

Annual Report

Year ended 31st December 2016



St. Michael's Church, Braintree

Information

Address St Michaels Lane, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1EY
Website <http://stmichaelsbtree.co.uk>
Email admin@stmichaelsbtree.co.uk

PCC Membership

Ex Officio Members

Cyril Bamforth (*Churchwarden, Lay Chair*) Lesley Davey (*Churchwarden*)

Deanery Synod (also ex-officio)

David Huxter Chris Jones Lin Terris John Turton

Elected Members

Moe Aung	Jennifer Bailey	Philip Bartlett-Rawlings	Derek Chapman
Terry Clark	Roger Cooke	Rod Davey	Ann Mahood
David Marriott	Ade Odupitan	Richard Richardson	Peter Schaad
Joel Wicks			

Co-opted Members

Andy Carter David Henfrey (*Treasurer*)

Non-members

Kim Cureton (*Secretary*) Sandra Savill (*Electoral Roll Officer*)

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Statistics

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Overall Sunday figures		
Total attendance (inc. Youth Church)	9,189	8,645
Average attendance. (inc. Youth Church)	177	166
Total Communicants (all services)	2,404	2,502
Youth Church Attendance		
Total Sunday children and adults	1,174*	1,197
Avg. Sunday children and adults	32*	30
Average Sunday Attendance		
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion	11	12
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion	128	124
10.00 a.m. Morning Worship	135	119
10.00 a.m. Church Family Worship	147	141
5.15 p.m. Traditional evening Worship	9	13
6.30 p.m. Holy Communion	17	19
6.30 p.m. Evening Worship (not including Sunday Carol Service)	18	19
Midweek 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion	8	9
Special Services		
Family Carol Service (Christingle)	291	270
Sunday Carol Service	167	181
Midnight Communion	73	75
Christmas Day 10.00 a.m. Service	137	130
Register/Special services		
Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child	1	3
Baptisms	9	5
Confirmations	2	4
Weddings	1	8
Funerals	20	22

* For comparison purposes please note that there were 37 weeks in 2016 and 40 weeks in 2015

Compiled by Marion Richardson from statutory registers

Minutes of the Annual Meetings

Meeting of Parishioners, held on Wednesday 27 April 2016 at St Michaels Church House

Welcome

Charles gave thanks to all involved in setting up the room, the sound system, and the induction loop, and for providing refreshments. He then welcomed Alan Radford, the Independent Examiner of our accounts, to the meeting.

Appointment of clerk for the meeting.

Kim Cureton was proposed by the Chair and duly elected unopposed.

Hymn 720

"We believe in the God the Father"

Opening Prayer

Rev. Stephen Bailey

Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 15th April 2015

The minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 15 April 2015 had been incorporated within the printed Annual Report 2015-16 provided to all Electoral Roll members. The minutes were agreed to be taken as read. Proposed by Dave Marriott, seconded by Helen Kemp and carried unopposed.

Election of Churchwardens for 2016/17

Cyril Bamforth and Lesley Davey were elected for the year.

Charles expressed his gratitude to Lesley and Cyril for their excellent year's work as a team and for being loyal supporters who have offered a warm personal friendship. Charles thanked Lesley especially for building a team of sound operators and to Cyril for his perseverance regarding the investigation of the flag tower cracks. Both Lesley and Cyril expressed a willingness to serve for another year. With no other nominations Cyril and Lesley were duly elected.

Commendation of newly-elected Churchwardens in prayer

Phil Bartlett-Rawlings

Kim Cureton

Annual Parochial Church meeting, held on Wednesday 27 April 2016 at St Michaels Church House

Apologies for absence

There were approximately 66 people in attendance. 55 apologies for absence had been received and their names were read out.

Keynote Address:

"The Great Zumbrati" by Mike Ferguson CEO of Developing Professionals International. The gist of Mike's address was that the requisites for change were 1) a vision of where we want to go and 2) belief that it could be done. He also said that the resources were always available but were not always seen. He challenged us about the danger of 'limiting beliefs' which could hold us back.

Charles expressed his thanks to Mike.

