

Plympton St. Mary
Parochial Church Council



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31st December 2016

Incumbent

Rev Robert Harris Bank

NatWest,

74 /76 Ridgeway, Plympton,

Plymouth,

PL7 2AF

Independent Examiner

Mr. Graham Beeson

150 Dudley Road,

Plympton

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Our Mission

St. Mary's PCC has the responsibility of promoting the whole mission of the Church: worship, evangelisation and service. We seek to work together pursuing our mission statement: "Serving Christ in the heart of Plympton and beyond."

The Parochial Church Council

The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission, registered number 1128769. The appointment of PCC members is governed by the Church Representation Rules. After ex-officio posts (clergy, churchwardens and deanery synod representatives) have been filled, Ordinary members retire after three years on the PCC but can be re-elected.

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956 and the Synodical Government Measure 1969. During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

Clergy: (Ex-officio on PCC)

Revd. Robert Harris, Revd. Roger Beck, Revd Mark Brimicombe, Mr. Robert Harrison (Reader).

Wardens: (Ex-officio on PCC)

Mr. Peter Leigh and Mr. Kenneth Kingwell

Elected to the Deanery Synod for the session ending 2016 (Ex-officio on PCC)

Mr. Keith Escott. Mrs Margaret Leigh and Mr. Phil Smith

Elected Members

Elected to 2017

Mrs. Mila Collier

Mr. Julian Otto

Mr. Keith Shepperd

Miss Deborah Tozer

Miss Mavis Buttle

Mr. Sam Snelling

Elected to 2018

Mr. Ian Duckworth

Mrs. Julia Escott

Mr. Rodger Ruse

Miss Lucy Skinner

Elected to 2019

Mrs Gillian Anstey

Mr. Mick Austin

Mrs. Mary Nicholls

Mr. Mike Lewis

Mrs. Anne Tozer

Parochial Church Council Meetings

The PCC met six times during 2016. Discussions at meetings included the routine financial management of the parish; the care and maintenance of parish buildings; our mission and ministry. In November members of the PCC took part in a Team Ministry away day as we sought to develop relationships between the two parishes and a shared understanding of mission and ministry. Together with the PCC of Plympton St. Maurice we appointed an administrator for the Team Ministry.

Deanery Synod

St Mary's has 3 delegates to the Synod, which meets 3 times per year and we have

always been represented, recently with Reverend Robert. Meetings begin with refreshment worship lasting approximately 15 minutes, and have followed a general pattern of a major presentation lasting 20 minutes, as well as items of regular business. The major presentations have included: "Dementia Awareness"; "Transforming Plymouth Together"; "Cash Smart Credit Savvy" and "Building Financially Aware Communities".

Local ideas which are requesting on-going financial or man-power support from the Deanery or local parishes have included Drake Foundation to raise funds to tackle Child Poverty within the City; and support for alternative expressions of church (eg Messy Church, Mission Shed).

All the business has been underpinned by the Diocesan Vision and Strategy: "Growing in Prayer, Making New Disciples; Serve the people of Devon with Joy" although "report approvals" and an on-going "Action Plan" have been regular items, but one wonders how much these documents will affect individual parishes.

It is clear that the Mission and Vision seems focused on new expressions of church such as "Messy Church" and "Mission Shed", or other new forms of worship, and also the business seems heavily focused on the City of Plymouth especially as that is the title of the Synod on the Diocese website (Tackling Poverty and Social Action, support for the Drake Foundation to tackle Child Poverty in Plymouth) while to outer parishes such as Plympton there seems little evidence of direct impact of the work of the Deanery.

Having said that, our PCC at St Mary's often looks at the Exeter Diocese Vision as our guide, and the Deanery Synod replicates the Diocese of Exeter focus rather than forming an adapted Plymouth Deanery version to include the outer suburbs. It would be good to feel more involved in the Deanery activity but the number of parishes, some organised in groups as "Team Ministries", "Benefices" or "Mission Communities" but the group seems too large to ensure all areas covered by the synod (including as far afield as Elburton, Bickleigh, and Shaugh Prior!) have adequate input to the agenda. Plympton, after all, has significant areas where loneliness, poverty and social isolation exist which St Mary's needs to address in addressing through local outreach.

