

United Church Dorchester  
**CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT**  
January to December 2016



## **OUR VISION**

Our purpose is to worship God and, helped by the Holy Spirit, to love each other, to care for those in need and to share the love of Jesus Christ with all those around us.

The United Church Dorchester is a Christian Community welcoming everyone. We value our diversity. Whatever our age, background, culture, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity, we each have something special to share with others.

In Jesus Christ's name, the United Church Dorchester

- seeks personal and spiritual growth, together as a worshipping community and also individually, and encourages all in faith,
- cares for and supports all within and beyond the church community,
- works in partnership with other churches and local groups in Dorchester and district,
- serves the community and the wider world by caring for the earth and striving for a just and peaceful world, combating poverty and disadvantage, and
- fosters a deeper understanding of and respect for other cultures and faiths.

# 1 A year of Vision and Fruitfulness

- 1.1 Dorchester United Church located at the bottom of the main shopping street, is a combination of Methodist and United Reformed Church members with other denominations and of none attracted to it. With the new Brewery Square development taking shape with a mixture of retail and apartments, town houses and other developments nearby, in an area that has seen people re-locate into the area due to retirement and downsizing from other areas, we have seen a number of new seekers.
- 1.2 We are a hands on community, a church with its sleeves rolled up, working in the community providing a safe place to meet. A coffee shop that is open up to four days a week, manned by church volunteers and others from different walks of life, a Christian book shop that is open 10am to 12.30 five days a week selling Christian books greetings cards and Fair Trade food, gifts and stamps, and is a hub of information to visitors to the area who call in.
- 1.3 We offer different styles of worship at different times Sunday, 9am Communion service once a month, a quiet reflective time of worship, a 10.30 all age service, with a mixture of traditional and modern hymns and songs with choir, singing group and musicians, to compliment. Small children have either the choice of staying with parents playing with toys or craft table or offered Christian activities away from the main worship time. During the week there is Story Tots. a parent/guardian and child activity time which has grown over the past year, run by a team of dedicated volunteers.
- 1.4 Our Ministers offer 24/7 care in spiritual and emotional care, Rev. Peter Clark (United Reformed Church Minister) from the Bridport Pastorate, offers ¼ time and Superintendent Stephanie Jenner based at the United Church with responsibilities to other smaller churches in the area. Rev. Jenner took her sabbatical this year from April to July which ministers take every 7 years. She took the theme of Mind, Body and Spirit.
- 1.5 2016 has been a year of extended outreach. We held a “Death Café”, in March where a team of varying Professionals came together to offer help and advice to the public to allay fears and concerns about funeral planning, with coffee and lashings of chocolate cake provided to lighten the mood, with a team of United Church’s pastoral team to hover and oversee the day and provide a listening ear.
- 1.6 The Church was involved in separate groups for a lent course, this year’s theme was “Psalms and Prayers for today’s people” the book was bought by different groups and various people took turns to lead a session.
- 1.7 Holy Week - We held a week of several different styles of Worship for Holy week including a Taize style worship service, a film, a family midweek meal. The churches together in Dorchester came together Good Friday to have a walk of witness through the town, stopping at various points in the town centre, ending at

the local Catholic Church for a time of quiet reflection. Coffee and hot cross buns were served afterwards for those who wanted to stay.

- 1.8 Easter - A dawn service was held on Easter day at a local green space on the edge of town, a notorious spot in days gone by for executions. Breakfast was supplied afterwards back at the church Hall before the celebration of a family service for Easter.
- 1.9 A newly formed group of Retail Chaplains continues to grow, shop staff now feel comfortable in engaging with Chaplains calling in and engaging with them, this group is made up of different church representatives
- 1.10 This Year 2016 our chosen charity was a cause dedicated to the plight of Refugees. And a total of £1,844.43 was raised and sent to Christian Aid in December.
- 1.11 Dorchester Agriculture Show - At our annual agriculture show we provided a safe and quiet haven for parents looking for facilities for nappy changing and breast feeding, plus an area to chill out. We provided an activities table, keyring and badge making kits and games for older children.
- 1.12 Advent and Christmas - We offered again this year an interactive Christmas Story "Journey to the Stable" with parallel stories of today's world. A wide variety of schools booked private sessions and then it opened to the public.

We offered a variety of services, from a Christingle Service for the very young and young at heart, to a Quiet Christmas service for those who could not cope with loud and busy service. This was aimed at those suffering from Dementia to those going through bereavement.

