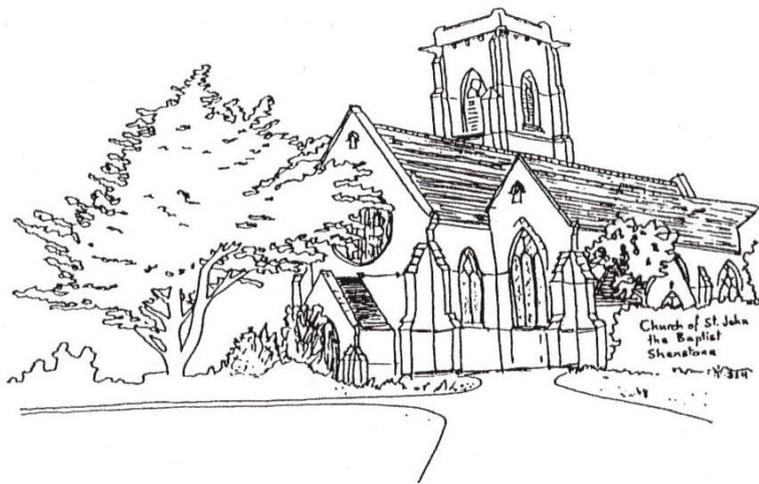


St John the Baptist, Shenstone

Following Jesus, sharing His love
and building His Kingdom together



**Reports of our Church Activities during 2017
presented to the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting on
Wednesday 18th April 2018
7.30pm in St. John the Baptist Church,
Shenstone**

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Vicar's Report

So here we are once more for our APCM meetings in our churches. This last year has been a whirlwind in church life as it very often is. We saw a huge surge in occasional offices during 2017, vicar speak for Hatching, Matching and Despatching (Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals). Across the two churches we baptised 15 children, married 17 couples, and conducted the funerals of 20 people. We may say 'but we never see these families again', but from baptism two families have become regular worshippers at the Early Birds service at St John the Baptist, and because of a funeral one family now attend St Peter's. The weddings conducted have sown seeds of belonging to a church. One of the forthcoming weddings in 2018 is because of seeing a wedding in church during 2017, the couple wanted that experience for themselves and cancelled their hotel ceremony as a result. Behind the hour or so the services of these occasional offices take, the families concerned have on average met with Christians 2 or 3 times, for a couple of hours or so. We are sowing seeds for the future. Of course, some of the baptism, weddings and funerals that took place in our churches were for dear church family members which is always an honour and privilege to be able to conduct.

We have seen the encouraging shoots we saw in 2016, continue to thrive with the housegroup formed, where the members of the that group are parents of children who attend the Early Birds service, continues to meet on a fortnightly basis. The existing housegroups continue to be sources of support and fellowship for the members. In both churches Messy Church has continued with this fast-becoming church to those families who attend. It's always helpful to look back at challenges set and lifted directly from the Parish Profile written way back in 2013 this is one of the challenges set for your incoming Vicar to meet; *"Help us to build on our work with church families and the wider community, cultivating and consolidating the outreach opportunities these present."* There is still plenty of work to do, but we are working well towards meeting that challenge.

We've continued to meet monthly in Shenstone to pray together, and a new weekly service of Morning Prayer started in the Autumn of 2017. These times of praying together sustain and strengthen our fellowship and prayer is always great. Following on from our Mission Action Planning meetings the desire at St Peters to offer prayer and bible study during the week was identified and this is an exciting new project to be in 2018. Again, lifted directly from the Parish Profile; *"Inspire and strengthen our personal and corporate prayer life, setting prayer at the heart of everything we do."* Still plenty to do but we have firm foundations to build onto.

The Mission Action Plans of both churches identified a wish to review our services this next coming year and to ensure that our Pastoral care is the best it can be these will be the next challenges we meet. We've still got plenty to do in our churches and communities, however we start this next year with robust Mission Action Plans in place to enable our churches to grow but more importantly to enable us to tell plenty about the risen living Lord because 'How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?' (Romans 10:14).

