

A year in the life of



Annual Report 2017

STPL.ORG.UK

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Letter from the Vicar



Dear friends,

Reading through the annual report always leads me to thank God for all that he is doing among us at St. Paul's, and to thank him for our church family as a whole. Thankyou too to everyone who has played a part in the life of our church over the last year.

During 2017, we took time as a church to seek the Lord afresh for what we should be focussing on next. Our vision has long been "to see Leamington changed, one life at a time", and we have spent several years focusing on different strands on that vision.

We spent several years putting a lot of energy into the wider church in the town, and I am delighted that so many people are involved in so many inter-church ministries. More recently, we spent 5 years redeveloping our buildings and multiplying our congregations, and it is wonderful to see how much more ministry is happening as a result.

Now we sense that it is time to focus our energies on helping each other to grow as disciples of Jesus. This is not an inward-looking thing, as Jesus always calls us to look outwards and serve others. Making disciples takes a lot of time, and we can't rush it. So we have expressed this as our

2020 Vision: Making wholehearted (missional) disciples of all ages.

As you read through these pages, thank God for all he is doing, and ask him to show you what part he wants you to play during 2018 and beyond.

With love and prayer as always,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Jonathan".

Services

At St Paul's, there are 5 services each week with a range of styles. Each service, in its own way, gives the opportunity to draw close to God through Jesus, to worship him, hear his word and apply it to our lives by his Holy Spirit. All the sermons from our main morning and evening services on Sundays are available on our website and we encourage anyone who has missed them to listen to them later in the week.

Our regular services are:

Sunday 8 am

This is a small and quiet service of Holy Communion which lasts for about half an hour and is held in the chancel (at the front of the church).

Sunday 9.30 am and 11.15 am

These are lively services which have the same content as each other, and groups for under 14s. The worship is led by a band and comprises a mix of contemporary songs, hymns and action songs. These two services are combined into a single 10.30 am all-age service during school holidays.

Sunday 6.30 pm

The worship at this service is led by a band and uses contemporary songs. There is a talk (which is usually the same as that at the morning services) and prayer ministry. Most of the congregation are students or young adults in their 20s and 30s but some older people also attend.

Wednesday 11 am

This is a more traditional service with hymns and a talk. The congregation mainly consists of retired people but some younger people also attend.

Highlights from the Services



Mornings

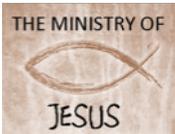
The two main morning congregations are roughly equal in size with around 120-140 adults and 50-60 children at each. There tend to be more pre-school children at the 9.30 service and more over 11s at the 11.15 service. Most services include a mix of sung worship, prayers, church news, a Bible reading and a talk with the opportunity to respond and prayer ministry offered. Children and young people go out early in the service for their own activities. There is Communion around once a month.

Evenings

Around 120 adults attend the evening service during term time with around 70-80 meeting during the university holidays. Fewer time restraints in the evening mean that there is a longer time for worship. Increasingly, this service has had input from a small non-clergy team who regularly lead the service or the prayers. There is a range of age-groups at this service but it particularly attracts students and young adults.

Teaching

Most weeks we have the same sermon at all three main services. As well as celebrating the main festivals of the Christian year (Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Advent), we also usually have one or two sermon series each term. In 2017, we had sermon series on:



You can listen to the sermons again through our website.
www.stpl.org.uk

Where is St Paul's?

Every Sunday in March at each service a church member spoke about their working week and role in the community and how their faith made a difference to them & those they meet.

We heard from

Simon Brown, *IT teacher*;

Charlie Crow, *barrister*;

Jon Randall, *automotive engineer*;

Joe Shepherd, *primary teacher*;

Jack Shepherd, *student*;

Helen Ovenden, *probation officer*;

Ruth Quigley, *full time mum*;

James Horn, *digital artist*;

Sam Young, *GP*;

Andrew Bush, *automotive engineer*;

Tim Traynar, *systems engineer*.





The Midweek congregation of around 40-50 worshippers meets on a Wednesday morning at 11am for a slightly more traditional service compared to the main Sunday services. A variety of speakers cover a wide range of Bible passages over the year. The talks sometimes follow the lectionary but there have also been sermon series on the Armour of God, the Life of Jesus and the book of Acts. It is a real pleasure to worship with a congregation that has so many years of Godly wisdom between them and to know that there is so much prayer going on behind the scenes. There is also a real sense of community – many people look out for friends who are becoming more frail or need hospital visits.

From the summer onwards it was a joy to welcome our Curate Adam to the service on a regular basis and we also had the bonus of a new organist moving into the area; thank you to Ian for helping us out so willingly and regularly. Thanks also go to Lewis, our other organist and Jonathan, John, Judith, Helen, Ruth and Jan who regularly come and preach. We would also be a very thirsty bunch if it wasn't for the amazing kitchen team who supply us with coffee and tea – thank you ladies.

During school term times there is a light lunch after the service and every two weeks a variety of talks and quizzes – but more about that in the CAMEO section of the Annual Report...

Vision and Commitment Sundays



This year, our Vision and Commitment Sundays had a slightly different format to that of previous years.

As our big focus is on adult discipleship, Jonathan preached about how important it is for each one of us to keep moving forward in our journeys with the Lord. He shared with us how he and Juliet have committed themselves to moving forward, particularly in their prayer life, and are meeting with spiritual directors to help them with this. Jonathan has committed himself to 1 hour of daily prayer every morning.

For the past few years on Commitment Sunday, we have asked people to consider their giving and their service in church, and to fill in response forms committing to regular giving and offering service to some area of church ministry. This year, however, Jonathan encouraged each of us to spend time listening to God to discern what the next step forward for us should be. There were cards available in church for people to record what their own commitment would be (these were for them to keep as a reminder rather than to hand in) and separate cards to ask for any help they might need from the church to do this.

People were also offered the opportunity to renew their baptism vows and receive an anointing with oil to mark their renewed commitment, and many people responded to this. There was a powerful sense of commitment and solemnity as people did so, and also a great sense of joy.

“Commitment Sunday was a really special occasion; having a chance to properly think about the baptism vows and consciously re-commit our whole lives (not just commit a little more time or money) was a very powerful experience for us.”

Zak & Emma Dunstone

Special Services

Easter and Christmas On Easter Day and Christmas Day we combine all 3 main services and the building is packed with around 500 people of all ages worshipping together.



Easter

The Easter Day service comes at the end of Holy Week, when we remember the events leading up to that first Easter Day with various events and services including Children's Easter Crafts, a Passover Meal, and 2 services on Good Friday.

The Good Friday morning service is like our Sunday morning all-age services (but quieter, and not as suitable for toddlers). Then, at 2pm, we have a 'Quiet Hour at the Cross', with hymns, bible readings and times of silence. It finishes at 3pm, the time at which Jesus died. After meditating on the cross on Good Friday, we are ready to celebrate with lots of joy on Easter Day. On Easter Sunday morning, the church was packed almost to capacity for a lively all age service where the resurrection was celebrated with party blowers and dynamic worship. The church was decorated with daffodils and pom-poms and there was a great atmosphere of joy and celebration.



Christmas

Christmas Services started seasonally with the first snowy Sunday for many years on Dec 10th, the date for....

Christmas Replugged

our alternative carol service, rebranded from 'unplugged' last year.



The intention of Christmas Replugged was to allow everyone who attended to surround themselves with the well-known story and engage with its meaning. Sometimes, the nativity story can be lost or glossed over in the hustle and bustle of Christmas, so we wanted to give people the opportunity to stop and actually think about it. Using a mixture of bible verses, poems and immersive story-telling, we gave people a chance to reflect on the realities of the story and of the feelings of some of the central characters. People were given the opportunity to consider how they were really feeling about Christmas this year and to share this with God.

We interspersed the story with a range of Christmas carols that allowed people to join in and worship, or to reflect on the words being sung. At one point, Jess Tams sang a solo which encouraged people to consider Mary's feelings. At another, a video asked us to think about Joseph and his changing emotions as the story progresses. Overall, the evening helped those who braved the heavy snowfall to have a quiet, calming space to re-engage with Christmas. It reminded us all that Jesus came to Earth because we are all worth so much to him.

"I thought it was really interesting looking at Christmas from Joseph's point of view. It gave a fresh feel to a story so well-known it's easy to forget the real meanings and reasons for the birth of Jesus. Also, I liked the style of the service; it kept me engaged and listening all the way through." Rachel Roberts.



All Age Carols

The Sunday before Christmas Eve, we held a combined All Age carol service which included a simple re-telling of the Christmas story with the children dressing up as characters from the narrative and forming a great tableau on the dais. Children were encouraged to come as whichever character they preferred.

Carols by candlelight 2017

The annual Carols by Candlelight is one of the biggest services of the year at St Paul's, and it's always a real joy to see the church packed with people and to hear the traditional carols being sung with such enthusiasm. We loosely follow the nine lessons and carols structure, familiar to many, and each year we pull together a choir who help lead the sung worship and perform a new carol. One of the highlights of the service is the moment of quiet at the end of the talk when, one by one, candles are lit all around the church. The flame is passed from one person to another, until the whole church is filled with soft candlelight - a visible reminder of the Light of the World who entered into history that first Christmas time.

The pop-up Christmas choir came together weekly from the beginning of November to learn a new carol and to reacquaint themselves with the old favourites - especially the descants! It was a real pleasure to welcome new members, boosting the numbers attending choir practice to thirty, including four bass singers.

It's fantastic that during the weeks before the service choir members turned out so faithfully for rehearsals. Newcomers were welcomed and supported as they negotiated tricky passages of music. One of the aims of the choir is to be a worshipping community and to convey through song the joy of the faith that we all share, and that came across in the energy and delight that was evident when the choir were singing.

Special thanks to Ruth Smith who led the choir and wrote the choir carol, and to Stephen Axcell who arranged the choir carol. We also had a fine band who turned up and played with only limited rehearsal time, but who were always professional and patient. We are blessed as a church to have so many excellent musicians.



Christingle services

This year, as Christmas Eve was a Sunday, we had one of our two Christingle services in the morning and one in the afternoon. Both services were very well attended and appreciated with a good mix of regular church families and visitors at both services: there were more regulars in the morning and more visitors in the afternoon. Lots of children and their families enjoyed joining in singing familiar Christmas songs and hearing the gospel and the significance of the Christingles. Rather than the more traditional candles in the oranges, we now use glow sticks which added to the festive light-filled atmosphere.



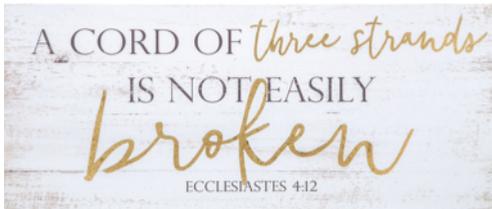
Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals



“Our wedding on 11/11/17 was made so much more special because we were able to use the beautiful space that is St Pauls for the whole event. We were also bowled over by all the help we had from our Church family as well as our own in preparing for the day and all the hard work on the actual wedding day. We could not have done it without you. Thank you so much.” Kay & Guy Chapman



Mel Tweed giving away his daughter Helen.



“Chris and I both think it was the happiest day of our lives. Everything we'd planned came together beautifully thanks to the hard work of many of our church family. We will be forever grateful to all at St Paul's who made our special day so special.” Jo Ryan

During the year there were 9 infant baptisms and 4 adult baptisms, including one baptism where a whole family (mother, father and child were baptised together).

We also had 7 weddings:

Jo Edwards and Chris Ryan;

Mike Hood and Rachel Leeson;

Sam Davis and Jennie Philpott;

Zak Dunstone and Emma Cottrell;

Helen Tweed and Adam Hunter;

Sandra Leadbetter and David Wilson;

Kay Wootton and Guy Chapman.

There were 7 funerals in church including those of Fran Shaw and Shirley Crook who were both active members of the church, Peter Sampson who came on Sundays and to the midweek service and Pat West who had joined our 8 am congregation in the last few years.



