



Annual Report 2015-16



The CTOD Covenant re-signed at St John's Hurst Green

Covenant 2016

We, the Churches of Oxted and District:

- recognise that Christ wills the unity of his Church;
- acknowledge the sincerity of each tradition of faith;
- rejoice in our common Christian faith and heritage;
- give thanks to the Holy Spirit for leading us into closer friendship and unity of purpose.

So we covenant with each other to:

- continue our pilgrimage towards a visible unity, praying that God will lead us to the form that it will eventually take;
- share our Christian life together as fully as we can, in love and service to God and to God's world.

To do this we will:

- worship, pray and study together so that we may understand, know and value each other;
- wherever possible, carry out our mission to our local community and the wider world as Churches Together;
- commit ourselves, as individual churches and together, to find ways to promote unity;
- every year, review our progress towards these objectives.

We commend each other to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and pray for God's wisdom and strength to fulfil this Covenant.

2015-16 CTOD Executive Committee

Chair	Katherine Saunders	St John's
Deputy Chair	John Tolley	St Peter's Lipsfield
Hon. Treasurer	Margaret Cox	Hurst Green Evangelical
Hon. Secretary	Bob and Carole Evans	Methodist Hurst Green
	Miles Corbett	King's Church
	Matt Drummond	Limpsfield/Tatsfield Team
	Diana Jones	URC
	Rebecca Littleford	All Saints
	Gerald South	Limpsfield/Tatsfield Team

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Chair's Comments

Katherine Saunders

It's been another busy year, with the highlight probably being our Covenant Re-signing and Renewal Service in July.

At our AGM last year, we welcomed St George's Crowhurst into the fold. We also heard reports from both of our local charities, The Woodhouse Centre and The Brigitte Trust. We agreed to support Iraqi Christians in Need as our overseas charity for 15/16.

An ad hoc CTOD Choir provided suitable entertainment to shoppers while Carol Singing outside Boots on 19 Dec. This was led by Philip Mills from the King's Church on this occasion. It's always a wonderfully happy morning.

In late January, Oxted URC held a service of farewell to Rev David Skitt, who retired from the ministry. Many CTOD members were present, testament to David's significant commitment to ecumenism locally. Lent brought forth the Lent Groups, once again ably organised by John Tolley. The culminating service at the Methodist Church in Hurst Green displayed the many and varied talents of the participants this year. The Good Friday Walk of Witness (complete with new lighter cross) was well attended, and very thought-provoking.

An inaugural meeting of the Christian Community Choir was held in May. Spearheaded by Molly Holman, inspired by the singing at the Spiritual Spa Day in January at St John's, a group of eager singers agreed to meet on the last Tuesday of each month at Hurst Green Methodist Church. This group contributed to the enthusiastic singing at the Covenant Renewal and Re-signing service in July, at which we re-affirmed our commitment to our local covenant of unity. I am indebted to the contributions of all the churches for making this such a special service, and in particular to Rebecca Littleford, Margaret Cox and Andrew Rumsey for their help in compiling and planning the service.

CTOD once again took a Carnival Stall, graced by our newly updated banner, and the summer ended with an ecumenical walk, led by Gerald, from the URC to St Peter's Tandridge for tea, followed by evensong.

Many thanks once again to Gerald for compilation of this year's Annual Report and to John Tolley for taking on the baton of CTOD Chair. I have hugely enjoyed my time in the "hot seat" and would like to thank you all so much for your help and your encouragement these last two years.

SOME CTOD EVENTS – in chronological order

Carol Singing in Oxted

Margaret Cox

A group of CTOD Carol Singers gathered outside Boots on Saturday 19th December and sang lustily to bring Christmas cheer to the shoppers. Rotary tell us it boosts their collection as well! This year we will gather on 17th December at 11am. Why not have a half hour break from shopping and join in. All welcome!



URC Christmas Tree Festival

Margaret Cox



CTOD now own a tree courtesy of a local charity shop! As I adorned it with lights and pictures of CTOD churches the words of a hymn came to mind "One Church, One Faith, One Lord" and seemed a very apt theme for our tree. Walking round the festival was a great blessing, such a variety of trees and so much creativity.

What I really enjoyed was the fellowship we had as everyone was putting their trees together in preparation for the event.

Thank you to those who organised the event!

The 2016 Lent Course

John Tolley



contenders and voted.

