



ANNUAL REPORT

AN OVERVIEW OF
ALL SAINTS CHURCH
2017 - 2018

Registered Charity No. 1131968

Annual Report Index

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this year's Annual Report.

The report serves two purposes. In the first place it gives a snapshot of the life of All Saints over the last twelve months, with the intention that it will lead to thanksgiving to God for his goodness and faithfulness and further prayer that he will continue his work in and through us. But it is also meant to be a help to newcomers to All Saints, highlighting some of the activities which take place at All Saints and signposting ways in which you can be involved in them.

The Annual Report is, rightly, a record of lots of activity. But one of the things God has been teaching us this year is that being busy isn't enough and that it can be unhelpful. It's too easy to find our identity in what we do for God and then to feel devastated when it goes badly or we can no longer do it. All we do for God, and in his name, must come out of who we are in Christ. We have been chosen by him to belong to him. We are his sons and daughters, highly favoured by God. We aren't perfect yet, but we are a forgiven people. We have been given a glorious hope for the future and the Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will one day enjoy it. *(See Ephesians 1:3-14)*

That is our true identity as believers and, to understand the life of All Saints, we will need to keep reminding ourselves of it. So please read this Annual Report with that in mind. We want to become more *like* Jesus and we want to go into the community *for* Jesus but, before we can do any of that, we need to spend time *with* Jesus, enjoying him and finding our joy and delight *in* Jesus.

John Kirkland

ALL AGE WORSHIP

All Age Worship, a more informal service where Sunday Club and Pathfinders remain in church, takes place on the first Sunday of every month. Having a space at the front of the church where children can come forward for a better view, worship freely with instruments and streamers and take part in a craft activity, has helped to create a welcoming atmosphere for families and also makes it easier for talks to be interactive and inclusive. The dedicated and growing All Age team is committed to making our service accessible for all and one example of this is our decision to use the children's Bible translation more effectively. Members of the congregation have made valuable contributions to All Age this year, through the worship, readings, prayer and talk illustrations, helping to make the services engaging, joyful and truly reflective of the All Age ethos. During the services we have also celebrated church life outside of Sunday morning, interviewing members and friends of All Saints about how we can support their work in our local community.

Missy Johnson

ALL SAINTS MINIS AND DINKIES

It's unbelievable to think that I have been running Minis for 15 years now! It's been a fantastic journey and the privilege of walking alongside so many families during that time has been and continues to be such a joy.

Tabitha Heathcote helps out on Mondays, taking it in turns to do the talk at our Mini Ted Altogether Time as well as chatting to the parents and carers and helping to tidy away. We have introduced the families to many Bible stories through this time as well as our usual blessing song which we sing to each child by name, celebrating birthdays and other events.

We have a number of parents who help at Minis being a friendly face or arriving early to finalise the craft activities and I am always grateful to Harrison Beveridge and Nic Jones who set up for Minis the night before. I believe that, between us, we continue to provide a lovely welcoming group for the families who come as well as a support for those in the ups and downs of parenting pre-school children.

All Saints Dinkies is the group specifically aimed at parents and their babies (i.e. those not yet walking). We currently have 30 parents and their babies on the Register. Dinkies is not as structured as Minis – we offer refreshments during the course of the afternoon and end the time with 15 minutes of singing nursery rhymes and other songs.

The team at the moment includes Andrea Wood and myself (front of house) and Hilary Shergold (kitchen) with Jackie Sears providing end of the afternoon assistance with clearing away.

PLEASE PRAY:

- That we continue to make friends with and support those who come to Minis and Dinkies week by week.
- That we “make a difference”, by being Christ through what Minis and Dinkies offers and by our love and care.
- For freshness of ideas week by week.

Helen Ellis

ALPHA and other courses

This last year we’ve run two Freedom in Christ courses which were well received. We ran the new Life Explored course with two guests initially, though one dropped out after a few sessions. It is a good course which looks at sin in terms of idolatry rather than law breaking and challenges our thinking. It is aimed at people in the 20’s to 50’s who have grown up with a different mind-set to previous generations.

