

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 2024 – 2025**

Table of Contents

Governance 3

Officers' reports 3

PCC Lay Vice-Chair Report.....	3
Clergy Report.....	6
LLM Report with PtO Review	6
St John's churchwarden's report.....	9
St Mark's churchwarden's report	11
PCC Secretary's report	12
Farnham Deanery Synod.....	13
Electoral Roll	14
Safeguarding Report.....	14
Health and Safety Report.....	17
Lay Training Pathway	18

Worship 18

Parish Choir	18
Musicians Report	19
Farnham Mill Nursing Home.....	21

Outside Organisations 21

Bishop Sumner Education Foundation	21
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Adult Study Groups 22

St George's House Group.....	22
Connections.....	22

Social Groups and Events 23

Parish Fete.....	23
Artz at St Mark's.....	25
Parish Social Committee.....	26

Youth & Children..... 27

Groups 27

Good Friday Craft.....	27
Little Bees.....	28
Open The Book	28

Governance

Officers' reports

PCC Lay Vice-Chair Report

Looking back across the last year the Parish management team have moved from a short-term caretaking role to one of long-term responsibility for the parish. This has hopefully put the Parish in a stronger position for when Alexa becomes our incumbent in June and will allow us to support her over her first few months as she gets up to speed with how we work and her new responsibilities.

Last year I did not know who did what in any real detail and so thanked you all generally, now I understand that so many of you provide critical support to the operation of the parish so again I want to thank everyone who supports the delivery of parish activities, but to do it individually would pretty much list everyone in the Parish, so please accept this general thank you.

The Standing Committee has been the engine of the Parish across the last year. Whilst I am well aware that there are things that we would have liked to have done that we have not managed to, on your behalf I want to record a special thanks to Churchwardens Kris and Pamela, and Sarah before she stepped down, and Richard for their dedication and hard work to keep the Parish functioning well. Lastly, but definitely not least, Rev Stella, who I am frankly in awe of the amount of work she has achieved as both our administrator and from a pastoral perspective. I wish that she had allowed us to share the load more and look forward to her being able to step back and complete her own training when Alexa joins us.

At the time of writing last year, we had Rev Stella, Rev John Evans, Rev David Camp and two occasional visiting ministers to lead our services, but as 2024 moved on we steadily lost most of them. David to a Parish where he could continue his training successfully and the two visiting curates as they finished their training and moved on to their long-term jobs. Rev John has proven to be a willing and valuable work horse leading more and more services for which

we are very grateful and hope that we are not wearing him out! Kris, Pamela and Lesley S have been invaluable in leading Services of the Word, to allow us to provide a service at all three Churches every week, although after the success of Combined Parish services for Bishop's visits, we are currently running these once a month which has been well received.

From a PCC perspective we have sadly lost Elizabeth, Carolyn and Michelle, for a variety of reasons, but we are grateful for their contributions before that happened. Michelle moving away also leaves us with a gap in the Youth ministry area which we will look at with Alexa when she arrives.

One key role that does not always sit on the PCC is that of Safeguarding Officer. Jo Taylor is standing down at the APCM after a stint of excellent services. Our thanks go to her for keeping us on the straight and narrow, which I can assure you is a non-trivial task. Having a person outside of the management chain that Safeguarding concerns can be reported to is essential to minimising the risk of sub-optimal practice (or worse) going unchallenged. Which as recent reports have highlighted, does not always happen and has contributed to very bad situations in the past. Investing the necessary amount of time in training and administration is simply necessary to allow us to provide a safe environment for everyone.

Personally, I would like to record my thanks to Rev Richard Bodle, our Area Dean, and Rev Sandy Clark, Stella's training mentor, both of whom have provided me with invaluable support and guidance during the vacancy.

Financially 2024 was a positive year with us making a small surplus of around £4,000 for which I thank everyone for their hard work which was critical to making that happen. The "business as usual" budget for 2025 is just about break even, but one of the upsides of a long vacancy is that we are only required to pay a reduced Parish Share after a year of vacancy, which is a saving of around £2,000 per month from February. This 'windfall' has allowed us to think about some things that we would not otherwise have been able to consider. It was strange to think that the longer the vacancy went on the better we were financially able to undertake projects!