Minutes of the APCM of 15th April 2015

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 15th April 2015 had been incorporated within the printed Annual Report 2015-2016 provided to all Electoral Roll members. The minutes were proposed to be taken as read: proposed by Jennifer Bailey and seconded by Cynthia Daniels. This was carried.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Report of Electoral Roll Officer

Charles reported on behalf of Sandra Savill that at the APCM 2015 there were 234 names on the Electoral Roll. During the year 13 names were added and 14 names were taken off. The Roll therefore stood at 233. The names were read out.

Elections

Election of 4 Deputy Churchwardens (elected for 1 year)

The following had been nominated:

Moe Aung	Dave Marriott
Paul Killingback	Ade Odupitan

As there were no other nominations, Charles declared them duly elected. Cyril expressed his thanks to David Hart who has stood down this year after 6 years.

Election of 8 PCC Members

(5 elected for 3 years and 3 for 2 years)

3 years

Phil Bartlett Rawlings	Dave Marriott
Roger Cooke	Ade Odupitan
Jennifer Bailey	

2 years (by voluntary agreement)

Ann Mahood

As there were no other nominations, Charles declared them all duly elected.

Thanks were given to Christine Hart, David Henfrey, Paul Killingback and Sue Marriott who were retiring after their 3-year term.

Appointment of Sides persons for 2016/2017

Cyril Bamforth apologised for not bringing the list of names of the sides persons for the coming year but expressed his thanks to them all. It was proposed by the Chair that the Wardens be authorised to appoint further suitable people at their discretion, and this was carried by the meeting.

Presentation of Independently Examined accounts for the year ended 31 December 2015 and report of Treasurer

In David Henfrey's absence Cyril Bamforth took the meeting through the Summary Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2015, previously published and circulated within the Annual Report 2015-2016. Copies of the full accounts were available upon specific request.

Cyril noted that under Sources of Income, the Gift Day target had been £15,000 with £12,101 being received, so slightly less than expected but an increase on last year. In the General Fund Gift Aid donations were £73,140, which is down a little on 2014, thereby making the tax we recovered slightly down too at £19,633 and collections were £8,489, making total donations down 2% to £126,608, which included Other Planned Giving of £13,245. Total income in the Youth Fund was £11,185. Total income in all Funds for the year was £161,097 down from £178,996 in 2014.

On the expenditure side, the Diocesan Quota at £74,949 has increased by 4% on the previous year. Youth work expenditure of £32,625 is up 15%; last year's expenditure was lower mainly due to being without a Children's Worker for four months. Consequently, the transfer to the Youth Fund has gone up from £14,973 to £21,440. PCC giving was £16,152, £500 less than the previous year. Church Running Expenses were down slightly from last year at £15,025. Church House Running Expenses were also down at £7,183. Other expenses were £7,166, up by £372.

Total expenditure for the year was £273,177 up from £154,309 in 2014, largely due to the church porches and boilers projects.

The General Fund deficit was £2,508. The balance at 31 December 2015 was £33,489. Overseas Giving was £4,855 and Home Giving was £11,297.

Thanks were given to all involved with the accounts and Alan Radford the Independent Examiner. No questions were asked. Charles recognised this year as being

David's 25th year as Treasurer and will be making a presentation to him in recognition of his work.

Appointment of Independent Examiner of our accounts for 2016/2017

The meeting thanked Alan Radford for his work. He was appointed as Independent Examiner for the coming year. Charles made a presentation to Alan.

Appointment of Disclosure and Barring Service "Disclosure Clerk" for 2016/2017

Margrit Strathearn was appointed to continue this role. Proposed by Jenny Chapman, seconded by Joel Wicks and carried unanimously.

Questions relating to any of the reports contained in the Annual report 2015-16

Charles expressed his thanks to those contributing to the Report, to all contributors and compilers for their effort, to Dave Marriott for the page setting, to Tessa Quarrie for the pie charts, and to Notley School for the printing and production of the report. Separate copies of the Missionary Support report for Tearfund, not published in the Annual Report, were available at the time of the meeting.

Anne Harvey asked about Andy Carter being co-opted to the PCC and Charles explained the difference between election and co-option.