Along with members of the Church Leadership Group, we decided to change the way we offered Alpha and to try to be more bespoke to those who enquired. Ideally we wanted to resource people to run Alpha in their homes or other venues rather than offer a centralised Alpha as we had in the past. Martin and Rosy, along with Steve, ran an Alpha with one guest in the end – others had enquired, but then did not take up the offer of the course. Pam and Jackie had a similar experience as they set up a course for one person initially, two others were all set to join but didn't, and one other joined and completed the course whilst the original person dropped out before it started. Sam ran one in conjunction with the Groves Missional Community with some success.

John Patterson had wanted to invite members of his Close and he followed up on a couple of requests which came into the church in order to set up a course in his home and some members of his Close then accepted the invitation to join that course which Kate helped him to run.

Well done Martin, Rosy, Steve, Pam, Jackie, Sam & the Missional Community, John and Kate. We'd love to resource others to run an Alpha.

A new venture following Costa has been the use of the START course. This is an interactive course which is equally useful for young and old. Gill Brown and Ron presented the course and Pam provided the hospitality. This has led on to the MOVING ON course from the same stable.

Ron & Helen Glenn

B-IT THEATRE COMPANY

Another exciting year at the B-it Theatre Company! God's faithfulness and blessing continues to pour out on us. Here are a few highlights:

The Drama Bits and Junior Company have enjoyed working together over the last year and they put on another wonderful Roald Dahl classic. Fantastic Mr. Fox was a hit, and the group showed their talents with silly props and teamwork. A special shout out to Charlie Nunez and the Cook family who did an outstanding job on costume and makeup.

The Youth Theatre had a fantastic year with their Mockumentary project in the summer of 2017 and embraced a period drama with *Because of the Lockwoods*. They displayed outstanding characters in this understated but deep play. What a group!

Storm Rusty is Coming to Town was brought to the stage by the Drama Bits and Junior Company Christmas of 2017. It was another devised triumph and there was a laugh a minute.

B-it continues to be doing great work at Hoole Primary School. We are well established within the community and have built relationships with staff, parents and kids. Due to popular demand, we are now running two groups! The kids continue to grow in confidence and drama skills through Just4fun workshops and the performance of sketches. God is moving and we love being a part of it!

The Lord has blessed B-it so richly with leaders who are talented and generous with their gifts. Harry Warrell has added graphic design to his many talents and made some beautiful posters for us. And we welcomed Sophie Hawker to the team in October 2017 as B-it Assistant and she has been doing an incredible job. It has been a great year and we pray that Jesus increases his power and presence amongst us.

Peri Nightingale

BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee is a sub-committee of the PCC, made up of PCC members and others with an interest in the buildings and fabric of the Church and other properties. It is both our privilege and responsibility to look after all of the PCC's building portfolio. To this end, we consider our role is to ensure that the Church and other buildings are kept in the best possible condition for the current and future needs of God's people here in Hoole, to use to his praise and glory.

This year we have continued working through the jobs identified in the Quinquennial report of February 2016. Although no major works have been undertaken we continue to keep on top of the day to day maintenance and redecorating. The repairs following storm Doris were completed after being approved by the insurance company. The carpet in Church has been replaced this year.

As always, if you would like more information about the work of the committee, just ask one of its members, and if you have an idea as to how we can improve the buildings, please let us know and we will look at it.

The Building Committee are:-

Ken Wood (Chair) Kathryn Jones (Secretary) Steve Tynegate, Roy Greenwood, Christina Beveridge and Ian Speechley

Ken Wood

CARE GROUP

The Care Group has been offering support to members of the Church family for nearly 20 years, officially commencing May 1998.

We undertake regular transport to church on Sundays, church activities and ad-hoc requests for appointments for doctor/dentist/hospital and shopping trips. Visiting members in their

own homes/care homes or hospital are also undertaken. Long term requests for shopping and appointments are also being accommodated.

Volunteers give their help and time freely ensuring the Care Group continues to assist the church family when needed and is greatly appreciated. Many thanks again to those not officially registered with the care group but whose support ensures most requests are met, particularly with lifts to church on Sundays.

Care Group leaflets with details of support offered are available in church, the list is not exhaustive and we always do our best to undertake any reasonable requests.

Dawne Rendell

Since writing this report Dawne has been unwell and has had to step down from the leadership of Care Group. As a result, the Care Group is not open to new requests until a new leader is appointed. If you are interested in taking on this role, please speak to John Kirkland.

