

# St. Augustine's Church Halifax

## Annual Vestry Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting



Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2016

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# **St. Augustine's Church Halifax Annual Vestry Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## **A G E N D A**

### **Annual Vestry Meeting**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of previous meeting
  - a. Matters Arising
3. Election of Churchwardens

### **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of previous meeting
  - a. Matters Arising
3. Reports
  - a. Electoral Roll
  - b. PCC Review of the year
  - c. Churchwardens' Fabric Report
  - d. Deanery Synod Proceedings
  - e. Churches Together
  - f. Accounts and Financial Statements
4. Appointment of Independent Examiner
5. Elections
  - a. Deanery Synod Representatives
  - b. Lay members of PCC
6. Transformational Plan
7. Vicar's remarks
8. Any other business

# **St. Augustine's Church Halifax**

## **Minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting**

### **held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Revd. Sue Heptinstall, Shelagh Hirst, Sue Degnan and Geoff Anderson.

#### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 were included on page 4 of the report booklet.

Proposed: Karen Hellewell

Seconded: Denise Keenan

That: "The minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 be accepted as a true record."

Decision: Carried

No matters arising from the minutes were identified.

#### **3. Election of Churchwardens**

The Vicar expressed his thanks to the outgoing Churchwardens, Jon Hirst and Jimmy Keenan for all they have done. The Vicar advised that Jon Hirst, having completed six years as Churchwarden, is not eligible to stand again without a break of at least two years.

One nomination was received, Denise Keenan, making a ballot unnecessary.

Revd. John Hellewell declared Denise Keenan elected to serve as Churchwarden in the parish of St. Augustine, Halifax for the year 2015 – 2016.

# **St. Augustine's Church Halifax**

## **Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

### **held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Revd. Sue Heptinstall, Shelagh Hirst, Sue Degan and Geoff Anderson.

#### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 were included on pages 5 to 8 of the report booklet.

Proposed: Denise Keenan

Seconded: Karen Hellewell

That: "The minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 be accepted as a true record."

Decision: Carried

No matters arising from the minutes were identified.

#### **3. Reports**

All the reports are contained in the booklet circulated prior to the meeting.

##### **a) Electoral Roll**

The Electoral Roll Officer reported that there are 25 people on the Electoral Roll. This is an overall increase of three compared to last year.

John Fleming asked whether the Diocese gathered any information about the number of people passing through St. Augustine's Centre during a week as the usual Sunday attendance figure of 23 is a very poor representation of life at St. Augustine's. The Vicar advised that the Diocese does not gather any such information.

##### **b) PCC Review of the Year**

A summary of the business conducted by the PCC in 2014 was included on pages 11 to 13 of the booklet.

No questions were raised.

**c) Churchwardens' Fabric Report**

No questions were raised regarding the Churchwardens' Fabric Report as included on pages 13 and 14 of the booklet.

**d) Deanery Synod Proceedings**

The proceedings of the Deanery Synod in 2014 were included on pages 14 and 15 of the booklet.

In response to a question from Jenny Lynn, the Vicar explained that, whilst an infrequent occurrence in his experience, a PCC can pass a resolution to Deanery Synod for consideration, which can then pass it on to Diocesan Synod and thence to General Synod. Jenny suggested that this route could be used to gather wider support on issues that are of concern to St. Augustine's, such as the indefinite detention of asylum seekers.

**e) Churches Together**

The Vicar advised that the Central Churches Together grouping did not meet during 2014 and consequently there was nothing to report.

**f) Accounts and Financial Statements**

The accounts and financial statements, including the reports from the External Examiner and the Treasurer, were included on pages 16 to 21 of the booklet.

The Treasurer pointed people to the summary on page 20 for an overview of the position at the year end. At the end of 2014, there was £3,574 in the unrestricted *General Fund* and £1,181 in the restricted *New Mara / Kiabakari Fund*.

