

**ST. PETER'S PARISH CHURCH
BOCKING, ESSEX
Diocese of Chelmsford**



**Annual Report and Financial Statements
of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ending
31st December 2017**

Members of the Parochial Church Council 2017

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected. Elections to the PCC are for a term of 3 years. One third of elected members 'retire' each year, although they are permitted, after a break of one year, to stand again should they be proposed and seconded and be willing to stand. Elections are conducted at the APCM in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Members of our congregation seeking election must be on the Electoral Roll.

During the year, the following served as members of the PCC:

Incumbent (Priest in Charge):

The Rev'd Tim Barnes

Assistant Curate

The Rev'd Robert Stone

Churchwardens:

Richard Whitbread and Anne Tee

Deanery Synod Representatives: (elected in 2017, to serve until 2020):

Enid Colyer (served till the end of August), Judith Dignum and Ann Macklin .

Elected members (9 in total) as from the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 2017 were:

Lesley Cook, Ray Hurst, Colin I 'Anson, David Jacob, Judith Leach, Anna Marsden, Hilary Shead, Genifer Snellin, and Janet Wash.

Honorary Treasurer (co-opted onto the PCC): Maureen Ledgerton

Honorary Secretary: Ann Macklin

Vice Chairman of the PCC: Anne Tee

Sub-Committees:

Standing Committee:

Required by the Church Representation Rules, it has "power to transact the business of the PCC between the meetings thereof, subject to any directions given by the PCC".
Membership:

Incumbent and Churchwardens are ex-officio members, and the PCC must appoint at least 2 others from among its own members. Those appointed were: Lesley Cook and Ann Macklin.

Events Committee: Churchwardens plus Enid Colyer, Maureen Ledgerton, Ann Macklin, Hilary Shead, Gennifer Snellin, and (co-opted) Rachel Hope, Glynis Perring, Margaret Woolmer., Judith Dignum

Fabric and Gardens Committee:

Membership: The Incumbent, Churchwardens, Ray Hurst, Colin I'Anson, and Janet Wash.

This Committee is charged with identifying possible health and safety issues in our buildings and surrounding gardens, looking out for any necessary repairs and refurbishments, making regular seasonal maintenance checks, and seeking to advise the PCC where necessary on desirable actions to be taken.

Other designated positions:

Electoral Roll Officer: David Jacob.

Choirmaster: David Wood.

Parish Safeguarding Representative: Anne Tee.

Health and Safety Officer : Enid Colyer (till the end of August); Ray Hurst (from September)

Webmaster: Martyn Perring.

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Background

St. Peter's Parish Church is situated in Bocking End, Braintree. It is part of the Chelmsford Diocese within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is The Vicarage, St Peter's in the Fields, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9AR.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent and the Churchwardens in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

This includes maintenance responsibilities for the Church Hall.

Introduction

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the second edition of our new style Annual Report: if you want to know, and indeed to share with others, what St Peter's does and who we aspire to be, then these pages will be a great help.

I am grateful to all who contributed to this Report, and especially to my colleague, Fr Robert, who has yet again formatted it into this excellent and attractive booklet.

I hope that you enjoy reading the following pages – and assure you that any constructive comments are always welcome. And I hope even more that it will encourage you to **give thanks** for all that we are able to do, and to **pray** that we may continually be helped and guided to make a difference to people's lives by the sharing of the Gospel of Christ and by our own living in the light of that Good News.



Rev'd Tim Banes
Priest in Charge and PCC Chairman
March 2018

Incumbent's Report

Dear Friends,

every year that I endeavour to play my part in helping to compile this official document detailing our Church's life, I am struck by the sheer number and diversity of activities and events that we have all been involved in, alongside our "normal" Sunday and weekday worship, prayer, study and fellowship! I suppose in this we are no different from most parish churches up and down the Country as we seek to be the Church *of and for* our people – whether they come along on a Sunday or not! I guess in a way this Annual Report goes some way in outlining the large scope of our mission and justifying our own particular existence.

