

**ST. GILES CHURCH,
HORSTED KEYNES**



**St Giles Church Vestry Meeting
and
APCM on Thursday 25th April 2024**

AGENDA

and

REPORTS for year ending 31st December 2023

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING AGENDA

A meeting to elect churchwardens will be held before the APCM:

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Minutes of Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Thursday 29th April 2023**
 - (a) *To agree the minutes as a correct record*
 - (b) *Matters arising*
- 3 **PCC annual report and statutory accounts for 2023**
 - (a) *Presentation of examined Statutory Accounts*
 - (b) *Future financing*
 - (c) *To receive the Annual Report*
- 4 **Appointment of Independent Examiner**
To appoint accounts examiner for 2024
- 5 **Safeguarding report**
To receive the report for 2023 (Page 16)
- 6 **Fabric, goods & ornaments report**
To receive the report for 2023 (Page 6)
- 7 **New electoral roll**
To receive the report for 2023 (Page 6)
- 8 **Church reports**
To receive the other reports for 2023 enclosed here (Page 4 – 18)
- 9 **Elections**
 - (a) *PCC*
- 10 Any other business

We were shocked and saddened to learn that Tim Westlake, our most recent volunteer cook, had died. One of only a few male cooks, we very much miss him. Our hearts go out to Denise, Sam, Holly and all Tim's friends and family.

The cheerful, almost party, atmosphere that pervades our lunches owes much to Lizzie Heasman, who sells us our raffle tickets, and to Peter, who welcomes everyone, collects their money, takes the register, and masters our ceremonies in a somewhat ruefully humorous manner. We are also blessed by the small, revolving team of three or four Year Six pupils from St. Giles School, who, supervised by a Governor, arrive in time to help collect the plates of our main course, and then serve up the puddings (before sitting down to eat one). A third blessing is that we often have a male scullion or labourer, often married to one of the cooks, helping the duty team. Andy, Mark, Tony, Alan and Paul come to mind.

Above all are the cooks, usually in teams of five now, who meet, devise, plan, cook, and serve the lunch and then clear everything away and wash it all up. It can be a rewarding task, but it's never an easy one. It's a relief that it comes round only twice a year. We are so very fortunate to have about thirty generous, resourceful, talented, organised and above all energetic and hardworking people willing to take part. They are all heartily appreciated. *James Nicholson*

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CHICHESTER DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY SUPPORT WORK

With the increased cost of living and all the pressures on families in these difficult times, the future isn't getting any easier for those in crisis, and the waiting list is long. The charity's CEO, Martin Auton-Lloyd, reported that the charity had supported over 600 vulnerable families over the past year, and delivered over 3,200 food boxes. It is encouraging to learn though that many of the clients they support have told FSW what a difference their help has made to them, giving them the guidance and confidence to move on with their lives. This is all done through visits, calls, supported meetings with other agencies, group sessions and food deliveries. But there are also lots of organised activities and outings for the children and families so that they can have fun together and escape from their cares for a day.

To support their work and to make these activities possible, the staff and volunteers organise many fund-raising events, such as sponsored walks and sky dives, suppers and barn dances, not forgetting the ever-popular FSW teas at the various Open Garden events through the spring and summer, or FSW's charity shop in Eastbourne.

Over the past year FSW has recruited six additional Family Support Practitioners, which has enabled it to cover even more areas of the diocese. They have also recruited other staff for head office (two community engagement and volunteer coordinators and a new digital fundraising apprentice), and always welcome more volunteers to help at fundraising events, sorting at the food bank, or with social media etc. Here in Horsted Keynes, where St Giles Church has for many years been a supporter through an annual charitable collection, Harvest and Advent gifts, and the regular collection of items for the food bank, there remains a vacancy for someone to focus on promoting FSW's work and raise their profile in the village.

As always, FSW is grateful for the generosity of its supporters - financially, practically and in prayer.