It is important to note that new delegates to the synod will need to be appointed this year.

Phil Smith, Keith Escott and Margaret Leigh

Churchwardens' Report

In January of this year outside the west door was flooded for over a week. I thank Bob Dyer for helping me unblock the drains adjacent to the door. We had some of the slates on roof re-secured. One of the spot lights was replaced on the Church roof. In August we had the Quinquennial inspection under taken by our architect.

During the year the hedges along the Ridgeway and Market Road have been cut and trimmed by a contractor. The grass in the Churchyard has been maintained throughout the year by Bob Dyer and his team and generally keeping the churchyard in good condition thank you.

Also the Civic Society who help to keep the section of the yard next to the ridgeway tidy.

We lost two trees adjacent to the path they were blown over in the bad weather and had to be cut up. There have been four new trees planted one for the Mother Union celebrating 150 years and two for retiring Stannators and the other by civic society for the Queen's Birthday.

Inside the Church, thank you to the cleaning team and the brass cleaning group for keeping the church in good order. Also to the Ladies who arrange the flowers every week

Peter Leigh

Churchwarden

Overview of Church Year

The last year has been one of major change for the parish. In March I was appointed as parish priest following a vacancy of over two years. I am very grateful to all who maintained the ministry of the parish during that time, and in particular the Revd Roger Beck supported by the Churchwardens, assistant clergy and Readers. On April 1st the Plympton Team Ministry was created bringing together the parishes of Plympton St. Mary and Plympton St. Maurice. This will enable us to work more closely together, developing a mission and ministry to serve the needs of the whole Plympton community.

The occasional offices, Baptism, Marriage & Funerals, are a major part of the ministry in the parish and occupy a considerable amount of time. However, they also form a vital part of our pastoral care and an important opportunity for mission. I am grateful to all who support this ministry. It has been encouraging to see most Baptism families returning to church on the second Sunday of each month. One of our future tasks will be a consideration of ways in which we can further improve the mission opportunities provided.

The parish's ministry to schools continues to develop. In addition to the strong links which exist with St. Mary's CE VA Infant School closer ties are being developed with Old Priory Junior Academy. The other Plympton schools are regular visitors to St. Mary's whether for curriculum visits or special services. The Mothers' Union continue to provide the children at St. Mary's School with a Bible each.

The ministry team plays an important part in providing for the spiritual needs of those in our residential and nursing homes by making regular visits and providing Communion for those who wish to receive. I am grateful to those who assist in this ministry, not least by providing musical support.

The choir also visited a number of homes before Christmas to sing carols for the residents. There has been much discussion about the future of Chaddlewood Church and how we can best serve the needs of a large part of our local community which may feel distanced from the parish church and where there are few community facilities. These discussions continue as we seek to know God's vision.

The quinquennial survey took place during the year. The PCC will be prioritising the work required, not least the provision of a new boiler, whilst also considering ways in which we can increase the accessibility and use of St. Mary's Church. This will be vital if we are to obtain the grant funding required to maintain our fine church building.

I am very grateful for the welcome which I have received from both the parishes of Plympton and for the continuing support of the ministry team and congregations alike. I am not going to produce a long list of thanks, for fear of missing someone out. However, I do wish to record particular thanks to Roger Beck for all that he did to maintain the life of the parish during the vacancy. I should also like to convey my particular thanks to Peter Leigh and Ken Kingwell as the retiring churchwardens and Keith Shepperd as retiring treasurer. Their ministries have also played a vital part in sustaining the life of the Parish.

I am excited as I look to the future. Please continue to pray that God will constantly renew His vision within us and that He will provide all that we need to fulfil the mission and ministry to which we are called.

Robert Harris

Rector

Parish Safeguarding

St Mary's PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

I did not receive any issues concerning the safeguarding of children or adults at risk of abuse or neglect within our church community during the year.

There is a Basic Awareness module (Module C0) available on line which is recommended but not compulsory (<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>). It is for those involved with children or vulnerable adults within the church community who may not be leaders but would benefit from the basic awareness safeguarding training.

