



S<sup>t</sup> PETER & S<sup>t</sup> PAUL  
NORTHLEACH

## ANNUAL VESTRY & PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 in Northleach Church  
6.30pm Bring and Share supper  
7.15pm Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The annual Vestry and Parochial Church Meetings will be held in the church at 7.15pm on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April.

The primary purpose of the Vestry meeting is the election of Churchwardens. The primary purpose of the Parochial Church Meeting is to receive reports on the life of the church, elect members of the Parochial Church Council and discuss matters of current interest in church affairs.

All residents of the parish of Northleach and all members of the Northleach Church Electoral Roll are entitled to attend and vote at the Vestry meeting. Only members of the Northleach Church Electoral Roll are entitled to vote at the Parochial Church meeting although everyone is very welcome to attend. Nomination forms for the election of Churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council are available at the back of church. These must be returned to the Rector before the start of the meeting to which they refer.

The booklet comprises the Agendas for both meetings, the minutes from the equivalent meetings in 2017 and reports about various aspects of church life. We would be delighted if you are able to join us this year to hear about the progress made by your Church during 2017 and to participate in the election process. There will also be an opportunity for you to ask questions of the Rector, Church Officers and Members of the Parochial Church Council.

The Reverend David Ford, Rector

# Agendas for The Vestry and Annual Parochial Church Meetings

## The Vestry Meeting

1. Opening prayers
2. Attendance and apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017
4. Election of Churchwardens for the year 2018-2019

## The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017
2. Chairman's Report
3. Presentation of the Accounts for 2017 and appointment of an Independent Examiner
4. Safeguarding Report
5. Fabric Report
6. Receipt of Other Reports
7. Election of Members to the Parochial Church Council
8. Any other business (notified in advance only)
9. The Grace

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church  
Meeting  
St Peter and St Paul, Northleach  
09th April 2017



S<sup>t</sup> PETER & S<sup>t</sup> PAUL  
NORTHLEACH

Present: 30

David Ford, Ilse Ferwerda, Mike Chappin, Laura Blundell, Colin Kelsall, Tony Antoniou, Rod Seath, Georgie Trotter, Neil Simmonds, David Cotton, Mark Tennant, Liz Tennant, Guy Wooley, Bill Bond, Mike Pezet, Joan Bond, Ann Hood, Sam Hood, Jo Coker, Peggy Bird, Liz Ford, Heather Heywood Roland Corry, David Jennings, Valerie Beatty, Bill White, Alan and Chris, Esther and Bobby Morgan, Jill Thomas

The Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

1. Opening prayers

2. Attendance and apologies for absence

Pam Fisher, Patsi Rainey, Gill and Gerry Hopkins, Richard and Julia Owen, Simon Wills, Sally Jennings, Kate Seath, Tim and Primrose Unwin and Bud Dutton

3. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on 17th April 2016.

Minutes circulated and all agreed they were an accurate record.

Proposer : Mike Pezet

Seconder: Mark Tennant

4. Election of Churchwardens for the year 2017-2018.

Joan Bond was unanimously supported as Church Warden.

Proposer : Tricia Preston

Seconder: Liz Tennant

The Rector thanked Tricia Preston, Liz Tennant and Brian Hillier for their continued commitment, work and support over the years as Assistant Church Wardens.

5. Receipt of two nominations for the vacancy on the Town Trustees

Bernard James: Secretary of the Town Trustees have requested names of two people to replace Phil Harris on the Town Trust.

Richard Owen and Mike Chappin have been nominated. The Town Trustees will then make a choice from those nominated.

Comments were taken: There were no other nominations.  
These names had the meetings unanimous support.

There being no other business, the Vestry Meeting was closed.

Signed:

Dated:

Pam Fisher/Laura Blundell

Joint Secretaries to the Parochial Church Council.

1. Approval of minutes of Annual Parochial Church meeting held on 17th  
April 2016

Minutes circulated and all agreed they were correct, subject to the 1  
correction below. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

Correction: on page 6 of the 2016 minutes that the minutes would be  
published subject to final approval by the APCM in 2017.

Proposed. Bill Bond

Seconded. Guy Wooley

2. Chairman's report

The report booklet contains a copy of the benefice report for 2016, but  
here are seven good news headlines about Northleach Church.

In summary: finances significantly improved;

more people helping;

pastoral care expanding;

exciting social life;

visitors' contribution growing;

developing communications networks;

new curate appreciated!

2016 saw the transformation of our finances from serious deficit into  
encouraging surplus. Huge thanks to everyone who has helped us to achieve  
this. We now need to continue to sustain this so that we can continue to  
invest in important areas of mission and ministry, including the maintenance  
of this building.