- 1.13 At the Town's Christmas lights switch on and a carnival atmosphere, we provided refreshments and mince pies. Music was provided by local school orchestras and singers and the Town band. This brought many people of all ages into the church and they stayed to sing Carols and Christmas songs. A voluntary collection made £96.65 and donated to the local Poverty Action Group Charity.
- 1.14 On Christmas Eve a candlelight midnight Communion Service was held, many people gathered including many visitors to the Town. And a short celebration Service was held Christmas morning.

## **2 The role of the Council of Stewards**

- 2.1 The Council of Stewards (the Trustees) has the responsibility of administering and managing the Church in support of its Vision. It supports and advises the Ministers in promoting the whole mission of the United Church and the wider Church in its teaching of the Christian faith and in its pastoral, evangelistic, social, ecumenical and charitable work. The Council is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the United Church building and the associated buildings at numbers 49 and 51 Charles Street, Dorchester.

2.2 The Stewards Council is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church and to become part of it. It maintains an over-view of worship and makes suggestions on how services can involve the many groups that live within Dorchester and its surroundings. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

### **3 Adherence to Charity Commission guidance**

3.1 When planning our activities for the year, the Ministers and the Stewards Council adhere to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our Church community through:

- a) the celebration of public worship;
- b) the teaching of the Christian faith;
- c) mission and evangelism;
- d) pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved;
- e) the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including, but not restricted to, the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and the support of other charities in the UK and overseas.
- f) maintaining the fabric of the United Church and associated buildings in order to facilitate all these activities.

### **4 The celebration of public worship**

4.1 The Church provides a variety of worship styles at different times throughout the week. The 10.30am Sunday morning services have been led by our Ministers, incumbent or retired, or by accredited lay preachers. The average weekly congregation, based on the October Count figures, has been about 150 worshippers. The format for Sunday mornings is flexible, although there is always the opportunity for children and young people to take part in worship both with the adult congregation and in their own Junior Church worship

4.2 The choir practises weekly to support congregational singing in worship and performs anthems and other items, and an informal singing group offers the opportunity for anyone to learn new worship material.

4.3 Sunday evenings tend to follow a more traditional format with a smaller, but faithful congregation of between 25 and 35 worshippers. Worshippers have a variety of services such as reflective (Taize) or Celtic style, traditional healing and wholeness and songs of praise added to the future plans.

4.4 On the second Sunday in the month, an early morning communion service is held at 9.00am. Encounter services are now also held in the evening with different emphasis for example Arty Party or Bible Banter. These services last thirty minutes and are always followed by a bring-and-share tea. They replace the 6.30pm service on that day.

- 4.5 A short, twenty minute service is held on Wednesday morning to coincide with the town's Market Day and is accompanied with coffee and stalls in the Hall. Typically about 30 people attend the service and, although most are regular Church goers – though not necessarily from the United Church - a few who would see themselves as non-church goers regularly attend.
- 4.6 As well as offering regular services during the main festive periods at Easter and Christmas, we continue to have additional and special services, celebrations and activities during these celebrations.
- 4.7 Dementia-friendly services were held during July and December this year and the intention is to make these a regular feature in our worship calendar. These services were also taken out to residential homes.
- 4.8 As part of our pastoral support to the local community we provide comfort and support to the bereaved. The Ministers were involved in funerals throughout the year, not all of Church members. Monthly communion services continue to be held at two residential homes and one sheltered housing complex and, through our Pastoral Visitor and Ministers, we hold occasional services at three other locations in the town.
- 4.9 Two church groups meet regularly for reflective prayer and meditation.

## **5 Teaching the Christian faith**

- 5.1 The Church has a number of house groups that meet regularly and, through discussion and conversation, explore the Word as expressed in the Bible. During Lent 2016 the theme was "Psalms and Prayers for Today's people".
- 5.2 A key objective of our Junior Church is to educate our young people in the basis of our Faith. Most Sunday mornings they share in part of the main service before leaving for their own sessions but once a month meet separately as First Steps for their own worship and activity time with their parents and carers.

## **6 Mission and evangelism**

- 6.1 In addition to its regular and established activities, the United Church Dorchester has arranged a number of additional events this year.
- 6.2 This year the Dorset County Show management offered the church a fee free stand which was also larger than in previous years giving more space for the activities. The team provided refreshments, baby changing and feeding facilities, games and information. For the first time this year a similar facility was provided in the church in the week running up to Christmas, offering an open door onto South Street for a few hours each day to anyone in the town wanting respite from the commercial activity and facilities to feed and change babies.

