports.

We have now entered a period of ‘Vacancy’ in the parish after sadly saying goodbye to Rev’d Lesley and Rev’d Alan who have retired to Suffolk.

The PCC has appointed David Walter as PCC ‘Lay Vice Chair’.

I have chosen to be a secretary with non-voting rights.

June Jasper

Youth Minister

Schools

It has been a real privilege to be invited into the infant and junior schools within the parish to take assemblies. Assemblies have taken place over the year at William Cobbett, both infant and juniors, Hale Academy, Folly Hill and Badshot Lea Village Infant School. I have been able to take assemblies once each term.

Badshot Lea came over for their easter service at St. Georges on Thursday 28th March even though we are in vacancy.

The Year 4s at Hale school came and participated in the Harvest experience in October at St. Marks Church; it was a great success. All students were engaged and thoroughly enjoyed the session. As a result of the Harvest experience, I am liaising with Hale school to come up with a curriculum of experiences, one for each year group.

During the experiences students are split and rotate around stations which are all themed base on the topic being taught.

Michelle Chapman

Confirmation classes

It is always a real privilege to be involved with those going deeper with their faith. This year we have seen 2 young people participate in confirmation classes and they have already led a service of the Word at St. Marks.

Michelle Chapman

Toddlers service

This is a toddler-friendly service online with a short welcome, story in the form of Fuzzy Felt, a short animation and/or puppets with a song, prayer and craft on a Biblical theme. This service appears online on the first Tuesday of each month. Thank you to Jacqui Searle for her continued support and input for this service.

Michelle Chapman

Farnham Deanery Synod

For most of 2023 the parish did not have a lay representative to the Deanery Synod, although all ordained clergy are members. Richard Myers took over the role late in the year.

Farnham Deanery Synod met twice in 2023, on Tuesday, 9 May, at St Luke's Church in Grayshott and on Wednesday, 11 October, at St Peter's Church in Wrecclesham. Both meetings started with a short act of worship and a reflection from the incumbent on the context of ministry in the parish.

The meeting in Grayshott was the first of the new synod following the triennial elections at the various Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs). The Area Dean (Rev'd Richard Bodle) welcomed all members, recently elected and of long standing. He then introduced the Deanery Leadership Team (DLT), responsible for assisting the Area Dean and Lay Chair in the running of the Deanery and helping to set the agenda for Deanery Synod meetings.

After some housekeeping items (Deanery bank account and synodical structure) the Lay Chair reported back on the meeting of the Diocesan Synod in March. The most important topic had been the implementation of a new vocations training programme, which increases the range of options available to the laity. The Synod agreed that it would be beneficial to invite the recently appointed Dean of the Local Ministry Programme to a future meeting. The Area Dean provided an update on the vacancies in Churt and Tilford.

In small groups, the Synod then discussed ways in which parishes were seeking to address the three key action areas in the Parish Needs Process (PNP): discipleship, group ministry, and children's and youth ministry, before reporting back in full session.

The second meeting in Wrecclesham opened with a request for members to consider volunteering for the vacant appointments of Lay Chair and Treasurer, and the imminently vacant appointment of Secretary, followed by an update on the management of the Deanery bank account. The recently retired Lay Chair (but still a member of the Synod) provided details of the Diocesan Synod in June, where the main item for discussion had been finance. The accounts for

2022 had shown strong recovery in parish finances in the aftermath of the pandemic and, commended by the auditors, tight control of Diocesan expenditure, which had resulted in a small surplus at year end. This had enabled Church House to assist parishes through a contribution towards increased energy bills. The draft budget for 2024 included increases of 3.5% for stipends and salaries and 3% for Parish Share.