2017 has been a particularly difficult year for Ray and myself with family bereavements which have taken their toll on us both, emotionally and physically. We have been and continue to be grateful for practical and prayer support offered to us by you our church families. The Lord has walked closely with us during these times and we have drawn on His strength many times. We're looking forward with joy to the birth of our second grandchild due around the time of the APCMs!

In closing, I would like to thank Veronica Raybould and Bill Whitney, Peter and Patsy Toulouse our Church Wardens for their amazing support and encouragement in this last year, Rev John, our Readers, both PCCs and many others whose work and ministry is vital to Church life and ministry.

May God who has given us a vision for our churches give us the courage to accomplish that vision.

Rev Liz

Wardens' Report

Some years are more difficult than others, and so it proved with 2017. The tragic death of Liz's brother, followed soon afterwards by the loss of Ray's mother had a deep impact on all at St. John's. As we held Liz and Ray in our hearts and tried our best to support them we recalled that "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble".

We thank the Lord that He walked with them through the dark times and we thank Liz and Ray for all their hard work for St. John's despite all that they had to deal with.

Inevitably, some things took longer to come to fruition than planned and this included the PCC Awayday which was held, eventually, in November. This was an opportunity to review our Mission Action Plan and update it for the next few years. It was both a thought provoking and exhilarating day. We were agreeably surprised by how much we had achieved and our Mission Action Plan for 2018 is both exciting and achievable.

The life of the church invariably carries on come what may. Our excellent Lent course was a Bible study based on the theme of "New Life" and we welcomed guest speakers Dr. Lindsey Hall, Rev. Jonathon Iddon and Rev. Pauline Shepherd. Those who attended (and numbers were good) found the variety of speakers inspiring and thought provoking.

The traditional Walk of Witness with our friends from Trinity Methodist church again took the new longer route so that as many as possible would be able to see the procession of the Cross. For the first time we also joined with Trinity for our Easter Sunday celebration. We started at St. John's with an Easter Egg hunt and to decorate the Cross and then processed the Cross down the hill to Trinity, so that all could see the joy of "the Risen Christ". We hope that this will become a new tradition in our village with the Easter service alternating between the two churches.

Remembrance Sunday is also a joint service and this year was once again very well attended both at the Cenotaph and in St. John's.

Christmas saw changes to the Christingle service which had been held on Christmas Eve, but where numbers had grown to such an extent that it was proving difficult to manage. It was moved to the more appropriate first Sunday in Advent and a new more traditional Nativity service was held on Christmas Eve, when numbers again exceeded 200! The Carols by Candlelight service, which provides an opportunity for both churches and the wider village community to come together in the choir and orchestra, once again proved extremely popular.

Another innovation was the opening of the church on weekends during Advent to enable any who wished to enter for prayer, to sit quietly or just to look around. This is the precursor to opening on a more regular basis – something we see as a blessing for our community.

The Church was also open, of course, during the Village Festival. Many people came either to see the flowers, to eat and drink or to take part in Songs of worship. It is always a joy to hear the very positive comments made about St. John's on occasions like this. Our thanks go to all those who worked so hard and also to the Festival Committee for their donation to Church funds. The Festival once again ended with Songs of Praise which is another opportunity to see a coming together of both churches and the wider village community. Other events in church have included a visit from the Lichfield Gospel Choir and from the Sutton Coldfield Chamber Choir. These offered very diverse but equally enjoyable performances and were well attended.

Our regular Sunday services have continued to show growth in both Early Birds and Messy Church for which we thank Liz and the Early Bird team as well as praising the Lord.