So far in 2025 we have progressed two significant projects, replacing the fence surrounding St George's car park and replacing the worn-out chairs at St George's. The car park fence was not secure with the risk of young children escaping onto the main road, unsightly and dangerous to snagging passersby. We are responsible for maintaining our building and grounds, so we must do what we can. The chairs were simply falling apart, so they neither encouraged people to worship or to hire the facilities. With income from facility hire making up about 30% of our parish income, we have to find the right balance between maintaining facilities and not spending too much.

One of the less good things that has come to light in the last few months is that the Parish is not undertaking the required Fire Safety and Emergency Lighting testing. We are in the process of putting in place appropriate protocols – basically regular testing. We also discovered that most of our emergency lighting was not working at both St George's and St Mark's, so we have had to spend on getting the situation resolved. Whilst doing so we have taken the opportunity to replace some of the normal light fittings with more energy efficient ones which should reduce our energy costs going forward.

It is great to see that the fundraising efforts towards repairing the tower at St John's are progressing well. I have to admit that I initially doubted that we would be able to undertake the work for many years, but the progress Janet and others have made has changed that and I am now optimistic that the work can be started soon.

One of the most unusual roles that I undertook this year was to represent the Parish on the planning applications for the Ismaili Cemetery which initially included much needed car parking for St John's and the ability to provide level access to the church. Initially I wrote a submission highlighting the importance of the car park to the Parish and I was allowed to make a personal submission at the Public Enquiry. Sadly, part of the reason for the extended process was the environmental impact. To minimise this the Ismaili's were advised to remove the car park from the application; it is that revised application that was finally approved. Stella and I have started to discuss with the Ismaili's representative how we can work together as neighbours and we are optimistic of a good neighbourly relationship.

I will finish by repeating my thanks to everyone who does their bit, small or large for the Parish, but with a plea that we do not see Alexa's arrival as a cue to step back. She will take up many activities, but she will need support from the laity especially in the short term but also in the long term to keep the Parish running successfully.

There will be a significant change in the next few months as Stella has made us aware that she will stop being Parish Administrator no later than when she finishes her training. We will work with Alexa to see what the Parish needs from its Administrator(s), but if you know of anyone interested in doing the job please let me know.

Dave Walter

Clergy Report

To follow.

With blessings

Rev'd Stella Wiseman

LLM Report with PtO Review

Technically, I thought I had retired. When you reach the grand age of 70, the Church of England no longer licenses you as a Lay Minister. To continue to serve in that capacity, you require "Permission to Officiate" (PtO). With the departure of the Revd's Alan and Lesley, my retirement plans were put on hold



and during our vacancy, I received PtO so I continue to lead the Arts at St Mark's group (see further report).

And as well as preaching and leading services, music is a huge part of my life which I love to share with anyone and everyone. Whilst I have stepped back a bit from formal ministry

this year, I enjoyed creating and leading another “All Sung Service”. Everything, including the sermon and the notices, is set to music. It seemed to go well and I hope to be able to do it again this coming year.

I play with our church musicians each week and together we run the parish barn dances.

Prayer Page

I continue to create 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.

Risen Lord Jesus,
I know I do not have
the patience of a saint
and I may not meet any dragons today:
but with your love to guide me,
help me to show kindness
in all I do today
Amen



I will continue to support the parish of Badshot Lea and Hale in whatever way is appropriate and I thank the community for their support and fellowship.

Lesley Shatwell

St George's churchwarden's report

I write today in the knowledge that our 15 month long vacancy is soon to be over and I sense a sigh of relief!

Being in vacancy is testing time and having someone 'back at the helm' will certainly take the pressure off.

Yes, the vacancy has been a testing time, but that doesn't mean it's been a bad thing. In many respects I have enjoyed the experience and I have found it a privilege and an honour to serve the parish as a churchwarden during this time.