Seamus Stinson's baptism



Worship and Tech Team

Our worship team has continued to be blessed by the wonderfully talented musicians we have at St Paul's. We have met regularly as a team throughout the year to learn from one another, to build relationships and to worship together. In the latter part of the year we've been exploring how to build more freedom into our worship, and the Thy Kingdom Come worship evenings, now held roughly every month, have become a significant part of this – with different members of the team leading each one.

On Sundays we've continued to learn new songs at all our services, whilst continuing with some of the old favourites. We've welcomed a good number of new people to the worship team, not least Adam, our curate, who comes with some experience of leading worship and worship teams in the past. He has taken on leading the team and creates a good link between those who lead our sung worship and the clergy leadership team. We see the Tech team as very much part of the worship team and vital to our ability to worship properly, both on Sundays and throughout the week. We've a good team of folk who ensure we always have the words to the songs on the screens, and can hear everything that is going on. This year we've done quite a bit of work to our systems, with new radio microphones giving us better and more consistent quality of sound, alongside a new projection system. The team have enjoyed getting to know these new systems, and particularly enjoy the new features of the projection software.

Stewards and Service Managers

We have a fine committed team who steward and service manage each of our services. The service managers make sure that everything is ready for the service and that all the relevant teams are in place. They also make sure that things are left tidy and secure after the services. The stewards welcome people at the door and make sure any visitors know where to go, man the door throughout the services, give out any handouts, watch out for stray children leaving without their parents and help tidy up after the services. Both teams will also take the lead in evacuating people safely if there is ever a fire or other emergency. We are very grateful for the work of both these teams in making sure that things run smoothly and we couldn't manage without them.

Prayer Ministry

Alison Scott, Ruth Lockyer and Andrea Kane are now leading St Paul's Prayer Ministry and together with the rest of the team, are in the process of developing this area of ministry. This is ongoing and we are building on what has gone before. It is an exciting time and we have been very encouraged by those who recently came to our 'Prayer Team Social and Prayer' and our 'Prayer Ministry Training' afternoons. There are currently 22 members of St Paul's regularly on the team and, following the training afternoon, we have five new people who would like to join the team. We are planning to increase the number of times we come together for prayer and training and are very keen for more people to get involved.

Quotes from the training afternoon

'I was very encouraged by the training day. The teaching was very helpful and we all needed to be reminded of basic values of prayer ministry. Alison was excellent and also gave opportunity for participation. The prayer time for one another was important too. Thank you Andrea, Ruth and Alison!' Angela Stephenson

'I found both sessions really encouraging. The more people getting involved in prayer ministry the better for the continuing growth and health of the church!' Liz Thomson

Ministry and Mission



Children

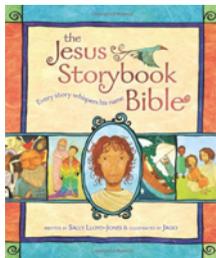


Groovers

Groovers (5-11 yrs) has continued to develop use of the Carousel model where children experience activities in three different zones; the Construction zone (hands-on, messy and creative), the Game Zone (physical, fun and teambuilding) and the Wonder Zone (quieter, reflective and thought-provoking). The session always starts with the mixed age 'PODS' having some social time together over drinks and biscuits. This is followed by a leader opening the week's theme and sharing the Bible story before the Pods move to their carousel of activities. Through all this our vision is to help children develop a God heart rather than just becoming God smart.

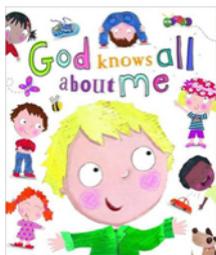
None of this would be possible without a great team of volunteers to lead each of the Zones and 'parent' each of the Pods. Typically 25 children attend each session.

In February Hester, our Children's Minister, went on maternity leave and Liz Garrett kindly stepped up to lead Groovers as another Assistant Minister alongside Hannah Jones. This enabled Hannah to focus on ...



Movers:

In Movers (2.5yrs-5yrs) we have been going through The Jesus Storybook Bible and have had fun creating sessions that are filled with sensory and play-based activities based upon a particular Bible story. We've made sure to include space for 'chat' with God – which is age-appropriate conversational prayer, the children have responded really well to this. We continue to have around 20 children at the 9:30 service and around 5 children at the 11:15.



Wrigglers:

This year in Wrigglers (0-2.5yrs) we were able to go from only offering Wrigglers at the 9:30 service to being able to offer it at the 11:15 service also! 2017 has also seen us really establish a routine to our sessions whereby every session we have set times for snack, story and singing...by far our favourite book is 'God knows all about me' which lots of the little ones can do all the actions for!

Easter Crafts

Easter Crafts was once again a lovely event, the whole church had tables laid out full of Easter-themed crafts and activities and there was a wonderful sense of worship during the church-time that followed the craft. We watched a DVD explaining how Easter is part of God's big rescue plan, which is something we have been building up to within our school assemblies and on Sunday mornings at St Paul's, helping the children discover that Easter was the pinnacle of God's rescue plan was exciting. As always it was a free event with lots of families from the surrounding community coming along, we even had a guest appearance of the Easter Bunny rewarding those who had completed the Bible-verse-egg-hunt! These big children's events really do highlight how giving and welcoming this church family is, we had so many people of all different ages who volunteered on the day, or helped with prep beforehand...and it's wonderful to see how much everyone's efforts bless our local community!



"Thank you for a wonderful morning. We all loved the Easter crafts the children were all so happy."

Becky, parent at Easter Crafts



Pirate Party

On the first Tuesday of the summer holidays we held a Pirate Party. Church was packed full with an amazing 204 children, along with their parents & carers, plus an incredible team of volunteers from the church family! The event involved lots of pirate themed crafts, activities and games, a time of sung worship and a Christian message - and our biggest ever children's party lunch! Throughout the crafts, worship and talk our theme was 'we are all God's treasure' - something we really pray each person who came along will know fully! The church looked amazing with all sorts of craft tables, even jelly fish & a life-size octopus hanging from the ceiling, and the opportunity to play in a pirate ship. Great fun was had by all!



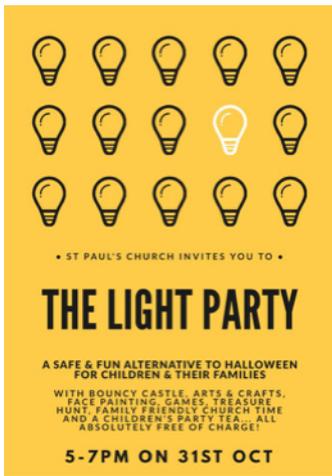
"What an amazing Pirate Party! Thank you Hannah and your brilliant team of helpers. We had a lovely time." Claire Greig

"It was fantastic as always, thanks to you all."

Diane Langhorn

"Thanks for this morning! Know you must've put loads of work! Much appreciated!"

Joy Caws



Light Party

This year's Light Party was a wonderful success; 197 children, along with their families, filled our church celebrating Jesus the Light of the World! We had an amazing team of volunteers who really went above and beyond to make sure the event ran so well, but most importantly, they were a great witness and shone a bright light of love into our community. We had a bouncy castle and a variety of activities and crafts, followed by a half hour family church time and a children's party tea. A big thanks must go to the team who made 200 portions of party food! It really was a night to remember, with many families expressing how grateful they were for a safe and fun alternative to the dangers and darkness of 'Trick or Treat'.

"It was absolutely brilliant." Alice – aged 8

"It was lots of fun." Arthur – aged 5

"The boys absolutely loved their first Light Party at St Paul's! They really enjoyed making their lighthouses, having their faces painted and charging down the bouncy castle run. 4 year old George especially loved that it was celebrating that Jesus is our light as he's been hearing and seeing a lot about Halloween and feeling frightened/uncertain of why scarier things are being celebrated. Huge thanks to Hannah and all of the team for their wonderful energy, enthusiasm and effort!"

Ellie Whiteford

"I liked all the pretty lights and doing the colouring and singing." (Olive – aged 5)

"Once again the team pulled off a cracking event that was well planned, well organised and well enjoyed by the masses who attended! It's such a fantastic alternative to Halloween and so easy to invite people. It was great to see many school families there, and even greater to hear them talking so positively about it at the school gate the next morning! Thanks all!"

Joy Caws

"The light party was fantastic! It is a wonderful way of allowing children to have a fun time celebrating God's love and light as an alternative to the often scary Halloween season. My children loved the craft and bouncy castle. It was so well organised and all my children could get involved."

Rachael York-Moore

Training events

In January we had whole-team Youth & Children's team training which was split into two halves; we all had St Paul's specific safeguarding training and then we split into streamed seminars on The Spirituality of Play, Effective Storytelling, Promoting Positive Behaviour and Youth Work.

"Team training gave me practical advice about what to do should I have any safeguarding concerns. It was also an opportunity to meet others who were on children's teams and pray about how we could positively impact all the young people in our church." Ruth Bowie

"The evening was a great chance to see how big and enthusiastic the whole youth and children's team is. Normally I only get to see a few people at a time when helping out on a Sunday morning, so it was really encouraging to see everyone altogether and hear about their similar experiences and ideas." Zak Dunstone

TIDDLIES PRAISE

Tiddlies Praise

Tiddlies Praise continues to be a very happy ministry! Many parents & carers remark that it is such a bright, open and welcoming space for their children to play. We have between 55-85 families any given week, the majority of whom are regulars so have got to know us very well. Parents and children alike enjoy the café style lounge area & it's a very natural setting for good conversation between parents and team. 2017 has also seen us partnering with NCT, who run a 'Parents in Mind' group within Tiddlies Praise – the group supports women who are experiencing or have experienced perinatal mental health issues & we pray that God's presence and healing would be in that group. This year we have had a number of Tiddlies events; firstly an Easter event whereby children interacted with each part of the Easter Story in a walk-through telling of the story using crafts and activities. Our second event was an indoor Summer Teddy Bear's Picnic which was great fun; our third event was our Christmas party which was unfortunately cancelled, due to snow, but we were able to open up the lounge for a DIY toddler group for the few who hadn't got the message which turned out to be a lovely time getting to know a small handful on a deeper level...so even in disappointment we've seen God at work!

We're continually blessed with an extremely faithful team of volunteers who come along each week, who serve in a variety of roles & who really are a treasure to both church and community! The beginning of 2017 was particularly difficult for us as a team as we suddenly lost dear Fran Shaw who passed away unexpectedly. Fran was very special to Tiddlies and had been on team for many years, her love for the families and her depth of friendship with many became very clear and we thank God for her life & ministry.



Fran Shaw



St Paul's School

We continue to provide weekly whole school assemblies which are very gratefully received by both the school staff and the children – it's a real joy to see how excited the children are knowing it's a church assembly! During the autumn term we provide separate weekly assemblies for the Reception classes and this year Liz Lewis has taken responsibility for these and been in every week – this is something she's been absolutely fantastic at and her relationship with the children and staff in Reception is wonderful. We have also been into some classrooms to deliver various RE sessions & answer the children's questions. It's wonderful to see the relationship between school and church going from strength to strength. We also have various whole school services held at the church for Harvest, Christmas, and Easter as well as a School Leavers service at the end of the school year. The parents and guardians are also invited to attend these school services and there's always a sense of celebration and joy.



Charlie Crow, Chair of Governors, reports on a very successful year for St Paul's School.

"Different people and different organisations will employ different measures and rules for gauging the quality of a school. As both a parent and a governor, I represent two of the interested constituencies, and have a vested interest in both the gauging and the improving of the quality of provision at St. Paul's C of E Primary School. However, rather than foist upon the reader my own opinion (at least, not overtly!), it is my pleasure to recite the current opinions of others.

Firstly, and most importantly: feedback from both the pupil and parent bodies is positive. Naturally, there are still things to improve, but we are led to believe that parents and children generally enjoy the atmosphere at school, feel safe, and are encouraged by their progress. This last two years has seen the development and gradual embedding of our school values, which were decided upon by way of input from teachers, children and the governing body.

