

THE PARISH OF EAST and WEST TILBURY

and LINFORD

THE REPORT OF

THE WORK & ACTIVITIES

Of the PARISH

2017

**Our Church's *PURPOSE* is to *Worship* God,
and to *grow* through developing as disciples, bringing other
members of God's family into our Church, and demonstrating God's
love and care.**

Churchwardens' report for the year ending 2017

The end of 2017 and we are still in interregnum. The vacancy for our parish priest has been advertised twice during the year and unfortunately there have been no applications. As the year progressed the position changed. It had been intended that Fr David Rollins would oversee the parish but with the departure of his curate Justin, it became clear it would be difficult to oversee our parish alongside the United Benefice of Corringham and Fobbing.

Also 2017 saw the sad death of Bishop John and Mike Lodge, the Archdeacon of Southend is now looking at how we move forward. After several discussions a meeting was held between the Archdeacon, the Wardens and Sheila King, Secretary of the PCC and a new approach has been agreed.

The plan is now for a Priest in Charge in the parish rather than an Associate Priest who would have been part of the team of another parish. This will still be a House for Duty role but whoever is chosen would be responsible for this parish Therefore the Parish Profile is now being revised so the post can be advertised.

However, although we are at this moments still without a parish priest it is good to see that the life and worship at St Catherine's and St Francis is continuing and our congregations are still supporting our parish. Colin has worked very hard to make sure our services are covered by visiting clergy and this has become harder over the year due to curates moving on as have other priests in the Deanery. It is good to report that every service has been covered over the year and the completed "Statistics for Mission" form which has to be completed and sent annually to the Diocese shows very little difference in numbers attending services. The Christmas services were very well attended with more people than usual in the congregation on Christmas morning. We were very grateful that the Archdeacon was able to lead this service for us.

We continued to hold all our usual events over the year and welcomed visitors to the Lent Lunches, Cake Sales, Summer Fete, Christmas Bazaar, Harvest Supper and Afternoon Teas. We also held what we hope is the first of many Quiz Nights. The Drop-Ins at St Francis go from strength to strength alongside the Food Bank. The Wardens thank the PCC and other members of the congregation who give their time and enthusiasm to make sure all these events continue to happen.

Over the year we have had several meetings with our architect and Bakers. The builders have now finished work on the snagging list and the problem with the heating seems to have been resolved. The boiler had not been calibrated correctly at the factory and had not been running at full capacity This has now been rectified and Chris is continuing to take temperature readings which seem much improved.

We move into the new year with optimism. The rest of this report outlines the life and work of the parish.

Colin Strong and Sue Spiers

Electoral Roll Report

This year has seen some of our parishioners move and with them have taken family members from the electoral roll. We have been lucky to enrol 2 new parishioners.

Our 2017 -2018 figures are:-

Residents 51 Non Residents 15

We have Removed 9 names from the roll and have added 2.

Kathleen Bird (Electoral Roll Secretary)

Gift Aid and Planned Giving 2017

The Gift Aid Scheme allows the parish to claim 25% on all donations from U.K. Tax payers.

In addition from 2014 HMR&C does allow us claim for collections in Church and for donations including ingredients for cakes /wool for knitted items etc. and for services funded by parishioners and for the “Easy Fundraising” scheme. The examiner of accounts advised that we can claim for donations at St. Francis services.

Planned Giving has remained at the 2016 level. We have 26 Individuals / Families who give generously and regularly through the envelope scheme or by direct debit.

Contributions are now at the 2014 level. Loose collections are down by approximately £1,000 due to a reduction in the number of services.

Tax Relief is up as we have claimed for collections at St. Francis and on a very generous donation.

The full impact of 2017 a year of minor changes and improvements is difficult to assess but I am confident that over a full year in our lovely, warm and refurbished Church our financial position will improve.

The majority of the regular givers pay tax and have filled in the required declaration.

If you have yet to fill in the a declaration please let me know,

Tax thresholds have risen and if you are no longer pay tax please make sure that we stop claiming tax relief in your name.

Thank you to all for your continued and generous support of the work of the Parish.

Norman

The St. Francis Centre

Apart from its use for church activities we have got a lot of regular booking for the hall, supporting the local community. There is a ladies “Keep Fit” on Monday evenings. On Tuesdays we have three groups; the “Linford Ladies” group in the morning, a carer’s craft group in the afternoon and now (March 2017) a karate group in the evening. On Wednesday’s we start with our service of Holy Communion followed by our “Drop in” in the morning, Regency Dance in the afternoon and another dance group in the evening. On Thursday we operate a Thurrock foodbank

distribution centre in the morning and, once a month, the local Womens' Institute meet in the evening.