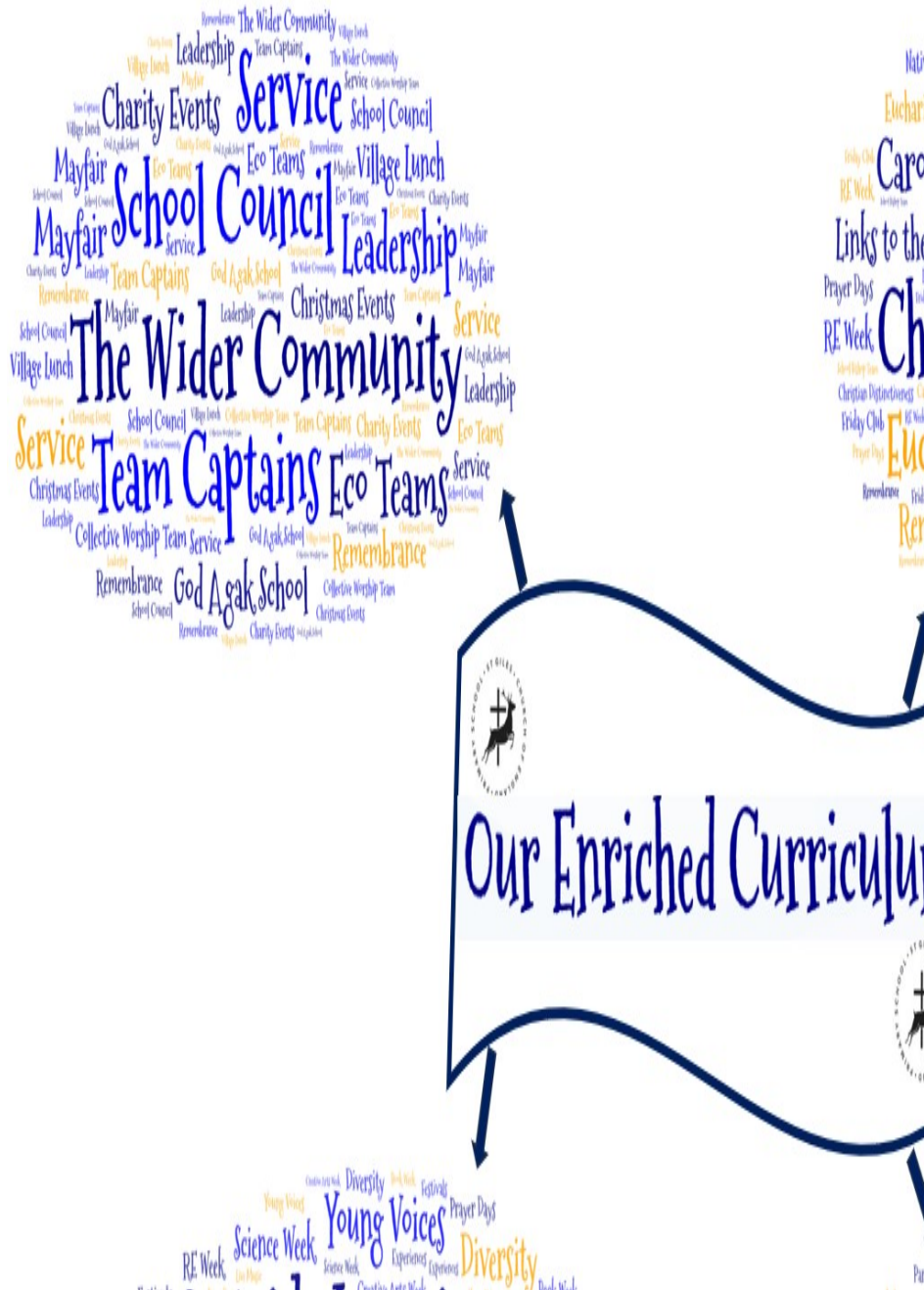
Sally Lamb

VILLAGE LUNCH

2023 was the first year since 2019 when the lunch was uninterrupted by Covid restrictions, and we've been able to enjoy a village lunch every month. Average attendance in '22 was 30, but numbers have steadily grown since then; in '23 the average was 41 and by March '24 it was 43. 49 people sat down for Christmas lunch last year. What demographic or other causes explain this rise we can only guess. But we see it as positive. Though it makes for harder work for those on the cooking team, it certainly makes it easier for us to cover our costs. As everyone who caters for large numbers knows (but no one understands), an increase in the number of diners requires a less than proportionate increase in the quantity of food needed.