This year we chose Exploring God's Mercy by Steven Croft, the Anglican Bishop of Sheffield. Based on Psalm 107, it explored five ways in which God loves us. The process used was the same as the previous year in which interested people in all churches looked at the

There were 115 people who signed up for Lent Groups this year, the same number as in 2015 but less than in 2014. They were accommodated in 12 groups and three people did individual study. We were able to cover mornings, afternoons and evenings on all days and times except Thursday (afternoon) and Friday (afternoon and evening).



One of the Lent Groups – puppets and all!

The content of the book was generally approved but the use of light print for some passages was not. The Bishop of Sheffield's videos were also approved for content but not for the accompanying tinkling and meaningless music.

This year we introduced an on-line sign-up system which those who used it thought worked well. I have made an alteration to improve it for next year. In general the sign-up system was approved though many said that the course advertising needed improvement. Could anyone help with that in 2017?

The final service also went down well and I particularly liked the puppets which two members of St George's Crowhurst put on. I was very grateful to Karen Bell and Sue Compton for arranging this. We were so glad that our newest church was able to contribute three members to Lent Groups this year.

Next year will be easier because Easter is later giving us more preparation time. Even so we will need again to make decisions on the Lent Book before Christmas. We could also do with more people signing up as leaders and hosts so that former leaders do not have to feel that they must lead if they want a break.

I am very grateful for all the people who agreed to act as Lent Group co-ordinators in their churches and to all who volunteered to lead or host groups, even if they were not eventually chosen.

Good Friday Walk through Oxted

John Tolley



It was a good walk. About 100 people eventually took part and it was successful despite the worst the sound enhancement system could throw at us!

Aby led by Matt Drummond of St Peter's Limpsfield, the text was based on that devised for the 2015 Walk, with its emphasis on Mary's reaction to the events of the day. Many felt that the text and the prayers surrounding it

were so inspiring.

At least, thanks to the inspired carpentry work of Revd Gerald South, following in the footsteps of someone, perhaps, the cross was lighter than that of previous years!

Some think that the event might better timed at Whitsun, when it would be a part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I personally find it a normal part of my devotions for Good Friday – an event that has been there for many years. However, there is no point in tradition for tradition's sake. If we do continue with the walk, for next year we will need a new leader and perhaps a new text. Would anyone like to take on the job?



There are more photographs on the back cover.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Margaret Cox



We used material from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland called Salt and Light to guide our thoughts and prayers through the week. Each day was led and attended by members of our different church flavours. It is such a precious thing to be able to meet together in unity and fellowship and pray together. There is also something special about knowing that it is a world-wide initiative that we are part of. Thank you to those who led sessions and to Kings Church for providing refreshments at Amy Road.

Re-signing our Covenant

Katherine Saunders

CTOD – Another Ten Years!

On 3rd July well over a hundred people from our twelve different congregations gathered at St John's Church, Hurst Green to celebrate the last ten years and to look forward to the next. The covenant was signed by a representative of each of the twelve churches and endorsed by senior members of the denominations.



Led by Revd Dr Andrew Rumsey, Team Rector of the Oxted Team Ministry, using an order of service compiled by Margaret Cox, Rebecca Littleford, Andrew and myself, we re-affirmed our commitment to work together.

It was a lovely afternoon, where our sense of unity was palpable. The joyful music-making and prayerful contributions culminated in a very special few moments when the Covenant was re-signed before so many witnesses. With thanks to St John's for hosting and to the member churches for their contributions to a very memorable day.

Oxted Carnival

Rebecca Littleford

CTOD were represented again at this year's Oxted Carnival, to be both a presence in the local community and to make people aware of the overseas charity we are supporting this year - Iraqi Christians in Need.

The day started off well, but soon became extremely wet! Our spirits were not dampened, however, as we chattered to the many people who sheltered under our gazebo. We had a giant jenga game for the children to play and this proved popular with all ages. Thank you to everyone how came along and helped.

Fifth Sunday Service

Margaret Cox

Hurst Green Evangelical Church hosted the CTOD 5th Sunday service on 31st July at 6.30pm. We took the theme "God is working his purpose out" These are interesting and difficult times in so many parts of the world.

We were reminded that that God calls us: "If it is possible, as far as it depends



on you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18), but that we are also called to pray for leaders, to pray for those in authority and to pray for those countries that God puts on our heart and in particular those countries that the media has forgotten about.