In September we, once again, provided the venue for a local McMillan nurse's coffee morning which was very well supported.

In addition we have had several "one off" bookings for Church members and our various social events. So things continue to go well.

Patricia Strong (Bookings Secretary)

Thurrock Foodbank at the St Francis Centre

The parish continue to be great supporters of the Thurrock foodbank which exists to help people in Thurrock who find themselves in a crisis situation, by:-

- Regularly donating food
- Making cash contributions through our donation "buckets"
- Operating a food distribution centre at St. Francis in Linford
- Assisting with supermarket collections

The distribution centre is officially open on a Thursday morning between 11am and 1pm but we have also provided food on a Wednesday morning during the "drop in" session if clients have arrived with the relevant food voucher. We also work closely with Samson Obaduju, our Local Area Coordinator by providing a friendly environment for some of our lonely and more vulnerable residents. Although this is not strictly a "foodbank" facility it is clearly part of our Christian ethos.

Chris Ford

The Wednesday "Drop-In"

After our Wednesday service of Holy Communion at the St. Francis centre the hall is swiftly transformed into a coffee shop. While some of the worshippers remain they are joined by a number of other local residents. At these weekly meetings information and stories are exchanged, technical advice is given regarding computers, mobile 'phones etc. and we also have a very well used book exchange. All are welcome and the event is funded by the donations of the visitors. Samson Obaduju, our Local Area Coordinator, also uses this time to meet with his clients.

Chris Ford

St. Catherine's flowers

Flower arranging in St Catherine's is always a pleasure for me as it was not chore but an inspiration to achieve an art form with flowers.

The year starts just after Christmas and the New year, and often the flowers are still good for another couple of weeks . Depending when Easter falls there are a few weeks of general flowers then, in Lent, flowers are absent for six weeks,

Then the season of Easter and the church looked beautiful dressed with lilies and spring Flowers. The lilies are paid for by donations from the congregation in memory of loved ones. Our thanks to Carol and John Bell who arranged the Easter Garden and the Tomb which is always in keeping with the Easter Theme.

Flowers are always put into Church for our weekly Services and are economically used. Festival's are normally noted by the colours in the arrangements.

We did have several weddings during the year and arrangements used the colours requested by the bride if she had a particular colour or type of flowers in mind.

Church was decorated for Harvest with Autumn Colours and some small amounts of produce.

In November we mark "Remembrance" with displays of Poppies.

And so to December, looking forward to our Christmas arrangements and seeking ideas from our arrangers of what we would like to do. Chris and Kim got the tree and with the help of some of the children decorated it; making sure that the decorations were ready for the Carol service on the 16th December.

Pam Painter

Social Committee - 2017

1. The Committee met four times during 2017.
2. We started our events with our Shrove Tuesday Pancake social evening which was a great success and the donations went to the Bishop's Lent appeal.
3. Lent Lunches were held in February and March to support the Bishop's Lent Appeal. This year these were held at St. Catherine's after the Sunday Service and were reasonably well attended by members of our congregation and friends from the Linford Methodist Church.
4. Our Annual Spring Cake Sale at the St. Francis Centre raised funds for the parish as well as giving the opportunity to catch up with annual visitors.
5. In May we held our annual Rogation procession through West Tilbury village "beating the bounds". We were joined by friends of Grays Town Band who supplied accompaniment to the hymns. The last stop was the

village hall where tea and cakes were served. This was a pleasant afternoon and well attended.

6. Our summer fete took place at St. Catherine's on June 25th. The weather was not particularly summery which meant that the attendance was down. It also meant that there were less stalls outside and the Grays Town Band, who play in the churchyard, had a smaller audience. Traditionally this event has clashed with the Horndon Feast and Fayre and so we are going to try a Saturday afternoon in 2018, and not coincide with Horndon event.
7. The Picnic was arranged for St Catherine's this year instead of St. Francis although the attendance was rather low and the weather was a little inclement, those who did partake enjoyed the fellowship.
8. Our Quiz Night on the 8th September was a new event this year arranged by Geraldine Riddles and her family. There were four tables of quizzers and some who enjoyed the evening and felt that it should be repeated.
9. The Harvest Supper in October was held at the St. Francis centre; a "bring and share" event. The food was supplied by members of the congregation who attended. There were various hot dishes for the main course and fruit pies and crumbles for desert. It was enjoyed by all those present.
11. At the end of October we celebrated the local connection with St. Cedd with an open weekend at St. Catherine's. On the Saturday we were open for tea, cakes and craft activities. The Sunday was a repeat and a great success with lots of people attending and taking part.
12. Last but not least, our Christmas Bazaar took place on 2nd December at St. Catherine's. As in the past it was a good event for meeting folk, "showcasing" the church and raising funds for the parish.
13. Our usual Carol Services at St. Catherine's and St. Francis took place and were supplied with mince pies and mulled wine.

