



Annual Parochial Church Meetings 2019

Wednesday 3rd April 2019 at 7.30 pm

St Mary's Church Hall

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AGENDA for Annual Parochial Church Meetings 2019

Meeting of the Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens - Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Churchwardens' Reports
3. Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Agenda

1. Minutes of last Annual Parochial Church Meeting
2. Matters arising from the Minutes
3. Electoral Roll Officer's Report
4. PCC Secretary's Report
5. PCC Treasurer's Report
6. Presentation of the Annual Reports for 2016 and any comments required
7. Fabric, Goods & Ornaments Report
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Election of four members to the Deanery Synod
10. Election of twelve members to the Parochial Church Council
11. Appointment of Sidespersons
12. Appointment of Independent Examiner for the Accounts
13. Incumbent's Report & Intergenerational Missioner's report
14. Organisations' Reports

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

1. Election of Vice Chairman
2. Appointment of Secretary
3. Appointment of Treasurer
4. Appointment of two Deputy Wardens
5. Dates of future meetings
6. AOB

Churchwardens' Report

CHURCH FABRIC

Church re-ordering has continued in 2018. A faculty has been obtained for Phase 2: the removal of the remaining pews in the nave and north aisle, the replacement floors and the purchase of new stacking chairs. C J Bayliss has been appointed as contractor and chairs to match those purchased previously have been ordered. Work will commence in February 2019 and is expected to take about eight weeks. A quote has also been received for further improvements to the lighting, including replacement of failed units under guarantee. This is also planned for early 2019 and will be financed by the Friends of Ross Church. Talks have also taken place about Phase 3 of the re-ordering, improving access and the entrances in the north porch and chancel.

Very grateful thanks are due to the re-ordering team. Many plaudits have been received for the work so far completed including that of the DAC who visited in the autumn.

CHURCH SECURITY

Following installation and commissioning of the CCTV system, we are pleased to report that there have been no incidents of theft or vandalism during the year.

CHURCHYARD

Volunteers continued to supplement paid help in the open churchyard. The Probation Service continued to do an excellent job in the Garden of Remembrance and part of the churchyard. Thanks again to Bob Ryan for his solo efforts with the strimmer.

FUTURE PROJECTS

It is hoped that Phase 3 of re-ordering can take place by early 2020.

CHURCH HALL

A team of volunteers led by Bryan and Sue Jones has converted part of the basement for use by the Community Larder, which moved into its new premises in December. It is hoped to renovate part of the first floor early in 2019.

RECTOR

We are now in an interregnum, Sarah Jones having moved to St John the Baptist, Cardiff at the beginning of October. We are very grateful to Simon Tarlton and all the members of the Ministry Team who have ensured that services have continued smoothly during the interregnum.

THANK YOU

We are truly grateful to the whole congregation and clergy team for all their support.

We must mention the work of the many who help with cleaning. This is very often a challenge and we are really thankful to have so much help.

Well done everyone again – and THANKYOU!

Dr Janet Cooper and Dr John Setchfield

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens 2018

Wednesday 18th April 2018 at 7.30 in St Mary's Hall

Present: Rev S Jones, K Vitale, P Eward, T Raddenbury, P Raddenbury, J Spencer, J Spencer, C Leggat, P Leggat, A Morris, M Mason, P Mason, P Reynolds, V Allen, C Glover, J Setchfield, J Cooper, P Waters, T Waters, the Rev S Tarlton, B Jones, B Ryan, S Ryan, A Constance, R Skelton, B Wardle, A Remmington, H Setchfield, R Lewis, B Altree, D Lane, C Cattanach, L Lewis and M Sanderson.

1. Apologies were received from: Canon F Davies, T Davies, D Glover, P Landau, K Richards, S Greer, P Harding, T Harding, A Morris, D Eward, N Lewis and P Altree.
2. Churchwardens Report: C Leggate expressed his affection for the pews but appreciates they have to go, however he asked what was to happen to the Ministers Stalls and Prayer Desks? The Rector replied that she had not given it any thought, but will consider it. J Cooper said they were in much better condition than the pews.

The Rector thanked the Church Wardens for all of their hard work and the meeting gave a round of applause in appreciation.

3. Election of Churchwardens: J Setchfield and J Cooper were duly re-elected as Church Wardens.

The meeting closed at 7.40

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2018

1. Minutes of the APCM held on 4th April 2017. The minutes were previously circulated and accepted as correct, with only a few minor spelling errors, they were agreed and signed.

Proposed by B Jones

Seconded by P Raddenbury

2 abstentions due to absence.

2. Matters Arising: None
3. Electoral Roll Officers Report: The Roll opens after this APCM, it is currently 150.
4. Secretary's Report: No questions.
5. Treasurers Report: P Raddenbury explained the restricted and unrestricted funds. Restricted funds are for a specific purpose, more notable this year as some restricted funds were moved into the unrestricted funds, along with a refund of bank charges. £108k was used for reordering and was used from restricted, figures come in less than budgeted. The Charities Commission decision meant we were able to move £102k from restricted to unrestricted.

C Leggate, asked where the profit and expenditure from the 100 club was, The Treasurer pointed this out.

