

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

## **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING FOR THE YEAR 2018**

**To be held on**

**Sunday 14th April 2019, 11.45 a.m. in St Mary's Church**

**Documents enclosed for the meeting:**

**Agenda for APCM on Sunday 14th April 2019**

**Minutes of Previous APCM Meeting 23 April 2018**

**Reports for 2018**

**ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW**  
**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

Sunday 14th April 2019, 11.45 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 29th April 2018
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 2018; and the appointment of an Independent Examiner
6. The Churchwardens' Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church  
*(in accordance with Section 50 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018)*
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; Holiday at Home; Home Communions; Kibakwe Link;  
Messy Church; Music; Newsletter Delivery; Parish Visiting; Poppy Project (Café Plus);  
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 5 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, 2018**

Held in Church on Sunday 29th April 2018: 51 members of the congregation present  
In the Chair: Reverend Paul White (Incumbent)  
Minutes taken by: Linda Yabsley Judy Gater (PCC Secretary)

The meeting opened with a short prayer.  
The Rev'd Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from: Carol Wickham, Barbara Smith, Katerina Nixon, Michael Payne, Mark Totty, Steve Newell, Sue Mason, Mavis and Derek Oakley, Annemarie Woodward, Carol Bramham, Pat Large (12)

**2 Minutes of the APCM held on 23rd April 2017**

The Minutes of the APCM held on 23rd April 2017 had been circulated to members of the congregation. It was proposed by Kelly Parsons and seconded by Maurice Bush that the Minutes be accepted by the Meeting and this was unanimously agreed. The Minutes were then signed by the Rev'd Paul.

**3 Appointment of Churchwardens**

There were two nominations for the office of Churchwarden:

Martin Massy (proposed by Linda Moore and seconded by Liz Derrick)  
Barbara Smith (proposed by Judy Gater and seconded by Kirsty Finch)

The meeting voted unanimously that Martin Massy and Barbara Smith be elected Churchwardens for the coming year.

**4 Report on the Electoral Roll**

The Electoral Roll has been displayed in the church for 2 weeks, in accordance with Church Law, so that any errors could be notified to the PCC Secretary and revisions made to the Roll. In accordance with Data Protection legislation we are not able to leave the Roll on display and it will be removed from today and kept in a secure cabinet. Anyone wishing to view the Roll should contact Judy Gater or Janice Massy and they will make it available.

In 2018 the Electoral Roll has been revised to take account of the following changes:

10 people were removed from the Roll (6 had died and 4 had moved away from the Parish)  
8 people were added to the Roll

Resulting in a net decrease of 2.

The total number on the Roll is 183 of whom 125 are resident in the Parish and 58 non-resident. The proportion of members living outside the Parish is 32%.

David Lear has, once again, acted as St Mary's Electoral Roll Officer and Judy Gater thanked him and his wife Gabrielle for all their hard work in compiling the Roll.

## **5 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 2017**

The Annual Report and Financial Statements of the PCC had been approved by the Independent Examiner and had been presented to the PCC at the meeting on 20th March 2018 for their approval, which had been unanimously given. (The Minutes of the PCC Meeting in March and copy of the Report were available to the congregation)

David Gater (Honorary Treasurer) gave a brief overview of the Financial Statements Report for 2017, mentioning in particular:

1. It was very clear to all that the Report is one of considerable factual complexity, and is drafted largely by the bookkeeper with certain input by the Treasurer. However, the Finance Team of Alan Knowles (Bookkeeper), Maurice Bush, Ian Thom and Barry Wheeler (Cashiers), and John Speed (Gift Aid Secretary) all contribute to bringing the Financial Statements together. David thanked them all for their hard work, with special thanks to Alan Knowles who has been Bookkeeper for the past 5 years and who this past year has had to cope with changing to new software, which in terms of the Report has not been easy. However, Alan feels it is now time for him to retire, and David was pleased to report that Duncan Murray would be taking over as Bookkeeper. Thanks were given to Duncan for taking on this role.

2. David Stephens, the Independent Examiner of the Financial Statements, was thanked for his help and expertise in respect of the preparation of the Financial Statements.

3. Thanks were given to John Speed our Gift Aid Secretary for overseeing this important source of income. Gift Aid was crucial to St Mary's annual income, contributing approx. £15k p.a. without which the Church could not operate at the level it currently sustains.

4. The contribution made by the congregation through voluntary giving enabled the church to pay its bills and to play an active role in the village community. David thanked everyone for this. However, we are projected to have a shortfall of income in the year 2018 and an appeal had been made for an increase in regular giving where possible. David thanked those who have already responded to this.

5. Reserves - in 2017 expenditure of approx £100k was exceeded by income and we had a small surplus of £2,600 at year end. An income of £100k was a considerable amount for a parish of our size and although income was matching expenditure, it has not been possible to maintain satisfactory reserves for some years past. We should ideally have reserves of about £30k and the PCC again discussed this issue last November. The PCC will present plans to the congregation in due course, aimed at enhancing the reserves level over a 3 year period.

Approximately 60% of St Mary's annual income goes straight to the Diocese. In the PCC's judgement this is a very creditable figure to contribute to Diocesan funds, bearing in mind the national average for all parishes is 42% and in Rochester the average Parish percentage provision is 33%. Hadlow St Mary's contribution places it within the top fifty parishes in the Diocese (out of 216).

This is a brief overview but all the details about our Finances were to be found in the Financial Statements.

In answer to a question as to who decides the level of contribution to the Diocese (the 'parish pledge') David explained that this was the responsibility of the PCC and is a corporate decision.