CHURCH CENTRE

Each year it amazes me how good our God is!

The activities in the church centre maintain the income year on year which is fabulous, but we do need to take care not to rely solely on this income to meet the church's needs.

We have a wide variety of non-church activities taking place now that includes:

Alcoholics Anonymous (Tuesday and Friday Groups), Alanon (Support for people living with Alcoholics), Alateen (Support for teenagers living with an Alcoholic), AA Inter Group, A Star Sports (children's club), Bible Study Fellowship, Chasamba, City Fitness Class, Chester Family History Society, Class Fitness, Chester Philharmonic Orchestra, Cheshire West

and Chester Weight-loss Group (Morelife), Deva Miniatures, Deo Gratias Choir, Hoole Veterans Group, Jo Jingles (children's group), Labour Party Meetings, Music Therapy, Magic Voices Choir, Pilates, Quit 51 (smoking clinic), Rainbows, RASAC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling), Slimming World, Taekwondo.

The Church also has a great deal of use of the centre in a huge variety of ways which includes:

Café, Minis, Dinkies, Alpha, Housegroups, Prayer meetings, Senior Residents, B-it, Little Acorns, Messy Church, Franks, Open to God, Music Group, Craft Club, Footsteps lunches, Cinema Afternoons and Nights, Sunday Club, Space Homework Club and other one off events.

Many thanks go to my team of volunteer receptionists for their support throughout the year – Elaine Hemmings, Ann Chester, Pat Pawson, Helen Glenn, Michaela Barnfather, Hilary Shergold and Rachel Kirkland.

Also to Andy Warren for all his work to help keep the centre clean, tidy and well maintained.

Thanks also to Helen Dymond and Chantal Proctor for their additional support throughout the year and to John Chester and Rick Hemmings for their support as line manager and health and safety-advisor. And last but not least my family for the way they support me in my role as Church Centre Manager.

Christina Beveridge

CHURCH WEEKEND

Our weekend away last year in Cloverley Hall was in November when Graham Shaw, Vicar of Christchurch in Newtown, was our speaker. He spoke on 'living beautiful lives' for Jesus, based on chapters in 1 Peter. November was a little late to go, we found, so this year we are back in October. The dates are October 12th-14th. Do join us!

Vicki Bulgin

CINEMA AFTERNOON AND NIGHT

We try to run a cinema every few months at least. The vision behind it was to make a cheap afternoon and evening at the cinema, watching something you may not have been able to go and see recently. A comfortable space for friends and family to be invited along to and feel loved and looked after. Also a great time to build on church family relationships.

The Afternoon Cinema is generally well attended, possibly because of the afternoon tea supplied after the film. We have kept the cost to an unbelievable £1.50 for several years. This is now being reviewed and may be increased but not to more than £2.50 which is still very good value!

Popcorn, ice-cream and drinks are served during the film at both the Afternoon and Night Cinemas. The evening film goers usually have pizza, hotdogs or burgers prior to the film. In all a great time to come and unwind and enjoy fellowship with others.

If you'd like to get involved, please come and see me!

Thanks goes to my regular support team of Patience, Harrison, Eve, Stephen Beveridge, Cath Noble, Paula and Andy Warren, and Elaine Hemmings.

Christina Beveridge

COSTA DEL HOLIDAYS

Last August the new Costa team along with 40 helpers and around 80 guests enjoyed 3 days of a unique holiday adventure as we embarked on Costa del Ballooning.

Costa del Holidays is All Saints' holiday at home for the senior members of our church family and local community, who for lots of reasons find it difficult, or are no longer able, to get a break.

God inspired, Jesus blessed, Spirit led, we aim to recreate all the elements of a real holiday in the Church Centre and make believe for 3 days that we are in 5-star accommodation, with 5 star activities, 5 star food and 5 star service.

With craft workshops, indoor and outdoor games, films, as well as afternoon trips, our guests were able to enjoy the delights of an authentic holiday, all from the comfortable surroundings of our Church Centre.

The holiday did not end after 3 days for some of our guests as 6 of them went on to follow the 'Start' course with Pam and a number of others.

