



Annual Report 2016

presented to the St. Mary's Annual Meeting
April 24th 2017

St. Mary's Church

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Vision Statement (what we aim to become)

St Mary's 2016-2020 will be:

One body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible & prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:



- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart**, BOTH prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church, AND training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision

Values Statement (what matters to us)

We believe that we are reconciled to God the Father through faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we value:

The Bible	as the written word of God and our supreme authority in following Jesus in the whole of life.
Prayer	as the prime expression of faith in Jesus and of our dependence on God's loving grace and sovereign power in all things.
Church	as a family of wholehearted worshippers and disciples of Jesus Christ committed to mutual encouragement, care, and accountability.
Evangelism	as the proclamation of the good news of God's salvation in Christ for all people
Service	as a family of God's people caring for people in Wootton and Stewartby and beyond with the love of Christ.

Identity Statement (who we are)



We are...

Christ's church:	the church is the bride and body of Jesus Christ; it is through him alone, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that we know God; it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we worship and serve Christ; and it is Christ's future return which is our hope and motivation for life.
A local church:	a full and authentic expression of the universal church, called into being and sustained by God's word. We have a specific responsibility to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in Christ among the people of the parish of Wootton. We are also called to involvement with the world-wide mission of the whole church.
An Anglican church:	while we welcome Christians of all backgrounds, our permanent and most visible connection is with the Church of England. We accept and uphold its founding documents (The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal) as authentic expressions of orthodox Christian belief. We are committed to supporting and encouraging biblical faith and practice in the Anglican Communion, both within and beyond the diocese of St Albans.
An evangelical church:	we recognise the convictions of historic evangelicalism as crystallising and expressing the kernel of orthodox Christianity, including: the supreme authority of Scripture; the universal nature of human sin; the grace of God, seen above all in the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus Christ; and the gift of justification and new life in Christ, received and enjoyed only through repentance and faith. We value the examples, among others, of the sixteenth-century reformers, the eighteenth-century evangelists, and the nineteenth-century social reformers. We are committed to gospel partnership with evangelical mission agencies, as well as with our patron, the Martyrs' Memorial and Church of England Trust, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

Introduction

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through him. *Colossians 3:17*

Whether you are reading this report online or holding it in your hands, I thank you for taking the time to open it. The Church Council at St Mary's presents it as a record of the life of the church in 2016, including our financial statements. We do so not only as a matter of legal obligation, and because it is right to be transparent about our stewardship of the church's ministry over the last year. But also because the Christian life is to be marked by thankfulness to God for his goodness to us. And this report, while candid I hope about our challenges and failings, and undoubtedly incomplete as a record of all we have done in word or deed, nonetheless gives many reasons for such gratitude.

So do join us if you are able, at our Annual Meeting on Monday 24 April, to give thanks to our heavenly Father for his kindness to us in 2016. As we debate necessary business and choose new wardens and council members. And resolve with me to do whatever we do together in 2017 and beyond, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Yours in his service

Peter Ackroyd



PCC Members

Peter Ackroyd (chair), Emma Hearn (secretary), Steve Rowse (treasurer), Andy Snelson (warden), Margaret Greenhalgh (warden), Lucas Durant (curate), Pauline Kendall (Deanery Synod rep), Hazel Sanders (Deanery Synod rep), Tim Dillistone (Deanery Synod rep), Sally Snelson, Kirsten Knight, Dorothy Teh, Josh Kendall, Maria Richardson, Diane Murray (in attendance).

Voted onto PCC April 2016: Maria Richardson and Josh Kendall.

Those whose PCC term ended in April 2016: Jenny Roffey

Structure, governance and management: The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll.

This report has been adopted by the PCC at its final meeting before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.



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PCC Aims and Ministry

Wootton PCC is responsible in partnership with the vicar for promoting the whole mission of the church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical - in the ecclesiastical parish of Wootton (which includes Stewartby).

In planning and overseeing the mission of the church, the incumbent and PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and especially the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We aim to equip Christians to live out their faith in Christ through:

- church services and prayer
- bible study groups and training
- young people's activity and educational involvement
- pastoral care for parishioners
- evangelism
- partnership in world mission

At the beginning of 2016, following some months of consultation among leaders of all St Mary's ministries and drawing on the results of a congregational survey as well as responding to the themes of St Albans Diocese Living God's Love vision, the PCC adopted a revised Mission Action Plan. Our core vision calls on us to become over 2016-20:

One body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible & prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby, and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart**, both prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church, and training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision

To this end the PCC has adopted a detailed plan of action with priority goals in the following areas: corporate prayer; making new disciples; equipping leaders and disciple-makers; and ministry to children and young people. Progress towards realising the plan goals is reviewed at each PCC meeting.

The vicar and PCC are supported in the church's mission by PCC committees, by a part-time employed administrator, and by teams of volunteer helpers, appointed by the PCC and vicar. During the year the church's ministry was further strengthened by the licensing of Jim Hignett as Reader at a service in St Albans Cathedral on Sunday 12 June. We continued to have responsibility within the diocese of St Albans as a training parish, and we delighted to see the Revd Lucas Durant ordained presbyter in July on completion of the first year of his curacy. Several congregation members supported Jim and Lucas at these services.

In September following his acceptance on the two-year Cornhill Training Course in London, Joshua Kendall joined the staff team in a voluntary capacity as a placement student.

To support the church's ministry the PCC maintains the fabric of St Mary's church, the church hall and grounds, and the curate's house. Following completion of a fund-raising campaign and with the assistance of grants from the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust and the National Churches Trust and loans from some congregation members, in March we were able to commence restoration of the stonework on the south face of the church building. This was successfully completed by Boden and Ward over the summer under the supervision of Hazel Sanders. A thanksgiving service was held in the autumn, and in December the congregational loans were repaid from the proceeds of a legacy.

The PCC is a charitable corporate body established in law and operating under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, as amended, and the Church Representation Rules 2011. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

During the year the PCC agreed revised Safeguarding policies for both young people and vulnerable adults. New systems were implemented to ensure that appropriate training, guidance, and checks are received by all who have regular contact with young people and vulnerable adults. The PCC has subsequently reviewed its policies in light of revised guidance from the Church of England. The PCC is accordingly happy to confirm that it has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

In September, eleven PCC members attended a training event 'PCC Tonight', run by Church Pastoral Aid Society and hosted by Bedford Deanery Synod at Kings House, Ampthill Road.