The Area Dean then provided an update on the vacancies in Churt and Tilford (previously notified), Rowledge (imminent) and Badshot Lea & Hale (forthcoming). Discussion on the PNP noted that dates for a review in 2025 were already being arranged, but progress may be affected by the departures of Revd Richard Lloyd (Mission Enabler Team) and the Archdeacon of Surrey. An external speaker, Mr Malcolm Carter from 3 Counties Money Advice in Haslemere, talked about the challenges of the 'cost of living crisis' and the help available through his faith-based charity at Hasleway Community Centre, and similar agencies, for example Farnham Frontline at Bethel Baptist Church and the Vineyard Centre. In small groups, the Synod discussed the challenges in their local context and their responses to the crisis, before reporting back in full session.

Mark Williams (Churchwarden, St Mary's Ewshot)

Electoral Roll

The Church Electoral Roll now has 107 parishioners (16 of these are not resident within the parish.) No names were added during the year and two were removed. Figures cover period up to 14th February 2024.

Gemma Brown

Safeguarding Report

Since last year's Safeguarding Report in April 2023, I have continued to be busy, ensuring that Church of England Safeguarding procedures are followed in our Parish.

DBS checks

Many roles, including PCC members and those involved in activities for children, young people and vulnerable adults, require a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check which is valid for three years. Prior to a DBS check a Confidential Declaration Form (CDF) must be completed. A copy of the Parish policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is sent out with the CDF. I processed four Confidential Declaration forms, sent out information for three Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) online applications (the other one is in process) and organised virtual meetings to check two people's ID. We now have two other people in the Parish who will check people's Identity Documents: Anne Boyman at St Mark's, who has checked one person's ID, and Janet Martin at St John's.

Training

The Church of England has set out a training pathway detailing who needs to do which Safeguarding training courses depending on the person's role. The roles range from Licenced Clergy, through to Churchwardens and PCC members, to children's, young people's and vulnerable adults' Activity leaders and helpers, and many other roles.

Some roles require completion of one or more of the safeguarding core training courses (Basic Awareness, Foundation and Leadership). Other roles need additional training courses such as: Safer Recruitment and People Management, Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse and Bridges Introductory training.

The Church of England Safeguarding team state:

"Ensuring that Safeguarding Learning is up to date helps embed a culture where people feel safe and abuse can be spotted and dealt with in an appropriate and timely fashion all current safeguarding policy and practice guidance has been approved by the House of Bishops and must, where relevant, be followed by all Church Bodies and Church Officers."

Thank you to everyone who has spent time completing the correct level of training.

At least 21 Safeguarding training courses have been completed in the Parish since March 2023. Each course is a minimum of 1.5 hours long, so well done to you all!

A Safe Environment and Activities

This year 30 people including PCC members, and leaders and helpers at activities for children, young people and vulnerable adults have read and confirmed that, for the activities they are involved in, they comply with the relevant requirements of Chapter 11, A Safe Environment and Activities, in the Parish Handbook. The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement states that 'The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults ...The Church will strive to support all church officers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power.'

Thank you to all those involved in activities for children, young people and vulnerable adults for practising and promoting these standards within our Parish.

The Parish Dashboard

This is an online system that helps parishes comply with statutory requirements and Church of England policies, and explains what actions need to be taken. It enables dioceses and the national church to oversee compliance. There is a video explaining how the Parish Dashboard works. See [Parish Safeguarding Dashboard - YouTube](#). Our Parish has reached Level 3, the highest level.

I regularly review and update the information on the Dashboard which has nine areas:

- Policies and Action Plan
- Safeguarding Procedures
- Safeguarding Roles

- Reviews and Reports
- Learning and Development
- Church Activities
- Learning and Development
- Non-Church Activities
- Prevention

Lesley Crawley received an email on 19/10/2023 from Jane Huttly, the Head of Safeguarding for the Diocese of Guildford, saying:

“Just a quick congrats as Badshot Lea and Hale are the first and only parish in the diocese to have 100% on the Parish Dashboard – great achievement and well done to all your team. It is great to see the Dashboard being used so positively to demonstrate safeguarding arrangements.”

We were commended in the Diocesan publication Safeguarding Matters on 12th December 2023:

“A big shout out to Badshot Lea and Hale who are the dizzy heights of 100%.”