Peter Schaad asked about the Diocesan Quota and whether it needed to be paid in full as we would not have a Vicar for part of the year. Charles explained that this was a matter for the PCC, not the APCM, but briefly outlined why the Quota continued to be payable during a vacancy. Peter Schaad asked that it be minuted that he and some others thought this should be discussed at a future PCC meeting.

Any other matter of church interest

None

Results of Deputy Churchwardens and PCC elections under 6(a) and (b) above

Not applicable, as no ballot had been required.

Hymn 442

"Lord of the Church"

Benediction:

The benediction was given by the Vicar. He thanked everyone for coming and announced that there would be a short meeting of the PCC following this meeting when officers would be elected.

The meeting closed at 10.12 pm.

*Kim Cureton
PCC Secretary*

Minutes of Meeting of PCC, held immediately afterwards in Church House

Present: -

Rev Charles Mason (Chairman); Cyril Bamforth, Terry Clark, Rod Davey, Peter Schaad, Lin Terris, Jennifer Bailey, Dave Marriott, Lesley Davey, Moe Aung, Andy Carter, Phil Bartlett- Rawlings, Derek Chapman and Joel Wicks

Appointment of Secretary

Kim Cureton was proposed by Phil Bartlett-Rawlings, seconded by Terry Clark, and duly elected unopposed.

Appointment of Treasurer

David Henfrey was proposed by Moe Aung, seconded by Joel Wicks, and duly elected unopposed.

Appointment of Electoral Roll Officer

Sandra Savill was proposed by Cyril Bamforth, seconded by Derek Chapman, and duly elected unopposed.

Appointment of Lay Vice-Chairman

Cyril Bamforth was proposed by Jennifer Bailey, seconded by Dave Marriott, and duly elected unopposed.

*Charles Mason
Chairman*

PCC Proceedings 2016-17

Membership: Andy Carter and David Henfrey were co-opted to the PCC.

Much of the business of the PCC has been discussing reports from the various committees, officers and the diocese, including the Standing Committee, the Treasurer, The Deanery and Diocesan Synods, re-imagining Ministry and the Evangelism group, Future Governance and the Parish Profile.

Major items of discussion have included: the maintenance of our buildings, the improvements to the church entrances, the sound system, and the Church House re-decoration and flooring.

Under the heading of the Treasurer's report, we have discussed St Michael's overall financial position and the size of the Gift Day needed to balance the books out and our giving as a church. The gift day target was set at £10,000 to enable the books to be balanced.

Regular reports have been received from the Diocesan and Deanery Synods, reflecting the views from the Diocese and other parishes about the future for the churches in Essex, Transforming Presence, and its challenges.

The Evangelism Group members were thanked for their hard work following the successes of the Queen's 90th

Birthday Celebrations, the Newcomers Tea, Cafe Church, the Easter Experience and Experience Christmas. We looked at the success of Smash Club. We carried out a review of Christmas and although the numbers of children attending the Carol Service and Midnight Service this year were lower; the number of adults was very similar. The number of children at the Christingle Service was greater than last year but the number of adults was a lot lower. However, the number of children attending the Christmas Day service was much higher than last year with the adult numbers being very similar.

*Kim Cureton
PCC Secretary*

Braintree Christians Town-wide

We continue to play an active role in the following organisations:

For further details, please speak to the Church Representatives named below:

Braintree Area Churches Together (BACT) & Workplace Chaplaincy	<i>(Cyril Bamforth)</i>
Street Pastors & Outreach events	<i>(Lin Terris)</i>
BYPC	<i>(Kirsty Huxter)</i>
Braintree Area Foodbank	<i>(Helen Hopkins)</i>
John Ray School	<i>(Joel Wicks)</i>

Churchwarden's Reports

Church and Churchyard

2016 was the year of the Quinquennial Inspection Report. It has been described as the thinnest report in the Diocese. Nevertheless, there are a number of items that need attending to ranging from cleaning out rainwater gulleys to replacing sections of the lead roofing. The former we do ourselves with our bi-annual work parties but the latter will need doing over a period of time as funds become available. We have also experienced problems with the toilet door locks and after several attempts to fix them we may have to try a radical alternative. Similarly, we will need to take a serious view of how we replace our lighting system and that will inevitably be expensive. Fortunately, the replacement boilers seem to be working well so hopefully we will have several years' good service from them. People are at last getting used to opening the north porch doors by using the push buttons. Manual operation and standing in front of the sensors can cause problems with the mechanism.

