

ST MARY THE VIRGIN RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN

OUTREACH REPORT - FOR ST. MARY'S APCM 2018

Charity nominations voted for by the congregation were resumed for 2017/18.

The three charities chosen were the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance, Porchlight Homeless Charity and Sevenoaks Christian Counselling.

As in previous years, the three charities were invited to come and speak to us at one of our 9.30am church services with a subsequent retiring collection being held. The Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance were the first to be invited but unfortunately were unable to attend on the date agreed due to unforeseen circumstances. However, a retiring collection was held on the allotted day and the money raised duly sent to them.

Porchlight were next to be invited and a representative came to speak to us before Christmas. She gave an excellent presentation of the work they do to help the homeless. Working across Kent and the south east, they help vulnerable and isolated people get support with their mental health, housing, education and employment and provide children, young people and adults with the advice, guidance and skills to live independently. They provide a very necessary service in the current climate where, sadly, homelessness appears to be increasing.

Sevenoaks Christian Counselling have been invited to speak to us on Sunday, 29 April 2018. SCC offer a professional service by Christians which is affordable for all. They provide confidential counselling on an equal opportunities basis, accepting clients as they are and offering non-judgemental, professional attention, care and support, regardless of religious or non-religious beliefs. We look forward to welcoming the Revd Andrew Proctor who will join us and speak to us at our 9:30am service.

Other charities we have supported during the year are:

Poverty & Hope - We continue to support this excellent charity as part of our annual outreach. The appeal each year raises funds to support projects overseas and in Kent that aim to tackle the causes of poverty. Projects are usually supported for three years, to provide stability and to help them grow and become self-sustaining.

Friends of Kent Churches Sponsored Ride & Stride Event - The annual event happens each September and is supported by local churches around Sevenoaks and beyond. Money raised goes to help restore Kent's fine churches – some dating back to before William the Conqueror! About 700 Kent Churches open their doors.

SKET (Sevenoaks Kenyan Education Trust) - Our sponsorship of a Kenyan girl continues. The money pays for her education up to the end of secondary schooling. The Sunday Club's "circle of pennies" makes a valuable contribution to the sponsorship. Updates on progress are pinned on the notice board at the back of the church at various times during the year.

Risti Church, Estonia - Money was raised to send to our link church in Risti, Estonia. They were particularly grateful for our donation as they are currently trying to finish the work in the vestibule of the Church. They do need to preserve and protect their Church and fund raising is difficult.

Christmas Tree Festival - Our annual and excellent Christmas Tree Festival raised money in December to share between Age UK and St Mary's Church.

Samaritan's Purse/Christmas Shoe Box Appeal - For the second year running, members of the congregation have made up Christmas gift boxes to send to children who wouldn't necessarily be receiving presents. It has proved to be well supported and is a very worthy cause.

Names of the three chosen charities to support in 2018/19 will be announced at the 2018 APCM.

Ronnie Todd & Rosemary McLintock

April 2018