- 6.3 Prior to that, over a period of three weeks in December, we repeated the 'Journey to the Stable' which was visited by an increased number of school children and members of the public. An addition this year there was a sheep trail around the town with fourteen shops hosting a felt sheep in their window for children to find. The sheep making had involved a large working party of church volunteers who spent an afternoon together sewing and inventing names for the sheep. New publicity also included balloons being given to passing people on the first day of public opening, accompanied by a church member in a sheep costume bleating loudly at passers-by!
- 6.4 The church was also opened to join in the traditional Annual Christmas Cracker late night shopping carnival in Dorchester. The Church forms an important focus because of its position in the town centre, offering free coffee and mince pies with an opportunity to listen to Christmas music and join in singing carols.
- 6.5 Earlier in the year, the after-school drop-in for children to attend between school and home during term-time ended at Easter. This followed a review which found a decreasing response from students.
- 6.6 The 'Story-Tots' group which meets once a week during term time continues to welcome babies and pre-school children and their carers who share a time of play together. After a fairly quiet spring and summer terms numbers significantly increased in September with many new parents and babies as well as regular attenders.
- 6.7 Members of the Church continue to be involved in the management and running of the Quiet Space in Poundbury.
- 6.8 Chaplaincy work in Dorchester continues under the ecumenical Management Group, both with Dorset Fire and Rescue and with retailers in the town. An official party of firefighters attended our Christmas Carol Service, with their fire engines parked nearby ready to respond to a call if needed.
- 6.9 The Church's window onto South Street, with a new window dresser this year, continues to show to passers-by something of the life and concerns of the Church with a frequently changing display.

## **7 Pastoral work**

- 7.1 United Church maintains a system by which all members and adherents are assigned to a pastoral visitor, who tries to keep in touch with them and appreciate their concerns. As well as each member or adherent being assigned a visitor the visitors themselves are grouped under a number of co-ordinators, who look after the visitors' pastoral welfare. Training for pastoral visitors this year has included the topic of positive pastoral visiting. The pastoral visitors leaflet was discussed and has been updated.
- 7.2 A special welcome was given to recent new members to help provide them with information, a welcome pack was produced which included the new Church activities booklet.

- 7.3 The Church employs a Lay Pastoral Visitor who continues to support the Ministers in regular pastoral visiting and responding to needs as they arise. One of these perceived needs was around keeping older brains active. This led to the launch of a monthly games afternoon in January 2016
- 7.4 In the Spring a Death Café was organised. Groups involved with end of life issues were invited to have a stall, including solicitors, funeral directors, woodland burials, Cruse bereavement counselling, Age UK Dorchester, Weldmar hospice and our own musical director and ministers. It was felt to be a very positive morning where people could ask questions in a supportive and caring environment. Another is planned for 2017.
- 7.5 Another component of our pastoral care is the “Prayer Chain” where those in need are remembered in prayer by a number of Church members, including those who are housebound. The Tuesday prayer group also keeps a list of people for whom prayer has been requested.
- 7.6 The Coffee Shop continues to be a hub of social activity, offering a listening ear and a friendly welcome to all. It now has a regular clientele, some of whom are either physically or mentally frail. They are well known to the staff and use the facilities as a place to come and feel at home. A further opportunity for friendship is provided by a regular lunch time club called “Picnic People” which has successfully taken off this year. The Quiet Room and the Church itself are open daily for all to use for quiet prayer and reflection and as a place for quiet conversation.

## **8 Serving the local community**

- 8.1 With its central location in the town, the United Church is ideally placed to offer itself as a reasonably priced venue for many events. The Regional Blood Transfusion Service runs well attended donor sessions regularly on our premises. The Dorchester Learning Centre occupies the Chelselbourne room on the top floor. This is to be extended to include the Charminster room. Occasionally the Centre provides a collection of their art work for display in the Coffee Shop.
- 8.2 A number of local charities receive advantageous rates for the use of rooms. In specific instances accommodation is provided free-of-charge. One such group is the bi-monthly Contact Centre where children can come to meet their non-resident parents, often under potentially confrontational circumstances.
- 8.3 The Church is used for a number of choirs for rehearsals and occasional concerts. Grateful mention is given to Peter Mann who has managed all the bookings for many years and ensures rooms are ready for use for both regular and occasional users.
- 8.4 The Church Shop still opens six mornings a week from 10.00am to 12.30pm providing a wide range of Christian books, gifts and cards, and fairly traded goods, including food from Traidcraft. Its customers come from a wide radius around Dorchester. As a Fairtrade Church and eco-congregation, good practice is actively promoted within the Church and more widely in our locality.
- 8.5 The total takings for the Coffee Shop were £14,258 which is £80.56 per working day (£80.03 in 2015). After taking into account the purchase price of foodstuffs, which

together with equipment and materials cost £4,469, the profit generated during the year was £9,789. This, together with part of the modest working capital with which we started the year, enabled us to pass over to the church the sum of £10,000 which was the same as 2015. The working capital remaining available at the end of the year was £1,921.

