

# SAINT THEODORE'S TIDINGS



## Advent-Christmas issue October 2017 – January 2018

The Anglican Church of St Theodore  
Cnr Swaine Avenue and Prescott Terrace  
Toorak Gardens, S.A

Website: [www.theodores.org](http://www.theodores.org)



## Welcome to our new Archbishop

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, 2017, Bishop Geoffrey Smith was installed as Archbishop of Adelaide. He is the tenth Bishop and fifth Archbishop of Adelaide and Metropolitan of South Australia

At the time of his election in December 2016, in a wide-ranging interview with Jade Gailberger, he said that one of his priorities was to get to know the people of Adelaide. He wasted no time in moving ahead with this priority holding a number of meetings with clergy shortly after his installation. Subsequently, Lay Leaders were invited to attend one of the five Lay Leaders' Gatherings organised to give them the chance to meet with him in an informal setting.

On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Plympton, **Sue Bishop** and **Angela Jones** (as Synod Representatives for St Theodore's) attended one of these Gatherings – and they are thanked for providing the following report. **Ian Campbell** also attended one at St Matthew's Church, Marryatville, on 15<sup>th</sup> August.

Archbishop Geoffrey's Agenda for the Gathering was to:

- ❖ *introduce himself and his family;*
- ❖ *set out his priorities for the Diocese;*
- ❖ *ascertain the views and priorities of the laity, and whether there are any barriers preventing the Church from fulfilling such priorities . . . and if so, to identify them;*
- ❖ *give some 'take home' messages.*

### Introduction

Archbishop Geoffrey has come to Adelaide from Brisbane with his wife Lynn. She is an accountant in full-time employment – she has set up a home office here in Adelaide and makes regular work trips to Brisbane as required. They have two adult children.

Archbishop Geoffrey initially trained as a teacher and then studied theology. He was ordained Deacon in 1982 and Priest in 1983 at Christ Church Cathedral, Grafton, and consecrated as Bishop at St John's Cathedral, Brisbane in 2007. He has ministered in a number of parishes in Australia and for a time in Papua-New Guinea. He has a particular interest in the place of the church in coastal towns, having ministered in churches in Surfers Paradise, Ballina, Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie. For five years he was the National Director of the Anglican Board of Mission - Australia.

Most recently, before becoming Archbishop of the Adelaide Diocese, he was Assistant Bishop and General Manager/Registrar in the Diocese of Brisbane. Prior to that he had been Bishop of the Southern Region (Diocese of Brisbane). He revealed that he had had some personal resistance to moving from Brisbane to Adelaide but that he had felt a strong calling to come here. He appeared pleased to have made the move and said he felt refreshed by it.

### Archbishop's Priorities

Archbishop Geoffrey's absolute priority is the welfare of the clergy and the provision of proper pastoral care for them. To this end he will be promoting Clergy Conferences and Retreats. He asks that parishes encourage their clergy and pray for them.

(cont./)

He is optimistic about the church in spite of the pessimism so often expressed, but he does ask for parishes to be praying for Growth in the Church in:

➤ Numbers:

“More people coming to faith in the Lord Jesus and discovering God and God’s love through Him.”

➤ Faith:

“Growth in faith so people know God and know their faith more deeply, and can share the hope that is within them more readily and more confidently.”

➤ Service:

“Growth in service so that our congregations or churches or schools actually serve the community, and intentionally bless the community with no strings attached except to serve and make things better.”

➤ Generosity:

“Growth in generosity so that we are more generous with what God has given us to look after and so can fund the mission God has called us to do.”

Archbishop Geoffrey will be revisiting the Strategic Plan for the Diocese and will do this in consultation with the Rev’d Sandy Jones. In due course parishes will be advised and consulted further about this.

*He then opened the Gathering for comment from the floor to consider*

### **The Views and Priorities of the Laity**

There was significant and useful discussion, with a number of those present making worthwhile contributions.

There was a strong view that the Church needs to be meeting people “where they are”. Changing social customs, work obligations and family structures together with time limitations; technology and social media have all had an impact on the life of the Church and we need to address these issues.

There was a generally shared view that pastoral care for priests, particularly for women priests, was really important. The Archbishop commented that he was concerned about mentoring and help for priests and hopes to tap into the mentoring resources of Anglicare.