This year's holiday will be 15th – 17th August and details will be available soon. Do consider joining us as either a guest or a helper. We would love to see you there.

Elaine Hemmings

CRAFT CLUB

As Craft Club enters its sixth year we continue to meet on Friday afternoons at the back of Church between 1:30 - 4pm and have around 25 members from the community; some worship at All Saints but not all. We cover a wide age range, the youngest member is 2 and contributes enormously to the happy atmosphere when we meet. We are all individuals with many different creative skills but our common

goal is to share the love of God and encourage one another in whatever way we can. One member, when asked what she was currently making replied, “conversation”. Needless to say we are all creative when it comes to having a natter especially when cups of tea and cake are involved. So if you are at a loose end on Friday afternoon and can spare the time you are very welcome to come and join those conversations.

Sheila Greenwood

CRÈCHE

All Saints is able to offer parents of children under the age of three a place to play during the morning service.

Crèche is located in Sparrow room in the Church Centre where the service is relayed on a screen so that parents who have children who won't let them leave, can still see and hear what is going on in the service. We have an open door policy, so children can be dropped off at any time and parents are welcome to stay with their children for all or part of the service.

We have a dedicated team of volunteers and parents who help to run the crèche, headed up by Jane Ashford, who is able to be there more weeks than not and Amy Batchelor who also volunteers most weeks. Most of our current parents are DBS checked so are able to stay as and when extra help is required.

Helen Ellis

FLOWERS

We are a group of three volunteers who help to prepare the fresh flower arrangements every Thursday throughout the year at All Saints. They are made for the Altar, both War Memorials and the Reception area. One week we dismantle and start from scratch and then the following week we titivate, while filling in and taking away the old.

Flower arrangements are made in memory of loved ones, for birthdays and other special occasions such as Easter, Pentecost, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas time.

Many thanks to Lis Treby and Gill Brown who have very kindly been helping to prepare them over the last nine months and to all those who contribute to the church flowers. It is lovely to see them each and every week and receive the happiness and special lift that they give.

Katherine Perkins

FOOTSTEPS

Footsteps children and families ministry overarches all the children's groups on a Sunday morning, monthly families luncheon, the lending library and termly SHOUT events, under 'Link Up'.

The Footsteps library has Christian books, DVDs, CDs to help resource families in developing faith at home.

Our Sunday morning groups (Scramblers Preschool-Reception, Climbers Y1-Y3, Explorers Y4-Y6) have been growing and flourishing with new families, helpers and leaders. Our Christmas service was a wonderful demonstration of the children's faith. 3rd Sunday praise brings all of the children's groups together to learn about the wonder of worshipping God. It also provides opportunity for them to bring their own instruments in, enabling them to share their gifts in the monthly all age worship service.

On the second Sunday of each month, Footsteps holds a families luncheon, providing space for families to get together, build relationships and share food and fellowship with each other.

SHOUToutside (July) joined in outreach with the Missional Community on the Groves. SHOUTglow (October) provided a light alternative to Halloween, at Hoole Baptist Church. Both events were big successes,

seeing children from all over Chester gathering together to learn about God and engage in mission.

Tabitha Heathcote

FRANKS (School Years 10-13)

A highlight of my new role as Youth Pastor has been getting to know and disciple our Franks, witnessing how God is impacting on their lives and the support and laughter we share on a Sunday evening. We had a fantastic week at Soul Survivor in July and are looking forward to Soul Survivor 2018, camping with other local churches and testing out a new venue closer to home in Stafford. Since September we have focused our studies on how as Christians we can impact on our culture, and various books of the Bible, such as Luke and Daniel, have helped us to delve deeper into this topic. A highlight of the year so far was our trip to Liverpool for a Rend Collective gig and it was great to see our young people growing in their confidence and worshipping freely. We are committed to attending the Ignite monthly youth evening which has allowed Franks to deepen friendships with young people from churches across the city and to hear first-hand testimonies of how Jesus is changing lives in Chester.