The Braintree District Council has kept up their maintenance work of the land around the church and, in particular seem to have resolved the problem of flooding. For this we are grateful.

The problem with drugs use in the churchyard is still there albeit at seemingly lower levels than previous years. Once again the Council have been very helpful in clearing up the immediate problem but we must all remain aware of the problem.

Thanks should go to Peter Schaad for enhancing the lighting over the "Pilgrim's seat" and the vestry door.

Church House report

Our change to a more formal enforcement policy on parking in Church House car park appears to be working but we need to be prepared to report persistent offenders. We are considering the issuing of a different type of pass for those, not of our congregation, who regularly use Church House. The concept is that those coming to, say a Keep Fit class will have a pass that clearly covers the period of that class only.

Our bi-annual work parties have enabled us to keep up with running repairs. We have installed LED lighting around the building and new door bells with different ring tones for front and back doors have been installed so that these doors can be closed for greater security even while people are on the premises. The halls and other rooms continue to be used for a variety of purposes so we have added a diary page to our church website for people to look up when the building is being used. We have acquired a new lawn mower for our extensive lawns. Once again we rely upon the time generously given up by volunteers who often see what jobs need doing and get on with them. You know who you are, so a very big thank you.

Deputy Wardens and Sides-persons

Where would we be without them? The support given to the Wardens is invaluable. They share the work load and give wise advice. We are much blessed by their loyalty and enthusiasm. Perhaps the greatest compliment to all of them is that the congregation do not notice them because everything runs so well because of their efforts. This year in particular we want to thank Gloria and Graham Boor who are standing down after several years of organising the sides-persons rotas.

*Cyril Bamforth and Lesley Davey
Churchwardens*

Braintree Deanery

The Braintree Deanery consists of parishes from Coggeshall in the East to Finchingfield in the west and includes the four in Braintree/Bocking.

As you may already know deaneries have been asked to plan for the future when there is expected to be far fewer ordained paid clergy to cover all the churches. This means that each church needs to look at its own

resources and see it can work with other churches in the deanery to ensure the vital job of sharing the Gospel and helping Christians to be built up in their faith can continue.

The Deanery Synod with representatives from each church has been continuing to develop the plan for the deanery to become a Mission and Ministry Unit, which puts informal cooperation into a more structured form.

At its meeting on 9th March 2016 the Synod spent some time in discussion about what the strengths were in each parish as well as what was challenging and needed to be worked on. For example: 'Who is missing from your Church?' For many this was children and young people, for others it was older people unable to get to church, others, men, and others people living in certain areas/estates.

On 29th June the Synod continued to look at Mission Priority Areas and there were three presentations:

Great Notley shared what it was like to be a new church on a new estate in and ecumenical partnership- the joys and the challenges.

St Pauls shared how a one-off Messy Church fun day took off and has become a regular engagement between the congregation and the community.

St Peters expressed the challenges to be tackled by being an established church but having estates on the edge of the parish (e.g. the Glebe) not being touched.

On 9th November the Synod heard about the Bishop of Chelmsford's Pilgrimage walk around Essex and he will be coming to Braintree and Hinckford Deaneries on 21st May 2017.

It was agreed that the Mission Priority Area would be Children and Youth, and the name for the MMU would be Braintree Deanery MMU.

It was also agreed to apply for funding from the Mission Opportunities Fund for a part-time administrator to help coordinate activities and booking funerals etc.

There will be changes to the Parish Share and there is to be a meeting in 2017 for Treasurers and Churchwardens.

*Canon John Turton
Lay Chair, Braintree Deanery Synod*

Missionary Support

During the last year we have continued with 'Mission of the Month'. Each mission has a month when we specifically pray for its work during services and have opportunity to develop our understanding of what it does by seeing details in a display at the back of the church.

If you would like further information about any society their web link is given below.

Details of the Church representative to contact can be found inside the back cover of the LINK magazine.