On completion of the training a certificate is available confirming the course has been completed. An email is also be issued confirming this. Either the certificate or the email can be used as evidence of completion. The Team Administrator in the Parish Office needs to see either document in order to update the record of all such training undertaken. Please note that this module is designed not only as a stand-alone course for those who need basic safeguarding awareness but is also recommended as background reading for anybody intending to complete modules C1/C2, or C3 (Clergy & Lay Ministers).

David J. Farley

PCC ACCOUNTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2016		2015
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Voluntary Income	97,900	0	97,900
Activities for Generating Funds	11,789	0	11,789
Income from Investments	261	0	261
Church Activities	39,511	0	39,511
Other Incoming Resources	2,215	0	2,215
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	151,675	0	151,675
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Costs of Generating Funds	1,478	0	1,478
Mission/Donations to Charities	1,085	0	1,085
Church Activities	143,325	0	143,325
Major Repairs and Redecoration of the Church	-	-	-
Major Repairs to Hall/other PCC property	-	-	-
New Building Work	-	-	-
Governance costs & other outgoing payments	751	0	751
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	146,638	0	146,638
NET INCOMING RESOURCES			5,037

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2016

	2016		2015
FIXED ASSETS	£	£	£
Tangible assets	227,270		227,270
Investment	8,737		9,756
	<u>236,007</u>	236,007	<u>237,026</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8,807		8,349
Cash at bank and in hand	16,907		10,198
	<u>25,714</u>	25,714	<u>18,547</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		261,721	255,573
LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	(9,303)	(9,303)	(8,192)
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>252,418</u>	<u>247,381</u>
LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER ONE YEAR	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		<u>252,418</u>	<u>247,381</u>
FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds		242,418	237,381
Restricted funds		10,000	10,000
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>252,418</u>	<u>247,381</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 9th March 2017

Signed on its behalf by:

Robert Harris

The notes on pages 7 to 11 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 prescribed by the Business Committee of the General Synod.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC.

Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted. Following advice received from the diocese previously funds listed as Restricted are now classified as Designated. The intention to only use them only on the intended purpose remains.

The amounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members. Charity collections made by the congregator away from the church no longer form part of the accounts.

Incoming resources

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving receivable under Gift Aid is recognised only when received. Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the income is received. Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement, the amount due is quantifiable and its ultimate receipt by the PCC is reasonably certain. Income from bazaars, socials and other events is shown net of the expenditure incurred. Although this is not in accordance with accounting standards it is the opinion of the PCC that that no material understatement of the funds raised occurs as a result of this treatment.

Parish Trusts Investments

The Exeter Board of Finance has again advised us on the total value of trusts held on behalf of the parish. There has been a slight increase in their value which is shown in the accounts. The six trusts produce quarterly income. As a result of the latest statement on these investments produced by the Exeter Board of Finance Ltd, dated 19th January 2017 it is now known that they are restricted for churchyard purposes.

Repayment of War Stock

The PCC's War Stock holdings were repaid by HM Government in January 2016. As a consequence these are not listed as an investment as of 31 December 2016. (Note 6).

Resources expended

All expenditure incurred by the PCC is recognised on an accruals basis and analysed to the appropriate cost category.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS continued

INCOMING RESOURCES

	£	£	2016 £	2015 £
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
Voluntary Income				
Gift Aided Planned Giving	56,012	0	56,012	54,845
Other Planned Giving	2,214	0	2,214	-
Collection at Services	8,988	0	8,988	8,743
All Other Giving/Donations	13,987	0	13,987	5,331
All Tax recovered through Gift Aid	12,998	0	12,998	12,127
Legacies Received	2,100	0	2,100	200
Income from Grants	1,600	0	1,600	18,056
	<hr/> 97,900	<hr/> 0	<hr/> 97,900	<hr/> 99,302
Activities for Generating Funds				
Gross Income from Fund-raising Activities	11,789	0	11,789	9,804
Income from Investments				
Dividends, Interest, Income from Property	261	0	261	325
Church Activities				
PCC Fees	23,746	0	23,746	24,003
Gross Income from Trading	15,765	0	15,765	15,279
Other Income Resources	2,215	0	2,215	366
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	<hr/> 151,675	<hr/> 0	<hr/> 151,675	<hr/> 149,079