A suggestion was made that the Church (the Archbishop) should speak more publicly in particular to try to counteract the very negative views espoused by so many about the Church. This was reinforced by a comment that the Church needed to “speak out more”

The topic of abuse within the church was raised and in particular the necessity to care for those people who were abused, and how to rebuild trust in the church. The Archbishop commented in relation to this that he had in the first week he was in Adelaide met three of the abuse victims to discuss the continuing hurt and damage to them and their families and how this might best be dealt with.

The topic of prayer was raised in the context of the value of learning how to pray.

The Archbishop noted that it was envisaged that St Barnabas College would have a greater role to play in providing short courses of more general application for the Diocese.

A comment was made that there should be more interchange and involvement between parishes. The Gathering was an example of how this could be done.

### **Take Home Messages**

Archbishop Geoffrey asks that we pray for him for:

- ❖ *Wisdom* (in choosing what he puts his time into and the decisions he makes);
- ❖ *Health*;
- ❖ *Lynn* his wife.

He also asked us to remember that “healthy” Churches (in terms of confidence and competence) need healthy leaders.

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In conclusion it must be said that there was a very encouraging atmosphere at the Gathering. The considered, open and caring approach of the Archbishop engendered a calm and useful discussion from the floor. Members of the Church of The Good Shepherd contributed by kindly hosting the Gathering and providing afternoon tea.

***We would ask that all members of the Parish keep the Archbishop and his wife in their prayers, pray for our clergy (in particular Fr Grant and Fr Peter and Rev’d Lesley), and pray for growth in church numbers, faith, service and generosity.***

**Sue Bishop**

# SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

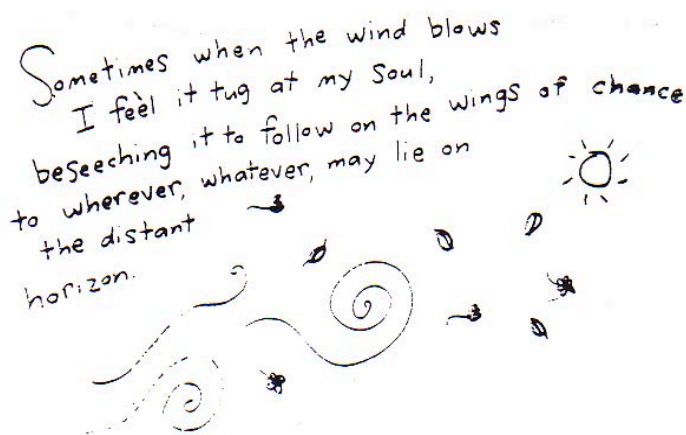
## In what 'direction' are you traveling?



**Margaret Trevethan** has been a Spiritual Director since 1992. She has a teaching and ministry background with a Grad Dip Arts/Leadership (ACU - Brisbane), a Master of Theology (University of Newcastle), and a Master of Conflict Resolution & Management (JCU). Marg works ecumenically and in the workplace and is involved in retreat work, formation, facilitation, ministry and group supervision, and staff development. Married with two daughters and two grandsons, she is Prayer and Spirituality Co-ordinator at the House of Prayer & Spirituality (a mission of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville – see the article below) and she is currently a member of the Australian Ecumenical Council of Spiritual Direction.

*Are you seeking to draw on the peace and strength of your faith for your journey of life? As you listen to your life, are you searching to identify and trust the presence of God with you? How are you responding to God and living out this sacred relationship in practical ways? And, would you appreciate being 'companied' along the way?*

“Bidden or Unbidden God is Present.” This old Celtic saying reminds us that the Sacred is present – always and in all ways. In the midst of the ordinary, in the everyday, in all of life, God is there. If we take the faithful presence of God seriously we will want to learn how to pay attention and tend the Holy in our lives. The desire to nurture our relationship with God will call us to give time to discovering God’s presence with us, and to discerning how we will respond in our daily lives. Both attention and discernment require a contemplative mind.



Other times it makes my hair stick out funny.

