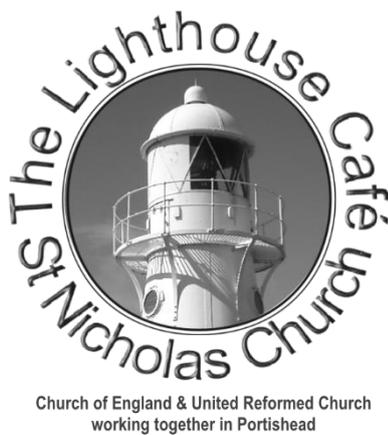




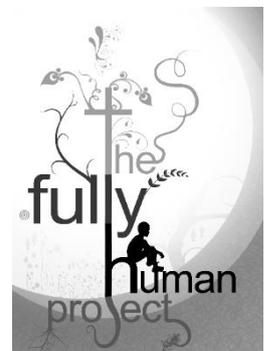
Portishead Church of England

Chronicles 2017

A Snapshot of Parish Life



Grant us a vision, Lord,
to see what we can achieve;
to reach beyond ourselves;
to share our lives with others;
to stretch our capability;
to increase our sense of purpose;
to be aware of where we can help;
to be sensitive to your presence;
to give heed to your constant call.



Thank you!

Thank you to everybody who has written about the various parts of the life of our community here in Portishead. Some of these are firmly rooted in the church, others have at least one foot in the local community. It is wonderful to see that all of them are a response to God's wonderful and transforming love poured out to us in Christ. So thank you to all of you (named and unnamed here) who are responding to that love in such powerful and generous ways.

And thank you to God! Thank you to the God who calls us, equips us and draws us together as a diverse and richly gifted group of people to serve him.

I am profoundly thankful that God has called me and my family to this place, to this community of people. It is a joy to serve him alongside you.

We have been reflecting on growth in these last few months. As we thank God together for who we are let us also pray that we may grow to become the people he has made us and longs for us to be. Let us pray that we may grow in our spiritual life, in our service to the community in which we live and that he would add others to our number.

God bless you all for all that you are and all that you give.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eob' or similar, written in a cursive style.

1 Discipleship: Worship, fellowship and study

Children's & Families Worker overview

The last year has seen a plethora of events and initiatives for Portishead Church of England. We started off with our first holiday club for many years, running for three mornings in the Easter holidays, and swiftly followed that up with Easter Extravaganza.

In the summer we took a group to Great Wood Camp for the weekend, growing relationships and community between people who have a variety of different connections to Portishead Church of England.

We then took a breather, before running the Pumpkin Party and Weird But Wonderful in October. The Pumpkin Party was phenomenally popular, attracting over 100 children and their parents for a two-hour craft extravaganza. Weird But Wonderful was a smaller scale event on Halloween itself, allowing families to celebrate together in a safe environment.

In addition, I have overseen Pebbles, where we have continued to experiment with new material, supported Church Tots and LLaDs, been part of the team for Trinity Toddlers and Pitstop and worked with the Majors choir at St Peter's School.

Things to give thanks for: a committed and enthusiastic team of volunteers; increased contact with a large number of children and their parents; the willingness of St Peter's School to allow us to use the Pier Hall for events.

Things to pray for this year: for continuing growth in spiritual curiosity; that we will have the discernment to know what to carry on in 2019 without a children's worker (or for funding for a new children's worker!); for God to raise up new volunteers who are passionate for children and young people to know Jesus and grow in their relationship with him.

Fran Smettem

Expedition Force Easter holiday club

Fran has mentioned this briefly in her overview, but it's worth highlighting! We welcomed 35 children each day to St Peter's Church during Holy Week when we followed Jesus' journey to the cross. It was a delight to be able to share games and activities, as well as bring together a group of adult leaders and volunteers, who all have involvement in different parts of Portishead Church of England. Under Verity's expert instruction we created an amazing cross, which we covered with dirt and the bad things in the world, before revealing resurrection glory. Ian Fletcher wowed the children with his magic, and we sang, danced, made bread and generally had fun together. This was the first holiday club for a number of years and Fran was delighted that people wanted to continue journeying together to put on more events for families in the town.

Things to give thanks for: an increased sense of community among different groups (including Trinity Toddlers, Pitstop and members of the 9.15 congregation); the response from families; the lovely family feeling at the club; people who came to move chairs!

Things to pray for: we are doing another club! Please pray for us, and for the families who will be coming.