That doesn't mean there have not been challenges along the way. The parish has been run by a small team of dedicated people who for the majority of the

time have worked well together. But there have been inevitable clashes and disagreements from time to time and at times our patience has been tested. Despite any difficulties we may have had, I can say that I personally have never felt isolated or out of my depth. Our hope has been that parishioners have only seen the swan gliding across the water, rather than the frantic paddling feet going on under the surface.

I am pleased to say the team is still strong together and we will still be there to work alongside Lexi when she joins us.

Throughout the vacancy I have felt a warmth from our worshipping congregations, and I feel like I have grown much closer to people, primarily at St George's but also across the parish.

I have to admit that I am still inclined to think of myself as Churchwarden of St George's rather than of the parish. That doesn't mean that I don't have the interest of the whole parish in mind – I most certainly do, but sometimes regret that I don't move around the parish more. And I had to be reminded recently that I have as much authority as anyone to put notices on the St Mark's boards (whereas I thought I'd be treading on toes to do so!!)

But I have not paid as much attention to the quinquennial reports for St John's & St Mark's as maybe I ought, so I hoping they are reported in another report.

So – some practical stuff from St George's – this time last year I grieved the state of the chairs at St George's and I am happy to report that with a successful grant application (many thanks to Farnham Town Council) and some focussed fundraising we have been able to replace all of the folding chairs. We have also purchased some moveable screens to hide the items at the back of the church that make it look so cluttered.

I notice that in last year's report I had started to become a bit despondent about failing congregational members and sadly this feeling has not gone away as again this year we have lost some wonderful people. All for perfectly good reasons and/or ill health but I have a tendency to take these things personally and it can get me down. I pray very much that our vision to grow God's Kingdom; following our aims (as stated in our parish profile) to:

Grow in Spiritual Maturity
Grow in Number
Grow Younger
Grow in Community Engagement.

will come to fruition in the future months and years.

I purposely have not named any names in my report, this is because I see that each individual in our church family is as valued as the next. We are each individually and uniquely created by God and each has the same value and is loved by God unconditionally. So, no matter what part you play you are worth a mention! Thank you to all for your help, support, love and prayers.

Many blessings
Kris Lawrence
Churchwarden – St George's Church

St John's churchwarden's report

I took on the role of Churchwarden at the end of October 2023, simply because it was felt that, following Alan and Lesley's retirement it was important that all three churches had Churchwardens. I have been incredibly fortunate in that I have continued to have a lot of support from Clive Jasper, Dave Walter, Bob Shatwell and Richard Myers. Kris Lawrence has also been very supportive. I thank them all very much.

The year started with us all preparing for the time when we would have to cope on our own without the care and leadership of Alan and Lesley. It has been a real blessing to find that although our three churches have kept their own very definite identity we are now really working together and planning together as a Parish not as individual churches. This is something from which we are all benefitting.

A few years ago the pews were removed from the North side of St John's in order to open up the space and make it more versatile in the way it could be used. We now have tables and chairs placed in that area and so we are now able to use this space for other activities and had an Epiphany lunch at the beginning of January in order to raise money for the repair to the tower. This

space could also be used after church on a Sunday and also, hopefully on other occasions as well. If there are big services then the space can be easily cleared and chairs can be put out. We have just learnt that the charity “Reskilled”, who took the really long pews that we had, have made some of them into a bookcase which is at the Cathedral. You may remember that Reskilled is a charity that was set up to help to develop the skills and raise the confidence of people who were unable to work for various reasons.

“Community Payback” have continued to help us by mowing the grass during the summer and also painting the gates and the seats in the church yard. They have also done a little more work on the floor. Wood was placed over the tiles in the North Aisle in order to make the floor even and reduce the amount of trip hazards. Unfortunately that wood is not now in very good condition and is showing signs of wear and is no longer completely even. We are considering various options as to what we do with regards to the flooring in that area.