Our intention is that St. Paul's be known as "a Christian school that values being encouraging and challenging; brave and kind; thankful and thoughtful".

Whilst, for obvious reasons, Ofsted's valuations carry particular weight in the educational community in its widest sense, the Governing Body was particularly delighted with the conclusions drawn, following a visit in October 2016, in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report. This is because the foci of such a visit includes: how the school manages to be distinctive and effective as a C of E school, how it meets the needs of all learners

through its distinctive Christian character, and the extent to which collective worship and religious education positively impacts upon the children's education. Given this emphasis, it was especially pleasing to be awarded the grading of 'outstanding'. Ofsted paid St. Paul's its long-awaited visit in June 2017 and awarded grades of 'good' for all areas. This was a fitting tribute to some very hard work put in by the Headteacher (Mr. Matthew Bown), Deputy Head (Mrs. Caroline Newell) and all of the staff. It was a pleasure to hear the inspector feed back at the end of the two-day inspection to explain how close the school was to being rated as 'outstanding' in various areas. Once again, the inspectors seemed impressed with the behaviour and atmosphere – echoing the views shared with the school by various local authority advisors that have visited over the course of the previous few years. Last, but by no means least, the current Year 6 football team has won its way through the local and county competitions to reach the regional finals to take place in May – even 'the beautiful game' thrives on the playing fields of St. Paul's C of E!

As with any organisation, there are still areas to improve. The considerable devotion, dedication and professionalism of the staff team at St. Paul's School that I have witnessed, combined with the conspicuous and valuable input provided by St. Paul's Church (clergy, staff and lay members), leaves me in little doubt that it will continue its current upward trend. Whilst we do look to the future, it does feel good to celebrate the recent victories!"

Youth

"2017 was an exciting time for our youth work as once again we welcomed new faces from Year 6 and the Year 9s moved up to the older youth group. This year has seen the regular youth groups happening, as well as a weekend away, a trip to Soul Survivor (new showground. Yay!), socials going bowling and to Alton Towers, and The Hub Road Trip. It's been fun!"

Kate Wallis (Youth Minister)



The Hub:

The Hub is a group for young people in school years 10-13 (age 14-18). The aim is for this group to be like a small group for the members with social time, teaching, prayer and time of encountering God. We have looked at a variety of themes this year as we seek to grow in discipleship and friendship. We have also increased the amount and variety of socials that we have so that the young people, and team, can grow in relationship with each other.

Our 3 oldest members moved on in the summer to gap years and drama school. It has been a joy to see these ladies flourish in faith over the years and to see how God is at work in them now they have left school and are exploring the world.

There is a deep commitment in this group to using skills and gifts for the wider church.

Consequently, many of the young people are involved in leadership and volunteering in the church including worship, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Community Work, Reading, Prayers... It is a real joy to see them fully involved in church life. We said goodbye to Neil Collings from the team as he and his family are due to move home. Thank you so much for your faithful service to our young people, Neil.

YOUTH

engage

Engage:

This group is for school years 7-9 (age 11-14) and meets on a Sunday morning. There is a group at each of the morning services with different teams but focusing on the same topic. The 9.30 group continues to be smaller with around 5 young people attending each week. The 11.15 group has around 15-20 young people each week.

Each week we aim to look at a topic that is relevant to the young people and then encourage them to apply this, in practical ways, so that what they learn on a Sunday is applied to their day-to-day life away from church.

It is a real joy to see the fruit of our amazing Kids Work as we welcomed 15 new members into the group at Easter (and said goodbye to 9 as they moved up to The Hub!). Through their experience in the Kids Work, we are welcoming up young people who know how to connect with God, experience him in their lives and are excited to find out more about him. We ended the year by saying goodbye to Tim Traynar from the team and a temporary goodbye to Rich and Gail Duxbury. We are so thankful for all that you have brought and shared with us.

Friday Club

Friday Club:

Friday Club is aimed at school years 7-9 (age 11-14) and provides a great space for young people to invite friends who may not usually attend church. Each session has a theme with activities, craft and a short talk related to this and it is a great way for young people to have a small glimpse of how great God is for perhaps the first time. We ended 2017 with 36 young people on the register although we see around 10-15 young people each week. It is our prayer that this group is a space where young people feel at home and are excited to bring friends along each week.

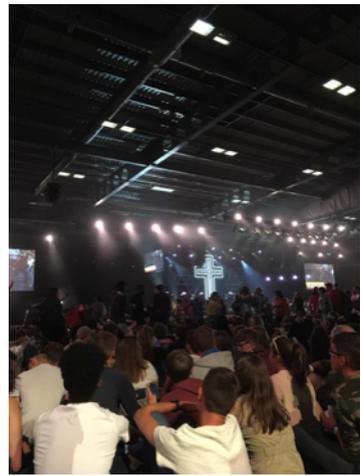
Summer Activities

For the sixth year we took a group of Soul Survivor. This year the group was led by Kate and the wonderful Andy and Caroline Castle. We were based at Soul Survivor's new home in Peterborough and the showground was a breath of fresh air as it has a great layout, clean facilities (although not enough showers, but no change there!) and God, as always, was very present in it all.

Many of our young people also attended New Wine with their families and a large proportion of these young people also served on the New Wine Team in the children's groups. It's a real joy to see them putting their faith into action in this way.

A number of our young people also attended Christian holidays over the summer too, such as Christians in Sport, Ventures and Scripture Union Camps.

These holidays provide a great way for young people to have fun away from home, meet new people and have a week focused on God.



Youth Weekend Away

For the second year running St Paul's young people attended the Thrive Youth Weekend Away which was planned by Andy Castle and his team. This was such a blessing as our young people did get time with their own groups but also got to join with young people from across Warwickshire – many of whom they went to school with or knew from outside church but didn't know were Christians.

It was great to serve alongside a team made up of youth workers from different churches and to engage with young people from other churches too. We took 39 young people and 6 team and there were around 90 people on the weekend overall.

2017 was a great year for the Youth Ministry as young people grew in faith and relationship. We are so thankful for Kate and the team that we have and for their enthusiasm at working with our young people. Current statistics are that almost 80% of people who are Christians took the step to follow Jesus before they were 18. What an amazing mission field we have both in and through our children and young people.





Our student ministry completely changed hands this year: Toby Leek (Volunteer Worker), Calum Machin and Mike Hood (UCCF Relay Workers at Warwick University Christian Union) had been leading the team until they all moved on from St. Paul's at the end of the academic year. From then on, Adam & Jess Tams and Emma & Zak Dunstone have taken up our student ministry and that is where we begin this overview of all things students.

Our main aim as a team is for students to feel like St. Paul's could be their "Home from Home" – not just a place they could attend services and grow in their relationship with Jesus, but also a place where they would feel truly valued and cared for. As a result, we set up student lunches which are links between groups of students and families in the church; the families kindly offer lunch and hospitality to that group of students after church – helping our students to know more people in the wider church family and to feel welcomed into one specific family. We also offered a mentor to every student who wanted one, pairing up students with older members of the church who can encourage and walk alongside them.

This vision for students to feel at home in St. Paul's meant that we wanted students to be more involved with the church as a whole. In the past, the student work has sometimes felt separate from everything else that happens, so we have been really excited by the opportunity for more integration with the 6.30 service. This has been mainly facilitated by regularly having food after the service so that the 20s & 30s and student groups don't go off to different pubs but all stay in church and spend time eating together with the rest of the congregation, allowing those links to grow between the groups. Adam's link to the worship team also meant that some of our gifted student musicians and worshippers could get involved straight away and it was wonderful to see them after just a few weeks leading us in sung worship from the front.

The year ended for us with another successful weekend away. A group of 22 of us stayed in the Harby Centre in rural Leicestershire, and we had a wonderful few days of relaxing together and learning about "Keys to a Meaningful Life" from John's Gospel as explained to us by Thom Jee, who joined us for the weekend. It was a special time to get to know each other better, reflect on the term we had just completed, and spend time worshipping and praising our awesome God together. The weekend finished with an interesting race against the heavily falling snow to pack up and leave before we were stuck in the Leicestershire countryside!

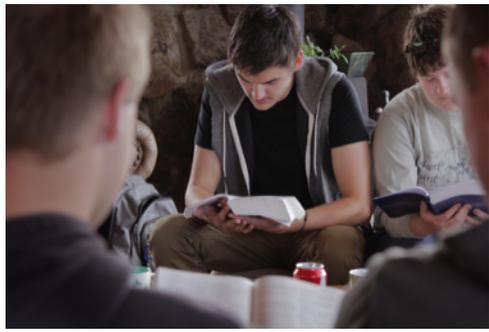
We are really looking forward to welcoming students back and getting alongside them this year, and seeing what God has in store for us.



20's - 30's

In February 2017, a group of 58 young adults from St Paul's went to Hothorpe Hall in Leicestershire for a weekend away. This followed a successful first trip the year before. We had teaching, worship, testimonies and plenty of free time, which gave us a great opportunity to get to know one another better, build friendships and spend time with God.

There are now many other activities throughout the year for this age group and it is amazing to see how the friendships amongst the 20s and 30s group have built and strengthened, in order to support one another in our walk with God.



Small Groups

We have 18 small groups that meet on different evenings of the week, with 5 of these having started in the last year. These groups provide the ideal place for people to grow in discipleship, accountability and fellowship. We encourage all our regular committed members to either be part of a small group, or part of one of the larger fellowships – Oasis, MIRTH or CAMEO.

The groups meet in locations around Leamington and the surrounding area for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. Many of these groups are quite large, and so we are continually looking for opportunities to start new ones. We are very grateful for the work of our small group leaders.

The teaching programme of the groups varies according to the needs and interests of the group members. Most of the groups get involved in service by taking turns to serve coffee after the 9.30 am or 6.30 pm services. Some of the groups have also found other opportunities to serve together at events like the Community Christmas meal.

Family Camping

Family Camping headed again to the popular Hopley's Campsite at Bewdley. This year eight families enjoyed Pizza from the site's new stone-fired Pizza 'Hut' and a great walk in the Wyre Forest including a pub lunch. It was very relaxing for the adults to get to know each other better while the kids, aged from 6 to 14, entertained themselves round the site! An all-age cricket match went on through dusk til we couldn't see the ball!

"It was really fun because you get to play in the woods and the Pizza was very good!" Zac Garrett

"As new members of St. Paul's, family camping was a great way to get to know people from the congregation better. Our tent stayed up, the weather was fine and the walk and evening BBQ were a chance to make friends in a fun and relaxed environment."

Marian Nelson

"Going to small group is one of the highlights of my week! Every Wednesday we meet to learn more about Jesus, share in each others' joys and hard times, and pray together - all whilst eating lots of cake. It helps me to connect with people from the church on a really deep level." Jen Davis

"One of the real blessings to me of our small group is that we have such a large age range in fellowship. We have those in their early twenties sharing fellowship with folks in their late seventies. - It really is a mark of Christlikeness" David Harkness



Prayer Weeks

Thy Kingdom Come

Prayer Week 26 Feb-4 March

During the Spring term, our prayer week coincided with the start of Lent.

We had a particular focus on praying into our Vision for the future, with Jonathan encouraging people to take time to pray through the 'Vision and Values' document, as well as praying for the wider needs of the world.

Ash Wednesday was in the middle of the week, and Communion services were held at the regular midweek time of 11 am and in the evening. Both services gave an opportunity for quiet prayer and listening to God. There were also prayer evenings on the Tuesday and Thursday. Ross Caws led a prayer run one morning, Anne Hibbert led a prayer walk and Martin Haywood led a series of prayer bike rides throughout the week.

Some small groups chose to come to one of the prayer meetings whilst others took the opportunity to spend time in prayer in their groups.

“... We did a Prayer walk outside despite the rain! We had a really special and super time.” Anne Hibbert



During Lent, Anna Smith featured on the BBC website, she baked 40 cakes for 40 different friends and family: a cake a day for 40 days.

Anna decided to make a difference during Lent by giving cakes to people to say thank you for the positive influence they had been to her, friends, family and neighbours benefitted from the amazing selection of cakes.