Great Wood Camp

It was fabulous to be able to take a group of people to Great Wood Camp in the Quantocks for a weekend in July. Ten families from different groups within the church came together and explored faith, with Tina coming as our guest speaker and facilitator, and members of the planning team taking on different stories and responsibilities. We were amazingly fed by Olwyn KW and her kitchen team, and were lucky enough to be able to use the pool, which was a great draw!

Things to give thanks for: beautiful weather! The friendships that emerged among different families.

Things to pray for: Great Wood is still talked about: please pray that we are able to find time to keep building those relationships.

Pitstop

Pitstop is a Fresh Expression of church, a group of people meeting together who haven't experienced church before. We seek to connect with families with children aged 0-7 who are interested in exploring faith, and to provide spiritual, emotional and physical sanctuary once a month. The core group attending Pitstop continue to be very faithful in their attendance, as do the team! Since Tina stepped into her Diocesan role, others have started to take the lead in planning and leading Pitstop, which has been an exciting time to see new gifts flourish and grow. This year Pitstoppers have had 2 additional socials: we held a pyjama party at the Children's Centre and then had a "drive-in movie" at St Peter's School, where the children created cardboard box cars and watched a movie in their cars. It was a huge success! We have also done some research into Pitstop to get an idea of what people thought about it, as well as the practical aspects of meeting together. The primary adjective used was 'fun' which we were pleased about, but it was also very apparent that it is regarded as a place of community, friendship and where 'God stuff' happens.

Things to give thanks for: the continued growth of faith & release of gifts within the team.

Things to pray for: we are currently seeking where God is leading us to in the next phase of Pitstop and we would appreciate prayer as we consider this.

Pebbles

Pebbles (the building blocks of our church) are the youngsters (Reception to Year 6 age) who leave St Peter's 9.15 service with adult leaders for their own special time in the Guide hut across the road. Sessions involve some combination of games, Bible stories, discussion, singing, drama and craft. We are currently working our way systematically through all the BIG Bible stories over 3 years: give thanks for all the fun, and the interesting questions that this has raised so far! Please pray that more leaders will join the Team and discover just how much their own faith will grow through leading the children on their faith journey.

Alison Stubbs

Youth Event

Youth event provides an opportunity for young people to enjoy an evening in St Peter's Church guided by the youth leadership team. The target age group is year 6 upwards.

We meet on the second Sunday of every month, 6.00pm to 7.30pm. The main objective is fun through fellowship in a safe and caring environment. Each session finishes with a prayerful review.

The junior event for younger children precedes the senior youth event, and is based on similar activities, geared to a younger age group.

Our activities during 2017-18 have followed a similar pattern to previous years with games based on our theme for the evening. Our bonfire and barbecue on the beach at Sugar Loaf Bay and Christmas party combined junior and senior groups.

Fran, our youth worker, runs our planning evenings helping us to create an imaginative array of activities.

We thank God for the young people who attend Youth Event and for their families.

We pray that they will grow in faith as a result of their experiences.

Church Tots

Church Tots is activity songs, a Bible story, prayer, then refreshments for all, followed by chatting, playing and a creative activity to take home for the pre-school children.

We thank God that we have helpers to share in preparing the story and refreshments and then chatting with all who come.

Please pray that we have more families attending and enough funds to cover our costs.

Portishead Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union is a worldwide organisation whose aims are to support parents and family life through prayer and practical help in the communities where there is need. Our branch members do this by helping in the community and raising funds to enable projects to go ahead at home and overseas. We have an annual theme for our meetings and this year it was "Faith in action".

We have raised about £2,000 by holding lunches and teas and regular donations by our members which went towards overseas work and in our diocese providing holidays for needy families. We now have two knitting groups who make hats for the Mission to Seafarers and baby clothes for the local hospitals. Prayer shawls and squares are also knitted to offer comfort to those in need.

Our meetings are held twice monthly and we have communion once a month. Please see our notice boards in church for details. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings so please come and join us. We usually have a speaker on Thursdays and a more social evening on Wednesdays after a time spent in prayer.

Thank you for supporting us in our fundraising efforts and please pray for our members around the world who are frequently working in very difficult circumstances.