In order to get my head around all this activity, I keep a rough notebook where, from 1st January to 31st December each year, I scribble down all the events and activities as they happen whether they be special Services, concerts, fundraisers, charity collections, fabric work or whatever . This then helps in filling in the detail that follows. Some of the activity is much the same year on year, and yet it still seems right to record and celebrate it, even if it is long past the date when it could be considered "new". This year, my notebook had 64 entries!

As ever, since his appointment as our Assistant Curate, I am so grateful to have Fr Robert as a colleague, and as someone we are all privileged to be



helping to grow more fully into the ministry God has for him. It was a joy to be with him as he was priested in July, and I know how much we all appreciate his wisdom, sense of humour and pastoral care.

But, any church is much more than its clergy, and I wish to record my sincere thanks to *each and every person* who plays their part, in whatever way, seen or unseen, in the life of our parish. And, it is notable that although our congregational numbers may not grow massively year on year, we have over the past year become the place of choice for a few new people who have felt welcomed and affirmed among us, and who have appreciated our more 'traditional' style. It is also notable that some of our 'newer' members have now stepped up, taken on responsibilities and shared their experience and skill with us. This is all to the good.

In the latter part of the year, the PCC spent an evening looking at developing our Vision for the future, considering what we already do well, and what we could aspire to do better - the opportunities that present themselves, and the challenges we face. 2018 will, we hope, see us refining this Vision and facing squarely some of these challenges – including the ageing fabric of our buildings, and how to make them more welcoming and accessible.

Ultimately, though, it is the quality of our spiritual lives that is paramount, and I hope and pray that St Peter's continues to be a place where we all learn, after Christ's example, to be ever more gracious and loving.

Fr. Tim Barnes



Assistant Curate's Report



2017 was another big year for me. Having just about gotten used to the life and work of a deacon, I was privileged to be priested at Great Dunmow on Sunday 2nd July. It was a great joy to see so many members of St. Peter's at the service.

Whilst the ordination service was fabulous can I confess that it was a greater joy to then preside at the Eucharist at St. Peter's a week later, hence my choice of photograph above. I must also thank you all for your very generous gift of a clerical cloak which I was very pleased to have on a very chilly Remembrance Day afternoon.

Being part of St. Peter's Church is teaching me much about being a clergy person, and all of you have been a real encouragement. Thank you for your kindness and patience as I now get used to being a Priest.

May I end by echoing a few words from Saint Paul: "I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers." *Ephesians 1: 16*

Fr. Robert Stone

Photographs
Top: Market Stall
Centre: Preparing for our new sign

Electoral Roll and Church attendance:

At the APCM of 2017, there were 108 on the Church Electoral Roll. Of these 44 lived in the parish and 64 lived outside the parish.

The average weekly attendance was 65 adults and 5 under 16's (65 adults and 3 under 16's in 2016): this is taking into account the 8 am and 10 am services. Obviously this number was increased at the major Festivals and celebrations (including Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest and Christmas).

Main proceedings of the P.C.C. and activities of the Parish in 2017

The PCC met 6 times during the year, and the average attendance over the year was 84%.

The Standing Committee did not need to meet, and the other Committees met between meetings, as necessary, and reported back to the PCC meetings as appropriate.

1. Church life and faith:

Our regular Worship and Prayer on Sundays and during the week has remained the foundation of the life of our Church over the past year.

All principal **10 am Sunday Services** are **Sung Holy Communion**, with the first Sunday of the month being **Family Communion**. We have an **8 am Holy Communion** every Sunday following the **Book of Common Prayer (BCP)**, and also a service of **BCP Evensong** once a month. We also have **Weekday Services of Holy Communion on Tuesday mornings, and Friday lunchtimes**

We seek to follow the Church's calendar of festivals and seasons, and to enter as deeply as we can into their meaning for us today, and are so grateful to the many whose work, seen or unseen, contributes to our many Services over the year. We need each other, and it is good to remember that, as we say at the Peace, "we are the body of Christ...let us then pursue all that makes for peace and builds up our common life".

Our beautiful Church interior is important to us, and in June, we were very pleased to dedicate five new seasonal altar panels that we were able to purchase through generous gifts.