This achievement is due to the good will and hard work of everyone in the Parish who is asked to complete Safeguarding Training on time, have DBS checks as required, and confirm they comply with Chapter 11 of the Safeguarding Handbook: A Safer Environment and Activities. Thanks too to the PCC for all the work you do in fulfilling your safeguarding role and responsibilities.

Thank you.

I feel very supported as Parish Safeguarding Officer by everyone within the Parish and the Diocesan Safeguarding team. Thank you to Stella for her work, including putting up Safeguarding posters in all three Churches and to Dave who has taken on the role of Safeguarding Lead on the PCC.

Jo Taylor

Inclusion

We continue to work at being inclusive, aiming to welcome all and ensure that everyone who wants to come to our churches and associated activities can do so without barriers or prejudices. This is harder work than it sounds because we often do not see the barriers we put up, or the barriers which are inside us, so we are continuing to try to educate ourselves through articles, sermons, services, and listening to others. We are currently looking at what areas we are falling down on.

One area we are working on at the moment is neurodivergence as churches and groups often cater more for neurotypical brains and we don't always realise how hard it is to be in a group if, for instance, you have to move a lot, or become overwhelmed by sound. We also continue to work hard at welcoming LGBTQI+ members of the church, some of whom have been rejected elsewhere. We held Pride services last summer and will do so again this summer.

We continue to support Inclusive Church and its guiding statement:

“We believe in inclusive church – a church which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate.

“We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality.

“We believe in a Church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.”

Stella Wiseman

Inclusive Church Ambassador, Surrey

Health and Safety Report

No incidents have been brought to my notice in this last year.

The main ongoing concern is for the integrity of the tower at St Johns. Various deficiencies were pointed out in the last quinquennial inspection that have not been corrected at the time of writing. However, action is now being taken to address some of these issues and grant applications are being constructed to raise the funding to deal with the others.

Another area of concern is the access to the old boiler room, by the side of the external door to the Sumner room. These steps are moss-covered and very slippery. Additionally, they have collected a significant amount of debris that has fallen off the stonework above them. Fortunately, access is only occasionally needed, but the chance of an accident is high. A strategy needs to be devised for dealing with this: either frequent cleaning or no unaccompanied working here, or both.

Bob Shatwell

Lay Training Pathway

We have three people who are authorised, and currently exercising a ministry in the Parish. Kris Lawrence is an Authorised Worship Leader, and Kris Lawrence, Pamela Marsham and Richard Myers are all Authorised Preachers.

These are over and above those who are licensed, who are the clergy and LLMs.

David Walter

Worship

Parish Choir

“ I don’t sing because I am happy, I am happy because I sing”.

The aim of our parish choir is to enhance our regular, weekly worship. Every Sunday throughout the year, come rain or shine, members of our parish choir sing at the services held at our churches, with commitment, sincerity and dedication.

We have also sung for Christian Aid, at the Harvest Supper, at monthly services at Farnham Mill nursing home, regular services at Bankside , numerous weddings and funerals. We have done carol singing 'round the tree', at Hale Chapels and switching on of the Badshot Lea lights. We have had an afternoon singing the Top Ten Carols, and three wonderful Carol services at our three churches when we were joined by the children's choirs of Badshot Lea school and William Cobbett school.



Since August we have been very saddened by the death of our organist, choir member and dear friend, Frances. Frances has been at the heart of our music in the parish for over ten years. Frances was a dedicated organist and musician who played every Sunday in our churches, and at mid-week services, weddings, funerals, Carol services and Easter services. She also played many other church organs and went on organ playing holidays with other enthusiasts.

Frances was a dedicated and reliable member of our choir for over ten years and Frances was a dear friend who kept us all calm and focused on the things that are really important. Thank you Frances, we miss you.

I would also like to say 'thank you' to the numerous organists, pianists and musicians who play for our services and enhance our worship each week, and stand in when needed.