Anne Lewins, Branch Leader

Saturday Mass

Formerly known as the 'Walsingham Mass', Saturday Mass is held every month in St Nicholas' Church at 10am. It is a traditional Anglo-Catholic Mass with incense held in the side Chapel to which everyone is most welcome. This Catholic form of worship gives more of a focus on Mary the mother of Our Lord for whom we pray and give thanks for her devotion and faith; we also ask for her help in our prayers to God.

We thank God for the continued support of those who attend each month, we pray and ask for your prayers that our numbers may increase, to give thanks and explore worshipping God in this alternative form of worship. There is a time after the service for refreshment and socialising.

If you think you may be interested we would be very pleased to see you; you can either speak to Rev Rob or myself to find out more or just come along; You will find details on the weekly notice sheet or I can give you the dates.

David Colston

Men's and Women's Breakfasts

We have been blessed by being at the Lido Cafe this year, who have made us so welcome with wonderful breakfasts.

In February, Peter Maxwell, a member of Weston-Super-Mare Street Pastors gave us an inspiring talk on their prayer-based activity as the 4th emergency service. As the pubs shut 4,000 people can be on the streets, some of whom being drunk can be very vulnerable.

Roger English in May skilfully made us aware of the immense complexities of reopening the Portishead rail line to Bristol. Four tunnels, three viaducts, numerous bridges and rare white beam trees add to the normal difficulties of railway development.

It takes £2.6 million to run the Great Western Air Ambulance each year, all of which has to be raised. Their wonderful work of saving lives was explained to us by Richard Lewis in June. They can reach any location in the area in 20 minutes to gain access or give specialist care.

Lee Abbey is a Christian holiday, retreat and conference centre run by the Lee Abbey Community, where 7,000 guests each year are surrounded by God's love and welcome. This is where Rob Eastwood Dewing and his family lived for 5 years. The Community members are drawn from 20 nations and Rob spoke in October of the joy and challenges of Community life.

We thank God for the fellowship and fun we enjoy together at the breakfasts, for the volunteers at the Lido Cafe and our speakers. We pray for another good year in 2018 and that you will come and bring a friend or neighbour.

Pauline Wigmore, on behalf of the Breakfast Committee

Kubernestai

Kubernestai takes its name from the Greek word for pilot or steer. Our Kubernestai is a group of 12 people which meets every couple of months to act as a sounding board for the clergy team and to pray together about the life of the church. I am extremely grateful for the wise people who have been willing to serve on this group. As some members look to step down, please pray for the right people to be willing to join and share their wisdom.

The members of Kubernestai this year have been David Tyers, Hilary Finch, Hayley Lung, Hugh Capon, Ron Roberts, Jean Eburne, Mary Duncan, Pearl Walker and Simon Stevens, along with the clergy team.

Rev Rob Eastwood Dewing

Baptism Welcomers

A christening or baptism brings an opportunity to celebrate the gift of a child in marking the start of their journey with God. This is a journey shared with their family and with their extended family in God. Our Baptism Welcomers and Clergy host a Preparation session where hospitality is offered, baptism is explored, paperwork completed and the service explained. Most baptism services take place on Sunday afternoons and all baptism families are invited to attend subsequent Sunday services to be welcomed by more of their Church Family. A follow-up visit to their home is undertaken wherever possible, to support their onward going journey with God.

We give thanks to God that people delight to bring their children to Church to be baptised. We also thank God for the members of our team – Juliet Bracken (as initial point of contact), Pam Newton (who attends almost all preparation evenings and baptism services!), Lesley Flanders (who also organises birthday cards for the children, provides a link to Church Tots and attends most baptism services), Gill Colston (who organises the baptism anniversary invitations, cards and gifts, and PCC sidespeople for the baptism services), Jean Eburne (who co-ordinates home visiting). We also give thanks especially to Fiona Doughton as she steps down from the role of Baptism Co-ordinator for all her faithful ministry in the role.

Please keep praying that all who come for baptism, and their families and friends, may grow into a deep and committed relationship with God, and that God would continue to inspire more Baptism Welcomers to grow this ministry. Please pray also for our new Baptism Co-ordinator Gill Ogden as she finds her way in the role.

GF8

GF8 is a group of young people, from year 9 and above who meet on the third Sunday of the month at 14 Woodhill Avenue. The evening starts at 6.30pm and finishes around 8pm.

A topic introduced by Hilary might be discussed or we may talk in a safe and confidential environment about anything of interest or concern to the members. Our conversations can be quite deep and reflective; nibbles and soft drinks are there to provide sustenance. The evening finishes with a prayer, often involving pebbles, water and/or candles.

