



All Saints Church

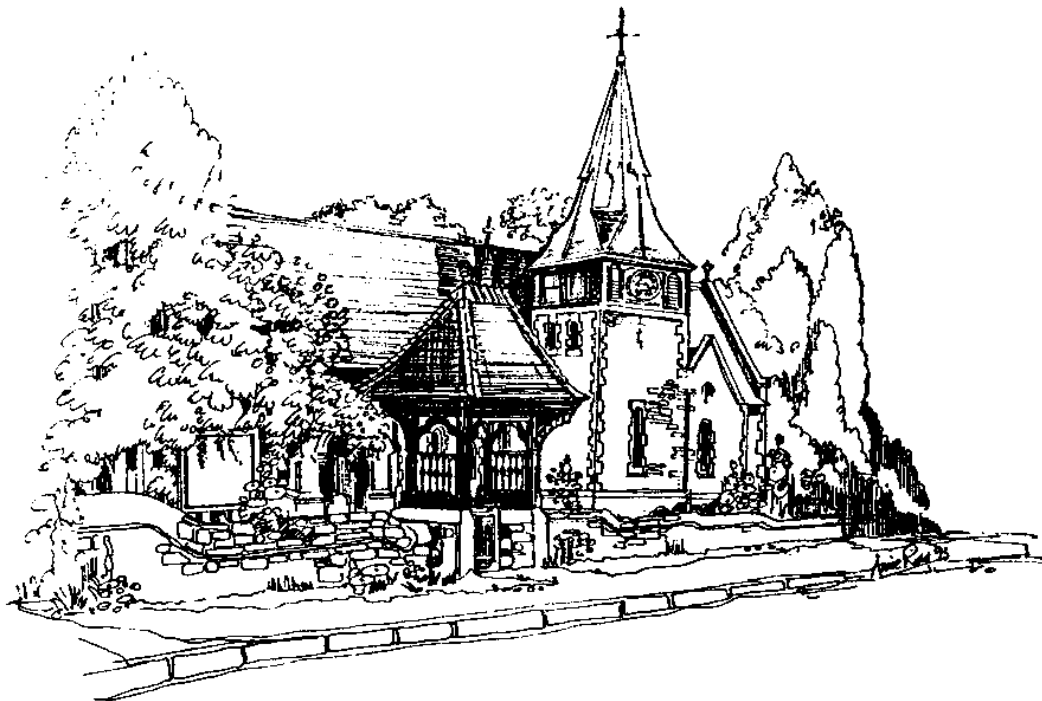
Grayswood

For God, for one another, for the world

Reports of teams for

Ministry and Mission 2023

For the Annual Parish Meeting 2024



Worship And Learning Teams

HOME GROUP

Tuesday evenings has become a precious time of friendship, exploring God's word (even the tricky bits!!) and prayer, over a cuppa and a biscuit.

Everyone brings something to the evening, whether from experience, their life story, their understanding of that passage, wisdom, questions and sometimes it's a safe place just to receive.

There are 12 of us who regularly meet but average of 8-10 (more are always welcome to squeeze in).

Autumn term we revisited 'The Difference course,' exploring following Jesus in a complex and divided world, lead by Justin Welby (not in person).

This last term we have used resources from 'Burningheart' discovering 'The Peace of God' in 5 sessions. Looking specifically at Philippians 4: 4-9.

Peace of God | Peace through Joy | Peace with people | Peace in prayer | Peace of Mind,

A challenge in this busy world.

We're finishing this term on Shrove Tuesday with pancakes.

Pippa Hollins-McLean(Group Leader).

LENT COURSE: Exploring the Psalms

The Book of Psalms is familiar to us through our regular services, especially our services of Morning Worship, and the use of the psalms in worship is centuries old in both the Jewish and the Christian traditions. We may have a favourite psalm or psalms and yet how familiar are we with the breadth and depth of the psalmody? Our Lent Course was an opportunity explore further.