I love good cartoons because, like poetry and art, they can creatively transport us into our contemplative mind. Richard Rohr calls the contemplative mind ‘a sacred gift’ and the rational mind, ‘its faithful servant’. I particularly love this cartoon, called ‘Stirrings’ (*source unknown*). It challenges me to remember that whatever meaning is being carried to us in what we perceive, it still requires our discernment.

The poet Mary Oliver says “This is the wildest, and the wisest thing I know, that the soul exists, and that it is built entirely out of attentiveness.” So pay attention to your stirrings and allow them, if you want to, to lead you into God and the fullness of life promised. And if you want accompaniment on this journey choose a Spiritual Director/Companion to listen carefully with you to your daily life experiences and to help you be present to God who is seeking to draw you closer, and receive the life being offered.

Some places, some ideas, some images, some encounters, some life experiences, some joys, some sadness, draw our attention and invite us to pause. On any given day we will be more or less receptive to these invitations to reflect and wonder and more or less able to be open to their possibilities. They will make their way into that space in us that experiences unity and belonging. A rainforest, a cathedral, a sunrise, falling in love, an act of kindness, birdsong, friendship, conversation, even death – are all places and spaces where we take that long loving look at what is real and in doing so come to perceive, and to know, the unknowable.

(cont./)

These are open moments, of relationship and encounter, a call to prayer and a doorway into deeper relationship with God and each other. We all have these moments of encounter. There will be movement for life to be found within these experiences. They may become moments of awakening, change and transformation; received rather than created experiences that can shape us from within and clarify things for us. These were sacred moments of encounter with mystery in the midst of everyday life. They ask us to pay attention, to take them to prayer, to respond from the heart and the gut as well as the head, and discern – *in what direction are you inviting me?*

A Spiritual Director will talk with you about how you pray in order to help you to discover how you pray best, and explore with you how you hear God and God's Word. The direction relationship provides a safe and confidential space to share your hopes and struggles. You will have companionship as you commit to spiritual practice and integrate spirituality into your daily life. You will learn to discern your inner movements, make life-giving choices and open yourself to growth in acceptance, forgiveness, justice, tenderness and compassion.

The Ministry of Spiritual Direction has a long and respected history in the Christian tradition. It is a means through which Christ continues to minister to us through God's Holy Spirit. It has been practiced by lay, religious and ordained ministers and is considered a sacred entrustment calling for the highest standards of formation, practice and accountability. It is not therapy, counselling, teaching, mentoring or coaching. It is uniquely concerned with facilitating a person's growth in relationship with God and living out the gifts of that relationship in right relationship with self and all creation. It is an invitation to slow down in the midst of a busy life and take the time to allow God to find us.

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## The House of Prayer & Spirituality, Townsville

### A "Thin Place"

*There is a Celtic saying that heaven and earth are only three feet apart, but in the 'thin places' that distance is even smaller. A thin place is where the veil that separates heaven and earth is lifted and one is able to receive a glimpse of the glory of God – which gives us an opening into the magnificence and wonder of that Presence.*



*A meeting room*



*A view of the Chapel interior, with the window looking out to Anderson Park*

In the thirty or so years Cheryl and I spent in Townsville, the House of Prayer & Spirituality, nestled against Anderson Park Botanical Gardens, was an oasis for contemplation, stillness and prayer – a 'Thin Place'. It has a simple and beautiful chapel, individual bedrooms, kitchen facilities and library with books, tapes and CDs. The community of the HoPS maintains the meditative atmosphere, supported by a regular rhythm and pattern of prayer. It was established by the Catholic Diocese of Townsville in 1981 in response to the needs of those searching for a deep personal relationship with God, and although change and growth occurred, the one constant was the vision at its heart:

***"Be still and know that I am God"*** (Psalm 64)

The HoPS provides the opportunity for individuals and groups to engage in prayer and meditation, experiential prayer workshops and personal formation, where Spiritual Direction for individual prayer guidance and development is an important aspect of the ministry. The HoPS grew as a place that nurtured clergy and lay people of all faiths, united in a common vision of contemplatively striving for a deep personal relationship with God in the midst of life, and called and committed to pass that love and experience on to others.

**(Ed.)**



Fr Grant Bullen also writes on “Spiritual Direction” . . .