Thank you to Mary Klymenko, Sue Lampard, Tim Sturt, Barry Hall, Joy Cobb, Roger Sanders, Bob and Lesley Shatwell and if I have missed anyone I apologise.

Our Parish choir meets every Monday at St. George's church at 6pm and sing for an hour. We enjoy vocals warmups, tongue-twisters, rounds, traditional and modern songs and the favourites from our hymn book. No audition is required, no music reading is necessary, just enthusiasm and a joy of singing together.

Thank you to everyone who comes to sing in the choir; you make Monday evenings a real treat for me!

Margaret Emberson

St Mark's Music

The music is usually provided by Roger Sanders, Lesley Shatwell and Bob Shatwell on keyboard, bass and violin. It has its own eclectic feel to it!

We are trying to rotate musicians around the three churches a bit more than we have done recently, to give both musicians and congregations a bit of variety. At St Marks, this has the additional advantage of ensuring the organ (Emily) is played at least once a month. Since the unfortunate death of Frances Whewell in 2023, this does not automatically happen now.

The musicians at St Mark's continue to provide music for the craft fairs and the free-access barn dances we hold twice a year are proving increasingly popular.

My thanks to the musicians who have contributed to all these activities, freely giving their time and expertise.

Lastly, we should give a moment to remember our last parish musician, Frances Whewell, a gentle soul and a passionate musician. She is fondly remembered and dearly missed.

Bob Shatwell

Farnham Mill Nursing Home

Weekly pastoral visits enable me to meet new residents, give Holy Communion to those seeking that Sacrament, and respond to spiritual needs of staff, residents and visiting relatives. 'Activities' at the home arrange with Margaret Emberson and our parish choir a monthly *Songs of Praise* occasion which many join in, identifying the Christian background of some who are unable to connect with much other human contact.

John Evans

Outside Organisations

Bishop Sumner Education Foundation

Bishop Sumner was Bishop of Winchester from 1827 until 1869. As was his wish, after his death in 1874, he was buried in Hale churchyard. He is remembered especially for his interest in education. The Bishop Sumner Educational Foundation was established by the investment of the parish share of the proceeds from the sale of the local church school. The fund is intended to assist with the education of students under the age of 25 whose residence is within the bounds of the ancient parish of Farnham with priority for the ecclesiastical parish of Hale.

Under the chairmanship of the Clergy of Badshot Lea and Hale the Foundation is administered by a board of trustees comprising:

- Two Churchwardens (ex officio)
- A representative of the Badshot Lea and Hale Parochial Church Council
- A representative of Waverley Borough Council
- A representative of Surrey County Council
- Two co-optative trustees.

Bishop Sumner Educational Foundation granted in year ending 2023 to 20 school pupils the sum of £1,290 to support them in their education.

Grants have assisted young people with school uniform, academic, sporting, musical and organisational pursuits. Without this support children may feel excluded.

June Jasper (Secretary to the trustees)

Outreach

Adult Study Groups

St George's House Group

Gemma kindly offered her house for the group that used to meet at Maxine's so we have been meeting there regularly using the book "100 Stand-Alone Bible Studies". This book offers studies that can be done individually, but also has themed studies for times such as Advent or Lent.

The studies have opened up some quite interesting conversations (not necessarily on theme, but God can often take us off track to some other important place). The evenings have also provided great fellowship and I am grateful to Gemma for hosting us.

Kris Lawrence

Bible Book Club

Bible Book Club has continued through the year, meeting weekly, except when there are Parish Groups when we have become one of them and welcomed others to join us. We have finished all the books in the Bible and are now going through the Apocrypha.

Michelle Chapman

Lent Groups

The Bible Book Club Lent course this year was 'From Now On', a course based on the film The Greatest Showman.

We looked at dreams, explored how the family of faith can bring hope and purpose, and how resistance is placed in the way of salvation. We questioned false fulfilment which can lead to betrayal.

To begin our journey, we invited the parish to watch the film one afternoon at St Mark's.