At last year's APCM it was suggested that 10% of giving received by the  
church should be given to external charities. The PCC discussed this but  
decided against such a policy believing that the church contributed  
significantly to the generation of charitable giving in other ways than  
through direct grant. This year, this has proved to be true. During 2016,  
charities of all kinds, benefited by nearly £13,000 through events and

collections sponsored by Northleach Church. This is equivalent to 14.4% of our total income; in other words well in excess of the proposed 10% of our regular giving.

More people are involved in the life of this church than ever before and this is despite losing valuable members of our congregation due to house moves, commitments to other congregations, becoming housebound, and, sadly, through their deaths. So while our congregations reduced slightly in 2016 the level of commitment from the congregation clearly grew.

Our pastoral work grew and strengthened during the year in part through the work of our expanding team of Pastoral Assistants. Pastoral care is at the heart of the church's ministry and it is wonderful to see us invest more time and energy into the care of baptism families, wedding couples, the bereaved, carers, the housebound...

The social life of the church has grown thanks to the enthusiasm of our hospitality and events team and this is helping to break down barriers between church and community, increase the times of fellowship we are able to share together, increase our support of external charities and improve our own finances. Church is good fun and we are increasingly able to demonstrate this!

2016 was the most successful season ever for our team of church welcomers under the motivational leadership of Richard and Julia Owen. Our sincere thanks to them, to all 50 or so on the welcoming team and to the thousands of visitors to our church whose donations increased significantly this year.

The last twelve months witnessed the first full year of Alix Sibbald at the helm of the magazine and Jill Thomas carefully directing the weekly What's On sheet. This has been matched online by the tremendous work undertaken by Mark Tennant and Vicki Gray to develop our new web site and improve our Facebook presence. All four have contributed enormously to our improvement in communications – thank you!

Finally, the arrival of our new curate, Ilse Ferwerda, has strengthened the ministry team immeasurably and I know just how much Ilse's quiet and thoughtful ministry is appreciated both within the church congregations and the town at large. Thank you Ilse!

## Questions:

Liz Tennant proposed that the Rector explain the continued work that was taking place with the Young Persons Confirmation Group of 2015: 20 months ago 5 people were confirmed. They have continued to meet twice / month. Once/ month with Youth for Christ and once/ month with either the Curate or the Rector. This is an important opportunity for fellowship, faith and fun as well as the potential for a young house group.

3. Presentation of the Accounts for 2016 and appointment of an Independent Examiner.

M. Chappin presented the Accounts for 2016.

2016 was a satisfactory year from a financial point of view.

Income was up by 12% with strong performances from stewardship with introduction of the Parish Giving Scheme, visitors contributions were up by 9% and successful fund raising such as Standing Ovarions, Barn Dances and Gospel Concert.

At the year end Church was worth £115K or £135K if we include the potential profit we would make if we sold our investments.

14% of our income is monies raised by the church for other organisations and charities.

Thanks to Liz Tennant, Tony Antoniou and Patsi Rainey for their work on the Finance Team.

Increasingly cash less with most payments made by BACs, online box office, PGS and donations through the website.

## Questions:

Sam Hood: Is there any mileage in a sinking fund for the Fabric of the building, for future projects and planning? (To ensure there is no complacency in giving, whilst there is a surplus.)

Our general fund has always been available for a sinking fund. There is also the Trust, which was last used to raise £200,000.

This can be raised with the PCC.

Action: Agenda item, under finance at next PCC.

Jo Coker: Has the parish giving scheme increased the collection?:

MC: Saves accounting through standing order and white envelopes. It does in 2 ways. The majority of people in the PGS pay income tax. The Church receives Gift Aid roughly at the time that the church receives payment.

Secondly the payments are Index linked.

No new members for PGS in the last 2 months. Anyone interested in setting up the parish giving scheme, please see Tony Antoniou.

The Rector thanked Mike Chappin for his work as treasurer, as well as his team. The accounts were approved.

Proposed: Tony Antoniou

Seconded: Sam Hood

Reappointment of David Louisson as independent examiner for 2017-2018.

Proposed: Guy Wooley

Seconded: Georgie Trotter

#### 4. Safeguarding Report

There were no comments in response to Sheila Wills' report.

Proposed: Joan Bond

Seconded: Colin Kelsall

#### 5. Fabric Report

The Rector thanked people for their work on the fabric of the building this year.

Firstly Brian Hillier for the jobs he has completed on the church.

Also to everyone who has been involved in caring for the church this year.

The rector encouraged the PCC to move the Fabric of the building forward, to raise money for fixing the control unit on the windows to replacing the heating system.

Action: Fabric to be an important focus for action in 2017-2018 PCC meetings.