John Fleming asked about the purpose of the £12,000 loan that was made to Christ Church. The Vicar explained that the replacement of the heating system at Christ Church had resulted in unexpected additional work with the floor having to be replaced which caused a cashflow issue. Christ Church is hoping to repay the loan in full when Gift Aid has been recovered; there has been a slight hiatus due to a change in Treasurer.

The meeting expressed thanks to Bob Berridge for all his hard work on maintaining the accounts.

#### **4. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

The meeting agreed to send our customary token of appreciation to our Independent Examiner, Revd. Anthony Foster. It was confirmed by the Treasurer that Revd. Foster is prepared to continue in the role he has filled so ably for more than twenty-five years.

Proposed: Margaret Francis

Seconded: Jenny Lynn

That: "Revd. Anthony Foster be re-appointed as the independent examiner for the accounts for St. Augustine's Church for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015."

Decision: Carried

#### **5. Elections**

##### **a) Deanery Synod Representatives**

Deanery Synod Representatives will next be elected at the APCM in 2017. Current representatives are Shelagh Hirst and Denise Keenan.

##### **b) Lay Members of PCC**

The Church Representation Rules specify the election of 6 lay members for our size of electoral roll. This year there are three vacancies; two as a result of completion of term of office and one as a result of Denise Keenan being elected Churchwarden. The following nominations were received prior to the meeting:

- Bob Berridge
- Karen Hellewell
- Jon Hirst

Two further people have expressed interest in serving on the PCC; however they are not eligible for election having been only recently added to the Electoral Roll. The first meeting of the new PCC will consider co-opting the two people in question.

There being no need for a ballot, Revd. John Hellewell declared the above named elected to serve as lay members of the PCC of St. Augustine, Halifax for a three-year term of office.

## **6. Transformational Plan**

A summary of the current position with regard to transformational planning was included on page 22 of the booklet.

The Vicar advised that a new Diocesan initiative, *Plan for Growth*, will be launched in the Huddersfield Episcopal area in the autumn to replace transformational plans. The workshop planned for May 2015 will still go ahead and will be used primarily to review where we are up to on previously identified items. The output from the workshop will be a useful input to the new initiative.

## **7. Vicar's Remarks**

The Vicar's remarks were included on pages 23 and 24 of the booklet.

## **8. Any Other Business**

With no other business being raised, the Vicar closed the meeting.

St. Augustine's Church, Hanson Lane, Halifax

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# Annual Report & Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council

for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015

*INCUMBENT* Revd. John Hellewell  
*BANK* Santander  
*INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION* Revd. Anthony Foster  
32 Savile Drive  
Halifax HX1 2EU  
01422-344152

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## 1. Introduction

St. Augustine's Church has the responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

St. Augustine's Church is part of a united benefice with Christ Church Mount Pellon, with separate PCCs being maintained for the two churches.

## 2. PCC Membership

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. Members of the PCC are either *ex officio* or elected by the annual parochial church meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

*INCUMBENT* Revd. John Hellewell  
*ASSISTANT PRIEST* Revd. Sue Heptinstall (*until 08/09*)  
*CURATE* Revd, Linda Maslen (*from 04/07*)

*CHURCHWARDENS* Jimmy Keenan (*until AVM*)  
Jon Hirst (*until AVM*)  
Denise Keenan (*from AVM*)

*DEANERY SYNOD REPS* Shelagh Hirst  
Denise Keenan

*ELECTED MEMBERS* Bob Berridge  
Karen Hellewell  
Jon Hirst (*from APCM*)  
Denise Keenan (*until APCM*)  
Ann Mansfield  
Mitra Nikoo  
Shine Sun

*CO-OPTED MEMBERS* Alireza Amini (*until APCM*)  
Alex Khalili (*from 12/05*)  
Katie Fawcett (*from 12/05*)

During 2015 the following members served as officers of the PCC:

*VICE-CHAIR* Denise Keenan  
*TREASURER* Bob Berridge  
*SECRETARY* Jon Hirst

At present the PCC operates one committee, the Standing Committee, which is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. The Standing Committee consists of the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Churchwardens, the Vice-chair and the Clergy.