Prayer Week October 2017

In October, between our Vision and Commitment Sundays, we invited the church to join us in praying as people were encouraged to renew their commitment to being wholehearted disciples of Jesus.

On the Tuesday evening, there was a quiet evening of more contemplative prayer when Lissy Clarke led us in meditating on a passage of Scripture.

On the Wednesday, there was a more lively service of praise and prayer. The midweek service also included time to pray.

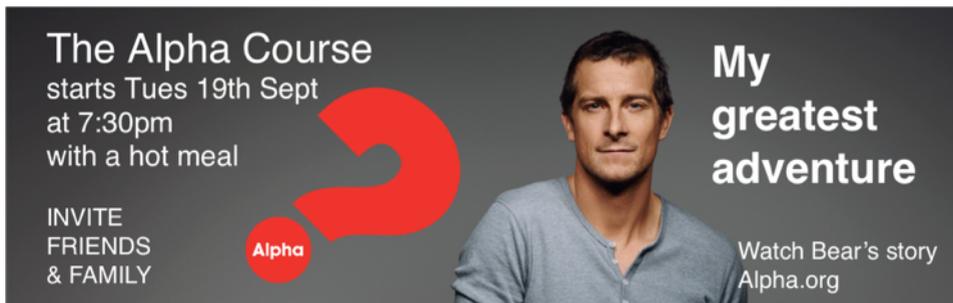
Following Wednesday's service, prayer stations were set up around the church and these were made good use of during an early morning prayer time, by the Oasis ladies during their meeting and in an evening prayer slot. Several people also dropped in during the day to pray.

The different ways of praying attracted good numbers of people to come and pray at some point during the week.

“It made the church feel like a cathedral somehow, with all the reverence that goes with that association! It really felt like we were collectively drawing near to God.” Simon Brown

“I love the variety we have at St Paul's - and I really enjoyed the contemplative prayer evening led by Lissy (as well as the creative prayer stations the next night) - wonderful!” Tony O'Brien



A promotional banner for the Alpha Course. On the left, white text on a dark background reads: "The Alpha Course starts Tues 19th Sept at 7:30pm with a hot meal". Below this, it says "INVITE FRIENDS & FAMILY". In the center, there is a large red question mark with the word "Alpha" in a small red circle at its base. To the right is a portrait of Bear Grylls. Further right, white text reads "My greatest adventure". At the bottom right, it says "Watch Bear's story Alpha.org".

The Alpha Course
starts Tues 19th Sept
at 7:30pm
with a hot meal

INVITE
FRIENDS
& FAMILY

Alpha

My
greatest
adventure

Watch Bear's story
Alpha.org

Alpha

St Paul's ran 3 well attended Alpha courses in the Spring, Summer and Autumn terms of 2017. The Alpha course gives people the opportunity to explore the Christian faith together in a relaxed and friendly environment. Simon Davies, Tim Wagg, Simon Brown and Jonny Morgan headed up our courses this year with different teams each term supporting them.

The courses ran for 11 weeks each term on Tuesday evenings. Each evening began with a delicious hot meal and we relied on some great volunteers to cook and serve the meal and clear away afterwards. This year we have made good use again of the Alpha videos, which include some powerful personal testimonies and act as a great stimulus for discussion and questions. In the middle of each course, St Paul's hosted an 'Away Day' along with some other local church Alpha groups, giving time and space for the guests to meet with God and to receive prayer. These have, once again, proved to be very special days, and many of the guests have encountered God through them – so taken a significant step in their spiritual journey.

Every course has seen people come to faith, and all the guests have moved on in their journey towards the Lord. Alpha is a great way to bring friends who show an interest in what we believe into the church. The emphasis is on listening to guests and showing love and friendship in a relaxed way. The course is also a great first step into the Christian walk for any who are new to the faith or want to think more about what they believe.

"I would recommend Alpha to anybody who requires comfort, hope, peace, healing, a belonging and would like to make new friends as well as acquire a family with similar soothing interests. If that is you then come to Alpha it will help put your life into perspective and teach you about what true meaning of life is. This is from someone who experienced so much trauma that people questioned how this person was still standing."

"I would highly recommend Alpha to anyone. It answered a lot of questions I had and enabled me to find God through the Holy Spirit, which was an amazing experience. Everyone was welcoming and non-judgemental."



Join us for a
Sat 19th August 12-2pm
Kennedy Square

BBQ

BOUNCY CASTLE

FREE FOOD & SOFT DRINKS

KIDS GAMES & ACTIVITIES

ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

The poster features the St Paul's Lambington Side logo, a large 'BBQ' text, and three yellow arrows pointing to the event details. A photo of a grill with food is also included.

Kennedy Square Barbecue 19th August 2017

Our annual barbecue in Kennedy Square was, once again, a resounding success. We had many more people attending this year than in previous years, with more adults wanting to socialise with each other and take part in the day. We again enjoyed a fantastic puppet show thanks to our friends at Crown, and the weather was kind enough to allow us to enjoy the day, mostly, in the sunshine. We're looking forward to doing the same again next year!

A big thank you to all who volunteered!

“It was a privilege to help out at the Kennedy Square barbecue. Not only did we find it very rewarding but it gave us insight into the involvement of the church in the community which is something we are very passionate about. We're hoping to get involved in other opportunities in the future.” David and Carol



Carol Singing in the Kennedy Square area

This year was the 13th year that we have been out in December to sing carols in Kennedy Square. We started off, as last year, singing a few carols outside the new houses and flats in Newbold Gardens and then moved on to Kennedy Square. Many of the residents came outside to listen and chat to those delivering the boxes of biscuits and invitations to St Paul's Christmas services; it was good to reconnect with many we have met in the past. One man was in the local pub when he heard the singing and came out to chat and collect his biscuits! It was great to see 4 of the mums who have come along to Tiddlies Praise this term outside with their families while we were singing. Once we had visited all 74 flats in Kennedy Square and sung at 5 different places we then moved to nearby St Paul's Square, by request of one of the residents. We continued our carolling here and also sang "The 12 Days of Christmas" for the first time.

Many thanks to our fantastic brass band (6 members this year!) which everyone agreed produced an amazing Christmas sound. Thanks also to the 50 folk who supported with singing and distributing the presents and cards and to all who prayed for the evening.



Community Christmas Meal

This year's community Christmas meal on December 14th was another great success. As in previous years, we not only invited those who live in Kennedy Square and St Paul's Square, but also other members of our wider community, and those who engage with the foodbank at St Paul's. Over 100 people joined us for the meal and they enjoyed a few games, a great quiz and the opportunity to have a photo in the stable. We had a fantastic team of volunteers who served the food, painted faces, helped with crafts, did magic tricks, and crucially sat down and chatted to our guests. It was heart-warming to see so many people wanting to support the event in various ways. This year, the Christmas message was delivered using chocolate bars, which lots of people enjoyed, especially those who picked up on the chocolate puns and got a bar as a reward!

A number of the guests spoke about how much they enjoyed the evening, and how welcome they had been made to feel. This was a real opportunity for St Paul's to bless our local community, and to show something of the generous, joyous and loving nature of God.

Relational Ministries

Marriage Preparation Course



This year saw another two marriage preparation courses being run in the first two terms. Both courses were full and booked up well in advance. We welcomed church couples, non-church couples, fringe or affiliated couples, and couples who came based on the recommendation of other non-Christian couples who have previously completed the course. Again, feedback was really positive and it was great to meet and engage with these couples and be part of an exciting and life changing period in their lives. We are very grateful to Ross & Joy Caws for leading these courses, and also the Marriage Course.

Marriage Course



The Marriage Course had another successful year running in the autumn term. This year the places were booked up well in advance and there was no need for any real promotion – indeed we unfortunately had to turn 3 couples down due to being full. Once again Ross & Joy were ably assisted by Tim and Katherine Filby, and Carolyn Harris ran the kitchen. We also welcomed Ruth Bowie and James Leng on to the team who did the course themselves last year. They slotted in easily and assisted wherever was necessary. Thanks must also go to Caroline Castle and Lizzie Timlin for their help in the organisation and set up each week. The course was attended by 11 couples and the feedback received so far is overwhelmingly positive.

"It was really great to intentionally have a couple of hours together each week to eat, chat and invest in our marriage. We particularly enjoyed the last session about how to continue growing in our marriage."

Kate & Pete Wallis

"We really appreciated the chance to spend some time together working through the course. The team worked incredibly hard to provide a delicious meal and make the lounge look appealing. We felt very blessed by the whole experience." Graeme and Jan Pringle

"We valued the time to invest in our marriage and to re-evaluate our priorities. We found it helpful to discuss areas of our lives that we would normally by pass in everyday life. We are looking forward to putting lots of things into practice." Ruth and Rich Quigley



Restored Lives

We held the Restored Lives course in the Autumn of 2017, led by Kevin & Sarah Roe. The course is for those who have, or are suffering from, intimate relationship breakdown. People who come on the course may be separated, going through divorce, recently divorced or divorced for decades. It is for Christians and non-Christians, married or co-habiting and is not designed as an evangelistic course - although we recommend Alpha to those who may wish to explore. We aim to provide a strongly supportive, non-judgemental environment, and details shared by members are treated with utmost confidentiality. Over the 6 weeks of the course we cover various matters, including the emotional issues such as anger and loneliness and anxiety. We also cover legal issues, child custody, forgiveness, and moving on.

We had three women on the Autumn 2017 course. Their stories, although very different, were quite distressing and the course allowed plenty of deep emotional sharing time.

"The restored lives course gave me a safe space and time to reflect on the reality of divorce and its impact on myself and family. It gave me a sense of hope for the future and was sensitively and respectfully led. Strongly recommend it."

"Reassuring to know that we can heal and life can go on after divorce/separation. Everyone has a story, and the course addresses each one of us in a gentle manner. Well done. You both were great hosts!"

"The restored lives course included very helpful and practical information/advice along with most inspiring testimonies from real people that have enabled me to begin to believe that I can survive separation and divorce and build a life that is meaningful in the future. Without this opportunity I believe that I could have remained stuck in a place of despair and without hope for a very long time. It was particularly helpful to gain perspective from sharing with others in similar situations and learn from them about how to move forward. Thank you."

Leadership Development

New Wine

New Wine 2017 was one of the most challenging yet that we have attended as a church. Firstly, as there were approaching 14,000 delegates (4,000 more than week 1 and 2-3,000 more than 2016) and secondly, as the weather was challenging and our village had no hard road access. Despite this, enthusiasm was only dampened slightly and much learning and fellowship took place.

Highlights of New Wine for most centred around Pete Greig's book "Dirty Glory" and John Mark Comer's teaching, which a number of St Paul's people have followed up on since. Alice Clarke made her debut as a seminar speaker at New Wine, talking about her faith alongside two other women.

It was also great to share our campsite with friends from Warwick Gates and St Margaret's once more.



Global Leadership Summit

GLS is a conference organised by Willow Creek and each year a number of leaders from St Paul's attend. Usually, all go to the same venue, but this year we were spread across 2 venues (Stafford and Gerrards Cross) due to convenience of dates.

The speakers are gifted leaders as well as gifted communicators, which means that despite it being a video conference, it is highly engaging, thought provoking and challenging.

The Summit always has a selection of good books linked to the talks and online resources so that the 2 days of conference are backed up with opportunities for year round development.

"Speaking personally, GLS is a leadership highlight of the year for me. I invariably come away with new insights to put into practice and challenges to work through. This year's included Bill Hybel's question 'Who are a few individuals you can plant leadership seeds into?', Gary Haugen's passion to see leaders form a community of courage of those they lead, and Immaculée Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide, speaking on the freedom of forgiveness." Carolyn Davey



THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
SPEAKERS



Oasis



Oasis is a community of women, wholeheartedly pursuing the transforming, life-giving, love of Jesus.

We are a diverse group of around 70 women of all ages and life stages who meet to encourage and support each other to grow in faith.