Questions:

Jo Coker asked about fixing the 2 damaged windows from the 2 burglaries.

This is a 2 step work in progress. 1) Complete the iron work on each window. 2) Fit the glass into the windows. The glass is not old so should be matched.

Peggy Bird asked about the progress on the kitchen. The Rector explained that the church rooms and the kitchen was a fabric project that the PCC need to make a priority in the next year.

Action: Fabric - kitchen agenda item at next PCC meeting.

Joan Bond asked about the 3 pianos in the Church Rooms The Rector explained that these 3 pianos will be reduced to 1.

Alan asked about the rope for the XXX bell. The rope fell out and needs to be reattached which means working at height.

Action: Alan to liaise with Brian H about fixing rope.

Peggy Bird raised the question about the a hand rail on the slope in the church grounds.

The Rector recognises it needs to be done. The Town council has to apply for faculty and pay for the cost of the rail. The Town council has agreed to apply for faculty. There was no agreement on payment. Bill White explained that the Town Council .....

## 6. Receipt of other reports

### Questions:

Jo Coker thanked the Choir for their attendance each week and the lovely music.

Roland Corry: Raised a question about the church's policy on House groups.

There were 3-4 groups at one time and an opportunity for the church to build. The rector explained that a House group is a group of Christians who come together on a weekly/monthly basis in someone's home.

The Rector agreed with the importance of House Groups and emphasised that a church with a good number of house groups thrives. The lack of

groups is down to leadership and hosts. The Rector would love to nurture/train and support future House groups either in the evening or in the day.

The Rector encouraged people to identify people who would like to host or lead a House group.

All the reports were agreed and great support for all the work of those who were involved in reports and work within the church.

Proposed: Mark Tennant

Seconded: Colin Kelsall

7. Election of members to the Parochial Church Council.

Membership is on a rolling term. The following five members of the PCC came up for retirement:

David Cotton, Georgie Trotter, Mike Pezet, Neil Simmonds, Laura Blundell.

The Rector has received nomination forms for all members and took assent for all 4 members to remain on the PCC.

See future agenda item for David Cotton.

Mrs Georgina Trotter

Proposed. Joan Bond

Seconded. Bill Bond

Mr Neil Simmonds

Proposed. Pam Fisher

Seconded. Laura Blundell

Mrs Laura Blundell

Proposed. Pam Fisher

Seconded. Peggy Bird

Mr Michael Pezet

Proposed. Mike Chappin

Seconded. Mark Tennant

8. Election of Deanery Synod Representative

David Cotton has offered to stand for the next 3 years as the benefice representative on the Deanery Synod.

The Rector took a show of hands from all present. There was unanimous support for David as Deanery Synod Representative.

Mr David Cotton

Proposed. Rod Seath  
Seconded. Laura Blundell

9. Any other business

David Jennings thanked the Rector for all his work and the graciousness with which he does it.

10. The Grace

The meeting concluded with the Grace

There being no other business, the APCM was closed.

Approved:.....

Date:.....

These minutes are published subject to final approval by the APCM in 2016.

## Finance

2017 for those of us involved in finance at Northleach Church has been a busy, but fruitful year.

In my notes on the accounts I report on what has been probably the most significant year of Church activity and progress for many years. Finance has supported an expanding range of special services and fundraising events, as well as accounting for the day to day activities of the Church, and keeping PCC informed on all financial matters.

On an almost daily basis, financial transactions take place in church involving many members of our congregation and I acknowledge and thank them for their efficiency and probity. We, for our part try to ensure invoices and expenses are paid promptly and where ever possible using BACS.

Special thanks again to Mark Tennant who built the financial system which has successfully processed all 2017 data; secondly Tony Antoniou who administered the Parish Giving Scheme; to Liz Tennant for processing the Gift Aid repayment claims; to Alison Rainbow for her financial work associated with the Benefice Office; and lastly, but not least, Patsi Rainey who worked tirelessly as Assistant Treasurer.

Michael Chappin FCCA (retired)  
PCC Treasurer

## **1. 2017 OVERALL SUMMARY**

The small deficit of £504 shown in the accounts masks a significant year of activity and progress for Northleach Church. The sale of some of our investments during the year, realising a profit of £16,000, has meant that, alongside our current revenue stream, we could meet our increased Parish Share commitment; invest significantly in the Black Cat Café; further develop our Benefice Office; appoint a new Organist; and start to catch up on building maintenance. At year-end the accounts show a net worth of £114,490. However, our remaining CBF investment showed a further unrealised profit of £8,000. Making the true net worth of the Church about £122,500.

## **2. ADMINISTRATION**

This is predominately the costs associated with the Benefice Office. During 2017 we invested in extra hours; new photocopier and computer & software.