### **3. Electoral Roll Report**

As required by the Church Representation Rules, the Electoral Roll is wholly renewed every six years, the most recent occasion being in 2013.

There are 25 (2014 24) people on the Electoral Roll.

The usual Sunday attendance was 25 (2014 23).

#### 4. PCC Review of the year

The PCC met on the following dates, with an average attendance of 71% (2014 71%).

- 13/01/2015
- 10/03/2015
- 12/05/2015
- 07/07/2015
- 08/09/2015
- 10/11/2015

The PCC discussed a wide range of matters, both large and small, including the following:

- The ordination of Revd Linda Maslen at Ripon Cathedral on 04/07/2015 and her subsequent arrival as Curate,
- The licensing of Shelagh Hirst as a Reader on 10/10/2015.
- The approval of PCC-nominated Governors for the School and Trustees for the Centre.
- The introduction of the laptop / projector / screen for use in Sunday morning services. This innovation has been enthusiastically received by the congregation and, along with revised liturgy, has greatly enhanced the worship experience.
- The close working relationship with the School and the Centre – including the establishing of a process to manage whether the Church or the Centre pays for items of maintenance for St. Augustine's House. Additionally, the PCC agreed to give the Centre Caretaker and the volunteer Head Gardener small gifts in recognition of the benefit the Church gains from their work.
- The definition of a six-month preparation period for baptism, during which the candidate must attend a course of some description that is focused on understanding / exploring the Christian faith.
- The annual review of the safeguarding policies – Child Protection, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, DBS Checks – took place on 10/03/2015 and the policies were re-adopted without amendment.

## 5. Churchwardens' Fabric Report

### a) *Grounds*

The Churchwardens are very grateful to everyone whose efforts contribute towards the maintenance of the grounds. Particular thanks are due to the volunteer Head Gardener at St. Augustine's Centre, Steve Blacksmith and his team, and the Centre's Caretaker, David Potter.

### b) *Chapel*

The Chapel continues to provide a refuge of quiet and calm for many who visit the Centre and remains in good decorative order. The Tuesday lunchtime worship times continue to be popular.

### c) *Inventory of Goods*

There are no points to note for 2015 in respect of the inventory of goods other than the purchase of a projector (the laptop and screen are on loan from The Gathering Place).

### d) *Communion Vessels*

The silver communion set remains in good order and is used for all communion services in the School Hall. When not in use the silver is stored in the Church safe.

The Holy Island pottery communion set also remains in good order and is used for communion services in the Chapel. When not in use, the new set is stored in a locked cupboard and the old set left on display.

A silver-plated pyx and a small silver chalice and paten set are not currently used and are kept in the aumbrey in the wall of the Chapel in St. Augustine's House.

A boxed home communion set is not currently in use and is stored in the Church safe.

### e) *St. Augustine's House*

The St. Augustine's Centre Halifax charity continues to use and manage the building on a day-to-day basis.

f) *Rotas*

Many of the congregation continue to be involved in our worship via the rotas for welcoming, reading, leading intercessions, etc. We are very grateful to all who volunteer in the various capacities and encourage everyone to think prayerfully about how they could be involved.

It is a great help when people on the rota arrange their own deputies for weeks when they know they will not be at church. We would like to encourage you to continue to take this approach and, where possible, write it on the rota displayed on the notice board.

Rotas are produced every three months and sufficient notice of a desire to join or retire from a particular rota usually means that the request can be accommodated from the next publication, although ad-hoc opportunities to deputise may well arise in the meantime. If you would like to know more about what any job entails, please speak to Jon Hirst..

## **6. Deanery Synod Proceedings**

Halifax Deanery Synod met three times in 2015 under the chairmanship of Rev. Stephen Bradberry, the Area Dean. The synod meets in a different church every time, and begins with an outline of the parish and its ministry.

This year we heard from St. George's Ovenden, Holy Nativity Mixenden, and Christ Church Sowerby Bridge.