6. Deanery Synod Report: No questions.
7. Appointment of Sidepersons: No questions.
8. Incumbents Report: No questions.
9. Deanery Synod Representatives: No election is needed as M Sanderson and P Eward joined in 2017.
10. Election of twelve members to the Parochial Church Council: C Cattanach and A Remmington were appointed.
11. Appointment of Independent Examiner for the Accounts: D Bennett is willing to continue in this role. Proposed: P Raddenbury, Seconded: J Setchfield, Unanimous
12. Organisations Report:

Altar Servers: P Reynolds, as it is not easy to get servers would it be worth dropping Acolytes and Crucifer for the All Age Services? The Rector responded that they are trying to encourage our younger members to shadow Acolytes and Crucifers and assist.

Bell Ringers: No questions.

Bible study group: The group at Marvin and Sue's did not happen, no other questions.

Catering Team: P Reynolds thanked the team; M Mason, M Willis, J Hazelton, L Lewis and T Raddenbury for doing a marvellous job

Christian Aid: No questions.

Commercial and Industrial Chaplaincy: No questions.

Church Prayer Group: No questions

Church Watch: J Cooper asked if the Church Watch volunteers could be notified when there is a funeral or any other event, as then the volunteers do not need to attend. The Rector suggested they contact the office, who has the rota, to find out if anything was planned. M Sanderson said he had a meeting planned with the Administrator and could put funerals on the website, weddings are already on there.

Community Larder: M Mason said they have approximately 22 clients each week and have never run out of food.

Flicks in the Sticks: No questions

Flower Rota: No questions

Home Communion: No questions

Hospital Chaplaincy: No question

Job Club: The Rev S Tarlton offered thanks to the people who come from the larder to help with refreshments, also the other volunteers who help, this builds trust and develops good relationships, 2 people have expressed an interest in being baptised.

The name Job Club may change, as it does not reflect what is being done, a possibility is St.Mary's Community Café.

LMDG: No questions

Men's supper club: C Beddows said it was a thriving club with people attending who are not from St Mary's congregation.

Mothers Union: M Willis is the new branch leader.

Music: No questions

Piecemakers: No questions

Play & Praise: No questions

Prayer Group: No questions

Residential Homes: No questions

Safeguarding: No questions. The Rector expressed the importance of Safeguarding and that any concerns regardless of age must be reported.

Sunday Kids: No questions

Friends St Mary's Church: The AGM is next week. P Reynolds will be handing over the role of Chair. New gardens are needed for the 2019 event.

Neighbourhood Team: Rev S Tarlton apologised for not submitting a report. This was previously done by Rev L Mathew, Rev S Tarlton has decided to make this a more focussed event.

Brampton Abbotts Primary School: P Mason and C Cattnach are doing some Open the Book sessions, initially just to trial it and then they will make a decision if it continues.

Church House Trust: No questions

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Electoral Roll Report for the year 2018-2019

Whilst most of the reports relate to a calendar year, the report on the Electoral Roll runs from the date of one Annual Meeting to the next. This year the Roll has to be completely revised and the new Roll will be opened at the APCM when I will report the number.

Peter Raddenbury – Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Secretary's Report 2018

No report

PCC Treasurer's Report

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2018 are published as a separate booklet and this includes a Financial Review for the year that I will not reiterate here. Our considerable assets hide the fact that we operate on a deficit basis if we match our normal daily expenditure against the income that comes in. This will come into stark contrast once we have carried out our various projects and our reserves become significantly depleted.

I am once again very grateful to David Bennett for carrying out the Independent Examination of the Financial Statements. Also the support of the Finance Group – John Setchfield, Paul Eward, Nigel Lewis and Paul Mason, who replaced Sue Edwards after she moved away during the year – is most welcome and I appreciate the opportunity to meet every two months to discuss the latest financial position.

During the year we signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme and this has eased the burden on Paul Eward, as Gift Aid Secretary. Because of time pressures I am very conscious that more needs to be done to make people aware of the Parish Giving Scheme and to encourage those who have not moved across to this method of giving to do so because of the benefits in terms of cash flow that it gives us from receiving tax refunds on Gift Aid payments so much earlier. If anyone feels that they have the capacity to assist with this then please speak to me.

Peter Raddenbury – Treasurer

Deanery Synod Report

We heard from a variety of speakers during the year, and discussed business relating to the Rural Deanery. Meetings took place in St Mary's Hall and Lea Village Hall.

Incumbent's Report (Assistant Curate)

2018 was an exciting year in the life of St Mary's with a number of significant changes. Not least among these was the departure of our Rector, the Revd Sarah Jones, who left us in September after 14 years of ministry in Ross-on-Wye. During her time here Sarah made a huge contribution to every aspect of the life of the parish. She combined a strong sense of continuity with the highest standards of administration as well as embracing and encouraging many new ideas and initiatives. Sarah leaves a significant legacy and will be a great gift to the people of her new parish of St John the Baptist, Cardiff. In October a strong contingent of benefice congregation and choir made the journey to Cardiff to help celebrate her installation there. We wish her well. Also leaving us, earlier in the year, was our house for duty colleague in Brampton Abbots, the Revd Marvin Bamforth, who has gone on to explore new challenges.