2017 saw a good number of Baptisms and weddings but also of bereavements and funerals. We are grateful to all those in the church family who keep in touch with those in need and our particular thanks go to John and Ann Aston for all they do. Churches need people, not just to attend services, but to undertake the myriad tasks that need to be done. From the maintenance and

cleaning of the church to the organising of events; from tea and coffee preparation to looking after the Food Bank donations; from moving chairs to operating the audio-visual system; from undertaking laundry to editing the Parish magazine; from distributing the magazine to— well you get the message! There is always something that needs to be done to further the work of the Lord. Your wardens wish to thank all those in the church family who give of their time. There are too many to mention by name, but the Lord knows them all.

Bill and Veronica, Wardens

The Church Building, Churchyard and Glebe, Old Tower and St. John's Hall.

Our physical assets continue to need expensive maintenance. The most expensive at present is the replacement of the Bell Frame and the good news is that a good proportion of the fund needed has been raised. This has enabled us to place an order for the work to be started in September. With further fundraising we hope to raise the final few thousand pounds needed. Our grateful thanks go to all those who have donated and to Graham and Ray for their work on seeking funding.

The other major expense has been the work on the church hall roof at a cost of £15, 836. The work undertaken on the hall during the last few years has greatly improved it. We are now looking to replace the flooring.

Some work has taken place on the stained-glass windows but more remain to be done.

The Quinquennial report highlighted the work needed on the drainage system. One drain has now been surveyed but obviously more remains to be done.

There has also been a problem with increased activity from moles in the churchyard and on the glebe. Measures to deal with this have so far proved unsuccessful.

Special thanks are due to the Building Group, and especially John Beattie, for the work they have undertaken. If you feel able to help, please consider joining one of the regular working parties – John can advise.

The Old Tower continues to be a problem. Discussions have taken place with Heritage England about possible ways forward. We continue to pray for a solution.

Bill and Veronica, Wardens

Music Group

2017 proved to be a very challenging year for Rev Liz and myself with us both experiencing family bereavements and as a consequence my efforts in looking to enhance the worship group has been somewhat on the back burner. Also during 2017 we saw less of our long valued vocalist Sarah Williams following her move to Upper Longdon and it would be appropriate to record our thanks to her for her loyal service to the group over the past years.

We hope she will still be able to join us occasionally, but this does highlight once again the need for other vocalists to come and join the group.

Familiarisation with the new technology has continued and anyone who would like to be involved with operating the sound desk or the computer for the visual display should make it known to myself or Rev Liz. The system has enhanced services in the Church and a number of favourable comments have been made regarding the use of the system to display photos of loved ones at funerals along with playing favourite songs through the system.

My desire for 2018 is to see the development of the music group with continued use of our existing songs and group members but also to see the growth in new songs and also any new members to join the group. If anyone would like to join please let either myself or any of the team know. It is proposed to advertise the need for additional musicians and singers to join the group to assist in developing the music within the services.

Once again I look forward to help leading the group and Church in musical praise and worship through the coming year and extend my thanks to all members of the music group and church for providing valuable support to Rev Liz and myself during the difficult year and for leading our sung worship during 2017.

Ray Chamberlain

Shenstone Churches Choir and Orchestra 2017

The Choir and Orchestra draw their members from St. John's, Trinity and the village community and enhance our worship at the major church events of the year: the Service of Celtic Worship, the Songs of Praise Service which closes the Village Festival, Remembrance Day, and Carols by Candlelight. Our Celtic Service in March was ably led by a small group of instrumentalists and singers performing music of a more intimate nature but, once finished, the evening was then rounded off with lively instrumental music!

The Songs of Praise Service in June was a joyful conclusion to our Festival weekend with the orchestra accompanying all the hymns chosen by members of our two church congregations and the Festival choir contributing several items. Once again, a 'select' band of instrumentalists led the hymns in our village service of Remembrance.

28 singers formed our Christmas choir to sing five contrasted choir items as part of the Carols by Candlelight service. 14 of our talented instrumentalists played in the orchestra (some musicians are so versatile they do both!). The orchestra did a sterling job of introducing the service with the Larghetto by Handel and then accompanying the congregational carols.