Rev'd Paul commented that the money contributed by parishes to the Diocese is actually used to provide ministry in the Parishes, including the home parish. In many places there is one Vicar between several churches, but we are in the fortunate position of having one Vicar and a stipendiary Curate in training. We are receiving much more than the average Parish in the Diocese. It would be an easy option to cut the amount of contribution to the Diocese, but this would work to our detriment.

Rev'd Paul proposed that a vote to receive the Report be taken. The Report was unanimously accepted.

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

David Gater thanked David Stephens, our Independent Examiner for all his work on the Accounts. Mr Stephens was willing to serve in this role for a further year and David Gater proposed that his appointment should be endorsed by the meeting. The appointment was endorsed unanimously.

## **6 Churchwardens' Report**

On behalf of the church, Martin Massy welcomed Nicky, Mike and family to Hadlow saying how fortunate we felt to have them with us.

### **Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**

The Churchwardens' Report forms part of the APCM Booklet which was available to the congregation prior to the meeting but Martin drew particular attention to the following.

Generally, the building is in good condition but there is work which needs to be done, added to which part of the ceiling in the Upper Room fell down last week. Martin was pleased to report that John Knowles would be coming in on Monday to repair it and the work should be finished in a couple of days. We would be using original lime plaster as required by our Listed Building Status.

Tower - the warranty period ended at the end of September. The display unit is almost complete - we are hoping to install it very soon (week of 14th May is the plan) and it will be dedicated on Pentecost Sunday, 20th May.

Work on the tower was in response to the Quinquennial 2013 inspection, and the next inspection is due on 4th June this year.

We are upgrading the sound system, mainly for microphones and receivers, which would bring it up to the current standards and this should be complete before the confirmation service on 10th May. We have to thank an anonymous donor who has contributed money for the upgrade.

We would like to redecorate the church and Quantity Surveyors have been asked to give us a quote so that we know what to do in terms of fund raising and then the PCC will make a decision on how to proceed, although the Churchwardens have overall responsibility for the fabric of church.

There were no questions from the members.

Rev'd Paul asked the meeting to vote to receive the Churchwardens' Report. The meeting voted unanimously to receive the Report.

Jenny Hopkins expressed thanks on behalf of the church to Martin Massy, Barbara Smith and Annie Young for the work they do.

## **7 Deanery Synod Report**

This Report is included in the APCM Booklet available to the congregation, but Francis Griffith explained that the Diocese was divided into Deaneries, with Hadlow being in the Paddock Wood Deanery and not part of Tonbridge Deanery. The Synod meets 4 times a year to discuss a variety of issues and share good practice. Focus groups are arranged to cover a range of topics.

Rev'd Paul asked the meeting to vote to receive the Deanery Synod Report. The meeting voted unanimously to receive the Report.

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

Rev'd Paul stated that the Reports from the PCC Sub-Committees were in the Annual Report Booklet and he would not be asking the Convenors to comment on the Reports. He asked if there were any questions on the Sub-Committees.

Martin Massy commented that we should thank Rev'd Christopher Miles for his work on lightning protection for the church; including personally installing the telephone surge protection.

Martin also asked everyone to be aware of a couple of issues:

1. Regarding the heating, the bills for November through to January were on the high side and it was discovered that someone had turned up the control downstairs. This is the frost thermostat so the heating was on all the time. SO, if you do not know how the heating works, PLEASE do not touch it.
2. The stair lift had to be repaired. It must be docked properly both at the bottom and top of the stairs or it will not charge the battery and if we need to call out an engineer it costs £196.

Rev'd Paul asked the meeting to vote to receive the Sub Committee Reports. The meeting voted unanimously to receive the Reports.

## **9 Reports from Other Areas of Church Life**

Rev'd Paul read out the list of groups involved in Church Life. He commented that we are a busy church and all the reports are in the Booklet.

He stated that there was no requirement to vote to receive these Reports and the meeting would take them as accepted.

## **10 Curate's Report**

Rev'd Nicky Harvey said she found it hard to believe that she been St. Mary's since September. She thanked everyone for making the whole family feel so welcome and Mike, herself and the children feel very much at home in in Hadlow. The highlight of the year was her ordination and she thanked everyone who came to the Cathedral. She hoped that the congregation would be able to attend her ordination as Priest on 29th September. She thanked Rev'd Paul for all his support - patiently answering her questions, letting her do things by herself, and allowing her to support him in his ministry. It had been an exciting few months. She thanked Rev'd Paul and the congregation once again for making her and the family feel so welcome.

## **11 Vicar's Reflections**

This was Rev'd Paul's 6th APCM here and he said that it was an absolute privilege is it to be the Vicar of Hadlow and was an ideal opportunity to give thanks for the St. Mary's church community.

Looking ahead at the start of 2017, two main themes became apparent:

The arrival of Rev'd Nicky Harvey as Curate  
Our response to "Our conversation, Our future" - the Diocesan consultation.

Rev'd Nicky arrived with us in September and there is no doubt that her ministry has flourished in this relatively short time. As Nicky's training Incumbent, Rev'd Paul has enjoyed ministering alongside her and looked forward to the remaining years of her curacy. In September she would be ordained as a Priest and would celebrate her first communion. Her training and ministry would then enter a new phase. Rev;d Paul thanked Rev'd Nicky for becoming so much a part of the life of this community and also welcomed Mike and the children, David, Alice and Lucy who were already very much part of church and village life.

## **Vicar's Reflections (cont'd)**

### "Our conversation, Our future" exercise

Although the Lighthouse project in the Village Hall had been suspended, it had been re-branded and re-started as the "Beacon" service and was attracting a growing number of young people. In addition, the new Messy Church service drew in a very good number of young families, many of whom attended the Coffee Pots and Tiny Tots group.