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS continued

RESOURCES EXPENDED

			2016	2015
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
Church Activities				
Costs of Generating Funds	1,478	-	1,478	4,606
Mission Giving/Donations to Charities	1,085	-	1,085	3,001
Diocesan Parish Share	86,912	-	86,912	88,682
Salaries, wages & honoraria	9,742	-	9,742	8,548
Clergy and Staff Expenses	3,764	-	3,764	3,504
Mission and Evangelism Projects	4,130	-	4,130	1,729
Church Running Expenses	22,031	-	22,031	30,078
Church Utility Bills	3,850	-	3,850	7,425
Costs of Trading	12,896	-	12,896	11,862
Governance Costs	141	-	141	154
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	146,638	-	146,638	159,588
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Major Capital Expenditure				
Major Repairs and Redecoration of the Church	-	-	-	-
Major Repairs to Hall/other PCC property	-	-	-	-
New Building Work	-	-	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	146,638	-	146,638	159,588
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS continued

In November Mrs S Duckworth was appointed as a part time Parish Administrator working 15 hours per week, St Maurice PCC contributes a third of the costs. Mrs J Escott stood down as office assistant in July. The small committee, Chair Mr Leigh, Churchwarden, is responsible for the church hall. A contract cleaner is still engaged to clean the hall two days a week.

Three members of the PCC received pay during the year. Mrs L. Collier, Director of Music received £2,280, Mr K. Escott, received £1,480 fees for duty as the Verger at weddings and funerals. His wife Mrs J. Escott, who was a member of the PCC until the APCM, was the part time office assistant and received £348. Mrs Duckworth received £892 as the Parish Administrator, her husband, Mr I Duckworth, is a member of the PCC.

Our Sexton, not a member of the PCC, receives fees for attending weddings, funerals and internments. None of those receiving pay and/or fees earned more than £50,000 p.a.. There were no other disclosable transactions in respect of PCC members, persons closely connected with them or related parties. No PCC members were reimbursed travelling or substance expenses during the year.

Following the appointment of Rev. Roger Beck as Vicar of St Maurice he vacated 27 Pinewood Close. As a consequence this property has been entirely the responsibility of the parish for its care and maintenance since September. A decision on its future has yet to be made.

TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Cost or Valuation	£
At 1 January 2015	227,270
At 31 December 2015	227,270
Depreciation	
At 1 January and 31 December 2016	-
Net book value	
At 1 January 2016	227,270
At 31 December 2016	227,270
Freehold land and buildings comprise of the following properties:	
Church Hall at cost	194,970
27 Pinewood Close, Plympton (1994 valuation)	<u>32,300</u>
	<u>227,270</u>

INVESTMENTS

	2016	2015
	£	£
Parish Trust Investments held by Exeter Board of Finance Ltd	8,737	7,864
2 X War Stock Bonds (At nominal value)	-	1,892
	<u>8,737</u>	<u>9,756</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS continued

DEBTORS	2016	2015
	£	£
Payments	8,807	8,349

LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

Accruals	(9,192)	(8192)
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ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed assets for church use	227,270		227,270
Investments		8,737	9,756
Current assets	15,693	10,000	18,547
Current liabilities	(9,192)		(8,192)
Fund balance	233,681	18,737	247,381
		252,418	247,381

FUND DETAILS

	2016	2015
	£	£
Funds for specific purposes		
Boiler replacement	6,297	-
Choir members account	330	330
Bereavement Group	413	413
Bells maintenance	2,254	2,110

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF St MARY'S PLYMPTON

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2016, which are set out on pages 5 to 11, is in respect of an examination carried out under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and the need to fully comply with SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) 2005. Also Part VI of the Charities Act 1993; The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2005 and Accounting and Financial Report Standards.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3 (3) and section 43 (2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General directions given by the Commission under Section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2005 Charity edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act;
and

- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or

(2) To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Original signed by: G Beeson

Date: 11th April 2017

OTHER REPORTS

Open the Book

Our team of six or seven volunteers have continued to go into St Mary's Infant School about once a month to present a story from the Lion Storyteller Bible. In the past year we have been working sequentially through the New Testament stories following the guidance notes in the handbook. When we meet to prepare for the story, each member of the team is able to choose their role for that story – we avoid stereotyping although those who are more agile do find themselves with certain roles! Usually we can involve a few children in non-speaking character roles in each story. Our session always begins with everyone in Worship singing "Open the Book" with full involvement in the actions that go with the song. At the end of each story there is a brief summing up and a prayer.