Michelle Chapman

Social Groups and Events

Badshot Lea Community Fete

Glorious sun shone down on the fete of 2023. So much so that there was a last minute panic to get gazebos and umbrellas erected to keep stall holders from becoming frazzled! But sunshine is always good for attracting visitors and we had a busy afternoon. Busy, but great fun – the BBQ and Pimm's selling out and other refreshments getting low all means people are enjoying themselves.

There was great entertainment as always by the Farnham & Aldershot Karate Club, Badshot Lea Village Infant School, Dukes Ukes and Wendy Edwards with her beautiful voice.

We were very lucky to have the scouts & sea cadets come along to help moving tables and chairs and really doing anything that was asked of them – thank you!

As an added bonus we raised a good sum of money for the parish funds.

This sadly was Maxine's last fete in the parish but she has left behind comprehensive instructions, so going forwards so I am hopeful that we can have more successful fun fetes in the future!

Kris Lawrence

Artz at St Mark's

I am passionate about creative ministry. I have been leading a church art group which now runs fortnightly. It is aimed at those who are finding ways to express themselves through community with others, eating cake and drinking tea and coffee – oh and maybe creating a bit of art too. Absolutely no artistic ability

required. It saddens me when people (often old ladies, but not exclusively) come to me and say, “Oh I’d love to come to your group, but I am no good at art.” How dare anyone tell them that they are “no good at art”! We share the love of God through our pleasure in creation. We eat cake and chat and nothing delights me more when I see everyone happily occupied working on our art project.



We are able to offer a variety of materials as we are funded through the sale of cards and calendars which I put together from the artwork the group creates. I enjoy these sessions myself and I like to use my computer-based skills to create the cards, calendars and mugs for sale.

Lesley Shatwell

Social Committee

Social events are such an important part of church life. They tick so many boxes – providing fellowship, inclusivity, outreach, entertainment etc. But social events don't just happen – they need to be planned! The planning groups (or 'social committee') have met only once this year and all three churches were represented. As a result, we came up with events for most calendar months:

Jan	St George's	Top 10 Carols
Feb	St Mark's	Barn Dance
Feb	St George's	Snowman Drive
March	St Mark's	Craft Fayre
May	St George's	Plant Sale
June	St George's	Fete
June	St Mark's	Craft Fayre
June	St Mark's	Christian Aid Concert
July	St Mark's	Barn Dance
Sept	St George's	Scarecrow Drive
Sept	St Mark's	Craft Fayre
Oct	St George's	Harvest Supper
Nov	St Mark's	Craft Fayre
Nov	St George's	Quiz
Dec	St George's	Carol Singing round the tree

So you can see we have a busy schedule!

If there is something you would like to see (or even better organise!) on the list of social events do let me know. Our social events do also help with our parish finances – or, as with the Christian Aid Concert, support charities. So importantly, please do support these events and encourage others to come along too.

Kris Lawrence

The Farnham Poetry Competition

For four years in a row, we have held a poetry competition open to all ages, and for the past three years this has been run as part of the Farnham Literary Festival in March with an awards ceremony held in St Mark's.

Each year we have a theme, and the most recent one was Friendship, a topic which brought around 120 poems flooding in from all around the country for either the under-16s category or the adult one. There are prizes for the winners and two runners-up in each category, plus a list of highly commended poems. The poems are judged by professional, published poets; this year the under-16s judge was Coral Rumble and the adult judge was Linda Daruvala.

The highlight of the competition is the awards evening which doubles as an open mic. People of all ages take part. This year we had a four-year-old girl and a woman of 96! There is a wealth of talent and creative skill around us, so much so that we have decided to start regular poetry evenings at St Mark's where we meet, share our poetry, or just listen.

Stella Wiseman

The Craft Market

We run the Craft Market at St Mark's on the third Saturday of March, June, September and November, 10am to 2pm, and I am joined by a busy team of Lesley and Bob Shatwell, Jean and Roger Sanders, Chriss Green, Elaine Fell, Alison Ridgeon and Robbie Eggleton who work incredibly hard to ensure that the tables are out, the musicians are playing, the tea, cake and rolls are served, the stall holders and customers are happy and everyone has a good time.