Missy Johnson

HEART AND SOUL CAFE

Conversation - Connection - Community

Since re-opening in February 2017 we now have a great community of customers (young & old) who enjoy the food, friendship and a warm welcome. Some come back each week (or even day!) for their favourite food; tourists and occasional visitors drop in having seen the sign; and some come simply because they see the doors open and want to sit and pray in the church. It's been a privilege to be able to pray with some of those people and listen to those who need to talk. Our prayer is that customers will find not only food for the body, but food for the heart and soul as we engage in conversation, connect with people and develop community.

Board Games Morning runs on Tuesdays 10-11.30am, and more recently we launched Children's Storytime 10-11.30am on a Thursday which has been particularly helpful to several mums who are new to the area. We've held prayer mornings for the work of Heart & Soul once a term, with this term being a retreat day in Farndon. We've also held our second Praise & Testimony evening and planned another 'Free Coffee, Cake and Prayer Give Away'. These are great opportunities for blessing our local community, so if you want to know more or be involved in anyway just call in and see us at Heart & Soul Cafe. We are open 8.45 am – 2 pm Monday, Tuesday & Thursday during term time.

Rhiannon Cooke

HOUSEGROUPS

Housegroups meet fortnightly – some meet weekly to include social events as well as studies – and there have been one or two changes during this year as a new group came out of John and Anita's when that became too large and Ian and Christine Armstrong have taken over the leadership of John and Ann Chester's group.

Because we believe that the role of the housegroup leader is vital to the church's health and growth, we try to think about how we can become even more effective when we meet. This year we looked at Paul's sermon to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, trying to hear what stands out in Paul's example and how that might apply to our leadership. We also considered the responsibilities of a Reader, recognising that there are many similarities with the role of a group leader, and John Benson trained the leaders to be available for prayer ministry on Sunday morning.

John Kirkland

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The main change this year is that Sam DH stepped down from the Leadership Team as he became an Ordinand, although he has continued to act as a consultant, especially in the area of mission and the missional communities. We have sensed God is leading All Saints to engage more with the local community, both individually on our frontlines but also corporately through ministries like 'The Cheerful Giver', the monthly meals for the elderly, lonely and disadvantaged. This resulted partly from a vision morning in January when we spent time praying and asking God to speak to us, and partly from the church prayer breakfast at the beginning of February.

John Kirkland

LITTLE ACORNS

Little Acorns has now been running 3 years and is a twice a month group for families who are fostering or adopting pre-school children. The needs of those families are specific and it has become such a wonderful group of mums who share a common life journey with their little ones.

The group is beneficially small and so we are able to meet in 'Sparrow' room and use the crèche toys. The team is myself and Debbie Wood, who serves us with drinks and cake.

We have gone through lots of ups and downs over the past year with a number of the families and it has been a privilege to share with them in this.

Helen Ellis

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Using its new formula of three consecutive Wednesday evenings, Marriage Preparation has continued to run smoothly and successfully. The first night is spent in the pub getting to know each other, the next two are at church. With us all leading such busy lives the aim of the course is to create an informal and relaxed environment where couples can take time to be together and talk about the things they would probably like to, but life doesn't give them much of a chance to. To help them, the couples are given exercises to aid dialogue on different areas of life, relationships and marriage. The conversations are private and led by the couples. The best compliment this year of the course has been "I genuinely thought this was going to be rubbish, and it's been brilliant." All the couples agreed they would recommend the course to others.

Sam Durdant-Hollamby

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church at All Saints meets on the 3rd Sunday of each month from 4-6pm. We have a very loyal team running Messy Church, who all bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm into the planning and running (John K & David P - Welcoming, Debbie W, Ron G & Kate K - kitchen, Paula & Andy W, Steve T, Mav H, Pat P, Helen G, Alex & John L, Jackie S and Sarah D - activities) and headed up by Tabitha and myself. We have continued to have a short time at the beginning to tell the story that we are learning about that month and after the activities we have our Celebration time followed by the wonderfully cooked meal.

Over the past year we travelled together on the Easter Journey, using all of the church and centre. We had a film and pizza & chip supper night, looked at the wonderfully graphic story of the Valley of Dry Bones, remembered together with Messy Peace, had to cancel Messy Christmas due to forecasted heavy snow (that didn't really happen!!) but celebrated a late Christmas with a full Christmas dinner (thanks to Andy W) in January.

We have a lovely core congregation who are so enthusiastic about coming but there is always room for more, hence the wonderful new Messy Church banner on Hoole Road from which we have already had a new inquiry!