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Public Worship and Prayer

A range of Sunday services were offered. The principal service took place at 10.30am, with the goal of being accessible to all ages, including children's groups and a crèche facility. Adult attendance at this service was normally 70-80, with around 15 children. The Lord's Supper was celebrated once per month. At gam a weekly service according to the Book of Common Prayer alternated between The Lord's Supper and Morning Prayer and attracted 15-20 people. A Prayer Service was held on the second Sunday monthly. In the autumn, a further monthly evening event was launched, Sunday Plus, with the aim of equipping church members to think biblically about contemporary issues.

A monthly mid-week 'messy church' held in the church hall - Encompass - served younger families in Wootton and attracts a regular attendance of 50-70 adults and children. A large team of helpers sustained this venture and as well as building links with many families in the local community, a number of the older children have as a result joined the Wednesday Pathfinders group.

Connections with the wider church in both diocese and worldwide were maintained by church members and visiting preachers. In 2016 these included Prof Michael Horton (Westminster Seminary, California) and Canon John Kirkby (UK Friends of Masindi-Kitara Diocese, Uganda, and former vicar of St Marys).

Baptisms were held during the main morning service and often attended by significant numbers from the community. In 2016 there were five weddings and one service of prayer and dedication following a civil marriage. The clergy officiated at a number of funerals at St Mary's, at Stewartby United Church, and at Bedford Crematorium.

On Remembrance Sunday, St Mary's hosted as usual the village's annual Service of Remembrance. At Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest and Christmas a range of services enable all ages to celebrate major festivals. A Harvest Lunch was held on 2 October, followed by displays of flowers and teas in church.

Where there is a fifth Sunday in the month, a team from St Marys led by Clem Lewin leads the weekly Sunday morning service of Christian worship at Bedford Hospital.

To commemorate the ninetieth birthday of HM The Queen, on 11-12 June St Marys hosted a well-attended weekend of celebratory events. This included church displays of flowers and art prepared by village organisations, tower tours, a teddy bears parachute jump, cream teas, and a service of thanksgiving.

A weekly prayer ministry team supports those attending our morning service. Members of the congregation support the vicar and curate in their pastoral ministry in the parish. A visiting team ensures that a number of church members who are unable to attend services on account of infirmity or illness are regularly visited.

Members of St Mary's also support the ministry of Stewartby United Church, a Local Ecumenical Project. The Church of England is a member of a Sharing Agreement with the Methodist, United Reformed, and Roman Catholic Churches to provide pastoral ministry in the LEP.

Discipleship and Learning

The PCC provides many opportunities for people to grow as Christians. During 2016 six regular Growth Groups met for bible study weekly or fortnightly. Growth Group leaders met regularly for review and training, and during the year were: Angela Stephens and Allyson Cable, Clem Lewin and Ivy Peacock, Jim Hignett and Norma Smith, Lucas Durant, Peter Stephens and John Robertson, Peter and JoJo Ackroyd and Diane Murray and Derrick Lowe. A further two groups – including one providing bible study for Lunch Club members – met monthly.

Church members are encouraged to attend events for training encouragement and fellowship in the Deanery and wider church. Young people's leaders attended a March training day in Nottingham run by the Midlands Gospel Partnership. A small group once more enjoyed the May Bank Holiday 'Bible by the Beach' conference in Eastbourne.

In November a mini-intensive week of training was offered to church members under the title BUILD. This involved an introductory 'bible overview' and some principles for bible handling. Around fifteen church members attended.

As described in more detail later in this report, groups for young people are held on Sunday mornings and evenings, and midweek. Young people attended a range of residential events, including summer camps run by CPAS Ventures (Woolhampton I Pathfinder; Foremarke I CYFA ventures), and Lymington Rushmore Holidays, as well as our own Easter holidays Pathfinder residential at the Chellington Centre in Carlton. Church members including the vicar and curate served as leaders, cooks, and assistant leaders on a range of these residencials for young people.



Deanery, Diocesan and General Synod

The benefice of Wootton is part of Bedford Deanery. St Mary's three lay members of Bedford Deanery Synod are Pauline Kendall (Lay Chair), Hazel Sanders and Tim Dillistone. During 2016 the Synod, which connects St Mary's to the wider church, met four times. Deanery Synod heard regular reports of the business of General and Diocesan Synods.

Pauline Kendall and the vicar are among representatives of Bedford Deanery on Diocesan Synod. The vicar chairs the Bedford Deanery Pastoral Committee and also the Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship.

Regular reports of the work of the Deanery and Diocesan Synods are brought to PCC.

Ecumenical

The PCC aims to strengthen Christian witness and service in the community through membership of Wootton and Stewartby Churches. All congregations meeting in the parish are actively involved: St Marys, New Life Methodist, Wootton Baptist, and Stewartby United Church.

As usual, a United Service was held in January, a Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday, and a Senior Citizens Tea in May. During Lent WSC sponsored a well-attended Christ in the Passover evening held at New Life Methodist Church and addressed by Boris Skvortsov of Jews for Jesus. Following the Parish Council sponsored annual village Fun Day, at which a WSC marquee offered free activities, an Open Air service was held on 10 July at a new venue – in the grounds of Wootton Lower School's Harris Way site. The speaker was Andy Little.

Joint publicity was prepared and distributed to every household at Easter, in advance of the Village Fun Day and Open Air Service, and at Christmas.

Clergy attend bi-monthly prayer meetings for leaders of Bedford churches in sympathy with the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance, of which St Marys is a corporate member.

Evangelistic:

St Mary's aims to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ through its regular public services, through supporting the witness of Christians in their homes, neighbourhoods and workplaces, and through offering regular events and courses to enable people to explore Christian faith and practice.

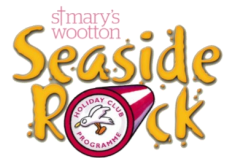
A Life Explored course was held in the autumn in the vicarage.

During the year, preparations began for a parish mission in June 2017, with visiting evangelist Glen Scrivener.