We meet on Thursday mornings in term time from 9.45 to 11.30. As we arrive, we enjoy tea, coffee, cake and/or fruit before the formal start at 10am. We then worship together and have a short talk before we break into our small groups for discussion and prayer.

There are 8 small groups which meet within Oasis as well as a welcome group for any newcomers.

These small groups are overseen by 13 small group leaders and we are really thankful for their commitment and supportive leadership.

We have begun each term with a coffee morning – this serves both as a chance to catch up with one another after the holiday period and is also an easy way to invite friends along to experience Oasis for the first time.

This year we have focused our teaching on the armour of God, Rick Warren's "Habits of Happiness" and the prayer lives of people in the bible. Each term we have also had a Prayer Morning (during the Church's week of prayer) as well as occasional mornings with longer worship and time to share testimonies.

"In an increasingly busy week, it is great to have a regular time and space to be with God, worship, pray and listen to his word. I really value the chance to talk things through in my small group and to pray with, and for, other women too." Ursula Adams



Alongside Oasis, we offer Hoppers and Bouncers – a wonderful oasis for our little ones too – where Liz Lewis and her team look after our pre-schoolers with much fun, love and care.

In July we bid a very sad farewell to Juliet Jee who set up Oasis (or Mums' group as it used to be called prior to rebranding!) over 10 years ago and has been integral to leading it ever since. We are so grateful for Juliet's warmth, wisdom and generosity and she is very much missed. She left in style though, hosting and catering a fabulous summer party for us all – in the completely calm and composed way that Juliet does!

Oasis provides a wonderful context in which to serve, explore and develop our gifts in a whole variety of ways; welcoming women at the door, giving a talk, setting out the chairs, hosting the morning, leading worship, sharing a testimony, praying for others, setting up the creche and looking after the children, leading a small group, making cakes and running the kitchen, as well as supporting each other when needed outside of Oasis sessions.

We are very grateful to the new leadership team of Caroline Castle, Ruth Whitehead and Becky Crow for taking over from Juliet so well.





Cake And Craft

At Cake and Craft we have enjoyed meeting together on the second Saturday of every month to have fun being creative while building friendships. In 2017, we have made felt birds, jewellery, cards and quilling, amongst other things. We also bring our own crafts to work on and share skills with each other.

As a group, we also came up with ideas for Create for Christmas and used some of our time together to prepare for the event.

"I really enjoy having a couple of hours where I can relax, chat with friends and do something creative."

Create For Christmas

Over 150 women came to the 2017 Create for Christmas. All areas of the church were used to accommodate this popular event. Quench was used for decorating biscuits and for cross stitch Christmas trees. The hall was a very busy area with decopatch boxes, block printing napkins, hot chocolate cards, star earrings and glass painting of candle holders, all being created enthusiastically. The flower arranging took over two rooms and provided a calm area for people to assemble their Christmas table centrepieces. The lounge was a hive of activity hosting tables for making paper stars, snow globes and concertina trees. The main church housed penguin cards and pine cone owls. This was also where everyone gathered halfway through the evening to hear Rachel King give a Christmas message. Mulled wine and mince pies were served as the ladies took some time out from crafting to reflect on the meaning of Christmas. We had a large team of helpers in the ladies running the craft tables, demonstrating, encouraging and chatting to everyone who attended the event.



Bec Rolls, who organised Create for Christmas with Juliet Jee who welcomed everyone to this annual event.



John Leftley, Graeme Pringle & Adrian Smith helping to prepare & serve the refreshments at Create for Christmas.

"I brought a group of friends and we felt warmly welcomed from the moment we walked through the door and throughout the evening. At every table we went to everyone was just so lovely and we came away with lots of beautiful crafts."



Book Club

Book Club resumed in April 2017 –

a small but enthusiastic group of women who like reading. Titles chosen ranged from fictional works to real life stories, including a classic Jane Austen novel (in her bicentennial year), a tale unravelling a secret in 1840s London and modern works from the 20th & 21st centuries. We have read about aspects of life in Afghanistan, Alaska, America and Argentina.

Each month we enjoy the stimulation of meeting together to express our opinions on the current book, and to hear and learn from each other. One member commented that the book club was 'always inspiring'.



2017

SPA BLOKES

ST PAUL'S MEN'S MINISTRY

Men & Kids Camping

The 2017 annual men and kids camping trip hit its 10th anniversary and was at the usual secluded camping ground in the Forest of Dean. The aim of the weekend is to have fun with our children, get outside and relax with other men from the church - all with limited access to technology! It was a tremendous weekend under canvas and the 22 men and 39 children who came along for the 2 nights partook in hiking, wood chopping, pub lunch, campfires, BBQ, marshmallow roasting, dad vs kids football, Micah's magic bucket, hunting in the woods, many other games and 'paddling' in the river Wye.

We rounded off the weekend again by hiring 20 canoes and headed off down the Wye for a few hours in glorious sunshine. We were quite a sight, bringing noise and laughter to a peaceful river with much swimming and paddling as we meandered our way back to the boat yard.

We were thankful for the continued safety of this excellent weekend and the glorious weather that we had.

We are particularly grateful for the leadership of these camping weekends that Simon Davies and Mark Peers have given for the last 10 years.



2017 saw another low key array of activities from the Men of St. Paul's, with a mix of curry nights, bike rides, a skittles evening and supporting the ManUp event in October.

Social events were similar to 2016, including several curry nights and another skittles evening which saw 20 guys, including some from outside St Paul's challenging for the "no-expense-spared" trophies returned from 2016. A normal skittles round was followed by a second, where teams chose to either change hands or bowl with their opposite hand, amid much laughter and amusement.



TAPAS Truth Application Prayer Accountability & Support

has completed its third year with another slightly different mix of guys. We have never prayed for an influx of new people but just that God would send someone new into our midst for a season and he continues to honour this each year.

At the start of the Autumn term there was a unanimous wish to dig deeper into the first A of TAPAS (Application) and so we embarked on a journey through a book called "Surprise the world" challenging us to intentionally Eat, Listen, Learn & be Sent with a particular emphasis on listening to God to determine where, how and with whom.



Older People's Ministry



MIRTH - Men In Retirement Together Having...

Throughout 2017, MIRTH continued to focus on its aim of building a community of retired men that improves the quality of retired life for all. The opportunity to do this occurs mainly in the weekly Tuesday meetings, but it has been good to see a continued growth of connection beyond this.

We have 70 men who receive the weekly emails, and in a typical month around half of these will attend one or more of the four meetings: topical discussions, walks, bible discussion and our main meeting.

The main MIRTH meeting tends to be the largest meeting, where 20 -25 people attend. During the year, we have had speakers from St Paul's (Rachel Wiratunga on 'how to live to 100' and Geoffrey Johnstone on 'Ladies of the night [astronomy]') and beyond St Paul's (Rachel Butt, director of Thare Machi Education - an important Leamington based charity, and former curate Mike Elliott sharing his 'Faith under Fire' experiences as an RAF chaplain, including near misses in Afghanistan). Visits have included a guided tour of St Mary's Warwick, the refurbished British Motor Museum, local charity Tools With a Mission (TWAM) in Kenilworth and Charlecote Mill.

We had the usual summer "Jolly Boys Outing" this year to Slimbridge Wetlands Trust, and the traditional Christmas meal with wives and partners in attendance.

The organising team is Mike Bench, Stan Harris, Andrew Rolls, John Robinson and Anthony Johnston - coordinated by Tim Wagg. From September onwards the team has been delighted to welcome the energetic Jonathan Hattersley on board!



CAMEO - Come And Meet Each Other

CAMEO is a group of mainly older people who meet on Wednesday afternoons (after the mid-week service) for a light lunch and (on alternate weeks) some form of activity together. As a group, CAMEO aims to care for one another, remember birthdays, pray for each other and laugh together.

The planning team, which consists of Ann Duxbury, Barbara Edwards, Vanessa and Janice Leedle, Pauline Archer and Jean Grimes, have put together a varied programme. This has included a number of fascinating speakers who have shared adventures abroad, local history knowledge, hobbies and biblical insights amongst other topics.

CAMEO also support a NOTDEC child, Mordecai, praying regularly for his particular needs.

Events

APCM - Annual Parochial Church Meeting



Our APCM this year again took the form of an 'Annual Party for Church Members' and was celebrated in style with round tables and crisp white table cloths throughout the worship space. Canapes and prosecco were served and Jonathan chaired the evening, introducing a variety of interviews where people spoke about different aspects of church life and the impact these had had on them. One of our new churchwardens, Carolyn Davey, was also introduced and a number of people who were stepping down from various roles were thanked.

We took time during the evening to pray for our church ministries with prayer suggestions to be found on party favours and hidden in party bags. The whole evening was a great celebration of our church family life together.

"This was my first time at St Paul's APCM, although I've been to many of these before in other churches. There was a great feeling of celebration (helped a little by the bubbly!) and excitement both in looking back to where the church has been and looking forward to what is next! It was fantastic to have the whole church family from across the five services together and gave me the chance to meet even more new people who I may not have otherwise come across." Adam Tams

Board Games Evenings



This year, a number of Board Games evenings have been held in the church hall. These have been extremely well organised by Nicola Asker, who has shared with us both her large collection of games and her encyclopaedic knowledge of how they are played. The evenings have attracted a cross section of ages, and have been a good opportunity to get to know others in a relaxed and entertaining atmosphere.

Passover Meal



Once again, the Passover Meal was a great occasion. Making use of the whole of the worship space, we were able to welcome around 150 guests.

Jonathan began as usual by leading us in a short time of worship and an explanation of the Jewish Passover festival with all its different elements – various traditional Passover foods were tried as starters to the meal.

We had a delicious meal in a lovely relaxed atmosphere. All the guests who were able to signed up for a job on the evening – welcoming, preparing or serving food, washing up, setting up or clearing down. This gave a real 'family' feel to the meal with everyone pitching in to make it a success. Particular thanks go to Naomi Gaade who coordinated the whole event, Juliet Jee who also helped with the planning, Beth Penney who coordinated all the different serving teams and Jonny Morgan who oversaw the kitchen team.

"It was very special. To be able to reflect on the Easter story in company with many other fellow Christians, whilst sharing a really excellent meal in the surroundings of our church was a real privilege." Mel Tweed

Man Up



ManUp men`s conference was attended by over 100 delegates from over 15 different local church congregations this year. The conference aims to bring guys together from different churches in order to meet with God and to be encouraged in both existing and new ventures with the Lord.

After a cooked breakfast, Clyde Thomas from Victory church in Cwmbran led the first session with a challenging talk on leaving our sacred places, and taking the love of God outside the church. He encouraged us to seek purpose and to love our towns as we seek to 'find' others just as we have been found by God.

The second session offered a choice of seminars based around our theme of reaching men with the gospel. There were seminars from different leaders from around Leamington and Warwick churches on

discipleship, outreach and helping practically in our communities.

It was a conference full of encouragement, and a sense of God renewing purpose among us and strengthening us to go out in the name of Jesus.

“Great to talk with other men and be inspired.”

“Great to see so many guys worshipping and fellowshiping together.”

“Opening doors for our small church - thank you.”

“Inspiring - helpful in our church setting.”

“Exceeded my expectations - good quality sausage and bacon!”

“Powerful and challenging.”

“The holy spirit was moving in the event - fantastic speakers.”

“Brilliant practical message.”



New Year's Eve

This year, New Year's Eve fell on a Sunday, and so, a small team arranged a party so that we could bring in the New Year together. Over 115 people gathered in the church to celebrate. Jonny Morgan cooked a fantastic curry and then a variety of activities were available; from an adult bouncy castle, to the showing of a couple of films, to a variety of board games. A little later after pudding, we came back together for a team based quiz which took us up to midnight. After we counted down and had said 'Happy New Year' to one another, we brought in the New Year with 30 minutes or so of worship and praise whilst watching the fireworks on the screens behind the words to the worship.

It was a fantastic evening, and the worship particularly was a really special way to bring in the New Year. A good number of folk commented on how the evening had a real feeling of being church family together, and was so successful, there are rumours it will need to be repeated next year! Watch this space...