We took time to pray and also join in singing hymns old and new together. It was lovely to fellowship with our CTOD brothers and sisters.

Pilgrimage to St Peter's Tandridge

Gerald South



This year our walk took us from the URC in Oxted to the ancient church, and yew tree, at Tandridge. This was not a long walk but was certainly very varied as we left the developed area of Oxted, including the old gasometer, crossed the A25 through the woods of Hurst Green, past the water of the mill, and on to the open countryside of Tandridge.

There we were warmly welcomed by some of the St Peter's congregation who have provided a very generous tea for us. We were then able to join them for their regular Evensong.

Our numbers may have been smaller than usual but it proved a very enjoyable afternoon.



SOME CTOD REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Christian Community Choir

Katherine Saunders

Churches Together was approached by Molly Holman from All Saints earlier this year. She had an idea to form a Community Choir under the CTOD umbrella, which would harness the considerable singing talents of our community but in a relaxed atmosphere, with no auditions or formal performances.

Molly's concept is one of getting together to sing, just for singing's sake. The Executive was keen to pursue this idea and a meeting was held in May to consider how best we might support it. Hurst Green Methodist Church offered to host the new enterprise and Wendy Hewitt and Anna Liddell from St John's agreed to provide musical support on piano and flute.

Needless to say, we're really enjoying ourselves! Choir members bring something to sing if they wish, or we just sing from the hymn book, in an impromptu manner. The Community Choir swelled the voices at our 3 July Covenant Service. Recently we've sung the harvest hymns together, including all the old favourites. On 22 Dec, we will be singing as part of the Oxted Adventure. We're very excited about this opportunity and invite everyone to join us.

Contact Molly for more info on 01883 715475 or
molly_holman@hotmail.com

Christian Men's Prayer Breakfast

John Roberts

We gather regularly at 7.00 am on the second Monday of each month (except August) at The Gospel Hall, Old Oxted. After a breakfast of coffee, rolls and croissants we are led in prayer by one of our number and there follows a time of free prayer expressing our concerns of the moment.

We continue to be most grateful to Alistair Scott for his hospitality and his cheerful welcome.

All men are welcome to join us - no previous experience required!

Supporting Our Chosen Charities

Helped by our fund raising on various occasions we have been able to send £315 to both The Woodhouse Centre and the The Brigitte Trust, our two chosen local charities for 2015. During 2016 we are raising funds for Iraqi Christians in Need.

Foodbank Support Project

John Roberts

Although it is still quite early in the year to judge, the indications are that the need for food parcels through the Oxted Citizens Advise Bureau is on the decline. The total number of boxes delivered since the project's inception have been:

April 2013 – March 2014 78 boxes

April 2014 – March 2015 128 boxes

April 2015 – March 2016 67 boxes

April 2016 – Sept 2016 26 boxes (which compares to 48 boxes in this same period last year)

This is obviously very good news and it is hoped that the trend is not reversed as Universal Credit is rolled out in Tandridge over the next 18 months.

The generosity of donations to the Caterham Foodbank via the supermarket donation points has continued, such that the Foodbank has seldom had the need to call upon individual churches to organise additional collections. However, they will be happy to receive contributions from any Harvest Festival collections that churches or schools may be organising this year. For their current requirements, please refer to their website at <https://caterham.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

At the end of September, Caterham Foodbank issued an appeal for more volunteers to spare a few hours every couple of weeks. This was circulated to all the churches, so please do contact them if you are interested at info@caterham.foodbank.org.uk.

GROUPS

Christmas Cards to Prisoners of Conscience.

Sue Mallinson

A Prisoner of Conscience is any person imprisoned for expressing an opinion, political, religious or social, that does not advocate or condone violence, but is not tolerated by the government of the state in which they live.

Many are journalists, lawyers or community leaders standing up for ethnic minorities.

Each year in November church members organise a local campaign to send greetings to prisoners of conscience. Four members of the former Justice and Peace Group arrange an active Saturday morning in central Oxted.

Lists of prisoners and human rights groups, their situation and reason for imprisonment, come from the charities Amnesty International and Action by Christians Against Torture. They know these prisoners will be allowed to receive the cards. Not all the people we write to are Christians. At our local event we can each choose who we write to.

