



St Nicholas Church
SEVENOAKS

**Annual
Parochial
Church
Meeting**

Tuesday 17 April 2018 at 8pm

The Vision Statement of St Nicholas

EXPLORE GOD'S WORD
EQUIP GOD'S PEOPLE
EXPLAIN GOD'S GOSPEL

as Christ's ambassadors in order to build a Christ-like,
loving, prayerful, gospel-minded community

Verse for 2018:

2 Corinthians 4: 5

*'For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as
Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.'*

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Insert: PCC report and Financial Statements for
the year ended 31 December 2017

Agenda

Welcome Angus MacLeay

Song: *To God be the Glory*

Bible Reading Isaiah 40:1-11 Andrea Trevenna

Prayer Gavin McGrath

Song: *I will glory in my Redeemer*

AGENDA A - Joint meeting of Parishioners

1. *Nomination of Minute Clerk*
2. *Apologies for absence*
3. *Approval of minutes of Joint meeting of Parishioners 27th April 2017*
4. *Appointment of Churchwardens*

AGENDA B - Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. *Approval of minutes of APCM 27th April 2017*
2. *Electoral Roll*
3. *Election of new PCC Members*
4. *Election of new Deanery Synod Members*

Prayers for the new PCC will be included at the Services on Sunday 22 April 2018

5. *Treasurer's Report*
6. *Receive and adopt the Audited Financial Statements for 2017*
7. *Appoint auditors for 2018*
8. *Annual safeguarding update (report on Page 10)*
9. *Approval of Leadership teams and Congregational Pastoral teams (see list on Page 4)*

Question Time

A snapshot of church life

Chairman's Address Angus MacLeay

Song: O Church arise

Final prayer
& the Grace Church Wardens

Agenda Item 9: Names for Approval

Congregational Pastoral Teams for approval

9:15am St Nicholas

Ian & Christine Ervine
Gavin & Janet McGrath
Nic & Janet Pocknall
Simon & Anne Wallis

11am St Nicholas

Marcus & Jacquie Branson
Manoj & Katie David
Tony & Jenny Jennings
Mog Page
Matt Taylor
Andrea Trevenna

6:30pm St Nicholas

Roger Clarke
Maureen Connolly
Dan & Pippa Halpin
Simon Heather
Tony Isaac
Steve & Emma Osei-Mensah

Congregational Leadership Teams for approval

Grace Church

Hannah Blake
John & Ros Collett
John & Sue Goodban
Tom & Clare Nash
Paul & Heather Williams
Giles & Emily Witchell

4 O'Clock Church

Hannah Blake
Andrew & Jane Coates
Tom & Clare Nash
Iain & Sarah Taylor
Tony & Rachel Waghorn

Churchwardens' Report 2017/18

St Nicholas continues to be focussed on our vision which is to: "Explore God's Word, Equip God's People, and Explain God's Gospel, as Christ's ambassadors in order to build a Christ-like, loving, prayerful, gospel-minded, community."

This report is being written at Easter 2018 and as we celebrate our risen Lord and Saviour we are reminded of how much has been done for us, how much we have to be thankful for, and the challenge of our response. Indeed, our Rector's current newsletter states:

"Easter Sunday not only proclaims that death is defeated but also that the One who has defeated death is now engaged on an unstoppable mission of planting and growing new life ... in us ... and also in others. May we be those who actively participate in this glorious task of seeing God's new creation grow and flourish"

While we are seeking to play our part in **extending God's kingdom** here in Sevenoaks, we are also mindful of wider changes in society that make gospel work ever more imperative and challenging. Part of this inevitably involves thinking about the strategic direction of the church for future years and the priorities and choices we should make now.

Supporting church activities – this report cannot do justice to our gratitude to all those who are involved in the many and varied facets of gospel ministry here at St Nicholas and so, while it is not possible to mention everything or everyone, we are truly grateful for all the work, contributions and support from very many people in all aspects of our church life. It is invidious to mention individuals, when so much is contributed by so many. However, we are grateful for the contribution made by our Ministry Associates: Sidney Faith, Nathan Heeb, Sophie-Ann Rebbettes, Peter Redmayne and Dominic Richardson

However, the challenge continues to be to encourage discipleship rather than just "getting people to volunteer on various rotas" - that is, encouraging a response with thankful and grateful hearts for all that has been done for us in Christ with a desire to serve.