Of course, we have never sought to make a profit from village lunch. We are happy simply to cover costs, and any happy surplus that occurs is given, with raffle proceeds, to the Martindale committee as a small contribution to our heating and cleaning bill. The price we charge was raised (at the request of diners) to £5 in October 2022, and, despite the persistently high food-price inflation since, we continue to make surpluses. In 2023 the total amounted to £338 (£457 in '22). Lizzie and Peter Heasman's raffle, on the other hand, raised £756 (£472 in '22). 2023 saw the first 'Lunch lunch' since before the pandemic, when all those who provide and prepare village lunch came themselves to have lunch, to relax and enjoy each other's company, to share each other's experiences and to make plans.

In August we had a special treat. Najwa Mounla, who with Martin has been a regular for some time now, offered to arrange and provide a Middle Eastern lunch for us all. Helped by two Syrian friends, Asia and Sumar, she provided Mujadara (lentils and bulgar wheat), stuffed Zucchini (white ones specially bought from Covent Garden) and more, with a dessert of Mamoul with dates. There were a few raised eyebrows; but the majority were charmed and delighted with it. Dawn, one of our cooks and used to living in the Middle East, brought her children for a nostalgic meal. Several asked for recipes and even training. Other such events may follow. Watch this space.



CUCKFIELD DEANERY SYNOD

On the 10th February the annual Deanery Morning was held in the Martindale Centre, St Giles Church hosting the occasion. Over 50 people attended from around the deanery, with a good showing from our own congregation.

The speaker was the Rev Earl Collins, once a catholic priest in Belfast, now an Anglican in Brighton and Hove. His subject was the development of the Old Testament, from the original scriptures into the books that we know today. He explained how various documents were gathered together, decisions made about what to include and what to leave out over the centuries. The bible that we know today, one volume within two covers, is actually a relatively recent format for the Christian scriptures.

On the 20th February the synod met at St Wilfrid's Church, Haywards Heath. The speaker for the evening was the Rev Rachel Reverley from Ipswich, on the subject of Angels. Her original idea was to 'angel bomb' the city of Ipswich during the run up to Christmas, having realised that angels still have a strong appeal. She had heard people saying that they 'didn't believe in God and weren't religious, but did believe in angels.' In some cases, of course, they may have been confusing angels with fairies, but the Rev Reverley considered that this nascent form of belief could be a stepping stone to a sounder Christian faith.

The reasonably modest budget for the project was spent on publicising the events, and on the manufacture of several very large angel wings, to adorn the city in prominent positions. Other angel based initiatives were run by local schools, churches and businesses, angels were made and displayed in all sorts of places, and carol services and Christmas worship with an angel theme was well attended. The idea has spread, (as far as Eastbourne, at least) and may be coming closer to home.

Heidi Mowforth

ELECTORAL ROLL

The Roll stands at 117 members with two deceased members and no new members.

21 of those enrolled are outside the Parish.

Fiona Price

FABRIC REPORT

Church Building:

During the year the Fabric committee met 6 times. as required and on a reasonably regular basis. The Committee was chaired by David Lamb and composed of the Chairman, Martin Govas, Phil Miles and myself. All maintenance and protection of the fabric was maintained and enhanced as necessary with timely efficient action. Our thanks to the committee for it's commitment of so much time and effort in ensuring best use of our limited funds to present the Church in it's outstanding condition, so often commented on favourably by visitors. In more detail, in response to the 2022 Quinquennial Inspection by our Architect Jonathan Cerowski the condition of the Church has been brought fully up to date by a comprehensive contract of works carried out by T E Tilley Ltd. This was in response to the less urgent category 3 and 4 items, mainly a comprehensive repair of the rain water goods including the provision and installation of historically missing items. The works also included; repointing, stone repair, stone replacement and internal redecoration. All the work was approved by our Architect, to historic building standards, managed and supervised by members of the Fabric Committee. These works have ensured that the building is weather tight and free from deterioration, which would have resulted in considerable future cost.