The March meeting was an opportunity to listen to our (then) new Bishop, Rt. Rev. Jonathan Gibbs, and ask some questions.

In June, we heard from the Diocese about the current financial situation and ways forward for the new parish share, and also about Fostering in Calderdale.

The November synod was supposed to hear from the new Director of Education for the new diocese but unfortunately he was unable to attend at the last minute. The meeting instead was able to give time discussing and debating a motion from St. Paul's, Kings Cross relating to parishes who had not paid their Parish Share (Common Fund). In the end, after a lively debate, the motion was not carried. We look forward to further stimulating debates over the coming year.

## **7. Churches Together**

Churches Together in Central Halifax did not meet in 2015.

## 8. Accounts and Financial Statements

### External Examiner's Report

I have independently examined the accounts of the PCC as required by the Church Accounting Regulations 1997. The PCC has elected both to prepare the accounts on the receipts and payments basis and to subject its accounts to independent examination rather than audit. My responsibilities are to identify whether or not proper accounting records have been kept; to check that the PCC accounts agree with the accounting records; to look for possible significant errors in the accounts; and to check that the accounts have been properly prepared.

#### *My report*

No matters have arisen during the course of my examination where I have to give an adverse report. On the contrary, I can only praise the care and thoroughness that your Treasurer has shown once again. You are blessed to have his service, but need to prepare for the time when Bob will no longer be able to do this important work. I note with approval your charitable giving of 10%, but would ask you to consider gifts to the Church Missionary Society, the Bible Society and other missionary societies, who are receiving less from PCCs than previously, and do vital work in UK and overseas.



A. J. Foster.  
18.3.16

Revd. A.J. Foster  
External Examiner  
32 Savile Drive  
Halifax  
HX1 2EU

## Financial Statement for the Year Ending 31 December 2015

	2015	2014
<b>Unrestricted General Fund for the Year Ending 31 December 2014</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>		
<i>Voluntary Receipts</i>		
<i>Regular Giving</i>		
Planned giving	3852.00	3807.10
Collections & other giving	1090.05	1196.39
Income tax recovered – years 2012/13		1927.75
Income tax recovered – year 2014	836.54	
<i>Other voluntary receipts</i>		
Miscellaneous Donation	30.00	10.00
Donations for monthly Sunday lunch	56.82	170.06
<i>Receipts from Church activities</i>		
Funeral & Wedding Fees	110.00	0.00
Coffee after Church	99.19	86.56
St. Augustine's House Annual Lease	5408.04	5250.00
<i>Receipts from investments</i>		
Deposit account interest – see Reserve Fund (£241.46 invested in this fund during 2015)		
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>11482.64</b>	<b>12447.86</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
<i>Church activities</i>		
Mission & relief agencies	(4) 1148.27	1240.00
Common fund	5551.00	5456.00
Church running expenses	792.20	213.90
Cost of services	1537.55	1345.18
Clergy expenses	(3) 807.78	396.40
Utax Copier / printing / fax m/c	334.80	331.20
Printing, post & stationery	31.89	65.18
Hospitality & local community support	308.08	400.00
Monthly Sunday lunch costs	227.79	345.50
Coffee after Church	99.19	124.60
St. Augustine's House	1745.43	2876.10
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>12583.98</b>	<b>12794.06</b>
Excess receipts over payments	-1101.34	-346.20
Bank current & deposit accounts at 01/01	3574.06	3920.26
Bank current & deposit accounts at 31/12	<b>2472.72</b>	<b>3574.06</b>

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Unrestricted Reserve Fund for the Year Ending 31 December 2015</b>		
<b>Receipts</b> Deposit Account interest	241.46	248.08
<b>Payments</b>	0.00	0.00
Excess receipts over payments	241.46	248.08
Bank current & deposit accounts 01/01	1616.12	1368.04
<b>Bank current &amp; deposit accounts 31/12</b>	<b>1857.58</b>	<b>1616.12</b>