It was also a great joy for us to celebrate with our Curate, Fr Robert, as he was priested at St Mary's, Great Dunmow, on 2nd July. He continues to

Our Parish Vision: Agreed by the PCC May 2012

1. To be a welcoming spiritual centre for our community that actively shares the Good News of Jesus Christ.
2. As Christians, to serve our local area as good neighbours and be involved in organisations that help enrich people's lives.
3. To look outward to the wider world, helping people who suffer from poverty, conflict & injustice, and to care for the environment.
4. To enable all members of our congregation to feel at home and to find their gifts so that our Vision may be more fully realised.

be such a blessing to us.

Pastoral visits are made as often as possible to the housebound and the sick, in their own homes, in residential care or in hospital. Efforts are also made to keep in touch with the bereaved for whom we have taken funerals – especially those who are most alone, or who are most in need on support.

St Peter's continues to host in September an **Annual Service of Remembrance of Loved Ones** organised with a local Funeral Directors, to which our regular congregation are invited, and also those for whom we have taken funerals in the past year.

Discussion Group: The monthly group "**A Question of Faith?**" has continued with the aim of being a forum where matters of Christian faith can be discussed in an open and friendly environment, and where perhaps people on the 'fringes' of Church life can explore faith further in this relaxed atmosphere.

Bible Study Group: This was a new venture for 2017, initiated by Fr Robert: we have met monthly, and during the year we looked at the Parables in Matthew's Gospel and the Book of Amos.

A well-attended Lent Group was run again this year using the most recent York Course - *Receiving Christ in five different ways*.

Also, a number of people continue to take a range of Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) booklets.

The wider Church of England Community: Braintree Deanery, Colchester Episcopal Area and the Diocese of Chelmsford: We continued to be well served by the attendance of our Representatives at Deanery Synod. Fr Tim and Fr Robert attended the Clergy Chapter meetings when possible, and we were happy to have a member of another congregation with us on placement prior to a selection conference regarding ordination training. We have also managed yet again to pay our **Family Purse** in full, and are grateful for the commitment of our regular givers.

11 members of our congregation attended Bishop Stephen's *School for Disciples* evening, and came home with various resources, including his famous jar of pickled onions (as a visual aid of how discipleship can be shaped in Church life). Also, as encouraged by the Bishop, we now begin each PCC meeting with a moment's reflection on a Biblical passage.

Work to our fabric and gardens: This year, in the gardens we have installed a new Church signboard, and a seat in memory of Marjorie Hunt, and we have had some major trimming work done on several of our trees. Inside the Church building, we have a storage box for our new altar panels (mentioned above), having disposed of most of the old altar frontals and the chest that stored them. We have also had the wooden War memorial extensively cleaned.

Ecumenically, we have maintained good links with Braintree Area Churches Together, and members of

our congregation are always encouraged to attend the United evening Services in the various Churches when possible, and also the Lent Lunches, the United Good Friday Service held in a local Church, and followed by the Walk of Witness into the Town Centre. Fr Tim is also attends the monthly Ministers' breakfast meetings, which are good times to catch up and share matters of mutual interest. Another positive development this year has been that, occasionally, a local Romanian man and his family come to say **Orthodox evening prayers** at St Peter's – and the church is filled with the smell of sweet incense and the sonorous music of the ancient Byzantine liturgy.

2. Baptisms, Communion before Confirmation, Confirmations, Weddings, and Funerals:

During the year, there were **17 baptisms** at St Peter's – 14 babies and the rest young children (there were 29 baptisms in 2016). We still aspire to keep in touch as best we can after the actual Service, and have produced a leaflet to give out that encourages families and godparents to keep in touch and provides guidance as to the ongoing commitments they have made and the next steps that can be taken, including in prayer.

We had no **Preparations of Children for Communion before Confirmation** this year, and no **Confirmations** (8 in 2016) – but we appreciate that these joyous events occur as people come along to us, and in the year we have had the pleasure of welcoming a few new people into our Church family, so we look to the future with hope!

There were **4 Weddings** (4 in 2016), and 1 **Service of Prayer and Dedication after a Civil Marriage**, and 1 **Thanksgiving for Marriage and Renewal of Vows**.

