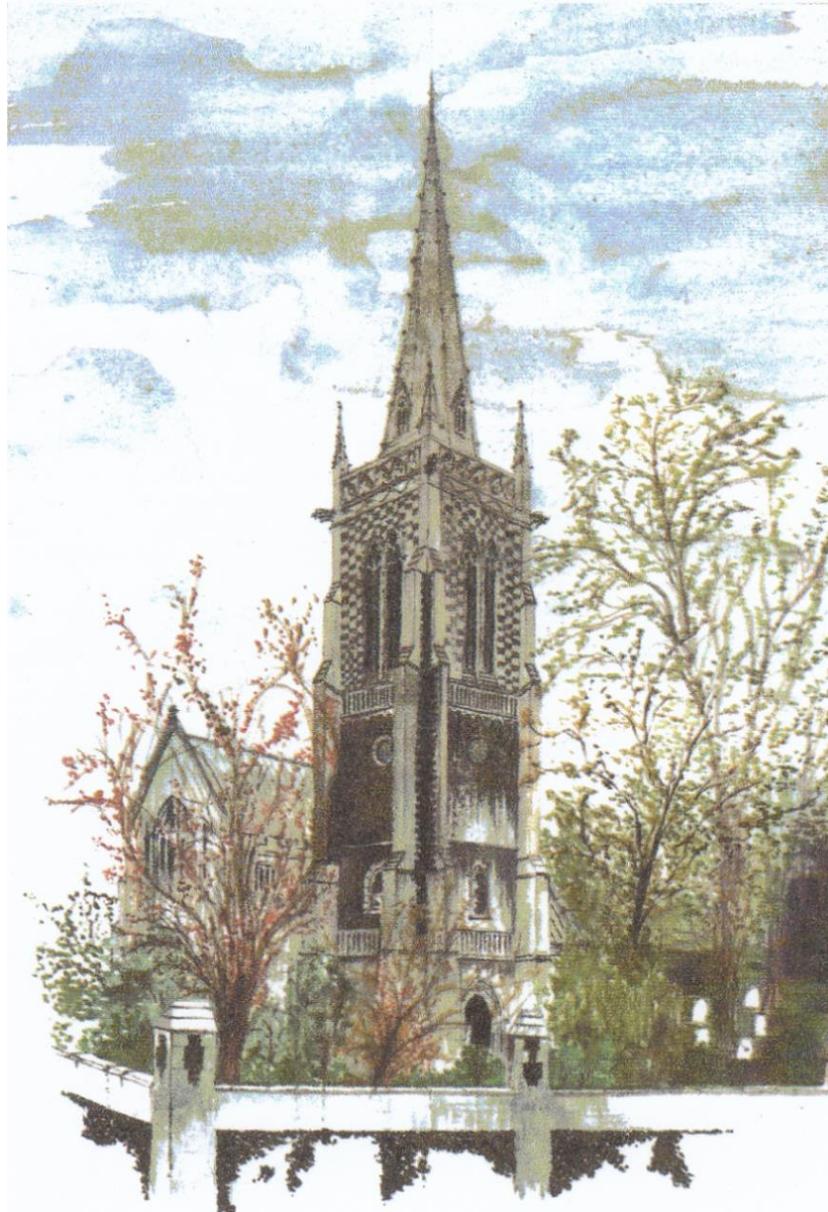


# St Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich

## The Town and Civic Church of Ipswich



## Annual Church Reports for 2016-17

[www.stmaryletower.org.uk](http://www.stmaryletower.org.uk)

# WORSHIP, WELCOME & PASTORAL CARE

## Sunday Services

SMLT continues to offer four services every Sunday during term time: Holy Communion; Choral Matins; Parish Eucharist and Choral Evensong. All but one of these services are Choral services with the SMLT Choir.

The 8am Holy Communion service usually has an attendance of a minimum of 5 people but only very infrequently more than 10. At present there does not appear to be any signs of this number increasing, however this service will continue so long as there is a demand for it.

We usually have up to 10 congregation attending the 9.30am Choral Matins with a choir usually in excess of 25, the majority of the congregation comprises chorister families. This is a really nice service with wonderful choral music. It would be great to see more people at this service.

The 10.30 Parish Eucharist regularly has a congregation of between 50 and 65 people and as such is the busiest of our Sunday services. The Welcome Team works very hard to offer a warm welcome to everyone at this service, especially those people who may be new to SMLT. However, attendance numbers have continued to slowly reduce this year, following the pattern of the previous years and sadly some of this is due to several long term SMLT members passing away, and also illness preventing people from regular attendance.

Whilst SMLT does still succeed in attracting new members of the congregation to this service, we need to find innovative ways to grow our Church and attendance numbers at all services and appeal to a range of potential future congregation members. Two or three times a term, this service as an All-age address and the choir is formed by choristers all together without the lower voices. This an attractive format and usually attracts a larger congregation.

