



# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
24<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## The Vicar's Report – Rev'd Jon Randall

### 2015 Review

I believe that 2015 was a really exciting year for St Peter's and the Kingdom of God in Yaxley. As I sat down to write this report I was very aware of how much we have to be thankful for. Indeed, the many ways in which God blesses us formed the backbone of the sermon series on The Beatitudes in the early part of the year. This feels the right place to record some of the ways in which I believe God has blessed us as a church family in 2015.

It was great to be able to welcome Mark, Becci, Josie and Ethan (who we initially knew as "bump"!) to join us in July for three years. Mark joined us a Pioneer Minister and I believe arrived at a perfect time in the life of St Peter's. Mark's focus is to look at creative ways of reaching people with the Gospel and the love of God. I am full of expectation that Mark will be able to build on the work we have done together thinking about things like "missional communities". I hope that we will harness Mark's skills and experience and that many more of the ideas we have for reaching out will become reality.

One of the ways we reach out to our community is through loving service. I was delighted that, after months of preparation and much groundwork, we were able to launch the Food Bank in July. The response of those both within the regular congregation and others to the need to supply food and to volunteer has been wonderful and humbling to see. I know from several conversations how grateful the recipients of the food are. One guy I spoke to after he had collected his parcel asked me why we were all volunteering. Initially, he found it really difficult to understand that we were doing this to show God's love (I did have to convince him that no one was paying us to open a Food Bank!). The conversation was a wonderful opportunity to begin to talk to him about the Gospel and I know there were many similar encounters between volunteers and clients. Thank you to everyone who has supported the Food Bank and particularly to Sue and Chris Grant without whom this would not have been possible.

During the course of the year, I felt that God was challenging us as a church to devote more time and attention to prayer. One quote which has really stuck with me is John Wesley's observation that, "God does nothing on the earth save in answer to believing prayer". If Wesley's right then it's worth losing a little sleep, worth changing our lifestyle and worth switching off the TV or social media to pray more. This belief was the motivation for our autumn sermon series on prayer and indeed this was the focus of our Church Weekend in Matlock in September. We also established our weekly *Revival Prayer Meetings* on a Monday morning at 7.30am. I am aware that this time does not work for everyone, but it would be wonderful if we could increase the numbers attending in 2016. These meetings have been focused on praying for Yaxley and its people and we have had powerful encounters with God.

One of the signs of a healthy church is when people meet for fellowship, Bible study, prayer etc. during the week. I was delighted to see SPREE launch during the year. SPREE is a "home group" for families which meets on the first Saturday of the month in St Peter's. If you have a family I would really encourage you to make attendance a priority and enjoy fellowship with other families. I would also want to encourage those of you not in a weekday home group to explore joining one.

One of the highlights of 2015 for me was spending a few days with six young people from the church and their leaders at Soul Survivor in July. The weather was awful and I don't like camping (!), but it was a wonderful experience to join several thousand young people worshipping God and enjoying fellowship with each other. I hope that we will be able to take a group to Soul Survivor again in 2017.

Other highlights for me included conducting the weddings of two couples who are all heavily involved in the life and ministry at St Peter's. These were two of around 25 weddings during the year. We also said goodbye to two faithful members of the church family during the year. Both Audrey and Barbara were an inspiration to many and are greatly missed. In total there were around 30 funerals either in church or at the Crematorium. At the other end of life around 50 children and a few adults were baptised during the year.

We have continued to develop our links with Rwanda – particularly with the church led by Berthe in Kabahire during the year. We were all delighted and honoured when they decided to name their new church St Peter's in recognition of the prayer and financial support we are providing them. However, I was humbled when I learned that St Peter's Kabahire regularly fast and pray for St Peter's Yaxley. Please remember them and all our friends in Cyangugu in your prayers.

I would like to place on record my thanks to everyone who contributes to church life at St Peter's. I cannot begin to list everyone, but God knows everything which is done for the glory of his Kingdom. As Jesus said, may we remember that "everything we do for the least of these is done for me".

### **Challenges for 2016**

I said last year that I was convinced that there is a real spiritual hunger in Yaxley and beyond. I remain sure of that and a church brimming to overflowing at some services over Christmas was further evidence of this. The numbers of occasional offices, increasing attendance at SPARKS and many other factors contribute to my certainty about this. I wonder if our greatest challenge in 2016 (and likely for years to come) is to engage with this spiritual hunger and to look for creative ways to enable the people of Yaxley to engage with the Good News and the Kingdom of God. Missional communities are going to be key to this and I look forward to seeing additional ones launched and developed in 2016.