The tower is our major problem as it was discovered that there was a problem with the stonework and a danger of stone falling from the tower. As a result we can no longer use the tower door or ring the bell. Fencing has been put up around that area to stop people from going too close to the tower. Repairing that stone work is a major undertaking and will require scaffolding. Raising the money to do this work is not easy as we need at least £40,000. In addition to appeals for donations and holding events like the Epiphany lunch, Janet Martin has been very busy contacting various organisations and applying for grants. To date we have about £21,000 so we are half way, but obviously we still need more money in order to get the work completed.

Some of the chairs in the Sumner Room became badly worn. Strangely it was only the red chairs, the blue ones seem to be fine. The frame work of the chairs was in good condition but they needed to be reupholstered which is actually quite a costly undertaking if done professionally. It seemed that no one in St John’s was skilled in this craft but Kris Lawrence from St George’s offered to do the work. This meant that the only cost was the cost of the material. The chairs are now looking as good as new, so we are very grateful to Kris for

undertaking this work. This is also a wonderful example of how we are now working together as a Parish.

Our Christmas Carol Service was again 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. We were also delighted that a member of staff from Farnham Heath End School also joined us and read one of the lessons.

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

Pamela Marsham

Church Warden – St John's Church

St Mark's churchwarden's report

We do not have a Churchwarden with a particular focus St Mark's since Sarah stepped down last summer, but it does not feel appropriate even in those circumstances not to have this section.

Sarah started the year as Churchwarden but stepped down in late summer for personal reasons. We thank her for her work during her time in post.

I know that particularly at St Mark's there are many people who quietly do things without being on the PCC and that tasks for each service are picked up by individuals immediately prior to the services. That means I am not really aware of who does what and so I am at risk of forgetting to thank people by name, but I do know that Pamela doubles up after attending St John and goes to St Mark's most weeks and on many occasions has led services for which we are very grateful. Bob Shatwell, deputy Churchwarden, does many practical things around the church and, with the help of Lesley, is often key to ensuring that things are prepared for visiting presidents for which we are very grateful. I know that when fit Pat Manton does many things as do Anne Boyman, Rachel Crease and Jo Taylor.

I know that having the services on the laptop, rather than in booklets as at the other churches is an integral part of the service at St Mark's, but it has not been

without problems during the vacancy. The addition of a WIFI extender should reduce some of the problems and I know that we are looking to upgrade the laptop which will improve the situation further. However, it has been noted that the screen does not work for everyone, for example those with limited eyesight or those sat behind tall people, so we probably need some large print booklets for those who need them.

All three churches are short of able-bodied people to undertake maintenance tasks, this seems to be particular so at St Mark's where Bob would really benefit from the occasional support of the able bodied.

During the year it was agreed that we follow the modern move towards 'rewilding' at St Mark's. So it was agreed not to mow the grass at St Mark's to the traditionally short length and allow wildflowers to grow. St Mark's has benefited from the occasional visit from the Community Payback team, but they are overworked in keeping the grounds of the open churchyard at St John's under control, especially during the period of the year when the grass is growing quickly, so they are only doing specific tasks.

Dave Walter

(Deputising for) Church Warden – St Mark's Church

PCC Secretary's report

Understanding the importance of the work the PCC committee puts into the care of the parish in 2024, I agreed to continue in the role of PCC Secretary.

I chose not to have voting rights.

Under the leadership of the PCC Lay Vice Chair, in the period of interregnum, there were

- nine PCC meetings
- one Meeting of the Parishioners
- one APCM

At the APCM six members from the electoral roll were nominated and voted for as serving members.

One member was elected to 'Deanery Synod'

The rest of the committee were Ex-officio members

June Jasper

Farnham Deanery Synod

Farnham Deanery Synod

The Synod met twice in 2024, on 30th April and 9th October.

The April meeting was not attended by anyone from this parish. Some points of note from the minutes were:

- The Caleb Stream: a new initiative to encourage ordinations for candidates in their 60s
- A talk by Pippa Cramer from Claygate Parish about an initiative developed by her and her husband called 'Hymns We Love' which uses well-known and much-loved hymns to connect with older people, perhaps on the periphery of the local church community, and share the good news of Jesus Christ in a gentle but clear manner.