Societies working in the UK

The Children's Society	childrensociety.org.uk
Christian Youth Outreach	cyoweb.org.uk
RNMDF	fishermensmission.org.uk
Church Pastoral Aid Society	CPAS.org.uk
Make Jesus Known	makejesusknown.com

Societies working overseas

ACTS	betterplace.org
A Rocha	arocha.org
Barnabas Fund	barnabasfund.org
CMS and MAM	churchmissionsociety.org
Christian Aid	christianaid.org
Crosslinks	crosslinks.org
Langham Partnership	uk.langham.org
The Leprosy Mission	leprosymission.org.uk
Samaritan's Purse	Samaritans-purse.org.uk
Stand by Me	standby.me

St Michael's School

Our thanks go to Andy Cumpstey and Karin Farran and staff for their hard work this year during the recovery of Mrs Short after her spinal injury. We are glad she is back with us again.

ASK Club and Spotlight have continued to flourish.

Sarah Hayward has joined Joel and I on the rota for Assemblies.

An Ash Wednesday Service was introduced this year and was a highlight of this term.

Understanding Christianity is being introduced through the school.

Governors have continued to serve the school well and Ben Whitlock is our new Parent Governor. Mrs Jenny Keable has joined as a co-opted Governor and Claire Hollingsworth has joined us as an Associate Governor.

*Jennifer Bailey
Chair of Governors*

Evangelism committee

The highlights of their outreach events in 2016 included a prayer weekend in May 2016 (*Thy Kingdom Come*), celebrations for the Queen's 90th birthday in June and two teas for newcomers. Café Church and Christianity Explored courses were also run throughout the year.

*Lin Terris
Evangelism Enabler*

Women@ St Michaels

We have had two successful events this year... one a Summer Medley to say goodbye and thanks to Harsha Mason and she spoke to us about the Road to Emmaus and an Autumn Medley to say goodbye and thanks to Louise Trevelyan and Jennifer Bailey spoke about two Psalms to encourage Louise on her way.

Jennifer Bailey

Study Groups

There are a number of Bible Study groups meeting, some weekly and others less often. All groups provide a good opportunity to study the Bible and meet with friends, usually over refreshments.

Women @ St Michaels
The White Horse Tavern
Meeting Point
Chestnut Grove Group
Life-builder
Rose Hill Group
Carry on Exploring

Full details of all groups are available in the LINK magazine. If you are interested in trying out a group, please speak to the group leader.

As a taster of what is on offer there is set out below a report from one of these popular groups –

The White Horse Tavern:

We have tried to walk in the footsteps of our illustrious predecessors who gathered in the White Horse Tavern in Cambridge in the 1530s.

Our study and discussion have taken in the early church Fathers and Reformation leaders. We have done so with the help of Michael Reeve's two books '*The Breeze of the Centuries*' and '*Standing on Giants' Shoulders*'. Discussion has never been anything less than lively. These men from the past have helped us see a little bit further in the Bible and Christian truth.

WHT is open on Monday evenings from 7.30pm to 9.30pm in Church House.

Stephen Bailey

Sunday Worship

We would like to offer our sincere thanks for those who have supported us during the interregnum. As far as we were able, we retained the same pattern of services throughout the year. Preaching has not faltered and has been enhanced by the variety of leaders and preachers who have blessed us with their service.

Our main thanks go to Revd. Stephen Bailey, our lay readers and other able members of our congregation. We have also been blessed by the continuing support of Revd. Sarah Hayward celebrating at 8 am Communion, enhanced since Charles left by Revd. Beth Bendery, Revd. Olivia Maxfield-Coote and Revd. Keith Holloway.

There have been a few occasions when we were unable to find a celebrant for the 8am service so instead we used the BCP Morning Service.

Leisure Groups

Women's Fellowship is a group of ladies who meet on most Thursdays to enjoy a time of sharing, caring and worship. They have said goodbye to some members but also welcomed others.

Flower Club has up to 20 members meeting each month for creative workshops in various styles and designs of this art. Their meetings are on the last Friday of each month.

Ladies Group meets every month on the second Tuesday.

suMMiT is St Michaels Men Together and is an opportunity for all the men at St Michaels to join in a wide range of events and activities to broaden their biblical knowledge, share experiences, learn from each other and build and strengthen their relationship with their Father.

