

Additional Reports

Bellringers and Steeple Keepers Report

During the course of 2025 and into 2026 I am teaching two schoolgirls to ring as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. They attended the volunteers day at the end of 2025 and obtained approval from their school to learn to ring.

Sadly ringing for Sunday services is now only 3 or 4 at best. Though most times it is as low as 1. Nevertheless, we continue to call the faithful to church.

We have continued to run successful weekly practices, helped by a number of visiting ringers regularly attending.

On 27th April 2025 we rang a quarter peal to mark Ruth Peet's farewell following her last service at the church. We also rang on 8th May 2025 in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Eight other quarter peals and one full peal were rung during the year. Most recently I was able to assemble a band at very short notice to ring on Friday 20th March 2026 to mark the pilgrimage of The Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, Archbishop of Canterbury, as she walked through Aylesford village.

We have also rung for a number of weddings and funerals throughout the year. Again, we have had to rely on help from others to fulfil these commitments, especially the funerals, and increasingly weddings, which are during the working week and some of our existing band are working or at school.

Paul Bastow, our Steeple Keeper, continues to undertake periodic inspections of the fabric of the bells and tower, including the roof. He also ensures the flag is flown from the tower roof on appropriate occasions.

The winding of the church clock is now undertaken by an electric winding mechanism designed and built by Mark Elvers, who is the Tower Captain and steeple keeper at St Michael and All Angels in Maidstone. This required no alteration or modifications to the clock. Thereby obviating the need for a faculty. The cost has been borne by me.

Finally, I am pleased to say I have returned to ringing following suffering a stroke and pneumonia in 2024. I am most grateful for the help and support I receive from all our visiting ringers, especially those from St James the Great in East Malling, without whom it would not be possible to run the weekly practices.

Terry Barnard

Tower Captain

Dementia Café Report

This last year we have had fun and lots of laughs but also sadness, losing some of our regular attendees.

Most months we have a theme and activities that go along with the theme (some of us also dress up!).

We have had a few visitors to entertain us. We have listened to Aylesford Handbell Ringers, Rob and his Electric Ukelele, and stroked some animals from Amazing Animal World.

Again, this year we have been lucky to be presented with donations from Andrew Kennedy (he also enjoys coming along and joining in).

I would like to thank the volunteers who help every month and to the Church community for supporting a very important outreach to the community.

Jane Roberts

Anna Chaplain

Choir Report

Once again, very little has changed with the choir over the last 12 months and we always remain on the look-out for more singers!

We continue to support the singing of the traditional services (1st and 3rd Sundays of the month), and some others; the annual Carol service was again a challenge, with very few singers and thus music scaled-back from what had originally been planned.

The Community Choir (of youngsters under the direction of Paul Richards) continues to provide an enthusiastic contribution once a month, now on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

We have sung for several funerals and memorial services during the last year, although there has been a dearth of weddings of the last couple of years; we look forward to this improving once we have our new incumbent!

Levente Vas continues to play for all or parts of the services when he is at home from university.

Michael J. Keays

Organist and Choirmaster