This year we have welcomed our new colleague, Christine Cattanach, as Intergenerational Missioner (see separate report). Part of Christine's role, as part of an exciting Diocesan wide initiative, is to engage with new groups of people and help us welcome new congregations. Her work lies at the heart of our First Shared Priority in Hereford Diocese, spiritual and numerical growth. Christine has introduced a number of wonderful new and successful initiatives, which are outlined in her report. What has been striking about her work with new groups has been the willingness and enthusiasm of members of our existing family to get involved and provide support. Thank you to everyone who has supported and encouraged her.

2018 was the year we completed phase one of the reordering of St Mary's. The provision of kitchen, children and toilet facilities has been a huge blessing to all who use our church. We have learned well how

to use the new space to its best advantage. The completion of the work brought a renewed enthusiasm for the next two phases of the reordering due to take place in 2019 and 2020. An open weekend in May, organised by the Neighbourhood Group, saw many visitors in church as we showcased all of the various aspects of church life to a new audience and met with much positive feedback.

Since Sarah's departure, as the only full time stipendiary Minister remaining I have done all that I can to help maintain the worship life of the parish. It is testimony to the other excellent and dedicated members of the Ministry team with which we are blessed that we have been able to run the full rota of services across the whole Benefice during the interregnum. We have covered all baptisms, funerals and weddings as well as other special services without having to call on any outside help. In a busy and growing parish this is a significant achievement and I am indebted to the help, encouragement, support and wisdom of (in no particular order) Revd Colin Leggate, Revd Chris Blanchard, Canon Freda Davies, Reader Emeritus Dr Derek Glover and Christine Cattnach as well as our Administrator Nick Richmond and Director of Music, Mark Sanderson. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to all of them and, for their inexhaustible patience, to every single member of our fabulous congregations.

Simon Tarlton

Intergenerational Missioner's Report

The IM has been in post for 14 months. During the first 6 months she was encouraged to observe and listen in the Parish she is situated in and get to know the church and what already is happening. Working as part of the Ministry Team she was tasked with how and where she might influence new initiatives to be situated and how she might influence St Mary's to grow both spiritually and numerically. The overall Diocesan Strategy is to use a tool called the Growth Cycle to consider how we as a church need to Connect, Engage and Nurture, Commit and Grow those inside and outside the church to inspire each generation to follow Jesus Christ. She has spent much time initially with the former Rector of Ross Rev Sarah Jones and since September 2018 predominantly with Rev Simon Tarlton, the Curate who has taken on the responsibility of leading the Ministry Team, discussing the strategy. Through prayerful discernment they have considered how we can create opportunities for this to happen. The intention of the Mission is to build on the many good examples we already have in terms of worship, prayer, outreach and community projects and add to these in a more Intergenerational way.

Schools Work

The IM has become involved in schools Work which has predominantly been at our Church School, Brampton Abbots C of E Primary, where initially she volunteered in Donaldson Class, year 1 and 2. She has also been involved with Assemblies and has introduced a more coordinated approach that now sees a three week cycle of Open The Book, IM follow up, Curate lead worship. Open the book was tentatively introduced to the school in the summer term and with a willing throng of volunteers has established a monthly pattern which more recently has released Margaret Mason into a creative directorial role which is helping it to flourish further. These Assemblies are assisted by Celia Glover who continues to play piano and brings a traditional element of children's songs. The IM introduced Sox Puppet Club, an after school faith based ministry that enables children to lead acts of worship themselves using dance and drama with the wonderful sock puppets created by Margaret and Leah from St Mary's. The IM has also supported and contributed to the successful Experience Easter and in November Experience Remembrance coordinated by Freda Davies which has drawn in the other schools in Ross and Walford.

Children, families and young people's work

September saw the launch of two ministries aimed at drawing in children, families and young people to St Mary's.

Toast Club aimed to draw in parents passing St Mary's on their return from the school run. A brave throng of enthusiastic volunteers initially took coffee and toast outside the church to draw a few parents in and this resulted in the birthing of this lovely group. It has now become Toast & Toddle with a good steady group of mostly Mums and tots who have loved being in the church building and say they feel loved by the Toast Makers. This is key for building this group of people who come from outside to feel comfortable in the church and build relationships. We have had several specials for Half Term and Christmas where more connections are made with the wider church family. A few individuals have come to knit and natter which has added another Intergenerational element we should like to see grow.

LEAF Club is the name given to a small group of young people between 5 and 8 girls aged 11-15 who are a mix of those known to us and a few newcomers. The girls created the acronym which stands for Last Friday of the month, Eating, Activities and Faith. This group is led by the IM in partnership with Volunteers some who are outside the regular congregation including Mark and Finlay Cattanach. They do not attend the traditional services at St Mary's but have been drawn into this type of ministry.

Other work with young people has included a successful Deanery Youth event, which the Curate and IM predominantly imagined, organised and executed along with input from local Christian Singer songwriter April Shipton. This culminated in an informal Christmas Service the Greatest Gift, which 20 young people attended. A small group of teenagers is now working on future ways to engage with this age group.