In the last couple of years the St Mary's team of story-tellers has included two or three from Chaddlewood United Church but since the summer of 2016 neither Judith nor Ennis have been able to join us. The joint Colebrook Methodist/CUC team have dwindled in numbers and the St Mary's team have offered to supplement their team when they go into Chaddlewood School.

Working alongside teams from the other churches in Plympton we are fortunate that props for the stories are prepared jointly and we now have access to individual costumes and other story aids for over 30 presentations.

Following a request in the summer of 2016 from one of the Diocesan Education Officers our team presented the story "In the Beginning" at Cornwood C of E Primary School where they were hoping to introduce "Open the Book" to the 80 children on roll. The co-ordinator of the Plympton teams was also involved in the initial presentation and Cornwood Church are now formalising a story-teller team. They will work with the Plympton Churches to share resources.

By July 2017 we will have completed all the stories and will begin the cycle again – it will have taken us over four years to do this!

Diana Smith

Mothers' Union

Our number increased during the year having enrolled two new members. We now have twenty members.

We meet on the 1st Wednesday of each month except August. We have a committee that organises our activities. The Annual General Meeting is held in January each year. We hold a New Year party in January and a garden party in July.

We receive Holy Communion in church four times a year. At the other meetings we enjoy a range of speakers. These included, Mrs McNaughton from on Women Survivors of War; Mr Sam Smelling on the work of the Red Cross; Mr and Mrs Mills on Plympton St Maurice, the

developments at Sherford, the discovery of artefacts and Roman coins; an amusing talk by Mrs Julie Turner on her work as a store detective.

Many thanks to Mrs Provost who stepped in when Mrs Seagate- Berry was unable to come. We also held the Women's Day of Prayer at St Mary's on 4th March with a talk by Mrs Gill Rudwick.

A successful Coffee morning raised money to purchase Bibles for children starting school at St Mary's in September.

To celebrate 140 years of Mother's Union a cherry tree was planted in the church yard. This was recorded with a photograph taken of our members at the planting of the tree.

Many thanks to all who supported us this year.

Marguerite Coaker

Melting Pot

We have had a good year with numbers increasing. The carol service held in the meeting room was well attended with gifts going to the homeless of Shekinah.

Coach trips went well starting in April and ending in November. Places visited included, Dartmouth, St Ives, Exmouth, Falmouth, Sidmouth, Penzance, Brixham, a mystery trip and Truro. The year's trips are now going ahead and leaflets with details of the various destinations can be obtained from the parish office on Tuesday mornings between 9am and 12 noon.

I would like to thank everyone who have helped me throughout the year.

Sheila Prizeman

Choir

Last year was, as usual, a busy one for us. At the year end our numbers stood at seven sopranos, five altos, two tenors, and five basses, 19 members in total. We have been augmented on several occasions by ex members whose help has been very welcome, including that Cheryl Stead who has been of great help on several occasions .

We have welcomed a two new members, Liz, who some will remember from when she sang in our choir before she moved away and Tom, who is a student at the University and comes to sing when studies allow. Unfortunately, Cyril is unable to sing with us as often as he would like as his health limits what he can do.

We still have a real need for new singers as, whilst having a reasonable number at present, there is a real pressure on us when someone is sick, or goes on holiday.

The choir has worked very hard under the guidance of Mila, learning a lot of new

music including the St. Thomas setting for the Eucharist (to be introduced later in 2017), supplying music at two services each Sunday during the year, and on various other occasions including the Memorial Services.

We have sung anthems for the major festivals and on other occasions, with special music for the Christmas Carol Service. We frequently sing at weddings and increasingly at funerals.

An annual treat we really look forward to is the RSCM Choir Festival at Exeter Cathedral in the autumn. Last autumn most of the choir able to take part and, as ever, we found it very uplifting.

We only manage to do one stint at the Saturday Coffee shop, many of our Saturdays are taken up with weddings.

For the immediate future some of us are planning to take part in the RSCM 'Come and Sing the Crucifixion' at Buckfast Abbey on Passion Sunday.