Prayer: I am very grateful to all who make Messy Church possible - it is definitely a team thing! As well as the wonderful helpers, I am very grateful to God for his leading and presence at our Messy Church and so we ask for your continuing prayers for those who come, that they may discover for themselves faith in Christ and for us as we lead Messy Church and how to disciple those who come.

Helen Ellis

MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

A few years ago All Saints sensed a calling from God to move out into the local community in a more tangible way. This led to Sam and Katy D-H planting the church's first missional community, All Saints on the Groves.

What is a missional community? A missional community (MC) is a worshipping community set up with the aim of sharing the gospel and witnessing gospel transformation within in a specific context, shared interest or geographical location *e.g. work place, allotment or street/wider community*. It also functions throughout the week as an extended family 'doing life' together.

All Saints on the Groves: The Groves is the area at the top of the parish of All Saints. Sam and Katy have lived there for three years and with their wonderful team, Liam, Caroline, Scott, Charlie and Kylie, have been meeting and doing mission on the Groves.

We are now meeting once or twice a week. More recently we moved our monthly Sunday gathering out of our house and into Hoole Primary School. On the third Sunday of each month we have 'social

Sunday' which is an opportunity to invite people to come and hang out with us as we do an activity together. We now have a website, feel free to have a look: www.asonthegroves.org

Sam is also engaged with chaplaincy work at Hoole Primary as part of the Groves Missional Community work. Sam and Katy also run a free Lego Club at Hoole Primary, which was generously funded and donated to by the All Saints church family.

Other communities: You will have read the Garden Gate Communities news, both monthly, and later on in this report. I won't therefore re-share their news. I am however delighted at the 'go for it' attitude the community has and the way that they are engaging with their wider community.

I am also excited to write that we will soon be launching a new community as one of our home groups has over the past year or so, decided to morph into a community.

The future? I hope to see the current communities continue to grow and flourish and new ones planted. If you are interested in starting one but don't know where to start please talk to me (Sam DH) as I would love to help you have a go!

Please pray for:

- All Saints on the Groves – breakthrough into the Groves estate and changed lives
- Hoole Primary School – continued growing links with them
- Our other communities – The Garden Gate and others.
- New communities, more people would catch vision and go for it!

Sam Durdant-Hollamby

MUSIC GROUP

Forming part of the WAMM team (Worship and Multi-Media) the music group is there for our Church Family to provide the music for our sung worship. We have seen some changes this year: at the 10.45 service we said goodbye to Paul Reeve, and Mike Walker took some time out after becoming a father to Eli. We welcomed back Tim Pilcher and Jim Ellis and our band of young musicians are now a regular part of our group on the third Sunday of each month. We give thanks for the willing commitment of our musicians week by week.

We are also grateful to the 9 o'clock keyboard and organ team. We particularly thank God for the many years of service given by Martin and Doreen Leech.

Our wonderful team of Easyworship operators continue to ensure that the words and other visuals appear on the screen: Rachel Kirkland, Vicky Pattison, Matt Wilkinson and Harrison Beveridge and they have recently been joined by Geoff and Adam Bone. We are very grateful for their ministry.

As a church family we are very blessed to have such a great group of gifted musicians supported by our Easyworship operators and sound crew, all of whom are committed to serving our church family Sunday by Sunday. Give thanks for them and continue to pray for their ministry among us.

Elaine Hemmings

OPEN TO GOD

We're reminded constantly in the New Testament how the church spent time in prayer, both on their own (Jesus regularly sought to be alone with his Father, as did Peter in Acts 10) and together (the church in Acts is reported as meeting to pray in several places), and we see how God worked as his people called on him. Although numbers at Open to God aren't as high as we would like, it is one of the most important meetings of the month. As well as giving thanks to God, we

also share encouragements with each other and pray for the church and the community. We have sometimes also had an extended time of sung worship as part of the evening – e.g. during ‘Thy Kingdom come’ last May – and we are currently thinking about how we can respond to the Archbishops’ call to prayer this May.