Routine inspections and Log Book maintenance items were managed and carried out by Phil Miles, our thanks to him for carrying out this unglamorous but essential work.

During the routine maintenance of the Tower Clock the defect in the chiming mechanism was inspected and significant wear was found to the hammer and related mechanism. A contract for the repairs was placed with Smith of Derby which required the silencing of the

In terms of grounds maintenance, we are looking to replace some fencing in the "moat area" to improve security. General maintenance is also ongoing. We are holding a Grounds Day in April to clear our playground and the sheds. We are looking at changing the Quiet Garden into a Sensory Garden to support the well-being of our children and this is being led by one of our Year 4 children who has taken on the project following a School Council meeting.

We, along with most small village schools, are having to work hard to ensure we have a balanced budget, these issues certainly don't get any easier with the passing years.

The PTA continues to be a great support to us. This year we have had a very successful Christmas Event, Quiz night and the May Fair is planned for the 11th May. The PTA have supported the school providing a range of workshops and events for pupils and helped to provide some extra equipment for the playground and the new Sensory Garden. We are grateful for all the hard work undertaken by the PTA to support the school.

As a Leadership team, we have the support of a strong governing body. Helen Jones continues to chair the board; her experience and drive is providing excellent strategic direction and challenge to the school.

As a church school, our vision of bringing out the best in every child and our values of Respect, Nurture, Inspire and Achieve are all about helping our children to flourish and "have life in all of its fullness" (John 10:10). The Church of England wrote recently about what that life means and the one that particularly resonates for us here at St Giles is the word "Ubuntu" – drawn from the Zulu language. This word is best translated as "I am because we are". Flourishing is not an individual pursuit but a collective endeavour, realised in relationships and communities that live well together. At St Giles, our children have the opportunity to flourish not only because of the relationships and communities within the school, but also because of those with the church and the wider village community. We are incredibly grateful for the support that we receive and look to further strengthen those relationships in the future.

Mrs Coulson

The wider community has also been something that we continue to focus on this year, as it plays such a big part in our school life. From giving our children leadership opportunities in school as bishops, team captains and school council representatives to our Eco Team, helping out at the village lunch, charity events, the Mayfair and our involvement with the God Agak school in Kenya, the school is at the heart of the community and we continue to look for ways to build on this. Mrs Douch has just visited the God Agak school in Kenya, taking them letters and gifts from the school. We are looking forward to seeing the pictures of the trip. We are also looking to build links with the school in our partner village of Cahagnes.

Collective Worship is an important part of our life at the school and gives us the opportunity to explore our values as well as other Christian values in greater detail. We have also spent time this year looking at the Christmas Carol "The First Nowell" in our RE week, the Lord's prayer and also just recently have created our own versions of the Stations of the Cross. This has also helped us to further strengthen our links with the church and clergy as both Frs David and Peter have been actively involved in all of these events answering in some cases, some particularly challenging and insightful questions. The link between the church and the school is also further enhanced by our Friday Collective Worship team made up of members of the congregation and the wider community. We are incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated team of volunteers who bring so much to the Friday services and help bring the stories and themes to life for the children. As a school, we are so grateful for our links and special relationship with the church and continue to look for ways to further strengthen and build on them.

We continue to maintain and develop the school buildings and grounds. Over the summer, the school undertook a massive refurbishment project with the help of funding secured from the Diocese. The fabric of the building (windows/toilets/security) was improved and the classrooms in the old wing of the school were renovated. The school looks amazing and refreshed.

chimes for several weeks. The striking mechanism is now in full working order.