To help us we used the ideas of theologian Walter Bruggeman as a structure:

Psalms of Orientation - *"...all is well in the world, God is in heaven and I know that to be true..."*

Psalms of Disorientation - *"...all is not well with the world and I'm not sure where God is..."*

Psalm of Re-Orientation - *"...all has been hellish but now I can trace God's plan in the world..."* (quotes in italics - Paula Gooder)

The writers of the psalms express the whole range of human emotions, from joy and thanksgiving to the darkness of despair, and yet throughout there is a clear sense of God's presence, righteousness and mercy. St Paul's Cathedral Adult Learning had recently released a recording of theologian Paula Gooder presenting an evening on Psalms, which provided a solid foundation for our sessions.

Each session began and concluded with a time of prayer and worship. There were opportunities for discussion, reflection, and creativity. The course concluded with the nighttime service of Compline. Each year we hold a Lent Course, please do join us if you can.

QUIET DAY FOR ADVENT: Theme: Emmanuel – God with us

I came so that they may have life and have it abundantly John 10:10

Just prior to the season of Advent a group of us gathered in the Village Hall for some quiet time to prepare us for the season of Advent and the busyness which we know is characteristic of this time of year!

In both Advent and Christmas carols we so often sing of Emmanuel, and so our quiet day was an opportunity to reflect on what this means for us today in two ways:

God with us - what might/can this mean for us as individuals? How might we experience God's life in abundance in our lives?

God with us - living this out in the world. How might we bring God's desire for life in abundance into the world?

Throughout the day there was ample opportunity for individual quiet time - we were encouraged if we wished to, to sample Lectio Divina, imaginative prayer, to be creative using the art materials available, or simply be quiet or go out for a stroll. At lunch time we enjoyed a simple yet filling lunch and thank you to Fi and Jackie who had prepared this for us.

The day concluded with a service of Holy Communion from the Iona Community.

Some time set aside for God is invaluable at any time of year or during any season of our life. So, if you sense that God might be 'nudging' you to take time out, here is an open invitation to join us on any future occasion. With every blessing.

Elaine Collins, Assistant Priest

PRAYER MINISTRY

Below is an overview of the various prayer supports we offer for the church family of Grayswood, for the wider community and on a more personal one to one basis.

Prayer Book

An open book is available on the table at the back of church for prayer requests that are to be included in the spoken prayers (intercessions) during the main Sunday Service over the course of a month. This is available for visitors, villagers or church members. Requests can be re-entered on the next page for the following month if prayer is required for longer.

Parish Prayer Cover

The weekly Service sheet and The Runner highlight prayer cover which include: Our church: Our quarterly mission: Our village - highlighting different areas each week: And Individuals in particular need:

Prayer Chain

A group of individuals linked together by phone, pledge to pray over a period of time for any prayer needs. A minimum of information is needed such as a name or situation. All requests are kept in strict confidentiality.

To make a prayer request please approach or phone one of the prayer chain members: Fiona Gwynn, Dian Mordin, Pippa Hollins, Jane White, Daphne Bleach, Tracy Garland, Ros Webb.

Prayer Triplets

These are small individual groups who meet together weekly in each other's homes to pray about concerns for themselves, friends and family. These groups are highly recommended for encouraging and supporting each other, and for seeing prayers answered in surprising ways!

If you would like to be a part of a prayer triplet group, please contact Dian Mordin 644143 who can put you in touch with others.

Do you Need Prayer?

If you would like someone to pray with you after a 10am service, please approach either Dian Mordin, Mary Gorniak, Pippa Hollins, Richard Everett or John McLean who will be very willing to find a quiet place to pray with you.

Reflect and Prayer

The church is opened throughout each day to make available to anyone who would like a peaceful area to quietly reflect, read or pray.

Dian Mordin (Co-ordinator)

MUSIC

2023 was a year without restrictions, so the choir was able to play its part at all the usual services. We were very happy to be joined by Rob and Annabelle Guidi for the Carol Service and would welcome new members. Sophie, a student at St Catherine's School played the organ a few times

during the year but Jean and George played for the majority of services. Unfortunately, Jean was unable to play on several occasions and we are particularly grateful to George for stepping in at very short notice.