Last year we sent over 100 cards. Oxted Community Hall's Meeting Room was busy all morning. People came for the opportunity to meet other people with shared aspirations: the Fairtrade goods on sale and the good coffee and cake were enjoyable extras.

Come and try it for yourself this year on Saturday 19th November from 9.30am. All we ask is a donation towards postage.

We can supply lists and cards and advice if you want to run your own church card writing event. Contact Jenifer Ruxton 01883 712836 or Sue Mallinson 01883 714775.

NOTE: St Mary's Church Christmas Sale will be in the Main Hall that same morning.

Housing and Homeless Action Group

Stuart Paterson

Over the last year the Group has paid £30 to TDC to top up its Transport Fund. This allows for transport costs for people presenting themselves to the Council as homeless to be paid so that they can travel to accommodation identified by TDC. We also paid £50 to Housing Justice, the national Churches umbrella organisation.

In April, members of the Group organised a Spring Fayre, raising £242.60. In May, a member of our Group attended a TDC Homelessness Peer Review meeting. At this meeting the Council's external partners reviewed TDC's performance in tackling homelessness. TDC officers were not allowed to be present and statements and discussions were recorded by external assessors.

Our financial balance is now £335.48. We are due to meet on 17th Nov. to discuss donations to homelessness charities and future plans.

TicToc

Together in Christ Toddlers of Oxted Churches

Sarah Darby

People and groups change with time, after 28 years Tic Toc is no exception. Sadly our two preschool children became school age and their mothers returned to work. We miss them all very much. We fear the age difference between remaining members and any future young parents has become too great, so we are more likely to welcome grandparent carers with grandchildren, while their parents return to work. We retain the same ethos in the hope that we may welcome some future preschool members.

This evolution has permitted more time for quiet reflection and prayer which had previously been stressful for younger members.

Our numbers remain steady, 10-12 participants per term time Monday morning. This is an excellent number to fill a sitting room and generate lively discussion. Our program is varied: worship, videos, bible studies. We welcome two speakers per term

In late January we enjoyed a very candid and inspiring talk about every day life as the wife of the Bishop of Paraguay. She explained her association with many women's groups, education establishments and zeal to empower women in Paraguay.

Dr Eleanor Stoneham has shared her journeys with the Southwark Diocese "In the steps of St Paul" and tales of her visit to the churches of Ethiopia. Revd. Steven Cox has taught us about "The History of God's People".

This year the CTOD Lent Study "Exploring God's Mercy" was a time of great enrichment by all.

We welcomed back two returners who have stayed after the Lent studies. Contrary to guidelines, a different member volunteers to facilitate each week of study, so there is always a variety of ideas and leadership style. We were extremely fortunate to meet in Helen Kemp's home which has a multimedia centre in the sitting room. This enabled us to enjoy various U-tube films to support the text, along with practical activities and closing selected music. Several of our members enjoy the Lent Studies on Monday morning at Tic Toc and then facilitate other local groups later in the week, thereby sharing ideas to a wider audience. A great time was had by all.

The photo is of "Once barren we are now fruitful". Each person contributed a ramekin dish of fruit, accompanied with an anecdote of why they chose that fruit. All the fruit was then mixed in a bowl to make a delicious rich and spiritual fruit salad, shared by all. A different type of communion!



We always welcome new members, Monday morning term time only 10.15-11.45. Please join us if you are free!

REPORTS FROM CTOD CHURCHES

All Saints' Church in the Parish of Oxted & Warlingham

John Roberts

The 12th of September was Fr Simon's first anniversary as our Parish Priest – where has the time gone? Having been a member of the Diocesan Commission for Ecumenism, Fr Simon was eager to become involved in the ecumenical life of the Parish. On his very first weekend in Oxted last year, he attended and addressed the audience at the very moving recital by Carl Bahoshy held at the URC in aid of the charity Iraqi Christians in Need and organised by a team from All Saints'. Through his regular participation in the CTOD events during the year and with our Dean at the resigning of our CTOD Covenant in July, Fr Simon has been introduced to most of our Ministers and become a well recognised face in the community. Recently, he preached at Compline at the Anglican church of All Saints' in Warlingham which was very much appreciated by their community.

All Saints' has hosted several events during the year that have had an ecumenical dimension. The Women's World Day of Prayer evening service in March using material prepared by the Christian women of Cuba and entitled Receive children, Receive Me. Our annual Stations of the Cross held on Fridays during Lent was attended by several people from the local churches, as also was the Way of the Cross evening meditation with Sr Diane Reynolds and Maureen Roberts, using powerful sculpture images of the Stations by Peter Foster.