New Services

The IM has been working with the Rector initially to add to the breadth of services we offer at St Mary's. Initially this involved introducing a monthly informal contemporary time of worship utilising the talents of Rev Sarah called Freespace. Although there was some interest from the existing congregation and a few from outside St Mary's, numbers were small and it came to a natural pause on the departure of the former Rector.

The principle 9.30 Eucharistic Service is well attended and enjoyed by those it currently serves. On the fourth Sunday, the IM has been aiming to develop a more interactive All Age Service whose vision is to be accessible to everyone there. Some advances were made with the help of the former Rector but recently with the encouragement and collaboration of the Curate a much more interactive non Eucharistic service that has been enthusiastically received and well attended by the congregation and some growth has been established. We have utilised a service pattern created by All Age expert Rev Sandra Miller to take those used to a traditional liturgical pattern on a journey which sees them Interacting, using testimony and utilising the choir to lead us in aspects of worship as well as using familiar hymns to create opportunities for everyone there to encounter God. These services take many hours to plan and prepare and the collaborative approach of the Curate in both planning and delivery in particular has been key to its success. The Director of Music and the previous All Age planning team have also been involved in its execution.

Discipleship

Part of the Mission is to grow those already in the church in discipleship. In December around 20 people attended a short discipleship course entitled Talking Jesus which the IM has been running with the Curate. The Ministry Team have agreed that we should now follow this with an Alpha Course and Rev Chris Blanchard agreed to help run this course along with lay leader Melanie Mellor. This course began in February 2018 for 10 weeks and consists of a shared meal, video and small discussion groups where a different element of faith is considered each week. It has been more successful than we imagined with 22 people signed up, all from the Benefice churches, some more established members and some on the fringes or new to us, coming on the journey of Alpha. This is very common when churches begin to run Alpha. Facilitation of this course is a big task but the vision we have is for those on this course to facilitate

a further more invitational course in September for which 6 people have already indicated they would like to join.

The Missioner has also been instrumental in encouraging and facilitating a Lay lead weekly Prayer Group which, due to the reordering, runs in St Mary's after coffee following the Thursday Communion. This group has been created for a number of people who have expressed a desire to pray out loud and we have been so encouraged by the many answers to prayer that we have seen. Encouraging members of the congregation to be a part of the initiatives is a part of the commissioned role and so involving and growing volunteers is important in the prayer group, Open The Book, All Age Services, Toast Club and Leaf Club, encouraging signs of new leaders are already emerging.

The IM project is now into its second year and whilst some exiting progress has been made in the last few months, carrying on the momentum and building upon it is vital. The enabling, encouraging and collaborative approach of the Curate Rev Simon Tarlton has been particularly key and continues to be so whilst we are interregnum. What God has been doing amongst us is exciting and encouraging and we now need to continue to build on the momentum we have with the new Rector.

Christine Cattanach

Organisations' Reports for 2018

Altar Services

I am grateful to the loyal band of volunteers who have ensured that there has been a crucifer and two acolytes for every 9.30am Eucharist as well as at other Eucharistic services during the year. Few people realise that there is more involved to being an Altar Server than that of leading processions and attending to the needs of the priest during services. Servers are responsible for setting up the Altar and the elements required for communion before services and for clearing up afterwards.

If you feel that you would like to help with this do contact me – there is no age limit and full training is given!

Freda Davies

Bell Ringers

Service and Maintenance - Regular maintenance of the installation is carried out by the local ringers (as is the case with many rings of bells across the country), who also voluntarily fund and resource the replacement and/or repair of items such as ropes, stays and clappers.

Condition - All major fittings (frame, headstocks, bearings and wheels) are in good condition.

Clappers - Clappers are a high wear item and most have been repaired over the past 10-15 years, so it is anticipated that we will continue to see an average of one failure per year. Failures include broken shafts or worn bearings, causing excessive play and eventual failure.

Both require specialist repair or replacement by one of the bell foundry companies. We have an established relationship with John Taylors Bell Foundry, who performed the last major restoration, and provide a fast and efficient service.

Following an inspection earlier in the year the clappers on bells 5, 6, 7 and 8 were overhauled (replacement bearings) and a replacement shaft fitted on the tenor bell to improve handling.

Stays - Stays (used to hold the bell still when not ringing) are subject to stress damage, especially when training new recruits. 2 stays were replaced this year, the stay on the 3 as a preventative measure and the stay on the 6 that failed due to old age (40 years!).

Ropes - Bell ropes are subject to constant wear so require frequent inspection and adjustment. Over the past year 4 ropes required repair or binding to resolve and avoid damage.

A new set of ropes was purchased in 2017 (as a memorial to 2 of our previous ringers) and are being fitted as required to replace worn items. All except the ropes on bells 1 and 2 have now been replaced; these 2 ropes have been retained for the moment as some of our younger ringers find them easier to handle.

Lighting - We understand the external light by the outside door is scheduled to be installed in early 2019.

Heating - No change.