So, I would like to thank all the loyal choir members and Jean White, George and Mary Gorniak and Sophie for their contributions to the church music in 2023. We hope to be a bit more adventurous in 2024! So do join us if you can.

Nicola Miller

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School has not been re-established but we continue to welcome children and families to services. There are age appropriate bags containing books and toys in church. Our Church Development plan includes revision of children's provision including use of the new AV system and planning of a family/children's Sunday afternoon service with tea afterwards.

The Christingle with Crib Service was popular with over 100 adults and 80 children attending. We continue to develop links with the school, Richard Everett regularly reads with Year and Rev Fi Gwynn takes a weekly Assembly. The school children held six services in church this year, including harvest and Christmas, as well as some individual RE lessons.

Mission Teams

CHURCH FAYRES

Our Spring and Christmas Fayres were, as usual, wonderful community events. The weather was kind to us and both Fayres were a huge success financially, raising over £4,000 for church funds. As ever, we are very grateful to those who donated items for sale, baked, sold raffle tickets, set up on the morning and tidied the hall after the event, ran the stalls on the day, served teas, coffees and bacon butties, or helped in any way - and of course to those who supported the events by spending money.

A large number of people are involved in making the Fayres a success but we would welcome anyone who would like to join Di and I in the organisation, particularly someone who would like to help with or take over the sourcing of raffle prizes.

Jackie Holmes (Fayre team co-ordinator)

HOSPITALITY

We have had fewer events this year to cater for but those we did have were very enjoyable. Over Easter week, a group of us shared a tasty supper on Maundy Thursday of chicken casserole cooked by Jane and hot cross buns were offered after the service on Good Friday. Our last event of the year (catering-wise) was the carol service, after which we enjoyed wine and mince pies.

Jackie Holmes & Jane White (Hospitality co-ordinators)

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE

We have an expanded team of 11 volunteers, who give up their time to serve coffee after church each week. Thank you. A new innovation this year has been the use of a card reader, in addition to the tin that is put out for cash donations, keeping up with the times and the move towards a cashless society. The church continues to pay for supplies, except for milk, which is donated by our volunteers. We have also received coffee donations from the WI and a personal donor, which have kept costs to the church down. This year your donations supported CMS, Crossways Counselling, Skillway and Christians against Poverty. Thank you.

MISSION LINKS

Every year we support four charities – one in each quarter of the year through gifts donated and from all the money generously put in the coffee tin after church each week and the PCC adds £300 to each of the quarterly donations (we do not take out any expenses). Our three main quarterly missions are Crossways counselling, CMS (our Mission partner Katia Rocks working in Brazil), and Skillway (vocational workshops for young people based in Godalming with Greg Bleach as the general manager). Each year we choose a different mission for the remaining quarter and our chosen Mission for the first quarter 2023 was Christians Against Poverty, giving advice and support to those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. Totals sent to these missions were:

Christians against poverty	£ 446
CMS	£ 300
Crossways counselling	£ 876
Skillway	£ 5454.50

Each year we support Grayswood Primary School and Grayswood Nursery. All primary school children are given a bible when they leave. A donation of £3000 was made to the school for new phonics books and £5000 to Skillway, from the legacy received in 2022. In addition, we supported the Haslemere food bank, the Royal British Legion, the Children's Society and Water Aid.

Tracy Garland

COFFEE AND CHAT

Once again we managed to get regular mornings organised, missing only January and July due to Covid issues.

They were well attended, with many groups regularly seen around their favourite tables and others sitting chatting to catch up with friends.

We decided in February to donate any money raised to the local Food Bank, with families struggling after the pandemic.

However, by March, Ukraine was under attack so all monies collected from March through to September were given to the Red Cross Ukraine Fund.

As Christmas came into view, we decided to split donations between the two causes.

The generosity of the village and the humanity shown by so many meant that by the end of the year we had given £265.82 to the Food Bank and £758.10 to the Ukraine Fund.

How blessed we have been to have such a response!