Youth Church

Next: The group for 10-13 year olds continues to be an enjoyable group to be with on Sunday mornings. Over the last year we have spent time looking into Colossians, and discovering what we have in Jesus, then Heaven versus hell, suffering and salvation as a Christian using Psalm 22, then into 'What is a Christian' and now we are finding our way through The Beatitudes. This group are always willing, and very able, to serve at our CFW services and to get involved in making Christingles as well as getting involved in the Christingle service. All of which is both a blessing to St Michaels, and of great encouragement to us all.

Focus: The group for 14+ year olds who continue to be very special and of great encouragement to me. We have spent different periods of time in Bible quizzes, games and snacks. Reading and chatting through parts of Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, Esther, Prayer and topics like Christmas and 'What is a Christian,' and the 'I am' sayings of Jesus. Judges beckons us next. I am very grateful for their encouraging, positive and talented involvement in Smash Club, Christingle making and the service, as well as CFW services. Focus are a blessing to us all and it is a joy to spend time with them and to learn together and encourage one another to grow in faith when we meet.

Andy Carter

Junior Church

On Sunday mornings we've been blessed to see 25-30+ children have been coming to Church House for Junior Church. We have been pleased to welcome several new families to Junior Church this year, especially in the younger groups.

Those who are early to arrive play puzzles and ball games in the Large Hall until 10am when we gather for a song or two and a prayer together. We then split into four age groups: Followers (led by June Kirk), Explorers (led by Joel), Adventurers (led by David and Kirsty Huxter) and Next (led by Andy) for a time of learning from the Bible, often accompanied by games and crafts.

After the summer holidays Explorers and Adventurers have joined forces as a larger group, which continues to be called Adventurers. In the Autumn term we began rehearsing for our Christmas play 'Three Wise Men and a Baby'. We had great fun rehearsing this and felt it was a real success. Thank you to all the children for being brave in sharing their talents, the parents who made a big effort to get their children along for Sundays and all our extra rehearsals and all who supported us at the performance.

We are still collecting donations each week to send to our sponsor child, Tsion in Ethiopia through Stand By Me. We are really grateful for those who give money to support Tsion and other charities through our collection pot at Junior Church; please keep remembering to send your children with donations when you are able.

Our thanks especially go to our dedicated team of leaders and helpers who invest their time so generously in serving among our children, including the aforementioned group leaders, our weekly helper Lisha Lingesh and all those who help in Followers on a rota basis.

Tiddlywinks

The last year has seen big changes at Tiddlywinks with over half of our children leaving to go to school last summer. Once again we've been very blessed and have had many new families coming along. This means we've had a steady group of 5-15 children ages 0-4 attending each week. With a solid base of regulars, we are building strong relationships with many of the parents and it has been encouraging to see some of these parents on a Sunday too.

Kirsty Huxter and Katie Whitlock continue to organise and lead the Tiddlywinks team. Children and adults alike have enjoyed participating in the story times with a different Bible story each week as well as singing and prayers. This year we said farewell to Charles who had previously visited termly to lead a story time. Kirsty and Katie, Miriam Clark, Kipper the dog and I have continued to lead the story times which have included stories about creation, Jesus and the Old Testament. The children continue to love singing 'Joy, Joy Joy!' with us each week, a decades long tradition!

After story time we have refreshments served by Frankie Winning and her team of volunteers. We then move into playtime with the ride on vehicles and slide continuing to be particular favourites. At the craft table the children have also enjoyed creating many different items relating to the day's Bible story. We are thankful for our volunteers and the resources available to us and we look forward to continuing to spend time with our Tiddlywinks friends and seeing what God does in their lives.

Crèche

This extremely valuable resource has continued to be well used by our younger children throughout the year. The reliable band of helpers who work on a rota in the crèche are very much appreciated. NB Extra volunteers are always welcome.

SMASH Club

This year's SMASH Club was entitled 'Space Academy' and was about Daniel and his friends trying to live God's way, in the face of great danger, in a place far from home.



Each morning around 70 children, 20 junior helpers and their adult leaders gathered together Mission Control in Church House. We were hosted by the anxious 'Disaster Dan' and the confident 'Captain Courageous' who were preparing for a mission to space.