In the October meeting, the guest speaker was Alison Moulden, Net Zero Officer for the Guildford Diocese. She gave a presentation on the climate change emergency and what parishes can do to tackle it. The first three steps are:

- Fill in the annual Energy Footprint Tool [EFT]
- Conduct the Ecochurch survey
- Arrange an energy audit of the church buildings in the parish by an external firm [which might cost £500 per building].

An important subject in a recent meeting [in 2025 but before the date of this report and so eligible for comment] was the next stage of the strategic planning for each parish which Guildford Diocese oversees under the name of the Parish Needs Process [PNP].

Richard Myers

Electoral Roll

The Church Electoral Roll has been completely revised this year. This is part of the regular cycle of renewal where every six years everyone has to make a new application. The Roll now has 72 parishioners. 13 of these are not resident in the Parish. Figures cover period up to 20th April 2025.

Gemma Brown

Safeguarding Report

At the APCM the PCC should provide an annual report in relation to safeguarding. In the PCC's annual report will be a statement which reports on progress and a statement as to whether or not the PCC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance."

Since last year's Safeguarding Report in April 2024, I have continued to be busy, ensuring that Church of England Safeguarding procedures are followed in our Parish, enabling the PCC to comply with the duty to have "due regard" to the House of Bishop's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

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 12 Confidential Declaration forms and sent out information for 12 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) online applications. Anne Boyman at St Mark's and Janet Martin at St John's check people's Identity Documents as part of the DBS process.

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 24 Safeguarding training courses have been completed in the Parish since the beginning of April 2024. Each course is a minimum of 1.5 hours long, so well done to you all!

A Safe Environment and Activities

This year 17 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 progressed to 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

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 they do in fulfilling your safeguarding role and responsibilities.

Safeguarding Sunday

In February/March 2025 Dave Walter, as Safeguarding Lead on the PCC, gave a talk about Safeguarding in the Sunday service at each of the 3 churches in the Parish. These talks demonstrated the importance that the PCC attach to Safeguarding, and explained the importance of DBS checks, Safeguarding training and having a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to whom people can report Safeguarding concerns in the Parish.

Thank you

As Parish Safeguarding Officer over the last 4 years, I have been very well supported by everyone within the Parish and the Diocesan Safeguarding team. Thank you to Stella for her work, including putting up Safeguarding posters in all 3 Churches and to Dave who has the role of Safeguarding Lead on the PCC.

I have informed the PCC that I will be stepping away from the role of PSO after the APCM in May 2025, so I hope that someone else will step forward and take on this important role in the Parish.

Jo Taylor

Health and Safety Report

The tower at St Johns continues to be a major headache. In 2024, a potentially dangerous loose block near the top of the tower was identified and it was considered unsafe to use the church access door immediately below it. As a result, the “danger area” was cordoned off with a picket fence and access is now via the Sumner room external door and the main church entrance.

An additional problem with the tower was ingress by pigeons and the resultant health hazard caused by their droppings. A company was employed to clean the inside of the tower and put bird-proof coverings to the openings at the top of the tower.

There continues to be a problem with stone flaking off the clunch surface of the church. There is no obvious solution to this, as it is intrinsic to the poor quality of the material. A re-assuring point is that this is not structural. The church is brick-built and the clunch is just surface cladding material.

St Marks was recently subjected to an inspection by an officer of the local fire brigade. This is apparently because the recent listed building status brought the church to the attention of the fire brigade. Largely the inspection went well. There are various actions, many involving regular checking and maintenance of fire alarms, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers, that are requirements of any building open to the public. At the time of writing this report, these requirements are being studied and appropriate procedures being put in place.

These should give a basis for making sure the other churches in the parish are compliant.

Both St Georges and St Marks have emergency lighting in the newer parts of their buildings. We must thank Ed Tricket for updating these, and the fire alarm system at St Marks.

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

“ All God’s creatures got a place in the choir “

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 at the Harvest Supper, a fundraising concert for Christian Aid, monthly services at Farnham Mill nursing home, at Bankside, and at numerous weddings and funerals. We had a lovely evening voting for, and singing our top ten hymns.