I would like to express my thanks to Vera and Janet for helping make these ventures so enjoyable and successful.

Di Cook

TODDLER GROUP

Our Toddler Group continues to meet on a Wednesday morning in the Oonagh Jeffrey room during term time and is well attended, with a group of 5 or 6 regulars. It has been great getting to know the mums/dads/grandparents/nannies and see the children growing and developing over the year.

Snack time is very popular with the children, as is having a chat over a piece of cake and a cup of coffee for the adults. We have started having 15 minutes or so of music and singalong time at the end of the session, which sometimes can get a bit lively but the children love it. We could really do with some more volunteers, and have had to call on one of the lovely mums to help a couple of times, so if it is something you would like to get involved with we would love to hear from you.

Jackie Holmes

THE RUNNER

Once again we have published the monthly parish magazine and then distributed it to all the homes in Grayswood in person - thank you!

The Grayswood Runner is a source of information not only for the congregation but also for the wider community and we receive many requests to advertise events from other organisations. We have supported The Hunter Centre and Friends of All Saints events, such as Open Gardens, advertised courses for Lent and Advent and promoted the Christmas Fayre and a reading of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.

We dug into the archives as we marked the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla in May; the Commonwealth War Graves Commission signage project and Remembrance Sunday.

Our regular contributors include the Women's Institute, Grayswood Nursery, Friends of Grayswood School (PTA) and the Village Club with their varied events.

Runner folding continues on the last Thursday of the month in the church - with a faithful band of volunteers folding, bundling and inserting fliers - with cups of tea, biscuits and time to chat. A big thank you to those who give up their time once a month and also to those who, as the final link in the chain, distribute copies around the village. If you would like to join the folding or distribution team, please do let Sarah or Val know.

If you would consider writing a short article (100 or so words) for one of the editions, please email allsaintsgrayswood@gmail.com or drop a note into the post box in the Church porch.

The deadline for receiving contributions for the following month's edition can be found at the foot of each copy (usually the 15th of the month), and the Runner is displayed on the church website: allsaintsgrayswood.org.

Sarah Bennett (Editor)

Pastoral Teams

The Pastoral Team meets 3 times a year and the team is comprised of trained Pastoral Assistants and those of us who are willing to provide pastoral care to the local community under Fi's support, guidance and supervision regardless of whether they worship at All Saint's or not.

Our aim as a Pastoral Team is to visit newcomers to the church, those who move into the local area, the sick, those in hospital, the housebound and we support the dying and the bereaved. There are over 320 houses in Grayswood, it is a large area to cover so we rely on those who deliver The Runner each month to be 'our eyes and ears' and to feedback to either Fi or myself if they become aware of someone who needs, or would like, a visit.

In July, we looked at how best we could raise our profile within the community as it came to light that not everyone knew of our existence. We put an article in The Runner in September & October and produced a leaflet with contact information for the back of church, which was also given out at the Annual Service of Remembrance in November.

We distribute cards to those who have moved into the village, had a baby or been recently bereaved but we have ceased to deliver Harvest gifts to newcomers. We have kept the lovely tradition of distributing hand knitted cardigans to the new babies in the village, those who attend Toddler Group and the occasional grandchild as this is always well received. A big thank you to our band of knitters, all the cardigans are very much appreciated.

We are a small team so if anyone is interested in joining us then do speak to either Fi or myself, you would be more than welcome and please also let us know of anyone who may need extra support as we also have a list of volunteers who can help with various one-off support tasks.

Daphne Bleach (Pastoral Team Leader)

Maintenance Teams

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

General

We continue to be grateful for our Buildings and Grounds team of volunteers who conscientiously watch over and maintain the church fabric and its grounds to a very high standard in terms of appearance and safety. Additionally, the team maintain and manage the Garden of Remembrance ensuring it is always visually tidy.

Grass

As previous years our grass maintenance contractors continue to provide an excellent service and meet their contracted obligations ensuring the grass and pathways are kept tidy and weed free.