At Christmas, St Mary's participated in a Hope Together pilot project, and distributed copies of an attractively-presented magazine Hope Christmas to over four hundred households in the Berryfields/Jubilee Gardens development, together with invitations to Christmas services. A Carol Crawl through the village on 20 December culminated in a short community open air carol sing-a-long with refreshments on the Berryfields estate.

Seaside Rock

The Encompass team ran the Seaside Rock Holiday Club in August 2016. Our aims were: to have fun, to teach children the gospel, and to give adults a chance to learn about God and how to serve him. We ran the club for 4 mornings, Tuesday to Friday, with games and crafts on Wednesday afternoon. The Scripture Union material shared the Good News of Jesus, as seen through the eyes of Simon Peter. We saw Jesus calling Simon. We heard the parable of the wise and foolish builder. We saw that Peter betrayed Jesus, but was forgiven and called Peter the rock, on whom the church would be built. Over the 4 days 100 children attended. We also held a BBQ on Friday night. Then we held a service at the Church Hall site on Sunday morning. All of our aims were wonderfully met, by our wonderful God.



Hazel Sanders

Mission Beyond the Parish

The PCC tithes its regular giving income to support Christian mission beyond the parish.

Longstanding mission partners in Belgium (YP & Jude Gayet) and Chile (Alf & Hilary Cooper) were supported directly and through the Church Mission Society. During the year the PCC agreed to support the training of a Church of Uganda ordinand at Uganda Christian University through the UK Friends of Masinid-Kitara Diocese.

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St Mary's also supports prayerfully and financially: the ministry of IMPACT, a Scripture Union affiliated charity, which employs Christian schools workers in the Bedford area; the local ministry of Karen Jones, local sixth-form & FE college worker with the UK charity Festive (a joint venture of UCCF and Scripture Union); and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

Harvest collections were donated to Tearfund, while at Christmas collections of food and other items supported the work with the homeless of BeChar and also a women's refuge in Bedford. In November, church members contributed generously to the ministry of Operation Christmas Child (Samaritan's Purse). Church members also support the work of the Bedford Foodbank through a collection point in church; the church is a referral agent for the Foodbank.

Staff and Church Officers



Churchwardens' Report on Fabric

2016 has been a busy year for the churchwardens. We started off by having the Church Hall drive resurfaced. The stonework repairs to the south side of the church were begun and completed, under the excellent supervision of Hazel Sanders. The church lighting has been replaced by LED equivalent lamps which use 1/6th of the power of the old system whilst giving a better light. We have replaced the worn out runner and pulpit carpets.

As you know, just before Christmas, a large ash tree fell on to the south porch. This caused damage to the roof and an aisle window. We hope the tree will be removed and repairs started before too long.

Margaret and I would like to thank all the church family for the help, support and prayers given to us throughout the past year.

Andy Snelson and Margaret Greenhalgh

Electoral Roll Officer's Report

Over the last year (January – December 2016) 6 names were removed (deceased, moved away from the parish etc.) and 11 names were added. As at the 31st December 2016 the Electoral Roll totalled 130.

Sara Butler-Jones

PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC meets once a month on a Monday evening eight times a year. The meetings are usually for 2 hours. At the present time the PCC is made up of fourteen members. The term of office for each member is three years. The PCC has five functions; to enable the church to play its part in God's mission to his world, to co-operate with the minister in sharing leadership, ensure legal compliance with charity and church law, care for church buildings and church yard and as a channel of consultation within the wider Church.

The PCC also received regular reports on the state of the church's finance, reports on deanery and diocesan synods, the condition and maintenance of the church buildings. As ever in the life of the PCC it was a busy year, the Stonework Project was completed thanks to fundraising efforts, a generous legacy gift and lots of hard work by the Stonework Committee. The Church Hall drive was resurfaced. Church lighting was replaced with LED bulbs. Support for our Mission Partners was increased due to an increase in our mission tithe fund and changes in the economic environment and we were very pleased to be able to make a payment towards our 2014 parish share arrears. The majority of the PCC also attended a very useful training event on how to be an effective PCC.

Emma Hearn

Cornhill Ministry Placement Trainee

I began my ministry trainee placement at St Marys' in September 2016 when I also began the Cornhill Training Course which runs alongside, and is complimentary to, my work here at St Marys. On Mondays and Tuesdays I attend Cornhill in London which is run by the Proclamation Trust. I attend lectures which focus on teaching the Bible and on the different aspects of a life in ministry. On Thursdays, Fridays and Sunday I work for St Mary's doing a variety of work including; helping run children's and youth work, running a club at Holywell Middle School, working in the office alongside Di, leading services and preaching. I met regularly with both Peter and Lucas. In this work, the PCC supports me, for which I am very grateful. Thank you for the prayers, welcome and support I have received in my new role.

Josh Kendall

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Parish Administrator's Report

Over the past thirteen years, work in the church office has evolved with more emphasis on 'brand', website and social media. We have around 230 followers on Facebook offering huge potential. We are called to go where people are, whether in person or online! I am thankful to Georgia Murray for design expertise and to Sara Butler Jones for admin support.

In November, Josh Kendall, Elaine Sullivan and I attended the Premier Christian Radio Digital Conference.

The staff team meets weekly. In 2016 we also began meeting to pray on Thursday mornings. It has been encouraging to pray, in more depth, for the work of St. Mary's.

We have recently begun using a Church Management system called ChurchApp, which will help us to manage rotas, groups, communications in a more coherent way.

It is a privilege to provide admin support as St. Mary's works hard at 'Knowing Jesus and Making Jesus Known to All'

Diane Murray

Church Hall Warden's Report

The Hall is used daily in term time by St Mary's Playgroup, whereas Pathfinders and Rainbows meet weekly. Explorers and Pathfinders also use the hall on Sunday mornings. Monday Lunch Club and Encompass meet monthly in the hall. A two day Take-a-Break, is planned for early April. The Committee Room accommodates the Church Office, Church Council meetings and some storage. The roadway is much better following its repair during last year. The boiler room doors have been covered in roofing felt to prevent water ingress. However they need attention, as the doors are sticking. The kitchen heating cupboard has proved a great success.

Following reports of youths climbing on the hall roof, new warning notices have been fixed to the ends of the building. The grounds receive regular attention to keep them tidy. Volunteers are always welcome to assist me keeping the Hall and grounds in good repair.