John Kirkland

PATHFINDERS

In the summer term Pathfinders joined our city-wide 11-14s weekend away with excellent teaching, worship and fun. It was a brilliant weekend and a privilege to support and help to run. We have welcomed Geoff Collins to Pathfinders and he has been an invaluable addition to the team. Pathfinders have become more involved in the worship band this year and it has been fantastic to see them contributing to whole church services as well as Kids Praise where we are exploring the Pathfinders role as young leaders. We have studied the gospel of Mark and how encounters with Jesus transform lives, and Daniel as a role model for living out our faith in our culture. We are excited to offer Pathfinders the opportunity to be involved in the diocese ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ youth weekend which is currently in the planning stages and has already been a fantastic opportunity to build closer relationships with other youth groups in the diocese.

Missy Johnson

POSADA

Posada literally means “shelter” or “inn”. It is the name given to an old Mexican tradition where, in the weeks leading up to Christmas, young people dressed as Mary and Joseph travelled from house to house asking for a room for the night and telling people about the imminent arrival of Jesus. On Christmas Eve they would visit the local church to re-enact the nativity and place figures of Mary and Joseph in a crib scene.

Modern day Posada uses nativity figures of Mary, Joseph and the donkey, who travel from place to place. This gives each 'host' the chance to create their own celebration in their home, worshipping with the real message of Christmas and making room for Jesus in their lives.

During Advent last year the Posada was welcomed into over 25 homes of people from All Saints. The Posada basket not only contained knitted figures of Mary, Joseph and the donkey but there was also the Posada prayer, Christmas story book and a journey log. I know that a number of those involved enjoyed having a cup of tea or a meal and chat together whilst handing over the Posada on the next part of its journey, and it was a joy to celebrate the end of the Posada Journey on Christmas Day, complete with a small baby Jesus. This year each Posada host household and also those who came to the Crib Service received a knitted star made lovingly by many people from the Church family - many thanks!

Helen Ellis

PREACHING TEAM

We are very grateful to all those who share in the preaching ministry at All Saints, whether at All Age Worship or on the other Sundays in the month. Indeed, one of the highlights of this year has been the preaching of Peri Nightingale as she has joined the team. Our longing is that, as we speak, the congregation will encounter God. Preaching is not just about filling our minds with knowledge, important as understanding the Word is; it's about hearts that are changed by the Spirit at work in and through the Word. Discerning the central message of each text and then applying it accurately to us today is key to our task. We may know what we should do, but we need God to change our deepest desires in order that we will delight to do his will. Please pray for that to happen more and more.

John Kirkland

SCHOOL LINK

The church team continue to take assemblies each Wednesday in Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) and in one of the year groups in KS1 (Years R-2). This year the team – Sam DH, Peri Nightingale, Tabitha Heathcote, Missy Johnson and me – has looked at the early church, the promises of God, the life of Joseph, generosity, the Creed and the events leading up to Easter. We also contribute to the school services at Harvest, Christmas and Easter and take part in the school's Easter Activity Day.

We are also grateful to those from All Saints who serve as Foundation Governors – Steve Tynegate has been replaced this year by Princy Johnson – and we were all thrilled when the school was judged to be Outstanding by SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) last June. That reflected well on the whole school staff and especially Rachel Inns, who leads the Church School Ethos and Collective Worship.

John Kirkland

SENIOR RESIDENTS' FELLOWSHIP

Senior Residents meet every Thursday afternoon (2-3.30pm). We have had a variety of speakers sharing their exciting holidays, and also enjoyed the children's choir from St Martin's Academy. Our Christmas lunch was provided by Andy, Paula and their team and, once again, this was a momentous occasion – we can't thank them enough for all their hard work. Everyone had a wonderful time.

- We must also congratulate Florence Petrie, Mary Maddocks and Freda Linfield on reaching 90!
- During the last year we have welcomed two new members but sadly lost Joan Kidd and Frank Roberts.
- Senior Residents do need younger members and also someone younger to take over the running of the group.
- A huge thank you to Christina and the office staff for their help during this past year.

Rene Peters

STUDENTS

We love having students among our Church Family and the main focus is Sunday lunch each week in the homes across Chester. We would like to thank all our student lunch hosts - Jim & Helen Ellis, Rachel Gomersall, Rachel & Rob Collier, Sheila & Roy Greenwood, Yvonne Heath, Steve & Jules Tynegate, Vicki Bulgin, Rick & Jackie Appleby, Lis & Paul Treby, The Wilkinson family and Rick & Elaine Hemmings.