Choral Evensong regularly attracts attendance of up to 10 people, again mostly chorister families. During the summer season this service was held at 6.30pm, however during the Winter time the service time was changed to 5pm on a trial basis. This trial appears to have been well received by the Choir and the Congregation. For the Spring and Summer months Choral Evensong reverts to 6.30 again. It is worth noting that the Choir forms the greater part of the congregation at both Matins and Evensong.

Choral Evensong with Communion is usually offered on the first Sunday in the month and is proving an attractive pattern

Katrina Robertson (Churchwarden)

## **Festival Services**

There were some real high points during the year especially in regard to choral services. The choir excelled at Holy Week and Easter and at Christmas and SMLT hosted the Mayor's civic service as usual in September. The Orchestral Mass was held at the end of June but the IpArt festival didn't take place in the same way in 2016 and so we resolved to rethink this service.

## **Midweek Services**

Monday Midday Prayers for Peace and Wholeness are now held on weekly basis though attendance is small. The focus for the simple order of service is a time of prayer with lighting of candles for people and issues. The service is usually led by the Vicar and an Elder, but sometimes by an Elder on their own. Thank you to Hilary and Cathy for their regular co-leading of this service.

Choral Evening Prayers at 6.40pm on Mondays and Tuesdays take place during term time and are an established part of the pattern of worship at SMLT. Choristers read the lessons and prayers, and the services are popular with choir parents. Thank you to Mary Baldry (churchwarden) for sharing in the regular leadership of these services.

When there is a 10.30am Eucharist with an All-age address on a Sunday, on the previous Friday evening here is usually a service of Choral Compline at 8.30pm. This has added another occasional choral service to the pattern at SMLT.

Charles Jenkin (Vicar)

## **Wednesday Communion**

'Do this in remembrance of me...' For the sacrament initiated by Jesus himself at the last supper we have met for Communion and fellowship each Wednesday during the year. The number of persons attending fluctuates between fifteen and twenty each week. Many of those attending are dependent on public transport and are no longer able to attend on Sundays but remain staunch and committed members of S. Mary's congregation.

The liturgy used is that of the Book of Common Prayer which has now been in constant use for over 350 years. Our fellowship after the service with a cup of coffee gives us all the opportunity to socialise and know our fellow members the better. The 'Prayer tree' which we provide for the Christmas Tree festival continues to attract much attention and the prayers gathered are presented at the altar on the Sunday after the festival.

We would place on record our thanks to Steve Harman for the many years he assisted us while verger. We are thankful for the weekly ministrations of all our clergy Charles Jenkin, Roger Pallant and Chris Gonin.

Bob Tostevin

## **Clergy and Elders**

During 2016 we welcomed retired priest, Revd Chris Gonin and his wife, Elspeth, to the congregation, and Chris is taking a regular role in the liturgy alongside Canon Roger Pallant. SMLT continues to benefit a great deal from the ministry of retired clergy and it is we are very grateful for all they do.

Elders take a significant part in Sunday and weekday services, assisting in the leading of worship, reading intercessions and administering Communion, as well as helping with altar service as well on occasions. There is also always an Elder on duty for the Welcome for 10.30am services. Elders also occasionally officiate at Choral Matins. Many thanks to Hilary Norman, Richard Hanley and Cathy Moss for their dedicated ministries.

Revd Charles Jenkin (Vicar)

## **Pastoral Visiting**

Pastoral Visiting is undertaken by the Clergy and the Elders together with other members of the congregation; to both those in hospital or at home. We have approximately thirty people on the Pastoral List, including members of the congregation, and some family or friends: many of whom are no longer able to with us in Church. Canon Charles and Canon Roger currently take Home Communion regularly to five members. The Elders also take Communion to others in their homes.

Some of our visits are only occasional and others are more frequent, usually fortnightly or monthly. Contact is usually maintained between visits with a short telephone calls. We endeavour to support all whom we visit, to provide a friendly face and to assure them that they are not forgotten. Those who are acutely ill, or chronically sick are remembered at the Monday Midday Prayers for Light and Peace. Clergy and Elders are always willing to arrange visits if requested.

Hilary Norman (Elder)

## **Vergers**

Our Vergers Steve Harman retired having completed 20 years of dedicated service at SMLT. We give thanks for his loyal contribution to worship, welcome and caretaking. In preparation for his retirement a significant amount of money was raised as a farewell gift. Steve's last service at SMLT was the 2nd October 2016, Harvest Thanksgiving, when we bid Steve and Ruth a fond farewell and formally thanked them. A presentation was made which comprised of a cheque from the congregation and also a painting of SMLT by a local artist, Lois Cordelia. Steve and Ruth were delighted with their gifts and have now moved to Lincolnshire for their retirement. We have heard that they are very happy there and wish them all the best for their retirement.

Ian Molloy continued to cover for Steve Harman's annual leave throughout 2016 until Steve's retirement and following this he then continued to work in the church everyday continuing to carry out Verger duties and also cleaning the floor tiles. This ensured that the church remained open every day. We owe significant thanks to Ian Molloy for his continuous commitment to SMLT ensuring the church remained open following Steve's departure.