Exploring and Explaining the Gospel - we are grateful for the continuing opportunities we have to proclaim the gospel week by week in local schools as well as in various church evangelistic events. We have seen a good number

attending these events as we long for people to come to know Christ personally. We would also want to give thanks for those regularly attending Bible studies across all our congregations and for the hard work and prayerful preparation that leaders put in to this important ministry. The continuation of Home Groups, with new leaders and groups emerging, is also a source of much encouragement.

We are grateful too for the dedication of the Congregational Pastoral Leadership teams at St Nicholas, as they have sought to increase fellowship and commitment amongst congregations through different events including lunches, picnics, quizzes, walks, and a bonfire evening.

However, as we look to the future we are concerned for the increasing secularization in society and greater liberalism within the Church of England. The challenge will be for us to remain faithful both in our explanation and preaching of the gospel and also in our living out of the Christian faith. This will need to go hand in hand with greater dependence upon the Lord revealed in a growing commitment to prayer both corporately and individually. It is our prayer that more people will be committed to a small group and, as we said in our last report, that there would be increasing support for the monthly St Nicholas prayer evening.

Equipping God's People - the new weekly women's training group that started in September has been a real encouragement and it is planned to replicate this in the future. It has also been encouraging to see a few more Christian mums coming along to Mum & Co over the past year and links being made there. With Dad & Co, this is an important way to engage with non-Christians.

However, we need to pray for on-going wisdom as we seek to help equip and encourage people at St Nicholas to be living whole-heartedly for Christ in an increasingly hostile and secular culture and to be actively reaching out with the gospel to those on the fringe of church and beyond. Apathy, fear, compromise and comfort seem to be constant challenges that only being rooted in God's word and gripped with the glorious gospel will help us overcome. There is a fresh conviction of the need to make an absolute priority of prayer in everything in this area.

Children's work - we are thankful for the Lord's provision of gifted and able people to teach and help in these groups and for the way they faithfully and prayerfully hold out the Gospel week by week in the children's groups. We are

also thankful for the way the teams were supportive in the transition period of Claire Mason leaving and Cara taking over and Hannah Blake's arrival.

Holiday Club 2017 was again a significant event with 130 children hearing of God's faithfulness from the book of Esther. We're very thankful for the way the Lord has continued to use Holiday Club to bring the Gospel to families and children in Sevenoaks.

However, in the years ahead as we think and pray how best to engage with families and children, we will need to think biblically and creatively as to how we do this with the resources the Lord has provided.

As ever, we are always looking for people to join the teams at St Nicholas, Grace Church and 4O'Clock Church. But we also want to be supporting and training current leaders to be doing this important ministry.

Youth Ministry - we are grateful for the Year 10 Confirmation class/home group settling in well to Contact when they joined from Christmas; for an openness of faith and a "family" feel within Contact; and for the small "chat-back" groups at Friday Centrepont enabling growing relationships between members and with leaders.

However, we need to be prayerful that all of year 10 make the transition and settle well into Contact. We would also love to see more regular Sunday Centrepont attendees join on Fridays and the strong but small leadership teams to grow in number.

Grace Church is thankful that they have seen continued growth in numbers and maturity and a growing appetite for God's word. A good number were able to attend an encouraging joint Awayday with 4 O'clock Church in November at St John's Tunbridge Wells. With 4 O'Clock church, there is also much gratitude to God for the arrival of Hannah Blake from Sydney, Australia, as Women and Children's Worker. The Grace Church leadership team has been a consistent model of hard work in the service of Jesus Christ.