## **9 Support of other charities in the UK and overseas**

- 9.1 The United Church has a continuing commitment to local, national and international charities through members working as volunteers and by donations of goods and money.
- 9.2 Locally the Church and individual members have supported:
- The Dorchester Poverty Action Group which held an open meeting this year looking at the issues around personal debt as well as continuing to offer grants to people in emergencies.
  - the local food bank, for which the Church continues to be a collection point
  - Age UK Dorchester
  - Dorset Nightstop
- 9.3 The Dorchester Support Group for Action for Children has continued to be there through a very trying 2 years personally for the organiser. A few of the regular home box holders have been lost and they could do with some more. United Church has been very supportive and at the Christmas season was the best ever. It is hoped to hold at least one quiz in 2017.
- 9.4 Internationally the Church is committed to relieving poverty and disaster and to funding development through the work of Christian Aid. Members of the Church have shown great generosity in their contributions both to regular collections and in other fund-raising activities. Moreover, the Church's chosen charity in 2016, the Sudan Refugee crisis, raised a substantial sum which was channelled through Christian Aid.

The main focus of raising funds was through Christian Aid Week, most particularly the annual house-to-house collection and the Christian Aid Week market, hosted as always by the Church but a splendid example of ecumenical cooperation. Members too volunteered for the street collection at the end of Christian Aid Week which has now become a regular fixture. The Lent Lunches also raised awareness of, and substantial funds for, Christian Aid.

Church members have been heavily involved in other ecumenical events for Christian Aid. These have included a Valentines Fair of local produce in the Hall which was very well attended, a highly successful Quiz Night and the traditional Carol Singing on Christmas Eve. The 'Valentines' event will be repeated this year on 25 March (the Saturday immediately before Mothering Sunday). It is called 'Sharing the Love' and a number of other aid organisations have been invited to it.

Church members continue to be heavily involved in lobbying on such matters as climate change and tax justice.

We were very fortunate to have two excellent speakers at our World Church Services in June and October: Stephen Dominy and Fiona Daborn, both regional organisers for Christian Aid.

The Church continues to make a tremendous contribution to the fight against injustice and working to bring hope to the poorest and most powerless people in the world. Its' contribution to all Christian Aid activities provides an excellent example of commitment to cooperation with many of the other Dorchester churches.

- 9.5 The Church supports The Bible Society and world mission through the World Mission fund of the Methodist Church and CWM in the United Reformed Church. In 2015, the chosen World Mission Project for the Church was for Syrian refugees sent via Christian Aid (charity reg 1105851).
- 9.6 During the course of the year the Coffee Shop has handed over to the Church some £12,000. As in previous years charitable donations have been made by the Coffee Shop by contributing from the regular "tips" box. This year's chosen charity was Air Ambulance and £458.84 donated.
- 9.7 The weekly market day stalls in the Hall have again distributed their proceeds to a number of different charities and most of the Church social groups made donations towards Church expenses or another nominated charity.

## **10 Maintaining the Church building**

- 10.1 For probably the first time in history, the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee met at UCD in September and almost half the agenda related to projects at UCD! , the repair work to the church spire was approved in principle, the works to the South Street doors was approved subject to some minor changes, the installation of the lift was approved and the installation of Solar Cells on the roof of the hall was approved in principle. The redecoration of the church and the cleaning of the church stonework was discussed in some detail!
- 10.2 A structural engineer was commissioned to survey the loft space of No 51 Charles Street and design a simple structure to permit the removal of the cross beams.
- 10.3 The UCD fire risk assessment was updated by P D Fire.
- 10.4 Following Alison Pople's move to Wales, Ray Harris has taken over many of tasks that Alison had undertaken faithfully for many years.
- 10.5 In 2016 the lighting in the Church Foyer was improved and some in the shop + Coffee Lounge were upgraded. The curtains in the hall were cleaned and repaired, and the No 49 Charles Street doors were replaced.

