

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST ANDREW, FAIRLIGHT
and
THE CHURCH OF ST PETER, FAIRLIGHT COVE**



ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

Our vision is
**TO BE A LOVING, WELCOMING FAMILY
SHARING A PASSION FOR JESUS**

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REPORT FROM THE PRIEST IN CHARGE FOR THE PERIOD

31 DECEMBER 2022 - 31 DECEMBER 2023

Thank you for being interested in the life and ministry of St Andrew's and St Peter's Churches, and for your time reading this report. It is likely that you are one of many people who is involved in various ways in the life and ministry of Fairlight parish for which may I thank you so much. Without your love and commitment there wouldn't be such a thriving community of Christians continuing in our generation the worship of God and service to Fairlight Village which has taken place here for over many years.

Outside of the church walls in Fairlight parish I have:

- visited Fairlight Nursey School
- liaised with the Parish Council
- liaised with the War Memorial Group
- enjoyed meeting people at the monthly Café Refresh
- chaired Batley House Alms House Charity
- been invited to be the Chaplain for The Royal British Legion

The main worship service is weekly at 11am and was mostly held at St Andrew's Church apart from a spell worshipping at St Peter's during the colder winter months.

The usual pattern of services is:

1st Sunday Morning Praise - Sandi Wickens lead/preach.

2nd Sunday Morning Praise led by Ministry Team with Dr Barbara Leppard or visitor preaching at St Andrew's.

Book of Common Prayer - Rev. Kay Burnett Holy Communion lead/preach/preside at St Peter's.

3rd Sunday Holy Communion – Sandi Wickens lead/preach/preside.

4th Sunday Holy Communion – Rev. Kay Burnett preach/preside Ministry Team - lead.

5th Sunday Alternating Sandi Wickens with St Laurence Guestling at the beginning of the year and Morning Praise from the Summer.

The Ministry Team is Maureen Baines, David Hornsby (Until May 2023), Valerie Hornsby, Barbara Leppard, Jane Oliver-Murphey, John Relfe, Marcia Russell, Janet Walker. The average weekly attendance is 39.

Café Church, which had a small congregation who enjoyed afternoon tea, informal worship, and teaching worshipped monthly until the Spring and took a break because of unavailability of leaders and hospitality team.

Messy Church was relaunched in 2023 with thanks to a small and dedicated team of leaders. The numbers of families who have joined in with this and other family friendly events is growing.

There have been 12 special annual services:

- Ash Wednesday
- Maundy Thursday Holy Communion with bring and share meal
- Good Friday
- Easter Sunday Sunrise service with local churches on the Fire Hills followed by breakfast at St Andrews Easter Sunday Holy Communion
- Ascension Day
- Harvest where food and financial gifts given to the local Food Bank in Hastings
- Remembrance Service
- Christingle led by Ruth Hayes and Team with the collection given to the Children's Society.
- Guestling Bradshaw School end of term Christmas Service with parents and carers
- Nine Lessons and Carols followed by refreshments
- Christmas Day Holy Communion

There have been 9 funerals, 1 Thanksgiving for the birth of a child and no weddings.

More behind the scenes in I have met with:

Church Warden(s)

Safeguarding Officer

PCC

Deanery Colleagues

Individuals for pastoral conversations and Home Communion

Funeral Directors and Stonemasons

And have ministered in a similar way to our sister parishes and congregations in Guestling and Westfield.

A small team of volunteers re-opened the tower to the public once a month in the summer months. This was a good opportunity for hospitality and to meet new people.

I am very grateful to the very many people who serve God in this community in so many different ways. It is a joy to belong to a church community where everyone shares in the work of making God known.

Lastly and most importantly, in case you have skipped straight to the last line, I've prayed that you might grow in knowledge and love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and know his love for you each and every day.

Revd Sandi Wickens

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

As your one and only Churchwarden I thank everyone who helps to keep St Andrew's and St Peter's churches running smoothly. There are many folks who help and if I have missed anyone out, I apologise.