We thank God for the wonderful group that we have currently, for their enthusiasm and fresh expressions of faith in their world.

We pray that the faith of these young people can thrive giving them confidence to be able to discuss openly with their peers.

If you wish to know more about GF8, the contact number for Hilary and Graham is 844252.

HOME GROUPS

Acts Group - Pauline

Our Acts Group that meets once a month on Wednesday continues its wander through Paul's missionary journeys. It is a wonderful read about God's power in the lives of the first Christians as they proclaim Christ's resurrection. Our thanks to God for the insights and strengthening of our faith and pray that he will continue to speak to us through his word and our discussions.

Pauline Wigmore

Acts Group – Michael

We meet on one Thursday each month. We have continued to follow the missionary journey of the Apostle Paul from Philippi via, Athens, to Corinth, and then on his third Missionary journey through Galatia to Ephesus, and eventually ending up at Miletus. We have noted that Paul's theology evolves during his travels and his differing audiences. Some of these cities were Greek foundations with a long history. Some had Jewish communities. Others were Roman colonies, but it is important to remember that in Paul's time all these cities were part of the Hellenistic world, in which Paul was an outsider, and to thank God for the efforts of Paul, and all those early Christians who came forward to lead the churches he founded. We pray that we shall learn from Paul's efforts and be inspired by his amazing energy.

Michael Wigmore

Third Thursday Morning Home Group

Our small ecumenical group has been studying a course – The Joy of the Gospel. It includes Bible passages, quotes from an Exhortation by Pope Francis, and questions to discuss. We usually include a quiz and cheerily accept that our varied answers can't all be right.

We have much to be thankful for – our freedom to meet (in some countries we would be persecuted), our prayer times (albeit brief), the friendliness which makes our opening with tea/coffee and then discussions so enjoyable even when serious.

We need prayer for our progress this year in continuing to learn and then putting into practice the outcome of our study and also in drawing into our group any would-be member.

Thursday Home Group

Our Home Group meets 10.30-12 on alternate Thursdays in term time, even though our school aged children have now moved on to university or adulthood. We thank God that it continues to be an oasis of support and encouragement for all of us, in busy and demanding lives. This year we have been following the Bible Society's 'Still Lyfe' series of readings and

reflections, and have sometimes even completed the challenges! Pray for us that we might always have the energy to give our faith the nurture it needs to grow.

Alison Stubbs

Tuesday Evening Home Group

Up to 11 of us have been meeting in the warmth and comfort of Mike and Edna Burt's lounge on alternate Tuesday afternoons. During the first half of 2017 we shared our thoughts on parts of Paul's Epistles as set for the Sunday morning services. Later we worked our way through 26 prophetic passages in the Old Testament looking ahead to the two Advents of our Lord Jesus Christ. More recently we have started to follow the challenging York Course "When I survey Christ's Cross and Ours."

Rodney Wheeler

Tuesday Morning Home Group

We are a group of ladies who meet together every Tuesday morning in term time for bible study, fellowship and support, providing an opportunity to discuss and strengthen our faith.

We give thanks to God for travelling alongside us and for the friendship and companionship that we all value.

We ask for prayer that more members will join us; for a deeper understanding of God's word and that our discipleship will draw others to know Christ as their personal Saviour.

Mary Duncan

2 Discipleship: a ministering congregation

Music Group

We are a mixed band of music makers of all ages who come together at the 9.15 service to worship God with enthusiasm! We use a wide variety of music which we hope appeals to all – tots, teenagers and traditionalists!

We pray that our music may be further enriched by the addition of any instrumentalists willing to share their talents and time with us to praise God's name.

We thank God that we have the opportunity to come together and offer worship in our own unique way, and for the fellowship that we share. We remember that He is with us always – even when we practise!

Cathy Jackson

St Nicholas' Choir

Though small in number, the choir continues to play its part in the music of the church. We sing occasional introits, anthems on festival days and introduce hymns which are new to most of the congregation.

We joined with St Peter's Choir and the Music Group for the patronal festivals and, as is usual, with High Street Methodist choir for the Advent Carol Service. Some of us also joined Churchill Methodist choir to sing 'Olivet to Calvary' on Palm Sunday.

Our Good Friday offering of Stainer's Crucifixion sung by an augmented choir was well received and this year's presentation will be 'The Passion of Christ' by Arthur Somervell.

