

**The Parish of St Thomas and St Edmund Salisbury**

# **A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF THE PARISH 2016**



**Update 3**

## **Welcome**

*For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. Romans 12: 4 - 5*

Welcome to the 2016 edition of 'A Year in the Life of St Thomas's Church' and what an important year it was. After ten years of inspiring ministry we bade farewell to David as our Rector. David will be long remembered not just for the excellence of his preaching but the breadth and depth of his theological understanding which he applied to so many areas of our communal life: the Re-development Project; in the deepening of our links with the businesses, organisations, and institutions of the city; and in his day-to-day pastoral care for so many across the community. We have much to thank David for.

The vacancy, however, has demonstrated the depth and quality of our parish leadership, the strength of which has been hugely appreciated. Our wonderful Churchwardens, Bobbie and Rosie, have led by example and we thank them and the Churchwarden Team, for their tireless efforts and commitment to St Thomas's. We welcomed Meryl Browning as our new Parish Manager working alongside Cristina strengthening the role of the Parish Office. The Leadership Team, the PCC under Martin Marriott, the Fabric and Finance Committees and the many other teams have grown in confidence as they have shouldered the diverse responsibilities of an energetic parish. Indeed, the process to appoint a new Rector, successful at the first attempt, amply demonstrates the skills and talents residing within our community and our thanks go to everyone involved in that challenge. We are so pleased to be welcoming Kelvin Inglis, his wife Helen and their family to St Thomas's in July.

But there remain challenges to be met: how to implement and pay for the Re-development Project and the fabric needs of a medieval building; the work with our children and young people; and ensuring the long-term financial stability of the parish.

If anyone were to feel downhearted or daunted then we would ask you to read this booklet carefully. There can be few parishes, anywhere, who can report on such a wide range of activities, initiatives and successes. St Thomas's is a community with deep and firm foundations. Our worship is strong and varied. We have a great sense of purpose and of who we are as a community, rooted in our steadfast faith and prayer. We can look, therefore, to 2017 and beyond with great confidence.

**The Ministry Team**

## **Safeguarding Report:**

The way that safeguarding training is delivered in the Church of England has changed dramatically over the last couple of years. New practice guidance on how this should look over the coming months has been approved by the House of Bishops for all dioceses and our diocesan website clearly states what the expectations are for us. The purpose is to develop and ensure a framework of consistent learning and development of safeguarding values in the context of the church. In Salisbury, we have access to clear and comprehensive training for all our volunteers and advice and support from the centre for the clergy and parishes.

In September 2016, the PCC appointed Bridget Trump and Michael Humphreys to be the Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSRs) for St Thomas's, with clear instructions about how to deliver and monitor the diocesan guidelines.

The emphasis has initially been upon ensuring a general awareness of safeguarding issues through the attendance at C1 foundation level training sessions. By the end of the year over 40 people had voluntarily undertaken to attend one such half-day session. In addition, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance is mandatory for some roles, alongside the requirement to undertake both C1 and C2 level training. A steady stream of people have completed this requirement.

All our volunteers have responded with a positive attitude to these requirements and have used the training sessions to explore ideas and scenarios that are unique to our shared life in the city centre. It has been through these shared sessions that we begin to understand other people's roles within our church community and the pressure and anxieties that they face. We must be fair to everyone; protect the vulnerable and in some situations acknowledge that this includes ourselves.

We have produced a simple tri-fold leaflet explaining general safeguarding information with the relevant contact details. A dedicated email address gives access to the PSRs who have been able to respond to special concerns. Care is being taken with drawing up role descriptions for volunteers for our many different groups as we implement the guidance surrounding the safe recruitment of volunteers. Inevitably this involves clear strategic planning, detailed risk assessments, contacting referees for written references and formal induction and probationary periods.

The PSRs report to the PCC on a regular basis and work with the Leadership Team on delivering the diocesan requirements. We would all wish to acknowledge that huge progress has been made within a relatively short period of time and for that we are grateful for the manner in which the congregation have supported the change of emphasis for our life together, which now holds safeguarding in a prominent position.

**Bridget Trump Parish Safeguarding Representative.**

## **Adult Education Team**

### **Membership:**

Jill Britton; Fiona Hulbert (Chair); Mark Manterfield; Judith Marriott; Jonathan Plows; Linda Salter, Keith Thomasson.

At the 2016 APCM John Cox stood down as Chair of the Education Team after eight years, in which time Education at St Thomas's has grown and flourished. Fiona Hulbert was elected as the new Chair.

### **Groups**

Ongoing groups include the Marriott's Bible Study groups (contact Martin or Judith Marriott), the Faith Group (contact Jane Miller) and Contemplative Community (contact Jill Britton or Jonathan Plows). Newcomers are most welcome at all these groups.

### **Parish Day, March 2016**

A Parish Day was held on the topic of 'The Common Life: ways ahead in growing and strengthening the community of St Thomas's Church'. The keynote speaker was Brother Samuel S.S.F. from Hilfield Friary, who spoke on 'Being an Inclusive Community'. Additional speakers were Rev. Belinda Davies and Rev. Keith Thomasson. There were also discussion groups on Christian Community, Home Groups, Inclusive Church, Pastoral Care, Developing Children and Young People's Work, and the Redevelopment Programme. The day was attended by seventy-five people.