## **11 Ecumenical Relationships**

- 11.1 The United Church Dorchester has good relationships, both working and through worship, with other churches in the town. We are a member of Churches Together where one of our congregation was nominated as Chair this year.
- 11.2 Additionally, through the Quiet Space on Poundbury where our Minister is a trustee and several members of our congregation are volunteers, the Church actively

contributes to and supports an ecumenical Christian presence in Dorchester. After 3 years as Trustee, our minister has stepped down and another church member is trustee on our behalf. We continue to participate in the leading of prayers and worship at the Quiet Space.

- 11.3 This year the Church participated in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. We celebrated the Good Friday Walk of Witness, ending at the Church with a service and hospitality. Further ecumenical events supported by the Church included Peace Day in September and Cracker Night in December. Other denominations joined us at our Sunrise service on Easter Sunday. We continue to seek ways to work with other churches in the town.

## **12 Membership, Staffing and Other Issues**

- 12.1 During the year one person has been welcomed to the Church through transferred membership. One baby was baptised and another welcome at a service of thanksgiving. We lost 7 members through death.
- 12.2 During 2016 our Methodist Minister, Revd Stephanie Jenner, took a sabbatical leave of three months and shared some of her experiences and learning on her return. She gives approximately two-thirds of her time to United Church, as she has three other small churches in her care, and also is Superintendent of the Bridport and Dorchester Methodist Circuit, and has District roles. She takes the lead in the planning of worship, in pastoral activity, in developing local networks such as Churches Together, and contributes to both business and other committees and groups. We continue to benefit greatly from the ministries of retired Ministers and lay leaders of both.
- 12.3 Our URC Minister, Revd Peter Clark, continues to give about a third of his time to United Church Dorchester, leading worship, sharing leadership of one of our Fellowship groups and serving on the Council of Stewards. He also comes regularly to our Coffee Shop and makes himself available to church members and visitors alike.
- 12.4 Our employed pastoral visitor continues to work closely with the Ministers and pastoral team.
- 12.5 In January 2016 June Faulkner started in the part-time role of administrator for the Church. This new role has supported both the minister and Stewards.

## **13 Financial Review**

- 13.1 The Finance committee continues to meet four times during the year to review quarterly the actual income and expenditure against the 2016 budget. The main purpose being to ensure that the Church finances are in order and remain on target. The committee is also concerned that the finances are managed well, and to give support to the Treasurer in the management of all the transactions and financial affairs of the United Church.
- 13.2 In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter the budget was planned for 2017; this planned budget was then taken to Stewards Council and finally the Church Meeting for approval. Because of

the great number of ideas for possible improvement to the church it was necessary to prioritise them so as not overwhelm church resources.

- 13.3 United Church reserves continue to be in a very healthy state, although some use of them is planned for in the 2017 budget.

#### **14 Reserves policy**

- 14.1 The Church Finance team has a Reserves Policy in place, this is to secure the future in case of unexpected or exceptional need, and is a requirement of the Charity Commission.
- 14.2 Our reserves are held as unrestricted funds which are kept available once our commitments and planned expenditure are covered. The only portion of Church funds which are included as reserves are those which are freely available. Restricted funds and endowments are not included in the reserves; for example, the Florence Fare Trust is an endowment, and the Youth and Family fund is a restricted fund and therefore these are excluded from the list of reserves.
- 14.3 Of our funds and investments, there are three, which at the present time, fall into the category of reserve funds. These are the Emergency fund, the Memorial fund and the General fund. The total of these makes up our available reserves.
- 14.4 The Charity Commission suggests that we consider certain factors, namely forecasts of future planning and expenditure, and possible risks and contingencies, including the possibility of reduction in income of the Church. We have tried to strike a balance by taking their recommended figure which is equivalent to six months' worth of our working capital to be held as reserves. Therefore it is necessary for us to hold an amount of at least 50% of the annual expenditure of the United Church as a sufficient reserve. The three funds held have been adequate to cover this requirement and meet the recommendations of the Charity Commission throughout this last year, and the exact figures will be published with the Annual statement of the Accounts at the Annual Church Meeting. It is our policy to invest our fund balances between the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund and the Trustees for the Methodist Church Purposes.

#### **15 Structure, governance and management**

- 15.1 The procedures for the appointment of elected officials and Stewards are set out in United Church's constitution. The membership of the council of Stewards (trustees) consists of the Ministers and the Stewards, Senior Steward (Chairman), Secretary and Treasurer and are elected. All the Stewards except the Ministers are elected by a combination of United Church members and retired Methodist Ministers who choose to make United Church their main place of worship. All those who attend our Church are encouraged to become members, if they feel called to do so.