Firstly, thank you to the ladies that carry out catering, flowers, cleaning and much more.

Revd Kay for her ministry to Communion. It is sad that Kay is retiring in 2024 and we wish her all the very best for the future.

Thanks also to Dr Barbara Leppard, for stepping up to the plate, running services and for her preaching with some very interesting talks. My sincere thanks also extend to John Relfe, Valerie Hornsby, Marcia Russell who often led our services.

Also, for Jim Leppard and Val Smith who are involved with the AV system along with Frank James.

Mostly I thank Revd Sandi who is doing a great job looking after us along with two other parishes. For me personally it has not been a stressful time and to support Revd Sandi is the most important part of the churchwardens' duties.

The church family is slowly growing with an average attendance of around 35 to 40 folks attending regularly. With excellent fellowship, this encourages outreach and growth. Thanks to Pat and her team the toddler's group 'Teddies' is working well and long may it continue. Café church continues to meet on regular monthly Thursdays for fellowship, cake and tea.

I enjoy working with Dave Wickens and together we have tackled a number of repairs, cleaning and maintenance. As a result, the church is gaining a smart appearance. We mostly meet on Wednesdays to carry out a variety of jobs. See *Fabric report for more information*.

I repeat the churchwarden's ending from last year's report.

Please pray that we live up to our mission,
to be a loving, welcoming family, sharing a passion for Jesus.

John Miles

FABRIC COMMITTEE

One of the challenges for Congregations is the maintenance of their buildings. At Fairlight we have two completely different types of building. St Andrew's is an early Victorian listed church built of stone with a tiled roof and St Peter's, which is much more modern and predominantly built of wood with a felt roof. Fortunately, both are in a reasonably good condition which reflects effective maintenance works over the years.

The late David Hornsby formed a Site Team in 2023 to manage general maintenance of both churches and their grounds. The team now comprises of John Miles, David Wickens, Linda Willard with occasional help from Mike Willard, Jake Bucton and Ray Heyes. John and David met most Wednesday mornings to undertake general maintenance, including some cleaning, and others helped as and when available. Where necessary (and obliged) specialists were engaged and supervised as necessary.

Works by outside contractors during 2023 were the Quinquennial's and electrical inspections/urgent remedial measures, stonework repairs to the south porch and annual boiler service at St Andrew's. The stonework repairs were predominantly grant funded by the Historic Churches Trust and thanks to those involved in securing that grant.

The team report to each PCC, giving an update on minor works and seeking approval for any more major works. If Diocesan approval is necessary, Rev Sandi makes the appropriate application.

Works the team undertook on a DIY basis were:

St Peter's - PAT electrical testing, grass cutting and trimming including play area.

St Andrews- relaying and sticking floor tiles, fixing loose floor boards, filling hole and painting Vestry ceiling, easing doors, replacement of light bulbs and various batteries, repair to kitchen fluorescent light, weed spraying, dusting, hoovering and polishing, PAT electrical testing, resetting two cast iron bollards, hedge trimming, removal of fallen tree branches from the Lych gate, adjustments to altar rail/gates and fixing metal mesh to keep birds out of the tower.

In 2024 we will be looking closely at works identified in the Quinquennial's and the Site Team will be making recommendations to the PCC. Whilst we now have electrical safety certificates there were a number of non-urgent measures that we may want to address.

David Wickens and John Miles

TREASURER'S REPORT

1. The total receipts on general unrestricted funds were £61,502 (£27,825 being from planned giving and collections). These are detailed in the Annual Report and Financial Statements.