## God’s Flow

We go to see a counsellor or therapist because we have a problem in our life . . . often in a relationship. And they typically ask, “*How do you define your problem, and what do you need to do or change in order to fix it to your satisfaction?*” Counselling is a modality that assumes we are in control of our lives; that we can shape them according to our own will and action. (And by the way, I am personally a believer in the usefulness of therapy . . . and I use it regularly.)

When we go to meet with a *spiritual director*, there *may* be a problem that impels us . . . but not necessarily. We go out of our desire to be better connected with God; to grow and mature in our faith . . . and because we want to live a happier more fulfilling life. The *spiritual director* typically asks, “*What is the Spirit doing in your life; where is she inviting you to pay attention; and how are you responding?*” It is a modality that assumes that God is in control of *all* life – including our little life – and that abundance flows when we are in harmony with God’s intention for us and action within us.

Thus *spiritual direction* is counter-cultural. It goes against the prevailing assumption of our society that places great importance on our power of self-determination; indeed a culture that tells us it is our duty to be in charge of our own destiny and happiness. *Spiritual direction* lives out of a totally opposite understanding of reality.

Christ Jesus taught that *everything* is held in God’s love, and therefore there is no need to be anxious or to strive. We can relax in God’s profligate goodness and generosity. A metaphor of the spiritual journey that I particularly like goes like this . . .

*All of life is a flowing river of God’s love. And so all we need to learn is how to float like a rubber ball in the flow of God, trusting this movement to carry us to our ultimate fulfilment; which is the sea . . . union with God and all creation. Striving simply impedes our progress. All of that time and effort spent trying to grab an overhanging branch (because we are afraid of the rapids); trying to clamber up the bank out of the stream (because we think another path will be safer and more sure); swimming valiantly against the flow (because we do not know where it will take us) . . . all of that time and effort is futile and wasteful. It only intensifies our experience of pain and confusion. Instead, be like the rubber ball – abandon all striving, and simply float in effortless surrender, allowing the flow of God to take us.*

It is a beautiful and seductive metaphor . . . **but** being that rubber ball requires discernment and intention. It does not come easily to most of us, and the society around us is ignorant (and even frightened) of this wisdom. The practice of *spiritual direction* is designed to help us learn to go with God’s flow.

The *spiritual direction* question is subversively difficult . . . “*What is the Spirit doing in your life; where is she inviting you to pay attention; and how are you responding?*” At first, all of us struggle . . . with both clauses.

- ❖ What *is* the Spirit doing in my life? How would I know? What do I look for? What can I see as authentically God’s activity rather than simply the action of my own will?
- ❖ How *am* I responding? I feel stuck much of the time – is that my doing or am I just unlucky in life? I am not at all sure what ‘*responding to the Spirit*’ would look or feel like? I want to say *yes* to God, but am I?

To come to understand these questions requires developing the great unpractised art of the Christian life – *discernment*. It asks us to see our life as a sacred journey, daring to believe that God is at work in me. It requires time and energy set aside in reflection – looking, noticing, and paying attention. And it needs to be taken seriously; important enough to meet with an experienced guide in order to share, stimulate, and sometimes challenge our perception.

The faith assumption beneath *spiritual direction* is simple:

- ❖ God desires us and bends all His will to draw us home.
- ❖ This divine will is ultimately irresistible. But our striving and our wilfulness blocks our progress.
- ❖ We unblock the flow of God when we seek to cooperate with the Spirit’s action within us.
- ❖ Our attention and willing participation amplifies and quickens the Spirit’s work of transformation in our lives.

At the foundation of *all* this is the critical question . . . *Am I in charge of my own life, or am I a rubber ball in the flow of God’s love?* Our answer to this will have a big influence on how our life progresses.

# Fr Grant reports on progress in our efforts of development of aspects of our Parish ministry

## \*\*\*\* "Breaking Bread" and "the Project" – Two Years On \*\*\*\*



'Breaking Bread', our Eucharistic community of 'younger people', is now two year's old. 2017 has seen a couple of significant changes.

One of our families shifted interstate for work, which we all felt as a sad blow. But then almost seamlessly a new family joined. Once again they came through the friendship network of existing members. So the numbers have remained stable – twelve adults and five children (aged six and under).