### **Lent 2016**

The programme was planned as an accompaniment to our spiritual journey between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. In addition to church services special events included:

- a series of Tuesday light lunches with talks from various speakers
- a series of Friday lunchtime concerts
- a series of study evenings on Community in the Old Testament led by Canon David Durston

## **Interfaith Education**

During 2016 we begun a programme of occasional events to give us opportunities to learn about other faiths. This has so far included:

- a group going to Southampton in June 2016 to participate in the Interfaith Walk for Peace, visiting the places of worship of different faiths in the city
- a talk from Canon Guy Wilkinson, Bishop's Interfaith advisor, on why Christians in Salisbury need to learn about other faiths
- a Scriptural Reasoning session, with Rabbi Natan Levy, Imam Usama Hasan and Canon Guy Wilkinson discussing the topic of 'Encountering God' from their respective scriptures.
- further events will follow

## **Advent Conversations**

This series of 'Spiritual Conversations' led by Revd Keith Thomasson gave participants opportunities to explore ways of nurturing their spirituality.

## **Retreats / Quiet Days**

None were held during 2016, but preparations have been made for our Quiet Day with Ian Adams in April 2017 and our next weekend at Hilfield Friary in Sept 2017.

## **Fiona Hulbert**

## **The Bellringers**

We have continued to ring for most of the Sunday Parish Communion and Evensong services exceptions being the few occasions when we could not summon up enough ringers. We have also rung for several weddings and Mayor making. Once a month we hold an advanced practice that brings in ringers from a wide area and allows us to practise methods we could not ring on our own. This has led to several of our ringers extending their repertoire.

Social events, mainly curry evenings, have been organised by our dynamic new Social Secretary, Penny Ibbs. We had a tower outing in July when we visited 6 towers including Amesbury and Warminster and a mini-ring. A tower open day was held in September. We were recorded by the BBC for the BBC Music Day in June. We continued to man the second Saturday coffee mornings in the church and this year split the takings equally between the church and the organ appeal.

We rang two quarter peals for the "Ringers Strike Back Against Blood Cancer" initiative which was heavily sponsored nationally and has raised over £7million to date with many quarter peals rung around the country and overseas.

As announced at our 2015 AGM, Margaret Romano resigned as Tower Captain at our 2016 AGM and was replaced by me, her long-standing Deputy. She has worked very hard over 20 years in charge, keeping the ringing going, teaching and maintaining standards. The band and other local ringers gathered for a supper to express our thanks to her. Speeches were made and gifts were given to her.

At our AGM, chaired by Dominic, our curate, we also discussed the new safeguarding procedures that the church is adopting and what it would mean for bellringers.

It is a matter of pride that the sponsored peal we rang on 9<sup>th</sup> October raised considerably more money than any other single event for the organ restoration appeal.

We gained one trained ringer during the year but also lost one who moved out of the area. Recruitment and training will be an important priority for 2017. We would welcome new recruits who should be reasonably fit and between about 12 and 60.

**Nigel Orchard, Tower Captain**

## **The Bookstall Report**

The Bookstall has had a quieter year than 2015. But despite this, an income total of £2,506 has been raised. The stall continues to please both locals and visitors alike and a full rota of volunteers enables us to maintain our regular service. We remain indebted to all those who donate their volumes and to our customers who buy our wares.

I would like to pay tribute to all my team for their time and unbounded enthusiasm, without which we could not operate.

It is good to hear from reliable sources that real books continue to outsell their electronic counterparts. Long may this continue. Our main sales are still generated for good quality paperbacks, so I would be most grateful if you are able to donate, by either bringing them into the stall or I will be happy to collect larger amounts.

**Geoff Bishop.**

## **Care and Connect**

Care and Connect have continued to meet, on the third Tuesday of each month, throughout the past year.

Some of our group make their own way to St. Michael's room whilst others are collected by minibus and we are very grateful to both Alex and Eileen Lomax who act as driver and chaperone for these trips.

After coffee and plenty of chat, a member of the clergy team gives a short reflection, often based on the previous Sunday's readings, and then the group are escorted to St. Thomas's House for lunch. Previously this has been cooked by the Pantry Partnership charity but is now being prepared by volunteers from St. Thomas's congregation.

A budget from the finance committee has allowed us to ask for a minimal donation from those attending and we are grateful that this important outreach is able to continue, as it is so important for people to be able to come together for food and fellowship. Thanks must also be given to those helpers who regularly commit both their time and cooking skills.

In May we shall be lunching at Robert's, at Britford, and hope to be able to organise outings for a cream tea and a Christmas lunch.

## **St. Thomas & St. Edmunds Charity PCC St Thomas & St Edmund Fricker Charity**

Two charitable funds are distributed under the auspices of the parish: (a) the St. Thomas & St. Edmunds Charity and (b) the parish's share of the Fricker Charity.

The Trustees of the St. Thomas & St. Edmunds Charity are:

The Rector (ex officio),

Sally Vaughan (PCC Nominee and Secretary),

Nigel Orchard (Co-opted, Treasurer),

Bobbie Chettleburgh (Salisbury City Council nominated) and

Martin Inglis (Co-opted).

The Rector of St. Thomas's is the designated recipient and distributor of the parish's share of the Fricker Charity funds; David Linaker chose to use the St. Thomas's Charity trustees to advise him on distribution of the Fricker funds. In David's absence from August this arrangement was continued. Permission was obtained from the Archdeacon for Bobbie Chettleburgh as a churchwarden to receive the Fricker distributions and to chair the meetings of the trustees and

distributors. Dominic Thornton, St. Thomas's Curate, attended the last two meetings of the year. For further details, contact any of the trustees.

So that the charities can respond quickly to cases of need, the Secretary circulates details by email with a short deadline for Trustees to reply. If an application receives majority approval then the Secretary and Treasurer will make the payment. Only if an objection by a Trustee cannot be resolved by email will the application be held over to a meeting. The Trustees met four times in 2016.