## **3. PARISH SHARE**

2017 contribution to Diocese was £45,000 (L/Y £41,944) and Benefice £3,247 (L/Y £3,140).

## **4. FLOWER GUILD**

The Church makes an annual grant of £798 to the Guild. Un-used funds at year end amounted to £351

## **5. MAINTENANCE & SERVICING**

Includes cost of new safe at £948

## **6. STEWARDSHIP**

HMRC have yet to process our claim for 2016/17 Gift Aid. This should be received shortly and amounted to about £8,000 in the previous year.

## **8. OTHER INCOME**

Fund raising events at Church this year raised nearly £3,000 for the Church (£7,000 LY).

## **9. FUNDS RAISED FOR GOOD CAUSES**

The Church raised £13,696 for charity in the year through collections at special services, funerals, exhibitions and social events such as the Candlelit Supper.

## **10. VISITORS (RED BOX)**

We are yet again indebted to the 'Welcomers Team' for yet another successful year with contributions up 6% over the visitor season.

## **11. BLACK CAT**

In August 2017, an anonymous benefactor gifted the Black Cat Café, and the property it occupies, to the Church for the benefit of the community. Northleach Church and Town Enterprise CIC has been established as an umbrella organisation to run the new initiative. The PCC is the sole shareholder. The property is owned by the company (and therefore the PCC) and is held by the Diocesan Trust, whose approval is needed if the property is ever sold. The PCC has set aside a maximum of £45,000 as a loan to the new enterprise and have agreed to seek no repayment for a minimum of 5 years. Northleach Church & Town Enterprise will prepare and publish their own accounts.

St Peter & St Paul Northleach  
Year to 31 December 2017  
2017 EXPENDITURE: £93,233

2016		Unrestricted	Restricted	Note
5,089	Energy	6,282		
316	Altar Service	550		
1,812	Literature	1,019		
7,465	Administration	10,448		2
6,000	Insurances	6,362		
45,084	Parish Share	48,247		3
2,010	Organist	4,134		
2,802	Miscellaneous	2,139		
3,547	Maint & Servicing	7,274		5
979	Book Stall			
7,042	Special Ser/Funerals		5,197	9
336	V&CW Charity	500		
1,270	Flower Guild		1,081	4
83,752	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86,955</b>	<b>6,278</b>	

2017 INCOME: £92,729

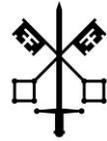
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Note
43,062	Stewardship	40,935		6
17,664	Other income	11,829	534	8
	Profit on Share sale	16,261		
2,304	Interest	1,803	588	
6,429	Legacies/Gifts	4,051	250	
9,021	Visitors (red box)	9,456		10
2,662	Book Stall	2,027		
7,369	Special Services		4,775	9
250	Flower Guild		220	
88,761	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86,362</b>	<b>6,367</b>	

5,009	Surplus/Deficit	-504	
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NET WORTH OF CHURCH  
As at 31 December 2017

114,993			£
	CLOSING BANK A/Cs		
	Lloyds Current		4,586
	Lloyds Deposit		936
	Santander Business Account		427
	Lloyds V&CW	Charities Account	2,145
	CCLA Deposit		56,187
	Loan to Black Cat (see note 11)		39,041
	CBF Designated Shares @ cost		11,168
	<b>TOTAL WORTH</b>	(Note 1)	<b>114,490</b>

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL  
CHURCH MEETING – 2017  
REPORTS



S<sup>t</sup> PETER & S<sup>t</sup> PAUL  
NORTHLEACH

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## Rector's Annual Report to the Northleach Benefice<sup>1</sup>

*“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”*

*Micah 6.8*

As we look back on 2017 in the life of our eight churches, different memories will surface for each of us, partly depending upon our parish, partly depending upon our own interests and commitments. Alongside all the detail of individual events, there also sits the bigger emerging story of God's will for us as a benefice. What is it that God requires of us?

The single biggest event in the life of the benefice in 2017 was probably the gifting of the Black Cat Café in Northleach to the church for the benefit of the community. Every time I have shared this miraculous story with people from other benefices, the response is of amazement but also of excitement too. “What an opportunity!” I hear. It is certainly that, though it will take time for those opportunities to take shape and root. I sincerely believe that God has engineered the gifting of the café to us; our challenge is to use this gift in ways that honour him and advance his Kingdom. Thank you to all those who committed their time and energy to the café in 2017; we completed the year far stronger than we could have imagined possible.

If we consider our shared life in terms of worship, mission, community and heritage, then there have been positive developments in all areas this past year.