Access - Access to the ringing chamber is by 35 steps, which some of our more mature and less able ringers find increasingly difficult to climb. There is a rope fixed to the newel of the spiral, however, this does not provide adequate support. A secondary rope or handrail to the outer wall of the first stage of the

spiral staircase was requested last year, but not fitted as it was stated that it would restrict space in the stairwell. The consensus of the ringers is that an external rope or rail would still be a better solution, and suggest that the rope on the inner newel could be removed to make more space.

Security - The entrance door to the staircase has been subject to occasional vandalism and may require further repair or reinforcement. In 2015 the old mortice latch and lock failed and was subsequently removed, leaving no means to keep the door closed other than being locked with the security key, which cannot generally be used when people are in the tower to ensure a means of exit. In windy conditions the door often blows open making the stairway less secure and open for intrusion and vandalism.

Reinstatement of the mortice lock or some other form of latch would improve security and weatherproofing of the stairway.

Ringers - Our service band comprises a group of 13 regular ringers, 5 of whom live outside Ross town (1 in Peterstow, 1 in Much Marcle, 1 in Bridstow and 2 in Littledean), plus itinerant support from 4 ringers from Bridstow, Monmouth and Huntley.

On Tuesday practice nights we attract regular support from ringers from other towers in South Herefordshire and the Forest of Dean, plus occasional visitors from further afield.

Changes - We gained 2 experienced ringers when Liz Walker and Edward Barnard moved to Ross.

Officers - Officers of the St Mary's Ross-on-Wye Bell ringers band are currently as follows:

- Tower Captain Roman Sadowski
- Secretary Pauline Leggate
- Treasurer Frances Taylor
- Safeguarding representative Karen Howard

Recruitment - We welcome and encourage all new recruits (from 9 to 90).

Following a visit by the local Guides and an 'open tower' event in summer 2017 we gained 3 additional recruits.

All members of the public, and especially the P.C.C., are very welcome to visit the tower to see what we do!

Safeguarding - No changes.

Achievements and Events - We rang for all major Church events and Sunday service throughout the year.

We hosted various visiting groups of ringers and other events during the year (details on request)

Roman Sadowski

Bereavement Support Group

The group is made up of people who are willing to support the bereaved in any way they can. Most have experienced bereavement themselves and while every individual's situation is different, it can be helpful to have some understanding of how others might be feeling.

Bereavement affects people in so many different ways - for some the loneliness experienced as a result of the death of a loved one can be hard to cope with. Sometimes it is helpful to find a place to go where there is a warm welcome and someone to talk to who has some understanding of the situation the bereaved persons may find themselves in – a place where no one minds tears or the need to repeat the same story again and again, or when no one minds if someone prefers to just be quiet drinking a cup of coffee or tea. The Bereavement Support Group with help from Ross Mothers' Union hope that the Bereavement Cafe in St Mary's Hall on the fourth Wednesday of every month goes some way to addressing this need. Some people just come once or twice while for others the cafe becomes a regular event and new friendships develop.

Freda Davies

Bible-A-Month Club

This Bible Society initiative encourages monthly donations of a minimum of £5 to provide Bibles to individuals and groups throughout the world who cannot otherwise afford one. The Monday Bible Study groups have been continuing to support this scheme for over three years now and throughout 2018 have paid for 36 Bibles. If anyone would like to add to this work, please contact Janet Nelson.

Janet Nelson

Bible Study Groups

The Bible Study Groups continue to grow with Paul and Margaret Mason's and Colin and Pauline Leggate's groups both at full capacity. These two groups meet fortnightly on a Monday evening and another group meet at Chris and Sarah Blanchard's home in Walford on a Tuesday evening.

For the duration of Advent and Lent we meet weekly and all study the same thing.

Last Advent we studied a four-week course based on the carol 'Angels from the Realms of Glory' and this Lent we are doing a Hereford Diocesan Course from 2018 called 'Future Calling' which is designed to challenge us on the threat to our environment and global warming. As well as seeing what the bible says about these things it is a discussion based course with challenges for us to undertake each week to help improve our environment. Other studies we have done this year have been on Isaiah, some of the minor prophets, Moses, Elijah, and some followers of Jesus – the disciples, Mary, Martha and Mary Magdalen.

Chris and Sarah's group studied a course called 'The Long Road to Heaven' based on the film 'The Way'; which led to them doing the 'Pilgrimage to Patricio' in Wales.

We also had a lovely social evening in July where we all met at Walford Vicarage at the kind invitation of Chris & Sarah and enjoyed a delicious bring- and-share supper and several fun outdoor games.

If anyone would be interested in joining another group please have a word with Chris, who is our co-ordinator. We enjoy good fellowship and we learn from one another; it would be good if we could start another group as the more we study the bible the more we learn of God's will for us.

Pauline Leggate

Brampton Abbotts CE Primary School

Some random statistics:

- Approximately 1 million children attend Church of England schools.
- About 15 million people alive today went to a C of E school.
- A quarter of all primary schools in England are C of E schools.
- There are 74 C of E Primary schools in the Diocese of Hereford and 35 of the 79 Primary schools in Herefordshire are C of E schools.
- Locally around 750 children with HR9 postcodes attend C of E Schools equivalent to about 45% of the total Primary School aged population.