The St. Thomas & St. Edmund funds arise from a Charities' Commission fund into which were consolidated the investments from 11 old charities ranging from The Charity of John Eyre (founded by will dated 13th July 1599) to The Charity of Richard Earlsman for Six Poor Men dated 1st October 1940. The capital is now invested in the Charity Commission fund (COIF). In 2014, the opportunity was taken to move these funds into a more ethical fund run by the Charities' Commission. Only the income is distributed by the trustees; the capital is left intact.

The income from the Fricker Charity (arising from the rental of a shop in Salisbury and distributed according to the terms of a will made in 1696) is passed equally to the rectors of St. Thomas's and St. Martin's and the trustees of The Trinity Hospital, Salisbury. The Fricker distribution area covers the entire city, Laverstock and Harnham, and the Fricker Trustees have asked St. Thomas's and St. Martins to liaise to ensure fair relief of need across the entire area and avoidance of duplication.

The St. Thomas & St. Edmunds Charity funds are restricted to the parish and to Bemerton Heath.

The trustees would welcome anyone drawing their attention to potential recipients. Grants may be made to needy individuals or organisations serving the needy in the area of the scheme. The contact email is:

**StTCharities@btinternet.com or phone the parish office in the first instance: 322537.**

In 2016, the St. Thomas & St. Edmunds Charity had an investment income of £3553 and distributed £1766. The main distribution was of £1050 in grants at Christmas for needy parishioners. The Fricker fund income was £10,000 and £10,016 was distributed in 41 grants (a big increase over the 28 in 2015). The trustees prefer to make grants on application from organisations so that they can vouch for the need, confirm that other sources of funding (where relevant) have also been approached and ensure that the grants are spent effectively and for

the purpose intended. The trustees aim to distribute the full amount of the income taking one year with another. No expenses are incurred in the administration of these funds by the parish.

Each year the accounts of both funds are subject to independent examination. Copies of the accounts are available on request.

**Nigel Orchard**  
**Treasurer**

## **The Choir**

The choir has had another busy year. In addition to singing regular services, it has been involved in concerts, special services and carol services. In April we sang at the Salisbury Diocesan Mothers' Union service at Salisbury Cathedral, one of three occasions that we sang there, the others being the Diocesan Festival and Evensong after Christmas. On Passion Sunday we sang Litany of the Thorns by John Harper and during the Easter season Joy of Easter, a programme of readings and music. Remembrance Sunday is always very special - as well as taking part in the Guildhall Square ceremony, the choir sang Fauré's Requiem at the evening Eucharist.

The main highlight of the year was the concert in July in aid of the Organ Appeal which raised £2000 - the choir were joined by instrumentalists to sing Beatus Vir by Monteverdi. The programme also included Jehova Quam Multi Sunt Hostes Mei by Henry Purcell and My Heart is Inditing by Handel.

We have maintained our link with Lady St Mary Church, Wareham, and had a very successful day visiting Corfe Castle and then singing Evensong.

Christmas is always a busy season starting with the Christmas Tree Festival and then carol services for Wessex Cancer, Elizabeth Court and singing for residents of Archers Court, a special Wessex Stoma event and Salisbury Trust for the Homeless.

During the year we have had to say farewell to Colin Fricker as he set out on a new venture in the USA. Caroline Schwarting was also presented with an RSCM medal to mark her service to the choir as she started at Durham University. Everyone in the choir has a chance to attend special sessions to improve their knowledge and skills. During the year Magnus, Jamie and Arabella all gained their Dean's Award, while William, Benjamin and Cameron moved up the ribbon ladder.

It is a privilege and very rewarding to be part of the choir and it is vital to recruit new members (boys, girls and adults) who can enhance the standard and maintain the tradition.

**John Dempster Director of Music**

## **Christian Aid**

St Thomas's people have supported Christian Aid in a number of different ways. The team of house-to-house collectors, together with coffee morning volunteers and a collection in church managed to raise a record-breaking total of £1929 in Christian Aid Week. The annual quiz night in January, now in the larger venue of St Marks to accommodate more teams, raised £769, also surpassing previous years. We also helped with a street collection in December.

Christian Aid is not only about raising money to be sent overseas, vitally important though this is.

In October 2016 St Thomas's hosted a lunch to bring to the attention of the public climate change, and especially the plight of people overseas affected by drought, flooding and hurricanes. The lunch was attended by Christian Aid's Director Loretta Minghella, together with Arturo Tahup from the Philippines talking about the effects of Typhoon Haiyan, Bishop Nicholas, and 70 others.

Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions, coming mainly from industrialized countries are effecting poorer countries with more extreme and unpredictable weather events. The Paris Agreement in December 2015 was groundbreaking in the commitments made to reducing carbon emissions, but the danger is that world leaders and industry chiefs will not stick to these commitments unless we hold them to account. After lunch we processed to the Guildhall with placards for a photo opportunity, and sang 'Climate's Changing' to the tune of 'Stormy Weather' – rousing and hearty even if Ella Fitzgerald wouldn't have recognized it.

On the same theme, Christian Aid is at the next phase of its Big Shift campaign – a campaign to persuade banks to honour the commitments they made after the Paris Agreement to disinvest in fossil fuels. Watch this space to see how St Thomas's will be involved!

**Clare Tawney**

## **Christmas Tree Festival 2016**

The 2016 Christmas Tree Festival was again a very popular and successful event. Degrees of the success are measurable:

- 107 trees and nativity scenes were exhibited.
- 15,273 visitors were checked (or clicked) in.
- Visitors from 39 countries logged their homeland on the map.
- Nearly 500 children and adults sang and played music.
- 93 litres of soup made by members of the congregation were consumed.
- £15,490.30 was raised from the retiring collection after expenses had been met. The St Thomas's Organ Appeal received £7790.30 and the charities Serve On and The Rose Gale Trust each received £3800.

