Gosh this last year has flown by. We wonder if that is because we have done so many things. We have held two craft fairs with big raffles, a barn dance, a quiz, a jumble sale, lent lunches and we have catered for a funeral wake and had BBQ’s at our churchyard clear-ups. St Peter’s is a very versatile church and a big thank you goes to everyone who has supported and helped with these events. We already have planned two more craft fairs and a flower festival at Harvest and a ‘Songs of Praise’ for the coronation.

We introduced a new service ‘free@four’ on the first Sundays each month to encourage families but sadly it didn’t really take off so we stopped it. However Ali, our youth leader, is starting a new weekday get together on Wednesdays in hopes of catching the mother’s on the after school run. There will be crafts, games, refreshments and ‘light’ worship. Please pray for the success of this new venture.

The repair cafe continues to use us once a month and seems to get busier and busier. Lunch club is a very successful event and the Christmas lunch was exceptional. Thanks to MaryJane and her team.

As you will now know Chris and Teresa are stepping down from their roles as churchwardens but we will continue on the PCC and be supportive to the new lucky replacements! We say that lightly but it has been a privilege to serve you and St Peter’s and we have both enjoyed doing so. Hopefully the new recruitments will also get some pleasure from it.

Our love and thanks go to both Paul and Martin for their wonderful ministry with us, and the huge support they give to everything we do. Their enthusiasm is infectious. Thanks also to Andy for the musical directorship, to Anthony and Philippa for their steadfast accounting and IT/technical support, to MaryJane for Possums, Lunch club and being the safeguarding officer. Thank you too to the choir, we hope to try to recruit some new members in the coming months. Thank you to the flower team and cleaners who do a great job keeping the church looking lovely, thanks to the bell ringers who welcome us to church on Sunday mornings, and a big thanks to everyone on the various rotas for Sundays. Teresa and Chris are very appreciative of the support and co-operation you have given us.

As we hand over we assure you that the roof leak and the flooring problems are being addressed and will hopefully soon be overcome. The running, heating and maintenance of the church is an ongoing problem and we rely on the generosity of our congregation and fundraising events to sustain the financial side of things.

Let us continue to be the warm, friendly welcoming church that we have a reputation for being.

St Peters’ Church Choir report for April 2022 to April 2023 for APCM 23.04.23

As usual the choir is immensely grateful for the inspirational musical direction we receive from Andy Rees, and the time and effort he so generously gives us.

Our only regret is that we cannot repay these in greater measure.

Our numbers have remained low, with illness still preventing some of us from attending, but we are ever hopeful of seeing returning friends.

Our joint services with St Mary’s Newick were joyful occasions, and both choirs relished the opportunity to sing with a larger group and be part of a fuller sound.

This was particularly so at the Christmas carol service, when our combined forces were joined by “proper” (professional) singers and it was a truly wonderful experience to be part of, certainly for St Peter’s Choir, and hopefully for the congregation too.

We were also “invited” to sing carols at Gradwell Park in South Chailey in the week before Christmas.

This is the second year we have done this, and it was a very happy experience for us and hopefully the residents too, who made us feel very welcome.

As ever, the focus for our small core of singers is to support our church services with sacred music which touches our spirits with harmony and helps to bring us all closer to God.

Flower Report for 2022/2023

The lovely flower ladies continue to create some wonderful arrangements over the year for our church.

We have welcomed two new arrangers and one lady has moved away, we will miss her and wish her well.

We are now using less oasis and have more freeform arrangements, mainly to save the planet and in some circumstances, flowers stand alone beautifully with a small amount of greenery, particularly at Easter as the lilies themselves create a statement.

We do have a small budget for flowers which is usually used at Christmas, relying on the arrangers with gardens to bring along their foliage to compliment the arrangements.

Wedding flowers for a Christmas wedding in 2022 meant we did not have to do any arranging, as they were done by members of the family and friends.     Their arrangements were stunning and very much in keeping with the festival of Christmas.

We are always looking for more people to join us, so please let me know if you are interested.   We meet for festivals with tea, coffee, cake and biscuits so we can enjoy each other's company.

With my thanks to all the ladies for all the time they spend arranging the flowers which certainly enhance the life of our superb church.

Liz Cullen    Flower Co-ordinator

**St. Peter's Prayer Team** do not meet in a group at the moment but continue to pray individually. We have an extensive list of names which are prayed for daily and we welcome any names that need prayer for any reason at all. The names are confidential. It is not necessary to divulge the reason for prayer if you do not wish to. We are a very small group at the moment and if anyone would like to join us, they would be most welcome.   I am in church most Sundays and available for a chat. Paula

**BIBLE BOOK CLUB** We are slowly and methodically reading our way through many of the Bible’s 66 books.

The Old Testament Prophets, both major and minor, has inspired us in the detailed recording of these ancient events.  Currently we are reading the book of Joshua.  We have read St John’s gospel, having already covered some of St Paul’s letters written to the New Testament churches.

We are discovering that the Bible is far from uninteresting but inspiring and challenging when we are able to give time to become more familiar with its message.  We have to ask why haven’t we had these enjoyable and informative discussions in a group session before.

Although it is known as the Bible Book Club, it is very open and free for anyone to join us.  We each share what we have discovered from the book we have read, and learn from the various viewpoints shared.  As we try to unpack the narrative of each story, the relevance of God’s word is our generation becomes quite exciting, both historically and spiritually.

Why not come and join us at our next meeting: April 17th @ 2.15 @ MILLRIDGE.

Phone: 01825 722936 or stewartandjoy@gmail.com

We’d love to see you.

BELL RINGERS

Unfortunately we are short on ringers at the moment  due to two members moving away and one with a long term hand injury. We have been teaching one new ringer and she has picked it up very quickly. Ideally we would like a couple more learners.

We are again this year showing the Geocachers how to ring when they come to help tidy the churchyard.  We rang for the Queen's funeral and we will be ringing on the Coronation weekend although we have yet to finalise details.

We have noticed sticks outside the tower in recent days, we think the jackdaws are back in the belfry.  If there is any way of stopping them we would be most grateful as in recent years they have made a real mess up there.

Also, we have two weddings this year that require bells and we are happy to ring for the school services if those who work are available.

Thank you again for heating in the tower on practice nights, it makes a great difference.

Katherine Matthews, Tower Captain

Safeguarding :

No incidents to report this year.

All PCC members are up to date with their DBS checks and safeguarding training.

Lunch Club:

Thank you to all our helpers who continue to make lunch club the fun event that it is.

We have around 30/35 guests each month who love the food and atmosphere.

Toddler Group:

Thank you to Fiona and Joy who help to make this group the success that it is.

We have on average around 10 children and their parents, grandparents or carer.