In this last few weeks, Fr Simon has lead a five week course, Introduction to Christian Meditation which was well supported by other churches. Meditation is an ancient form of prayer bringing the distracted mind to silence, stillness and rest in the presence of God. The course demonstrates that this is possible even in our busy, modern times. More such courses are intended for later in the year and will be open to all.

The Community Choir initiated by Molly Holman through CTOD continues to meet and made a valued contribution at the Covenant resigning service in the summer. It is a very informal group and the hope is that they will be able to help with the music at future CTOD events. All are welcome to come along to

enjoy a good sing with Wendy Hewitt at the piano on the last Tuesday of the month at 7.45pm at the Methodist church.

Another initiative this year has been to arrange the occasional Sunday afternoon “Tea and Sing Song” in the Parish Room, giving people with special needs and their carers the opportunity to sing along (and dance) to some favourite songs and enjoy a sumptuous tea. Initial responses have been most encouraging, more to follow.

Evangelical Church, Hurst Green

Steven and Margaret Cox

In Psalm 133 the psalmist writes “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity”

We recently had a church day away at Holmsted Manor, Cuckfeild, home of YWAM. It is a beautiful peaceful venue to spend time together as a church family along with extended family members. We are also blessed by the fellowship we have with fellow believers in CTOD in formal and informal meetings.

We have seen a growth in our regular congregation. Over the year we have had a number of people who are visiting folk locally join us for our morning worship. One family in particular comes to mind visiting from the Netherlands where they attend a church of 4000 but appreciated the feeling of family in our



church. They shared and prayed with us and were a real blessing reminding us that we belong to a worldwide family

We put on a Christmas Activity morning for younger children which was a fun way to share the message of Christmas with families in our local community. The local churches followed this up with an Easter Activity morning at Aggies on the Green.

We enjoy taking turns with St Johns and the Methodist church providing a regular service in the Windmill Manor care home. We have all witnessed the Holy Spirit ministering to the residents during these visits. There are also opportunities to take assemblies in our local schools. Moorhouse students are superb at impromptu dramas to bring the bible story to life! Our Easter garden in Hurst Green school enables a lot of discussion about the Easter story

We enjoyed fellowship with members of other churches at our Passover meal. Celebrating Passover as Jesus would have done really deepens our appreciation of what Jesus accomplished for us.

I think this year has been a particular challenge to the prayer life of the church. There are a number of personal issues which we have been praying about for a long time believing God is faithful and will answer when we call on Him.

The verse in Romans 10 remains a particular challenge as we pray for our local community "How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard" God places us amongst the people who need to hear. We have thought a lot about how to pray for all that is going on in our nation and the world. We have challenged ourselves to pray as we read our newspapers and listen to the news. It was this that inspired the theme of the CTOD Songs of Praise which we hosted "God is working his purpose out"

King's Church

Miles Corbett

Our 30th birthday year has been another year of growth for us. The vision for Kings Church: Building the Church, Sharing the Gospel, Serving the Community and Reaching the Nations, has been expressed in many new ways with a deepening understanding and involvement for us all in living out and sharing the Gospel on a daily basis.

This last year King's Church continued to support our partners in overseas mission particularly in Zimbabwe where the challenges and opportunities

facing the church seem to be at two extremes. In addition our young people have been very involved through YWAM and refugee support in Greece.

Our wider community work has extended this last year with the opening of an Oxted Baby Café and Friday Club focused on children and parents: in addition our Parenting and Marriage Courses are open to all and continue to thrive. We are also encouraged by the personal 'calling' of our members which contribute so much to our missional culture - Jayne Gould-Smith has been deeply involved in the growth of Clean Sheet, a Christian charity which aims to help ex-prisoners into work and a life free from a cycle of re-offending (www.cleansheet.org.uk). We continue to surprise the residents of Oxted every month with our prayer on the streets team led by Simon Quincey reaching out to bless people in the midst of their busy lives.

Methodist Church, Hurst Green

Bob Evans

Our Church has continued to develop over the year. Following on from last years' 'Visioning ' session, we have launched the Messy Church activity service and our first session has attracted some 20 children, many of whom are new to worship. As a result of the 'Visioning', we have also changed the style of our monthly Café Church services to make them more relevant and accessible to a wider range of people.