We have done carol singing ‘round the tree’, and for the switching on of Badshot Lea lights. We had an open-air carol service at the beautiful Hale Chapels garden, and wonderful traditional Carol services at St. John’s church and St. George’s church, when we were joined by the children’s choirs of Badshot Lea school and William Cobbett school.

I would like to say a very big “Thank You” to the numerous organists, pianists and musicians who play for our services and also enhance our worship each week, and are prepared to change their plans to stand in when needed. Thank you to Tim Sturt, Mary Klymenko, Barry Hall, Joy Cobb, Sue Lampard, Roger Saunders, Bob Shatwell, Lesley Shatwell and Sam Martin.

(If I have missed anyone I apologise.)

Our parish choir, about sixteen in number, meets every Monday (except public holidays) at St. George’s church at 6 pm and sing for an hour. We enjoy vocal warm-ups, tongue-twisters, rounds, traditional and modern songs and the favourites from our hymn book. This year we have enjoyed preparing new anthems to sing each week during Advent and Lent.

I invite anyone to come along on a Monday evening and give us a try. No audition is required and no music reading is necessary. Recently some of the choir started working through the Royal School of Church Music ‘Voice for Life’ course, written to help develop singing skills and understand more about the music we sing. This not compulsory! Enthusiasm and a joy of singing together, however, are compulsory!

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

Margaret Emberson

Musicians Report

It is worth taking a moment to remember our last official parish musician, Frances Whewell, whose untimely death saddened us all.

We should also be thankful that, despite having three churches with services in each of them each Sunday, we can normally have live music in each. Our thanks should go to the musicians who make this possible:-

Mary Klymenko

Tim Sturt

Sam Martin

Margaret Emberson

Lesley Shatwell

Roger Saunders

Bob Shatwell

This seems to me to be an exceptional number of capable people for any parish and one that we should be grateful for.

Rota

I arrange the rota of who is playing where and when according to the musicians' availability. Mostly Tim and Mary play for St Johns, Margaret for St Georges and Lesley, Roger and Bob for St Marks, with Sam filling in when needed. However, I try to move people around a bit to give everyone some variety.

Hymn choosing

The hymns used to be chosen on a monthly basis by Lesley Crawley and Frances. This obviously hasn't happened for the last eighteen months or so. Various approaches have been tried, but we now seem to have settled into a regular system.

Every six weeks, or so, about five of us (Tim Sturt, Margaret Emberson, Kris Lawrence, June Jasper and myself) get together to decide on the next tranche of hymns. I look at the records to see what was sung in the equivalent ecclesiastical week last year and three years ago. Tim uses his (vast) experience and access to CofE databases to suggest various possibilities. Kris and June check on the gospel readings for that particular week. We then have interesting discussions on the merits of various possibilities and the order in which they should be sung. With a little dogged pedantry from myself we eventually curtail discussion and select five hymns and the order, then move on to the next week.

I then add them to the on-line rota and my own database, so we continue to have a record of what was sung and when. We've done a bit of rationalisation, having the same five hymns for each church (unless there's a christening or a special event in one church). For largely unclear historical reasons, St Marks has fewer hymns than the other churches, so I remove one based on my experience of what the St Marks congregation is likely to know and, frankly, my personal likes and dislikes! The on-line service, now put together by Kris, has usually followed the St Marks selection, assuming we have videos of the hymns available. If not, Kris uses her own judgement.

The system isn't perfect and will undoubtedly change as our new incumbent exerts her influence, but the discussions we've had have been a pleasant way to spend a Monday morning and there may be a touch of regret if these things pass!

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 (BSEF) 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 individual 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 Badshot Lea and Hale's Parish Rector the BSEF is administered by a Board of Trustees comprising of:

- Two Churchwardens
- A representative of Badshot Lea and Hale Parochial Church Council
- A representative of the Waverley District Council
- A representative of Surrey County Council

- Two co-optative trustees

Under the leadership of Cllr Catherine Powell (Deputy Chair), in the period of interregnum, there were

- Two BSEF meetings

During the financial year (2023-24) the Bishop Sumner Educational Foundation awarded £1,992 in grants to 22 school pupils in need of financial help who without this support would 'miss out' or fail to be included.