I take this opportunity to invite those who enjoy singing God's praise to join us in the choir and at the risk of causing controversy, would stress the need for men's voices. The ability to read music is not essential; please consider joining us as we seek to enhance the music of the church.

Roy Jukes

St Peter's Choir

St Peter's choir lead the music for the 11.15 morning service every Sunday. This is a more traditional sung eucharist service where most hymns and other musical items are sung in harmony with organ accompaniment. We sing at Evensong twice a month. We are a friendly group and thrive on knowing each other and enjoying our singing together. We thank God that we have this opportunity to use and share our abilities. We meet on Fridays to practise the music for Sunday services and other events.

Early in 2017 the choir began learning the music in the Festival Book for Wells. We attend the group rehearsals so that we can practise the new music with other local choirs. The Diocesan Choral Festival was held at Wells on June 24th. Towards the end of the year most of us attended the Deanery Evensong at Christchurch Nailsea on 15th October.

I should like to thank the choir, music group and additional singers for the work put into the Christmas Carol Service.

Please pray for the choir and especially for those who are thinking about joining us but have been reluctant to come forward.

Andrew Curtis

Flowers at St Peter's

With Spring around the corner, we as a group once again enjoy sharing our love of flowers and foliage at St Peter's Church. A Calendar for vacant flower arranging dates is in the porch and we welcome any additional members.

Festival flowers are much enjoyed, when the group meet together to make our church more beautiful. Please check the church notices for times and come and join us.

Ann Grandfield Tel: 01275 847191

Bellringers

Portishead Bell ringers ring the bells at St Peter's Church on most Sunday mornings for Service. We ring for weddings and other occasions. We practice every Tuesday evening. We range in age from 13 – 82. We are always pleased to welcome visitors and equally pleased to train new recruits.

During 2017 we won the East Harptree Shield in the Deanery Bell ringing competition. We are delighted to have a tower full of ringers each week, often augmented by friends from other local towers. We always go to the pub at the end of bell ringing practice and drink lots of hot chocolate plus a small quantity of beer. Some of our bells have been in use in our tower since 1772 and are beginning to get very worn. This year we need to come up with a plan to keep bells ringing at St Peter's for the next 250 years.

Jan Wyatt

3 Discipleship: rooted in the local community

St Peter's School

St Peter's is the oldest school in Portishead, educating primary age children for over 200 years. The year has been full and active with many achievements and experiences for everyone. Most notable being designation as a National Teaching School and the Head teacher became a National Leader in Education.

St Peter's School now has a leading role in The Lighthouse School Partnership, providing professional development for staff and schools. We have close links with the Diocese as our Head Teacher has become a member of the DBE and School Effectiveness committee. We were delighted that the diocese sponsored our application to be a Teaching School.

Close relations with the Parish continue, with children enjoying services on leaver's day, special assemblies and the awe and wonder of Star Trail for example. Children naturally

express faith and like sharing this through “bubble prayers” and lively singing of “God Loves You.”

We hope, as a Teaching School, to share our expertise with student teachers and the wider community within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership and beyond. The governors have also revised our vision document in line with the C of E report “Valuing All God’s Children.” Please pray that we can continue to innovate and improve the learning opportunities and experience of “excellence as standard” for our children in the future.

Patricia Oakley, Foundation Governor

Trinity School

We are a Primary School providing education for children aged three to eleven years. In October last year, the Head of the school left for a new job and we would like to say thank you for all her work over the past nine years in helping the school to grow in size and to be successful. Thank you also for the help and support that both the Church of England and Methodist Church have given to the school over the last year.

The school has been represented many times throughout the year by the pupils. Some year six children went to a National Maths Challenge at Cambridge University while others have taken part in sporting and art events. The children are also active in local community events for example the Carnival and Swimathon. The school has an Animal Care Group where pupils help to look after the school pets. They are excited at the moment as a new baby guinea pig has just arrived to join the other animals.

Looking to the future we pray for the wisdom of the Governors to make the right decision in the appointment of the new School Head, for the health of the staff and pupils and for the children to enjoy and achieve their best in their learning.

Angela Venn, Foundation Governor

Open the Book

Open the Book continues to grow from strength to strength, offering assemblies to these schools: Trinity, St Peter’s, St Joseph’s and St Mary’s Portbury. It’s been a delight to see more Anglicans getting involved! Fran has had to step back from active involvement owing to her work pattern, but she stays in touch with the organisers and her old team.