For Health and Safety reasons it has been necessary to lower and remove the Flag Pole. The unconventional support system had deteriorated and the pole had commenced an increasing lean, aggravated by November gales. The last flag flown was in memory of our thrice Warden and much more, Peter Vince. A replacement pole will be a considerable cost and a specific fund will be required. I would like to once again, to thank the Friends of St. Giles for their continued enthusiastic and effective fund raising towards the maintenance of our community's greatest and most loved asset. The Annex Project Team have continued to complete the process of the planning application. It has become necessary to carry out additional documentation due to the necessity of convincing Historic England, and by association, the planning officer of the need for compliant appropriate facilities for a functioning 'Community Church' rather than the, 'ancient monument' they seem to consider it to be. Our thanks to the efforts and perseverance of the Team.

Goods and Ornaments

There were the normal purchases of consumable items and materials and stocks were maintained. As referred to in the Building report the Flag Pole was lowered it is unsafe, but remains on site.

The only purchase was a new Diones Flag, which was the last flown on the Flag Pole.

Barbara Fairweather and John Whiting

FIRST STEPS

We have now entered our twentieth year and recurrently I'm reminded of the sense of inter-generational connection, which is so important in building community. I believe the local church should be a shining beacon of community building, and so am encouraged that St Giles continues to support our village provision for the tiniest residents in our village. The Martindale is a great place to be on a Wednesday morning. Why not arrange to drop in and see for yourselves?

Three grandparents who raised their own children in the village bring their small charges occasionally or regularly to play and explore. All 4 volunteers, Amanda, Elaine, Linda and myself (and occasionally Pat too) also raised their own children here. We are fortunate to have such a heart. 8 of our current tots have at least one parent who grew up in Horsted Keynes and went to St Giles School. But of course there is always room for new families, and our village community is enhanced by their arrival.

We aim to provide a warm, safe and welcoming place to meet and make friends. The kettle is always hot and snack time around the table is an opportunity for chatting, while the singing slot is accompanied by enthusiastic shaking of bells and rattles, as we end the morning with an energetic rendering of the hokey cokey.

Chris Wheatley

FRIDAY 'GOD IS OUR ROCK' AFTERSCHOOL CLUB

This Club began in September 2022, inspired & conceived by Katie Spetch, as a way of enhancing the connection between St Giles Primary School & our Church community. The idea was an After School Club, offering a free service on the school premises as an opportunity for children to explore the Bible stories & learn more about the Christian faith/way of life in a more informal way.

One of the first sessions involved deciding on a name for the Club. The most popular idea with the children was to call it The Rock Club. There was already a music club called "Rock Steady" at the school, so we adapted it to "God is our Rock", although the children also affectionately refer to it as "Katie's Club".

We completed our first school year In July 2023 and began again in September.

At present we have a steady group of about 12 (mainly boys) who turn up eagerly each week. They seem to like physical/active activities, preferably with a competitive element, so whenever the weather permits, we hold the session outside on the playground.

adjacent parishes with volunteers helping on a rota; First Steps baby and toddler group; and an after-school club for children at St Giles School on a Friday afternoon.

Duffy Parry

ST. GILES PRIMARY SCHOOL

It has been another busy year here at St Giles. We have said goodbye to a much-loved headteacher, undertaken a new interim partnership and continued to work hard as a staff to ensure that everything we do within the school is designed to bring out the best in every child and to preserve the special features of our Church school.

With the retirement of Mrs Douch, we have embarked on an interim partnership with St Peter's Primary School in Ardingly. Through this partnership I have taken on the role of head of School, and we have welcomed Jamie Savage as our Executive Headteacher, working with us for two and a half days a week. In practice, this means that Jamie spends two or three days at St Giles, alternating with St Peters. We both have clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the school and are currently developing and reviewing the partnership. As a result of these changes to staffing, we have had a reshuffle of teachers and the classes that they teach and also welcomed a new Early Years teacher in January. Pupil numbers are steady, and we are currently almost full in reception. The school continues to have a good reputation locally.

This year our focus for school development has been to ensure that our curriculum reflects who we are as a Church School and what skills we want our children to develop by the time they leave us in Year 6. As a staff, we have thought carefully about our curriculum intent and what makes it a "St Giles" curriculum. I have included some of the things that make it unique to us in this report. We have also been working on having consistency in our curriculum documentation. Phonics and reading are still a focus with our scheme having a very positive impact on pupils' early reading skills. As a school, we are continuing to work hard to provide pastoral support for pupils, with challenges around mental health and some issues with behaviour.