The worshipping life of this benefice continues to be rich in its diversity and forward thinking in its creativity too. We have now established a pattern of two family services in the benefice each month: Café Church in Cold Aston on the 2nd Sunday and a Family Service in Northleach on the 4th. Our more traditional services continue to combine BCP and Common Worship liturgies in a pattern that ensures most people's needs can be met most of the time.

It is a particular delight to see more and more people supporting churches other than their own local parish church. By visiting one another's churches,

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<sup>1</sup> This report covers the 12 months to 31 December 2017 and supplements individual reports given to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in each parish

we are not only meeting our own spiritual needs but also helping to support the more vulnerable parishes and helping individual parishes to develop particular worshipping identities.

The quality of our music in worship grew steadily throughout 2017. It was with great sadness that we marked the retirement of David Cotton at Northleach after 20 years' service as their organist. The appointment of Gerry Hopkin as his replacement has proved a great success and through his leadership of the Benefice Choir, all the parishes are enjoying and benefitting from his enthusiasm and expertise. Our 5th Sunday benefice services are evolving into truly beautiful opportunities to worship together that many look forward to with great anticipation.

Our benefice offers us all some wonderful social occasions during the year, many of which recur annually and are eagerly awaited. 2017 will be especially remembered for the charity Candlelit dinner in Northleach Church and for the new 'pop up' pub in Turkdean Church. These are outreach missional opportunities as well as great community gatherings and are drawing more people steadily into the wider community of the church.

We are privileged to have eight outstandingly beautiful churches in this benefice that are thoughtfully maintained. Much energy and commitment has been devoted to church maintenance in 2017, usually with significant missional benefits. In particular I think of the path and handrail at Compton Abdale, the new heating at Turkdean, the advancing plans for the installation of a toilet at Cold Aston and a raft of projects getting underway at Northleach with substantial progress expected in 2018. Caring for our buildings protects our heritage but it also ensures the future availability of our buildings for worship.

Compared with many benefices, our parishes remain in financial good health thanks to some very generous givers, both living and deceased. The payment of parish share remains an annual challenge and I continue to be humbled by the commitment that enables it to be met in full each year. Thank you.

2017 was an important year in the life of our schools as Cold Aston settled into its new life as part of the North Cotswolds Federation and as Northleach School embarked on an important new building project linking

the school with the old school house. Our ministry to children and young people, in and out of school, is hugely important. It creates the foundations for spiritually healthy lives and introduces church as a place of safety, sanctuary and comfort whose value is life-long.

Occasional offices remain a vital part of the ministry of the church. During 2017 we had 11 baptisms, 8 weddings and 20 funerals. Each of these presents an important pastoral opportunity for the church as we meet people at their time of need, whether joyful or sorrowful. Those closely involved in these ministries will be aware of the deeply meaningful impact we often make.

A day never goes by without me being aware of the very many people in this benefice who contribute to the life of our churches. I try to say thank you as frequently as I can, though it never feels enough. At the risk of excluding someone I will refrain from lists of thank yous and instead simply say that whatever your role in our churches, it is deeply appreciated, never overlooked and of inestimable value.

But there are two people that deserve particular mention. First, Alison Rainbow, our benefice administrator, who takes from the shoulders of the clergy a huge administrative burden that would otherwise reduce the volume of ministry undertaken very considerably. Thank you, Alison, for all that you do with such enthusiasm, attentiveness and patience. Secondly, our thanks to Ilse Ferwerda, our curate, whose ministry blossomed in 2017 with her priesting and whose pastoral care of so many in this benefice is deeply appreciated. We know you can't stay with us for ever Ilse, but please stay for as long as you can!

This report began with the question, what does God require of us? I am sure the answer includes all of the above mentioned in this report and much more besides that has gone unreported. As to 2018? We will need to wait and see. Although at times our congregations feel smaller and older than we would wish, we remain in very good health and very good heart. So let us look back on 2017 with grateful and thankful hearts, and onwards in expectation of many more opportunities to create a little bit of God's Kingdom in our beautiful part of the Cotswolds.

David Ford, Rector

## Safeguarding

*“And therefore safeguarding is integral to our mission and ministry – it’s not an ‘add-on issue’” Bishop Rachel, February 2018*

The above statement from Bishop Rachel can only be supported if the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults lies at the heart of our life as a church community. Our deeply held conviction that everyone is made in the image of God, and that the quality of every life matters, should compel us to do all we can to safeguard those in our community, both children and vulnerable adults. The regulatory framework in which safeguarding operates is therefore an essential part of our common life together and we work within this in a number of ways.