What cannot be statistically counted was the success of the Festival as a great inclusive community event of Christian hospitality in the celebration of Christmas. Human creativity and hard work were in ample evidence in the months of preparation and the intense duration of the Festival. The home team of the committee, co-ordinators, caterers, stewards, musicians, publicists and those collecting and counting money was again a formidable and effective force. St Thomas's is also grateful to the very many friends and relatives not members of the congregation who helped in setting up the Festival and in its running. The greatest thanks must go to the organisers Brenda Whitehead and Liz Webb for their superb work over many Festivals and for this their last. Sadly, it was a swan song for Liz but people rejoiced that she was able to visit the Festival before her death.

**John Cox and Diane Emsley  
(Organisers for the 2017 Festival)**

## **The Churchwardens' Team**

We have been very fortunate throughout this year to have had the support of Pam and Tony Rea, Brian Sharpe, Jenny Vokes, Ronnie Johnstone and Jane Miller, who have all helped to cover the various services and events at St Thomas's.

The news of David Linaker leaving was a surprise to us all, and we are glad to know he is enjoying his new area of work. So began a series of meetings and plans for managing the vacancy and advertising the position of Rector. The questionnaire, the Parish Profile and the advert all needed to be written, and the various people who helped at each of these stages were brilliant: thoughtful, skilled, encouraging - thank you everyone! It was very interesting being involved the Familiarisation Day and selection process for our new Rector - and we look

forward very much to Kelvin's Licensing Service on 17 July, and to welcoming him and his wife Helen and their three daughters to our parish.

We would like to add here that the support of the congregation throughout the vacancy has been immense, and we truly feel blessed to serve St Thomas's Church and its people during this time. It has been a real privilege to learn so much about the day to day running of St Thomas's, and we have enjoyed being involved in various enhancements to our church: the new glass porch and the refurbishment of the west windows which together have added a new dimension to our welcome: they have brought new light into our church, as well as extending the light outwards into the city.

Martin Marriott, as Chairman of the PCC during the vacancy, has worked tirelessly to move the parish forward. One of the issues he was concerned with was to reduce the workload of the Churchwardens, and his letter to members of the congregation resulted in increased giving - so that we will now be able to employ a team of Vergers, which is wonderful news. As a result of this, John and Netia Coupe stepped forward to be nominated as our Churchwardens for 12 months, from the next APCM. We look forward to giving them all the support and help they need, as they embark on an exciting and enjoyable year ahead.

**Bobbie Chettleburgh and Rosie Norman**

### **The Cleaning Teams at St Thomas's**

I took over the running of the five cleaning teams at St Thomas's, from Sally Vaughan – who had been a very able and dedicated leader for some years and we thank her sincerely for that.

The teams meet on Friday mornings to keep the church looking clean, tidy and cared for. It has not been easy this past year due to the building work- and particularly the dust! We have also needed to draw in more recruits for 'Big Cleaning Days' – particularly before a special service.

I would like to thank every member of those five teams for their reliability and their good work.

**Rosemary Cox**

## **Tuesday Coffee Morning**

We have had a very busy year as usual meeting people from far and wide. They have enjoyed our home-made cakes and scones as well as coffee, tea, etc. Last October we extended one of our mornings for a special event for the Police Service, Fire Service, Wiltshire County Council and various other local services. Also in October, we attended Katy and Mark Honan's wedding, where we served the Wedding Breakfast – a truly happy day.

In December, we were asked to open the kitchen on a Thursday for the Police 'Keeping Salisbury Safe' morning. It was a pleasure to help out.

We all enjoy our Tuesday mornings in the Coffee Shop and look forward to another happy year.

**Jill Bushnell**

## **Community Engagement**

Community Engagement is a network within the Parish concerned with: Bible Study (See the Adult Education Report), Christian Aid campaigning and education (see Christian Aid Report), Ministry on the Streets – including Street Pastors, Parish-giving to organisations (See the Budget), Sudan and South Sudan, Eco-Church.

The Parish continues to support the work of Alabaré in Salisbury including the annual Sleep Out; the B.I.D.; the Salisbury City Neighbourhood Tasking Group, the Salisbury Refuge, The Prince's Trust, Trussell Trust with the Salisbury International Pancake Race, Salisbury Baroque; the Salisbury Sinfonia; Alzheimer's; the Salisbury Homeopathy College, AA, Headway and many other local organisations who make considerable use of St Thomas's House. St Thomas's remains a staunch supporter of Fair Trade.

The three-monthly Parish Prayer Sheet continues to be circulated. As a parish we continue to pray regularly for the Sudans especially as internal conflict continues. The Salisbury Deanery link with the Diocese of Juba has stalled due to events in South Sudan. The Parish supported the 2016 Sudan Garden Party

It was a particular joy to welcome the eight Tibetan Buddhist monks from the exiled monastery of **Tashi Lhunpo** who were in residence at St Thomas's in June 2016 during which time they constructed a Sand Mandala—a Tantric meditation aid—using millions of grains of brightly coloured sand. The Friends of St Thomas's Church hosted this event.



Community Engagement Coffee Mornings continue and I wish to say a big thank you to everyone who has helped staff these Coffee Mornings – it has been hugely appreciated.

May I take this opportunity to thank Meryl and Cristina in the Parish Office for all their magnificent administrative support over the year, my Ministry Team colleagues, the Choir. It has been much appreciated. Together we continue to make a difference

**Rev'd Jonathan Plows**

## **Contemplative Community**

Contemplative Community has continued to meet every Wednesday evening throughout the year and in September we joyfully celebrated our first anniversary by spending a Saturday together sharing, worshipping and exploring different ways of expressing our faith.