Richard Hull

Treasurer's Report

2016 summary. A healthy overall surplus was seen in 2016 but cautious spending remains key to a 2017 surplus. All bills and parish share was paid. A late parishioner's estate gift, for buildings use only, completed stonework restoration payments. Whilst the finances are healthy, the unrestricted proportion of this money PCC is free to spend as it wishes (or the 'rainy day' fund) was intact at the end of 2016, where as in 2015 had been empty. Youth and Children's worker financial pledges need to strengthen before the PCC can commit in 2017



2017 outlook. The number of giving households via standing order or blue envelopes has risen from 51 to 52 for 2017. Based on Standing Orders and blue envelopes received in January 2017 compared to January 2016, which showed an increase of 3.1%, giving is predicted to rise from £79,064 (2016 total) to £81,551.

Steve Rowse

Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to set, in the October budget, a working capital reserve balance on unrestricted funds for the following year. For 2017, the amount anticipated to be held in reserve at year end is £5,000. This working capital reserve is to smooth cash flow fluctuations and to meet unforeseen expenditure and emergencies

Steve Rowse



St. Mary's Book Club

St Mary's book club began in late 2015 after the idea was presented at the church weekend away in October 2015. The group's loose aim has been to encourage each other to read books that would be helpful in thinking about the Christian life and living it out. During 2016 we read a mixture of biographies, theology and practical advice, some old and some modern, including: the "Roots of Endurance" – a biography of William Wilberforce, Charles Simeon and John Newton, "The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment" – a Puritan classic, and Tim Keller's book on "Prayer". We try to choose one book a month and meet once that month to informally discuss what we found interesting/helpful/difficult about it. Everyone is welcome to join us any month. We try to mention in the church notice sheet when we are meeting and what book we are reading, and the books are usually available to buy through church.

Catherine Durant

Support for Services

Singing Group

Very little has changed regarding Singing Group during 2016 and we have neither gained nor lost any members during the year. Currently we have seven musicians and a rota of three singers. We have played on just about every Sunday throughout the year, sometimes without a full group but overall the members are very regular and loyal, especially turning out on cold, wet and dark Wednesday evenings for practice. We enjoy each other's company and regard it as a privilege to be part of the worship life at St Marys.

We like to keep up to date with new songs and tried for a while to learn a new song every month, a good ambition but not so easy to put into practice! However there are many new songs coming out all the time and it's a case of selecting the most appropriate ones to sing at St Marys.

Tony Winterson

Choir

First, I wish to thank the six members of the choir who have loyally sung at the gam service through the year. The choir consists of 3 Soprano, 2 Alto and a Tenor. This means that we are only able to sing relatively simple anthems. We have nevertheless continued to sing the Psalms to Anglican chants most Sundays. Unfortunately in my view it is only a short time before the long tradition of singing choral music at St Mary's will end. I would like to encourage the members who joined the choir for the Christmas Carol Service, and other congregational members to join the choir on a regular basis so that choral singing is maintained.

The Organ is well maintained and is tuned three times each year. We are fortunate to have a fine and comprehensive organ that enhances our worship week by week.

John Robertson.

Church Flowers

Flowers help to make St Marys a welcoming place for our congregation and visitors to worship. The 'Flower Ladies' have helped decorate the church for Sundays, Christmas, and Easter Services. Harvest was special as we had arrangements from Wootton Lower School pupils, and opened the church for 'Afternoon Teas'.

In June we invited other organisations to contribute floral displays to 'Her Majesty the Queen's 90th Birthday celebration'. Good weather encouraged many visitors to enjoy the flower arrangements, afternoon tea and Teddy Bear parachuting – feedback was positive many people saying what a wonderful community event it was.

During the year many of the arrangements were provided through donations to remember a loved one or anniversary. Floral displays were provided for five weddings during 2016. Eighteen people attended a wreath making workshop in December. Thank you to all of the 'Flower Ladies' and those who supported our events.

Alison Thompson

Church Bells

There is currently no bell ringing team. A team of ringers from Cranfield, headed by Chris Hartley kindly organise a team to ring bells when required at weddings. However it looks as though this may not be possible in 2017. So perhaps it is time to think about starting up a bell ringing team of our own again, so that we can hear our wonderful bells more often. If you would like to be part of that team - contact the Church Office.

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Young People's Groups

Wrigglers (weekly baby and toddler group)



Wrigglers continues to be busy with between 20-35 children every week along with their parents/grandparents/childminders. We are regularly meeting new children and their families whether it is a tiny newborn baby or someone new to the village. During 2016 we saw lots of children, we learnt new songs, drank copious cups of tea and coffee, ate far too many biscuits despite a national shortage in bourbons which caused some alarm, made lots of creative crafts, had a trip to Gullivers Land, had visits from the local Children Centre, finished the summer term with a musical entertainer and had a fabulous Christmas party with a visit from Father Christmas himself! This year Gina Westerink has joined the team and we are extremely grateful for our volunteers who help plan crafts, set up, serve refreshments and tidy away each week.

Emma Hearn

Men Behaving Dadly (monthly for dad's and their children)

Men Behaving Dadly (or MBD for short) is a group that grew out of Wrigglers. It caters to fathers with their kids, and usually happens on the last Saturday of the month - giving Mums a well deserved morning off! Since moving to the Maypole Farm, and changing to accept kids of all ages, the group has gone from strength to strength. We have had between 5 and 10 Dads attending and bringing their little ones to the sessions. Kids enjoy the play facilities and Dads enjoy the reasonably priced breakfasts (with bottomless tea, coffee and toast!) as well as the opportunity to meet and chat with other Dads.



MBD is a firm fixture, and we all look forward to it each month! You can follow us on Facebook (MBD Wootton) to find out more, and to be informed of the next MBD meeting!

Matt Hearn

Sunday Crèche

The crèche is held in a room at the front of the Church. We have lots of toys and games to play with and Josh Kendall has organized a new storage unit which should improve the appearance of the room and make it easier to find things for the children to play with. We have a few 'regulars' using the crèche but it really comes into its own when we have Baptisms. At the last Baptism service it was standing room only in the crèche with about 30 children and adults squeezed in!