Thank you to all those in St. Giles congregation who have contributed so generously to the charity, in both financial and practical ways.

Hilary Nicholson, Helen Townsend, Phil Miles

PARISH & PARISHIONER

Happily, the magazine fund scraped into the black again over the past financial year, thanks to the support of our readers, advertisers and the grant from the Parish Council.

We remain committed to delivering the P&P free to every household in the parish –there is also a link to the magazine on the church website. Thank you to all our regular contributors who keep us up to date with the village activities, and to all who send in copy for the magazine. It's good to know that the village is still such a vibrant and active community.

As always, mention must be made of the volunteers who conscientiously deliver the P&P to every home in the parish each month, especially Jan Humphries who sorts the magazines into batches, and Dick and Penny Carter who drop them off to the deliverers. A huge thank you to one and all, not forgetting Peter Heasman who posts the magazines to those on the mailing list – around 50 addresses, near and far.

Thank you to everyone for your support over the past year.

Sally Lamb – Editor P&P

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Duffy Parry has continued as the Parish Safeguarding Officer but will shortly be stepping down. A new Parish Safeguarding Officer will be sought.

The P.C.C. has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

No incidents were reported during the year

Regulated Activities: There were four 'regulated' activities during 2023: HK Help run by volunteers mainly driving vulnerable adults; HKafe, a drop-in café style youth group, run by youth workers from

We have a team of 6 adult leaders/helpers: Katie, Christine, Chris Wheatley, Ash Kauffman (parent & churchwarden at Danehill Church), Churchwarden Barbara & James Nicholson. We have also made use of other adults including Josh Watson (youth worker at Danehill, who also runs HKafe).

The leaders meet at the beginning of each half-term to plan our sessions, which either follow the school theme for the term or events of the church year. We are grateful to the PCC for funding the cost of our refreshments & craft materials and record our appreciation to Headteacher, Alison Coulson, for her support & accommodating us at the school.

We value the ongoing prayer support of the congregation for this outreach work & endeavour to give you a bit of a flavour of our activities with artwork in the Church porch.

Christine Murdoch

FRIENDS OF HK CHURCH

Since the Friends' committee is officially a committee of the PCC, we don't publish a separate Friends' account for the APCM; all our accounts appear as part of the Church accounts. Moreover we hold our own AGM. But here are a few details for last year (2023):-

Total Income £16,608

Admin, fundraising and other expenses £4,342

Net income £12,266

Total Expenditure £23,686

Less Admin, fundraising and other expenses £4342

Expenditure on church £19,344

Of which Annex seed funding £10,800

Church Fabric £5,744

Churchyard £2,800

Reserves at year end £39,699

Annual Meeting 16th March

Stephen Hitchen, busily preparing then for his demanding role in Iraq, took time to be our guest speaker, and charmed, educated and entertained us with a very lively discussion of the language of Arabic. Unlike nearly all languages, which require both halves of one's brain, Arabic one learns with only one side. We felt pleased to be taught to sing Happy Birthday in Arabic and were lost in admiration for those who can speak it.

Coronation Celebration 7th May

This was a whole village event, led by our Parish Council, with most village organisations taking their part (and raising some funds). Ours was to run the bar at the Martindale Coronation tea party. It was all a wonderful village occasion.

Barn Dance at the Bluebell Vineyard 20th May

This was a kind suggestion from Barry Tay. There was an excellent turn out with more than 100 barn dancing guests at the function room overlooking the lakes, the woods and vines on this beautiful, bright evening. Again, much of the pleasure was in the mixture of ages who attended. We raised £1,000.

Open Gardens Day and Plant Sale 24th June

This was another delightful event, with many well-known gardens opening again, and many gardens opening for the first time. It was unusually hot, a delightful day for garden visiting. The plant stall was on the Green, and attracted custom from many, not all of whom could visit the gardens. Many who did so were joined by visitors to the village from considerable distances. Cakes, teas and coffees were served in shady gardens. It was as successful as ever.