Pam Painter.

Pewtalk and Parish Communications 2017

"Pewtalk", our monthly parish magazine continued to be published during the year. 125 copies are printed monthly, with 90+ copies being delivered to subscribers in the parish by our band of dedicated distributors. The remainder are available at St. Catherine's and St. Francis for visitors to pick up.

The magazine consists of contributions from the editor, parishioners and articles from many other sources including the Chelmsford Diocese and "Parish Pump" (a resource for parish magazines) that we subscribe to. It includes our monthly calendar of events. It is also available on the parish website and we know from feedback that it is also read from there.

The contributors and distributors make the magazine possible and we thank them for their support. From time to time we produce leaflets for visitors to St. Catherine's. We also produce a weekly newsletter, maintain a Website (www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk) and are on the Church of England's website - "A Church Near You" - which is frequently accessed by people wanting to contact the parish and church.

Chris Ford (Pewtalk editor)

Sunday School

During the year we continued with our Sunday School meeting once a month when a sufficient number of children are available. With the current age profile of the congregation this tends to be grandchildren and friends. The programme is based on the Bible Society's "Roots" resource with a mixture of craft and bible teaching. We are very grateful to Kim and Jan for their efforts with this project. If you would like to know more, please contact Kim or Jan.

Links with other churches

We endeavour to work with the Linford Methodist church when and where we can. Some of our congregation, together with the Methodists and others, are involved with the "Open the Book" project at the Woodside Primary Academy in Grays and also the Methodists' "Yippee" club for children.

We invite them to join with us in some of our services, particularly on Remembrance Sunday and our Carol services, and we invite each other to our social and fundraising events. We also have a shared monthly bible study and joint Lent group.

Deanery Synod Report for 2017/18

Kim Ford and Sue Spiers are our elected Deanery Synod representatives. There were four meetings during the year.

The first meeting of the year was held at St Michael's Church, Aveley on 11th May 2017 members were welcomed by Les Brock. The first item discussed was Transforming Presence. Information was given about the "Time to Talk" event which was to take place in November. It was hoped that members of PCCs would all attend. Synod went on to discuss Reimagining Ministry it is still hoped to form three Units of Mission and Ministry in the Deanery but only two have been formed so far. The meeting concluded with a service of Holy Communion at which Tara presided.

On the 29th June the Synod met at St Mary's Church, Bulphan. The introduction was made by Darren who explained how the Deanery Synod fitted within the Church of England .

There followed the Election of Officers. Les Brock was elected Chair of the House of Laity and Pam Kirby elected Secretary. The meeting then broke into Houses in order for Four members to be elected from the House of Clergy and four members from the House of Laity to form a Standing Committee.

There followed a discussion on the Deanery Mission Event at Orsett Show it was intended to give out bottles of water and bubbles for the children again this year and provide tea and coffee. Any help would be welcome.

The October meeting was held at St Cedd's Church, Stifford Clays Unfortunately the speaker was unwell and unable to attend the meeting.

There followed a discussion on the future of the Deanery. There is to be a reduction in stipendiary clergy from 13 to 10. This means that in some parishes when the incumbent leaves or retires they won't be replaced. "Re-imagining" Ministry is about moving forward. Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan all had there own vicar and now they share one. St James, West Tilbury and Mucking were both closed. It was also pointed out that in the case of St Catherine's no one is coming forward to fill House for Duty posts.

It was reported that the Mission Event at the Orsett Show had been successful with over 600 bottles of water given out and lots of leaflets giving details of the Sunday services of all the churches in the Deanery.

The first meeting of 2018 was held at St John's Church, Grays North on the 29th January. The speaker was Emily Timmins for The Childrens' Society. She explained how the society was set up by Edward Rudolph who approached the Archbishop of Canterbury with his ideas and this led to the setting up of a Childrens' Home. The needs have changed as society has changed. Now the focus is on 10 -18 year olds that have many complex issues. There are 6318 children in Essex classified as in need. Many needing one to one help. Children leaving care find the transition difficult and need specialised assistance. The Society is very grateful for money raised from House Boxes and Christingles.

There was also discussion of the Time to Talk in November. The responses will be collated and taken back to the PCC's in the Deanery.

There was a presentation on the new Data Protection Act which will come into effect in May 2018. There will be courses run in the diocese so that parishes will be prepared to put into place the stringent new measures.