At Diocesan and Deanery level, parishes have been asked to prepare Mission Action Plans to detail what we already do and plan other ways of reaching out to the community. More would be heard about this during the year. As a church we are always seeking new ways of reaching out to people and we realise that we may need to do things in a different way, if we want to bring people to St. Mary's to experience the love of God.

The APCM is an opportunity to acknowledge everyone who contributes to the many areas of church life. It is an opportunity to remember that everyone has different skills and callings, which are vital to the well being of the church.

The following people were thanked particularly:

Janice Massy for all her hard work as parish administrator. There were huge amounts of "behind the scenes" routine administration in addition to which Janice is involved in Fundraising and Outreach events.

Judy Gater, who has acted as our honorary PCC Secretary this year, for organising this meeting and also for all her hard work ensuring PCC meetings etc. are arranged and conducted in accordance with regulations.

Our Churchwardens, Martin Massy and Barbara Smith, who have been so supportive and hardworking. There is a lot more to the role than just ensuring Sunday services run smoothly and I am delighted that they are continuing for another year.

David Gater, Honorary Treasurer, and all on the Finance Team who support David.

The PCC and Deanery Synod members who gave up evenings during the year to guide the church and also to Antony Le Fleming, our Director of Music, and to the choir for the high standard of music we enjoy during worship at St. Mary's. Thanks also to Anne Hughes who is happy to continue her role as Verger for the coming year.

### Golden Green

Our Parish includes the Mission Church at Golden Green. The average congregation there is between 3 and 8 people, but it has developed into a real church community and provides church services for those who are not able to go elsewhere. There is a service once a month and these alternate between Holy Communion services and non-eucharistic prayer services. During the year, Rev'd Paul had been taking the Communion Services and Rev'd Nicky the prayer services, but this would no doubt change when Rev'd Nicky was priested. The highlight of the year for the church was undoubtedly the Christmas Carol service. This was always packed out and was great fun. Rev'd Paul intended to continue to the current pattern of worship as it was meeting a small but distinct need.

### What Next?

In May, there would be our first confirmation service for many years and then in September Rev'd Nicky would be ordained as a Priest. This would require changes in how Eucharistic ministry was shared.

It was hoped that the Beacon and Messy Church services would grow and develop and that the Mission Action Planning would highlight other ways we could relate to and serve the community.

## **Vicar's Reflections (cont'd)**

Whilst the church is thriving in many ways, Rev'd Paul sounded a note of caution in that we are not immune from demographic changes and if we want St. Mary's to thrive and more importantly if we want people to know the love of God, we all have to strive to grow the church. This does not mean just getting more people to the 10 am service to become members, it means living out our faith in the community and being open to "doing church" differently. Early morning Sunday services are not ideal for young families. We were already beginning to offer more evening services and we would probably have to continue this trend. This was not a proposal to scrap what we have, because the worship here was much loved, but we need to look ahead, always in a spirit of prayer that God would lead us in His path.

In conclusion, there was no doubt that God was working in this community through St. Mary's. By way of encouragement, a Priest who had attended a service here a few months ago, incognito, said what an amazing welcome and atmosphere she encountered. This was something to treasure, and not to be taken for granted.

In conclusion, Rev'd Paul said he was happy to take questions then or could be contacted at any time.

## **12 Election of PCC Members**

There were currently 2 vacancies and with Ellie Livett moving away there would be a third.

There were nominations, duly proposed and seconded, for Julia Miles and NC.

No nominations were received from the meeting to fill the third vacancy.

The nominations of Julia Miles and NC were accepted by the meeting and Rev'd Paul declared them PCC members for the coming three years.

## **13 Re-appointment of Sidespersons**

Judy Gater read out the list of Sidespersons. There being no amendments, Rev'd Paul declared them elected as Sidespersons for the coming year.

There was to be a short meeting of the new PCC following the APCM.

The meeting closed with The Grace at 12.30pm



## REPORTS FOR THE YEAR 2018

### Agenda Item 6: Churchwardens' Report for the year 2018

The Churchwardens' report covers the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church, but we must start by thanking every one of you who contribute in large or small ways to making St. Mary's the wonderful community it surely is. We worship God in all his glory and all try to show friendship, compassion and understanding to each other within our Church and the wider family of Hadlow.

As you know, the main tower repairs were completed in 2017. The display unit is the last part of that programme and is now almost finished. As the word 'Quinquennial' says - five is the magic number. The inspection of 2013 triggered the Tower Restoration and 2018 saw the next inspection of the Church buildings and surrounding areas. This was carried out in June and to our great relief, gave us a clean bill of health with just a few minor caveats as to work that might be beneficial to undertake over the next few years.

The Church sound system has caused concern for several years now and thanks to a generous donation, we were able to undertake a major reworking of the system. It has had teething problems and there are still some issues which need to be resolved, but in the main, we now have a system which will allow us to use modern sound technology to our advantage. Hopefully, in the near future it will make services, weddings and even possibly funerals, easier to manage from an audio perspective.

Other actions taken during the year include:

- The frost thermostat for the main boiler was reset. The heating had been on continuously for over a month after someone had increased the temperature setting.
- Installation of three additional emergency lights to improve coverage.
- Installation of combined Type 1 and Type 2 surge protection to the main incoming electrical supply, plus installation of Type 2 surge protection to the telephone line and testing of the lightning protection.
- Portable Appliance Testing.
- Repair to the stair lift to the Upper Room following complete discharge of the batteries after the lift had not been docked properly, and two routine services.
- Annual inspection and clearing of gutters and hoppers comprising the roof drainage system, and replacement of roof tiles where necessary.
- Re-plastering two ceiling panels in the Upper Room with traditional materials (lime mortar and horse hair) following fall of plaster from one panel.
- Replacement of bell ropes and pulleys, supported by a generous donation.
- Annual service of main and Upper Room boilers.
- Annual fire protection inspection.
- Organ tuning and maintenance of fan and humidifier.