Graveyard

A health and safety risk assessment of the graveyard, with particular attention being paid to the memorials, found that several headstones were deemed a potential risk of falling over and causing an accident. The PCC commissioned an independent assessment and inspection of the memorials in the churchyard and this was confirmed. A number of memorials that required maintenance have undergone remedial work and are now deemed safe. The PCC continues to regularly inspect the memorials to ensure there is no risk to the public.

Path

In Q2 work commenced on removing existing pedestrian pebble path to the front of the church and replacing it with a self binding gravel path to improve accessibility. Work was completed in Q3. Feedback from those with mobility issues has been very positive.

Audio-Visual system

A new Audio-Visual system was successfully installed and commissioned in Q4 which has made a vast improvement to services.

John McLean (Co-ordinator)

FLOWERS

The team have continued to provide an arrangement each week and fill the church with fresh flowers for the annual festivals.

We continue to arrange the flowers in chicken wire, avoiding floristry foam. We are mindful of the provenance of the flowers used and aim to use home grown flowers and foliage as much as possible. In December members of the team attended a wreath-making event using locally sourced foliage. The wreaths were stunning and sold well at the Christmas fayre, raising much-needed funds for the maintenance of the church.

Thanks to Claire Wright for organising the festival flowers and the rota of arrangers.

We continue to welcome new members to the team. If you would like to help with displays on an occasional or regular basis or at festival times please get in touch. New ideas are always welcome!

Tracy Garland (Flower team co-ordinator)

PLANNED GIVING AND GIFT AID

2023 was a difficult year financially for many of us, however church donations were only very slightly down on 2022. During the year we lost some regular donors because they moved out of the area or died but we gained some new regular donors. Sunday congregations, though still less than in

the past, have improved during the year. The table below summarizes the donations for 2023 and 2022.

	2022	2023
Regular bank Standing Orders and Direct Debits	£28,958	£26,430
Church service collections	£5,107	£6,408
Gift Aid and GASDS rebates	£7,357	£7,232
Total funds	£41,422	£40,070
Gift Aid & GASDS %	17.8%	18%

In April 2023 we introduced Direct Debit giving through the Parish Giving Scheme for regular donations. The Parish Giving Scheme is a Church of England initiative and is free to use for all parishes. The Parish Giving Scheme greatly improves the church cash flow and reduces All Saints' administration time. For donors the direct debit scheme is very easy to set up and is also easy to amend, it can be set up and managed by post or telephone or online. We have encouraged donors with standing orders to change to the direct debit scheme and so far 75% of the donors have made the change. There were 41 standing orders and direct debits in place at the end of 2023, which is 3 less than at the start of the year and included 2 new donors.

In April 2023 we also introduced an improved bank card reader unit for one-off donations. The PAYZ unit is fixed just inside the main church door and can be used at any time the church is open. Use of the PAYZ unit has gradually increased over the year as more people get used to donating by card instead of cash.

David Hutton (Gift Aid Admin)

CHURCH ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Life in the church office is settling down after the pandemic and with much remaining "the same as last year" there has been a little breathing space for projects outside the routine administration. Alongside the weekly notice sheets, monthly publication of The Runner and paperwork for weddings, baptisms and funerals, there have been two large projects this year.

1. Recording the Churchyard online:

We have now photographed all the headstones in the Churchyard and these have been added to the website along with the plot numbers, burial register entries and churchyard plans. We are continuing to contact the next of kin where memorials are in need of upkeep. Next year we hope to record the Garden of Remembrance.

2. Digitising the Terrier:

There is an ongoing project to digitise the Terrier (the record of the church, churchyard, and everything in the church itself, including its fabric, furniture, plate, bells, books and candles). The main documents have been typed and checked and we will add digital images in the near future. This is the first revision of the Terrier for nearly 40 years.

During the year we have trialled sending weekly emails and event advertising through Church Suite. This seems to have been well received and so will continue.

It has been a privilege to work alongside so many amazing people committed to the life of their church in Grayswood and to be able to support those in the wider parish when they have needed us.

Sarah Bennett (Church Administrator)