Serendipity's 'Vocal Voyage' 15th July

As expected, this was a hugely enjoyable evening from those very talented and versatile musicians, though the timing of the concert, in mid-July, reduced the size of the audience. Nonetheless it was a very

People come for gatherings of all sorts; children parties, wedding receptions, family gatherings and wakes, enjoying our facilities and wonderful views across the Weald.

Despite rising costs for gas, water and electricity and other basic needs, we decided not to raise our hire rates last year, but we still managed to cover our costs and make a profit, partly due to a programme of Fund-raising events, which are well supported. We continue in our policy of making the Martindale free of charge to all church affiliated organisations, which covers First Steps, HKafe, Village Lunch and any St. Giles School P.T.A. events.

None of this would be possible without the support of the hard-working Committee, Jackie Binstead, Paul Fairweather, our Booking Secretary, Alan Johnson, Martyn Mason, Hilary Nicholson, Alison Smith and Adrian Woods. Any other volunteers will be warmly welcomed!

Marion Lott

OPEN HOUSE

We have continued to support this hostel in Crawley for the homeless throughout the year. We no longer collect clothes, etc., for them, but we have delivered two large collections of food and household supplies during the year, including a special Christmas collection of seasonal goodies for them to enjoy.

During September and October Open House was the approved St. Giles charity, and we invited Ian Wilkins from the charity to come to our 10 a.m. service on the 24th October to give us an update. His talk made very clear that the residents are very well looked after in many ways, providing food, clothing, safety and advice on health, benefits, housing, etc. Now that Crawley has so many asylum seekers housed in local hotels, Open House find themselves being the next step for those who, having been granted asylum, are no longer entitled to accommodation. It was very moving to hear his stories of how they bed down outside the full hostel at night as it makes them feel safer. We were very grateful to Ian for giving his time.

HK HELP

My report on HK Help over the past year has very little to say in as much the service we offer is now not so in demand as it used to be, but there are times when I get a call for some help. This usually is someone wanting a lift to or from the village lunch, which helps to keep the numbers up, and in some cases keeps them in touch with other villagers. I have found over the years that if people need help in many ways, they will phone me for HELP. As long as I remain up-right I will carry on giving the service. Thank you.

Peter Heasman

LIFE & FAITH DISCUSSION GROUP

The meetings are held on Thursday afternoons during term time.

Currently there are seven regulars who gather at the home of one of the members of the group.

Discussion topics selected cover a variety of subjects and issues, ranging from books of the Bible, contemporary issues or events.

This year we included the Lent course which followed the same Pilgrim course Fr Peter was running at the main Wednesday evening group.

New members are always welcome in an hour or so of friendship and fellowship –and, of course coffee/tea and biscuits!

Barbara Fairweather

MARTINDALE CENTRE

The Martindale Centre continues to provide a welcoming venue for a wide range of activities, welcoming folk from the village and further afield. These cater for all ages, from babies and toddlers and their parents/carers at First Steps through HKafe for Secondary School children to a variety of Pilates and other Keep-Fit groups to the Village Lunch. As a church, we use the Martindale as a venue for P.C.C. Meetings, the Lent Course meetings, and a variety of one-off gatherings. We also provided a site for some Swift Boxes to be located on the North facing wall, as part of a programme organised by the HK Wildlife Group.

successful evening. No surprise, then, that we asked them back so soon.

Serendipity's 'Christmas Cornucopia' 9th December

The fine singers performed a wide range of Christmas songs, some traditional, some new to us. There was a delightful variety of richly enjoyable, quality singing. It felt like the first event of Christmas. The mulled wine and mince pies seemed just right, and ninety of us were there to enjoy it.

Burns Night Supper 25th January

In a welcome return after a five-year Covid gap, 72 of us sat down to our three-course traditional supper. As we ate our excellent food, there was a nice range of entertainments, the traditional speeches, songs, recitations, and bagpipe playing.