36 full Funeral Services were conducted - 10 of which were held in Church, and the remaining 26 being at local Crematoria or at the local Cemetery Chapels. (34 funerals in 2016 – 10 in Church).

3. Children and Young People:

Our **Sunday Club** has continued to meet on the 3rd Sunday of the month in Term Time, and we are we are very grateful to the leaders and helpers who make this possible. The Sunday Club joins the main congregation during Communion. Our **Family Communion Services** are quite well attended, and we continue to maintain good links with the **Rainbows, Brownies and Guides** of the Blackwater West District who meet in our Hall. A number of Family Communions are designated as Parades, and the leaders do their best to encourage attendance by the girls and their families. They are also involved in our Summer and Christmas Fayres, and turn out in good numbers for our Christingle Service.

Schools/other Youth Groups: Fr Tim continues to have good links with John Bunyan Primary and Great Bradfords Infants and Junior Schools. He takes regular Assemblies in each, as well as reading sessions with some year 6 pupils at Great Bradfords. John Bunyan Primary School had their Christmas Carol Service at St. Peter's again this year – and excellent it was - and Fr Tim has become a Governor.

Fr Tim was again this year involved in taking a whole-school Remembrance Service at Tabor Academy, which also featured serving members of the armed forces, Royal British Legion and other veterans, Air and Army Cadets and various Services Charities. It is a privilege to be involved in this large community event.

Fr Tim is also Padre to 158 Squadron (Braintree and District) Air Cadets, and regularly attends Squadron nights, and also various Sector and Wing events such as ATC Sunday (Feb.) and Battle of Britain Sunday (Sept.)

4. Social and other Events for all ages

We had a **Quiz Supper** in February, and a bring and share **Harvest Lunch** in October, to which a good number of our Brownies and their families came. Our **Monday Club** continues to meet monthly, has a varied and interesting programme, and a good number of members.

Music and Singing continues to be an important facet of life at St Peter's: Our **Choir** continues to thrive, under the guidance of our Choirmaster, and we are very grateful to a number of organists who play for us regularly.

Also, we have also enjoyed several excellent **Concerts and Events** over the year: in February, we hosted a Singing Day entitled *French Connections* and this proved to be very uplifting, and made a good amount for Church Funds. In April and again in December we hosted the Braintree Ladies Choir; in October we had an mini organ recital by Richard

Reed that raised money for the Organ Fund, and on 11th November, *Trio Poetique* gave a presentation of words, music and song on the theme of *The Lads in their Hundreds*. This commemorated the 100th Anniversary of World War 1, was attended by the Chairman of Braintree District Council, and raised a good amount for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

The monthly **Poetry Group** continues to be popular, with a very wide range of poetry being brought by members.

Tea at Two - a monthly afternoon get together over tea and cake which is open to all – also continued successfully. The congregation is encouraged to invite friends and neighbours, including those who may feel lonely and isolated.

We also enjoyed another **parish coach trip** (kindly organized by some members of our congregation) - this year we had an enjoyable day in Cambridge.

5. Safeguarding (Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults):

We have a **Parish Safeguarding Representative** whose brief is to oversee all safeguarding issues regarding both children and vulnerable adults. This includes the Disclosure and Barring Service and the necessary checks. We are committed as a PCC to offer support and encouragement in following good practice to all who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults in our Parish. Every PCC meeting has as an agenda item regarding Safeguarding.

6. Other Involvement with our Community:

Regular monthly Services of Holy Communion have been organised in **3 Residential/Sheltered Homes in the parish** – Kilkee Lodge, Aspen Grange and Abbeyfields Great Bradfords House.

We also have good links with **Braintree District Council at Causeway House**, which is virtually next door to St Peter's. As Workplace Chaplain Fr. Tim tries to visit from time to time, and seeks to build bridges, show support and offer help and a listening ear where it may be needed. He is also privileged to be able to attend the monthly Manager's Briefings, and also to meet occasionally with the head of HR.

We continue to have good links with the **Dolphin Women's Institute** and in April they formally presented to us their latest knitted masterpiece – a model of the exterior and interior of St Peter's. Sadly, their Carol Service this year had to be cancelled due to snow.