We also now have a music group led by our organist Josh and his wife Hannah

Ford. This has added a refreshing new dimension to our singing with an increasing number of new songs as well as old favourites. Our Minister is currently leading a course of Bible Study on what the Bible has to say about topical affairs.

Our Women's Fellowship



has re-branded itself to the Wednesday Fellowship. Each week guest speakers provide a focus for companionship in a friendly setting. All are welcome. Our Church also provides the venue for practice for the Christian Community Choir under the auspices of CTOD.

Our Minister, Rev Karen Bell, will have completed her time of dedicated and inspirational service at Hurst Green Methodist Church during 2017. We await details of future arrangements within our local group of Methodist Churches in the Purley Circuit.

The Methodist Church strongly supports CTOD at many of its services and functions including playing a significant part in the organisation of the Anniversary Re-signing of the Covenant and looks forward to participating in future events.

Oxted United Reformed Church

Diana Jones

During the autumn of 2015, Oxted URC (OURC) undertook a review of key priorities and objectives for local mission and ministry (LMMR) - a valuable process, enabling the church to reassess its Mission Statement and Priorities. In November, a well-attended Snelling Lecture, *Modern Art – Friend or Enemy of Christian Art*, was given by the Rt Rev Richard Harries. The season of Christmas was celebrated by participation in the Oxted ADVENTure tableaux, involving the Pre-school who meet on URC premises; and a number of special services, including a Pre-school nativity play and the screening of a BBC programme for children, *Was This the Way He Came?*

On Sunday, 31 January, at a moving retirement service, an affectionate farewell was given to the Rev David Skitt. David's inspirational leading of worship, his unstinting pastoral care, and his support for ecumenical activities, have been greatly valued within the congregation and across the wider Oxted community. Our prayers go with David and his wife, Alison, as they enter a new chapter in their lives.

OURC is now in a period of **'Transition'**, which brings both challenges and opportunities. The importance of pastoral care is an important legacy from David's ministry, the maintenance of which continues to be a high priority.

OURC is a shared pastorate with St John's URC, Marsh Green. As part of the process for appointing a new minister – OURC 60%; Marsh Green 40% – the two churches have worked together to prepare an inviting Pastorate Profile. The importance of continued reflection and study during Transition is recognised and to this end a series of house groups, entitled *Topictime*, are being introduced.

During Lent, it was good to join in study with friends from other churches, this year, *Exploring God's Mercy*, culminating with an inspirational service of worship on Palm Sunday. Easter was a time for reflection and celebration, with the Good Friday Walk of Witness and joyous worship on Easter Sunday morning.



Social events have included Traidcraft Big Brew; a popular Quiz evening; afternoon tea in aid of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust; a church outing to the cathedral city of Chichester. In July, OURC hosted an annual event for the seven churches which make up the URC North

Downs Cluster; beginning with a walk to and from St Peter's, Limpsfield, followed by tea and service of worship - *We lift our eyes to the hills . . . from where does our strength come?* reflecting on our shared life and witness within the foothills of the North Downs.

Prayer and Share and Wednesday Fellowship continue as important regular events in the URC calendar, as are occasional Family Tea Services on Sunday afternoons, with young and, not so young, meeting to share imaginative forms of worship and enjoy fellowship.

In October/November we look forward to hosting the sixth biennial Bluehouse Festival, with the Snelling Lecture delivered by the Rev Richard Coles, his theme, *Servant of two masters: The opportunities and risks of ministry and media*. We hope to see many of our friends at this event.

St Andrew's, Limpsfield Chart

Sue Compton

The most spectacular change to St Andrew's is the recent installation of sensitive lighting for the Reredos which now makes an admirable focal point in the Chancel at our services and complements the enabling of the priest to stand behind the altar facing the congregation, which was achieved by moving the altar forward from the back wall a few years ago.

During Advent, figures of Mary, Joseph and the Donkey from our Nativity set travelled on their journey to Bethlehem from home to home on the Chart, leaving church at the Carol Service and coming back for Christmas Eve Christingle - both of which, as usual, were our best attended services in the year.