St Peter's PCC has again committed to increasing our payment in 2016 towards our cost of ministry by 10% compared to 2015. We will need to increase by a further 10% in every year until at least 2019 if we are to get to a position where we are meeting our ministry costs. Thanks to those of you whose generosity has enabled the PCC to make this commitment. As before, I am confident that we have the resources to meet this continuing financial challenge.

Lastly, I wanted to highlight a challenge which I would like to see us address during 2016. We last set the vision for St Peter's in 2010. I would like us to have a look at our vision together and see if we want to amend or update it in any way. I am NOT saying that our vision is wrong, but after six years I believe it is appropriate to seek God together and ask Him for guidance on the future. We started to explore this at the 24 hours of prayer in March. Further details of how we envisage we might go about setting a renewed vision for St Peter's will follow in due course.

## **Churchwardens' Report 2015-16**

### **Quinquennial Inspection**

This took place in August 2014. The report did not highlight any pressing works - and required works are ongoing - with new roofing repairs popping up every few months....!!

### **Lighting & Redecorating Fund**

We are pleased to report that donations and pledges received should ensure that the £126,882 cost of the works will have been paid for, in full, by the end of 2016.

We would take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generosity – especially those who's continuing pledges are paying off the outstanding amount.

### **Terrier**

This was updated in 2014 in the new format now required by the diocese. A large number of historic documents were taken to Huntingdon Records Office – where they can be viewed by anyone – leaving us with only the most recent records for our use.

### **Heating**

Heating costs are still being kept in check through our 'use it only when you need it policy' and not depending on the timer for every activity in church.

The boiler(s) have been serviced and repaired, but the problem of gas supply to boilers, which causes one to trip out, continues, but, following extensive tests, it seems that the supply pressure fluctuates with increased use in Yaxley.

### **Organ**

The organ has had its annual service and no problems discovered.

### **Bells**

The bells had an annual check in June when the bearings and pulleys were greased and oiled, in addition this year the head stocks were repainted with hammerite paint, they should not need repainting for another two or three years.

The stays and ropes are checked on a regular basis about three or four times a year or if a rope need adjusting, the last time they were checked was Sunday 10th April, when taking up a rope.

### **General**

The ongoing problem with the pump which operates the drainage system, which results in it 'tripping out' and the alarm sounding in the toilet, continues, but is easily resolved by pressing the 'manual' button at regular intervals and checking it hasn't 'tripped out'. We shall continue to monitor and have the engineers attend to it when they service the pump.

We applied for Planning Permission to install external doors to the South Porch, but this was rejected by HDC's Conservation Officer. We have consulted widely and now have Historic England's acceptance of the suitability of the scheme over any others and will reapply later in 2016 – once we have received the bat survey...!!

The Churchwardens would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members of the congregation who have assisted them throughout the year, but would ask for extra assistance with the regular Churchyard Tidying days, generally on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. Please speak to us if you can help in any way.

**Paul Russell & Mark Jarrett**  
Churchwardens

## **Treasurer's Report**

Our 2015 accounts show a surplus of general income over expenditure of £3368. Income for the year was less than the previous over several categories, whilst expenditure was very similar. However, the

surplus was very quickly spent early on in 2016 when planned roof repairs took place, at a cost of £2600.

Expenditure includes insurance premiums of around £5000 and utilities of circa £3600. We continue to benefit from the bulk buying powers of the Church of England Energy basket for both gas and electricity.

We paid our parish share of £30,000 in full and have kept our promise to pledge payment of £33,000 for 2016.

We continue to fund Berthe's ministry in Rwanda and have repaid our loan from the Diocese, which had previously allowed us to complete the electrical works. Our continued fundraising efforts and remaining pledges will enable us to pay the final £10,000 to Mission Possible.

All of this is possible thanks to your generous giving, whether by standing order, weekly envelopes or one-off donations.

Thanks, as always, to those who support me in producing these figures. A special mention must be made this year to Steve Salmon, who after 8 years of patiently slaving over Excel spreadsheets, has decided to call it a day and hang up his memory stick.

Onwards and upwards!

**Debbie Jarrett**  
PCC Treasurer

## **Report of the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council**

The PCC has met five times since the 2015 APCM, and has discussed a variety of matters, including:

- The work with children and young people, including "Sticky Faith and "SPREE"
- "24 hours of prayer" days
- Fund-raising
- Social events
- Community Sunday and Community Projects
- Stewardship
- The Electoral Roll
- Health and Safety Policy
- Financial matters
- Maintenance, repairs and improvements
- The William de Yaxley C of E Junior Academy
- The Impaired Senses group
- The MU Engage group
- A Food Bank
- Yaxley Festival
- The Compass Group
- Christians Against Poverty
- Rwanda/future trip in 2017
- The Holiday Club
- The Spinney Project

- Possible alterations to the North Door and South Door; and to the flowerbeds
- Missional Communities
- Church Away Weekends
- Revival Prayer Meetings
- The new website
- The online DBS registration
- The Pioneer Minister
- Occasional Preachers' Training
- The MU Light Party
- Soul Survivor
- The Church Cleaner
- The Boiler Cupboard
- Church Opening
- The "Encounter" Group
- "Door-to-door" Flyers

One meeting was cancelled.