The grants were used to supply residential and day trip experiences.

June Jasper (Secretary to the trustees)

Outreach

Adult Study Groups

St George's House Group

Unfortunately, the St George's House group has not met for bible study this year. We took a break after the lent course in 2024 and although we tried to get together for the lent course again this year it never quite happened. For me, although I loved the fellowship shared by the group, I did not find it was feeding me spiritually and I was struggling with the energy to lead the group. However, we have continued to meet socially, with a few other friends, and regularly share that all important fellowship at 'Sally's' café, so all is not lost – we may not be a 'house' group but we are now a 'café' group!

Kris Lawrence

Connections

Bill and Annie have been running Connections from the start, but this year felt they needed to step back a little so Kay and I agreed to help out on the weeks

that they were not available. However, due to ill health Bill & Annie decided they could no longer continue so, having had a few sessions under our belt, we decided to take the group on.

We have pretty much kept the format the same, still alternating between Bingo and a quiz, there's always a jigsaw on the go and there are table games available.

The difference is that the members have taken on a level of responsibility to the group – we now have a donation pot for voluntary contributions to help with the running costs and members were keen to supply cakes rather than to rely on Kay I every week so that is organised on fairly loose rota. Of course everyone is always happy to muck in with clearing up.

Other than that, all the chat and laughter is much the same and Connections is still very popular, with even 34 partaking one week! We do of course miss Bill and Annie very much and do hope that one day they will both return but without that pressure of running the group.

Kris Lawrence

Social Groups and Events

Parish Fete

I took on the main responsibility of organising the fete in 2024 following Maxine's departure from the parish. My thought was to follow a plan that had worked in previous years rather than trying to try anything new – if you have something that works then there's no need to re-invent the wheel!

In the end, the success of the day was very much down to teamwork – most of the stalls already had teams of people who knew what needed to be done and just got on with it!

The fete was opened by the Farnham Town Cryer Michael Stephens and the Farham Mayor Brodie Mauluka. We were blessed once again with reasonable weather so we could be in the garden with independent crafts stalls and a Little Bee's children's stall in the church. The Parish School of Dance (one of our hiring groups) also did a wonderful display of their talents in the church.

Outside we had a café style seating area which was always busy with people enjoying cream teas, BBQ, Pimms etc whilst being further entertained by the Farnham and Aldershot Karate Club and Badshot Lea Village Infant School with their Maypole Dancing. As well as the usual bottle & general purpose tombola there was a very popular chocolate tombola.

The Hale Scout group were a great help with setting up, clearing up and running a couple of stalls for us. And the Badshot Lea Bloomers brought along a selection of plants from the Community Garden.

It's the generosity of everybody's time, energy, gifts, donations, goodwill, smiles, and money that makes an event like this so successful, as well as the prayers that underpin all our efforts – and we had an abundance of all. So, a massive 'thank you' goes out to everyone who played a part – no matter how great or small!

And I was a very happy Churchwarden, when on Sunday morning you would hardly notice anything had ever happened – the bunting, posters, banners had all been cleared away. There were no leftovers to take be taken to the local charity shop and the church was back to normal – bright, clean and shiny! A Churchwardens' dream – Thank you!

One challenge that we needed to overcome was the condition of the loaned BBQ from a local scouts organisation. We are grateful for having the use of this over the years, but something more economical and in better condition was needed. I am grateful to the social planning committee who put their hands in the pockets enough to enable us to buy 2 sizeable BBQ's that should see us through a few years going forwards.

"Oyez, oyez, oyez!," will be the cry again on 7th June this year when the Town Cryer helps to open the fete once more. And new for this year we have a Children's Pet Show – so we are looking forward to welcoming a variety of God's creatures to our grounds!