We once again enjoyed our New Year Party together. The occasion has become something of a tradition with a bring and share feast and home-grown entertainment to follow – an occasion which often reveals hidden talents!

Both the choir and orchestra provide an easy opportunity to invite musical friends and acquaintances to cross the threshold of St. John's Church, and, we hope, to encounter the love of God and his people.

My thanks to all our musicians; I am sure you will agree that, for a relatively small village, we are richly blessed with an astonishing number of capable singers and instrumentalists in Shenstone.

Paul Glover

Bellringers

It has been another busy year for the bellringers. There have been again a large number of weddings requiring the bells plus it was the year for the Village Festival. Four of us have been busy arranging money raising events for the new bellframe. There have been a variety of events and taking place in various venues. In the months ahead, there are a number of events planned to look out for.

The order has been placed for the work on the new bellframe but at the time of this report there is no fixed date for its commencement. It is however anticipated that this will be at the beginning of August / September and the work itself taking approximately 4 months.

Before the work starts there will be lots of planning and clearing of items at all levels of the tower in order that an unobstructed working area can be provided to achieve safe working environment.

As the bells will be out of the tower in November we are planning that we shall still mark the end of World War One with our bells sounding from the top of the tower. If you hear some inappropriate ringing before the bells are taken out it is because preparations are being made for this event.

When the work is completed we shall be looking into finding a number of young recruits to learn the art of bell ringing.

Vic Holland

Tuesday House Group

We are eleven in total and still crammed in like a tin of sardines. Despite this we value our time together and are very grateful for our meetings and all the prayers shared together. We used Spring Harvest material, including a study guide on Daniel and a dvd which featured Andy Hickson who proved to be an excellent speaker. Andy kept us engaged as he took us through Isaiah and helped us to put the chapters into context. As usual we found the studies challenging but gained much as we discussed the issues that cropped up within the chapters.

Meals, games, prayers, laughter and tears have all been shared and the traditional Christmas event at The Cathedral Lodge hotel in Lichfield to see the acclaimed 'Intimate Theatre' perform 'Christmas Voices' was, as usual, a huge success. Praise the Lord for house groups!

Margaret Birt

Sunday House Group

Take about 10 or 11 members of St. John's.

Add the accumulated wisdom and insights from long Christian lives

Mix in news of Christians and churches around the world

Stir in the influence and perspective of the Bible, with some video clips to encourage and illuminate.

Add a spoonful of Tom Wright (optional)

Allow time to pray

Spread generously with love, laughter and mutual support and serve with currant buns at tea-time on the first Sunday of the month.

N.B. Other ingredients may be substituted but should not affect the consistency of the finished product.

Paul and Tricia Glover

Alpha Housegroup

Five years on from the 2012 Alpha Course the bonds of love, friendship and support continue to grow stronger, and during 2017 each of our 13 members has benefitted at one time or another from belonging to such a caring group of friends.

Meeting weekly on a Tuesday evening, usually at the home of Jill & Paul Harris in Four Oaks but occasionally at other members' homes in Shenstone, we laugh together, cry together, learn together and pray together.

Our study material varies but is usually sourced from YouTube DVDs with gifted speakers from churches such as Holy Trinity Brompton and the Kingsgate Community Church. In the autumn we began a series on the life of Joseph entitled 'Living the Dream', which has had moments of real poignancy for some members of the group as we

have discussed the long periods of drought often experienced whilst waiting for God to hear and answer our prayers.

During the year we have enjoyed several social gatherings including our annual summer barbecue, and an Advent bring and share night followed by a Christmas meal at The Plough.

It has been a slow start to 2018 due to Lent being so early in the year, but as we look forward to another year of discovery we thank God for each and every member of our group and the unique contribution they bring to the meetings.

Carol Law

Early Birds

Early Birds has continued to grow this year, and has become, as our strapline says: “for families finding faith.” God is blessing us greatly on Sunday mornings, and our members are very supportive of each other both in joys and in sorrows.