During the summer, the Fabric Committee obtained a 'broad brush' estimate from a quantity surveyor for the internal redecoration of the Church. As expected the total cost was somewhat large, but the estimate was also broken down into specific areas and over time we would hope to be able to raise specific funds to allow the individual sections of work to be undertaken.

On a more immediate note, many events are now being held downstairs as some people are finding it difficult to get to the Upper Room, despite the option of using the stair lift. To this end the PCC has set up a steering group to investigate the possibility of using an area to the north of the main body of the Church just for light refreshments. This would not be a full kitchen, but an area where hot drinks could be prepared and cups washed. It would probably be in an enclosed unit so when not in use would be out of sight within the main body of the church.

**Agenda Item 6: Churchwardens' Report (contd)**

As you will be aware, Church finances have been under a lot of pressure this past year, but we have managed to maintain our aim to set aside £150 each month towards our church repair fund, that is in addition to expenditure on routine repairs and maintenance for the organ, fire and lightning protection, electrics, heating and sound system etc. We have had to make cuts to our budget for 2019, however, and can no longer afford to save in this way. And, as ever, with various programmes ahead, we still do need to rebuild our reserves and we do need extra funds. We would appeal to you all to review your personal giving to our church and see how you might be able to assist.

Finally, a huge vote of thanks must go to Rev'd Paul White and Rev'd Nicky Harvey for their excellent leadership, support and friendship, and thank you too to you all for being such lovely people – it makes our lives as churchwardens a lot easier and so much more enjoyable!

Martin Massy & Barbara Smith

## Agenda Item 7: Deanery Synod Report

This year many of the speakers have been centred around 'Called Together' the vision that has come from the work done within 'Our Conversation, Our Future'. The core themes of Called Together are resourcing our mission and ministry and Called to Grow and this is where Deanery Synod have concentrated. The aim is to work in collaboration across the Deanery, sharing skills, resources and knowledge as well as improving communication on what is on offer. A toolkit will be rolled out across the Deanery inviting churches to map what they do and reflect on these things whether they do them well or what could do with improving. As this is collected the Deanery will be able to connect churches together that may benefit from each other's skills set.

In November Jennifer Ross, Diocesan Communications Officer, spoke about new initiatives in the way that we communicate within the diocese. She is looking to develop a more relational culture where parishes send information to her that is more user friendly and inclusive so that stories can be shared more widely throughout the diocese. Jenny also mentioned the launch of the new quarterly magazine, 'Together' that will be available for churches and visitors to our churches that will highlight activities that are going on throughout the diocese. She also talked about how the Communications office can help parishes to share their stories through templates and support in writing press releases and having an online presence.

Caroline Clarke, Diocesan Officer for Community Engagement also spoke to the Deanery. Caroline spoke with enthusiasm about increasing our awareness of contemporary issues such as modern slavery, debt, addiction and loneliness, issues that are relevant across the diocese, ones that we need to be aware of in our parishes and how to engage with these issues and support vulnerable people within are parishes that may be at risk exploitation. Part of Caroline's role is to help and support churches to help the community. This can be done in various ways such as walking groups, parish suppers and social events that reach out to lonely people.

Although it is appreciated that our diocese and indeed the wider church is experiencing challenging times with 47% of parishes experiencing decline, there is a buzz of excitement; the thrill of an opportunity that we are ready embrace. Now is a time to look at how we can move forward a time to grow, and to do this we do need to work together. It is an opportunity to look at what we do well and what we could share with other parishes and, what we need to develop and where other parishes could help us. 47% of parishes may be in decline but 26% are stable and 24% have grown numerically, the focus of Deanery Synod will be to continue to look at how the engagement of every single parish can be used to grow the Kingdom of God working together.

"But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love"  
Ephesians 4 15-16

Kelly Parsons

## Agenda Item 8: PCC Committee Reports

### Education Committee Report 2018/19

This year has very much been a time of change and learning for education at St Mary's. The one thing that has been constant is the recognition of both the need to constantly review and refresh what we offer to meet the needs of the congregation and that it is not all about Sunday 10:00am Church.

The Beacon service ended strongly in the summer with a Beacon BBQ which was well attended, and positive feedback was received from the families that attended. When Beacon was set up the plan was that this would be a Youth Group similar to Lighthouse, however, from the first session it became clear that this group was not going to be what we had envisaged. Beacon turned into an activity session for children of all ages, ending with pizza, doughnuts and worship. Since coming back in September numbers attending Beacon have dwindled and its real mission has been lost along the way.

The Sunday groups have also undergone some rebranding involving the children. The names and age groups were changed, and we have experimented with running on different Sundays. Feedback from families and young people has indicated that the age groups and when they run is not working so we will be looking at this again.

We have decided to review everything that we offer to families and young people and start with a fresh look. This will include gathering the viewpoint of families and young people through a questionnaire and discussion groups. This is an exciting time and will give us the opportunity to reflect and find new and exciting ways to bring faith to young and share that journey with them.

Not everything is destined for change and some things we have got spot on this year. It was a pleasure to run the youth Lent course, it was based around clips from Henry's Cat a popular short cartoon. The course attracted a range of ages which gave opportunities for discussion groups to be split into two different age groups and be differentiated to meet the needs of that group.

The Virtual Bible group continues to learn together, and now is following the #SheToo podcasts that explore Bible accounts of violence against women, linked to the recent #MeToo campaign. The discussions have been really interesting as we support each other to develop our relationship with God.

Kelly Parsons

### Fabric Committee report

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 helping to define and carry out new initiatives that affect the fabric in its broadest sense.

I must start with the 2018 Quinquennial Inspection, which took place in June. After 2013's QI report identified the major work that needed to be done to the tower it was a relief to find the 2018 report complimentary about the repairs and needing nothing major this time. There are some things we need to do over the next five years, however, which is a reminder that we do need to set money aside for repairs and maintenance. I know this is difficult in today's straitened circumstances (in fact the money we were setting aside for the Church Repair Fund has been cut to zero in our 2019 budget to make it balance).

Speaking of the tower, the display unit on the West wall – a commitment made to secure the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the tower repairs – is near completion, although it needs more work on the display part to reflect today's church. It is a splendid addition, and thanks go to Stephanie Ingham, who designed it, Danny Hills, who built it, Cee Wetton, who designed the display panels, and Martin Ingham, who prepared the drawings showing how the church has evolved over the centuries (if you haven't seen them yet, take a look – fascinating!).

## **Fabric Committee Report (cont'd)**

We commissioned a quantity surveyor to develop a cost estimate for redecorating the church. Redecorating the main part of the church (several areas were excluded from the estimate) came to £71,500 + VAT, a considerable sum, so we and the PCC plan to investigate how to do some parts ourselves and how to raise the funds for the chancel and nave. There are also other things we would like to do, such as replacing the stair carpet to the Upper Room and the carpets in the choir, occasional and vicar's vestries, and buying cushions for all the chairs in church.

We are looking into installing smart heating controls, and LED lights to replace the high-level floodlights and spotlights in the nave and chancel. Installing LEDs will save energy and reduce maintenance costs; the difficulty is finding suitable lights that are not too expensive.

Thanks to a generous donation we were able to modernise our sound system, which had been giving problems – do you remember the high-pitched whine we were getting? We haven't got everything quite right yet – working on it! – but it is a much better system, capable of working with modern media such as wireless streaming.

Finally, thanks to all members of the committee and to Rev. Christopher Miles, who continues to help with advice and practical work.

The 2018 Fabric Committee comprises: Anne Hughes, Barbara Smith, Derek Oakley, Duncan Murray, Martin Massy (Convenor), Maurice Wong, Michael Payne, Stephanie Ingham. Ellie Livett resigned during the year as she moved for a new job.

Martin Massy, Convenor

## **Outreach & Fundraising Committee**

As in previous years, every month in 2018 saw at least one Outreach or Fundraising activity take place. As well as our long-established events such as the May Boot Fair – one of our biggest fundraisers, we also tried new ventures. These included a Bring & Buy Plant Sale, St Mary's Bake Off – a joyful event with lots of delicious baked items to sample and vote for; and an evening of excellent Poetry and Jazz.

After a gap of many years, we held a hugely enjoyable Variety Evening in June; vocal and instrumental music, stand-up comedy, poetry and a rousing first-half finale from our local pirate-themed drum and bagpipe band: what an amazing wealth of talent is to be found in St Mary's as well as in the wider Hadlow community.

Another Outreach and community success was our second Christmas Tree Festival which raised over £1000. It was gratifying to see over 30 village organisations take part. The imagination and skill that went into decorating the trees were breath-taking, the only complaint from visitors being that it was too difficult to choose a favourite!

A couple of evenings of fun were to be had at our Beetle Drive and Curry evening in February and, in October, our Harvest Supper with a manic game of harvest-themed Pictionary.

Six concerts were held during the year, taking advantage of the wonderful acoustics in St Mary's. These included two from East Peckham Silver Band – the second concert being held in memory of former band member Colin Large. Also, rounding off the year was a delightful Christmas Concert by soprano Rebecca Hooper, accompanied by Sharon Vanns and Francis Griffiths.

Our established events – the Men's and Ladies' Breakfasts and the monthly Market Stall – continued to provide opportunities for outreach and fellowship. And a hugely successful outreach was achieved by the poppy knitting afternoon sessions in the lead-up to the Hadlow Remembers commemoration of the centenary of the end of WW1. These sessions, led by Rev Nicky, revealed a niche for weekday meetings for tea, chat and optional craft, and so Café Plus was born and continues every second Wednesday at 1pm.

## **Outreach & Fundraising Committee (cont'd)**

The Hadlow Newsletter, which reaches (nearly) every home in the Parish continues to be a quiet source of Outreach, thanks to the efforts of an impressive network of volunteer folders and deliverers. We thank Lesley Bright who started her editorship of the newsletter in January 2018 and is doing a sterling job; and also, special thanks to Anne Hughes who efficiently co-ordinates the newsletter's distribution.

Which brings me to acknowledge the valuable contribution to the outreach of St Mary's by all those whose support of and engagement with our community takes many forms. But particular thanks go to all who help with Coffee Pots and Tiny Tots, Who Let the Dads Out?, Friends Together and, in a new venture this year, Holiday at Home.

Finally, a huge thank you to members of the Outreach and Fundraising Committee for their hard work and support over the past year: Barbara, Bet, Claire, Judy, Katherine, Kirsty, Martin, Rachel, Sharon and Nicky; I hope it has also been fun! And, of course, a big thank you to the many members of St Mary's who loyally support our events.

Janice Massy  
Outreach & Fundraising Committee Convenor

## **World Mission Committee Report for 2018**

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 several charities, both based in this country and abroad. With your support, because little would be achieved without it, we have raised and passed over £4,889 but due to budgetary constraints, we weren't able to supplement this with extra monies from PCC funds.

The main beneficiaries have been M.A.F; our link with Kibakwe; The Children's Society and The Community Storehouse in Paddock Wood (our Deanery Food bank) plus sponsoring the Link to Hope shoe boxes collected by the children of our primary school.

Worthy of particular mention and thanks must go to our Kibakwe team of Sharon Vanns, Jim May and Liz Derrick plus the Rev'd Nicky; Viv. Wickham and Steve Newell. In 2018 it was agreed that we should raise monies to provide lighting for the new girls' dormitory - so they could comfortably do their homework! The village response to our Lent Appeal and the Sponsored walk to Canterbury for money to provide this lighting was fantastic. So much so that in fact the team were able to provide and install a large solar panel which is far safer and more efficient than individual Tilly lamps.

Also, Kirsty's sterling 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. Plus, of course, organising with Rev'd Nicky, Kelly and others, the Christingle Service preparations. This service was created in 1749 but has been adopted by the Children's Society as 'theirs' for the last 50 years.

Christopher and Vivienne have raised awareness of the work of Mission Aviation Fellowship and helped with our Market Stall for them in September, which was well supported.

## **World Mission Committee Report** (cont'd)

The beneficiary of the profit from the Lent Lunches which preceded the Mid-day Lent Course, was the Community Storehouse in Paddock Wood. They need hard cash to pay the rent for their premises so we also donated half the collection from the Carols in the Square on Christmas Eve to them, but of course, also a big thank you from this team 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 12 Hadlow addresses on their books - it really is a local issue here in Hadlow and not someone else's problem.

So much so, that now we hold some stock here as a satellite food bank to help alleviate the travelling time and cost of going to Paddock Wood.

We must also thank everyone who responded so magnificently when the Food Bank had a mini-crisis of suddenly finding 15 refugee families and 10 local homeless singles and families were unexpectedly being moved into the recently refurbished Dowding House in the town - not just for food but for the basic necessities anyone would need to set up a new, but empty home.

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 2018 we sent over 100 shoe boxes containing essentials and little Christmas presents to the charity plus 15 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 this cost due to your generosity.

We would like to thank everybody for their support during 2018; for raising the awareness of what these organisations do and for helping raise much needed funds for these charities.

Barbara Smith

January 2019

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

### **Hadlow Bell Ringers**

Hadlow Bell Ringers rang for 10am Sunday morning services throughout 2018 as well as for special services and two weddings. Most Sundays we are able to ring all eight bells.

Practice night is on Wednesdays at 7.30pm and caters for all abilities from beginners through to accomplished ringers. Under the leadership of Tower Captain Phil Jarvis, Hadlow bell ringers have attracted a number of new ringers over the past couple of years who are making very good progress. We now number 14 Hadlow ringers who regularly turn up to practice nights, and are joined by many visiting ringers from other towers.

We are lucky to have some excellent ringers in our band; they followed up their 2017 successes by winning the 2018 Tonbridge District 6-bell striking competition and then again going on to win the County competition against the best teams in Kent.

A quarter peal – lasting around 45 minutes – is rung on the first Sunday of every month and occasional full peals are rung lasting approx. 3 hours. One notable ringing occasion was on 11<sup>th</sup> November at 12.30pm when Hadlow joined with towers across the country to mark the centenary of the Armistice. Ringing alongside seasoned band members were our learners who were recruited as part of the nationwide drive called 'Ringing for Peace', this aimed to enlist 1400 new ringers in honour of the 1400 ringers who lost their lives during the WW1.

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

Janice Massy

### **Brass Cleaning**

Brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, has been in use since Roman times, but our church brasses are all fairly recent. The colour varies according to the proportions of the metals, and there are subtle differences in the colours of our brass plaques. Brass can be tarnished by handling; the small brass on the right-hand side of the altar rail does get marked and responds well to cleaning.

The team of brass cleaners continues to work hard to maintain the condition of our brasses and we thank them for all their hard work

Judy Gater

### **Church Cleaning**

Our church is still cleaned every week and although two of our cleaners had to give up we have been fortunate in that Chris Porritt has come on board and, from June, Lee Kirk will be joining us (she's already filling in if needed). We could still do with some more volunteers - the more on the rota the less often your turn comes around! Many thanks to those who already do the cleaning.

Ann Jenner



## **Church Watch Report for 2018**

2018 saw some departures from our rota of Church Watchers, as well as some new additions. We now have 15 days per calendar month covered, but could still do with more volunteers to keep our church open for visitors on weekday afternoons. 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. Some, who are also on the church cleaning rota, can also use the time to carry out their cleaning rotas.

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.

One Mum wrote a card expressing her thanks. 'The friends we have made here and links to the church have been life saving and made us really feel a part of this lovely community.'

Regular volunteers include Cathy Brill, Judith Deckers, Carole James, Jim and Pippa May, Val Newell and Deborah Smith. Also, Father Christmas who distributed nearly 40 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 Martin Massy.

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.

## Friends Together

Friends Together is a meeting held on the second Monday of the month that enables any bereaved members of our wider community to share company and lunch. This takes place in the Upper Room from 12.45 until 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](https://twitter.com/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 unable to come to St. Mary's on a regular basis due to ill health or infirmity, there are opportunities to receive Holy Communion at home, in their Care Home or in hospital. They are able then 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, 12 people received Communion in their homes or Care Home, on a fortnightly basis either from clergy or lay members of the Congregation currently authorised to provide this option. At present due to recent deaths, the number of people receiving Home Communion is 8.

Home Communion Team

## Hadlow-Kibakwe Parish Link

2018 has been an active year for the Parish Link with Kibakwe. In February a small band of pilgrims walked from St Mary's, Hadlow to Canterbury Cathedral to raise funds for the Link. The pilgrimage took three days to walk the 50 miles with overnight stops at Sutton Valence Church and Charing Church Hall. Our thanks go to those whose help made the pilgrimage a happy and uplifting experience. Our especial thanks go to our pilgrimage roadie, Mike Harvey, who with his daughter Lucy, collected and transported our overnight baggage from stop to stop and made sure that the group had freshly made packed lunches.

At the end of May a party of 6 members of St Mary's travelled to Tanzania to visit Kibakwe. These visits are a highlight of the Link with their emphasis on friendship. The mutual support that the link engenders is greatly valued by our friends in Kibakwe as well as by Hadlow Community. The generosity of the members of St Mary's has enabled the Link to fund a number of projects this year. We took out with us 80 water filters so that most of Kibakwe's organisations, civic, religious and educational could have access to safe drinking water. The funds for this were raised by the 2017 Lent Appeal. We also took with us some £1,200 that was money raised from the 2018 Lent Appeal that we used to buy and install a solar powered lighting circuit into one the Girls dormitories. This joint project with our friends in Kibakwe meant a great deal to them as witnessed by the fact the components were blessed at a service held in the Anglican Church attended by the Vicar General of Mpwapwa Diocese followed by a handing over ceremony at the Secondary School attended by members of Kibakwe Village Council and other dignitaries. It was a proud moment when the lights were switched on.

## **Hadlow-Kibakwe Link (contd)**

Our visit also took in the two primary schools, renewing friendships with the teachers and seeing and hearing how the schools were progressing with their own projects. It was a pleasure to bring them letters from Hadlow Primary School as well as some sports equipment and stationery. We visited the hospital and noted that it was being expanded and upgraded with new wards being built. We look forward to discovering how that has gone on our next visit and seeing the new maternity unit. Hadlow Scouts have been very active in supporting the Scouts in Kibakwe providing "seed" money for their projects. The Goat Project has gone from strength to strength and has provided the Kibakwe Scouts with the means to start their next project, the acquisition of 2 cows and a plough! Hadlow Scouts have made a contribution to this project which will let the Kibakwe Scouts help the Kibakwe community to plough their farms. They have also started a project to buy sewing machines so that school leavers can be trained to be tailors.

Our last highlight of the Link Year 2018 was the visit from Kibakwe of Nelson Nyaombo and Elias Kashonele. These two friends from Kibakwe are our main contacts for our visits to Tanzania. They ensure that all goes smoothly when we are there and that we can do and see all that we wish. Travel to the U.K. is far more difficult than it is for UK citizens to travel to Tanzania and a lot of hoops had to be gone through before they finally arrived at Gatwick. Thanks go to all who made their visit so memorable but special thanks go to Val and Steve Newell for hosting them during their stay.

A trip to Kibakwe is planned for around August time 2019, to build on what has gone before.

Jim May

## **Holiday at Home**

A new venture for 2018 was Holiday at Home. This was designed for Senior residents who might not have the chance to take a summer holiday.

It was run for 2 days with various activities, refreshments and a cooked lunch. The highlight of the 2 days was a cream tea in Stephanie's garden.

I would like to thank Nicky, the lovely group of volunteers who worked so hard, members who supported me in various ways and of course Stephanie for that lovely cream tea.

Plans are already in place to hold another Holiday at Home in August 2019.

Jenny Hopkins

## **Music Report**

At this point in time no tribute that I could think of would go far enough in conveying my admiration for the singers in our choir.

At the end of a cold, blustery February day, members forego the inviting fireside warmth of a Friday evening for intensive practising in a cold church. Out again for an early start on the Sunday but, on this particular day this is just the start. Later on they reassemble to deliver an evensong of exhilarating singing. And, next week, another special service (wedding) calls for additional commitment.

Sometimes I am tempted to wonder just how far down the congregational line my enthusiasm for the choir's efforts is shared. I don't know who gets to read this but it would be good to gain more general feedback. And my secret wish? For a respectful modicum of silence during concluding voluntaries rather than chattering voices rising higher and higher in competition with the organ!

## **Music Report** (cont'd)

Anyway, things have generally gone well over the past months and we have pursued a wide range of liturgically focused music.

Sue Mason and some kindly parents have helped maintain a healthy children's involvement. 20 choristers took part in the Diocesan Festival in October. Seven received RSCM awards: Linda Moore, Sharon Vanns, Roi Arden, Freya Sceal (Bronze), Sharon Vanns, Roi Arden, Ben Sapsford (Silver), and special congratulations to Katerina Plucknett-Nixon, who was awarded Gold. During the year several youngsters gained their red ribbons and several are currently working towards their Bronze and silver awards. The youngsters also attended a choir course in Rochester cathedral.

Sharon Vanns, our choir leader, and Mike Pound have continued to provide special support. But huge thanks to our valiant band of singers whose dedication goes so much further than mere devotion to duty.

Antony le Fleming

## **Messy Church**

Messy Church was started in the Parish a little over a year ago. There have been 5 Messy Churches so far which have looked at the themes of Easter, Noah, Harvest, Advent and The Wise and Foolish Builders. Messy Church involves exploring a parable or theme through art, craft, music and science activities which are for the whole family. Parents are encouraged to join in activities with their children as Messy Church is for all ages. After the 'messy' part of Messy Church there is a time of worship which is then followed by tea.

Over the year the number of people, both adults and children, attending Messy Church has risen to forty. New families are beginning to engage with the church and come regularly to these sessions. Messy Church now takes place every other month at St. Mary's.

Rev'd Nicky Harvey

## **Newsletter Delivery**

Many thanks to all concerned with the distribution of the Hadlow Newsletter, Easter and Christmas cards, to most households in the village. To Lesley for editing the information, Janice for printing it, the regular group of volunteers who do the folding and to the many people who deliver through the letterboxes. It is an excellent way to let residents know what is happening in the village, both church and community events.