As we meet week by week so we have the privilege of listening to one another's faith journey and stumble towards an expression of our own experience of relationship with God. In today's busy world we don't have many opportunities to try and express who we really are and the things that are important to us, and to

be listened to with love and compassion; this experience is greatly valued by members of the group.

The pattern of our meetings continues to revolve around centering prayer which we practice every other week. Through centering prayer, a form of contemplative prayer, we practice letting go, and letting God's will be done in our lives. On the weeks in between we rotate between lectio divina, and a more general "community" meeting.

Through the year members have come and gone and we have also welcomed those who just want to try us out for a week, and those who are staying in the area for a few weeks. We are an open and friendly bunch and would welcome anyone who is interested in exploring spirituality and community.

**Jill Britton**

### **Craft'nChat**

We meet in the Canterbury Room of St Thomas's House on the third Friday of each month. We are a small group who meet to help each other with our craft ideas in a friendly atmosphere. We share our expertise, so between us we can solve most 'crafty problems'! Teas and delicious biscuits are served and thoroughly enjoyed. We have a small core of regular members and always welcome new faces.

**Sara Getley**

### **The Parish Gentlemen's Curry Club**

The Curry Club has met throughout the year except for August and December when holiday and Festive alternatives enticed members away. A wide range of menus have been produced with an interesting range of spiciness but never such to destroy the taste buds at 3 metres! As ever patrons have engaged in and enjoyed a wide range of conversation though always mindful of the Club's small print regarding political correctness. The Club is delighted to accept new Gentlemen members and is able to offer extensive training into the arts of sub-Continent cuisine.

**PGCC Collective**

## **The Deanery Report**

In 2014, the Salisbury Deanery Synod took the visionary decision to merge its discussions with those of Churches Together in Salisbury and this ecumenical process continues to be exciting and rewarding as we share the rich variety of church life in Salisbury and explore ways of supporting one another and avoiding duplicated effort.

The Deanery Synod is an important body in relation to effective mission in the City, but also in its relationship to other levels of Synodical Government. It is Deanery Synod that provides candidates for election to General Synod. So if there is an issue over which you feel strongly, especially if you would like to advocate for some of the issues championed at St Thomas's. I would urge you to consider election in due course, so that you might stand for the important role of membership of the House of Laity at General Synod.

**Martin Marriott**

## **The Fabric Committee**

The three principal activities of the committee this year have been:

1. Completing the roof works over the North Chapel for which we received a 85% grant from the Listed Places of Worship fund (LPWF). this was the last section of our roofs to be replaced meaning that the top shell of the church is now secure. However, because we managed to come in under budget for the works the LPWF agreed to our grant also being able to fund essential work on the Lady Chapel roof to capitalise on some experimental work to stop the persistent leaks that we had been experiencing over the past few years. This was successfully done.
2. Successfully completing restoration work on the West End South and North windows which entailed removing the windows and repairing both the windows and the masonry holding them in place as well as rendering the outside of the church. The old cloudy glass was replaced with clear glass which is a mixture of flat and wavy to match that elsewhere. The project was completed on time and to budget.
3. Extensive preliminary work to determine the feasibility and likely costs of possible project for consideration to inform the reordering and appeal projects. This is on-going and is anticipated will be a main activity in the months to come.

**Nick Beard**

## **The Faith Group**

The Faith group enjoyed a range of topics during the year following the Christian calendar with an introduction to advent in November, followed by a discussion of Tom Wright's book 'Advent for Everyone' over the Christmas period. In the new year Ken kindly led an evening on 'death and dying' using the café conversation cards inspired by Belinda Davies, and after that we had the pleasure of welcoming Alison Mayne to give us insight into the works of the late Michael Mayne with a discussion after Easter on 'To Trust and to Love'. The group generally meets on the third Thursday in Victoria Road. We have shared meals twice a year in the summer and at Christmas and we are open to everyone.

**Jane Miller**

## **Flower Arrangers**

I have recently taken over the co-ordination of the wonderful team of flower arrangers. We are delighted we now have the facility to arrange flowers for special occasions in the glass porch.

We decided not to have any arrangements in church during Lent, we would be interested in your thoughts. We have several weddings this year, Mayor Making and special arrangements for the Easter, Harvest and Christmas. We have also arranged flowers for memorial services and funerals.

If anyone is interested in joining the happy gang of flower arrangers please do get it touch we would be very happy to welcome you.

**Jill Clark**

## **The Friends**

2016 was a year of further consolidation with our membership growing beyond 100 Friends and our funds growing steadily. The Friends were delighted to be involved in the development of the new Parish website making fund available for this project. The role of the Friends at St Thomas's became clearer during the year as ideas on the Re-development project; the Organ Appeal and wider Fundraising crystallised. The Friends support all these and a wide range of community, social, heritage and cultural activities in and for the parish.

**Rev'd Jonathan Plows**

## **The Garden Team**

Malcolm Chettleburgh, Clive Guthrie, Ken Dungate, Tony Miller, RoseMary Robinson, Ann Kadiri and I make up the Garden Team.

The garden has been lovely this year with many people commenting on how well it looks. The revamped central flower bed gave pleasure from spring to very late autumn and summer flowers, so near to the house, were much appreciated by all.

Clive noticed that a huge part of the lawn was criss-crossed with protruding roots from the large trees in the garden and he suggested that the lawn could be improved if these were removed. This was a key project for him. He tirelessly worked – mostly alone, taking up parts of the lawn with its many weeds and relaying it with fresh seeds and using his favourite ‘top up’ – coffee grounds, that he understood are very good for growth. Thanks to a local shop he obtained the grounds gratis! This exercise was hard work but hopefully will pay dividends in the years to come when the lawn settles down.