“It wasn't just the amazing array of activities planned, or the great food provided; it was the sense of family, the welcoming hospitality, and the warm atmosphere which spoke of the love of Jesus which imbued everything.

Thanks from us to all who were involved in preparing and producing this extraordinarily successful event.”

Tony O'Brien

Wider Church Relationships

Churches Together in Leamington

Our vision is to see Leamington changed one life at a time, and so we believe it is hugely important to work and pray with other local churches. In 2017, Jonathan continued to host monthly prayer lunches for church leaders (he has now been doing this for 11 years.) Usual attendance is about 15 out of a possible 25.

Relationships are very good, and we always pray for God's blessing on our town.

Over the years it has been a joy to see so many inter-church ministries start up. The PCC has committed significant annual financial support to The Well, CAP, Thrive and Foodbank. In addition we have strong involvement with Street Pastors, and coordinate the annual "Praise in the Park" (2017 was the 7th year).

There are many other excellent inter-church ministries, and we pray for them all, and encourage members of St Paul's to get involved. These include: Nightlight, Crossteach, Christian Resource Centre, Warwick Gates Centre for Relational care, Nightshelter, Homeless Action Project, Home for Good, and the Learning Centre.

Street Pastors



Five members of our church regularly volunteer as street pastors in Leamington, patrolling the town centre on Saturday evenings from 10 pm until 4 am with the aim of creating a safer and more harmonious environment for those around at this time. To this end, they distribute bottles of water, foil blankets and flipflops; dispose of discarded bottles and clear up broken glass; arrange taxis for those who need them; liaise with door staff and others to reunite people with their friends and generally provide a Christian presence which reduces tension and gives reassurance to those who might be feeling vulnerable. We are delighted that Jonny Morgan (from St Paul's) is now the Street Pastors local co-ordinator

Praise In The Park

Praise in the Park is now in its seventh year, and a regular fixture in the year of the local church. The event is truly inter-denominational, with numerous churches from across the local area coming to help lead and attend the event. Set up started under a blue sky in the local park at 7am, where a stage and sound system were erected by a cheerful group of volunteers. The event started at 11am (despite some rain!) with lively worship and children's action songs, before several town wide Christian charities were interviewed. The main speaker was James Lawrence from the Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS), who gave a very encouraging talk highlighting the importance of the Thy Kingdom Come campaign. With the crowd swelling to over one thousand people, it was a great success in bringing Christians together to pray for the local area.



"What we love about Praise in the Park is the sense of family. It's so encouraging when a wide range of people come together to celebrate their love of Jesus and to enjoy singing his praises. We're struck by the way the crowd blends in with the passers-by walking along the Parade ... and the fact that a number of them stop to ask what's going on. It's great to be able to share our faith - and our joy - in the open air with others, including those who are seeking, and to remind ourselves that 'church' is not a building but a movement."

Tony and Yolanda O'Brien





The Well Christian Healing Centre

We have an excellent relationship with the Well Christian Healing Centre and they, in turn, have been grateful to us for our love, hospitality and financial support which under-pins their

ministry. There are 16 members of St Paul's on The Well team, including Rev Anne Hibbert, the Well's founder and director. This year has been a very exciting one for the Well as, after years of waiting and searching, they have finally got a permanent home in the middle of the town centre here in Royal Leamington Spa.

Their new home at 20 Augusta Place is currently being remodelled and renovated and they are hoping to open there after Easter. This starts to fulfil their 10 year vision of being open 6 days a week. When the move happens, there will be lots of celebrating and the team are keen that St Paul's members come and join them in giving thanks to God for His faithfulness and provision.

In the meantime, the Well continues to be open and based at St Mary's church. They feel privileged to pray for their guests who are in many different situations. Some are facing major surgery and treatment, others are struggling in their emotions, some just don't know where God is and whether He can be trusted. The team prays for pregnant women and babies right through to guests who are older in years.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Well and seeing what the future has in store for them.



Guest Testimonies

"Thank you so much for all your time, care consideration and prayers! I feel as though my life is changing and progressing in the right direction since attending the Well for prayer.

The Bible verses you gave to me and prayed into my life are timely. My mind is being renewed and I can see myself differently. I now know that God is my Father and that His love will never run out. Jesus has set me free and healed my wounds that brought me low and into a place of despair. You gave me Gals 5:1, "It is for freedom that Christ has set me free!" This is exactly what He has done. Thank you for journeying with me and helping me to experience Jesus' healing."

"I had somehow damaged my neck and top of my back area. My pain and discomfort gradually got worse. I was in constant pain and I was on heavy sleepers due to the tossing and turning from the pain. My mind was all over the place, I felt as if I was in a cloud. I was struggling through my work. I had an MRI scan which showed a prolapsed disc no. 6. I had at this stage no feeling in my left little finger and I was experiencing pins and needles in my left hand. I had to use my right hand to lift my left arm above my head.

I had been to The Well before for Soaking Prayer; however I had and have not since experienced anything like the power of God's healing, as I did on this occasion. I was anointed with oil. I settled down to appreciate the peace. A little while later I had a very warm sensation on the exact point of my pain, the 6th vertebrae. This feeling of heat was concentrated on this area. To my amazement the pain vanished during the soaking prayer time, the healing was complete, praise the Lord! What an extraordinary experience, truly sent from heaven.

I became drug free and the clouds dispersed in my mind. Jesus' healing power released me from my pain. And oh yes I can freely lift both arms above my head!"



Warwick District Foodbank



2017 marked a significant development in the four year history of the foodbank. Early in the year, Warwick and Leamington foodbank merged with Kenilworth foodbank, adding another distribution centre to the operation, and became Warwick District foodbank covering Kenilworth, Leamington Spa and Warwick. The foodbank provides 3 days' worth of food to clients in the local community experiencing crisis. Clients receive a voucher from referral agencies such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Children's Centres or local churches. The client then brings this to one of 7 distribution centres, including the one here at St Paul's. Miriam Bowen leads the St Paul's foodbank, using her excellent management skills and motivation of the volunteers, including a number of the St Paul's congregation.

During 2017 there was, sadly, again a dramatic rise in the number of clients. The distribution centre at St Paul's helped 632 adults and 296 children during the year, marking a 16% increase on last year. The last three months of 2017 were our busiest to date, both in terms of clients and the donations of food received.

Across the seven distribution centres, we have provided food for 2,926 adults and 1,324 children and even a few cats and dogs (a 24% increase in a year). The three primary causes for this increase are more clients suffering from low income; benefit delays/changes and the effects of debt.

Andy Bower does a great job as Operations Manager of Warwick District foodbank and is well supported by Paul Clarke (Chairman), and the rest of the trustees.

CAP

2017 was an amazing year for the local CAP debt centre. CAP stands for Christians Against Poverty and therefore celebrated when 8 households became debt free, releasing 16 household members from the grip of poverty and unmanageable debt.

Another exciting part of 2017 was seeing 18 clients become Christians. These clients made either first time commitments or a recommitment to follow Jesus Christ. During a joint client event in Coventry back in May, 2 clients, 3 of their friends and a daughter of a client came to know Jesus. At a second client event in October 5 clients and 2 friends of clients respond to the gospel. Other clients became Christians through one to one relationships where the gospel was shared and people were given the opportunity to respond by asking Jesus into their lives.

In 2017 the CAP team also expanded. Tim Evans joined in September as a 2nd Debt coach, joining Richard Bacon. Sally Davies, CAP administrator, also trained as a community links co-ordinator. This means that Sally is now promoting the debt centre across Warwickshire with the aim of building relationships with local services to gain more client referrals. The centre is well-managed by Darren Mitchell.

2017 finished with our CAP Christmas hampers distribution. 15 families were blessed with luxury hampers. We thank God for the generosity of the food bank, Warwick Lions and every individual who gave financially, items of food and their time to build the hampers and deliver them to our clients. Here are a few of the clients responses: 'truly truly amazing, thank you so much. The food hamper will mean I won't have to shop this week'; 'thank you for the amazing package, it was so kind of you all'; 'thank you, this will be such a help to me'.

"St Paul's Church, these are just some of the highlights, but thank you so much for partnering with us, for supporting us financially and giving us Jonathan as an excellent overseer and encourager." Darren Mitchell

christians
against
poverty

CAP

Thrive

Thrive Youth Ministries' vision is to help every church within a 30 minute drive of Leamington, have a thriving youth ministry. In 2017, Thrive managed to get alongside 80 churches in various ways.

They ran training events on how to lead an effective assembly, how to make the most of Messy Church, as well as their first Transform Conference for all those who help with youth and children's work in churches. The day explored not only how to be more effective at reaching out to young people but also how to keep growing in faith, ourselves, as leaders.

Thrive invested individually in 20 youth & children's ministers, through one-to-one mentoring. This continues to prove to be a most useful way of supporting a church and seeing positive development, this included mentoring Hester, Hannah and Kate at St Paul's.

Thrive hosted its second annual youth weekend away at the Pioneer Centre, near Kidderminster, encouraging nearly 100 young people and youth leaders to seek God for the weekend, including many from St Paul's.

They completed their sixth youth Growing Leaders course, which Kate Wallis helped to run. There have now been 56 young people who have completed this course, including several from St Paul's. It is a great way to invest in leadership from a young age, and has helped many to take up a leadership role both in their churches and later at their universities.

2017 saw Thrive form a partnership with Reign Ministries, who run a degree course in Theology & Mission with a youth ministry focus. The plan is to encourage more people to consider youth ministry as a vocation and to train them in a local church. In September, they placed our first student at St Margaret's Church, Wolston.

As a result, Graham Hayes has been welcomed to our team as Training Development Manager. Graham is volunteering two days each week to develop the degree programme and also to start to develop a calling discernment programme. Graham came to Thrive having been mentored by Andy Castle (who heads up Thrive as CEO & Founder) over the last year, whilst Graham completed his own degree in Theology with Moorlands Bible College.

Thrive ended the year moving into a new office space, kindly donated by Whitnash Methodist Church. It has been wonderful to have a space where the team can work together, encourage each other and create a stronger sense of team identity, rather than having to work out of their own homes. They are very grateful to God for this provision.





The GO Team (short for Global Outreach) looks after and promotes church interests and activities that are geographically beyond Leamington by supporting both individuals and organisations. 2017 has seen major change for some of our partners.

Patty McCulloch

retired in the Spring from her work with Friends International and visited us in May, along with Ron (who had retired earlier), to say thank you to St Paul's for our support over many years as they served in mission initially in Indonesia and later in the UK.



Keith and Catherine Ranger, although both are well into retirement years, still have a ministry to Chinese scholars – Keith is fluent in Mandarin. Their change has been moving from Macclesfield to Scarborough and getting very involved in a church planting situation in Scarborough, as well as making contacts with Chinese people. Catherine has suffered with ill health in 2017, so prayer for improvement would be appreciated.

Richard & Catherine Weston

help train people/churches in working with international students. They have a new rhythm of life and work following a season of study, and a season of near burnout for Richard. Catherine graduated with an MA this year and is now working on the research and writing of a training resource for churches. Richard has reduced his international travel, though is still doing some, and is now working on developing a web resource for international student ministry in Europe (a one-off gift from St Paul's has helped with this).



NOTDEC, an orphanage in Uganda where many children are sponsored by members of St Paul's, has seen major changes in leadership with the founder, Milly, stepping down, and a new director, Moses, being appointed. Also, Anna has been appointed to do the accounts. Several of the St Paul's congregation visited during 2017: Janet & Anthony Johnston, Gordon McDonald, Jo Edwards (now Ryan), Tim Traynar and John & Carlee Letley.

FRRME saw new leadership too in 2017.

Canon Andrew White resigned at the end of 2016, and the search for a new CEO concluded in August with the appointment of Mike Simpson. We continue to support the work of FRRME through the clinic at St George's Baghdad, which continues to serve people of all faiths there.



Other partners have seen less change, but nevertheless remain busy.