Things to celebrate: an extension of opportunities and growing confidence of the volunteers.

Things to pray for: we would love to be able to offer Open the Book to the non-faith schools in the town – please could you pray for this opportunity to open up.

Chaplaincy

As chaplain to 2494 (Portishead) Air Cadets I lead sessions, attend their Awards Evening, support cadets and staff and am available as needed. Both staff and cadets continue to value the role of their padre and my involvement is limited only by my availability.

On 30th March 2017, I completed my Police Chaplains' Basic Training, and I am looking forward to re-establishing regular chaplaincy sessions at Police Head Quarters to supplement the 'available when requested' current situation.

Let us continue to thank God for the many open doors that we have through chaplaincy roles, for the valuing of the spiritual wellbeing of people of all ages within our uniformed services and the invitation that is extended to us to support this.

Please pray that the doors may continue to be open to us, for wisdom in developing this ministry and for all who serve our community – who give of themselves that others may live safely and be supported through troubled times.

Rev Christine Judson

Trinity Toddlers

Trinity Toddlers is a super, friendly toddler group offering play, craft, singing and the all-important coffee/tea and toast for busy grown-ups and children. Thanks to our amazing volunteers from St Peter's Church, our group can offer a helping hand, from making a cuppa to keeping little ones busy whilst the grown-ups get to enjoy their cuppa. We give thanks to our amazing volunteers who, without their support, we wouldn't be able to provide such a group for the community. We pray that our support will continue and maybe even grow in the coming year. Also, we pray that our group continues to support the community in the right ways and when this falters, we ask for God's guidance to help put us back on the right track.

LLADs

Lads, Lasses and Dads (LLADs) for dads and children (0-7 years) meets at St Barnabas Children's Centre on the second Saturday of each month. We provide good coffee, bacon butties, snacks, juice, toys, games and activities. It is a safe place for dads to socialise with each other, children to play with others, and gives mum a couple of hours to herself. We give thanks that, despite needing to suspend LLADs at Trinity due to falling numbers, LLADs at St Barnabas is going well and is financially secure. We are grateful for financial support from the Local Commissioning Network over the last two years to pay for a professional children's worker. LLADs is supported by a small team of volunteers including a kitchen team who also provide a café service to a group for families with children with additional needs. We would

welcome prayers for the group as we work out new ways to work in partnership with the Children's Centre as they face further cutbacks.

David Tyers

Senior Citizens Supper

A three-course meal and entertainment was provided, with transport for those who needed it, for 136 older people in Portishead. Generally aimed at those who are in their eighties, or older, who live alone, this event particularly seeks to involve those who do not tend to get out and about. Totally reliant upon the generosity of Portishead Community for donations, volunteers and nominations, this intergenerational event is co-ordinated by a small team, headed by Elissa Hamilton. Elissa and many of the team are members of Portishead Church of England. They work throughout the year to manage and expand the guest list, to raise local funding and co-ordinate local support. Gordano School students, Police Cadets and St John Ambulance Cadets & Staff assisted and a myriad of other adult volunteers also played their part. Connells, Lions, Rotary, Portishead Porters and Gordano Valley Church all helped with transport. Harbourside Family Practice and Wiltshire Farm Foods provided food and Martin Evans, of Radio Bristol, compered while Philip Baldwin and Dylan Cheasley entertained with music and song, while Portishead Carnival Queen and Princesses visited every table. We thank God for the way that this event is supported by our community. Please pray for new Team members, that this hugely valuable event may continue to reach out and honour our older generation.

Star Trail

Once again, the beginning of Advent saw the inside of St Peter's Church transformed, as we invited our local school-aged children to journey in the steps of the three wise men.

Every primary school in Portishead (plus 3 other invited schools, a group of Beaver Scouts, and many members of the public) visited with their chosen year group again this year, which means that in their school career, every school-aged child in the town will be given the opportunity to follow the Star Trail and come face to face with the birth of the Christ child.

Our aims are to give the children an experience that fills them with a sense of the awe and wonder of the shepherds and wise men felt when they knelt at the manger; to fill their heads with visual memories of that very first Christmas; and to leave them with the knowledge that God is always there to be their friend.

We thank God for the fine weather we experienced in the week of Star Trail which enabled the children to travel safely to and from the event.