In the absence of a Verger the Vicar approached the congregation with a request for Volunteer Vergers for Sunday Services. Several people volunteered to be trained for this role, and training is in progress. There are several identifiable roles at weekends and separate teams are involved: the church setup on a Saturday, the silver setup on a Saturday and the Early setup on a Sunday

### **Caretaking**

The PCC made the decision that we could no longer afford to pay a full time Verger once Steve had retired. Instead SMLT would recruit a Caretaker who would work mornings (Mon-Fri, 15 hours per week) and would open the Church in the morning, clean the Church, Church House and Tower House. A recruitment exercise was completed and a new Caretaker Irina Rodacan took up post on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016, this coincided with the Christmas Tree Festival so Irina was able to quickly get to work. Irina is thankful to all Parishioners who have made her feel so welcome in her new role.

Katrina Robertson (Churchwarden)

### **Sanctuary Servers**

Many thanks indeed to Ian Molloy who is the regular server at 8am, and to Bob Tostevin who is the regular server at the Wednesday 10.30am Communion. Sadly, David Hall is no longer able to be a regular server at 8am through illness. Ian and Bob also serve regularly at the evening communion service and, when both are available incense continues to be used on that occasion.

In 2016 serving at the 10.30am Sunday is mostly offered by Chris Fisk and young Leonie. Now we are without a verger, the role of servers is even more important and I am glad to report that a new service joined the team on Easter Day 2017

Charles Jenkin (Vicar)

### **Children's Groups**

We have 44 children associated with the Tower, with whom we keep in touch through letters and birthday cards. Some attend regularly and some are siblings of choristers. At the time of writing this number includes 22 choristers and 8 choral scholars. This number seems to change weekly with new recruits joining the choir!

At present our Sunday School groups are very small, as most of our regular youngsters are in the choir and one is serving in the Sanctuary. We now have a few

toddlers and we provide activities for the when required. We provide a crèche when necessary. The Sunday group children re-join the main service at the offertory. At the end of the service they are invited to share what they have been doing with the congregation.

We run children's faith activities with the choristers on Monday and Tuesday evenings during choir practice. At Choral Evening Prayers on Mondays and Tuesdays they read their own Bible reading based on the previous Sunday's Gospel. They also offer one of the prayers. This has been very successful and they are all very keen to give the reading or prayer. We have had several all age services during the year including a Crib Service on the Sunday before Christmas. During these services the children read the Epistle. At the Christmas Tree Festival the choristers made "themselves as Choristers" to decorate their Christmas Tree.

We launched our Advent Appeal for the Children Society at the beginning of Advent at a Christingle Service. At Epiphany we collected £293 in vouchers for the Lighthouse Women's Aid. We all met on Easter Saturday to make the Easter Garden, followed by refreshments and an Easter Egg hunt. On Easter Sunday the children remained in church and we collected Easter Eggs for the Lighthouse Women's Aid.

Our mission is to share the stories and the messages of the Bible and to help the children to understand what God's word means to them in their own lives and for their families and friends. We believe that children learn best when enjoying themselves. We hope that they will realise that they are important to God and that we are interested in them as people. As well as contemplative moments of prayer and thoughtfulness, we also use craft activities, active games, messy play, story telling and drama. We have FUN.

Sue Adair

## **Sunday Welcome and Refreshments**

Sarah Jenkins handed the management of the Sunday Welcome Rota to Katrina Robertson, Churchwarden in August 2016. Thanks to Sarah for managing the Sunday Welcome rota so well.

The Welcome Team work hard to ensure that all attending our services receive a warm welcome and are provided with hymn books, service sheets, respond to queries, arrange people to do the collection etc. The Welcome team have notably stepped into the breach at no notice on a few occasions to do readings when readers have been unexpectedly absent. Thank you all very much for doing this as this part of the role can be particularly challenging and pressured reading a reading that you have not necessarily had time to read over in advance.

Our Welcome Team have also been very giving of their time for other special services throughout the year, of particular note was the September Civic Service, the Christmas Eve service and also a recent funeral where several people readily gave of

their time to this important welcome ministry. Thank you to all of the Team, you all do an important job which is very much appreciated.

I now manage the Sunday refreshment (coffee) rota too. The Refreshment Team continue to provide the weekly refreshments with a welcoming smile to all which always makes for a warm, friendly and sociable atmosphere following our 10.30 service. During the year Sally Graham stepped down from the Coffee rota and, looking ahead, David and Liz Todd will also be stepping down from May 2017 onwards. We give thanks for Sally, David and Liz's years of providing refreshments at the end of the 1030 Sunday service. We could do with more volunteers to serve refreshments after the 10.30am service, please speak to one of the Churchwardens if you think that you could assist in this way.

Katrina Robertson (Churchwarden)

### **Sanctuary Guild**

During 2016 Sue Adair has continued to lead and encourage our team of Flower arrangers. We thank them all for their lovely flower arrangements throughout the year; and especially for the major festivals of Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Anyone who would like to share this task will be warmly welcomed as a member of the team. Funds are available to offset the cost of flowers.