Marcos & Claire Wurfel with Marisol (9), Lukas (7) and Oliver (3) are church planting in Argentina. Claire briefly visited St Paul's in late November in the middle of a short break in the UK. They are encouraged to see their meeting rooms full. The majority are young people in their 20s, but many face much opposition. Marcos and Claire would love to be able to appoint elders/deacons or welcome another missionary couple, or an Argentinian couple.

Richard & Carolyn Davey

are with WEC International which has now functioned for a year in its new HQ in Coventry. Carolyn's role was part of the Project Management Group with a special focus on Member Care for those affected by moves from the large properties, but this came to a natural end in August and so her focus now is training and peacemaking. Richard has continued with financial responsibilities.





Theresa Wilson with Wycliffe Bible Translators has continued to work on 'remote assignment' on a couple of Seimat language projects for the Papua New Guinea Department of Literacy and Education, while continuing to look after her father at home. She has written of how a training course she helped develop has been taken up and used. Theresa has also been working on developing a number of mobile phone apps to encourage further reading of the Seimat Scriptures.

We also support **Charles Barr-Johnston** in prayer. Charles is retired but still living and ministering in Argentina, holding regular Bible studies (four per week) in his home.



CPAS is an organisation based in Coventry which seeks to develop Christian leaders, hold Christian camps in summer, and to appoint evangelical leaders in churches through their patronage work. St Paul's directly benefits through their Growing Leaders resources and also some of our members are involved in helping at the camps.



Betel's mission is to bring long-term freedom and restoration within a Christian context to lives broken by drug and alcohol abuse. They welcomed a team of 6 people from St Paul's (Jonny Morgan, Jonathan Tidd, Nathan Jones, Louise Seaman, Anne Cadby, Linda Hassall) for a weekend in July. It was a weekend that was variously described as 'amazing', 'a privilege', 'fantastic', 'excellent' and 'inspiring', and it certainly made a big impact on those who went. The success of the weekend means another will be organised.



Mission Sunday in May was an opportunity to have Philip Mounstephen (leader of CMS) preach at each Sunday service. The timing was just right for one of the members of our congregation, Liz Thomson, who was able to talk with Philip and discover how CMS could help her explore her sense of calling to Ethiopia. As a result she will make a visit in early 2018 to get a flavour of the country.

Philip Mounstephen

A number of people have been given small grants to help towards **mission taster** experiences. These include Caroline Castle, Guy Chapman, Rachel Duxbury, Timmy Jee, Elisa Pike, Jonathan Smith, Sam Stone & Becky Tidd.

All our partners pass on their thanks for the support we give them, in both prayer and finance.



Shirley Crook

It was with sadness that we said goodbye to Shirley Crook, who passed away in January. Shirley had a deep love for Jesus and a single-minded determination to live a life that pleased Him. She had a joy and warmth that was characterised by a hearty chuckle when something amused her.

Shirley had been a member of the GO Team for over 25 years and continued to give welcome input even after failing health meant she couldn't come to evening meetings. She faithfully supported those who had been sent from St Paul's as missionaries, in prayer, in practical ways where she could and in writing letters of encouragement. She was even sending these letters out over her last Christmas and always the one to be thinking of others, would always write at the end "no need to reply, I know you're busy."

Her depth of interest in others was both amazing and humbling, and it wasn't just the mission partners, it was true for many in the congregation, young and older, as well as staff. She is much missed.

Resourcing the Ministry

Staff

It's been a year of changes on the staff team at St Paul's. At Easter, we said goodbye to our Associate Vicar, Lizzy Woolf. Lizzy had been with us for 8 years and she and Dave contributed a great deal to the life and ministry of the church in their time with us. She left us to lead a large church in Leeds where her gifts will be put to good use. Esther Peers also completed her placement with us after two years, and we miss her energy and creativity. Her studies at St Mellitus continue and she will be ordained in Summer 2018. In July, Adam Tams joined us as our Curate. Adam came to us having completed his theological studies in Bristol. Adam, Jess and their son Jacob have all settled in well and already feel very much part of the St Paul's family.

From February 2017, Hester Meacock (our Children's and Families' Minister) has been on maternity leave which has meant Hannah Jones (the Associate Children's Minister) has picked up extra responsibilities in her absence. Since September, Liz Garrett has joined our children's team and has taken responsibility for the Groovers' Sunday morning group (4-11 year olds). Toby Leek, who had interned with us for a year, left us in July to take up a permanent civil service appointment. Toby brought many practical and organisational skills to the team.

We are blessed with a great staff team who bring a huge variety of skills and qualities to our ministry. The ministry and operational staff work closely together to ensure that all our services, ministries and events run smoothly. The staff team also underpin all our ministries with regular prayer.

Ministry Staff



Jonathan Jee (Vicar)

Jonathan provides overall leadership and vision for the church and particularly focuses on preaching, prayer and investing in other leaders. He works closely with Adam, Ruth and Jan and the Standing Committee in setting priorities and direction for ministry. He is also responsible for our links with the wider church.



Adam Tams (Curate)

Adam works closely with Jonathan and others in the leadership of the church. He shares in the preaching and service leading, and has specific concern for the worship and prayer life of our church community. Alongside this, he helps to oversee the student ministry, and project manages a variety of events throughout the year.



Kate Wallis (Youth Minister)

Kate oversees the Youth Ministry of St Paul's, both within church and through linking with local schools. She manages and develops a large team of volunteers to deliver both Sunday morning and midweek youth ministry. Kate enjoys seeing the young people grow in life and faith and seeing God at work in their lives.



Hester Meacock (Children's and Families' Minister)

Hester oversees our work with children under eleven and their families. This includes the St Paul's Kids ministry on Sunday morning. She has built up our links with St Paul's school where we have an active presence and is a school governor there. Hester spent January and February planning and preparing for her maternity leave and we look forward to welcoming her back in March 2018.



Hannah Jones (Associate Children's Minister)

Hannah assists Hester in the children's work with a particular focus on work with the under 5s. This includes the midweek Tiddlies Praise parent and toddler group, and the Movers and Wrigglers groups on Sundays. She is also involved in work at St Paul's school, particularly in taking assemblies and running occasional workshops. Since March this year, she has taken on extra responsibility in overseeing the children's work in Hester's absence.



Ruth Smith (Ordinand)

Ruth is now in her second year of training for ordination at St Mellitus College in September. As her placement church, she gives half her week to the ministry of St Paul's. She preaches and leads services regularly both on Sundays and at our midweek service. Her musical and pastoral gifts are also very well used.



Liz Garrett (Groovers' Leader)

Since September, Liz has joined the team with particular responsibility for the Sunday morning Groovers' groups (5-11 year olds). Liz oversees the volunteer team on Sunday mornings and plans and prepares for the sessions on another day during the week.

Operational Staff



Jan Pringle (Operations Director)

Jan oversees day-to-day operational matters and manages the office staff. She works closely with Jonathan and Adam in setting priorities in ministry. She is also our Safeguarding Officer.



Mel Tweed (Facilities and Finance)

Mel has been working at St Paul's since 2008 and is responsible for the running of all that happens in the building and for looking after the accounts.



Naomi Gaade (Communications & Events)

Naomi produces the notice sheet, updates the website, creates publicity materials, and helps to plan, organise and co-ordinate events.



Lizzie Timlin (Housekeeper)

Lizzie maintains & cleans the building. Organises the kitchen and trains users in food hygiene procedures.



Caroline Castle (Ministry Support)

Caroline joined the staff team in 2011 and provides administrative support to the ministry team and volunteer ministry leaders.



Julia Salter (Part-time Cleaner)

Julia provides much needed extra support with cleaning and housekeeping duties.

PCC

The PCC is formally the “Parochial Church Council”, and consists of the clergy, churchwardens and elected representatives from the congregation. As a body, they are to “cooperate with the incumbent (the vicar here) to promote in the parish the whole mission of the church”. In particular, the PCC is responsible for the finances, the fabric and the staff of the church. They also discuss and pray into wider issues of ministry and mission, and act as trustees of the charity.

This year has been a year of significant transition and change. Both Churchwardens have changed, we have a new PCC secretary (thankyou Helen for your years of service; welcome Sarah), we have said goodbye to Lizzy (the Associate Vicar) and welcomed Adam (our new Curate), and had many new members elected onto the PCC.

In addition to all that change of people, we have taken time to seek the Lord for fresh vision for the years ahead, after all the work redeveloping the buildings and multiplying the congregations over the last few years.

After several meetings talking and praying, we agreed in June that for the next 3 years, we should focus clearly on deepening the discipleship of all our church members. We don't see this as an inward focus, as Jesus calls his disciples to engage with the world around in mission. We have expressed this as our:

“2020 Vision: making wholehearted (missional) disciples of all ages”. We also agreed three main traits of discipleship: Being with Jesus, Becoming like Jesus & Doing what Jesus did. Jonathan is planning to preach into these areas in 2018.

We spent quite a lot of time discussing how best to resource this vision in terms of staffing. We are agreed that we want to recruit a new Associate Vicar, who will take the lead in overseeing adult discipleship. We are also aware that deepening discipleship takes a huge amount of time (Jesus spent 3 years focussing on the 12 disciples), and we realise that we will need to make extra staff appointments in 2018 to provide the leadership time needed.

Another significant topic on PCC was the buying of a house. We had sold our previous house (49 Wathen Road) to help with the cashflow for Phase 2 of the Redevelopment. In line with what we reported in 2016, we have bought a house using most of the money left over from the Wathen Road house, and made it available to a Syrian refugee family, in partnership with the local Council. We are delighted that this family moved into our new property in November. The agreement with the Council is for 4 years, reviewable annually.

With Lizzy moving on in the summer, Esther completing her church placement, and Hester on maternity leave, we didn't spend as much on staffing in 2017 as budgeted, and have made a surplus in 2017. We have now got to the point where our reserves are more than we need purely for cashflow purposes. Having used all our reserves previously on redeveloping the buildings, this has been a goal for a few years.

After some discussion, we decided to split these reserves into 3 pots: one for cashflow and general reserves, one specifically for our properties (two houses), and one to resource new initiatives/ staffing posts for mission and ministry. We have therefore agreed that the general reserves policy should be 8 weeks of regular expenditure (around £80,000); that the property fund should have the money left over from the Wathen Road house (~£45,000), and that all other surplus money should go into resourcing ministry and mission, probably priming the pump for new staff posts.

The other main theme for discussion has been safeguarding. We had a safeguarding audit on our processes and practices, which revealed much that was good. But it also revealed a significant tension between a process-driven approach, and a more pastoral approach. We agreed with the main recommendation from the report, which was to set up a new safeguarding group, to ensure that the pastoral ministry and safeguarding processes work together more effectively.

Church Wardens

At the Annual meeting, we expressed great thanks to our previous churchwardens (Chris Barrett & Elly Crofton), and to Andrew Rolls for filling Chris' place after he stepped down at the end of 2016. We elected two new churchwardens: Carolyn Davey and Martin Haywood.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee's formal purpose is to transact the business of the PCC between meetings. For several years now, we have also used the Standing Committee to act as a Senior Leadership team for the church. Sometimes Jonathan shares his thinking here first, to discuss and pray through before it reaches PCC. At other times, the PCC delegates decisions to the Standing Committee. It is made up of Jonathan (Vicar), Martin & Carolyn (Churchwardens), Andrew (Treasurer), Sarah (PCC Secretary) and Adam (Curate), with Jan (Operations Director) in attendance.

Clergy

Jonathan is our Vicar and works full-time. Lizzy was our Associate Vicar, and was working part-time; she was appointed as Team Rector at St George's Leeds, and moved in the summer. We welcomed Adam Tams as our new Curate in July. In addition, we are grateful for the help that Graeme Pringle and Anne Hibbert can give (both have demanding jobs elsewhere). We are also grateful to John Haynes, a long-standing retired clergyman, for occasional preaching at the midweek service.

Adam's Ordination 2 July 2017



On the afternoon of 2 July, our new curate Adam was ordained as a deacon in Coventry Cathedral in a very formal but moving service. Both Adam and Jonathan were spotted fully robed (a most unusual occurrence) and several church members went along to support him, Jess and Jacob as they took this big step after 3 years of training at Theological College.