**Unrestricted 63 Hanson Lane Sale Fund  
for the Year Ending 31 December 2015**

<b>Receipts</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>Payments</b> Tfr to St. Aug House Repairs & Refurbishment Fund	657.49	563.00
Excess receipts over payments	-657.49	-563.00
Bank current & deposit accounts 01/01	43423.86	43986.86
<b>Bank current &amp; deposit accounts 31/12</b>	<b>42766.37</b>	<b>43423.86</b>

**Restricted St. Augustine's House Repairs & Refurbishment Fund  
for the Year Ending 31 December 2015**

<b>Receipts</b> Transferred from 63 Hanson Lane Sale Fund	657.49	563.00
<b>Payments</b>	-657.49	-563.00
Excess receipts over payments	0.00	0.00
Bank current & deposit accounts 01/01	0.00	0.00
<b>Bank current &amp; deposit accounts 31/12</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Restricted New Mara / Kiabakari Fund  
for the Year Ending 31 December 2015**

<b>Receipts</b>	947.73	1185.18
<b>Payments</b>	1421.29	-1043.58
Excess receipts over Payments	-473.56	141.60
Bank current & deposit accounts 01/01	1180.83	1039.23
<b>Bank current &amp; deposit accounts 31/12</b>	<b>707.27</b>	<b>1180.83</b>

**Summary of Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2015**

	Receipts £	Payments £	Excess Receipts over Payments £	Amount in Bank 31/12/2014 £	Amount in Bank 31/12/2015 £
<b>Unrestricted General Fund Comprising:</b>					
St. Augustine's Church	6074.60	10838.55	-4763.95		
St. Augustine's House	5408.04	1745.43	3662.61		
	<b>11482.64</b>	<b>12583.98</b>	<b>-1101.34</b>	<b>3574.06</b>	<b>2472.72</b>
<b>Unrestricted Reserve Fund</b>	<b>241.46</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>241.46</b>	<b>1616.12</b>	<b>1857.58</b>
<b>Unrestricted 63 Hanson Lane Sale Fund</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>657.49</b>	<b>-657.49</b>	<b>43423.86</b>	<b>42766.37</b>
<b>Restricted St. Augustine's House Repairs &amp; Maintenance Fund</b>	<b>657.49</b>	<b>657.49</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Restricted New Mara / Kiabakari Fund</b>	<b>947.73</b>	<b>1421.29</b>	<b>-473.56</b>	<b>1180.83</b>	<b>707.27</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Items</b>	<b>133.70</b>	<b>133.70</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>13463.02</b>	<b>15453.95</b>	<b>-1990.93</b>	<b>49794.87</b>	<b>47803.94</b>
	<b>Bank Accounts:</b>				
				554.22	563.29
				49240.65	47240.65
				<b>49794.87</b>	<b>47803.94</b>

## Statement of Assets and Liabilities 31 December 2015

	2015 £	2014 £
Cash Funds		
Santander Current Account	563.29	552.22
Church of England Deposit Account	47240.65	49240.65
	<b>47803.94</b>	<b>49792.87</b>
Investment Assets	0.00	0.00
Assets retained for Church's use (unrestricted funds)	4330.30	5190.18
Liabilities	0.00	0.00
Creditor	12120.30	12060.00

### Notes:

- The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the R&P basis.
- Moveable church furnishing and equipment held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, and which require a facility for disposal, are recognised but not valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.
- A total of £807.78 of clergy expenses were paid to the Vicar and Curate. No other payments were made to PCC members.
- 10% of the PCC's General Fund receipts were donated to the following charities:
  - Christian Initiative in Calderdale Schools..... £200.00
  - St. Augustine's Centre Destitution Fund ..... £348.27
  - Alpha House Calderdale..... £200.00
  - UNICEF ..... £200.00
  - 'Hope Reclaimed' – Christians Together..... £200.00

**£1148.27**

### **Treasurer's Report for Year Ending 31 December 2013**

The General Fund consists of St, Augustine's Church and St. Augustine's House. The Church incurred a deficit of £4763.95 during the year whilst the House produced a gain of £3662.61 giving an overall deficit of £1101.34 (Church + House) for the General Fund.