Our special thanks go to Mary Wombwell and Sally Graham who, week by week, launder and care for our Altar linen.

We held our Summer Tea Party and Book sale in the Church and Churchyard in July, when we enjoyed good company and delicious cakes. The Autumn Lunch, held in early November, provided the opportunity to enjoy a hot lunch and plenty of conversation after which Viola Jones gave us a talk entitled "Deanery Encounters" in which she made us all smile as she related a number of amusing incidents she had experienced when preparing for and caring for visitors during Keith's time as Dean at York Minster.

During the year, care has been taken to look after our Altar Frontals and Priest's regalia. A new Green Chasuble and stoles have been purchased, made possible by a donation from Stephanie Thurstun in 2015. Thanks go to June Molloy, who has repaired the Green Burse used on the Altar during Communion Services. Our special thanks go to Mary Wombwell and Sally Graham who, week by week, launder and care for our Altar linen.

Hilary Norman

# **ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATION**

## **Parish Office**

When the administration position was first created, it was to provide administrative support to the Vicar and church officials with production of Church Papers, Prayer Diaries, maintaining the parish website, diary and membership database, dealing with correspondence and liaising with other church officials and ministers as well as administering the office supplies and equipment. To this was added the additional roles of Publicity officer and Finance officer as well as numerous other incidental tasks including supporting the Music Department. With the retirement of the vergier in October 2016, greater support of procurement and supervision of the church has also become a function of the parish office.

The position also involved the management of elements of internal interim refurbishment and maintenance of Tower House, managing of the rental of rooms and offices, including caretaking and finance, and the administration of permits for the four car parking facilities our community is fortunate to have access to.

## **Websites and Publicity**

The SMLT website ([stmaryletower.org.uk](http://stmaryletower.org.uk)) continues to function well and has proved a useful tool in attracting organisations to us by giving a well-balanced, organised and professional image. The St Mary-le-Tower Church Community Facebook page also helps to maintain an online presence with up-to-date details of events and achievements at SMLT. A second website, ([ipswichtreefestival.org.uk](http://ipswichtreefestival.org.uk)) and the festival Facebook page provide publicity and a point of reference for the SMLT Annual Christmas tree Festival.

Thanks are due to our Senior Music Scholar, Rhiannon Humphreys who has been ably handling publicity (including Twitter) for the music department. Despite this we still struggle as a whole to gain the high profile we would aspire to.

Donna Joyce (Administrator: Church and Tower House)

## **Inspire Parish Magazine**

Inspire is published quarterly, and is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. We try to include items to suit all our readers — contact information, church news, world wide church news, group activities, recipes, book reviews and articles submitted from our readers. “Snippets from the Church Mousehole” includes some lighter reading for the “young at heart”. We also have a crossword, word search and one or two articles for children. As well as being distributed to the congregation and visitors it is also sent to some previous members who have moved away, but wish to remain in contact with the Tower.

Sue Adair

# MUSIC AT ST MARY-LE-TOWER

## Musicians

St Mary-le-Tower is very fortunate in having two such outstanding musicians as Director of Music and Organist. Christopher Borrett and William Baldry are a very good team and bring a great deal of energy, commitment and dedication to their work. With their leadership the standard of music at SMLT is very high and the choir is growing strongly.

In order to balance Christopher's workload better and at his suggestion, and so as to broaden singing tuition with the choir, a new singing teacher, Katie Smith, joined the team in September, specifically to teach the teenaged Choral Scholars. This work is being supported generously by the Ouseley Trust, and is making a significant contribution to the confidence of the scholars and the maturity of the voices.

Charles Jenkin (Vicar)

## The Choirs of St Mary-le-Tower

The Church Choir has improved steadily over the last 12 months. Other than the hard graft invested by my colleagues and the choristers, choral scholars and adults alike, much of this improvement can be put down to the maturing voices of the choral scholars and choristers and now that there is a critical mass of people in each section of a decent standard.

The hardest aspect of the job by far is the recruitment of boy choristers. Despite giving over 15 workshops in the last 12 months, the appetite seems much weaker from the boys than in the girls' section which is going very well. That's not to say that we do not get boy choristers through our doors, but the quality of candidates has been disappointing. I have had to turn two boys away due to insufficient natural ability. The size of the section has also been affected by the families of established choristers moving away from the area.

On a positive note, the boys section has grown in stature and confidence, the music list is small but we are building a good strong sound in what was a very green section. Certain individuals are showing great leadership and promise. The girls section has become very assured. A little more daring-do is needed all round but that will come. The speed at which they learn new music is very impressive.

By far the most satisfactory forward step this year has been the way in which the choral scholars have responded to me placing a much greater musical responsibility on their shoulders. It is very rare now that I ask an adult volunteer to undertake a solo or lead a section. Not only can the choral scholars do it well, but it enables them to aim high on a regular basis.