We regularly have 20+ stallholders selling homemade gifts and cards, knitwear, candles, toys, jewellery, ceramics and much more, and the payments which each stall-holder makes for having a table goes into parish funds. We reckon to make £1250-£1400 from this. We also sell refreshments and the proceeds from these – around £800 a year – goes into a pot to enhance the environment of the Kitty Milroy murals. These remain a great attraction and we often have visitors popping in to see them.

The next market is on June 15th, 10am-2pm. Come and join us!

Stella Wiseman

Youth & Children

Groups

Good Friday Craft

A pleasing number of children joined us with great enthusiasm at St Marks for the annual craft session to celebrate the Easter story.

We began by getting together to retell the story of Easter using a selection of eggs which had little articles inside to stimulate their memory.

Then we began the activities which included making Easter cards, chocolate Easter nests, a cross of real flowers, and a banner depicting the crosses and the empty tomb, [which stayed up in church through the Easter season!]

The children worked really hard!

We finished with a simple service where the children shared what they had been doing with the parents and other adults and a simple liturgy followed by a drink and hot cross buns!

Thank you so much to all those who helped.

Anne Boyman

Little Bees



Little Bees is a group for parents/carers and pre-school children, including babies. It runs on a Friday morning, in St George's hall. The group has two volunteer co-leaders, who cover alternate weeks, two very loyal and hard working volunteers who set up, pack away, make tea and coffee, chat to families and deal with registration. There are additional volunteers who cover when necessary. We are always happy to accept more volunteers. It is such an enjoyable group to be involved in and I would recommend it to anyone. The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed and people make friends through the group.

Our philosophy is to demonstrate the love of God, by providing a safe and welcoming space for people to meet and by getting alongside them and offering support when necessary. We currently have between 10 and 18 families

attending each week. We have lots of toys, books, puzzles and free play. There is always a supervised, seasonal art activity on offer, which is well received and provides an ideal opportunity to listen and talk to the parents/carers. We offer hot drinks for the adults after which everyone helps to tidy away the toys. We then end the session with singing. The children join in enthusiastically with this. Little Bees is an excellent outreach and a great thing to be involved in.

Jacqui Searle

Friday Night Games Night

Friday Night Games Night, aka Table Tennis Club, aka 'The Youth Club for All Ages', aka simply 'Club', continues to evolve. We meet on the second and fourth Friday of the month at St Mark's from 7-9pm and we offer table tennis craft, board games, jigsaws and now a meal for which we all sit down together. The club is intergenerational and lively and it is designed to be a space where people can feel accepted just as they are. This year we were delighted to receive a grant of £500 from the Bishop of Guildford's Communities Fund (BGCF) to help fund the club.

Stella Wiseman

Open The Book

"Bringing the Bible to life for every child in every primary school."

This is the aim of the Bible Society and it is our aim when we read Bible stories in our local schools.

We have been visiting Folly Hill Infant school, Badshot Lea Village Infant school and Tootsies nursery for nine years, during term time. We have introduced hundreds of children to the timeless stories from the Bible.

We now have a team of six regular storytellers and other friends who help occasionally. Margaret, Bob, Tricia and I have been joined recently by Kris and Carolyn, and others when needed.



In June, past and present storytellers got together for afternoon tea and shared lots of special memories. We also said “goodbye” to Maxine, who has moved away from this area.

We all say a big “thank you” to Maxine for the enthusiasm and insight she brought to all the Open the Book stories. We wish you well.

This year the Bible Society has produced new material for everyone, so we have all had to buy new books and do extra learning and training. This has not been without its difficulties, but we are getting used to it and it is always a delight to see the children’s reactions to the ancient stories from the Bible.

Thank you to all the team - you are all brilliant !

Margaret Emberson

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