Church schools are encouraged “to maintain and develop an active and affirming relationship with a parish church”. Most church Primary schools are situated not too many yards from the parish church, but this is not the case with Brampton Abbotts and this presents us with a challenge, especially when none of the staff have a connection with St Mary’s.

Simon Tarlton and Christine Cattanach now take it in turns to lead the Thursday morning acts of worship and, once a month, an ‘Open the Book’ team visits school, this has been well received by both staff and children. Christine has also started a ‘Sox-Puppets’ after-school club with Year 5/6 children aimed at enabling them to lead acts of worship using the puppets to create both dance and drama.

As has been the practice for a number of years, some of our church members are regularly going in to school as volunteers to listen to children read or assist in some other way. I think that it’s probably true to say that hardly a day will go by without someone from St Mary’s being in school for a time. Unfortunately, it is very rare that anyone from the school staff, parents or children come to the monthly Café church which continues to be supported by an enthusiastic group of church members from Brampton Abbotts and St Mary’s.

With thanks to the PCC we have continued the practice of presenting (The Lion) Children’s Bible to each child when they enter Key Stage 2. They are then 7 years old and have acquired reading skills that are at a very exploratory stage. It is to be hoped that they will enjoy reading “the world’s greatest story retold for every child” and sharing it with other family members.

Marvin Bamforth and Sarah Jones retired as Foundation Governors when they moved away, and we welcomed Simon Tarlton and Roger Hanson in their places. The others who served as Foundation Governors in 2018 were Peter Jenkins, Paul Mason and Keith Richards. The continued good health of the school is due in no small part to the work of the Governing Body.

Brampton Abbotts has been oversubscribed in each of the last three years and continues to perform well in the various national tests and on the games field. In 2018 the school was one of only six schools in Herefordshire to achieve at least a 90% ‘pass rate’ in the English, Maths and Writing Key Stage 2 SATs tests. (Four of those six schools were church schools.) The federation with Bridstow School is now in its third year and staff and children increasingly benefit from the two schools working together.

Ofsted came visiting in 2018, 5 years after its last visit, and once again judged the school to be “Good”. Part of the Ofsted report read as follows: “The school has a strong Christian ethos, underpinned by Christian values. Leaders ensure that these values are promoted in daily worship and in classrooms. Pupils

are able to discuss their feelings and behaviour in relation to those values. As a result, pupils thrive in a safe environment that supports them well, both academically and pastorally.”

Thank you one and all for the many and varied bits of help from church members and especially for your prayers for our own church school. More information about the school can be found on the display boards in church (first window ledge on North wall) and on the school’s website www.bramptonabbotts.org.

Paul Mason

Cana Ministry

The Cana Ministry was developed to form a link with couples choosing to marry in our churches and the church community. The role is one of a befriender who is available if required, to welcome the couple if for example, they want to come to services before their wedding but need some help to find their way through the liturgy. Thanks to the generosity of The Mothers’ Union each couple is given a small gift on their Wedding Day from the congregation – this is presented by the befriender during the service. Recognising that marriage is not just about the ‘Big Day’, it is hoped that contact can be maintained with the couple after the ceremony so that they feel part of the church family.

Freda Davies

Catering team report

The catering team have had another busy year organising food for the Epiphany celebration, the Open weekend, Lent Lunches, the Bishop’s visit for Christine’s commissioning, refreshments for the Hereford Police choir, canapés for the Promises Auction, Summer Sunday Teas, Harvest supper and the Job Club Christmas, Easter and Summer lunches, all of which raised over £1300 for St Mary’s and other charities. All these occasions were part of the hospitality of St Mary’s. Thank you to everyone who provided food and spent time working hard in the kitchen.

Margaret Mason

Christian Aid

The annual house to house collection for Christian Aid, organised by representatives from all the churches in Ross & District, took place from May 13th – 19th. The emphasis of the week was on the needs of people in Haiti needing to build secure homes after yet another hurricane. A total of £6732.08 was raised.

The efforts of seventeen collectors from St Mary’s contributed £1252.66 towards the total amount. This was achieved by distributing envelopes through letter boxes and returning a few days later to collect the, hopefully, filled envelopes. On many occasions this entailed returning a second time. 265 filled envelopes were returned of which 48 were gift aided. In some instances, where householders were away, envelopes were left with an address in town to which they could be taken. A further 5 church members worked on the counting and banking of the money.

An exhibition in posters and words of people who had benefitted from Christian Aid was held in October. Representatives from St Mary’s were active in stewarding at this event.

Jean Harrison

Commercial and Industrial Chaplaincy

Because the church believes that God should not be kept in a box only to be opened on a Sunday and that the church should rely on the strength of Jesus alone, any chaplaincy visit begins with a knock and we “ask” if we may come in. Thus our work is done from the true position of the church, that of weakness. The chaplaincy has no rights of entry, no position of authority, no letters of introduction from the government, no mandate from county or town council, just faith that God is already there.

We visit the skilful who have good business plans, and we visit the incompetent who have poor business plans. For our community needs all those people who take on the responsibility of running a business. Our families need someone to employ them. Our community needs a steady supply of goods and services. Without our business people Ross will die.