Our thanks also to Yvonne and her wonderful team of cooks who provided the first meal for Student Alpha, which followed the Chester University Christian Union Mission Events week at the beginning of March. Freshers' Fair at the beginning of the academic year last October, once again gave us opportunity to hand out almost 2000 sticks of our now famous All Saints rock. We are one of a number of churches who are there to welcome students to Chester.

We continue to support the termly Student Connect meeting when the university Christian Union, Chaplaincy, Catholic Society, UCCF and local churches meet to share, pray and support what is happening on campus.

Elaine Hemmings

THE GARDEN GATE COMMUNITY

.....*praying, sowing and growing.*

We have reached our first birthday! A transformed Garden Gate provided a good first year's harvest. Working the plot as a group keeps us ever determined, encouraged and enjoying its challenge. We are beginning to put our own mark on this space now the plot is under control. We have so appreciated donated items, in particular seating, water butts, compost bins, paving slabs, and a greenhouse. Sam Durdant-Hollamby's Missional Community guidance is much valued and it is early days for us in this area, but we are getting to know our neighbours, beginning to see some exciting openings, and joining forces with HAGA gardeners shifting grit, clearing areas and also celebrating the Allotment's 100th year. We are now producing monthly 'Down To Earth' reports for the inner church noticeboard and fuller information is now available in our church file.

John, Pam, Phil, Mike, Simon, Heather, Paul and Liz

WELCOMERS: MEETING AND GREETING

We may not all stand at the door on Sunday mornings but we are all Welcomers, we all need to work hard to get alongside those whom we don't really know, or may be visiting for the first time. That said, we are eternally grateful to our faithful team of Welcomers on Sunday mornings who greet us on the door; they do a great job and some have done so for many years. Thank you.

As ever, there is a real need for more people to join the team, so if this is something YOU could do, perhaps fortnightly, please come and talk to us. It would not be wrong to see our welcoming duties as part of a universal front-line opportunity, an opportunity to show the love and grace of Jesus to visitors to All Saints as well as church family; you never know, that smile you hit them with just may lead them to think that there is something about this Jesus thing after all!

We are also very grateful to Charles Simkiss, Ian Speechley and Julie Tynegate, for their faithful work as Assistant Wardens over the past year; we are also very pleased to welcome Patrick Hill, who has recently joined the team.

Vicki Bulgin & Steve Tynegate

WHO LET THE DADS OUT?

...is a group for dads and their small(ish) children and babies. It takes place on the 1st Saturday morning of each month, from 10am-12pm at Hoole Lighthouse Centre. We serve tea and filter coffee for the dads, soft drinks for the toddlers, plus biscuits and bacon butties, which are very popular! There is also a great craft activity for dads and their children to work on together.

March 3rd saw us celebrating the 15th Anniversary! It was wonderful to welcome back a number of 'bygone' dads and their teenagers! We had 32 dads that day with a number of mums too. There was celebration cake and speeches from some of the people who have been involved since WLTD0 started up. Just after Christmas this year, Mark Chester and Tony Sharp from HBC who lead the group have recently set up a new group of WLTD0 in HETTY Pre-school on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Any dads and their children are welcome to that too even without a connection to HETTY.

Helen Ellis

WIDER CHURCH - INTO ALL THE WORLD

2017 has been a year of change. Partners we have supported for years are now starting new ministries in retirement. Our support has moved from people to projects as can be seen below.

South India Project

This was to assist a boy's orphanage at first and then perhaps one for boys and girls. The local church tries to supply food, clothing and books for the children. The money we aim to send would aid and support this work.

Margaret Gordon

Margaret is an inspiring Interserve partner that many of us met at a recent Open to God. She runs a hospice for the homeless in a central Asian country. The funds are for the hospice to provide for essential needs.

We focus our giving on organisations that reflect the known interests of the church e.g. Open Doors, or are working in the local community e.g. the money for our local school provides Bibles for Year 2 pupils.

Please become involved in this aspect of Church life by praying using the information in Grapevine as well as in prayer letters.

Bill Holt