The presence of the Vicar is key, as she introduces the service, speaks to the adults, leads prayers and concludes with a blessing. A different member of the team leads the rest of the service with songs, games, a Bible story (often with a video clip to watch) and activities.

Another vital person is Rosemary Lawrence who serves refreshments and whom many of the parents know and rely on. Good numbers make it easy for new families to join; we currently have families from Lichfield, Stonnall, and recently Tamworth as well as Shenstone. About half a dozen parents meet together at the Vicarage as a fortnightly House Group, and this is shortly going to expand. The church family party in February drew in over 90 adults and children for a very enjoyable evening, and Jo Swinton excelled herself catering for that. Millie and Molly the renowned bakers, raised almost £100 towards the Bell frame repairs by selling their cakes one Sunday morning recently, which was a great achievement. Our current challenge is to make the right provision for children who are 8-plus. For them and for future developments in Early Birds we would value your prayers and some extra personnel.

It was an enormous joy in March to see two adult members baptised at Early Birds, followed a few days later by three parents being confirmed in St. Chad's Church, Lichfield by the Bishop of Wolverhampton. We are so grateful to God for all that he is doing in Early Birds. If you have never joined us before, do come and visit – we'd love to see you!

Revd Liz Chamberlain, Ian & Carol Law, Lesley Matile, Tricia Glover

1st Shenstone (St John's) Rainbow Guides APCM Report

We began the Spring Term with a trip to the Snowdome where three Rainbows made their Promise in the snow. We sledged, built snowmen, played games and all warmed up at the end with a mug of hot chocolate!



In February, Shenstone and Stonnall Rainbows, Brownies and Guides joined together at St Peter's School, to commemorate "World Thinking Day". The girls enjoyed activities and crafts centered around Girlguiding in other countries and chocolate was on the menu again in the form of Swiss Chocolate, from the chocolate fountain!

The Summer Term saw us all enjoying a "Back to Front Challenge": Meetings began with a Goodbye greeting and ended with a Hello, clothes were worn back-to-front, names written in reverse, and of course, everyone walked backwards and sat on tables instead of chairs!

Rainbows enjoyed making a flower arrangement in church for the Village Festival and sold ice-creams from a specially made ice-cream stall. In July, we celebrated 100 years of Girlguiding in Staffordshire, joining other Rainbows, Brownies and Guides from all over the County, at Stafford showground. Our Rainbows were amazed to see so many other Rainbows – everywhere!

During the Autumn Term, we celebrated 30 years of Rainbow Guiding, (Rainbows' Pearl Anniversary), enjoying the theme of "Under the Sea".

Everyone hunted for pearls to make necklaces, went magnet fishing, learned about all kinds of sea creatures, and enjoyed an outing to “Pets at Home” in Tamworth where a very knowledgeable lady taught us how to identify and care for tropical fish.

In October, we took part in the Remembrance Day Parade and Service at St John’s, and with support from church members, held our annual Bonfire Night Sausage Sizzle for all Rainbow families. The year ended with a Pot of Gold party, a game which retold the Christmas story, a chocolate nativity calendar for every girl and the presentation of lots of well-earned badges.

Rosemary Lawrence

Open the Book

In our 10th year taking “Open the Book” to Greysbrooke and St. Peter’s schools, we started the cycle of Biblical stories all over again from the beginning with the story of Adam and Eve.

Open the Book now falls under the auspices of the Bible Society who have introduced a new four-year cycle.

They also provide a handbook which, for each story, gives an introduction and conclusion followed by the wording for a quiet moment of reflection; a prayer introduction and an appropriate prayer. These scripts have been carefully produced to meet both OFSTED and Church School Inspection requirements for Collective Worship and need to adhered to. They have the additional benefit of allowing any member of the team to lead the stories.

Early in the year we were fortunate to have a training session in church from Bible Society members. Regular and more occasional team members attended and it was extremely worthwhile, reinforcing what we were already doing and providing new ideas to carry forward. The Bible Society also provides a website full of advice and ideas on how to make the stories come alive.

