

**St. John the Apostle Parish Church
Whetstone, London N20**



Priest-in-Charge report

for the year ended 30 April 2017

Priest-in-Charge:

The Reverend Lynn Davidson

2016 started off as a year of change for St John's, with the retirement of Reverend Cindy Kent, and what would turn out to be an interregnum period of around eight months. This, of course meant having to find people to take the services each week until I arrived. The church was blessed with many local priests, including the Bishop and Archdeacon helping out. Finding cover, however, is not an easy thing to do and both Brian and Rob deserve thanks for managing to keep all the services happening week after week on top of everything else they do.

The church/school fête was a success. This year's summer fête will take place on July 1st. A special thanks to all who are involved in making these important events a great success..

As I write this report, I am reflecting on my first six months at St John's. We arrived in September to a wonderful welcome, and as I said at the time, I don't think I will ever forget the school children singing at my licensing service. It was very special. This past six months have gone quickly, and that's not just because there is a lot to take in when you start a new post, it's because the church is currently experiencing such a busy time. The negotiations for the sale of the church hall began almost immediately after I arrived and the practicalities around organising the building of the new hall continue to take up a great deal of time. It will, I'm sure, be worth it in the end when we have a wonderful new facility that will not only enhance our children's work and other church activities, but will also serve as a valuable mission resource for the whole community.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here so far, beginning to build up relationships with people. I never cease to be excited about opportunities to share the love of Jesus with others and we have those opportunities here in abundance. We are blessed to have so many young families in church and I am enjoying talking and praying with people about how we might share the Gospel message most effectively in Whetstone during this new season in the life of St John's. I am grateful that I already have such a good relationship with the staff and pupils of St John's School, where I serve as a governor and lead weekly collective worship. I lead Communion Services in Baxendale Residential Home every month and I am now one of two Church of England Chaplains at The North London Hospice. I am a director of St Peter's Bourne, Christian Retreat and Conference Centre and am on the committee that oversees the running of the house. A residential community has recently started up there based on 'new monastic' principles and it is exciting to be involved in helping to shape this. Also, Bishop Rob has asked me to be Safeguarding Support for the Edmonton Area.

The successful running of a church is about team work and at St John's, there is a committed team who are involved along with me in ensuring the weekly worship services all come together. Meg, our Reader is involved 'up front' each week and is also now regularly involved leading and preaching at the Wednesday service. Angela and the Choir work hard to ensure a high standard of music and singing each week. Rob and Brian, the Church Wardens assist with many things, from looking after the fabric of the church buildings, printing the orders of service, assisting at back and front during the services and setting up for all the events, to name but a few, and of course, Brian sees that our finances are on track in his role as our treasurer. Alison, Marguerite and Gillian work tirelessly and creatively to ensure the children are fully included in the services each week and that the 3 O' Clock Club runs smoothly each month. The team of flower arrangers produce the most wonderful displays each week. Peter keeps the church yard and gardens looking lovely, and there are many others who make tea, welcome people and numerous other things that are important to the effective running of the church, including, of course the PCC, who play such an important role working alongside me. Their commitment during this particularly busy time has been significant. All these people deserve our heartfelt thanks for all their hard work and commitment.

It is also important to mention the other people involved in the wider church activities. Jo, who leads JAM deserves our thanks, as do Judy and Sabrina who assist. Those involved in the Community Coffee Morning and Chat Club also work hard to ensure St John's church is a true community resource available to all.

I have recently started Bible study groups and the energy and enthusiasm during our discussions is very encouraging.

I feel that it is an exciting time for St John's and I look forward to all that we are going to do during the coming years, as we seek to proclaim the message of Christ in Whetstone together.