We have been delighted to welcome Adam and his family

to our church. Next year, he will be ordained as a priest and his training with us will continue for at least another two years.

"We had such a lovely day – thanks to all for your love, prayers and support." Jess Tams

Safeguarding



Jan Pringle

We take our Safeguarding responsibilities very seriously here at St Paul's. Jan Pringle is our Safeguarding officer and Jess Tams is our Deputy Safeguarding Officer. Any concerns should go to the leader of the group or ministry in the first instance but can be referred to Jan or Jess if the concern involves the leader. The leaders will pass concerns on as needed.

We work closely with Coventry diocese and have adopted the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy. The PCC has complied with the duty to "have due regard" to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding. We have a Safer Recruitment policy and any new staff and volunteers who are working with children or vulnerable adults are safely recruited as well as being DBS checked. We currently have over 100 people who have been DBS checked for their roles within the church.

Earlier this year, the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Carol Clarke, conducted an audit of all our safeguarding and reported to the PCC on this. Generally, the picture was very positive but a small number of points for action were identified. Since then, we have set up a Parish Safeguarding Advisory Group who meet approximately every 6 weeks to review safeguarding in the church generally and also to review the handling of more major pastoral cases. This group put together an action plan to address the points for action identified in the audit and this was approved by the PCC and by the diocese towards the end of the year. We are making good progress with working through this.



Jess Tams

Ordinands

(People training for Ordination)

During 2017, we have had 5 ordinands in training from our church family. There are a variety of training courses available, all of which have church placements.

Thom Jee is in his final year at Ridley Hall in Cambridge. He is due to be ordained in 2018 and will serve his curacy at All Saints, Woodford Wells.

Esther Peers is in her final year at St Mellitus College in London. For her first two years she was also on placement at St Paul's. During her third year, she is gaining wider experience in other churches. She is due to be ordained in the summer. (Details not yet public).

Jonathan Smith is in his final year at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, and is on placement at St Marks, Leamington. He will be ordained in the summer. (Details not yet public).

Ruth Smith is in her second year (of 3) at St Mellitus in London, and St Paul's is her placement church.

Thea Smith is in her second year (of 3) at Trinity College, Bristol. She lives in Bristol full time, and is on placement at a church there.

There are a few other members of the congregation also exploring a possible call to ordination.

Fabric

We have a large building which is well used throughout the year. To keep everything well maintained and in good repair, there is a programme of checks, tests and maintenance visits throughout the year. With so much use, equipment, fixtures and fittings do regularly need repair or replacement. The church gardens and exterior also need maintaining. All of this is meticulously overseen by our Finance and Fabric Administrator Mel Tweed.

Each year, we also identify particular areas that need addressing, and this year painting has been done both internally and externally to refresh areas which were getting worn. In particular, we were pleased to be able to repaint the hall which has lightened and freshened up this area.

At the beginning of the year we replaced our old organ, which had become unreliable, with a new organ console which has been well used, particularly at the midweek service.

Several members of staff and volunteers underwent training in using a defibrillator; following this we bought and installed our own defibrillator in the worship space. We also turfed the Quench garden which makes this space into a good resource for the youth groups.

In addition to our own church building, we are also responsible for the maintenance of 40 Leicester Street and have spent some time planning repairs and refurbishment there. We also have another property locally (now housing a refugee family) and this needed work to ensure its safety for the new tenants.

We are very grateful to several volunteers who help to maintain the fabric of the buildings. In particular, David Harkness has continued to give lots of help with small repairs and maintenance tasks. David Jackson has also been helping out with these tasks this year. Our curate Adam Tams has taken a lead in ensuring our PA and Visuals equipment is well maintained and properly used.

Lizzie Timlin and Julia Salter keep our building beautifully clean. Stan and Carolyn Harris regularly help out with deep-cleaning the kitchen. Lizzie and Julia also manage the operation of the kitchen, and are very grateful to all the volunteers who have given up time to be kitchen trained, and who do a great job of maintaining our 5 star rating when using the kitchen. John Robinson helps out with gardening in the summer months.

We are extremely grateful to Mel, Lizzie, Julia and our many volunteers who have worked so hard this year.



Use of the building by other local groups

As well as providing a base for the local Foodbank once a week, we have provided a room for language classes for refugees during the summer months. As well as this, the local 'Advance' group (who work with people with mental health issues and learning difficulties) have used our lounge and kitchen facilities to provide social support and cookery classes. We are delighted to make our facilities available to these groups.

Social Media

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have enabled wide spread publicity for services and events in 2017, as well as online ticketing, using Ticket Tailor, which has made access to tickets and entry to events easier.

We have also been able to notify the congregation of last minute changes to services easily, and these notifications have been shared across the social media platforms.

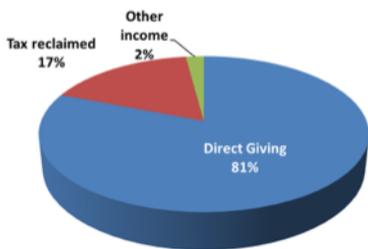
New worship songs have also been introduced by linking YouTube clips on Facebook, so that the songs can be listened to in advance of the services.

Facebook also provides a communication channel for those needing to ask questions about St Paul's and availability of the building.

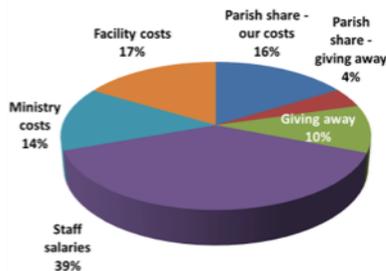
Finance

Once again, we are very grateful for the Lord's provision for our needs this year. Although income was a little down on the previous year, there were some savings as a result of staff leaving or being on maternity leave and we ended the year with a healthy surplus of income over expenditure. We have been glad that this has helped to replenish our reserves which were used up during the Redevelopment.

When we did Phase 2 of our Redevelopment in 2015, we sold the house we owned in order to help with cash flow (we had to pay VAT on some of the work which took some time to claim back) and towards the overall cost. The PCC decided to re-invest most of the remainder of this money in property and in September we bought another house and have worked with the local council to rent this to a Syrian refugee family. The rent we charge is not at a commercial rate but gives us enough income to cover the running costs of the property. The vast majority (98%!) of our regular income comes from direct giving from our church members together with the associated Gift Aid tax reclaimed on this giving and we are extremely grateful to all those who give so generously. There is also a small amount of income from wedding and funeral fees, lettings and investments.



Income - £518,050



Expenditure - £481,169

The pie charts show income on the left and expenditure, or how the money is spent on the right.

Staff salaries include the staff wages but also National Insurance and pension contributions for the staff team (apart from the clergy).

The ministry costs include all the costs of our children's and youth work, adult discipleship, outreach, community work, leadership development and training.

Facility and Governance costs include the costs of keeping our building and equipment in good repair, cleaning, office running costs, heating, lighting and insurance.

Each year we budget to give away at least 10% of the previous year's unrestricted income to our mission partners and ministries in the town beyond our own church. The PCC policy is for approximately half of this to go to local mission initiatives in the area, and half to go further afield. The Parish Share is our share of the costs of ministry in the diocese including training, housing, stipend and associated costs. In addition to the 10% we give away locally and further afield, we also give around 4% of our income to the wider Church of England through making an additional Parish Share contribution on top of our actual costs. So, in all, we give away around 15% of our regular income, in addition to occasional Gift Days for specific purposes.

After all our creditors and debtors have been taken into account, we have £141,407 in our general reserves. In addition £42,698 is what remains from the proceeds from the sale of our house in Wathen Road after buying the new house (which was a little cheaper).

Towards the end of the year, the PCC decided to split these reserves into 3 pots: one for cashflow and general reserves, one specifically for our properties (the new house and 40 Leicester Street), and one to resource new initiatives/staffing posts for mission and ministry. We have therefore agreed that the general reserves policy should be 8 weeks of regular expenditure (around £80,000); that the property fund should have the money left over from the Wathen Road house (£42,698), and that all other surplus money should go into resourcing ministry and mission, probably priming the pump for new staff posts (£61,407). Full details in the Accounts Appendix.

Statutory Requirements

Reference and administration details

Charity name: The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Paul, Leamington Priors

Registered charity number: 1130329

Charity's principal address: St Paul's Church, Leicester Street, Leamington Spa, Warks, CV32 4TE

Names of charity trustees, (PCC members) who manage the charity:

Jonathan Jee (Vicar and Chair) DS

Lizzy Woolf (Associate Vicar until 16/4/17)

Adam Tams (Curate from 2/7/17) DS

Andrew Rolls (Treasurer) (Acting Churchwarden 1/1/17 - 2/4/17) DS

Graeme Pringle (Hon. Associate Minister) DS and Dioc S

Chris Barrett (Churchwarden until 2/4/17)

Carolyn Davey (and Churchwarden from 2/4/17)

Martin Haywood (Churchwarden from 2/4/17)

Sarah Darren (Secretary from 2/4/17)

Simon Brown from 2/4/17

Andrew Bush until 2/4/17

Katrina Bush from 2/4/17

Charlie Crow from 2/4/17

Dave Gorton until 3/8/17

Lisa Haywood until 26/9/17

Rachel King

Judith Linnell

Suzanne MacRae until 2/4/17

Sam Meacock until 31/12/17

Tony O'Brien from 2/4/17

Roger Penney DS

Ruth Quigley until 2/4/17

Helen Perryman (Secretary until 2/2/17) DS and Diocesan Synod

Jon Randall until 2/4/17

Rachel Roberts

Rob Sciacaluga from 2/4/17

Pam Snape

Lewis Stephenson DS

Tim Traynar from 2/4/17

Pete Wallis from 2/4/17

Simon Wallis from 2/4/17

Nishan Wiratunga until 2/4/17

(DS = Deanery Synod, Dioc S = Diocesan Synod)

Bank: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent. ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner: M D Spafford of LDP Luckmans, 1110 Elliott Court, Herald Avenue, Coventry Business Park, Coventry, CV5 6UB.

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document:

Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended and church representation rules

How the charity is constituted:

A corporate body established by the Church of England

Trustee selection and induction methods:

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the church representation rules. The PCC is also a registered charity. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and are eligible to stand for election to the PCC. PCC members are briefed on current PCC issues at the first meeting of the new PCC.

The PCC operates through a number of committees, which meet between full meetings of the PCC: the Standing Committee, the HR Group, and the GO (Global Outreach) team.

Risk

The PCC has continued to review the risks facing the church, including types of risk, potential impact on the church and means of mitigating these risks. Systems and procedures have been put in place to mitigate identifiable risks. The PCC will continue to review risks on an on-going basis.

The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the affairs of the church as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the financial year. In preparing these financial statements the PCC will select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently and will make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent. The PCC is responsible for maintaining proper accounting records and for safeguarding the assets of the church.

Pay Policy

Clergy are paid by the diocese.

The pay of employed staff is reviewed annually by the HR Team and Standing Committee and increases are agreed by the Trustees being mindful of the Church's charitable objectives and increases in average earnings.

Objectives and activities

Our purpose at St Paul's is to bring 'Glory to Christ, Growth to his church and Good news to the community' (this purpose statement was approved at the APCM in 2004).

St Paul's vision can be summarised as follows:

"Our vision is to see Leamington changed, one life at a time. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we will try to fulfil this vision by helping each member of St Paul's to become a wholehearted disciple of Jesus, working towards St Paul's becoming a thriving centre for the Kingdom of God 7 days a week, working with other churches to continue the ministry of Jesus, proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God and demonstrating it in practical caring ways."

As a registered charity, we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. To fulfil our purpose and take steps towards achieving our vision the activities described above have taken place.

Achievements and performance

We hope you have enjoyed reading about these in the preceding pages.

Approved by the PCC on 12 March 2017 and signed on their behalf by

Jonathan Jee
Vicar and Chair of the PCC