The Sunday School Team are much more integrated into the Music Department than was ever the case in the past. This makes sense given that most children are in the department. Coupled with the fact that the choristers receive religious instruction on Mondays and Tuesdays before rehearsal – in place of Sunday School – I have placed greater emphasis on the choristers and choral scholars taking a leading role in the liturgy. Within Choral Evening Prayers, there may be days when the Responses are sung by a Choral Scholar and the reading and prayers are led by two other members of the choir.

Last Easter the tour visited Durham Cathedral, Hexham and Rothbury. This year we are travelling to Edinburgh's Episcopal Cathedral. The format is relatively similar although the emphasis will be on preparing music for Holy Week rather than looking further ahead. The fact we are based in one church will hopefully help us in this respect.

Next June, we hold our first Liturgy of Festival and Music. I believe we have struck a good blend between what we always do and “going that little bit further”. I hope it will be such a success that it will become a well-regarded fixture in our calendar.

The Tower Chamber Choir has continued to run smoothly. I am grateful for all those who help me run the choir, Ian Galbraith and Paul Reeve. The concerts have been of an excellent standard and have been held to compliment the liturgical year of the church. I think it is important that this remains the case, not least to separate its identity from the Ipswich Chamber Choir which I also direct. The only concert that doesn't necessarily relate to a liturgical event is the summer concert. This will hopefully take place during the Annual Festival of Liturgy and Music, and will be used as a contrast to the other choral repertoire being sung that weekend. It hopefully will also tie in with the summer's recital series. The Tower Chamber Choir continues to grow in numbers; I frequently augment the ensemble with choral scholars to further their choral experience.

Last December the Tower Chamber Choir joined with the Ipswich Chamber choir to perform Messiah. The concert was musically and financially a success. The most important benefit was the audience's reaction and the connections we have made. This coming December we will perform Messiah again but as a fundraising concert for the Choral Foundation.

I look forward to working towards this and all the other projects that are ongoing at St Mary-le-Tower. Finally, I am most grateful for the support I get from the congregation. I would specifically like to thank Isolde, Lis, William, Rhiannon and Donna, in the running of this department.

Christopher Borrett (Director of Music)

## **Organ and Piano**

The Organ had a number of reliability problems throughout 2016. A reed switch on the pedal board became unglued and had to be reattached in January. A wind leak in some trunking had to be repaired in March. The slider for the Pedal 8ft Principal had to be reattached within the pedal drawstop box. A major cipher occurred on the Great soundboard which disrupted the services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday – this was caused by a loose return spring and was fixed by Easter Saturday. In August, the ‘nameboard’ was rewired, allowing it to be removed so that the keys can be hinged upwards for easy inspection and maintenance of the contacts and springs. The Swell drawstop box was also repaired in August removing the percussive noises that occurred when stops were drawn and returned. In November tin tuning slides were fitted to all the pipes of the Gt II rank mixture to avoid further deterioration of these pipes from cone tuning. As ever, numerous problems with the keys, ‘rocking tab’ contacts, and other sundry issues occurred and were fixed. The organ was tuned four times during the year by Bishop & Son who also carried out all maintenance work.

The piano continues to be as reliable as ever, and was tuned three times during the year by Graham Cooke.

William Baldry (Organist and Assistant Director of Music)

## **Lunchtime Concerts**

Last year’s lunchtime concerts continued for the 45th successive year in much the same vein as in previous years. There were fewer organ recitals than in previous years as, especially during the earlier part of the series, William had instructed Bishops to undertake some work on the organ.

Specific donations (i.e. recital costs) were not forthcoming this year from either Oundle Organists or Suffolk Organists’ Association. I have re-established these contacts for this year, although the Oundle organist was so unresponsive that I have preceded without him.

This year I have included more organ recitals and have also tried to increase the number of wind and brass recitalists. The 2017 series encompass a broad range of musical styles, musicians from the area and afar, all of whom are excellent and are at different stages of their careers.

I am hugely grateful to those who provide the lunches before the recitals. I know that some would like to step back from this role in 2018 and I intend to recruit others to take up the reins in their stead.

Christopher Borrett (Director of Music)

## **Choral Foundation of St Mary le Tower Church**

The Trustees of the Choral Foundation met three times during 2016. Grants from the Foundation have been used this year to fund singing exams and theory books for choristers and choral scholars, in addition to singing lessons for choral scholars with a professional singing teacher. The Choral Foundation Concert took place in May 2016, which was well attended and featured the renowned counter-tenor James Bowman. The trustees wish to express their gratitude to a member of the congregation at the Tower who sponsors a Choral Foundation Christmas Tree at the annual Festival.

In April 2016 Mrs Camilla Haycock became a trustee. The other trustees continue to be Mr Jonathan Hunt (Chairman), Mr David King (Treasurer), Mr Richard Hanley (Secretary), Canon Charles Jenkin, Mr Stephen Firmin, Mr Ben Parry and Mrs Susan Punter. During the year an application was made to the Ouseley Trust, which resulted in a £10,000 grant for three years which is being held in a PCC account. No application was made to the Friends of Cathedral Music this year. At the end of 2016 the Foundation held approximately £35,000 in funds.