Each day we spoke via 'skype' to Angelica Faith (Emma Nash) on the International Space Station who shared a story about Daniel and his friends to help us survive in space. Thursday saw our dramatic 'launch' with a cliff-hanger ending and on Friday we rescued Angelica from the stricken space station.

For the second part of the morning the teams took part in several activities. Ed Nash organised lots of energetic games. Frankie Winning and her team provided both children and adults with refreshments while they reflected on the day's Bible story with Andy, Stephen Bailey and me. Lauryn Wicks demonstrated some fun crafts which included lion cup-cakes, vegetable fridge magnets and personalised 'writing walls' which the children enjoyed making.



During the week the children and their competitive leaders also had some great ideas for the team challenge of constructing something space related to show on Friday, including

space rockets, robots and the 'Mars Rover'. They worked hard at home too, producing beautiful pictures, models and jokes for the SMASH Club post box.

This year, as ever, we had a great team of dedicated leaders and an army of people supporting us in prayer. Thank you again to everyone who helped make SMASH Club 2016 such a joyful and special time, it was a blessing to be involved.

Light Party

On Saturday 29th October we held our annual light party. This year 40 children and 25 helpers came to celebrate Jesus as the Light of the World.

Our theme was 'Once Upon a Time' and we came dressed as our favourite story characters.

Our children began by making colourful lanterns with an LED candle which looked fabulous.

Next the children went in their groups to the large hall and rotated around 5 different activities.

Joining our regular favourites of apple bobbing and 'donuts on a string' we played superhero skittles, pin the



nose on Olaf (the snowman from Frozen) and the game where you pick up smarties with straws.

After snack time we sang 'Shine from the inside out'. We then returned to our 'Once Upon a Time' theme

with a talk on stories of light vs darkness, with inspiration from Disney stories and Star Wars. We saw how Jesus was the ultimate story of light triumphing over darkness. The talk ended with a challenge to turn to the light and say 'I am a Christian'.

The children made their way home happily with their goody bags including a tract about light, LED finger lights, glow bracelets, a 'light of the world' notepad and pencil and of course some sweets. I would like to thank all our helpers for giving up their time to make the party successful. I would like to thank all of you who prayed for the event; we were really pleased with the increase in numbers of children and how much they enjoyed celebrating light with us.

Spotlight

Joel Wicks and Graham Savill continue to run Spotlight on Monday lunchtimes for 20 Year 3 children each term. The club focusses on stories from Luke's gospel to learn about Jesus as well as fun activities such as 'guess the sound' and a termly colouring competition. It's fun getting to know the children and teaching them from the Bible. This year's children are enthusiastic (sometimes too much!) and are really enjoying Spotlight. Unlike before the summer we've had very few drop out and some positive feedback.

ASK?

This year at ASK? we have been learning from the book of Acts, heroes of faith from the Old Testament and the life of Jesus. As well as stories we offer craft activities, word puzzles and team games including favourites such as 'wink murder' and dodgeball. In the summer we often play team games on the field which the children are keen to do as soon as the weather warms up. Over 20 children attend each week on a Thursday afternoon and enjoy the varied activities greatly. We finish with a brief time of prayer where the children are keen to share their prayers. Our prayer for them is that as well as having fun the children will want to become followers of Jesus. A big thank you to my wonderful helpers for giving up their time for the children; Rod Davey, Sue Marriott and Andy Carter as well as Victoria Lingesh who stepped down during the summer due to work commitments.

John Ray Junior School

Joel has continued to take regular assemblies at John Ray Junior School. These have been on varied topics from 'Unconditional love' and 'The Teachings of Jesus' to seasonal topics such as Advent, Christmas and Easter. John Ray continue to visit the church for a Christmas service in December, as do John Ray Infant School.

We look forward to receiving John Ray Juniors for Experience Easter in March. We're pleased to have maintained a trusted relationship with the school which allows us to share the good news of Jesus and pray this will lead to further opportunities for ministry with families from the school.

*Andy Carter
Joel Wicks
Kirsty Huxter
June Kirk*

Our aims

We are a conservative evangelical church seeking to bring glory to God by helping people to:

