

# **ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW**

## **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING FOR THE YEAR 2017**

**To be held on**

**Sunday 29th April 2018, 11.30 a.m. in St Mary's**

**Documents enclosed for the meeting:**

**Agenda for APCM on Sunday 29th April 2018**

**Minutes of Previous APCM Meeting 23 April 2017**

**Reports for 2017**

# ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW

## ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 29th April 2018, 11.30 a.m. in St Mary's

### A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 23rd April 2017
3. Appointment of Churchwardens  
*(Two churchwardens to be chosen in accordance with the Churchwardens' Measure 2001)*
4. Report on the Electoral Roll *(A copy of the Roll is available for inspection)*
5. Adoption of The Annual Report on the proceedings of the PCC, the activities of the Parish generally and the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ending 31st December 2017; and the appointment of an Independent Examiner
6. The Churchwardens' Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church  
*(in accordance with Section 5 of the Care of Churches & Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1999)*
7. Report on the proceedings of the Paddock Wood Deanery Synod
8. Reports of the activities of the sub-committees of the PCC: Education; Fabric; Outreach and Fundraising; World Mission
9. The Curate's reflections
10. Reports on other areas of the life of the Parish:  
Bell Ringers; Brass Cleaning; Church Cleaning; Church Watch;  
Coffee Pots and Tiny Tots; Freewill Offering and Gift Aid; Friends Together;  
Home Communion; Kibakwe Link; Mothers' Union; Music; Parish Visiting;  
Newsletter Delivery; St. Mary's Flowers; St. Mary's Hospital Car Service; Servers;  
Sidespersons; Wednesday Study Group; Who Let the Dads Out?
11. The Vicar's reflections
12. Election of up to 2 parochial representatives of the laity to the PCC
13. Appointment of Sidespersons

## St Mary's Church, Hadlow

### Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Hadlow for the year 2016

Held in Church on Sunday 23rd April 2017: 55 members of the congregation present  
In the Chair: Reverend Paul White (incumbent)  
Minutes taken by: Annemarie Woodward (PCC Secretary)

The meeting opened with a short prayer.

#### 1 Apologies for absence:

Judith Deckers; Liz Derrick; Doreen Etheridge; Barbara Fermor; Ann Jenner; Stan Jenner, Sue Morgan; Val Newell; Jenny Nye, Steve Newell; Rachel Packham; Joan Roberts; Fay and Ian Dumbreck; Carole Waters; Annie Young (16)

#### 2 Minutes of the APCM held on 24th April 2016

The Minutes of the APCM held on 24th April 2016 had been circulated to members of the congregation. Their acceptance was agreed by all present, and the Minutes were signed by the Reverend Paul White.

#### 3 Appointment of Churchwardens

There were two nominations for the office of Churchwarden:

Martin Massy (proposed by David Gater and seconded by Susan Morgan)  
Barbara Smith (proposed by Judy Gater and seconded by Janice Bowden)

There being no other nominations, Martin Massy and Barbara Smith were elected unopposed.

#### 4 Report on the Electoral Roll

In 2017 the Electoral Roll was revised to take account of any changes which occurred during the year. Seven people were removed from the roll: four had died and three had moved away from the parish. We received one addition to the Roll, resulting in a net decrease of 6. Current figures are: 184 on the Roll, of whom 125 were resident in the parish and 59 non-resident. The proportion of those on the Roll living outside the parish was 32%. A copy of the Roll is displayed on the church notice board.

David Lear has, once again, acted as St Mary's Electoral Roll Officer and our thanks are due to him and to his wife Gabrielle for all their hard work in compiling the Roll.

**5(a) Adoption of the Annual Report of the proceedings of the PCC, the activities of the Parish generally and the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ending 31st December 2016.**

Rev'd Paul placed the Annual Report and Financial Statement before the meeting. Adoption of the Report - proposed by Martin Massy and seconded by Barbara Smith. The report was accepted unanimously.

**5(b) Appointment of an Independent Examiner**

Rev'd Paul paid tribute to the work of David Stephens, our Independent Examiner. Mr Stephens was willing to serve in this role for a further year. Appointment: proposed by David Gater, seconded by Maurice Bush and accepted unanimously.

**6(a) Churchwardens' Report**

Martin Massy provided a brief summary of the Churchwardens report (available on the website), paying particular attention to the restoration of the tower and the refurbishment of the upper room.

He noted that, as part of the agreement with the Heritage Lottery Fund with regard to the work on the tower, St Mary's has a duty to make the heritage of the church accessible to a wider range of people. To this end a display unit will replace the existing notice board at the back of the church. The new display unit (designed by Stephanie Ingham) is at present under consideration with the Diocesan Council.

There is a public notice period (for any objections to the faculty) which comes to an end on 6th May. The design and plans are available on the website, and should there be any objections these should be sent direct to the Registrar.

Rev'd Paul noted that there is also the possibility of further alterations to the fabric of the church: the flooring and seating in particular. These will be on the Agenda for the PCC Meeting in May.

**6(b) Report on the Accounts and Financial Statements**

David Gater (Honorary Treasurer) gave a short commentary on the Financial Statements Report for 2016, highlighting two areas in particular:

*The Belfry Tower capital works restoration project:*

The vast majority of the repairs identified in the last Quinquennial Report on the structure of the building had been undertaken, during 2016, initially as a result of the very generous Heritage Lottery Fund grant, but in addition as a result of a further £34,000 approx raised by the congregation of St Mary's. These extra funds were raised in just 5 weeks in the summer in order to complete unanticipated additional work not identified at the start of the project. This was an amazing response by everyone involved. Great thanks were due to all those who contributed this additional finance, and to Rev'd Paul and churchwardens Martin Massy and Barbara Smith who worked tirelessly to achieve the successful completion of the project.

*Day to day running expenditure in the year:*

In the year as a whole, expenditure exceeded income by £1,872, with income received being £101,253. Small though this deficit was, it needed to be stressed that St Mary's could not run

such deficits year on year indefinitely, due to the lack of reserve funds to fall back on. It would be prudent to make every possible effort, going forward, to ensure that day-to-day expenditure on 'running the Church' and all its activities was kept within the bounds of regular income received. In the longer term, bearing in mind that St Mary's is a growing church with plans for increasing activities beyond the current ones, it would be essential to gradually build up reserve funds to the ideal level identified in the past, ie. of at least £30,000. Expenditure levels across all existing activities had therefore been carefully examined, to identify any scope for reductions. As a first move, annual energy contracts for gas and electricity had been renegotiated recently. It was estimated that savings of approx. £1000 per year in that area would result. Thanks are due to Duncan Murray in this regard.

St Mary's contribution to diocesan funds in the year had been £60,000.

David expressed his gratitude to the congregation in their support of St Mary's. He urged all who have yet to do so ensure their regular donations were gift aided. The additional amount raised in gift-aid in 2016 was in excess of £15,000 - a make or break amount for St Mary's. In addition, the efforts and many initiatives of the Outreach and Fundraising Committee in organising fund raising events had been vital during the year, and many thanks were due to the that committee. David expressed his thanks also to all members of the Finance team, viz. Alan Knowles (computerised bookkeeping); John Speed (gift aid claims); Maurice Bush together with Ian Thom and Berry Wheeler (cashiers). The team had an onerous and unremitting job to carry out. Both churchwardens had attended meetings of the Finance Committee and had been unfailingly helpful. Martin Massy had led on the Belfry Tower project from the outset, including in respect of contractor payments and payments to professional advisers. With expenditure exceeding £115,000 this has been far from easy and Martin had done a marvellous job.

### **7(a) Deanery Synod Report**

Francis Griffiths gave a brief report on the work of the Deanery Synod. The Synod meets regularly throughout the year and, at their last meeting, discussed Bishop James' enquiry "Our Conversation: Our Future". It is hoped that over the next year or so the Synod will seek to address areas of concern from the grass roots up rather than 'top down'.

### **7(b) Appointment of three Deanery Synod Representatives to serve for three years (2017-18 to 2019-20)**

All three current members of the Deanery Synod, Francis Griffiths, Val Newell and Kelly Parsons, having agreed to serve again for a further period of three years, were confirmed as St Mary's Deanery Synod representatives.

## **8 PCC Sub-Committee Reports:**

### Education

Kelly Parsons reported briefly on the work of the Education Committee: St Mary's young people are the future of the church. However, in order to widen the scope of youth work in 2017/18 additional finances will be needed. To this end all members present were asked to take home a tube of Smarties (to be given out at the end of the meeting), enjoy the chocolate and return the tube full to the brim with 20p pieces. The money raised will go towards a youth trip being planned for later this year. In addition to the Committee's work with young people, Kelly noted that - in addition to the home study groups - there is now a virtual group available for bible

study, thoughts and comments. Alongside the Virtual group St Mary's also has a closed group on Facebook for weekly gospel reflections.

### Fabric

Apart from the Tower Restoration and Upper Room renovation (covered in the Churchwardens' Report) Martin Masy noted that the stair lift is now basically obsolete, and will need to be replaced so that all those who are disabled will be able to access the Upper Room. There is also the question of replacing the top level lighting in the nave with LED's. Although the fixed costs on this project are fairly high, the running costs would be substantially reduced. The Fabric Committee are also considering improved heating controls and installing solar panels.

### Outreach and Fundraising

Janice Masy presented a brief report on the church's plans for outreach and fundraising. She expressed her thanks to the eight-strong team who worked very hard to see individual projects through to fruition. Immediate plans include the May Fayre, a Scarecrow Trail in September and the annual Christmas Fayre. There will also be an opportunity to reach out to the wider community with a short Thanksgiving Service, together with tea and cakes, to be held on 11th June, celebrating the Tower Restoration.

### World Mission

Barbara Smith spoke on the work of the World Mission Sub-Committee, highlighting in particular the incredible 'Shoebboxes for Romania' appeal which resulted in 136 boxes last autumn. In the coming year it is hoped that St Mary's will be able to support a number of charities with a budget of £6,000.

## **9 Written reports on other areas of church life**

Rev'd Paul reflected on the many and varied areas of church life (all of these can be seen on the church website as part of the APCM booklet). The reports covered: Bell ringers, Brass cleaning, Church cleaning, Church watch, Coffee pots and tiny tots, support for the Delhi Brotherhood Society, Freewill offering and gift aid, Friends' together, Home communions, our link with Kibakwe, the Mothers' Union, Music, Parish visiting, Newsletter delivery, Flowers, the Hospital car service; Servers, Sidespersons, the Wednesday Study Group and Who let the Dads out. Rev'd Paul expressed his thanks to all those who give their time and energies to these worthwhile and valuable additions to the life of St Mary's.

## **10 Vicar's Reflections**

Rev'd Paul shared his thoughts on the last year (this being his fifth APCM as the vicar of St Mary's), saying it is a privilege to be part of St Mary's, where everyone is welcomed with a smile and where the depth of our shared faith binds us together as a community of brothers and sisters in Christ. He paid special tributes to Janice Masy for all her hard work as Parish Administrator, to Martin Masy and Barbara Smith as our churchwardens, to David Gater and his magnificent finance team, to Antony le Fleming for the incredibly high standard of St Mary's music and choir, to Anne Hughes as our vergger and to Annemarie Woodward for her work as PCC Secretary.

Rev'd Paul also spoke of the life and work of our mission church at Golden Green, highlighting in particular their Christmas Carol Service. He noted that Golden Green has a monthly service (a mixture of Holy Communion and non-eucharistic prayer). He went on to say that, although the average congregation, at present, is less than 10, he feels it important that we continue to hold services in the mission church because they meet a small but distinct need in this community.

Looking ahead to this year, Rev'd Paul highlighted the arrival of our new Curate, Nicola Harvey, together with her husband Mike and their children. It is vital that we offer Nicky our love and support as she settles into this first step in her life as a minister of Christ.

He then turned to the period of self-reflection we are undergoing in response to the Diocese's "Our Conversation: Our Future" exercise, pointing up the phrase "we need to cross the road" in connection with the suspended Lighthouse youth project. Present plans include the re-launch of Lighthouse and he asked for prayerful support as we reach out to the wider community in Hadlow.

On behalf of the whole congregation Martin Massy thanked Rev'd Paul for his continued guidance, leadership and wisdom.

### **11 Election of parochial representatives of the laity to the PCC (to serve for three years)**

The following nominations for election as laity representatives to the PCC have been made: Kirsty Finch; David Gater; Judy Gater; Jenny Hopkins; Eleanor Livett; Katerina Nixon; Rachel Packham and Mark Totty.

It was agreed unanimously that the above named persons serve as members of the PCC for three years (2017/18 through to 2019/20).

### **12 Appointment of Sidespersons**

Barbara Smith thanked all those who, week by week, welcome all those who come to St Mary's, not only for the Sunday services but also for several other services during the year: Carol Branham; Penny Brandling-Harris; Janice Bowden; Paul Bowden; Bet Brett; Maurice Bush; Sylvia Bush; Kirsty Finch; Jenny Hopkins; Anne Hughes; Bill Hughes; Albert Longford; Susan Morgan; Jenny Nye; Pamela O'Sullivan; David Nibloe; Suzy Nibloe; Kelly Parsons; John Pierce; Richard Pierce; Richard Sheridan; Mags Skelton; Gillian Speed; Mary Steadman; Claire Walter; Carole Waters; Heather Wills; Annemarie Woodward and Annie Young.

Their appointment as Sides persons for 2017/18 was agreed unanimously.

### **13. Any Other Business**

PCC members were asked to remain behind, when the meeting closed, for a short meeting. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 1.15 pm with the Grace.

## REPORTS FOR THE YEAR 2017

### Agenda Item 6: Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens' report covers the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church, but we can't let this opportunity go by of welcoming Rev'd Nicky Harvey, Mike and their family to St. Mary's - literally a godsend!

As you know, the tower repairs were completed in 2016 and, following the end of the warranty period at the end of September, we were able to close out the project with the Heritage Lottery Fund and received the last 10% of the grant (£9,770) at the end of November. We are also finishing the last element of the work programme, which is to install a new display unit in front of the west wall, where the notice board is currently. We hope to have the unit and displays dedicated at Pentecost. But, guess what? The next Quinquennial Inspection will take place in June this year - it was the last QI that triggered the tower repair programme. So, fingers crossed... !

The table in the Occasional Vestry is old; Leslie Gilham of Gorrings' auctioneers has confirmed that the table is Elizabethan/Jacobean, and was possibly used as a prayer table. Modifications over the years, however, have detracted from its value. We should treat it gently though!

We apologise for the poor quality of the sound system at times, although it does appear that moving intercessions to the lectern is popular. We are seeking expert advice on how best to upgrade our audio(-visual) system. An upgrade would expand possibilities for services, weddings, performances, etc., for example by using different media inputs or adding a screen.

The Fabric Committee is working on a programme for redecoration, but this will depend on being able to raise the necessary funds. The first step will be to find out how much redecoration would cost. As noted in the Fabric Committee report we are also planning to replace the high-level spot and flood-lights in the nave with LED lights.

We have resumed setting aside £150 each month towards our church repair fund, in addition to expenditure on routine repairs and maintenance for the organ, fire and lightning protection, electrics, heating and sound system etc. However, with various programmes ahead, as well as wishing to rebuild our reserves, we will need extra funds and would appeal to all to see how they might be able to assist.

Finally, thank you to Rev'd Paul White for his leadership, support and friendship, and thank you all for being such lovely people - it makes our lives as churchwardens a lot easier and more enjoyable!

Martin Massy & Barbara Smith



## Agenda Item 7: Deanery Synod Report

Our Deanery Synod representatives are Val Newell, Kelly Parsons, Francis Griffiths and of course Rev'd Paul also attends. We meet four times a year rotating around the different churches in the Deanery; for example our last meeting was in Pembury. Seeing the different churches in the Deanery is one of the enjoyable aspects of this role.

The Deanery Synod meetings have been largely focused around the response to Our Conversation Our Future which was very prominent last year across the diocese. The launch of Called Together which is part of the new vision for the Diocese of Rochester, has been much discussed as to how this will be addressed at a Deanery level.

Called Together has three core themes 'Growth', 'Enrich' and 'Resource', and each theme has four distinct areas of focus.

Growing disciples is necessary to better live out the Great Commission, share the Good News, and see more people find faith. It is important to build confident disciples who have deeper relationship with God and are more confident in evangelism and mission. It is also essential to make prayer the fundamental basis for life in the Diocese, to harness the power of prayer to transform lives and to encourage each individual to pray for, it is suggested, five people to come to faith. Children and young people should be very much the object of this. Growing disciples is filtering into many parts of everyday church including activities under Fresh Expressions such as Messy Church.

The second core theme is to enrich our communities through the activities of our local church and to establish and renew Christian presence in the light of the predicted future population growth. There must be increased Christian influence in schools across the Diocese. More encouragement should be given to chaplaincy to create "collaboratively energized ministries."

The third core theme is to resource our mission and ministry by helping parishes to run efficiently, making it easier for parishes to work with the Diocese Office and legal requirements, and encouraging parishes to establish mission plans and achieve measurable outcomes. Also to help parishes deliver major projects such as property development.

All parishes within the Deanery will soon be asked to map out everything that we do within our church and parish. A tool kit will be provided to collate this information so that the Deanery can present to the Tonbridge Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Working group the longer term plans and development in Paddock Wood Deanery. Although this will take some time and effort it will be useful to take a look at all the things that we do both within the walls of St. Mary's and in the wider community and review whether these things can be improved or developed.

As ever financial matters are always addressed within the synod meetings and there has been some discussion on the financial challenges that Called Together may bring. 2016 had shown an operating deficit of £0.51million within the Rochester Diocese and significant steps had been taken to control expenditure and improve financial management and planning. There was discussion about the Parish Share and thoughts on how to make sure every parish is paying an appropriate and fair amount were also discussed.

Our very own Mike Harvey has picked up the reins to become the Deanery Synod Treasurer; it's great to have him on board and to have one of our own in this position!

**Deanery Synod Report** *contd.*

The coming years for both the Deanery and Diocese look to be interesting: as the communities within grow, so the need for new churches and pastoral care within the communities will also grow. This year looks like a good opportunity to take stock of what we are doing, recognise and celebrate what we do well, and by working together evaluate and review things that may not be working.

Francis Griffiths

## Agenda Item 8: PCC Committee Reports

### Education Committee

We said hello to ...

Rev'd Nicky Harvey who has joined the education committee and brought with her new ideas, inspiration and enthusiasm which we have started to see through the projects in which she has been involved. These include the Beacon Service, Crib and Christingle and youth lent course.

Katerina Nixon and Jenny Hopkins who have also joined the education committee and have contributed with creative ideas and the finding of new resources. Katerina also agreed to be secretary.

The Beacon Service started in September 2017 and has continued to grow at a steady pace. The Beacon was introduced to fill the needs of our older young people who had simply grown out of the much loved family service and needed something else from us. The Beacon Service provides 40 minutes of craft, activities and a space to chill and chat, pizza and a time for worship. We look forward to seeing this develop and grow throughout 2018.

Nicky put her own spin on the Christingle Service last year building a large stable that could hold all the nativity including many bales of straw and quite a few sheep. This meant that more children could be involved in the telling of the Christmas story. Nicky also made over a 100 Jesus pebbles for families to take away with them and post photographs of Jesus in various places over the Christmas period, a fantastic reminder of the true meaning of Christmas and an interactive way to involve more families with the church.

The youth lent course was back this year using material called Guides not Guards which explored the various themes such a baptism, transfiguration, temptation and resurrection. This has been well attended.

We said Goodbye to...

Suzy Nibloe left for pastures new and the education committee was sad to see her go as Suzy has contributed so much, including working with the Wise Up group in deepening their relationship with God.

The last of the Time Together Family Services was held in July 2017. It was unanimously decided that for the moment Time Together should pause as many of the younger children this was aimed at have now grown up and need the service to change and grow with them.

Ongoing projects ...

Thank you to everyone who has returned their Smartie tube full of 20 pence pieces and I know that several people are on their second or third. The total will go towards a trip for the young people which we intend to plan this year.

The Beacon Service will continue to develop and hopefully grow into the community and we will see more young people join us.

We are also running a Messy Church four times a year with the possibility of holding one or two of these at Golden Green.

**Education Committee Report** *contd.*

We are exploring running a half term Club as we have done previously, possibly in the Autumn term aimed at primary school children. As for Christmas this year ... you will just have to wait and see.

Kelly Parsons

**Fabric Committee**

The Fabric Committee assists the Churchwardens in the discharge of their responsibilities for the fabric of the church. The aim is also to support the PCC in new initiatives that affect the fabric in its broadest sense. For example, the Fabric Committee is in the process of coordinating a plan for redecorating the church.

We thank wholeheartedly the Rev'd Christopher Miles, who is the lightning protection consultant for the dioceses of Rochester and Canterbury, not only for his advice on modifications required in the lightning protection but for his practical assistance in making the changes. He, together with Richard Morley, removed the bonding conductors between the lightning conductor and the bell frame. Thanks are also due for his installing surge protection in the telephone circuit (as I write, a work in progress). He also modified the stand for candles in the Lady Chapel, so that we can use tealights, instead of candles that drip onto the carpet.

Part of our proposal to secure a grant from the HLF was a display unit to be installed in place of the notice board on the west wall. The new unit will still have notices, but will also have display boards describing the tower repairs and church history, church life and links to the wider community. Many thanks to Stephanie Ingham for designing and overseeing the manufacture of the display unit - the unit is close to completion - and also to Cee Wetton, who is designing the panels (she had previously designed the display for the Hadlow Tower exhibition). The plan is to install and dedicate the display at Pentecost, which will hopefully give us enough time to complete the displays.

We were granted a faculty to install three additional emergency lights - one in the west entrance, one above the door from the nave to the north, and one in the vicar's vestry - after some delay these were eventually fitted in January 2018.

On the subject of lighting, as light bulbs fail we are replacing them where we can with LEDs, which use much less electricity and last longer. We are hoping to replace the high-level lights in the nave with new LED light fittings and bulbs, as the current light fittings will not take LED bulbs (most of the high-level lights in the chancel can be switched to LED simply by changing the bulb).

We have developed a repair and redecoration plan. We will start by hiring a quantity surveyor to give us a budgetary estimate, broken down by area, which will allow the PCC to take decisions on funding.

As you may know, we had problems with the heating for the main body of the church at the end of the year. One problem cost us well over £1000 in excess gas use during November and into January (we had wondered why the church was warm, but it didn't hit home until we got the bill!), and another resulted in the heat not coming on one Sunday in February 2018. Unfortunately, these were both caused by various controls having been adjusted incorrectly. So, please do not make adjustments unless you know what you are doing (the same goes for the sound system, where some Sunday mornings we have to correct changes made earlier in the week).

**Fabric Committee Report** *contd.*

I would also like to thank the members of the Fabric Committee for their help and support and to welcome two new members, Ellie Livett, who joined following election to the PCC at the 2017 APCM, and Maurice Wong, who has joined recently.

The Fabric Committee comprises: Anne Hughes, Stephanie Ingham, Ellie Livett, Martin Massy (Convenor), Duncan Murray, Derek Oakley, Michael Payne, Barbara Smith, Maurice Wong.

Martin Massy, Convenor

**Outreach & Fundraising**

Our 2017 programme of Outreach and Fundraising events kicked off with a concert by East Peckham Silver Band. This is becoming a regular fixture in St Mary's calendar and provides an uplifting and welcome boost in the grim days of January. This was the first of four well-attended concerts; the others were by Bacchus Wind Orchestra, Hadlow Orchestra and a concert of opera arias performed by local teacher Rebecca Hooper and our own Sharon Vanns on a glorious August evening - with interval Pimms and canapés.

The year saw at least one outreach or fundraising activity taking place every single month. The Committee continued its formula of a mix of tried and tested events and new initiatives. An example of the former is the annual Boot Fair - last year held on a drizzly May bank holiday; nevertheless it raised a valuable contribution to church funds. Men's and Ladies' breakfasts and the monthly Market Stall continued to provide opportunities for outreach and fellowship.

Of the new initiatives, arguably the most memorable was Hadlow's first ever Scarecrow Trail, brilliantly organised by Kirsty Finch. This was a true community event, involving societies and individuals throughout the village. It was wonderful to see so many people - including dozens of families with children - milling inside and outside church and around the village on a sunny September weekend, inspecting the amazing and inventive scarecrows on display.

Our Quiz Night in March adopted a new "Pointless" style formula which was a popular draw. The church also staged two performances during the year which, for different reasons, proved a learning experience. 'Those Magnificent Men' exposed the need for use of a sound system during theatrical events, while the very funny and excellent 'Would You Adam and Eve It?' taught us that even the best performance can struggle to attract an audience on a weekday.

A joyful outreach occasion was the Tower Thanksgiving service in June followed by afternoon tea. This was open to all, but special invitations went to the hundreds of people who donated towards the restoration of the tower - members of St Mary's and generous people from near and far, as well as those who worked on the restoration of the tower itself.

The biggest single fundraiser of 2017 was the Christmas Fair, raising £1,257. With a variety of stalls, the Fair is increasingly becoming a showcase of beautiful crafts by St Mary's congregation and the wider community. But like many of our events it relies on a host of volunteers and we are always grateful for those who step forward to help out and participate.

Another of St Mary's activities which relies on an army of unsung heroes, is the Hadlow Newsletter. This valued Outreach activity is delivered to most households in Hadlow and Golden Green by deliverers for every street. At the end of 2017 Maria Fisk relinquished her role as editor due to new work commitments. We thank Maria for all her time and effort in keeping the

## **Outreach and Fundraising** *contd.*

newsletter going over the past two years. However, finding someone to take on the task anew is not easy. I was therefore very grateful when Lesley Bright stepped in to take it on.

Of course, outreach does not stop with our committee; every member of St Mary's has a role to play. Particular thanks, though, should go to all who run Coffee Pots & Tiny Tots, Who Let the Dads Out? and Friends Together which all take forward St Mary's mission of supporting and engaging with our community.

Finally, my huge thanks go to all members of the Outreach and Fundraising Committee (some old and some new) for their hard work and support over the past year: Barbara, Bet, Claire, David, Judy, Katherine, Kirsty, Martin, Rachel and Sharon. And, of course, a big thank you to the many members of St Mary's who have supported our events.

Janice Massy  
Outreach Committee Convenor

## **World Mission Group**

The group currently consists of seven members:

Julia Miles; Liz Derrick; Annie Young; Kirsty Finch; Francis Griffiths; Penny Brandling-Harris and myself as convenor.

We haven't officially met as a committee very often during the past year but do plan and coordinate several events through regular contact via email and 'face to face' on Sundays.

This year we have raised awareness and support for many charities, based both in this country and abroad. With your support, because little would be achieved without it, we have raised £4,130 and actually given away over £6,000 when we include the addition of £2,000 from the Church budget.

Beneficiaries have included M.A.F; Christian Aid; Kibakwe; the Delhi Brotherhood; The Children's Society; The Community Storehouse in Paddock Wood (our Deanery Food bank) plus seven smaller charities who we felt needed some financial support.

Worthy of particular mention and thanks are St. Mary's Kibakwe team of Sharon Vanns, Jim May and Liz Derrick. The village response to our Lent Appeal for money to provide water filters for the community was astonishing.

Also, Kirsty Finch's efforts for the Children's Society; dealing with collecting, emptying and then returning the boxes and counting the money is a huge task, which she undertakes without a murmur - well, not to us, anyway.

Christopher Miles and Vivienne White have raised awareness of the work that the Mission Aviation Fellowship do and our Market Stall for them in March was well supported.

Christian Aid's Lent appeal was the beneficiary of the profit from the Lent Lunches which preceded the Mid-day Lent Course.

**World Mission Group** *contd.*

The most local charity that we support is the Community Storehouse in Paddock Wood. It is really our Deanery Food Bank. Thank you to everyone who has provided food and other consumables for them to distribute to those in need both in our village and locality. There are currently over several Hadlow addresses on their books - it really is a local issue here in Hadlow and not some else's problem.

The Food Bank team in Paddock Wood also has to raise over £8,000 a year to pay the rent and overheads of their premises. We help as a Church and although not strictly a WMG activity, the Carols in the Square collected almost £1000, half of which went to them. The other half went to 'Crisis' to help with caring for the homeless in our cities and helping people get back on their feet.

The other large effort from our Church community and village is the Link to Hope Appeal. Each autumn shoe boxes are filled by both the college students and primary school children (plus their staff) and our own congregation and friends.

In 2017 we sent almost 200 shoe boxes containing essentials and little Christmas presents to the charity plus 24 black bags of donated knitted goods and bulk toiletries like soap and toothpaste which the staff at the centre in Worthing take with them when they distribute the presents in Eastern Europe. Each box requires a £2 donation to cover the transport costs and customs duties. We don't ask the primary school children to fund this cost so a Market Stall is held in October to raise this money and to date we have covered the cost due to your generosity.

We would like to thank everybody for their support during 2017; for raising awareness and much needed funds for these charities.

Barbara Smith

## **Agenda Item 10: Reports from other areas of the Parish**

### **Hadlow Bell Ringers**

Hadlow Bell Ringers rang for 10am Sunday morning services throughout 2017 as well as for special services and weddings. Most Sundays we are able to ring all eight bells. The ringing is to a high standard and we regularly ring methods such as Stedman and Grandsire Triples. Hadlow is one of the few towers in Tonbridge District able to maintain this standard.

Our weekly practice night is on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. It caters for all abilities, from beginners through to accomplished ringers. Under the leadership of Tower Captain Phil Jarvis, practices can be challenging as ringers are frequently invited to learn and try new methods. It is, perhaps, for this reason - and our friendliness - that Hadlow seems to attract ringers from a number of other towers.

We are lucky to have some excellent ringers in our band. Following on from their win at the 2016 Tonbridge District 6-bell striking competition, a band representing Hadlow not only won again in 2017, but also went on to win the County competition against the best teams in Kent.

Newcomers are always welcome to try their hand at bell ringing and members of the public were invited to have a go during a Heritage Open Day in September and at St Mary's Christmas Fair in December. Part of the aim was to attract new ringers as part of a nation-wide recruitment drive called 'Ringing for Peace'. 1400 new bell ringers are being recruited throughout the UK in honour of the 1400 ringers who lost their lives during the First World War. The aim is for these new ringers to be ready to ring on Armistice Day, Sunday 11 November 2018. We now have five learners who started at the beginning of this year and all are progressing well.

Our thanks go to all members of the band who regularly turn out for practices and on Sundays and, of course, to our Tower Captain Phil for his patience, encouragement and leadership.

Janice Massy

### **Brass Cleaning**

Many thanks are due to the team of brass cleaners who keep the church's brasses looking good. We are fortunate that this enables us to be in the church at quiet times. It does make us more aware of how it must have felt in St Mary's in past years. The lovely windows in the north wall are more easily seen and studied as can the many, often very moving, memorials in the chancel. Cleaning the brasses becomes a privilege and links us with all the parishioners who have gone before us.

Judy Gater

### **Church Cleaning**

Due to our volunteers (although some might say they didn't actually volunteer!!) our church is kept clean. At present each person's turn comes every 8 weeks but from June it will be every 9. It is usually done by two people at any time convenient to them. It would be most helpful if we had more people on the rota. Thank you to all who help with this very necessary job.

Ann Jenner



## **Church Watch**

We have a band of 17 Church Watchers who faithfully keep the church open to visitors from 2pm-4pm most weekdays each month. However, we do still have times when it has to remain closed due to gaps on the rota. We would therefore be very grateful for more volunteers to come forward. It need only be once a month and can be an opportunity to take some time out from the busyness of our everyday life and read a book or magazine or simply meditate and enjoy the peace and quiet in church. Sadly, we have found it impossible to provide cover for weekend afternoons.

The total number of visitors for 2017 was around 300 - similar to the previous year.

Our very grateful thanks go to Church Watchers who have been keeping St Mary's open and providing a welcome to visitors.

Janice Massy

## **Coffee Pots and Tiny Tots**

Coffee Pots and Tiny Tots meets in church on Wednesday mornings from 10.30 - 12.00 throughout the year. We aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment where parents and other carers can meet informally while their babies and small children play. Tea, coffee, squash and biscuits are provided for a small donation. Every week, there is a simple craft activity and we finish with a musical session of action songs and musical instruments.

The group is run by a small team of helpers, supported by a further team of volunteers who set up in church on Tuesday evenings. We are grateful for a number of parents who help move chairs and put out toys.

Many of the families who attend make firm friendships which benefit both adults and children, and extend beyond the weekly meetings in church. Parents also enjoy bringing their children to monthly 'Who Let the Dads Out?' sessions on Saturday mornings, with the bonus of bacon rolls.

Regular volunteers include Cathy Brill, Judith Deckers, Carole James, Jim and Pippa May, Val Newell and Deborah Smith. Also, Father Christmas, who distributed more than 30 presents at our party.

Cathy Brill

## **Freewill Offering & Gift Aid**

We continue to have a significant number of regular supporters to our freewill offering without which we would struggle with the day to day running of the church. Over the last few years the number of people using the regular envelopes to donate to the church on a weekly basis has fallen. We have a surplus of these envelope boxes. If you feel you are called to support the church in this way then please do speak with John Speed or David Gater.

If you are a UK Tax Payer and have not filled out a Gift Aid form OR if you have moved since completing a form, then please also speak with John Speed. We continue to encourage any members who are UK Tax Payers but who can't support the church regularly to use the yellow envelopes in the pews or at the back of church so that we can claim an additional 25% from the Government.

John Speed

## Friends Together

Friends Together is a meeting held on the second Monday of the month and enables any bereaved members of our wider community to share company and lunch. It takes place in the Upper Room from 12.45 till 2.30 pm and is sponsored by the registered charity of the same name. Although this meeting is kindly allowed to use the Upper Room as it's base it is not a church run event. 'Friends' is the brain child of Chris Parker of Abbey Funeral Services Ltd, Tonbridge, whose company originally funded the cost of providing lunch and organised the community based groups in the Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells area. Today as a registered charity, monies are sought by the trustees and through giving via the 'yellow collecting boxes' (which you can see at the back of the church) which enable this much appreciated support to continue. Dates for events can be obtained from Lindsay on 01732 360328 or by email to: [lindsay@friendstogetherbs.org](mailto:lindsay@friendstogetherbs.org). For more information visit [www.friendstogetherbs.org](http://www.friendstogetherbs.org), or follow on Twitter @friendstogbs. Friends Together also run a number of fun activities/outings throughout the year which are offered to the groups in a self-funding capacity.

Judith Deckers

## Home Communions

For people who are able to, there are opportunities to receive Holy Communion at St Mary's. However, where infirmity, illness, lack of transport or age prevent them from attending Church, there is the option of having a shortened Communion service at home. Over time this also enables the persons concerned to retain their link with St Mary's and its congregation via a formal pattern of visits and services, and to hear the latest news of the parish. This provision is greatly valued by those who receive it, and indeed by those whose privilege it is to provide it.

In the last 12 months, 15 people received Communion in their homes on the basis outlined above (approx. every fortnight) either from the Rev'd Nicky Harvey or from lay members of the Congregation currently authorised to provide this option. (On a sad note, recent deaths have reduced the numbers visited to 11).

The team would welcome more members as team numbers have also decreased - there are currently only 5 team members and 2 assistants to share the visiting schedule. If anyone would like to join the team, please contact Nicky.

Home Communion Team

## Hadlow-Kibakwe Parish Link

This Link has now been going for some eight years and remains strong. Its purpose is to provide friendship and support to the Parish of Kibakwe. In addition, the church supports the Hospital and the Secondary School in Kibakwe. In the wider Hadlow community, Hadlow Primary School and Hadlow Scouts have made links with their counterparts in Kibakwe.

The Link team try to organise a visit to Kibakwe each year but for various reasons the 2017 visit was postponed to 2018. However the link was active in raising funds for its 2017 project, the provision of water filters to give safe drinking water. We were very fortunate and grateful that the money raised by the St Mary's 2017 Lent Appeal was to be used to buy water filters for Kibakwe. The appeal raised nearly £2,000 after Gift Aid, a really magnificent response. So far

**Hadlow-Kibakwe Parish Link *contd.***

40 water filters have been bought and we plan to buy another 40 and take them all out on the 2018 trip. The balance of the money will be used to buy buckets to which the filters will be attached.

The other highlight of the Link's year was the visit of the Reverend Canon Captain Agripa Ndatila to the Rochester Diocese. Rev Agripa is the Principal of St Philip's Theological College, Kongwa as well as being the Mpwapwa Diocese Link Coordinator. All arrangements for our trips go through him. Hadlow hosted him for four days during which he visited Hadlow Primary School, Hadlow Scouts, St Augustine's College and joined St Mary's for a Sunday Service and lunch. It was a pleasure to be able to reciprocate some of the hospitality that we have received from him on our Tanzanian trips.

For 2018, a team of five will be travelling to Kibakwe in May taking gifts and donations from St Mary's to our friends there. We are also looking to bring to Hadlow from Kibakwe, two of the team who look after us when we are there. Friendship and support goes both ways and we would hope that they will be able to take back with them some ideas that will benefit Kibakwe as a whole.

Jim May

**Mothers' Union**

2017 saw another varied programme of Members meetings with Barbara Smith giving us an insight into life as a Churchwarden and a visit from our President. Rev'd Paul White, our Vicar, led us in our Annual Communion service. We also continue the tradition of giving flowers to mothers at their children's baptisms.

Sadly during 2017 we had to say goodbye to 2 members Audrey Ferguson and Flo Daniels, both of whom had been very active members for many years.

With decreasing numbers and a lack of future leaders we sadly had to make the decision to close the Branch.

The first Wednesday in December saw our last meeting. This was our Carol service led by Rev'd Paul White and our Curate Rev'd Nicky Harvey, and it was followed by seasonal refreshments.

Members can continue as Diocesan members and Sue Morgan is arranging an afternoon meeting for those interested.

Jenny Hopkins

**Music**

The choir has continued to flourish over recent months despite my own periods of enforced absence. Major credit for this must go to Michael Pound, whose unwavering enthusiasm and dedication has been invaluable. Also to Francis Griffiths and, of course, to Sue Mason and her team, whose expertise and help with the children brings such inestimable benefits to St. Mary's.

**Music contd.**

Among those whose progress has been recognised are:

Millie White, Bethany Carter, Louise Pearce, - **through RSCM awards**

and

**through National Graded exams** - Hannah Packham (Singing Grade 5 and Clarinet Grade 3); Bethany Carter (Singing Grade 3); Annabelle White (Piano Grade 4) and Elliott Packham (Violin Grade 3).

Freya Sceall and Linda Moore are currently working towards their RSCM awards.

Katerina Nixon has the unique distinction of a top RSCM award. We also congratulate her on the arrival of a new baby son, Oakley. Of the other adults, markers have been laid down by Sharon Vanns, and Roi Arden and Richard Massy (now of the East Peckham Silver Band).

Our musical repertoire continues to expand and covers a wide range of styles. A newly composed congregational setting met with a mixed initial reception; “Three Hadlow Anthems” have possibly gained wider general enthusiasm and have now been published by the Royal Schools of Church Music.

Anthony le Fleming

**Parish Visiting**

When people are no longer able to get to church for services, our Home Visiting Team is there to maintain their connection with St Mary’s. Every two or three weeks, members of the team go out to listen, chat, share church news and enjoy a cup of tea with those who have requested a visit. By offering companionship, we aim to show that those who find it difficult to travel are still part of the church community. The scheme operates on a rota basis, so that everyone has variety and a change of face.

This is an enjoyable and worthwhile activity for team members and those visited alike. The regular visiting team is Cathy Brill; Judith Deckers; Liz Derrick; Jenny Hopkins; Ann Jenner; Julia Miles; Iris Shaw; Carol Wickham; Angela Widdicombe.

Cathy Brill

**Newsletter Delivery**

Many thanks to all involved with the Hadlow Newsletter over the past year: to Maria Fisk and Lesley Bright for compiling it, to Janice who prints it, and to all the many volunteers who fold, distribute and deliver the Newsletter month by month (together with St Mary’s Christmas card). It is an important and valuable way to keep all Hadlow and Golden Green residents informed of church and village activities.

Anne Hughes

## **St Mary's Flowers**

The talented and loyal band of ladies continue to decorate St. Mary's on a regular basis, as well as for Special Sundays. We do not arrange flowers during the seasons of Advent and Lent and therefore the Church looks truly beautiful at other times.

Mary, Ann and Jackie have needed to give up their places in our team and we thank them very much for their lovely arrangements over the years. We are pleased to welcome Lee into the team. Anyone who enjoys flowers and would like to join the team would be most welcome and we would help them in any way that they needed.

It is a pleasure to receive donations for flowers to decorate St. Mary's at special times in memory of loved ones. However, at other times the team provide their own flowers and foliage.

Barbara Fermor

## **St Mary's Hospital Car Service**

During 2017 we completed 110 journeys, 90 of which were for people unconnected with St. Mary's. This represented a total increase of 29 journeys compared with the previous year. The number of journeys undertaken is always for a much smaller number of 'clients' because individual people often need to make several visits to medical appointments at certain times of their lives.

The number of drivers remained more or less constant at 12. Obviously, without these drivers the service could not exist and I have been very grateful to them for their co-operation and willingness to spend time sitting in waiting rooms at the various hospitals and medical centres. The drivers this year have been: John England, David Gater, Flavio Gomes, Mike Harvey, Bob Holder, Ann Jenner, Jim May, Linda Moore, Duncan Murray, Val Newell, Lesley Terry and Annie Young.

Although we do ask our clients for a contribution towards the driver's petrol, our service is very much more personal than that which a taxi service would provide (and also very much cheaper) and it is obvious from their reactions that our clients appreciate the personal care we extend to them.

At the time of writing I have handed over the running of the Car Service to Mike Harvey.

Linda Moore

## **Servers**

The serving team comprises of 13 individuals and continue to support both the 8AM and 10AM Sunday services along with special services. The team has had minor changes this year resulting in an increase in 1 with Kelly and Jack joining the team. We aim for each member of the team to only serve once a month, however with many members of the team having responsibilities in other areas of the church this becomes increasingly difficult. It would be helpful if just two people could choose to join this team to reduce the pressure on other members of the team. Anyone new to the team will be fully supported by other members of the team. The commitment is for one Sunday a month and an additional 20 minutes before the service and 15 minutes after. Anyone interested should speak to John Speed or Paul for more information.

**Servers contd.**

Our current team members are:

Maurice Bush	(10am Acolyte)
Judith Deckers	(10am Acolyte)
Michael Payne	( 8am Acolyte, 10am Crucifer)
Iris Shaw	(10am Crucifer)
Celia Sheridan	( 8am Acolyte)
Mags Skelton	(10am Acolyte)
John Speed	(10am Crucifer)
Ian Thom	( 8am & 10am Acolyte)
Mark Totty	(10am Acolyte)
Carol Wickham	( 8am Acolyte)
Annie Young	(10am Acolyte)
Kelly Parsons	(10am Acolyte)
Jack Good	(10am Acolyte)

John Speed

**Sidespersons**

Firstly, Martin Massy and I would like to thank all of you who valiantly turn up month on month to do a sidesperson duty, both at the 8 o'clock service, the main 10 o'clock service, baptisms and other 'occasional' services.

Without your help none of these services would run as smoothly as they do. Visitors often comment how much they appreciate the warm and friendly greeting they received when they've come to St. Mary's.

Sadly, this year and for various reasons, we have "lost" seven gallant souls. Fortunately, others have stepped up (not all press-ganged) to take their places.

Currently, there are 22 people on the list, but more volunteers would be much appreciated, particularly as stand-ins at the last minute.

The duties are not onerous but so essential to a smooth running service. If anyone is interested in finding out exactly what is involved, please don't hesitate to speak to Martin or myself. A brief outline of these duties is as follows:-

- Elect between themselves someone to welcome worshippers at the main West door.
- To hand out Service books, including the Pew sheet for the week, at the beginning of worship and collect them at the end of the Service.
- Put the hymn books back in the cupboard and the service sheets back in their respective box folders.
- Identify new visitors, ascertain their names and if they appear unsure or rather embarrassed, try and ease their concern and offer to show them to seats.

- Before the Service, someone to ensure the clergy have clean glasses of water by their seats in the chancel.

- **Sidespersons** *contd.*

- Take the collection and a pre-designated member to take this on the plate to the altar. To nominate two people to stand by the Chancel step to assist people going to and from the Altar at Communion.
- Nominate someone to count the communicants among the congregation, remembering to include the choir, Servers and any eligible children (using the 'clicker') and give the figure to the duty Churchwarden.
- At the end of the service hand out copies of Rochester Link newspaper when the new edition arrives.

The present list is:

Carol Bramham	Kelly Parsons
Penny Brandling-Harris	John Pierce
Bet Brett	Jean Roberts
Sylvia and Maurice Bush	Richard Sheridan
Kirsty Finch	Mags Skelton
Jenny Hopkins	Gill Speed
Anne and Bill Hughes	Claire Walter
Sue Morgan	Carole Waters
Jenny Nye	Heather Wills
Pam O'Sullivan	Annie Young

We would ask this APCM to re-elect them all to serve for another year.

Barbara Smith

### Wednesday Study Group

In the Summer of 2017 we completed our series of 12 studies of the parables of Jesus using the study book in the Scripture Union Lifebuilder series. We studied the context of such parables as 'The Pharisee and the Tax Collector', 'The Rich Man and Lazarus', seeking to discern the original context of the parables, often challenging those in positions of authority and status in society, and the application to society today and to us personally.

In the Autumn of 2017 we followed a shorter series of 5 studies of the prophet Elijah, seeing him as both a fierce and determined servant of God who challenged the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and King Ahab over his unjust acquisition of Naboth's vineyard, but also a human person who experienced depression.

In 2018 we have begun a series of 9 studies on 'Promises Kept - the whole story of the Bible' starting with God's promises to mankind at creation, through the Fall and God's covenant with Abraham, to conclude with Jesus' return, using The Good Book Company guide. We do not meet in Lent. We will restart after Easter.

In January we had our usual Study Group supper at 2 Spa Close, with everyone contributing food or drink and making a donation, this year to Mission Aviation Fellowship of £282.



**Wednesday Study Group** *contd.*

Meetings are generally fortnightly and are at 7.45 p.m. for 8 p.m. on Wednesdays at 2 Spa Close. We are grateful to St Peter's Church for allowing us to use their car park. New members are welcome; please contact Jenny Hopkins or Christopher Miles.

Christopher Miles

**Who Let the Dads Out?**

Once a month, usually on the second Saturday, St Mary's welcomes Dads and their young children to share a fun morning together. We provide toys, craft activities, music and refreshments (bacon rolls for the Dads). It is a safe space where children and Dads can play together and make friendships. Mums sometimes join in, especially those who used to enjoy coming to Coffee Pots but have had to return to work. Parents, children and volunteers all enjoy the time spent together.

Volunteers include Cathy Brill, Pippa and Jim May, Val and Steve Newell, Barbara Smith and Annie Young

Cathy Brill