2. The amount recovered under Gift Aid and the Small Donations Scheme amounted to £5,527.

3. The figures under 'planned giving' include contributions that members of the church make through the Parish Giving Scheme. The advantage of this Scheme is that Gift Aid (where applicable) is received and credited to the church on a monthly basis, and donors have the option of their giving being increased with the line of inflation annually. During the year, 17 parishioners contributed over £17,758 plus £ 4,117 in Gift Aid, to the church through this Scheme

4. Our largest item of expenditure during the year was £25,800 paid to the Diocese to cover ministry costs. This amount covers the stipend, housing and pension costs of our Priest in Charge, clergy training, Diocesan central costs, and a contribution to national church funds. In 2024 we hope to be able to make a payment of £27,000. The true cost of our share for the benefice is £32,600.

5. The cost of maintaining the churchyard was over £3,200 but an annual grant from the Parish Council of £750 towards the upkeep, has helped to offset this.

6. Two legacies of £17,287 were received during the year.

John Relfe

ST ANDREW'S & ST PETER'S PCC: 2023

Chair

The Rev Sandi Wickens

Vice Chairman

John Relfe

Churchwarden

John Miles (from August 2023)

Treasurer

John Relfe

Deanery Synod Representatives

Jan Compson

Jenny Davey

Peter Davey

Elected PCC members

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Pete Jennings | (until APCM 2023) |
| 2 | Yvonne Jennings | (until APCM 2023) |
| 3 | Jane Oliver Murphy | (from APCM 2021) |
| 4 | John Relfe | (from APCM 2021) |
| 5 | Linda Willard | (from APCM 2021) |
| 6 | Val Smith | (from APCM 2022) |
| 7 | David Hornsby | – until May 2023 |
| 8 | Ruth Heyes | (from APCM 2023) |
| 9 | Marcia Russell | (from APCM 2023) |
| 10 | John Miles | – until August 2023 |

Co-opted for one year:

Barbara Leppard

Janet Walker

During the year, 6 PCC meetings were held, and business in-between meetings was conducted by correspondence.

SAFEGUARDING

The members of St Andrew's PCC are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of all our members and recognize that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We are committed to implementing all safeguarding policies and practice guidance issued by the House of Bishops and will carefully select and train all those who work or volunteer in positions of trust. We will use the Disclosure and Barring Service, amongst other tools, to check the background of each person.

- There were no safeguarding issues reported to the PCC during 2023

- We will respond, without delay, to every concern made that a person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
- We will co-operate fully with statutory agencies during any investigation concerning a member of the church community.
- We will seek to ensure that anyone for whom we have pastoral responsibility who has suffered abuse is offered support that meets their needs.
- We will respond appropriately to those who have committed sexual offences who wish to join our fellowship, following House of Bishop's guidance and the advice of the Safeguarding Team.
- We will review this policy annually and as part of this process will ensure that all our procedures, particularly in relation to the Disclosure and Barring Service, are up-to-date.

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

As at April 2024:

- 62 names – 40 women and 22 men
- Since April 2023, 8 names were removed and 9 names added.
- Figures for residency:

Fairlight	50
Guestling	02
Hastings	07
Pett Level	01
Bexhill	02
- The Roll is on display (names only) in the porch at St Andrew's.

Next year a completely new Roll has to be prepared.

Val Relfe – Electoral Roll Officer

DEANERY SYNOD

Three meetings of the Rye Deanery were held: -

The first on 16 March 23 at Winchelsea Parish church. The speaker was Rev Graham Atfield, chaplain at Conquest Hospital.

The second meeting on 24 May 23 was hosted by Fairlight, St Peter's with Rev Jonathan Meyer as the guest speaker on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The Mother's Union was mentioned as having two holiday static caravans in the diocese, one being located at Winchelsea Beach available for use by needy families. The third meeting was held on 15 November 23 at St Mary's Hall in Udimore. Sarah Hammond from Safe Families UK was the guest speaker.

Fairlight (churches) were represented at all three meetings plus our own Rev Sandi. General Synod meeting reports were disseminated down to the Deanery Synod as appropriate.