Di Murray sends out a Crèche rota to our helpers about 3 times a year and we also have some teenagers who can assist. Helping with the Crèche gives you an opportunity to get to know the parents and babies who attend and its lovely to be able to support them. From Crèche the children can go on to join our other groups and become part of our Church family.

Marje Williams

Climbers (Sundays for 2-5 year olds)

Currently there are seven children registered to attend Climbers. Most Sundays we have three to four enthusiastic young people meeting in the choir vestry to learn about Gods love for us through stories, activities, crafts and songs. This term we are finishing looking at the people in the Old Testament (we were looking at Jonah at the same time as the congregation which was a blessing). There are three leaders, myself, Anna Collis and Annette Hart and we are extremely grateful to the J@M members who help us each week.

Since changing our age range we have not regularly had any two year olds. However, we expect over the next term to have up to three 'little's' joining us which will give us the challenge to provide lessons that appeal across this age range. We ask for your prayers for this so that the little ones may settle and the older ones still receive valuable teaching.

Sally Snelson

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Explorers (Sundays for school years 1-4)

This past year saw three of our Explorers move to Pathfinders. However, we've been encouraged that new children have joined the group and now we have a core of seven who, although not with us every week, are regular attendees and make for a lively time. In September, we also welcomed Nicola and James Drinkwater to the Explorers' team. We're grateful for the extra help and the contribution they are making to the teaching times.

This year we've had an exciting diet of both Old and New Testament, covering the lives of Elijah, Elisha, Job, Gideon and Paul. Alongside this we've looked at some of Jesus' miracles and parables and revisited the Easter and Christmas stories. All of these have helped us focus the children, and ourselves as well, on the God who cares for everyone in all circumstances - one who needs to be trusted and obeyed in daily life.

Judi Fawcett

Pathfinders (Sunday & midweek for school years 5-8)

This has felt like a year of change in **Sunday Pathfinders**. We always miss those who move from Y8 to Y9, but this year we've also had teachers leave and join plus new teaching materials. Sarah Beacon put in many years of faithful service in all aspects of Pathfinders: midweek, Chellington and Sundays. She has such a passion for Bible teaching and young people that we miss her but are thrilled that Frances Wainwright agreed to join Claire Brice and I, bringing her wealth of experience. The new teaching material, Mustard Seed, comes from Rory Bell and his team who have led training events at St Mary's. It is helpfully online, has been such a help and encouragement in unpacking Scripture and the Gospel to our group. It would be good for other groups to consider perhaps. Since September we have been looking at Kingdom parables and are now going through highlights of Genesis!

JoJo Ackroyd

This year, while we have continued offering all the things that make **Midweek Pathfinders** an attractive outreach to young people - games, crafts, and snacks - we have especially focused on expanding the teaching portion of the evening. To that end, in the autumn we tackled some systematic theology together working through revelation, the attributes of God and the Trinity. Over the winter we have been working our way through the book of Numbers, seeing how God is faithful to his promises despite his people's rebellions. During our upcoming Easter residential in Chellington (which is fully booked!), our guest speaker, Julia Snodgrass (a student at Cornhill), will be walking us through Colossians.

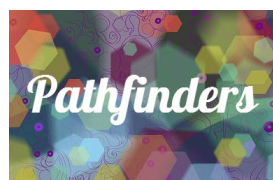
Many thanks to Amanda Newton, Josh Kendall, Georgia Murray, Tom Ackroyd & Holly Sanders who do so much week by week to make Midweek Pathfinders the dynamic and exciting ministry that it is.

Lucas Durant

J@M (Sunday evening for school years 9-13)

J@M is the church's youth group for those aged fourteen to eighteen inclusive, and it meets on Sunday evenings during term-time. Our hope is that the young people who come along will come to trust in Jesus for themselves, grow as Christians and be better equipped to live as Christians. We aim to have fun, support each other, and learn from the Bible together. During 2016 the group ranged between 4 and 9 young people, and it was led by two members of the congregation. The general format of the group is to begin the evening by spending time with each other and chatting, then moving into a game, and then looking at a book of the Bible or thinking about a spiritual theme together, and then ending in prayer. In 2016 we focused on a few different topics, including: the Ten Commandments, relationships, and the Changing Lanes course.

Catherine Durant



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Outreach and Community



Lunch Club

Lunch Club has had another successful year, with growing numbers and appreciative comments. The kitchen team do a wonderful job, providing excellent meals for 60 to 70 people each month. We have had a varied and interesting programme of after lunch activities. The highlight of our year is our two day event Take-a-Break. We enjoyed two outings, one on the John Bunyan boat and a day trip to Oxford. Our aim is to give a loving welcome to all in the name of Jesus and to show the difference knowing his love makes in our lives.

Norma Smith

Encompass (Messy Church)

We have been very blessed at Encompass this year. We have used the King, the Snake and the Promise material to guide us through an overview of the entire Bible. We have studied the stories through crafts, games, songs, prayers. Sally Snelson has continued to feed us all with delicious hot food every month. We have on average about 60 people attending, some of whom have been with us for many years, but new faces appear almost every month. The planning team is myself, Marion Lowe, Andy Snelson, Kirsten Knight, Gill Ireland and Josh Kendall but we are assisted by many many volunteers, baking cakes, cutting out, giving talks, putting out tables. The Encompass team again took on the role of organizing the Christingle service, taking responsibility for the talk, making Christingles, crafts and cake to eat. In 2017 we are again looking forward to running a summer holiday club.



Hazel Sanders

Associate Ministry

Stewartby United Church

2016 has been a year of some changes in the life of Stewartby, with the addition of many new houses. There have been some tricky issues for the church council to discuss including the decision to stop running our Family Fun Time due to a lack of helpers. A decision regretfully made as it was our main outreach for families. T@3 continues to run although we couldn't manage without the faithful support of our helpers from St Marys. It is quite difficult to run a church with so few active members, but it is amazing what God does, and it makes us appreciate how he uses people in his work, and what he provides.

We are truly thankful for those who have faithfully supported us in our outreach and who come to minister to us on some Sundays. Peter's support, guidance and encouragement is invaluable. Please pray for us for the future and join with us in celebrating our God, for whom nothing is impossible.