**Fran Russell**  
PCC Secretary

## **Children's Ministry Report**

### **Junior Church**

Junior Church is going strong and it has been great to see the number of children continue to increase. We would like to thank Karen Threlfall and Andrea Lomas very much for all they have contributed as Junior Church leaders. They both stepped down during 2015. Karen has been part of the team for many years. Tina Webster kindly continues as Junior Church Co-ordinator.

### **Youth Church**

The Sunday Morning youth group meets in the vestry. Our Year 6s continue to be included in this group. We are finding that the earlier transition from Junior Church into our youth group works better for them than waiting until Year 7 when they have so many other changes to adapt to. Imogen Tate and Naomi Howes joined the youth team in 2015.

We are very grateful to ALL of our children and youth team for their dedication and enthusiasm. Thank you all so much. Your ministry is of eternal significance.

### **Holiday Club**

Around 60 children attended our Jungle Jamboree Holiday Club at the end of August. Thank you to our wonderful leaders and helpers without whom we would not have been able to reach out to our local community in this way. It was very well received and we had lots of feedback afterwards from parents of delighted children. Our thanks, also, to The William de Yaxley C of E Academy for letting us use the school as a venue again.

### **Sparks**

Sparks, our group for under-fives and their parents and carers, continued to meet once a fortnight throughout the year. Special thanks to our growing team of faithful helpers who have worked so hard to make Sparks a happy, friendly and hospitable environment in which people of all ages from babies

to great-grandparents can engage with the Gospel. We are delighted that Sparks continues to be very well attended.

**Ingrid Randall**

## **Youth Group**

One key focus of our ministry at St. Peter's is teaching and engaging with the young people in our community.

We saw a great influx of new youth coming along on a Tuesday evening from September 2015 with many of our young people moving up into year 6 at primary school. We continue to meet on Tuesday evenings from 7-8.30pm at church, where we have around 6 or 7 children regularly attending to study the Bible together, eat cake and play games!

We also continue to meet on a Sunday morning during the 11am service and are grateful for an increase in volunteers to help lead that ministry. Both of these groups are aimed at young people from year 6 upwards and are open to youth both inside and outside the church.

In the summer of 2015, we took a group of 6 young people to Soul Survivor, and we had a brilliant time! We don't have plans to attend in 2016 but will look to take another group in the summer of 2017.

**Claire Grant**

## **Food Bank**

Yaxley Food bank Centre opened in July 2015 and is a satellite of Godmanchester Food bank. We are linked into the Trussell Trust who are the major national charity co-ordinating foodbanks around the country. The Trussell Trust provide the IT data systems on their website for voucher data and stock control. They also co-ordinate regional meetings and foodbank inspections.

We are fortunate to have a loyal group of volunteers who work for about two 2 hour sessions each month collecting, storing and parcelling food as well as meeting and talking to clients. We have a number of collection bins around the village including in the Co-op store and are grateful for all donations in these as well as those from St Marys Church, Stilton, the Catholic community in Yaxley and the Yaxley Methodist Church. We are also grateful for the monthly donations of fruit juice provided by Fielding Dairies.

The Yaxley Parish Council have been particularly generous in their logistical support without which we would struggle to run such an effective service. Over the last 10 months, we have collected and given out nearly 3 tonnes of food, including 770kg of food in Christmas parcels to those in need. We are always looking for new volunteers to cover our Monday and Thursday afternoon sessions and are currently particularly looking for those who can give some time on occasional Thursday afternoons. If you are able to volunteer, please speak to Sue or Chris Grant for further information.

**Chris Grant**

## **Mothers' Union**

St Peters Mothers' Union aims to support the mission of St Peters, all aspects of family life and the work of the worldwide Mothers' Union.

Events during the year have included the Teddy Bears' Picnic in May, a coffee morning in August for the "Wheels Appeal" and on October 31st, a "Light Party". Our travelling Nativity Sets visited several homes during Advent and Prayer cards were given out for the "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence". We have been able to support the Cambridge Women's Aid and Huntingdon Women's Refuge with donations of requested items and gift cards along with the families of inmates at Littlehay prison. We are in the process of making "Fiddle Blankets" for Dementia patients in local care homes. Our successful stall at the Christmas Fayre has enabled us to help finance some of the work of the Mothers' Union, both in Britain and aboard.