We have lost one member, Tony Miller, who has decided to retire from the garden and pursue less physical interests. He will be greatly missed as it was he that cut the lawn over spring and summer. We are hopeful that we can attract someone to replace him. Thank you, Tony, for all your hard work over the many years you have supported the team.

But we have a new member; a lady called Ann Kadiri who lives near St Thomas’s in the city centre and a keen gardener herself. We are happy to have her as part of our team. She is enthusiastic, friendly and full of new ideas for the garden.

The South Cemetery is looking better than ever with nearly all the gravestones now very visible and free from the ingress of grass and moss. However, we did have a problem last autumn when one of the shops that back onto the cemetery decided to redecorate their building. They did not advise the Church of this maintenance work and when they installed the scaffolding to carry out this task they irretrievably damaged and cut down some very big and established shrubs. This left a nasty scar that affected the symmetry of the churchyard. Luckily we contacted the letting agent and they organised some replacement shrubs and these were planted out by their own garden team. We are hopeful that these new shrubs will grow quickly and the gap will be filled with ‘green’ once again. During the summer the large Holly tree, that dominated the south churchyard, was cut back by the Council providing more light to the area and the property behind.

Also we bought 2 new wooden barrels for the North Churchyard entrance and planted some new 'sun loving' shrubs in them. Plus we acquired a Eucalyptus tree for the South churchyard. Hopefully this tree will provide interesting leaves for the flower arrangers when the tree is established.

Our Saturday morning coffee event at the end of July raised a healthy £230. Many thanks to all who helped behind the counter and provided drinks and cakes on that morning.

We never have enough gardeners and we always welcome new comers to the team. We meet every Thursday afternoon to work together. But if you join the team, you will have your own key and can potter around whenever it suits you. It is true what they say –'you are close to God in the garden!' Join the team and see what we mean!

**Ann Horwood**

## **Grapevine Report**

Grapevine, the Men's Social Group meets on the last Wednesday of the month for nine months of the year. We do not meet in July, August or December. The group is open to any male church members, as well as those from outside.

2016 was another year of varied speakers and events, some thought provoking, others just jolly good fun! We commenced the year with Nick Beard giving us some incisive wartime memories. February brought us Andy Bell, who regaled us with both funny and fascinating insights into the trials and tribulations of life as a Parking Ambassador. In March we were faced with some close to home facts and figures concerning Men's Health with Jonathan Borwell from SDH. April saw us sampling the delights of some wines from Alsace. In May, Craig Elsdon told us of the work of 'Serve On' the local charity which supplies disaster support in a variety of ways. In June we invited wives/partners to join us for a quiz and supper evening. After the summer break in September, we held a 'Grumpy Old Men' Evening! when those present were invited to tell us about what really annoys them! This was accompanied by a Fish and Chip Supper. Our very own John Cox entertained us in October to a thespian delight entitled 'A Theatre Life'.

Then finally at the end of November we held our Annual Dinner at the White Hart, as always both efficiently and thoughtfully organised by Mike Winterman.

We have decided that after nine years of service to Grapevine, now was the time to step aside to allow for a new direction. To this end, Michael Humphreys has kindly offered to take over the Grapevine reins and we wish him well.

**John Foster and Geoff Bishop.**

## **Inclusive Church**

Inclusive Church is a group of Christians uniting together around belief in church which does not discriminate, on any level, on grounds of economic power, gender, mental health, physical ability, race or sexuality, church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ.

Since St Thomas's formally joined Inclusive Church in 2015 we have continued to consider how we can become ever more inclusive, and have sought to raise awareness of the various issues involved in putting into practice our goal of being a church that welcomes everyone.

Inclusive Church posters have been displayed on the church notice boards and leaflets are available in the church. We have purchased IC's series of short books on various aspects of inclusion; these cover gender, disability, poverty, sexuality, mental health and ethnicity. They are available for members of the congregation to borrow from the church library. An evening is being planned to open up some of these themes for discussion.

A coffee morning was held for Inclusive Church in 2016 and a donation of £100 was sent to them. We intend to repeat this each year.

In July 2016 a training day, 'Open to All' was held on disability and the church.

As part of our commitment to supporting our LGBT+ brothers and sisters, St Thomas's supported Salisbury's first Pride procession, also in July 2016.

In the last year we have particularly focussed on inclusion with regard to dementia. A small group of interested people: Rhona Bennett, Pam Clarke, Ken Dungate, and Jonathan Plows have been discussing how St Thomas's might become a Dementia Friendly Church. This will require an audit, discussions, planning and the support of the PCC. Jonathan has now trained as a Dementia Champion and is willing to organise awareness raising sessions on Dementia and to assist members of the congregation willing to become Dementia Friends. St Thomas's supported Dementia Awareness Week 2016 with a display in church.

Becoming an inclusive church is a journey – we have not arrived! All of us have a part to play in making our church a more welcoming and accessible place for everyone who may come to us, whatever their identities and needs may be.

**Fiona Hulbert**

## **The Lay Pastoral Assistants Team**

The LPA team continue to cover many areas of ministry, including Care and Connect, Children and Families, home visits and Home Communion, hospital visiting and hospital chaplaincy, coming alongside people and carers coping with dementia, being a listener in The Listening Place (held in Salisbury Methodist Church), volunteering with the Samaritans, visiting some of the supported living residences, leading the Tuesday prayer group, and generally being available to congregation and responding to requests for visits within the Parish. During 2016 we purchased an additional Home Communion set for LPA's to use. This ensures that there is always one available when needed.