Elaine Sullivan

Holywell Governors'

Holywell Governors – JoJo Ackroyd, Pauline Kendall, Martin Sanders, John Spellman and Isabel Turner

There are five of us who represent St Mary's as Governors of Holywell School in Cranfield and this past year has been a challenging one. There are of course always challenges in governing a school – the responsibility for the welfare of the pupils and the staff, plans for a changing curriculum as well as maintenance of the site and the finances of the school – especially since Holywell is an Academy with great financial control of its budget. However this year there have been decisions to be made about whether to take Holywell down the route of a Multi Academy Trust and most recently the appointment of a new Deputy Head and, as we write this, interviews for a new Head Teacher.

It is both a joy and a responsibility to hold this role and we ask for your prayers and support.

Pauline Kendall

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St. Mary's Playgroup

We have had an excellent year at St Mary's Preschool and thanks to all the hard work of the staff the children continue to thrive in a caring and stimulating environment. With the village expanding, our numbers have increased and we have full capacity in most sessions.

Activities this year:

- We have covered a variety of projects including Pirates, Little Lumpty, Chinese New Year, Easter, Valentine's Day and Growing Vegetables.
- Playgroup danced at Wootton Lower School Fayre.
- We had a transition visit to Wootton Lower School.
- The nativity play that the children performed was extremely popular. It was a joy to see the children dressed and singing their hearts out.
- The children enjoyed a fun filled Christmas party on the last day of term.

Finally, I would like to thank the playgroup committee: Peter Ackroyd, Margaret Greenhalgh, Allyson Cable and Di Murray who give up their time to support us.



Established 1967

St Mary's Playgroup operates from the main room within the Church Hall. Children have access to a fully enclosed, grassed outdoor play area.

St Mary's Playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The Playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is registered by Ofsted. St Mary's Playgroup has six members of staff, three of whom have been at the playgroup for over twenty years. All members of staff regularly attend training courses, are police checked and all hold current First Aid certificates.

St Mary's Playgroup receives funding for early years education. It is open each weekday during term-time only. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 32 places a session. The setting serves the local and neighbouring community.



St. Mary's Playgroup
Income and Expenditure
January to December 2016

EXPENDITURE January - December 2016		
Salaries January - December 2016		59752.26
Pension		2400.00
Employers National Insurance/TAX		9543.29
Church Hall Rent		3723.60
Pre-school Learning Alliance Membership Fee		98.00
Photoscene		620.55
Equipment and supplies		4381.29
Miscellaneous		
Auditing fees	100.00	
PATS testing	60.00	
DBS	108.70	
Photo Developing	81.02	
Donation to PCC	300.00	
Miscellaneous Total	649.72	649.72
Staff Training		100.00
Petty Cash		1156.30
Ofsted Annual Registration Fee		50.00
Unpaid Cheque		304.50
Cheques cashed 101442 and 101455 (from last year)		100.25
Cash in Hand - 31 December 2016		10.33
Balance in Bank - 31 December 2016		29451.29
TOTAL		112341.38
INCOME January - December 2016		
Cash in Hand - 1 January 2016		26.63
Balance at Bank - 1 January 2016		30564.05
Received from Fees (Cash & Cheques)		10195.35
Received from Lunch Club		573.75
Received for Photoscene		705.50
Overpayment (N Opperman)		481.30
Children In Need		44.00
Received from Early Years Funding LEA		64541.00
SEN Funding		5209.80
TOTAL		112341.38

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24.2.17

St. Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council Independent Examiner's Report of accounts for January to December 2016

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedford Charity Commission no. 1150817

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended **31 December 2016**, which are set out on pages 1 to 5 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and **s.145 of the Charities Act 2011** ('the Act').

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 the Regulations and **s.144(2)** of the Act does not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under **s.145(5)(b)** of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. 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 the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- I. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - n to keep accounting records in accordance with section **130** of the Act; and
 - a 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
- II. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Lyndee Richardson Independent Examiner - L. RICHARDSON FCCA
Date 8th March 2017
Signed on behalf of PCC [Signature]
Date 20 March 2017

St Mary's Church, Wootton

Balance Sheet detailed

To the 31st December 2016

		As at 31/12/2016	As at 31/12/2015
Endowment assets			
1509	Wootton Armstrong Fund	1,106.62	996.05
1510	Wootton Church Cottages	17,795.62	16,017.64
	Total Fixed assets	18,902.24	17,013.69
Current assets			
1501	Current Account	145,214.23	12,009.34
1503	CBF Capital Fund	80,540.83	24,219.05
1504	CBF Studley Road	1.71	1.71
1508	Cash Book	—	—
	Total Current assets	225,756.77	36,230.10
Liabilities			
1650	Loans for Stonework	—	—
6699	Agency collections	149.93	18.06
	Total Liabilities	149.93	18.06
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	244,509.08	53,225.73
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	189,394.80	15,578.83
201	Starting balances	53,225.73	37,418.50
202	Gains and losses on Investments	1,888.55	228.40
	Total Reserves	244,509.08	53,225.73

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	13,366.41	3,928.09
Restricted	212,240.43	32,283.95
Endowment	18,902.24	17,013.69
Total	244,509.08	53,225.73

St Mary's Church, Wootton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the period from 01 January 2016 to 31 December 2016

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources	105,003.56	247,885.26	—	352,888.82	107,787.91
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	9,300.47	—	—	9,300.47	9,209.57
Activities for generating funds	—	—	—	—	—
Investment income	—	646.18	—	646.18	750.27
Other incoming resources	117.85	8,412.00	—	8,529.85	9,195.90
Total incoming resources	114,421.88	256,943.44	—	371,365.32	126,943.65
Resources used					
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects	6,267.50	875.00	—	7,142.50	7,281.50
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	91,509.22	74,681.19	—	166,190.41	93,848.49
Support costs	3,728.45	3,013.37	—	6,741.82	8,225.22
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity	1,895.79	—	—	1,895.79	2,009.61
Total resources used	103,400.96	78,569.56	—	181,970.52	111,364.82
Net incoming / outgoing resources before transfer	11,020.92	178,373.88	—	189,394.80	15,578.83
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	1,389.64	1,966.60	—	3,376.24	8,390.90
Gross transfers between funds - out	(2,972.24)	(404.00)	—	(3,376.24)	(8,390.90)
Net incoming / outgoing before other gains / losses	9,438.32	179,956.48	—	189,394.80	15,578.83
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	1,888.55	1,888.55	228.40
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	9,438.32	179,956.48	1,888.55	191,283.35	15,807.23
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	3,928.09	32,283.95	17,013.69	53,225.73	37,418.50
Total funds carried forward	13,366.41	212,240.43	18,902.24	244,509.08	53,225.73