Richard Hanley (Trustee)

## **MISSION & OUTREACH**

### **Growing in God**

Towards the end of 2015, and as part of the diocesan growth strategy in which churches seek to grow in number, depth, influence and to grow younger, the PCC chose three specific actions for development during 2016:

1. Christian teaching for the choristers on Mondays and Tuesday at 5pm. During the year this became a regular feature of chorister activity.
2. Attractive literature in church about the Christian faith and the life of the Church. Leaflets have been placed in the rack at the back of church.
3. Becoming more involved with community groups in Tower House. This continues to be a growing feature of the life of our church.

### **Weekday Welcome**

Sarah Jenkins handed the management of the Welcome Rotas to Katrina Robertson, Churchwarden in August 2016. Thanks to Sarah for managing this Welcome Team during the past few years.

The Weekday Monday Welcome Team (11.30-2pm) and the Saturday Welcome Team (Midday – 2.30pm) has continued to do sterling work keeping the church open

and offering a very warm welcome to all who visit SMLT. This role is a vital part of our Town Centre Ministry ensuring that there are friendly people in church to speak to who welcome all, are knowledgeable about SMLT and can respond to queries or give informative insights into the building, history etc. We give thanks to all who undertake this important Ministry.

Looking ahead, as we now have a Caretaker in church until Midday on Mondays which is then followed by Prayer Prayers for Light and Peace, from May 2017 the Monday Church Welcome times will change from 11.30 – 2pm to 12.30 – 3pm. With effect from May 2017, David and Liz Todd are stepping down from Church Welcome, many thanks for their work on the Welcome Tea during the past few years.

Since Steve's departure we now have no-one physically present staffing the church Tuesday to Friday (midday-3.30) and Saturday mornings (9.30 – Midday). Instead our Parish Administrator, Donna Joyce, regularly pops over to Church from Tower House on Tuesday – Friday afternoons to check that there are no issues and also locks the church up.

Katrina Robertson (Churchwarden)

## **Grand Christmas Tree Festival**

The Christmas Tree Festival 2016 was again a great success with more visitors attracted, approaching 3,000 and the event now embedded in the Christmas calendar for central Ipswich. People are coming through the doors of the Church during the Festival, who may otherwise never venture inside. People who place trees in the festival represent many different charities, business and organisations as well as individual Church members and Church groups. The profile of St Mary le Tower is more prominent within the town as a result, and has attracted various new groups to use the Church for concerts and Christmas carol Services.

Financially the festival made a profit overall with the café taking a steady flow of money. Donations continue to grow.

There are issues to address however. The Gospel Choir event was not well supported by Church members or other people. The planning group has agreed to not to offer evening concerts or evening events during the festival in 2017.

More people resources are needed to undertake publicity and sponsorship adequately. Generally, it would be helpful if more people from Church were able to support and help during the Festival each year, if only for a two hour slot or by baking for the café, with publicity, administrative assistance or with more hands on roles. The Festival planning group is looking to start planning earlier for 2017 and to secure more assistance from people interested in getting involved.

Thank you to the dedicated planning group who have worked steadily through 2016 to plan the Festival, and thank you the Church members, and their friends and families who found very considerable time and energy to help during the Festival.

Jo Jones (Chairperson of the Festival Planning Group)

## **Tower House Community Engagement**

2016 was a more challenging year in Tower House, with particularly the tenancy of the Cycle Café running into difficulties. However a new lease was negotiated in the autumn at a substantially lower rent than the Café had first offered in 2015, and this stabilised the situation. As a result of this difficulty, a new PCC working party was established to manage the Shared Community Space, comprising Mark Hollingsworth, Katrina Lant and Julia Hausermann, and this group has brought much needed new resources to bear on the management of the project. Many thanks indeed for the many hours and new energy that this group has given to the project.

As well as the tenancy of the Café, Tower House now has several additional licensees in office accommodation, bringing the total number of licensees in the building to six, and this is giving the project additional financial stability. Many thanks to Donna Joyce for her administration of various aspects of Tower House. 2017 has seen the appointment of Julia Hausermann as Director of Development for the whole building on a short term contract, and this is already bringing further professionalism to the project and clarifying development objectives.

Charles Jenkin (Vicar)

## **Social Events**

Last year we held a number of different functions where members of the congregation could come together socially and join in and get to know each other more. We offered Lent lunches consisting of soup and a roll in church house before the Lent course then on Easter day there was an Easter breakfast after the Sunrise service.

In the summer the Sanctuary Guild held a summer tea party. Refreshments were available and sold at the Open Day. These consisted of tea, coffee, cakes, biscuits and filled rolls which raised money for our funds. The Harvest Lunch was again held at St Margarets church hall then the Sanctuary Guild held their lunch and talk in the Autumn.

The Christmas Tree Festival Cafe made even more money last year. This was due to the lovely array of home made food and the friendly welcoming atmosphere. We also offered rolls and drinks for sale at the Tuesday concerts and continue to serve coffee and tea after the 10.30 Sunday service. I am pleased to report that we now have a 5 star rating for food hygiene.