We are concerned that anyone who needs LPA support is made known to us and we have been looking at different ways of enabling this whilst working within the bounds of confidentiality. We put regular notices in the diary and have the LPA information board in church as well as being known to members of the congregation. We are very reliant on either people making themselves and their need known to us, or other people contacting us on their behalf with permission to do so. The team are especially concerned for those who are either in hospital or have just come home from hospital and may appreciate some LPA visits and support.

Alongside the training offered from the diocese we also have time at the start of each meetings to look deeper into particular ministries or issues of interest and concern. This will often entail one or more of the LPA's bringing their particular expertise or experiences to share with the rest of the team, and may also be a time for specific training with external support. Safeguarding training and updates continue to be a regular item to ensure that we are all up to date with any changes and have time to raise any questions concerning it. We are grateful to our Parish Safeguarding Officer Bridget Trump an LPA with this as her only role in accordance to Diocesan guidelines, who always attends our meetings and enables this.

We continue to be extremely blessed at St Thomas's to have such a dedicated group of people. Their commitment to the welfare of others and to each other is a privilege to be around. They bring a huge and varied amount of training and life skills which they give to enrich our lives through their ministries and their prayers for us all.

**Rev'd Wendy Cooper**

## **Olive Branch - 2016**

We have again enjoyed some excellent speakers during 2016 on various topics, to include the Cathedral Archivist, Bereavement Counselling, Plant Life, Dressmaker to the Queen and Serve On. Our Curate, Dominic Thornton, also gave us an insight into his journey prior to becoming a priest. We have also enjoyed a summer outing to the gardens at Terston, Longstock and an hilarious evening of 'Swoppit', where we bought items we didn't need and gave the proceeds to the organ fund and remaining goods to the charity shop!

Our programme finished for the year in November when we enjoyed lunch at The White Hart Hotel. For the first time we decorated a tree in December for the Christmas Tree Festival on the theme of Friendship.

During the year we had two coffee mornings which enabled us to give £325. towards various charities chosen by our Speakers.

Our numbers fluctuate considerably and it would be encouraging if we could welcome new members in order to provide a good audience for our Speakers. If you would like to join us, please contact **Jan Winterman.**

## **The Organ Appeal**

Over many years, St Thomas's PCC has considered various schemes, some quite elaborate, for the refurbishment and enhancement of its historic organ, gifted by George III to the cathedral and then transferred to St. Thomas's in 1877. No scheme had come to fruition and the organ continued to deteriorate with the pedal section becoming almost unusable, the couplers unreliable and the wind reservoirs leaking.

Quotations were therefore obtained for the necessary basic refurbishment works and options for enhancements. A paper was presented to the PCC on May 19th and accepted by them with the conditions that: 1. Enhancements would be done only if the money could be raised for them, 2. The PCC would provide the basic refurbishment cost but asked for these costs to be defrayed, and 3. A deadline of the end of 2016 was set for the fundraising.



Application for a faculty for the works was quickly set in hand and obtained in August. An appeal to the congregation was launched in June with an external appeal in September. In a wonderful display of the team spirit at St. Thomas's and a demonstration of what its members can achieve, all the social and volunteer groups set to with fundraising. Generous donations were received from many people with the result that enough money was raised for all the enhancements and nearly £20,000 towards defraying the PCC's contribution. With PCC approval, the contract was signed in November with Stephen Cooke, a firm based in Westbury. My thanks are due to the fundraising team, mainly members of the Music Department.

A lot of preparatory work is in hand including manufacturing pipes for the new Trombone section and designing the new pedal mechanical action. The organ will be taken out of service after Easter 2018 to return to service before Christmas that year.

**Nigel Orchard, Appeal Organiser**

## **Praying Together**

We have continued to meet every Tuesday morning between 10.00 – 10.30 in St Michael's Room. Our numbers have numbered between 4 and 12 (and sometimes more), and we have welcomed visitors who have joined us from time to time.

***What do we pray about?*** Everything from family and friends, people with varying needs, illness, bereavement, loneliness, our church's needs, the redevelopment plans, living in harmony, welcoming people, activities and events, our clergy, written requests posted on our prayer board in the Lady Chapel, the

*world and for areas of unrest, confidential prayer requests, the prayers requested during our Christmas Tree Festival, and our concerns and thoughts.*

Our prayer ministry is a journey, and anyone can join us in this journey – all are welcome.

We would love to welcome new members to the group.

We have enjoyed some good times of prayer together over the last year, and I am grateful to the faithful group of members who come week by week to pray together, this is a real encouragement and there is something uniquely special and powerful in joining our hearts together in prayer.

I would like to record my sincere thanks to all the members for their prayers, their support, love and fellowship.

**Pat Inglis**

## **St Thomas's Community Recorder Group 2016**

The St Thomas's Community Recorder Group had a busy year during 2016, though it was marked with sadness as we lost one of our founder members, Noreen Johnson, who died after a short illness, in the summer. Several friends she had made through the group were able to attend her funeral, and we were grateful for the opportunity to dedicate our playing at Evensong on August 14th, to her memory.

We continued our pattern of monthly rehearsals and bi-monthly contributions to the sung Evensongs, and were delighted to welcome four new players to the group in the latter part of the year; Nikki, David, and Liz. We were also very



pleased to be able to welcome back players who had been absent for some time. We are grateful to John Dempster, David Power and the music team, who always welcome us so warmly and enable us to contribute to the musical outreach of the church.