A majority vote was received and agreed for each parish to pay £20 annually in 2024 to the Deanery for costs associated with confirmation classes, hall hire fees, drinks for Christmas lunch for retired clergy etc. Lastly, any activities by the different churches were flagged up at meetings to maintain support and connections.

Peter Davey

TEDDIES TODDLER GROUP

We meet Tuesdays in school term time 10.30 am until 12.00 midday at St Peter's Church Centre, Broadway, Fairlight Cove. Come and join us for play, tea, coffee and chat. For more information phone: 01424 812034

We welcome 5-6 children each week, but the numbers have increased since the beginning of 2024. All the children enjoyed a Christmas party in December.

Pat Staines & Jane Cowley

CAFÉ REFRESH

Meetings – 3rd Thursday every month at St Peter's Church Centre. 10.30 am- 12 pm.

Our monthly get together took place every month during 2023, with an average attendance of 16. The Christmas meeting was, unsurprisingly, the most popular with 25 people enjoying Christmas snacks, a quiz and singing to the accompaniment of Roland on piano.

During the year, we have been pleased to welcome visitors to Fairlight, as well as church members and it's been good to have Sandi and David joining us most months.

There's always a warm welcome together with home-made cakes, scones and sausage rolls to enjoy over a natter with friends. Also a good selection of books to browse and take home

Thanks are due to Paul Reid who puts up and takes down our banner on the corner of Waites Lane and Broadway each month.

Val Relfe

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Fellowship meets at St. Peter's Church Centre at 2.30pm on the first Friday of the month for an hour of fellowship, friendship and refreshments. The group is run by a committee of five ladies; Maureen Baines, Gay Oliver, Vanessa Reid, Marian Ridley and Pat Staines.

Programme:

The programme reflects the interests of members and includes outside speakers from local churches and other Christian organisations. Each meeting has a Bible reading, prayer and hymns. At least one meeting a year is taken by the members, an occasion when we share our Christian experiences with one another. In March we join with fellow Christians from all over the world for The World Day of Prayer, an opportunity to discuss, pray, sing and learn about the needs of Christians throughout the world. This year the service was held at Methodist Church. We had lovely weather for the Garden party in Pat's garden and in the year ended with a celebration of carol singing.

Mission Support:

Through the charity Compassion the fellowship sponsor the education of a young Christian girl called Confidence. We follow her progress by exchanging cards, letters and photographs as well as receiving her school reports.

Membership:

Attendance varies from twenty to thirty depending on the weather, people's health and the topic of the meeting. Several ladies have moved away from Fairlight to be nearer their family but we keep in touch with them by sending Christmas and Easter cards as well as a copy of the programme. The programme is also on the Benefice and Village web page. Pat's initiative to remember people's birthdays has proved to be a very nice touch. The monthly Café Refresh coffee morning is an additional link for the fellowship.

Meetings are open to all ladies and new members can be assured of a warm welcome. Transport can be arranged if required.

Maureen Baines, Gay Oliver, Vanessa Reid, Marian Ridley, Pat Staines

FLOWERS

Although 2023 was a busy year for St Andrew's not many events included flowers.

The ladies met in St Peter's to make posies for Mothering Sunday. We always have a good afternoon chatting, drinking tea and eating cake. We do this on the Saturday before Mothers' Day. If anyone would like to join us, they are very welcome.

Easter lilies were very well supported by donations from people wishing to remember loved ones. Thank you to Peter and Yvonne Jennings for helping with the ordering of lilies. We decorated the Church with lilies and lots of other flowers donated by the ladies who came to help.

Harvest is always a lovely time for the flower ladies and again very well supported. We had a couple of new volunteers who said they really enjoyed being creative and meeting all the ladies.

Christmas is a very exciting time when all the ladies join in doing lots of different arrangements and many compliment were received about the decorations in church.

I would like to thank everyone for their time and support throughout the year. I couldn't do it without you.

Vanessa Reid