Anne Hughes

## **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 this year has been Cathy Brill; Judith Deckers; Liz Derrick; Jenny Hopkins; Ann Jenner; Julia Miles; Iris Shaw; Carol Wickham; Angela Widdicombe.

Cathy Brill

## **Poppy Project - (Café Plus)**

The poppy project started in St. Mary's in May 2018. The idea being that a fall of poppies would be created to come from the First World War memorial window in the church. Everyone was encouraged to knit or crochet poppies. Several "Poppy" knit and natter sessions happened in church, drawing in many people from the local community and church congregation. Overall nearly 3,000 poppies were knitted, and three poppy displays were put up in church. One to mark the fallen of the parish in World War 1, another to mark the 100 years since the formation of the R.A.F. and the final one in memory of the 1,400 bell ringers who lost their lives fighting for their country. In church there were also displayed 3 perspex silhouettes representing the 'there but not there' theme.

This was a community project with many village organisations joining in to supply poppies. The Brownies, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts also made poppies out of plastic bottles which were used to line the church path. The poppy project provided many outreach opportunities within the community and was widely appreciated by all those who came to visit the displays while they were up.

As a result of this project the knit and natter sessions have carried on, on a fortnightly basis under the name Café Plus. These sessions are open to everybody to sit and chat over tea and cake. People can carry on knitting, do their own craft or simply come and be.

Rev'd Nicky Harvey

## **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. The ladies provide their own flowers and foliage at other times.

Barbara Fermor

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

During 2018 we completed 195 journeys, which compares with 110 in 2017 (an increase of over 77%), and, of these, 146 (75%) were for people not directly connected with St. Mary's. The number of journeys undertaken is always for a much smaller number of 'clients', as people often need to make several visits to medical appointments at certain times of their lives, and, in 2018, we had a total of 43 clients (34 not directly connected with St Mary's).

We had 11 drivers during the year and, of course, it goes without saying that without them the service could not exist. I am extremely grateful to them all 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, Mike Harvey, Bob Holder, Ann Jenner, Jim May, Linda Moore, Duncan Murray, Val Newell, Lesley Terry and Annie Young. After 15 years as a driver, John England decide to 'hang up his driving gloves' during the year, so a special thank you must go to John for his long-standing and sterling service for the people of Hadlow and St Mary's.

## St Mary's Hospital Car Service (cont'd)

Since I took over the organisation of the Hospital Car Service last year, it has become very clear to me that it is hugely appreciated by our 'clients', most of whom are elderly and do not drive, or perhaps cannot drive to a particular appointment for medical reasons. We do ask for a contribution towards petrol expenses, but this is a fraction of the cost of a taxi each way, and the highly personal service we provide does make a significant difference.

I am pleased to say that we will have 2 or 3 new drivers starting shortly but, with what seems an ever-increasing need in our village, I am always on the lookout for more drivers. If you are willing and able to give time between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm on weekdays and are interested in joining the Hospital Car Service as a driver, please do get in touch with me (01732 852564) for more information.

Mike Harvey

## Servers

The serving team in 2018 comprised 13 individuals and continues to support both the 8AM and 10AM Sunday services along with special services. The team has had minor changes this year resulting in a net increase of 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. 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.

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)
- Olivia Parsons (10AM Acolyte)
- Jack Good (10AM Acolyte)

John Speed

## Sides Persons Report for 2018

Firstly, Martin and I would like to thank all of you who valiantly turn up month on month to do a sides person duty, particularly those who take a duty more than once a month. Without your help, none of the services would run as smoothly as they do. On a personal note, my great thanks also go to those who 'volunteer' for the extra services, as at Christmas time and on other special occasions.

Visitors often comment how much they appreciate the warm and friendly greeting they received when they've come to St. Mary's.

## **Sides Persons Report** (cont'd)

Sadly, this year and for various reasons, our number of volunteers has been depleted down to 21 and this means several people take a duty more than once a month. This is not an ideal situation and we would warmly welcome at least another two or three volunteers to join the team.

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.

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

To 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.

The present list is Gill Speed; Bet Brett; Claire Walter; Jenny Hopkins; Kelly Parsons; Sylvia and Maurice Bush; Annie Young; Kirsty Finch; Carol Bramham; Penny Brandling-Harris; Mags Skelton; Carole Waters; Pam O'Sullivan; Jean Roberts; John Pierce; Jenny Nye; Heather Wills; Lee Kirk; Anne and Bill Hughes.

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

Barbara Smith

## **Wednesday Study Group**

In the Summer of 2018 we completed a series of 9 studies on 'Promises Kept - the whole story of the Bible' concluding with Jesus' return, using The Good Book Company guide.

In the Autumn we did a short series of 7 studies in the book of Nehemiah, learning lessons of leadership and trust in God, as we followed the story of both spiritual revival of the residents of Jerusalem and the associated re-building of the wall of the city, which symbolised the presence of God among his people.

In January we had a single meeting on prayer, locally devised, based on the mnemonic ACTS (A Adoration, C Confession, T Thanksgiving, S Supplication).

Also in January we had our usual Study Group supper at 2 Spa Close, with everyone contributing food or drink and invited to make a donation, this year to the Paddock Wood Food Bank. We were able to send the Store £193.

We do not meet in Lent and have yet to make our plans for after Easter 2019.

### **Wednesday Study Group (cont'd)**

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 the use of their car park. New members are welcome: please contact Christopher Miles, tel 01732 852323 or E mail [gcmiles@btinternet.com](mailto:gcmiles@btinternet.com).

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 and Barbara Smith.

Cathy Brill