Kris Lawrence

Artz at St Mark's

Arts at St Mark's



Everyone is an artist, musician, poet, or any other kind of creative; so it saddens me to hear that some people have been told that they are no good at art. Did I mention the cake? Arts at St Mark's is proof that everyone who enjoys making art is good at art (*but what about the*

cake?). We are mixed ability and very supportive of each other and we meet at St Mark's, twice a month on the first and third Thursdays of the month (10.30 – midday). Everyone is welcome (*tell them about the cake ...*).

And we have been busy: We exhibited at the Farnham Maltings "Unseen Artists" again in 2024 (*there was cake at the grand opening*) and we are planning for the next one in May 2025.



Our work adorns St Mark's



We always have great fun ... oh, and there's cake.

Lesley Shatwell

Parish Social Committee

The 'social committee' comprises representatives from all three churches and meets throughout the year to plan our social and fund-raising events. We aim

to avoid having more than one event a month, that we have events that may appeal to a variety of audiences and make sure events occur at all three churches.

Events last year included:

- Plant Sale
 - Fete
 - Christian Aid Concert
 - Barn Dance
 - Scarecrow Drive
 - Harvest Supper
 - Quiz
 - Christmas Light Switch-On
 - 12th Night Lunch
- along with the quarterly Craft Fayres

The success of many of these is evident in people saying ‘oh when can we do that again’ at the end of the evening just showing how much it was enjoyed. And of course, each event help to support our parish finances.

New ideas are always welcome – in particular events that might attract the wider community so we can welcome people into our churches.

Thank you as always for your support in helping with the success of these by helping with the running of them and / or by participating in them.

Kris Lawrence

Youth & Children

Groups

Good Friday Craft

A small but enthusiastic number of children joined us at St Marks on Good Friday 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 depicting various parts of Jesus' journey in Holy week.

Then we began the activities which included making Easter cards, chocolate Easter nests, a cross of real flowers, and pictures depicting their gifts and things they like. These were then mounted in the shape of a cross. Members of the congregation and art at St Marks had also contributed so we were able to make two banners to be able to display in St Marks.

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 toddlers and their carers which meets weekly during term time. Lots of toys are provided plus a craft activity each week. Adults are served with a cup of coffee and we finish with a singing session of nursery rhymes.

It was very popular last year with a good number attending regularly. The numbers have decreased since Christmas and whilst those who come love it we would like more to be involved. We feel that only allowing 0-3year olds is precluding some families from attending once the children reach 4 especially those who have a younger sibling who would like to continue to attend.

We are therefore intending making it for 0-4 year olds.

Anne Boyman

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 present Bible stories in our local schools. This is the tenth year a group from our parish has been visiting Folly Hill infant school, Badshot Lea infant school and Tootsies nursery. We visit regularly during school term time to present stories from the Old and New Testaments and have introduced hundreds of children to the timeless stories from the Bible.

We have a team of five committed, enthusiastic and resourceful story tellers - Margaret Skinner, Bob Skinner, Tricia Carter, Kris Lawrence and me! Last year the Bible Society produced new material for everyone which we are gradually getting used to. We meet regularly to prepare the stories, using drama, costumes, and props, and often include children from each school. At the beginning of the year we met for a late Christmas lunch! We consider it a privilege and a delight to be invited into our local schools to re-tell the ancient stories from the Bible.

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

Margaret Emberson

INDEX

Artz at St Mark's.....	25
Bishop Sumner Education Foundation...	22
Churchwardens Report	
St George's	7
St John's	9
St Mark's	11
Clergy Report.....	6
Connections.....	23
Electoral Roll Report	14
Farnham Deanery Synod	13
Farnham Mill Nursing Home	21
Fete	24
Good Friday Craft	28

Groups	
St George's	23
Health & Safety	17
Lay Training Pathway	18
Little Bees	29
LLM Report	6
Musicians Report.....	20
Open the Book.....	29
Parish Choir.....	18
Parish Social Committee.....	27
PCC Lay Vice-Chair	3
PCC Secretary's Report	12
Safeguarding Report.....	14