What happens when we visit? At the time it seems a lot of indifference, polite and not so polite refusal yet many times we have heard later that the visit was appreciated. But there are also tears of joy that the encouragement has been the first nice thing anyone has said to them all day. And there are tears of pain that the visit has stirred up half forgotten emotions. And there is peace when they realise they are able to talk confidentially.

In this report you will see that always the plural “we” has been used, because although it is physically only me, spiritually it is the church doing the visiting.

So I leave you with a question and a task. The question: Is the chaplaincy a job for the baptised or the ordained? The task: Look up 1 Peter 2.9

If it rings a bell with you then come and join me.

Colin Leggate

Church Watch, Welcome and Care

Firstly I would like to say a big 'Thank-you' to the members of our church and friends of St Mary's who have given their time and knowledge to visitors to St Mary's, answering their questions and dispensing facts about The Church, The Re-ordering and details on the town of Ross. Plus, there is still a lot to tell people about our continuing refurbishing plans over the next 12 months to our church. With a bit of luck the Church will all be straight by Easter, when we can get into our normal routine

Unfortunately our numbers have now depleted down to ten, that's including Bet and myself, so understandably the church is left unattended a lot more frequently. I do hope that we will be able to recruit a few more helpers during the next few months.

I was wondering if there is anybody else who would be willing to take this job on during the next year as this is going to be our last report.

Clive and Betty Beddows

Community Food Larder (CTRD)

Firstly our very grateful thanks to St Mary's Church who have completely refurbished our new Larder premises. Our new home is welcoming, fit for purpose and, most importantly, no stairs! We are very thankful to all involved in this project, most especially to Bryan Jones.

The Larder has continued to meet a genuine need amongst local people, our numbers remain fairly constant, we had been geared up for a rise in use due to the introduction of Universal Credit but, thankfully, apart from one or two specific issues, we have not noticed a serious upturn in demand.

We continue to be very blessed with a constant stream of donations, as reported in previous years we have never run out of food; we are also generously supported by financial gifts. We have good relationships with (most of) the supermarkets in town where we have collecting points as well as support from schools, Churches, local organisations and businesses as well as many individuals.

We work closely with the Job Club and provide refreshments at Tea and Toast which is now becoming something of a community cafe. We have recently arranged to issue vouchers from the Hall on a Tuesday morning which we hope will enable more people to join in the fellowship that is provided. We also have close links with CAP (Christians Against Poverty) and are planning to offer a Life Skills course soon to help with budgeting, cookery etc.

We are also well blessed in the number of volunteers that help with this vital social outreach, friendships are made between the volunteers from the different Churches in the town and those of no faith. It is a privilege to be part of this community action. Our very sincere thanks to all at St Mary's for the practical and prayerful support we receive.

Lindsay Cole

Contemplative Prayer Group

The Contemplative Prayer Group aims to meet on the third Wednesday of each month for half an hour or so when in the stillness, we try to focus our minds on God usually aided by a sentence from scripture towards the end of each session some time is spent in intercessory prayer. During the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent we meet every Wednesday in church as part of the Seasonal Meditation Group.

Contemplative Prayer is not easy and takes practice, the aim is to empty the mind and try to achieve an inner silence thereby enabling all our being to focus on God. While this form of prayer is not for everyone, we would welcome anyone who might like to try this for themselves. Do ask me for more information.

Freda Davies.

Flicks in the Sticks

We had another good year making over £700 for the Church Hall and providing 14 films of great interest over the year. Thanks to Terry Davies for all his work in banking the finances in the past, and to the Team Administrator, Nick, for taking up the mantle.

My thanks also go, yet again, to all the volunteers who make it possible, and more volunteers are welcome!

William Hazelton

Flower Rota

As always I should like to thank those who provide and arrange the flowers which week by week enhance the beauty of our church. Sadly each year there are fewer volunteers so we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join us. We are also pleased to hear from anyone who would like to donate money towards flowers perhaps to mark some special occasion or in memory of a loved one - one of the group will then arrange the flowers on your behalf.

Lindsay Ray ensures that the church is suitably decorated for festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest and is grateful to all who spend many hours arranging the flowers for these events. Generous donations from congregation members for Easter Lilies and Christmas flowers are much appreciated.

Celia Glover continues to be our link for those who marry at St Mary's sometimes liaising with Florists or with the bride herself and ensuring that wherever possible, special requests for colours etc are catered for.

Freda Davies

Friends of St Mary's Church

It's been a busy year for the Friends of St Mary's Church. Our new chair, John Taylor, took over in January and while on the subject of personnel, we were sorry to say good-bye to Sue Edwards as secretary and committee member in September, at which point Mark Sanderson returned to the Friends as secretary. The Friends is in excellent shape with, for the first time, a large proportion of its membership being represented by people who have little or no other involvement with the work of the church. Events this year have been:

- A contribution to St Mary's Open Weekend in February
- Bridge afternoon in March
- Hereford Police Choir Concert, AGM and talk by Heather Hurley in April
- An organ recital by Laurence John in August
- Chris Bartrum began a sponsored walk (to run in stages) in September

At the end of the year The Friends contributed a further £30,000 to the PCC to cover the costs of the floor replacements throughout the building in phases one and two of the reordering work. A further £5317 was given to pay for the supplementary work to the internal lighting.