We were delighted when we welcomed the Revd Robert as our Team Rector, and we are so pleased that he is encouraging us to take St. Mary's choral traditions forward in worship with new and exciting music.

Mila Collier Director of Music

Pauline Nicholls Deputy Organist

Bell Tower

There is very little to report on the year. The same few ringers try to maintain Sunday evening ringing, on Festivals and also for the morning Service. Several of the ringers regularly go to St Maurice for the bells to be rung for the Sunday morning service.

Generally, there is a shortage of ringers and most towers need to borrow able bodies to make up numbers to ring at weddings. If you can climb the 47 steps to the ringing chamber, age is not a barrier, you could join us. We have ringers in their 80's and the most recent learners were in the 70's when they began to learn. We welcome anyone from secondary school age (because of height) to come along on Monday evenings from 7.30pm to 9pm. You will see how the bells are hung in the frame and work with rope and wheel to make the clapper ring. The chimes and hourly strike of the clock are also connected to the bells. Take a look at the CCTV at the back of the church above the door to the belfry steps and watch what is happening when the bells are ringing.

Nicholls Nicholls

Church Watch

The year was a rather difficult one as far as Church Watch was concerned. We lost many more of the sessions than in previous years due to funerals. Also several of our

Church Watch members sometimes were unavailable for various reasons. I managed to provide cover for several sessions when one of the pair of volunteers could not attend. We unfortunately had to cancel many slots. During the winter a large number of our Church Watch people have said they will be unable to carry on in 2017. I sincerely hope that many more volunteers may come forward this year, otherwise the church will be open on far fewer occasions than in the past.

On the positive side, we had a constant stream of very interesting visitors, many of whom came with fascinating stories including the gentleman whose many times great grandfather was a warden at St Mary's in 1725 when the seventh bell was installed and had his name inscribed on the rim. Thanks to the efforts of Brian Meek, we were able to forward a photo of the bell to him. There were a couple of visits by children's groups, all of whom were thrilled to find out all about the structure and contents of our wonderful building, especially the model. Such individuals are the future of St Mary's and we need to nurture every one of them.

We had another weekend (10th and 11th September) participating in Heritage Open Days and the Devon Historic Churches Day. I am truly grateful to those kind Church Watchers who kindly gave up their time to act as guides and provide refreshments. We raised £500 for the Devon Historic Churches Trust (a record amount), over £400 of which came from the wonderful popular music evening splendidly presented by Ken and Tony who, together with the choir with their superb support and the fine ladies who provided refreshments, deserve our grateful thanks.

Rodger Ruse

Parish Centre and Hall

During 2016 the Centre has been used on weekdays for Preschool, Mums and Toddlers, Bereavement group, Melting Pot, Past Times and Mothers' Union. The office was manned by volunteers from Monday to Friday, 9 am – 12 pm. Their duties include maintaining registers, answering the telephone and maintain the church diary. We are very grateful for their support.

At weekends there was a weekly coffee shop manned by volunteers. Once a month we have a Table top sale, which is organised by Marcia and John Knight. Thank you to all who have been involved, making cakes sandwiches and serving tea and coffee all year.

The Church hall was used for the refreshments to welcome the new Rector and for all the fund raising events for Church including the Summer Fair and Strawberry tea (June), Christmas Fair (December).

The hall was also the venue for Baptism and Marriage preparation, also for study day organised by Rev Roger Beck. On Sundays it was used by Sunday Club. In the evenings the Centre was regularly used by other groups for meetings, and for taekwondo, keep fit and yoga. I thank Ken Kingwell who has helped opening and closing the hall 2 nights a week and I have done all other evening plus Wednesday afternoons also thanks to Keith Escott for standing in when I have been unavailable.

Last but not least I thank Margaret Leigh who has been taking care of the bookings for the hall, organising the Rota for the coffee shop and table tops and ordering the Pasties and stores etc. required to keep the Parish Centre running.

During the year the main hall floor has been a problem with the floor lifting because of the dampness and in one case the group could not use it for their activity. The Kitchen lights have been replaced with new, and the roof between the meeting room and the hallway has been repaired we have also repaired the guttering around the building

Peter Leigh
Churchwarden