As mentioned in last year’s report, we always have a need for more volunteers to help out as and when required as some stories need more people than others.. We visit Greysbrooke at 10am every other Tuesday. No previous experience is required, and it will take no more than an hour of your time – and it really is great fun!

We are trying to get some of the children taking part and really need some simple costumes for them. If you could help by making simple tunics it would be really helpful. Please let me know if you are able to help in any way.

Once again, I finish with words from Bob Hartman's introduction to The Lion Storyteller Bible, from where our stories come, "My hope as a Christian, is that having seen God in these stories, the children will learn to trust God and to listen to God's voice. And to love God in return."

Veronica Raybould

Shenstone Parish Magazine

At the PCC 'Away Day' late in 2017 it was agreed that the Shenstone Magazine meets 4 of the 5 'Marks of Mission' identified by Lichfield Diocese as the key areas of our outreach. Everything we do as a church should be measured against them! Few other activities we undertake can match that. So, the Magazine remains a vital part of our work in, and for, the community.

Thanks go to the 6 people who have edited editions of the Magazine in 2017, but we need 2 more people to help in this respect (help guidance and support would be provided). It would be wonderful if some 'under 60's' would step forward! Circulation remains fairly constant at about 580 Magazines each month. We are so fortunate to have more than 30 volunteers who deliver to subscribers in Shenstone and Little Hay each month and collect the subscription money.

This year, Peter Lawrence has kindly stepped forward to take on the role of Distribution co-ordination – getting the Magazines from the printers and to the people putting them through doors and receiving the subscription money. Thank you, Peter.

Mary Wilson is now dealing with invoicing the advertisers, with some other Magazine admin tasks also in consideration for her. And as always, I am extremely grateful to Keith Jones for laying out the adverts in PowerPoint and for his ongoing support and encouragement.

Graham Birt

Marriage Preparation

Well what a bumper year for weddings 2017 turned out to be, with 20 couples making their vows in either St John's or St Peter's during the year – of which 17 were able to attend the marriage preparation day.

The by now well-tuned format of light-hearted fun, sessions on Love, Commitment and Communication, and Conflict and Debt, backed up by 4 DVD presentations by Rob Parsons of CARE for the family, gave the couples plenty to think about.

And as always the run-through of the wedding service, followed by a question and answer session, was very much appreciated.

It is a real privilege to meet these couples at such an important time in their lives, and although most of them do not continue to attend church on a regular basis they do consider St John's to be their church and usually return for baptisms.

This is the only real contact we have with this age group, and it is therefore important that we do all that we can to maintain the relationships and friendships that build up during their wedding preparations.

To this end Liz and I attended a Wedding Conference at the beginning of 2018 to assess what we are doing and to learn from other's experiences. We were very encouraged that we are on the right track but have identified one or two areas in which we can year the course will have a new, less threatening, title – 'Space to think'. Another new initiative is to have a photo board at the back of church with photographs of all the couples who will be married in our church during the year, which will enable members of the congregation to greet them when they attend services, particularly with family members for the reading of their Banns.

Carol Law

Footherley Hall

Our monthly 'Songs of Praise' services continue in the main lounge at 11 am on the second Tuesday of the month. These are well attended by residents, care staff, Sisters and an increasing number of family members.

Harvest (Oct), Remembrance (Nov) and the Christmas Carol Service (Dec) are special events. Please have a word with us about joining us on any of these visits.

Communion for the non-Catholic residents takes place normally on the fourth Tuesday of the month and is taken alternately by Rev John Aston and Rev Jo Thornton. Again, if you would like to join us for these services, please have a word with John.

Rev John and Ann Aston

Home Communions

John aims to take Communion to those unable to get to church at least six times a year. Several who were on his list have now moved from the village into nursing homes in the area which in some cases are also visited by local clergy. Please let John know if he needs to add anyone to his list, even if only temporarily.

Rev John Aston

Prayer "Chain"

The Prayer "Chain" has been encouragingly busy in the past twelve months and we have been delighted by God's amazing grace in answering our prayers. About 30 people are on the email "chain" and if you would like to join us in praying this way, please send your email address to bradston@btinternet.com.

Ann Aston

Prayer Ministry

This ministry has been offered and provided by two of the ten-member healing team at each of the 10.45.p.m. communion services, during the year. We would hope that more would avail themselves of this opportunity for prayer which in the experience of many brings real comfort and blessing, (the Team do observe strict confidentiality).

Team members have also been available to pray individually in the pews after any service and are willing to pray with people in their homes, if so requested. The conical prayer basket at the rear of the Church is provided for anyone to put in prayer requests which will then be the subject of prayer on the part of team members. The team comprises Ann Aston, Bill & Di Proctor, Margaret Birt, Vera Heard, Brenda Butler, Elaine Whitney & David Roper. Verni Howieson and Bonnie Bonnielauri, joined the Team during the Year. The Team met with the Vicar recently. She is entirely supportive of this ministry.

David Roper

Swinfen Prison Prayer Group

The HMP/YOI Swinfen Hall Prison Fellowship prayer group uphold and support in prayer the chaplaincy team, the staff and the residents of our local prison. Where possible we offer practical support too. Do you have a heart to pray for or volunteer with us, for those incarcerated and for those who serve them?

We are always looking for new members to join our team. We meet at 9.30 a.m. for one hour on the last Thursday of each month.

Brenda Butler

Shenstone Ladies Group

We have 23 members and have enjoyed 11 meetings with a variety of programmes to engage everyone.

We have an open meeting every year to which men are invited!

Everyone is welcome to our monthly meetings which are held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7.30p. Date and venue are publicised in the Shenstone Magazine and the church newsletter. Do come along.

Pauline Sampson

Flowers

Many thanks to Sue Prestridge for her regular large arrangements and to everyone who helps throughout the year.

We do not have flowers in the church during Lent and Advent, but we do have special arrangements for Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

We do need more people to help throughout the year so please help if you can.

Pauline Sampson

Deanery Synod

This report will be given verbally at the APCM.

Rev Liz

Electoral Roll

This report will be given verbally at the APCM.

Rev Liz

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

This report will be given verbally at the APCM.

Rev Liz

Mission Giving 2017

Our mission giving was able to stay the same in 2017 as in 2016, thanks to the fact that our income remained more or less unchanged over 2016. We continue to support our core societies who are CPAS Church Pastoral Society – our Patrons), Scripture Union, Bible Society and Tearfund. Also, we support our CMS partners Mark and Jess Simpson in Rio de Janeiro. Also, to ICS (the Intercontinental Church Society).

Further donations were made to Rachel Olney, for her splendid work with Operation Mobilisation in Vienna and also to Paul and Cathy Middleton for their work with Mercy Air in South Africa.

We also continued to support Charities added to our list in 2015, namely the Uganda Childbirth Injuries Fund. The Barnabas fund was also again supported, which sends financial support to projects that support Christians suffering discrimination, oppression and persecution as a consequence of their faith.

Another Charity that was added in 2016, was Angel Tree, which provides Christmas gifts for prisoner's children. We also continue to support the Lichfield food bank, through both financial donations and weekly collections of food at the back of Church. Unfortunately, there is growing demand for this service, so any additional donations

of food and toiletry items during the course of the year would be most welcome.

All of the above can only be done as a result of generous donations, through either our bank account, Gift Aid envelopes or by general plate giving. In 2017, we are looking to support more local charities.

May I please ask you to conclude by reading this with a prayer, that we may continue to be blessed with members of the congregation and visitors, who are willing and able to give both their time and money to ensure we can continue to serve God through our mission giving.

Paul Harris

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St John the Baptist Church Shenstone

Following Jesus, sharing His love
and building His Kingdom together