We also welcomed the Essex Provincial Priory of the **Knights Templar Masons** for their Family Service in September, and the North Essex District **Rose Croix Masons** for their annual service of Evensong in October.

Fr Tim is Chaplain of the **Royal British Legion**, Braintree and Bocking Branch, attended the monthly meetings where possible, along with several members of our congregation who have become RBL members. With assistance from Fr Robert, he led the Service of Remembrance at the War memorial in the Public Gardens.

In the year, we were so grateful to a member of the Legion who kindly cleaned our wooden War Memorial, meaning that it was in great condition and easily readable for our Remembrance Sunday Service. The same person also kindly dismantled the huge old altar frontal chest at the West end of the Church (thereby creating valuable extra space), and also made a smaller storage box for the new altar panels. We are so grateful for all his hard work.

An added blessing was that the wood from the old chest was taken away by members of the **Maldon Men's Shed Organisation**.

As well as being essential fund-raising events, our **Summer and Christmas Fayres** are good 'windows' for the wider community onto our Church life – and in the Summer we were pleased to welcome John Bunyan School choir, some Twirlers, and a Dance Group – all much appreciated. Our church building was also open, and many looked around, some saying prayers and lighting a candle.

The **Braintree District Interfaith Forum (BDIFF)** has the support of local church people, including a few of our own congregation, and occasional meetings have been held in our Hall. Also, a number of us attended the Braintree Mosque's Community Fun day in Weavers Park, and also the Mosque Open Day.

Members of our congregation also support many other organisations and good causes in the local area, among which are: **Hope House** (for the homeless), **Braintree Youth Project**, the **Street Pastors**, the **Food Banks**,

the Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens, Braintree Community Hospital and Mid-Essex Talking News (for the blind and partially sighted).

Also, some of our Poetry Group continued to visit **Kilkee Lodge** to share poems with the residents, and this is greatly appreciated by them, bringing back happy memories of poetry often learned when they were children.

**1st Blackwater Rainbows,
1st Bocking Brownies,
1st Bocking Guides and
Braintree Rangers**

Guiding is thriving at St Peters with all units over-subscribed. The girls aged 5 to 16+ enjoy a varied programme of activities and adventures provided by their leaders and ably assisted by their unit teams.

Blackwater West District has 3 Rainbow units, 3 Brownie units, 2 Guide units and our Senior Section. However, we are so heavily over-subscribed that we cannot fulfil demands for Brownie places, so we are looking into the possibility of adopting another Brownie and Guide unit nearby, so we can keep girls in District when moving up. The St Peters units have been very active and have taken part in evenings at Jump Street, bowling, the cinema, a District fun swim, campfire, themed evenings, working on badges, raising money for charities, handicraft exhibition, trip to Adventure Island, various overnights including one on the HMS Belfast, a weekend at

Butlins, camps, crafts and plenty more. More is planned for the year ahead including our District camp at Skreens Park in July, International trip to Croatia this summer and a Brownie sleepover at Paradise Wildlife Park in the Autumn.

All the units would like to thank the church for the use of the hall. We continue to support the church by encouraging the girls to attend and participate in church parades, including the Harvest Festival, Christingle Service and Mothering Sunday, doing our scheduled church cleans and running stalls at the Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre fundraisers. We recently enjoyed our evening at the quiz night.

**Tricia Beney
Blackwater West District Secretary**

Magazine Report

Another good year for the magazine with good quality contributions. I would especially like to record thanks to John Joyce for his artwork designs for the covers, as well as his articles.

It has been generally possible to meet the earlybird print submission deadline to gain the 10% print cost discount, but in order to continue doing so without undue pressure or errors creeping in, it has been necessary to bring forward the deadline for submission of copy to the editor. All in all the magazine has held its own.