Part of the action that we undertake is to ensure that those who have specific responsibilities within our church community have a sound understanding of issues that arise in safeguarding and know what do should there be cause for concern. During the year a number of people have attended training, including the safeguarding course, safer recruitment and domestic abuse training. The Rector has received the mandatory safeguarding update which is required every 3 years. Safeguarding training is also being held at St Peter & St Paul, Northleach, on the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018. For further details and information on safeguarding and training visit

<http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/about-us/safeguarding/>

Safeguarding remains a standing item on the agendas for PCC meetings and the APCM, and this ensures that safeguarding is always given high priority and focus. During the year have not been any reportable safeguarding issues.

The Nominated Person for safeguarding in Northleach and other parishes within the benefice is Sheila Wills. Sheila ensures that applications for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance are carried out, including renewing existing DBS certificates as needed. She is also the person to contact if you need advice or have any concerns or worries of a safeguarding nature.

## Fabric Report

The year April 2017 – March 2018 has been a busy one.

The chancel roof has received a thorough inspection, with test areas being removed in order to accurately assess the condition of the underlying structure. As a result, immediate repairs have been carried out, gutters and downpipes cleaned, and the whole left in fair condition until more extensive work becomes necessary.

Plans to deal with an ageing boiler and heating system have been re-assessed.

This remains a major consideration, and it is planned to move forward when resources, both human and financial, are available.

The handrail planned for the church path, where it leads to the south door from the Market Place, is currently the subject of a Faculty Application due to be heard on 20 April 2018.

A survey of the electrical installations has been done and urgent work completed.

An improved CCTV system is also the subject of a Faculty Application, as two cameras need to be installed on the north side of the roof to compliment the new system inside the church.

The North aisle has been cleared and further improvements are being made to the display which is now part of 'history corner'.

A new Mothers' Union bench with suitable dedication has been placed in the upper area of the churchyard.

We are grateful to all those who generously give their time to ongoing minor repairs, and to Alison Rainbow for organising both the online Log Book, and our regular maintenance schedule.

Joan Bond  
Churchwarden

## The Sanctuary

I wish to thank the continued efforts of all who contribute to keeping the Sanctuary neat and tidy and always looking fresh. Of particular note, our thanks to the Flower Guild, Pam Fisher and Georgie Trotter.

Just before the end of the year we had the sad death of John Ferris who was a faithful server at our 8 o'clock BCP communion services; we will truly miss him.

We are in need of servers and would welcome young or old, male or female to join us. Full training will be given; with a few more servers the commitment would not be great, on average one service per month.

Mike Pezet

## Northleach Branch of the Mothers' Union

The branch had a busy and productive time in 2017.

We were privileged to have a conversation with our new curate, Ilse Ferwerda in February. Ilse stood up very well to some searching questions about faith, and now that she is so completely settled in the benefice, it hardly seems possible that she has been here for such a short time. In March the branch prepared and led the Mothering Sunday service, and in May our Diocesan rep, Pat Dew, came to talk about the future of Mothers' Union. We made a brave attempt at the annual Wave of Prayer, which had been moved to a less convenient time, and we took part in the Women's World Day of Prayer at Cold Aston. Our monthly Holy Communion service continues to be well attended, and the appearance of the Lady Chapel has been enhanced by flowers given and arranged by members. We spent a morning in detailed consideration of the MU's upcoming policy changes about the teaching of sex education at home and in school, and submitted our Report to the national committee .

The Mothers' Union policy about non-religious speakers is that they should widen the horizons of members. Nick Rainey's talk in April about crossing the Southern Ocean certainly filled the bill, and one member claimed to feel sea sick just looking at his amazing photographs! Anthony Sumner filled in at short notice in October, with a fascinating glimpse of the world of publishing.

On the social side, we had a wonderful Garden Party at the home of Patsi Rainey in June, a summer outing to the Arboretum in July, and a splendid Christmas Party, with all the food and entertainment contributed by members.

Our giving has been much enhanced this year. Money has been raised at the Charter Fair, Christmas Bazaar, tea stall at Notgrove, and a table in church, among other activities. We have put money aside in the care of the Parish to help pay for a school activity involving faith songs, which is to be arranged some time soon. We have given substantial sums to the Mothers' Union summer and Christmas appeals. Our knitting has helped at hospitals in Gloucester, and we have paid for a commemorative plaque for the new MU bench in the churchyard.

All this sounds a lot for a small branch like ours; we can only achieve this much with input from many directions. We would like to record our thanks to Rev David Ford and to Ilse, for their unfailing support. We are greatly indebted to Judy Mustoe for her astonishingly long service as Treasurer, which will cover 20 years next year. But our greatest asset is the loyalty of members, some of whom have belonged for more years than they care to remember. Thank you all for your support in so many ways.

Joan Bond

## 2017 Church Welcome Season

There were 38 regular Welcomers and 20 reserves on the 2017 rota, making a total of 58 enthusiastic and committed volunteers.