We would ask you to pray that 2018 will see more people coming forward to help at Star Trail in any way they can, so that we can share the roles, the workload – and the pleasure of the whole experience!

Sarah Iles

Lighthouse Carers

This group, based at the Lighthouse Café, enables people caring for someone with dementia to meet together in a support group while activities are provided for their loved ones. Carers meet in the cafe and have the opportunity to chat, exchange experiences and support each other. Skilled staff are on hand to provide practical advice and the Lighthouse Café helpers, plus other volunteers, act as hosts – providing a warm welcome and much valued hospitality.

The cared-for group meet in the Chancel for skittles, snooker and darts and in the Choir Vestry for crafts, jigsaws, board games and easy listening music. Skilled staff and volunteers supervise and support the activities.

The group meets monthly on a Tuesday morning 10.30-12.30.

Further information is available from Vicky Preston – 07702440416

4 Discipleship: agents of health and wholeness

Our Pastoral Assistants continue to provide invaluable support to many in our Parish. In addition to the fundamental requirement of a loving and compassionate heart and a willingness to listen and support those in need, they each bring to the role their own gifts, skills and interests.

Our current team of Pastoral Assistants have been involved in many different tasks, including welcoming people to our churches and our communities; hospital visiting; visiting people in their homes, not just the elderly and housebound; supporting the bereaved; administering home communion to individuals and groups; and sharing with clergy, wardens and readers in the pastoral oversight of our various congregations, taking a particular interest in visitors, newcomers and those not seen for a while.

We thank God for the ministry of Sharon Schools and Veronica Johnstone, both of whom have stepped out of this ministry during 2017, and for our new Pastoral Assistants – the second tranche of whom completed their initial training in Spring 2017. A joint celebration of

all Pastoral Assistants is planned for Sunday 10th June 2018, 3pm at St Nicholas' Church, when we will be joined by our new Archdeacon Adrian Youings.

Please pray for those in any kind of pastoral need in our parish, and for God's wisdom as we seek to care for them and share Christ's love.

Millennium Garden

The garden continues to be managed by 3 members of the congregation with additional help from members of Portishead in Bloom.

The garden was part of the town tour for the South West in Bloom judges and also the Britain in Bloom national judges. It also received an Outstanding award in the RHS It's Your neighbourhood awards in July.

Children from the 9.15am service have made a large 'bug hotel' out of recycled pallets, old pots, branches and twigs etc and erected it beside the compost heap to provide shelter for a variety of invertebrates.

Several wedding parties used the garden last summer for their photographs and various church events were held here.

The garden is frequently used by members of the public for relaxation, picnics or just for a walk. It is a valuable asset for the church and any additional help would be very gratefully received.

Jane Pagano

Lighthouse Café held every Thursday 2-4.pm at St Nicholas' Church

The Community Café is run by St Nicholas, St Peter's and the URC.

We are able to give lifts to some folk who would not be able to come without help, and we are on the lookout for people who are on their own. We serve homemade cakes, and lovely tea and coffee. We do not make a specific charge but ask for donations. Any money left over after we have covered our costs, is given to local charities and details of the giving are shown in the café.

Our aim is to show Jesus' love and compassion to those who come, and many do come because they are lonely. We ended 2017 with a bumper afternoon, and for the last quarter, we sang Christmas Carols, in a beautifully decorated Café. So many came that we had tables down the aisle and nobody was turned away, even if it was a squash.

We had a numbers blip towards the end of 2017 but numbers have picked up again. Please pray that this will continue. We also hold a time of prayer the day before at 2.00pm to specifically pray for the café.

We are always looking for people to join us by serving, or washing up, or picking up, so if you would like to find out more, please do ask me, or Rosie Weekes (URC) or just come to the café and see it in action for yourself!

Pearl Walker

Oasis @ Trinity

Having said a sad farewell to the wonderful Karen Twyford, I find myself stepping with my little feet into some big shoes!

My name is Claire Taylor and I am the Learning Mentor at Trinity Anglican Methodist Primary School. I am thrilled to be taking over the co-ordination of Oasis @ Trinity, working alongside the churches and community to help provide support to our school families.

Oasis offers parents and carers of children at Trinity school, the opportunity, once a week to be with like-minded people. To chat over a coffee, browse our support library, find out what's on or simply just sit.

Life throws many challenges our way and it is often with support, through our parent community, that we can feel stronger and get through.