The arrival of a new baby (William) and the changing sleep patterns of the other children, meant a shift to Sunday afternoons, meeting from 3.00 to 5.00 pm. We still follow a similar pattern:

- ❖ meeting twice a month;
- ❖ in the home of one of the participant families;
- ❖ beginning with a Eucharist;
- ❖ then moving to afternoon tea;
- ❖ before finishing with a 45-minute adult workshop on the Gospel of the day.

Brad Chapman went on 'paternity leave' as coordinator – a role that John Hicks has been doing admirably through 2017. I continue in my role as 'priest and teacher'. Everything else is shared.

The worship can be 'chaotic' as we have three very young children now, but we do remarkably well. The Eucharist always features an extended Children's Talk and I have really enjoyed watching Francis (now the oldest child) build a growing understanding of the Jesus story. He is an avid and proficient reader, has a quick and agile brain (that keeps the ageing parish priest on his mettle) and is now regularly telling me how today's story fits with past month's talks. Fascinating!

I continue to be impressed with the group's commitment and flexibility. At each moment where change has been necessary, they have taken the lead . . . not me. It was their idea and decision to move to Sunday afternoon, and recently they 're-jigged' the adult workshop to save it from being 'destroyed' by child-noise. There is the idea that we might also add a monthly 'adults' education session' on a different night of the week, but this has not happened yet.

The group's commitment is to attend the Sunday morning worship at St Theodore's on three-four major festivals through the year . . . and again I am impressed with how they keep to this. Two of the families aim to attend the Sung Eucharist on the weeks between Breaking Bread dates.

As I said this time last year . . . Breaking Bread is a very positive addition to our parish life. It is impossible to know how and where it will develop, but it has plenty of life as it goes into its third year.

{ "The Project " report follows on page 7 }



Regular worshippers were upgraded to First Class



His success as the third shepherd in the Nativity Play had rather gone to Toby's head



"That Advent wreath won't make itself" said Brian

From the "Church Times"



“THE PROJECT”  
– a ministry of encouragement and formation in the contemplative path with younger Christians – has run for 14 months now.

**Retreats** have remained stable. I continue to run two retreats each year – March and October – both of them at Sevenhill Retreat Centre in the Clare Valley. There are no addresses – simply a small homily at the daily Eucharist. Each retreatant meets privately with me as Director for an ‘hour’ every morning. Beyond this – and the worship, offices and meals – the retreatant is ‘free’ to enter the silence. The numbers attending vary between five-nine . . . most of them Anglican clergy in active ministry . . . most of them from Adelaide, but a couple from interstate. I am intending to continue this pattern in 2018.

**Spiritual Direction** has been a surprise for me. It has grown to a list of ten people – three of whom are St Theodore’s parishioners, three Uniting Church ministers and the rest are Anglican clergy. Each person comes monthly for an hour. I did not anticipate this growth – indeed it is now the biggest time commitment I make within The Project. Currently I watch this . . . not sure how to see it . . . but just going with the flow for now.

**Workshops.** I was running occasional workshops but this work has changed significantly in recent months. My main hope was to encourage collegiality through these (mainly) clergy gatherings. This seemed to work on the day, but I saw no indication of it building over time . . . and I became concerned about the ‘discretionary’ nature of people’s commitment. Eventually I decided if this activity was to be healthy, it needed to have a more collegial foundation. I invited seven of the most committed participants to join me in this, and we met twice to review and consider ‘what next . . . if anything’. The group consensus – which took me by surprise – was that the most valuable part of the program was the opportunity for quiet (contemplative) reflection, which the review group said is not available elsewhere in their ministry. So in 2018 we aim to provide five “Days of Quiet Reflection” – in alternate months of the year. These will be planned and run collegially. Effectively it will no longer be ‘my ministry’, but I have offered to be the Project Worker as part of my one day per week on ‘The Project’.

I continue to value this ‘specialist’ ministry alongside my work as a parish priest. And it remains my way of offering service to the wider church. (I sit on no other boards or committees in the Diocese.) And through my work, it is a real contribution from St Theodore’s too. The Julian Centre Trust continues to generously reimburse the parish for one day a week to release me to do this work.