Our notice board at the back of church has information about Mothers' Union, our monthly, MU-Engage meetings and our weekly prayer diary. All our meetings are open to non-Mothers' Union members, and we look forward to welcoming new people.

**Irene Porter**  
Branch Leader

## **Worship Team**

The worship team continued to grow in 2015, as we continued our Monthly Music Sessions - where we get together as a team once a month to explore the meaning of worship, learn new songs together, and enjoy a meal and fellowship with one another.

Song-writing is being explored by a group of members within the worship team and across the wider church and we hope to see that grow in 2016. A number of the worship team are also exploring the possibility of leading worship at services taking place in the prison approximately once every 2 months - something which will begin later on in 2016.

We have welcomed a few new people to the worship team in the last twelve months, and we continue to look for people to join and share their gifts so that we can continue to grow this area of St. Peter's ministry.

**Claire Grant**

## **CAP**

In November 2014 three members of St Peter's attended a one-day training course in London run by Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and qualified to become CAP Money Coaches. As a result, three CAP Money courses have been held, one in March 2015, one in November 2015 (both at St Peter's) and one in February 2016 at Yaxley Infant School.

In total nine people registered for the course with six attending and completing the course. Although numbers have been fairly low and slightly disappointing, we remain convinced that the benefits of the CAP Money course to the people of Yaxley are immense. Attracting potential delegates and reaching those people who would most benefit from the course remains a challenge. To find out more about the ongoing work of CAP and the CAP Money course visit [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org)

**Pauline Wallace**  
CAP Money Coach

## Care in the Community

This year the Care in the Community team had another excellent turnout on Community Sunday - which saw a record number of the congregation complete 27 jobs in the one day; beating the 2013 record of 23. This year we had 53 volunteers on the job with a further 7 supporting us with refreshments, cakes and sandwiches. For the first time this year we had members of the public actively helping us on a joint community job at the Yaxley Infants' School.

The delivery of the care in the community service has now spent a full year running as a monthly 'planned' service in the morning from 9am to 12pm every 3rd Saturday. A further 15 jobs were carried out in this way throughout the year, matching last year's grand total of 42 jobs, also matching last year with 28 individual households served.

With the warmer weather now upon us we are starting to plan for the main event of **Community Sunday on 19th June 2016**.

Again - a big thank you to all the members of the congregation who helped, on the jobs, and as support by providing food and refreshments for the returning workers.

I would like to reiterate what I said in last year's report - that whilst it is easy to get an enthusiastic group of volunteers on the Community Sunday, we do need to try and include the full congregation in the ad hoc work throughout the year. Planning Care in the Community for every 3rd Saturday seems to have had the opposite effect to that intended, there appear to be less volunteers coming forward when requested for help with the average numbering 2 to 3, as such I will be reviewing the group, its referral process and its interaction.

I truly feel we can expand the Lord's word through our deeds even further into the community, and look forward to continuing his work in the coming year(s).

**Andy James**  
Community Care Co-ordinator

## Impaired Senses

The Impaired Senses group has been running, in partnership with Deafblind Enablement, since December 2012. The aim has remained the same: to bring people with a hearing loss, Deaf, Blind, visually impairment, without speech and deafblind people together from Yaxley and the surrounding areas for conversation and fellowship.

The meeting has taken place every third Saturday in the month, (apart from August and September 2015) from 2-4pm. This group consists of 22 sensory impaired people who come on a flexible basis, with 16-18 people regularly coming each meeting. We are pleased to welcome a new member who started in January.

We have a dedicated, valued team of about 14 regular volunteers, with 3 new volunteers joining this year. Volunteers are always welcome and much needed to facilitate communication and guiding.

The format of the meeting has not changed over the last year and continues to be chatting/catching up with new and old friends over refreshments, games: such as Domino Bingo, guess that tune, play your cards right, quizzes and tactile games. Volunteers act as scribes/note-takers to assist Braille users. We also have different BSL signs and every member of the group can use Deafblind Manual.

Voice-over, Deafblind Manual and writing numbers on a white board are all used to aid communication.

We are very thankful to Jean & Jeff, members of the group for organising the raffle as this raises about £30-40 per meeting. These funds are used to pay towards the cost of the subsidised coach for the annual Hunstanton trip and the annual Christmas party.

Norman sets the pitch as the leader for singing 3 hymns; the sound of all of us singing lifts the roof and brings unity to the group. Margaret Braille's the hymns for the group and large print copies are always available. Prayers at the end of the group are given by various group members.

We had a lovely sunny day out in July this year at Hunstanton, with 32 people attending. Fish and chips, sitting on the prom, paddling, chatting and eating ice-cream made a fantastic change for many of the group members.

A big 'thank you' to everyone for all their support, making Impaired Senses such a success.

**Debbie James**  
Impaired Senses Co-ordinator