The deficit of £1101.34 has caused concern especially as it was preceded by year 2014's deficit of £346.20.

It was decided to look at excesses of income over expenditure for the Fund over the past 10 years (2006 to 2015 inclusive).

It was found that there were 7 deficits and 3 gains during this period. The largest deficit of £2895.83 occurred in 2006, and the year 2012 produced the largest gain of £1944.60.

Over the 10 year period the reserves of the General Fund declined from £11439.58 to £2472.72 giving a total reduction of £8966.86 during 10 years. This averages out to £896.69 per year. The figures show that with £2472.72 of reserves remaining at the end of December 2015, there are approximately two years in which to reverse the decline of the General Fund.

Interest earned by our deposit account is paid into the Reserve Fund. (I feel that a better name for this fund might be the Contingencies Fund so as not to confuse it with the 'reserves' of the General Fund). £241.46 was earned by the deposit account during 2015 bringing the total amount in this fund to £1857.58.

£657.49 was spent on a new Kenwood Cooking Range for the kitchen in the House. This amount was debited to the St. Augustine's House Repairs and Refurbishment Fund.

*Bowled 11.03.16.*

***The accounts for the year ending 31/12/2015 were unanimously accepted by the PCC on 10/04/2016.***

## Transformational Plan

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The new Diocese has replaced Transformational Planning with *Plan for Growth*; a formal plan in the new format will be produced in due course. A review session was held on Sunday 17/05/2015 to identify current positive and negative factors, ideas for further development, and priorities. It is envisaged that the output from this session will provide an input to the *Plan for Growth* process.

Current positive factors:

- People from different places
- Links with St. Augustine's Centre
- No permanent home (building responsibility)
- Flexibility of space
- Welcoming
- Bible readings in other languages
- Team work

Current negative factors:

- No permanent home / space

Ideas for further development:

- Worship
  - Make service more accessible
  - Develop bank of resources
  - Develop variety of styles / liturgies
  - Creative ways of praying
  - Prayers in other languages
  - Music as backing to prayers / 'silence'
  - Create art during the service
- Evangelism / Community
  - Bring back families / children from local community
  - Draw in more people from Clement Ct / Stansfield Cl / Rothery Ct / Cherry Ct
  - Advertise Church in Centre
  - Work on Centre / Church / School links – create something for children to draw them in
  - Write 3 steps on sheet and get translated (Farsi / Tigrinyan)

Priorities:

- Worship
  - Develop worship space / experience
  - Physical expressions of worship
  - Identify key / mandatory elements of services
  - More songs in other languages
- Evangelism / Community
  - Explore Parish profile, identify opportunities and promote
  - Do things together – away days / retreats, build links with Centre trips
  - Produce flyers for Tuesday lunch to advertise Church
  - Advertise Sunday lunches and invite people to taste Church then taste food

## School Report

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At the time of writing children and staff alike are on two weeks' holiday for the Easter break. They all work so very hard and I hope they enjoy this well-deserved holiday. When they return it will not be long before SATs week is upon us once again!

There are currently just over 180 pupils on roll. There is always a fair amount of mobility within the pupils, with one or two leaving and one or two arriving. At the moment we have a full complement of teaching staff and ancillary staff. All the staff show such commitment and loyalty to the school and put so much effort into their work.

The Governors continue to hold their regular meetings and also attend training sessions. Over the past year we have been so pleased to welcome four new governors, who are all making a valuable contribution to the work of the Governing Body. However, we do still have three vacancies! So, if you are interested, or know of anybody who might be interested, in becoming a governor, please do let us know.

The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors meet regularly to 'catch up' on school life. Each governor is linked to a particular class and its teacher, and governors are asked to visit their class at least once a term.