There is not room in this brief to elaborate on these events but they show the wide variety of activities and people involved offering hospitality within our church community. These events would not have been possible without the help of different members of the congregation and those who organised the various events.

To these people we offer our sincere thanks. As in all things there are comings and goings all the time. We would welcome anyone who might consider offering to help - its a great way of getting to know people and making friends. You do not have to cook but help is always needed in setting up, serving, taking money, clearing up, planning etc. Of course if you enjoy cooking that is a bonus. Do please consider this and if you are interested contact the churchwardens, Charles or Donna

Mary Wombwell

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### Membership of the PCC 2016/17

#### Standing Committee

Revd. Canon Charles Jenkin	Vicar & Chairman
Mrs Mary Baldry	Churchwarden
Mrs Katrina Robertson	Churchwarden
Mr Mark Hollingsworth	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Hilary Norman	Elected
Mrs Sonia Docherty	Elected

#### PCC Members

Mrs Sue Adair	Deanery Synod
Dr Russell Hall	Deanery Synod
Mrs Sarah Jenkins	Deanery Synod (until September)
Mr James Cutting	
Mrs Vicky Faull	Mrs Sally Graham
Mr Ian Lord	Mr Richard Hanley
Mrs Carolyn Heyburn	Mrs Hilary Norman

Hon Secretary (non PCC member): Mrs Joanna Jones

The PCC met 10 times during 2016 to consider the life and mission of the parish. From July the Standing Committee recommenced regular meetings in particular to address issues regarding Tower House.

In 2017 the PCC has adopted a revised meeting pattern, including 3 Saturday morning meetings a year to consider policy and finance matters in depth, when members are not so tired after a long day. The standing committee meets regularly

as a leadership team for the parish, but is careful not to make decisions that properly belong to the PCC unless there are pressing reasons for confidentiality or urgency.

### **Electoral Roll Report**

At the beginning of 2016 there were 172 on the roll. During the year, three members asked to be removed from the roll and sadly Barry Hunt, Nicky Barnard, Joan Parsons and Margaret Wilmot died.

We revised the roll between 13th and 31st March 2016 and the necessary notice was displayed in the porch for the requisite amount of time. 5 members joined the roll leaving a total of 176 when the roll was published.

The total number on the roll at the end of 2016 was 170.

Bridget Hanley (Electoral Roll Officer)

### **Safeguarding at St Mary le Tower**

Mr Richard Hanley is the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Mrs Sally Graham is the Deputy Safeguarding Officer for St Mary le Tower.

During 2016 all those appointed to posts which involve contact with children or vulnerable adults obtained enhanced DBS status. All other adults who work with children and vulnerable adults continue to complete the revised self -certification forms and the Stage 1 Diocesan safeguarding training. Risk assessments were carried out for choir tours and outings. A safeguarding issue was identified, addressed and resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. A noticeboard displaying safeguarding information is maintained in Church House.

Richard Hanley (Safeguarding Officer)

### **Church Fabric**

During 2016 – 2017 a small Team expertly led and managed by Ian Molloy undertook the project of cleaning all of the floor tiles in church, approximately 300Sq Metres. The task was to remove several layers of lacquer from the tiles to restore them to their original and intended state. This was a time consuming task which took several months of hard work. Humphrey Adair and Katrina Robertson worked alongside Ian Molloy and the tiles now look fantastic. It has very much been a Team effort involving strenuous work but it has also been very rewarding. Thanks to Ian, Humphrey and Katrina and a particular thank you to all who donated money to the fund to purchase materials and tile cleaning paste to enable this important project to be done.

Ian has also been re-setting loose tiles which can be a trip hazard. Looking ahead, there is still some work to be done on the re-setting of loose tiles and we are currently clearing out the Vestry so that the Vestry floor tiles can also be cleaned, this will then complete the project.

New Bell tower lights were installed in the Belfry to replace some fluorescent ones which were originally installed in the 1970's. New LED strip lights of the same dimensions as the original lights were installed which will be cheaper to run. The Bell ringers are very happy with the brighter led lights.

The Churchwardens have engaged with the architect Ashley Courtney to obtain quotations to repair the cracks in the Chancel arch within the Sanctuary area, replacing the plaster and redecorating the arch. It is hoped that this work will be completed during 2017.

The Churchwardens have obtained quotations for the installation of CCTV inside the Church as we are going to need greater security in church now there is no longer a full time Verger presence in Church. This project will be taken forward in the coming months. In the near future there will also be a requirement for installation of CCTV in the Churchyard as we are seeing a significant increase in levels of anti social behaviour and other issues during the day and in the evening which are of concern.

The Churchwardens have submitted a Faculty application for the installation of a new Donations Box, we have yet to hear the outcome of this but it will be installed as soon as possible once authorisation has been received.

Katrina Robertson and Mary Baldry (Churchwardens)

## **Churchyard Report**

The churchyard is used and appreciated by many, especially in the summer months when families and individuals are frequently to be seen enjoying a peaceful picnic or cup of coffee. Sadly, anti- social behaviour by some continues to be a challenge most notably on summer evenings after the churchyard is officially closed..