After Easter our priest-in-charge, Wendy Harvey, ran a well-appreciated Alpha-lite course, mainly for young mothers who bring their children to our monthly Monday Childrens' Church. That regular event continues with helpers providing inventive craft activities in the hall (including making a Simnel cake for all to enjoy at Easter!) The children then go into church with Wendy who captivates them with a story illustrated by suitable material emerging from her 'magic box' as they sit round her on a carpet in the chancel. The result is greater participation of the children at our monthly Family Service - the oldest is a Server at it and was recently admitted to Communion.

In the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we again held a Quiet Morning open to all the churches, this time using a Southwark Diocesan recommendation of making 'stations' in different parts of the church using the separate biddings of the Lord's Prayer. This, with material in the Hall, was appreciated by the few comers. We've decided the title 'Quiet morning' puts people off, and we'll be re-thinking it next year!

The June Flower Festival theme, celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday, was a huge success drawing in many appreciative visitors.

Our August Teas reached new pinnacles of 80 and 100 servings on two Sundays - a walking party of 35 arriving together stretched our 2-person teapots almost to breaking point! Teas draw Chart residents as well as people from the whole district and our garden was well used thanks to good weather

this year. We also hosted our lunchtime 'Team Barbecue' lunch for St Mary's Tatsfield and St Peter's Limpsfield – a joyful event again blessed by good weather!

In September our annual 'Pet Service' in the garden brought in outsiders – this year with three adorable Shetland ponies as well as the usual dogs!

Monthly coffee-mornings have continued, sometimes drawing-in outsiders; we are about to change these by joining The Carpenters' Arms coffee mornings on the first Tuesday of the month, thereby reaching more of the community. The various groups working on our 'Mission Action Plan' continue to explore how we can best reach out and serve the Chart.

St John's, Hurst Green

June Reed

As a part of St John's five year mission plan it was decided by the P.C.C. that during 2015/16 the two main priorities to be addressed were a) children and youth and b) tackling isolation felt by newcomers to the area and often after retirement. With regard to reaching out to young people in the area two "Make, Do and BBQ" and a number of art and craft mornings have been held and were well attended, especially one of the latter planned in conjunction the two other H.G. churches held in St Agatha's Hall where the children were joined by parents for refreshments. For the older generation an open Adult Craft Day was held and a Ladies "Spa Day" in the form of a Quiet Day. The Coffee and Chat mornings continue fortnightly in St. John's Room with transport provided on request and are advertised in the local Hurst Green News.

The celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday provided a great opportunity for the church to work with the other local churches and organisations in the preparation of a "Picnic" and an afternoon with live music and activities proved to be a really happy community event.

It was also decided by the P.C.C. to introduce some more contemporary acts of worship alongside the much loved traditional services. An All Age Service was already in place at 9.30 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month. In December this was replaced by a visit from the Rise Theatre Co. who

performed a sketch show based on the real meaning of Christmas with music and mime which was very popular and they are returning in November. Pentecost Sunday saw the introduction of Café Church to be held once a month at 11.30 with refreshments and a live Band.

On 3rd July St. Johns hosted the Resigning of the CTOD. Covenant Service with a candle ceremony and singing led by the new Community choir followed by refreshments in the York Rooms. It was a happy occasion on which to start the next 10 years in the words of the Covenant Pledge “to continue our pilgrimage towards visible unity and to share our Christian life together as fully as we can”.

St Mary’s, Oxted and St. Peter’s, Tandridge

Andrew Rumsey

This past year in Oxted has been an encouraging one for St Mary’s & St Peter’s, as we grow into relationship with St John’s Hurst Green and St George’s, Crowhurst. Together with St Peter’s, Tandridge, these four form the Oxted Team Ministry, created in 2014.

St Mary’s and St Peter’s work together ever more closely and our PCCs have spent some time refining a shared vision ‘Mission Action Plan’ that is used as a yardstick for our decision-making. This is summarised as follows: ‘Knowing Christ, Growing Community, Renewing our Heritage’. The latter part is especially relevant for us at present as we have two major capital appeals underway for essential works to our Grade One listed buildings. At St Mary’s we hope soon to begin repairs to the crumbling medieval stonework and, at St Peter’s, to the install new refreshments and w.c. facilities. New fundraising initiatives (including ‘Love St Mary’s – a new brand of homemade crafts) have begun in earnest!

The past year has also seen a major change in our Sunday worship programme with weekly informal services held at both churches, to balance the more traditional programme, which continues. At St Peter’s, we now run a weekly 11am Family Service and, at St Mary’s, the Café Service moved to 4.30pm. We are encouraged by these developments and look forward to their further growth.