There was a well-run, well stocked bar. An impressively efficient team of cooks, servers and washers-up served up and cleared everything with speed and grace, and a brilliant MC kept us smartly on schedule. We had time for a couple of hours of cramped ceilidh dancing before we sang Auld Lang Syne. It was all such fun.

“Next year” shouted revellers. “Never again” answered the cooks.

Events we are planning

Barn Dance at the Bluebell Vineyard 29th June

Last year's went so well that we were invited back, but after this year, this event will occur every two years, alternating with our Open Gardens Day.

Our Committee

Sarah Cooper, had to stand down from chairmanship owing to the pressure of moving house. Dawn Hitchen, our deputy chairman, has kindly stepped into the breach. Phil Green, who has served as our treasurer since 2017, has also had to stand down. Two new members have agreed to join us, namely Becky George and Emma Bell, who has kindly agreed to be our new treasurer.

Tim Westlake

Tim died suddenly and shockingly at the end of February. Tim was the founding chairman of The Friends of Horsted Keynes Church and very much set our tone. Our launch, in the church itself in September 2011, was in reality our first concert, or variety night. Tim was its inspiration, its impresario, its director and even a performer. It was his aim from the outset that not only should we raise funds for our church and churchyard, but also, we should run events which would help to build up our village community.

Tim's open-hearted warmth, his good-natured enthusiasm, the wide range of his interests, his capacity for friendship and fun – all these qualities and more were of huge benefit in our early years of strong and useful growth. His very personality, so engaging and so encouraging, naturally attracted support.

Early in 2017, as we were preparing for our Burns Night Supper, Tim suffered his terrible fall. When he chaired our committee meeting two months later he announced that he would have to stand down. We very much missed him. It wasn't just his wisdom, experience and flair; he was always such good company.

Happily, we have been led by excellent leaders since – that too is part of his legacy, as is the very wide nature of the events we put on.

Our hearts go out to Denise, Sam and Holly, to their whole family and all their many close friends.

James Nicholson

HKafe

In contrast to autumn 2022, a very small group moved from St Giles School to secondary school in September 2023 and most of them did not live in the village. This meant that our regulars are now almost entirely from year 8.

Hopefully next autumn the pupils from the current year 6 at St Giles who have already become part of the Youth Council, will become regulars at HKafe and bring their friends too.

Our team of volunteers continues to offer homemade waffles and pancakes and other small snacks. The youngsters enjoy a variety of

board games, table tennis, pool an xbox and switch and some fresh air activities when the weather allows.

They also look forward to 'Josh's challenge' each week – the winner of which is awarded an extra free waffle. The rota is tight, so please contact me if you are interested in joining the team. It's fun!

As well as running the weekly group, youth leader Josh Watson has taken a group to the Diocesan May camp at Plumpton last May. This included one young person from Horsted Keynes. This youngster also joined a summer Christian camp and a further weekend away with Josh and other local young people.

Although not HKafe's direct responsibility we have been pleased to host monthly meetings of the Youth Council at the end of HKafe sessions. Half of the members are still at St Giles School, the others are members of HKafe. The shape and function of the Council has been formalised with the Parish Council and is facilitated by Councillor Lucy Soper, with myself as the second adult present during their meetings. During the year the Council met with our local MP, Mims Davis who then invited them to Westminster in the new year. The council's initiatives have included running a Christmas fair, organising two chess sessions and encouraging participation in constructive recycling. With help from Lucy they are looking forward to the visit of a pop-up skate park.

A further event that was facilitated by Josh and Lucy was a night hike last May when a group hiked from Lindfield back to the village. This was an initiative from the Youth Council, but required Josh's expertise and employment status to arrange it safely. It was much enjoyed and hopefully can be repeated soon.

Hopefully this snapshot gives an idea of the positive presence that St Giles Church has in sponsoring and facilitating the provision of the only regular activities for our young within the village.

We appreciate the substantial funding from the PCC to fund Josh, which is supplemented by the Parish Council, but inevitably costs have risen and we are looking at ways of bridging the anticipated £400 deficit this year.

Chris Wheatley