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

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St Mary's Church, Wootton

Analysis of receipts and payments
Selected period: 01 January 2016 to 31 December 2016

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Receipts						
<i>Donations, Legacies and similar receipts</i>						
Donations, Legacies and similar receipts						
101 - Gift Aided	71,096.40	—	—	—	71,096.40	56,500.92
102 - Tax recovered	19,169.71	—	10,770.80	—	29,940.51	19,315.68
103 - Other giving	7,968.00	—	—	—	7,968.00	6,997.29
104 - Loose Collections	3,804.64	—	—	—	3,804.64	2,994.07
105 - Gift days- Sundry giving	1,145.76	—	—	—	1,145.76	1,202.76
201 - Given for specific projects	1,819.05	—	237,114.46	—	238,933.51	20,777.19
Donations, Legacies and similar receipts Sub-totals	105,003.56	—	247,885.26	—	352,888.82	107,787.91
<i>Donations, Legacies and similar receipts Totals</i>	105,003.56	—	247,885.26	—	352,888.82	107,787.91
<i>Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects</i>						
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
302 - Rent for hall	4,130.60	—	—	—	4,130.60	4,946.67
401 - Monies for books	968.87	—	—	—	968.87	729.40
404 - PCC fees Weddings/ Funerals	4,201.00	—	—	—	4,201.00	3,533.50
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Sub-totals	9,300.47	—	—	—	9,300.47	9,209.57
<i>Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals</i>	9,300.47	—	—	—	9,300.47	9,209.57
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>						
Activities for generating funds						
203 - Fund raising	—	—	—	—	—	—
Activities for generating funds Sub-totals	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Activities for generating funds Totals</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Investment income</i>						

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Investment income						
301 - Interest	—	—	646.18	—	646.18	750.27
Investment income Sub-totals	—	—	646.18	—	646.18	750.27
Investment income Totals	—	—	646.18	—	646.18	750.27
Other receipts						
Other receipts						
106 - Wootton Charities	—	—	2,250.00	—	2,250.00	1,350.00
405 - Assigned fees	—	—	6,162.00	—	6,162.00	5,168.50
600 - Studley Road	—	—	—	—	—	2,677.40
601 - Insurance claims	—	—	—	—	—	—
602 - Sundry claims	117.85	—	—	—	117.85	—
Other receipts Sub-totals	117.85	—	8,412.00	—	8,529.85	9,195.90
Other receipts Totals	117.85	—	8,412.00	—	8,529.85	9,195.90
Receipts Grand totals	114,421.88	—	256,943.44	—	371,365.32	126,943.65

Payments

Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects

Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects

1001 - Overseas Mission	3,667.50	—	625.00	—	4,292.50	4,300.00
1002 - Christian relief	—	—	—	—	—	—
1003 - Home Mission	2,600.00	—	250.00	—	2,850.00	2,981.50
1004 - Secular Societies	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Sub-totals	6,267.50	—	875.00	—	7,142.50	7,281.50

Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Totals	6,267.50	—	875.00	—	7,142.50	7,281.50
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Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects

Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects

2001 - Diocesan Quota	58,594.00	—	—	—	58,594.00	58,536.00
2002 - Working Expenses of Incumbent	3,285.45	—	—	—	3,285.45	3,326.07
2003 - Parsonage House	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004 - Assistant Staff	11,102.06	—	—	—	11,102.06	9,001.13
2005 - Church Running expense	6,111.46	—	—	—	6,111.46	5,267.75
2006 - Church Maintenance	697.99	—	—	—	697.99	767.86
2007 - Upkeep of Services	1,472.40	—	—	—	1,472.40	1,410.20
2008 - Upkeep of Churchyard	—	—	59.93	—	59.93	—
2009 - Costs relating to books	1,172.82	—	—	—	1,172.82	1,039.15

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total	
					This year	Last year
2010 - Church hall	7,463.00	—	—	—	7,463.00	5,947.80
2011 - Office	—	—	—	—	—	—
2012 - Major Works	—	289.63	68,863.26	—	69,152.89	1,014.00
2013 - Restoration	—	—	—	—	—	—
2016 - Honoraria, Assigned fees	439.70	—	5,758.00	—	6,197.70	5,161.12
3001 - Mission minded	—	—	—	—	—	—
6000 - Studley Road	880.71	—	—	—	880.71	2,377.41
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Sub-totals	91,219.59	289.63	74,681.19	—	166,190.41	93,848.49
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	91,219.59	289.63	74,681.19	—	166,190.41	93,848.49
Support costs						
Support costs						
2017 - Support Costs	3,728.45	—	3,013.37	—	6,741.82	8,225.22
Support costs Sub-totals	3,728.45	—	3,013.37	—	6,741.82	8,225.22
Support costs Totals	3,728.45	—	3,013.37	—	6,741.82	8,225.22
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
3000 - Fund Raising	—	—	—	—	—	—
4000 - Administration	1,895.79	—	—	—	1,895.79	2,009.61
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Sub-totals	1,895.79	—	—	—	1,895.79	2,009.61
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Totals	1,895.79	—	—	—	1,895.79	2,009.61
Payments	103,111.33	289.63	78,569.56	—	181,970.52	111,364.82
Grand totals						

Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Monday 24 April 2017

Opening Worship, Bible Reading & Address

Meeting of Parishioners - Agenda

- 1 Minutes of the meeting of 18 April 2016
- 2 Election of churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Agenda

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of 18 April 2016
- 3 Reports presented by the Parochial Church Council:
 - (a) Electoral Roll
 - (b) Proceedings of the PCC
 - (c) Financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 Dec 2016
 - (d) Fabric, goods and ornaments
 - (e) Proceedings of the Bedford Deanery Synod
- 4 Election of lay representatives to the Deanery Synod
- 5 Election of lay representatives to the PCC
- 6 Appointment of Sidespeople
- 7 Appointment of Independent Examiner
- 8 Any Other Business

Closing Prayers

Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners Monday 18 April 2016 7.30pm at St. Mary's Church Hall

Welcome, hymn and prayers

Minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 23 March 2015

The minutes of the APCM were presented as an accurate record of the meeting. All present agreed.

Election of Churchwardens

Andy Snelson

Proposed: Elaine Sullivan

Seconded: David Kendall

All: voted in favour

Margaret Greenhalgh

Proposed: Dorothy Teh

Seconded: Diane Murray

All: voted in favour

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Monday 18 April 2016 7.30pm at St. Mary's Church Hall

Present: Margaret Greenhalgh, Alison Reed-Thomsett, Andy Snelson, Norma Smith, Sally Snelson, Maria Richardson, Gordon Waller, Jenny Hall, Ivy Peacock, Jim Hignett, Liz Hignett, Richard Hull, Clem Lewin, John Wheeler, Jenny Waller, Jenny Roffey, David Price, Margaret Robertson, John Robertson, JoJo Ackroyd, Richard Frossell, Fiona Frossell, Dianne Sullivan, Elaine Sullivan, Claire Brice, Kirsten Knight, Emma Hearn, Tony Winterson, Diane Murray, Pauline Kendall, David Kendall, Josh Kendall, Marion Lowe, Derrick Lowe, Allyson Cable, Anne Warboys, Pam Richardson, Alison Thompson, Steve Rowse, Dorothy Teh.

Clergy: The Revd Peter Ackroyd (Chair), Revd Lucas Durant (Curate)

Apologies for absence: Lesley Waller, Claire Brice, Sue Barnes, John Barnes, Hilary Hull, Matt Hearn, Ruth Rowse, Audrey Beardshall, Sara Butler- Jones, Larry Teh, Martin Sanders, Hazel Sanders.

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Welcome, prayers and thanks

1. Minutes of the previous annual parochial church meeting of 23 March 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting of 23rd 7.30pm March 2015 were signed as an accurate record by Rev Peter Ackroyd.

All: voted in favour

2. The Reports Presented by the Parochial Church Council

(a) Electoral Roll: A Report by Sara Butler-Jones was read aloud. 126 are currently on the roll.

(b) Proceedings of the PCC

There were no comments or questions.

(c) Financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 Dec 2015

By the end of 2015 there was a surplus of £1,700. All the bills had been paid. The Parish Share of £5,800.536 had been paid in full. Money had come in from the play group, Gift Aid Tax, Wootton Charity and the Stonework. The main expenses in 2015 were the Parish share which amounted to 53% of the income, staff wages, heating, lighting and overseas missions.

This year had seen an increase in generous giving from the church members. Fifty-three households were giving on a regular basis to the amount of £63,498. This averaged out at £98 per household. As a result of Pledge Sunday the number of giving households increased from 53 to 59. This was an increase of 14.5% and amounted to £9,176. If the financial commitments continue then it is hoped there will be a contingency fund to pay off the Parish Share from the previous year of £11,645. By the end of 2015 the PCC were left with £6,000. This means there is £500 a month to spend assuming the expenses are similar to last year. The Treasurer thanked Alison Reed-Thomsett for her support with the church finances. The Treasurer concluded that the church was in a sound position with the current finances.

No questions were raised regarding the PCC accounts.

(d) Fabric, goods and ornaments

The church warden Andy Snelson presented a report. Andy thanked Margaret Greenhalgh for her contribution as church warden in the last 12 months. There were some ongoing issues with the church heating. The Quinquennial Report of 2012 covered all aspects of the church fabric. The Stonework repair should be completed in the next couple of months. The church hall drive had been tarmacked with a grant from the Bedford Borough Council. The notice boards had been varnished. A review of the church lighting system and consideration of a more efficient system would be beneficial. The church porch needs some attention.

No questions were raised.

(e) Proceedings of the Bedford Deanery Synod

Wootton was represented on the Deanery Synod by Rev'd Peter Ackroyd, and 3 lay members, Pauline Kendall, who was elected by the Synod's House of Laity as Deanery Lay Co-Chair, Hazel Sanders and Tim Dillistone. All present were invited to read the report and ask questions.

There were no questions relating to the Report of 2015 on the Deanery Synod meetings.

(d) Question about the Annual Report 2016.

The income for the play group had seen a sharp rise from £18,000 to £30,500. Why was this? It was explained that the funding for the play group comes in lumps. £30,500 was not surplus but was to cover expenses in the coming months. However it was noted that play group do have a small reserve.

3. Election of lay representatives to the PCC

It was noted that there had been a high attendance at the PCC meetings which was important for continuity.

Joshua Kendall **Proposed:** Maria Richardson

Seconded: Anna Collis

Maria Richardson **Proposed:** Norma Smith

Seconded: Pauline Kendall

4. Appointment of Sidespersons

The Rev'd Peter Ackroyd commented that the Welcome team has a vital part in the church ministry and was grateful for their service.

The following people are willing to serve as sides people in 2016-17:

R Frossell	M. Williams	P. Stephens	S. Rowse	A Reed-Thomsett
M. Lowe	C. Lewin	A. Stephens	I Peacock	N. Smith
D. Lowe	J. Waller	B. Hall	G. Waller	P. Richardson.

(6) Appointment of Independent Examiner

The PCC were thankful for the services of Lynden Richardson in 2015. It was proposed that he be appointed as an Independent Examiner for the PCC accounts in 2016.

Lynden Richardson Proposed: Steve Rowse Seconded: Ivy Peacock

(7) AOB

Alison Reed-Thomsett registered her thanks to John Barnes for his work with Gift Aid and HIC?

Clem had concerns about the churchyard path, that it was getting dangerous.

Jenny expressed her thanks to John Robertson as organist and choir master. She also thanked the musicians at the 10.30 service.

The meeting concluded with a hymn and prayer.



'You are living stones'
1 Peter 2:5

Administrative Information

St. Mary the Virgin is situated in Wootton, Bedford. It is part of the Diocese of St. Albans within the Church of England. Registered charity number 1150817.

Bank: National Westminster Bank, 231 Bedford Road, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 8DB

Independent Examiner: Mr Lynden Richardson

The correspondence address is: The Vicarage, Church Road, Wootton, Bedford, MK43 9HF

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