The Welcoming season began on 25 March 2017 and ended on 30 September, with Welcomers recording a total of 12,366 visitors in that period. This included 20 coach parties, some British but also groups from

Belgium, France, Italy, China and Iceland. Not all had booked in advance: for those that had we provided guided tours, and in other cases the Welcomers on duty coped extremely well! In May a delegation of international sheep vets came to Northleach and were given a tour of the church with help from a local sheep farmer.

We continued to stock the bookstall with books, booklets and postcards as well as supplying laminated foreign language information sheets at the Welcome Desk for use in the church, with information in Chinese and Japanese as well as European languages. An extra item of equipment at the Welcome desk was a mobile phone for Welcomers to use in case of need.

In addition to the notebook for Welcomers to record any comments and matters arising we also initiated a “Stories People Tell Us” notebook in which to record interesting observations made by visitors. One such was a visitor from Bath who said his mother had been ducked as a witch as part of the Northleach Medieval Fair in 1951! “She forgives you all” he wrote in the Visitors' Book.

We also had a number of visitors claiming descent from the leading Northleach wool merchants' families, including the Midwinters and the Forteys. We continued to expand the exhibits in the North Chapel, or “Heritage Corner”, including a Roman coin found in the graveyard and a nineteenth century font cover, and also made plans for a new History Society display to be installed in the North Chapel in time for the 2018 season.

Richard Owen, Co-ordinator, Church Welcome Team

## Flower Guild

Once more we have had a busy and productive year. We were fortunate to have Georgie Trotter and Avril Hasler come forward and offer their services. Their help has been greatly appreciated. Donations to the Easter Lily fund were again very generous and we hope the resulting floral efforts were pleasing to all. The new policy on weddings has worked well and we intend to continue with it. More often than not this means the two usual pedestals done by us, with the colour choice of the bride being used.

The weekly services and the main great festivals continue to be our priority. However we try to provide for other events, such as the Candlelit Supper, for which Ann Hood did spectacular black and white arrangements. The Mothers' Union has continued to do a small arrangement in the Lady Chapel which I know has been appreciated by everyone.

Michael Chappin has been our Treasurer for many years and we are grateful to him for all his work and help. He has set up an excellent system which hopefully will continue after his retirement from the role. We are also indebted to the Rector for his unfailing support and also to Alison for keeping us up to date with the Benefice Diary and What's On.

The Guild hopes to keep on enhancing the worship and services in our beautiful church.

Esther Morgan

## Hospitality Group

We have had a busy and productive year, including serving coffee after every 10.30 service, huge thanks to our regular coffee makers. We have also supported our Events team by making and serving a Harvest supper as well as hot dogs for the Family Games day. Home-made cakes and tea were served after the memorial service held in November. Mince pies and mulled wine made their usual appearance at the Carol Service, and of course fairy cakes and drinks for all the children after the Christingle service.

Our big event this year was the Candlelight Dinner attended by over 90 people, tickets were sold out before even being officially advertised.

Hospitality served a four-course meal and then finished the evening with bacon rolls at 1.00am. Our host for the evening was Colin Kelsall who managed to persuade people to part with over twelve hundred pounds in about ten minutes! and who could ever forget our Butler (including white gloves) who morphed into our DJ later in the evening – thank you Guy Woolley.

We were also delighted to host a Bring and Share lunch to celebrate Ilse's 'Priesting' on 16th July.

Patsi Rainey

## Foundation Governors' of Northleach Church of England Primary School (VC)

As a Voluntary Controlled Church School, Northleach Primary has three Foundation Governors. During 2017 these were David Ford (ex-officio by virtue of being the Rector), Laura Blundell and Tim Hamilton.

Foundation Governors have precisely the same responsibilities as other Governors but with particular responsibility for ensuring the development of the Christian Distinctiveness of the school as a Church School. Each Foundation Governor has a particular responsibility such as RE, Collective Worship or SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development) and together we share responsibility for the monitoring of specific school policies.

Most of the work of Foundation Governors is undertaken together as part of the school's Ethos Committee together with other governors and the Head Teacher. During 2017 our work focused on the introduction of the new RE curriculum (supported by the Church of England's scheme 'Understanding Christianity') and preparing the school's next church inspection (known as SIAMS – Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). We also carried out subject visits and learning walks around the school.

Northleach Church is an active supporter of our church school in a number of ways. During 2017 this included covering the cost of a coach to take

Year 6 to the Cathedral Leavers' Service and purchasing the large frieze in the hall to support the new RE curriculum.