During the year we continued to be blessed by the ministry of Phil Brooks as our trainee curate. Phil and Jenny left the benefice this summer, with Phil commencing a new post as Team Vicar of Christ Church, Sutton. We give thanks for all that he has given us, especially through his work with children and young people.

We continue to value our collaboration with other churches in the Oxted district – of which one expression is our ongoing ‘Neighbourhood Forum’, a quarterly lunchtime meeting for community leaders in the town centre, which meets at the Church of the Peace of God.

St. Mary's, Tatsfield

Gerald South

Following the departure of Louise Ellis in July 2015 we have been fortunate to be a member of the Limpsfield and Tatsfield Team Ministry whose clergy have been able to cover our services. Our wardens and PCC have also worked hard to maintain the activities of the church through the year.

Our outreach has continued to include the serving of teas on summer Sunday afternoons when we regularly welcome visitors from wide and near who enjoy the beautiful views, the company and the delicious cakes. Although somewhat off the beaten track the church also sees visitors at other times of the week and their appreciation of finding an open church is often expressed in their messages in the visitors' book.



Our Pastoral Group has developed a more consistent approach to keeping in touch with the bereaved following funerals taken by our clergy: this includes visiting them with a flower arrangement following our harvest festival.

The same group has also introduced a very new initiative in giving support to those with hearing aids. Many such people find that their aids are not

functioning as they should or find it difficult to acquire new batteries. Two of our congregation have trained with the help of the NHS and the Guildford Diocese and now hold a monthly surgery in the village centre. This is proving well worthwhile as many local people are taking advantage of it.

Awareness of dementia has also been offered over the last year. There have been two presentations in the church hall by a representative of Dementia Friends and many local people have attended these. Our Pastoral Group is now considering the best way forward in order to enable local organisation to become even more dementia friendly.

We maintain our link with Christ Church, Brixton Road and frequently provide items for their food cupboard. Eight of us recently joined them for their harvest supper and thoroughly enjoyed their company and entertainment.

We continue to offer the services of funerals, weddings and baptisms. A distinctive feature of recent times is the baptism of eight adults who have all been parents or uncles of infants who have also been baptised.

At the time of writing we look forward to 29th November when Revd Vince Short will be licensed as our new Team Vicar. It will be a joy to have him and his wife, Veronica, in The Rectory after a long vacancy.

St Peter's Limpsfield

John Tolley

St Peter's continues its work in Limpsfield and as part of the Limpsfield and Tatsfield group of Anglican churches. With a vacancy in the group at Tatsfield, we have been much helped by volunteer lay and ordained ministers and lay people. We said goodbye to Helen Cook, a trainee minister, now ordained and serving her curacy in Redhill. In St Peter's, our churchwardens and many lay people organise several events for our church and village. This year there have been courses on St Luke's gospel and a current study on St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. Many from the village attend church events such as harvest lunch and the monthly coffee morning at St Peter's and even more go to the Annual Fete run in conjunction with Limpsfield Infant School.

St Peter's is a leading player in the Annual Limpsfield in Bloom programme, which this year once again achieved a gold award at the South-East in bloom competition (we lost out to Tatsfield who won the category – but they are

part of the team and there is always next year). St Peter's choir has continued to feature in several events over the year and we always enjoy our annual visit to St James' Titsey on the last weekend of July. Bishop Jonathan of Croydon joined us this year, having seen the event in the CTOD calendar when he attended the Covenant Re-signing service and realised that there was a church in his area that he had never been to.

St Peter's is rightly proud of the quarterly magazine the church sends to every house in the parish. Produced and edited by lay people, it is a central source of information about the church and the village. The appointment of a new communications coordinator, Caroline Campbell, will help the church do more to communicate using social media and improve our website.

As the lay representative of St Peter's on the CTOD Council I am very grateful for the work of Fr James Percival and of Fr Matt Drummond and in particular for the latter's work on the Council and the CTOD Executive. We shall need a new lay representative when I become Chair at the next Annual Meeting.

*CTOD is a part of a much wider network of
"Together" churches. There are umbrella
organisations of Churches Together in Surrey,
Churches Together in England and Churches
Together in Britain and Ireland.*

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THE GOOD FRIDAY WALK THROUGH OXTED