- 15.2 The Stewards Council met for business 9 times during the year with an average level of attendance at 90%. It has the task of giving leadership to the Church as well as having an overview of its life. We had 2 Stewards resign, one at the end of April and our Secretary in September. One of our remaining stewards will take over the role of Secretary. Though we were unable to recruit a full complement of Stewards as laid down in United Church's constitution at the AGM. We are finding it more difficult to recruit Stewards who are willing to come forward to be nominated for the commitment of the term of office. In January we successfully recruited and employed for 10 hours a week an Administrator to take away the heavy load from the Secretary and Senior Steward and to co-ordinate various areas of administration to centralise and create a hub of information. In October the Stewards held an extra meeting to look at ways of reorganising the room bookings as the current Bookings Officer was looking to retire at the end of December. New updated methods of doing the job were discussed using an online strategy of booking rooms, safeguarding rules adhered to and payment showing prospective new hirers the layout of rooms and housekeeping rules, this to be taken up by the Administrator and an extra person to help out with checking of rooms after use and of close of day.
- 15.3 With its wide responsibilities the Stewards Council delegates, co-ordination of aspects of the Church's life to a number of committees. This brings about the active involvement of a larger number of people in the day to day running of the Church. These committees, which include Worship, Pastoral and Fellowship, Youth and Family, Community Service Home and World Mission, Property, Finance and Administration, and this past year a new group added to our remits is the Outreach Group. All these are responsible to the Steward's Council and report back to it regularly through their linked Steward.

## **16 Administration Information**

- 16.2 United Church Dorchester has an entrance on both South Street and Charles Street in the centre of Dorchester. As a 'Local Ecumenical Partnership' between the former South Street Methodist Church and the former South Street United Reformed Church, Dorchester, the United Church retains its links to both parent bodies through the Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church and the Southampton District of the Methodist Church and is an integral part of the Bridport and Dorchester Circuit of the Methodist Church.
- 16.3 The Church is registered with the Charity Commission, number 1137996.
- 16.4 The correspondence address is **The United Church Dorchester,**  
**49 – 51 Charles Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1EE.**
- 16.5 The website address is [www.unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk](http://www.unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk)

**The Council of Stewards (Trustees) who served during 2016 comprised:**

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Our Ministers	Revd Stephanie Jenner Revd Peter Clark
Stewards who stood down at AGM 2016	Wendy Hilton (who served as Senior Steward)  Elizabeth Martin (Admin)
Stewards who served all Year (Committee shown in brackets)	Penny Fennell (Senior Steward, Chair of Council of Stewards)  Colin Gannaway (Treasurer, Finance Committee)  Paul Smith (Property)  Paul Wallis (Worship)  Alexandra Reed (Youth and Family Church Secretary November 2016 pro tem till AGM)
New Stewards Elected at AGM 2016	Ronni Boyden (CSHOM)
Stewards who stood down mid term	Janet Kennewell (Church Secretary)

**17. Looking forward to 2017**

17.1 While this annual report relates to the calendar year January to December 2016, there are many things in the life of the church that began in 2016 that are being continued through into 2017.

17.2 There are several projects currently in various stages of planning and completion throughout the church building, with the core aim of making the church a more accessible, efficient and, most importantly, welcoming space. Many of these projects are continuations from previous years, however good progress is being made in ensuring they come to fruition. Further planning and consultation is being sought before some of these plans can progress.

- 17.3 It has been agreed that Virtual Doctors, a secular charity which aims to improve healthcare in some of the most remote and impoverished areas of Africa through the use of simple technology, will be the Church's chosen charity for the next year. This will take place alongside UCD's existing support for other charities such as Action for Children and Christian Aid.
- 17.4 Much thought has been given to the style and content of worship and activities within the church this year, and in this vein we intend to build further on our successes and learnings in 2017. Preparations are well under way for Lent and Easter, with a church meal and son-rise service planned, and plans are beginning to formulate for the church's very popular stall at the Dorset County Show, whilst some groups are already beginning planning for Christmas!
- 17.5 It will be 35 years since the exchange between Dorchester and Lubbecke was set up, and plans are in place for a weekend of celebration here at UCD before a return visit to Lubbecke later in the week to celebrate with the church in their 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the life of the Church during 2016 and continue to do so; and thanks also to those who have contributed to the production of this Annual Report.