The last year has been very busy for the children and staff alike. As always there have been many new initiatives imposed by the government. Probably the most important of these has been the great change in the assessment system. Levels with a numerical value have been replaced by the terms 'emerging, expected, exceeding and mastery'. The staff at our school must be commended for the way have taken it all in their stride and devised a tracking system combining the old and the new!

As well as working hard in school the pupils continue their learning and acquiring of new skills out of school. During the last year Year 6 thoroughly enjoyed a short residential trip to Cumbria.

During term time pupils visit 'The Boiler House,' an activity centre in Halifax, where they can enjoy wall climbing, amongst other things! The

sports teams regularly take part in inter-school tournaments for football, hockey, cricket and the like.

During October, we held our Harvest Festival. The children collected coins and managed to raise £64.24 which was passed on to Oxfam with a huge thank you!

In February the choir once again took part in the Young Voices event in Manchester. They had been rehearsing over 30 songs covering a range of styles since last July. They performed with over 2,000 other children at the Manchester Arena

The school took part in Sport Relief on Friday 18th March and raised over £500 for charity. A big thank you to everyone who took part and made the day special.

Year 5 are taking part in a national handwriting competition to produce a piece of work about the Lord's Prayer. The children copied out the Lord's Prayer in their neatest handwriting and then decorated their work. The competition is open to all year five children in the country, with prizes being awarded for the best entries. Every child who takes part will receive a small commemorative gift for their achievement.

There were some beautiful entries in the Easter Competition and everyone who took part tried really hard. Well done! The prizes for the competition were a selection of Easter eggs.

A copy of the school newsletter is always available at the school reception desk and one will be put on the Church notice board in the hall to inform members of the congregation of forthcoming events, to which they are warmly welcomed. Or why not visit the school website ([www.st-augustines.calderdale.sch.uk](http://www.st-augustines.calderdale.sch.uk)) to see what is going on in our school?

*Ann Mansfield, Chair of Governors  
29<sup>th</sup> March, 2016*

## Vicar's Remarks

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There is no doubt that the one thing that is constant is change.

Some of it is imposed on us and is clearly unwelcome – such as the death of a loved one. And at St. Augustine's we mourned the death of Maureen Keenan in July. She was part of the fabric of St. Augustine's in so many ways, and loved being here and being with so many different people – and always interested in what they and their families were up to. She is very sadly missed!

Some of the change is imposed, but brings mixed blessings. The diocesan initiative of 'Plan 4 Growth' has taken longer to launch than expected, but that shouldn't stop us. Indeed, we've been doing it for years, just under different names! However, we will shortly be doing a more formal review of our Transformational Plan, and looking at the next stage of our development. Watch this space for details of how and when we will be doing this.

And we are also naturally changing as the people that make up St. Augustine's changes. We have seen friends move away to other towns and cities – and we bless them on the new stages of their journeys. We have also seen new friends come – and we marked that with baptisms in December, and more to come in 2016.

We also saw the arrival of Linda as curate and her husband Dave, and they've already proved a great blessing to us! And brought their own changes with them!

We have at long last begun to use the screen and it seems to have largely been welcomed, and allows us look forward to more creative uses in the future.

We have also begun to change the liturgy (the words we use, and the way we do things) so that they are more easily understood and followed by everyone. And we expect that to continue – do please let us know if you have any ideas about how we could improve things!

And we are looking forward to developing the Bible studies for those whose first language is not English. We've had some fantastic sessions over the past year, and we are looking forward to more this year, especially seeing people taking more responsibility for their own spiritual growth – with help from us all.

We have also seen more people coming to prayers on a Monday morning – there's always room for more! And developing links with the Centre, with The Gathering Place, and with the wider community, and we would expect those to grow and develop over the coming year as well.

All in all, we shall be looking forward to more changes this year – pray that they may all be in accordance with God's will, and may we embrace wholeheartedly where he is leading us!

Thank you everyone for all you've done over the past year, and most of all for being you!

Yours in Christ

*John*