David Ford, Rector

## House groups in the Northleach Benefice

At present there are two house groups which meet regularly; both in Northleach. The first group was formed in autumn 2015, consists of seven people who meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 10.30 a.m. at Fosse Lodge, the home of Judith and Howard Jenkins. In that time they have used a variety of resources including tapes and booklets to guide their studies. They have looked at, among other topics, a passage from Luke's Gospel; Prayer; the Psalms; and the Letter of James. At this moment they are using a study guide booklet on John's Gospel and this will take them up to the end of the year. Sessions include a time for refreshments and prayer. If anyone would like to join, please let Judith know you are coming (tel. 861740) or speak to Cynthia Miller (tel. 860456).

The second group in Northleach started meeting in the middle of 2017 and consists of nine people of different denominations who meet fortnightly on Monday mornings at 10.30 a.m. at Georgie Trotter's house. So far they have discussed the topics of Hospitality and Welcoming the stranger; currently they are studying the Gospel of Mark.

House groups are a good opportunity to come together to discuss in more detail either parts of the Bible or specifically Christian issues as mentioned above. Discussions are often lively and there are as many opinions as there are participants. The aim is not to reach consensus but to learn from and with each other. Participants can be members of the congregation or anyone who is interested. Equally, group leaders do not need to be ministers but anyone who is willing to invest some time in preparing and leading sessions, usually with the help of a booklet to guide the sessions. For more information or if you are interested to start or become part of a house group please get in touch with a member of the ministry team or church wardens.

Ilse Ferwerda, Assistant Curate

## The Events Committee

The Events Committee, having been established in 2016, has grown from strength to strength thanks to the support of a group of dedicated helpers and by building stronger ties with the Hospitality Committee.

The Events committee was established with three key objectives:

- To reach out and encourage a diverse community to visit and use the church through events that appeal to wide and or a specific but varying demographic.
- To support the work of the church in our local community.
- To raise funds for the church and charities.

In 2017 we were able to run a diverse programme of Church events and host an even wider range of events run by other organisations.

In total close to 1,000 people attended a range of events including various concerts, Osiligi Maasai Warriors UK Tour, candlelit dinner & disco and an indoor family games afternoon. Not only did the programme reach a wide range of our community but over £14,000 was raised for the church and various charities.

Finally, we'd like to express our thanks to all those who have helped; creating marketing material, selling tickets, setting up the space and putting everything back after each event, providing and serving food and drink....the list goes on. A lot of time and effort goes into organising even the most straightforward event so these unsung heroes are vital, priceless and very much appreciated.

If anyone would like offer their help (on a one-off basis or otherwise) or if there is an idea or event you would like to discuss, please talk with Guy Woolley.

We ask for your continued support, encouragement and prayers.

Guy Woolley

## North Cotswolds' Deanery Synod Report

2017's Synods were at Bourton-on-the-Water (February), Condicote (July), & Oddington (October).

At Bourton Synod tackled the Diocese's new vision, LIFE, with its fourteen themes grouped under the four headings of Leadership, Imagination, Faith & Engagement. Members discussed which themes are already established in their parishes (the positives) & which they see as areas to develop (future work). 'Connecting with schools' & 'using church buildings creatively' were the biggest positives, & 'investing in our engagement with baptism families' & 'piloting liberating models of leadership & ministry, especially in multi-parish benefices' the top choices for future work.

Condicote was an 'Open Synod' (advertised to non-members) to discuss the challenges of rural parishes & rural ministry, & to hear the Revd Canon Dr Jill Hopkinson, the Church of England's national rural officer. The evening defined three main themes, being an open church with a pro-active welcome, making prayer the basis of everything, & discovering the spiritual needs of those who don't identify as being religious.

Oddington show-cased some of the ways in which parishes within the Deanery are responding to LIFE.

2018 will see further development of our responses to LIFE & to the rural challenges.

Jeremy Gould, North Cotswold Deanery Secretary

## The Choir

In July 2017 Gerry Hopkin was appointed as church organist. He succeeded David Cotton who dutifully served the church for 20 years and we are grateful for his contribution to church music. In August Simon Wills regrettably announced his resignation as choirmaster. The post as yet has not been filled officially but in the meantime, Gerry Hopkin has agreed to take on the mantle of choirmaster.

The Choir continues to build on the good work that Simon began with the recruiting of new members in all sections. The Carol Service received positive comments and each week the Choir fulfils the requirements of the communion service and sung Evensong with anthems, including music from the traditional repertoire as well as Taize and more contemporary music. Reports from the congregation are very positive.

In February the Choir attended the Royal School of Church Music Festival held at Gloucester cathedral and participated in a Choral Service given by many affiliated choirs of the South West and Midlands, together with Gloucester Cathedral Choir. This was a very uplifting experience and I am sure has helped the musical development of the choir.

Gerry Hopkin  
Organist and interim Choirmaster