We continue to be blessed with a very dedicated team of gardeners and I would like to express particular thanks to June Malloy who has kept me company throughout the winter months clearing leaves and tackling areas of rampant ivy. It was a great disappointment that on the one Saturday when we asked for help with the autumn clear up no volunteers were forthcoming. Please consider helping out this autumn. A particular thank you to Diane Kirby of Langham who, over the past two years, has donated a generous number of hardy perennials and bulbs for the churchyard.

On July 1st, the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, the Peace Rose Garden was dedicated to the fallen of The Great War. The roses are now well established and should provide a lovely display this summer. This winter we added a further five

bright, poppy- red roses named Remembrance to the area close to the cremation stones. We have also received many donations of plants and bulbs which have provided some beautiful swathes of colour.

Looking ahead we aim to create a place of peace and welcome in our busy town centre.

Sally Graham

## **Christ Church and St Mary-Le-Tower Lunches**

2016 was a mixed year for the Friday lunches, numbers have averaged 25 guests. We continue to meet from 11-30 onwards for coffee with lunch at 12-30. In September the date was changed from 4th Friday to 3rd Friday each month September May.

At the end of June Marjorie Sheldrake retired from catering as she was moving away, we thank her for her services over the last few years. The hunt was then on to find a replacement. In September Chikondi Mhango a new member at Christ Church took over the catering we have all enjoyed her catering skills, with a delightful Christmas lunch. Our thanks to her for taking this on, and our thanks to all those who help and support the Lunches.

We would welcome more members of the Church to join us if you are retired on your own please have a word with Mrs Phyl Fisk who issues invitations, Cathy Moss (Lay Elder) or myself.

Peter Gotts

## **Diocesan Synod Report 2016**

### March Synod

The first part of Synod was about Reform and Renewal and developing a Diocesan Vision and Strategy. The Bishop said “Our ambition is that all people will be drawn to God, in that we share in what God is doing”. We then broke into small discussion groups. Reports were presented from General Synod and Bishops Council.

### June Synod

Bishop Martin’s address paid tribute to Nicholas Edgell who has retired due to ill health after 20 years as Diocesan Secretary. He welcomed Charles Darley as interim Diocesan Secretary. The rest of Synod was mostly taken up with the Financial Report and Statement and a review of the Centenary Share. The Budget for 2017 was discussed. Synod authorised the DBF to expend a sum not exceeding £8,409,000 in the year 2017. It also approved the net sum of £6,961,000 be provided to the DBF through allocation of Share in the year 2017 to meet the budgeted expenditure.

## November Synod

Bishop Martin gave his presidential address where he asked that each Friday at noon we pray for the people of Iraq and Syria and he used a special prayer composed by Bishop Mike. He outlined some of the changes taking place in the Diocesan Office and introduced Anna Hughes the new diocesan Secretary.

We then split into groups to discuss three points in the Diocesan Vision and Strategy Plan: Equipping for mission; Finance and Buildings; Children, Young people and Schools; each in two contexts (Ipswich and Rural). We then “shared good practice” hearing from two parishes on enhancing worship.

A presentation was made by Charles Darley about the saving of £460K in Diocesan Office changes. There is a new DBF Management Board, a new Governance Committee, and improved Financial scrutiny. A report was given about the revised budget and Centenary Share. We heard a report on General Synod.

Sue Adair

## **Deanery Synod Report**

The Deanery Synod has met four times in the last year under the chairmanship of Charles Jenkin, Rural Dean, or Ali Chesworth, Assistant Rural Dean. Your representatives have been Sue Adair, Sarah Jenkins and Russell Hall. There has been at least two of us at the meetings.

As well as regular agenda items the meetings have included, in March 2016, discussion of the Initiative Growing in God. Bishop Mike told us how 97% of young people knew no-one who was a Christian. The Growing in God initiative includes Growing in Depth, Growing in Number, Growing in Influence and Growing Younger. Further discussion took place at the meeting in June 2016.

Also at this meeting Canon Barbara Bilton told us of her work as Rural Dean of Stowmarket. Canon Bilton had seventeen parishes and, contrary to popular ideas, they were not all inhabited by the wealthy. With her encouragement the payment of the parishes share has improved considerably. Repairs to churches have been paid for by Friends Groups.

In November we had a report from the Interim Diocesan Secretary, Charles Darley. He explained how the Diocese was moving from a deficit to a balanced budget by 2017. Considerable financial savings have been made by changes in staff and working of the Diocesan Office. The initiative of the Church Commissioners to help grow the Church was outlined and how funds may be provided to facilitate this growth for dioceses whose financial affairs are in order.

At the March 2017 meeting Bishop Mike gave a presentation Practices for Disciples. He discussed how a vision for the Ipswich Deanery might be based around the

principles he outlined with an aspiration to develop mission and evangelism. We also heard from from the Rev. Paul Daltry of the work of SELIG and how homeless persons cared for in the Night Shelter had almost all been successfully housed.

Russell Hall