Coffee, cake and Catch Up, presently on the third Monday of each term, continues to flourish and is supported by our clergy; Rob Eastwood Dewing and Nick Moxon, along with our amazing volunteers. "As new" uniform can also be purchased for just £1 an item!

Handling Anger in the family" proved to be a very successful parenting course, supported by Oasis. Our Christmas Star craft activity at the Christmas School Fair offered a great free activity for the children, while parents and carers had an opportunity to chat with the Oasis team and browse through resources.

I will be looking forward to working with the team to continue to offer much needed family support. In our ever developing world, where life can sometimes be hard work, we thank God for the provision of Oasis and the help of our invaluable volunteers.

We ask you to pray for our families (children, parents and carers) to know that they are not alone, to be guided by the support and held up by the strength of the Oasis team.

5 Discipleship: engaged in contemporary issues

Portishead Dementia Action Alliance

Portishead Dementia Action Alliance was launched in 2013 alongside similar groups in Weston, Worle and Clevedon. The steering group meetings are held at least four times a year. The group is made up of carers and former carers, people living with dementia and representatives of Portishead Rotary Club, Senior Citizen Forum, Wiltshire Farm Foods, Home Instead, Jubilee Day Centre, Portishead Churches, Alzheimer's Society and North Somerset Council. Our group is committed to working towards making Portishead 'Dementia Friendly'. The Alliance welcomes new members and volunteers to continue the important work of the alliance.

Portishead Dementia Action Alliance is aiming to improve the lives of people living with dementia in Portishead and the surrounding areas. To do this, we help to develop Dementia Friendly Communities for people with dementia, their carers and families, voluntary and statutory services, businesses and the wider community: to seek membership from businesses and organisations in and around Portishead; to assist in the formation of other Dementia Action Alliances; to establish and maintain effective support through information sharing networks; to ensure that the voices of people with dementia, their carers and families are heard and guide the work of the Dementia Action Alliance; to raise awareness of dementia across local communities and to work towards necessary improvements to enable people with dementia and carers to live independently.

So far we have undertaken consultation in and around Portishead listening to the views of people living with dementia and their carers, families and friends on how they feel their community could become more dementia friendly. Coin recognition charts and information sheets have been distributed to retail outlets. Dementia Friends awareness/information sessions run by local Dementia Champions and booklets with information for customer facing staff on 'How to help people with Dementia' have been made available.

In November 2017 a 'Dementia Friendly Portishead' Roadshow was held in Somerset Hall. People could visit information stalls, listen to speakers on such topics as Living with Dementia and nutrition and enjoy tea and cake in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. A similar event is planned for May 2018.

Portishead Church of England are pleased to be playing an active part in this organisation – both directly and via involvement in other community organisations. For more information or to be part of the Portishead Dementia Action Alliance please contact: Brenda Birkinshaw on: 07896633900 or email: brendabirkinshaw@gmail.com

Contemporary Ethics Forum

The Contemporary Ethics Forum seeks to provide well informed speakers who can help us to explore and engage with contemporary ethical issues. We hope that this will enable us to discern when we need to speak up, take action or support others in taking an ethical stance. We met twice in 2017. In May, Joy Saunders led us on: "Is Integrity in Business Possible?" Joy has worked in the corporate sector of business and in the not-for-profit area. In 2013 she was awarded Director of the Year for her transformative role working in 26 countries in very challenging situations. She described how setting standards and monitoring compliance alongside practices which alter the ethos of a company, can transform a business. Joy had just returned from working with her team on tackling corruption in the construction industry in Afghanistan. Her talk and her recent experience led to many questions and a prolonged discussion.

In October, the Professor of Sports Ethics at Cardiff Metropolitan University addressed the huge topic of Sports Ethics. Professor Carwyn Jones is particularly interested in alcohol and other addictions related to sport and discussed these as well as the use of and testing for performance enhancing drugs. He was an engaging and enthusiastic speaker who opened our eyes to the many potential ethical problems in sport.

This year we have met in St Peter's, which has not only reduced our expenses but provides easier access to audio-visual equipment. However, this venue may make the meetings less attractive and accessible to non-church members and we are keen to attract a wide audience. One particular group who we are delighted to welcome are the Gordano Sixth Form students with their ethics tutor.

We continue to be very fortunate in finding excellent speakers who have been enthusiastic and generous with their time and expertise. We welcome feedback and suggestions for future topics and speakers.

June Brailsford