Preparations for the annual Christmas Tree Festival music brought new challenges this year, in the form of several Christmas chorales by J.S.Bach, which we interspersed with well-known carols. The photo shows us after our performance, looking forward to a well-earned cup of tea and piece of cake! New players are always welcome to join the group: we rehearse in St T's on the second Friday of the month, from 2:45pm-4:15pm. If you would like further information please contact [sarumrecorders@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sarumrecorders@yahoo.co.uk).

**Louise Stewart**

## **Servers' Report**

So, what is a Server? Good question. We are the team of 3 people that you will see robed up before, during and after the main 10:15 service. Our job is to prepare the altars for the service, help everything to run smoothly and clear up afterwards. We aim to support a dignified liturgy. We make sure that the priests have all the important bits and pieces in the right place at the right time. We rely heavily on the Sacristan team to prepare the wine, wafers and altar cloths, etc. And we certainly would not be able to hold our heads high without Helen King, our heroine of a Robe Mistress in her cleaning, ironing and general care of our robes.

Of course, on High days and Holy days, we need more folk to keep the service running smoothly, for example when we need an extra altar on Christmas Day.

The Servers are, as ever, a quiet stronghold of volunteers in our main services. We are so glad to have such dedication and flexibility within the team. We have been delighted to welcome new members of all ages who are gradually taking on more responsibility. We are very grateful for the commitment of those who have served over the past year and have moved onto new challenges – thank you for your hard work and support over a number of years.

We have seen quite a few changes to the way things are done at St Thomas's over the past year. We are hoping that the arrival of the new Rector will be a smooth transition for all teams in the church, but are prepared for some new ideas to be introduced!!

If anyone is interested in becoming a member of the team, do come and talk to us. The duties are not overly onerous as members only serve once a month.

**Simon Green, Head Server**

## **Sacristan Team**

The eight members of the Sacristan team, working in pairs, have prepared and cleared up the Communion services throughout the year. The two who wash and iron the small linen used at those services have also done so regularly. Unfortunately, Anna Desch has had to drop out of this latter task due to a physical problem with ironing. We are very grateful for the service she has given. We are currently looking for someone to replace her.

**Diana Ruddle**

## **The Social Activity Team**

2016 began in fine style with a group of walkers eager to shake off the effects of the Christmas feasting with some healthy exercise. An enjoyable walk at Downton was followed by lunch at the White Horse.

The first Sunday lunch of 2016 was on Valentine's day, and a beautifully decorated Canterbury Room was the venue for a splendid roast pork meal followed by a choice of seven desserts.

During February and March teams of ladies provided soup and ploughman's lunches after the Tuesday Lent talks.

On March 5th a large contingent from St. Thomas's met for the Parish Day in the Methodist Church hall. Members of the Social Activity and Hospitality Teams provided coffee with home-made biscuits, a ploughman's lunch and afternoon tea and cake.

The country surrounding the village of Cranborne was the venue for a glorious spring walk. This was preceded by a visit to the church to view the superb new lighting designed by Simon Knight. An excellent lunch was provided at The Inn.

The Queen's 90th birthday was marked in style with patriotic red white and blue cakes following the Eucharist on June 12th.

The sun shone warmly on our Patronal Festival day on July 3rd. After the scattering of rose petals many people took their picnic lunches to the garden of Hemyngsby in The Close and enjoyed the hospitality of Pam Gueritz.

The Social Activity Team ran a coffee morning in August which raised £230.05 for the Trussell Trust's Christmas shoe box appeal.

After our Harvest Festival service on October 2nd over 70 people brought food for a shared lunch in church.

Forty people signed up for a merry evening of supper and a hotly contested skittles competition at The Silver Plough.

Every seat was occupied on October 30th for a roast lamb Sunday lunch in St. Thomas's House

On December 20th a record 500 people attended the popular Carols for Busy People service. The cooks of St. T's pulled out all the stops and baked around 600 mince pies for our guests.

It won't have escaped your notice that all the events of 2016 (as in past years) have included food! By welcoming all to share food and hospitality we have endeavoured to nurture a sense of belonging and friendship with one another, deepening the relationships within our community of St. Thomas whilst also reaching out to welcome others from beyond our congregation.

## **Tommy Toddlers**

It is good to report that Tommy's Toddlers is obviously a happy place to be on Tuesday afternoons.

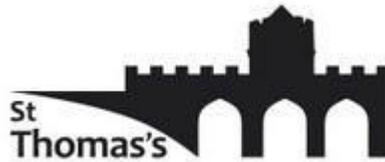
A mention in local social media is good publicity for us and certainly we are usually a full-house.

Summer comes early for Toddlers and we are out in the garden almost as soon as the first daffodils, though the cosiness inside on winter days has its attraction for housebound Mums or carers, too.

Our time-table matches school terms and we like to recognize seasonal events. Play-doh pancakes, baked hot cross buns, Easter eggs, end-of-year graduation certificates and presents for children moving on to school are all in the curriculum! Toddlers decorated the Christmas Tree with their own foot and hand prints and enjoyed visiting the Festival. There have been one or two baptisms and more are planned for this year.

We are so lucky that Pam Clark is now with us most weeks and her creative genius –mock cloth house and Fancy dresses etc- and skills with play-doh are very exciting. But Julia Merwood felt it was time to retire and we miss her kind and helpful commitment to the children.

If anyone feels the urge to lend a hand and has an occasional spare Tuesday afternoon please have a chat with one of us. We would welcome another helper.



## THE PARISH OF ST. THOMAS & ST. EDMUND, SALISBURY

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Registered Charity Number: 1133882

**The Parish Office is open**

**Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.00 am – 2.30pm**

**Tuesday 9.30 am – 1.30 pm**

**Friday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm**



@SarumStThomas's



St Thomas's Church