Anna Marsden

Choir Report 2017

The choir was very busy throughout 2017. As well as singing at all the 10.00am Sunday services, we also participated in the monthly services of Evensong. We sang at all the usual services for Holy Week and Easter, including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Other special services included the Collins Memorial Service on 10th September; the Masonic Evensong on 22nd October; the All Souls' Requiem on 4th November; the Advent Evening Service on 3rd December; the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on 17th December; and the Midnight Mass on 24th December. We were also able to get out into the community to sing carols at Wickham House, Great Bradford's House and The Hawthorns, where we were very well received by the residents.

The St. Peter's Singing Day on 25th February attracted over seventy singers, when we rehearsed and then performed the Cantique de Jean Racine and the Requiem by Gabriel Faure, along with other French music sung by the St. Peter's Sixteen. Many thanks to Richard Reed for playing the organ at this event. A total of £517 was raised for church funds.

On Saturday 11th November, Trio Poetique gave a very well received lunchtime concert entitled 'The Lads in Their Hundreds', in aid of the Royal British Legion. This included popular songs of the First World War; poems written in the trenches; poems by women poets of the time; a poem written by our own John Giffard; and piano music by Edward Elgar. Many thanks to Alison Shore and Stephen

Wood for joining me for this event. A total of £341 was raised for the Royal British Legion.

During the year, we sadly had to say goodbye to Enid Colyer, who moved away to live nearer to her mother, and John and Judith Reddington, who can no longer help us out at St. Peter's due to ill health.

I would like to thank all members of the choir for their hard work and continued support, and many thanks to our team of organists which included: Richard Reed, Ian Cruse, Michael Somers, Nathan Songer, Sue Edwards, Jackie Jones, Hilary Shead and Brian Collins.

David Wood (Choirmaster)

Sunday Club Report

We meet on the 3rd Sunday in term time. We have approximately 6 regular members aged 4 to 11 who, usually together with their parents, enjoy meeting in the hall, then come into Church during communion. We like to share with the congregation what we have been learning about by showing a related craft activity such as a collage or something that has been made. Baking cookies is a popular activity. Our session activities include worship, cooking, craft activity and game and has also become an enjoyable, inclusive family time.

This year our themes have included John the Baptist, the 7 Days of Creation, Mothers in the Bible, Christian Aid, Jacob and his 12 sons, Parable of the Sower, Hands of love, Parable of the 10 Bridesmaids and Christmas decorations for the church tree. Our collages and crafts are displayed in the church.

Monday Club Report

The membership of the Monday Club has continued to grow during the year, so that in November it stood at 43. We have an average attendance of 35 – 43 members each month.

Our meetings have been varied this year, starting in January with a talk entitled 'Lesley's Musings'. This was a talk by Lesley Evans who spoke about her time working at Butlin's. Our speaker was unable to come in February owing to unforeseen circumstances, so instead we had a Beetle Drive organized by Margaret Woolmer. March saw us having a talk by a certain curate called Fr. Robert Stone, who spoke about what led him to ordination and coming to St Peter's. In April, Sharon Gould spoke about 'Who is H?' H is her daughter Heather, who has Downs Syndrome, Sharon spoke about 40 years of fun and development, finally leading up to Heather's marriage, a satisfying end to an inspiring story. In May our friend Paula Short came and took us on a journey to South Africa. June was our AGM, and in July we had our outing to Feering Bury Manor followed by a meal out. As we do not meet in August, our next meeting was in September. Our speaker was Norman Jacobs who spoke about growing up in a 'prefab' from 1947, mentioning Rock 'n' Roll, Beatlemania, the snow of 1963, and Pie & Mash & Eels along the way. In October Kevin Bennett came to talk to us of the history of the Chelmsford Star Co-op (Braintree belongs to this group). November: June Mecklenburgh came to show us how to make festive table decorations for Christmas, and in December we had our usual Christmas Party

Events Committee Report

I would like to thank the Committee for all its hard work during 2017. The evidence is in the success of the events organised by the Committee. These include Quizzes, Summer Fayre, Bangers and Mash evening, Christmas Bazaar, Market Stall and small Raffles.

The support of the congregation at these events is paramount and enables the Church to pay its way and carry out our on-going improvement programme. We have a busy programme planned for 2018 and look forward to your continued support at our events.