## SELECT DATES



- ❖ **All Saints celebration, Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November** . . . Holy Communion 8.00 am; Sung Eucharist 9.30 am – with morning tea on the Rectory Lawn following.
- ❖ **Advent Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> November** . . . Holy Communion 8.00 am; Sung Eucharist 9.30 am
- ❖ **Carol Service, Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December** . . . at 8.30 pm we will hold our *Carol Service* in the Church followed by a supper in the main hall afterwards. This is a traditional service with fine choral singing by a specially gathered choir
- ❖ **Advent IV, Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> December** . . . Sung Eucharist at 9.30 am only (no 8 am service)

- ❖ **Christmas Services** . . .
  - **Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> December** . . . *Midnight Mass, Christmas Eve* – Sung Eucharist 11.00 pm
  - **Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> December** . . . *Christmas Day* – Holy Communion 8.00 am; Sung Eucharist (with presentation and activities for children) 9.30 am
- ❖ **Epiphany Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2018** . . . Holy Communion 8.00 am; Sung Eucharist 9.30 am

## St Theodore’s Christmas cards . . . final chance?

In 2013, the Parish had a very successful sale of Christmas cards featuring the beautiful diminutive St Theodore’s Nativity Crib which was crafted by a former Rector, Rev’d T.T. Reed . . . and in 2014 our Parish cards featured the Baptistry at the rear of the Church and two of its stained glass windows – one presenting Christ the Good Shepherd, and the other St Francis of Assisi. As in 2015 and 2016 we will some have BOTH of these cards available in 2017, until supplies run out: they will be sold in packs of 10 for \$15 (including envelopes), and will be available in early November. An order sheet will be placed at the back of the Church – alternatively, speak to **Richard Keene**.



# “We heard what she said, but we knew what she meant . . . ”

*Incorrect punctuation, poor spelling, typing errors and misplaced words can have unfortunate results. Here are a few – allegedly bona fide errors – from Church magazines and pewsheets. I thank Martin Godfrey for passing them on . . .*

- ❖ Ladies: don't forget the Silent Auction. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- ❖ For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- ❖ Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
- ❖ Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of new several members and the deterioration of some older ones.
- ❖ Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- ❖ The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment and gracious hostility.
- ❖ Pot-luck supper at 5.00 pm – prayer and medication to follow.
- ❖ The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the crypt on Friday afternoon.
- ❖ Weight-Watchers will meet at 7 pm in the Church Hall. Please use the large double-door at the side entrance.

## St. Theodore's – Contacts

<u>Parish Priest:</u>	Fr Grant Bullen ( <i>Office</i> - 8333-1567)	<u>Parish Council (2016)</u> – Fr Grant Bullen, Stewart Perkins (Treasurer), Ian Campbell, John Needs, Lee Fulton, Martin Godfrey, Angela Jones (Secretary), Thea Reynolds, Helen Starr.
<u>Associate Priests:</u>	Rev'd Dr Lesley McLean Rev'd Peter Anson	
<u>Priest's Warden:</u>	Ian Campbell	<u>"The Tidings" Editor:</u> Dr Richard Keene (ph. 0416-275-161)
<u>Peoples' Warden:</u>	John Needs	

## Parish Council and Vestry matters . . .

Our Annual Vestry meeting for 2018 will be held on February 11<sup>th</sup> at 10.45 am in the church, immediately following the Sung Eucharist. Father Grant presents much of his Annual Report in the sermon for the day.

In Anglican polity, the Annual Vestry functions like an AGM. It hears reports, receives the financial statement for the previous year and passes the budget for the year ahead. There is the opportunity to ask questions from the reports; also items/motions for discussion and debate can be listed – *Motions need to be with the Rector by January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018.*

It is also the meeting where parish officers are elected. Each year the following positions fall vacant:

- ❖ People's Warden
- ❖ Parish Councillor (6)
- ❖ Auditor
- ❖ Nomination Committee [3]

Nomination forms will be available in the month prior, and nominations close on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. We endeavour to run efficient meetings, so generally the Vestry runs for no more than 45 minutes. Because of its importance in the administration and care of the parish, Vestry is a meeting all parishioners are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions please ask Fr Grant, one of the Wardens or a member of Parish Council.



From the "Church Times"

The annual Vestry Meeting was held straight after the 9.30 am Sung Eucharist