However, the key challenges are praying for wisdom in building on recent growth, for ongoing good relationships with Lady Boswell's and the appointment of an assistant minister. There is a consciousness that people can't believe in Jesus Christ if no one makes the gospel known to them so in God's strength Grace Church and 4 O'Clock Church would love to see more

and more newcomers coming under the sound of the gospel and being granted repentance and faith.

40'Clock Church is also very thankful for the hard work and dedication of the leadership team, especially for the Walls who are stepping down. Numbers on a Sunday are steady if not spectacular and it is encouraging to see the addition of some new people. The Bible study groups continue to encourage and equip those attending and the establishment of an early morning men's Bible study joint with Grace Church seems to meet a particular need.

However, there is recognition that nothing can be done without God's sustaining grace and strength and so there is a longing to see more and more joining the monthly prayer meetings and committing all that is being done to the Lord. Consideration is also being given to moving to weekly Bible studies in the autumn and the prayer is that small groups prove even more beneficial at growing disciples of Jesus Christ. Further ahead consideration is being given to a church weekend away in 2019.

Support - we are thankful for a dedicated operational staff support team, augmented by a large number who serve in a wide variety of areas such as practical tasks in the church office, gardening, Health & Safety inspections, working in the coffee shop and book shop, serving refreshments at our various events and services - to name but a few. During 2017 the Audio Visual and music offering was enhanced in St Nicholas church and we are grateful for all who give time in this area each week.

However, looking to the future it is recognised that the office will need to continue to manage change in many areas of our operations as new legislation is introduced and it will be necessary to ensure we have the required capabilities and skill sets to address these changes. These will include our IT structures, our use of data in an ever-evolving range of media, our communication systems and how we reach a wider network of people with the gospel message.

Finances - as we acknowledge the generous and sacrificial giving provided by many, the PCC is seeking to grow our capability, including plans, unanimously approved by the PCC, for an assistant minister for Grace Church and 40'Clock Church.

However, the 2018 budget currently expects our expenditures to significantly exceed planned giving which represents a challenge for us to prayerfully respond to. Further, and recognising the concerns mentioned earlier regarding the trajectory of the diocese and wider Church of England, the PCC recently decided to reduce parish giving to the diocese so as only to cover our direct costs, which are primarily clergy costs.

Fabric - as Churchwardens we have a responsibility for the fabric of the building and with present quinquennial works largely complete the buildings and equipment are generally in good order.

However, a program of asset replacement such as for lighting, sound and heating systems will need to be implemented shortly in a structured and efficient manner. The PCC has currently prioritised expanding gospel ministry.

In closing, we have a huge amount to be thankful to God for and yet at the same time we need to be mindful of changes and new opportunities for the gospel all around us as we look to the future. The PCC is beginning to examine the strategic position of St Nicholas in the future and how we can, under God’s guidance, become more effective in the proclamation of the gospel in and around Sevenoaks.

Ian Nash and Chris Webb

Churchwardens April 2018

THE ELECTORAL ROLL 2018* - Lis Lidbetter, Electoral Roll Secretary

	Men	Women	Total
Resident	59	97	156
Non-Resident	249	307	556
Total	308	404	712
	(43%)	(57%)	

*** Figures correct at 9th April 2018**

Annual Safeguarding Update

Recent shocking and alarming accounts in the media highlight the necessity of due diligence concerning the protection of children and young people as well as vulnerable adults. Complacency is intolerable. All reasonable steps to protect are essential.

Following national and diocesan guidelines, St Nicholas Church continues to ensure safeguarding practice. In the past twelve months this has included further safeguarding training for staff, continued monitoring of our D.B.S. protocol, and stated P.C.C. policies concerning children & young people, vulnerable adults and those affected by domestic abuse. In partnership with the Diocese of Rochester Safeguarding Office, our Church safeguarding team, led by Gavin McGrath, is Lesley Batchelor (Children), Christine Ervine (Vulnerable Adults), Simon Heather, and Cara Smith.

Do, please, continue to pray the Lord protects us all by keeping us alert and vigilant.

Rev Gavin McGrath

April 2018

Fabric and Furnishing report 2017

The Church's Fabric & Furnishing Committee comprises: Tony Jennings (Chairman), Sue Day, Helen Greig, Paul Williams, James Bacon and Martin Levett (Secretary). Sue Stimson also attends, whilst Ian Nash is the Church Warden with the watching brief over this area of the Church's management.

Following the Quinquennial Report, phase 2 of the recommended repairs was carried out last year after the PCC had obtained the necessary faculty. This work largely involved external repairs to the stonework on the tower, repairs to several stained glass windows and re-treads to the Parvis Room staircase to make them safer. The gentlemen's toilet in the Undercroft was refurbished and a replacement dishwasher was installed in the main kitchen. Fixed electrical testing has been carried out and the few recommended works in the

report are in hand. Portable Appliance Testing has also been carried out. A team of volunteers led by Philip Day kindly repainted the interior of the North Porch.

Outside final tidying up work in respect of the Exit road has been carried out, particularly the completion of the footpath around the side of the main car park. Contractors have been coming in to tidy up the rear churchyard and work has also been carried out to remove ivy from the wall abutting Oak Lane. In December the Georgian Government fixed a memorial plaque onto the Waldrop grave in the rear Churchyard. Preparatory work to refurbish the Garden of Remembrance is ongoing.

At the Rectory, the Diocese completed a major project to improve drainage in the Rectory car park and to repair a section of the north boundary wall adjoining St Nicholas Drive. Further work on other sections of the said wall are in the pipeline as are repairs to the flat roof at the front of the property which were highlighted in the Quinquennial report into the condition of the Rectory. At 40 South Park, before the Taylors moved in, a team of volunteers led by Philip Day carried out extensive redecoration and a snagging list of small jobs was tackled. Since then, repairs have been carried out to the boundary fence with number 42.

At 26 Woodside Road, the remaining insulation to improve energy efficiency has been installed. A replacement fence and wall has been put in on the south garden boundary, as has a new drive. Repairs have been made to a leaking dormer window, a new radiator has been fitted as has a replacement cooker.

At 23 Beech Road, various redecorating and repairs were carried out before the new Ministry Associates moved in. Some new white goods have been provided. Repair work to the roof and gutters is in the pipeline.

We remain very grateful for all the work put in by the members of the Fabric Committee, our Ministry Associates and a host of volunteers who look after the Church flowers, clean the brass and carry out many other tasks with love to care for our buildings, their surrounds and their contents. In particular we want to express our thanks to James Bacon, Sue Day and Paul Williams who are standing down from the Fabric Committee after many years of faithful service.

AJ / MPL
March 2018

Deanery Synod Report 2017

During 2017 the new Area Dean, the Rev Martin Booth from St Mary's Riverhead, completed his first year in office. In addition to the St Nicholas clergy there are five lay members from St Nicholas on the Synod, and Ian Dobbie continues as the Lay Chairman.

There have been only two meetings of the Deanery Synod during the year as snow caused the one planned for February to be postponed.

At the June 2017 meeting, Mr Ian Ambler who is the ICT Manager for Rochester Diocese, gave a presentation of Parish Indicators, which provide a Deployment database designed to assist informed decisions by Area Deans. There would be large demographic changes in the Diocese over the next 30 years, creating the equivalent of 26 new parishes. Parish indicators would help in deciding how best to deploy resources most efficiently. Mr Ambler emphasised that the database is a mission and ministry tool which should put power back into Deaneries but "Jesus should have the last word."

In October the Rev Richard Williams, the Financial Director for the Diocese, spoke on the financial situation and challenges. Future plans were linked to the strategic framework for the Diocese entitled "Called together". There was a commitment for the diocese to break even by 2020, but stipendiary clergy posts would reduce by five over the next five years.

At the same meeting Mrs Billy-Jo Leary spoke on the Diocesan initiative to encourage fostering and adoption. 2740 children in Kent were in need of these caring ministries. Churches were encouraged to keep 5 November as Adoption Sunday. She spoke again at St Nicholas later in the month.

Brig. Ian Dobbie
March 2018