Richard Whitbread

Honorary Treasurer's Report for 2017:

This year, our Annual Accounts, which appear on the following pages, 17-19, show a welcome continuation for a fifth year running of a positive outcome over all: across the Unrestricted, Designated and Restricted Funds of our Accounts we showed a **net surplus of £2,529.44**. In the Unrestricted Fund alone, which reflects normal running costs including our Parish Share payments, there was a surplus of £2,412.39 (£2,194.97 in 2016). This is encouraging, although we are by no means complacent: our reserves are currently quite positive, but we have in mind a number of significant fabric projects for which substantial amounts will be needed.

Comments on our Accounts:

Our Parish Share (Family Purse): was £32,327.52 for 2017 and for the fifth time in nine years we have paid it in full. We had our successful TRIO Stewardship presentation in February 2013, and this was followed up at the beginning of this year with an encouragement to all Church members to review their giving, and see if they could afford to give a bit more. We have seen a substantial increase in our Planned Giving over the 2016 figure, and are very grateful to all who make a financial commitment to St Peter's.

As well as encouraging Gift Aid where applicable on regular giving - we received £4,431.72 refund this year - we also for the fourth year running made full use of the extra amount we could claim under the Gift Aid Small

Donations Scheme (GASDS): i.e. tax on up to £8,000 from general collections which amounted to £2,000. This gave us a grand total of £6,431.72 - an increase of £299.18 on 2016.

The **Harvest Gift Day** in October raised £1,149, down £252.35 on 2016. This sum was transferred to the Fabric and Building Fund.

The **Church Hall** continues to provide a good source of income with a net surplus for the year of £3,805.64 - this was up £70.64 on 2016.

We had a number of fund raising activities and events in the year:

Raffle for a Quilt kindly donated by the Braintree Quilters raised £161; Quiz Evening £286; Singing Day 517.07; Sunday Morning Coffee £196.83; Summer Fayre £1,295.24; Produce sales £13.60; Market Stall £103.97; Bangers & Mash Supper £87; and the Christmas Fayre £1,399.94.

In total, the above comes to an excellent £4,060.65 for general Church funds and thanks again are due to all who made this possible.

We also have plans in progress to improve our Church organ, and the **Organ Fund** benefitted from a concert which raised £122.71, Janet's Wash's Sponsored Hymn Singing, £501, and Frances Watkins' cake raffle, £53.

Work done on the fabric and gardens in 2017:

We made a final payment of £2,050 for the 5 new Seasonal Altar Panels (total cost £3,050); a new outside notice board cost £430.20; hedge

trimming and tree surgery cost £800 in total; general property maintenance £728; £390.60 was spent on our sound system – purchasing two new microphones. A garden seat in memory of Marjorie Hunt costing £739.20 was funded from donations given in her memory.

The movements on the various Funds and their year-end position.

These can be seen on the *Summary of Funds* in the Annual Accounts as attached. Because of another positive year, we have been able to add a net amount of £1,865.56 to the Fabric and Building Fund. The collection of £465.39 from Ray Cardy's funeral has been transferred to the Holding Fund.

Our total net financial assets as at 31st December 2017 were £55,424.51 (£52,895.07 in 2016) of which **£54,041.66** was held with the **Central Board of Finance**.

A significant amount of fundraising was done in 2017 for other good causes:

*** Christian Aid:**

East Africa Appeal in April: £129.00.
Christian Aid Week in May: gift envelopes given out in church raised £225.71.

*** Children's Society: Boxes** netted **£752.61**

*** Braintree Youth Project Charity (BYPC):**

A shared Christmas card for church members raised **£50.50**.

A regular donation of £30 per month continued to be made to the **BYPC = £360**.

The total raised in the above comes to £1,517.82.

In addition, our large **Harvest Festival collection of food and stationery** was divided between the **First Stop drop-in Centre** in Bocking End and the **Braintree Food Bank**.

Ongoing donations of food and drink were made by a few people to **The Hut Youth Centre** in Braintree (BYPC), and we encouraged the sale of John Giffard's new poetry book among our congregation: £138 was raised and this was donated to **Hope House** (Homeless project in Braintree).

Maureen Ledgerton