Work has also been ongoing throughout the year on planning for the 2019 Open Gardens and, in partnership with the Town Council, looking into options for the replacement of the external floodlighting.

Mark Sanderson

Home Communion and Visiting

Twelve members of the congregation as well as Simon Tarlton and Chris Blanchard take Home Communion to six residential or sheltered accommodation homes although Rosedale at present chooses not to have us visit.

Twelve individuals receive us for Communion in their own homes. The numbers vary from time to time according to their health situations but all welcome us when they see us.

Ross Court has Evensong with hymns taken by Simon (or Derek) on a bi-monthly basis and Anne Morris (plus either Judith Hazelton or Derek) visit West Bank Nursing Home which is our local home specialising in care for residents with Dementia. Those we visit in the Homes total about 45.

Some members of the congregation are unable to come to church for services have been asked if they would like us to visit but for various reasons some decline.

Celia Glover (Rota Organiser)

Hospital Chaplaincy

We continue to provide chaplaincy for the Community Hospital. The ward visitors for Peregrine and Merlin (Celia Glover and Jean Spencer) offer continuing weekly support especially for longer term patients and those from a distance with few visitors. They also are a link with the staff and the three ministerial chaplains who also visit each week on their monthly rota with an opportunity for patients to take communion then. Additional communions have been arranged on Sundays under special circumstances. The Rector responded to all emergency visit requests when needed.

Derek Glover

Job Club

Job Club (or St Mary's Community Café as it is increasingly being referred to as) continued through 2018, running alongside the Larder provision on a Tuesday morning. It has been a growing and fruitful initiative. Helped by a team of willing and wonderful volunteers the space is an opportunity to connect with many people who, in some circumstances, exist at the margins of our society. We offer help, encouragement and support in a multitude of ways ranging from simple befriending, practical help with job searches, benefit and housing issues and advocacy. Two of the regular visitors have started to attend church services at St Mary's and we have been seeing a larger contingent join us at Christmas and Easter.

We have introduced four annual lunches for our regulars, at Christmas, Easter, summer and Harvest, which are always very well received and provide another useful opportunity to engage, build trust and relationships that would otherwise be lacking. We have had many positive experiences during the year as we have helped people find work and connect with the benefits and support to which they are entitled. We have also supported a number of people into drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Job Club is one of the most fruitful and powerful ministries with which I have been involved. As well as giving of our time and concern we receive richly from those we help. My huge thanks go to all of the team who help out, with special thanks to Dr Derek Glover and Geoff Tipton for their tireless support.

Simon Tarlton

Local Ministry Development Group (Benefice)

No report

Mothers' Union

St Mary's branch of Mothers Union continues to meet on a monthly basis. Our membership has fluctuated over the year, but currently stands at 26. Some of these members are unable to attend meetings but still support our work through prayer and financial contributions.

Our speakers through the year have illustrated a wide range of human experience, from the stresses and strains on the family of premature birth, through the work of a magistrate, to being involved in the plight of men using the seamen's mission services. Reports of these meetings are submitted to the local paper in order to raise our profile in the town.

As a group we continue to provide toiletries for people admitted to hospital as emergencies, to provide hospitality for the Bereavement Cafe, and commemorative gifts for marriage and baptism; also the Mothering Sunday Posies.

This year we had great pleasure in celebrating the 100th birthday of Rhona Burston who has been an active member since 1964, serving in several capacities.

Mothers Union being a worldwide organisation does not confine itself to local needs but attempts to influence the wider issues of abuse, literacy and poverty. We would welcome your prayerful support.

Margaret Willis

Music

The choir continues to sing every Sunday morning for the 9.30 Sung Eucharist and a full Choral Evensong on the second and fourth Sunday of each month, rehearsals take place on Fridays at 7.00.

A highlight for some members of the choir was our weekend in St Davids where the choir sang 4 services over the course of a weekend in August (the only wet weekend of the summer – it seemed!) It was great to be joined by Janet and Nick who completed their walk from Ross to St Davids on Saturday afternoon, the proceeds of which have been given to the chorister scholarship fund. We are all deeply grateful to them for this tremendous effort.

In closing I'd like to thank all members of the choir for their dedication. I'd particularly like to thank my colleague Adrian Taylor, our organist, for his wonderful accompaniments, great sense of humour and his willingness to be so adaptable and accommodating. It's great to be working with such a professional. My thanks also go to David Lane for playing for funerals in the week; and to Rachel Lewis for her continuing willingness to direct the choir when necessary.

Mark Sanderson

Neighbourhood Team

No Report

Piecemakers

Costumes made by members of the group were worn by children from local primary schools in films made by local primary schools for the town's commemorations for John Kyrle ('Happy Birthday Mr Kyrle') in the summer of 2017 (www.mrkyrle.wordpress.com). Also in January 2019 in the four films supporting the Lost Fountain Project launched in March www.museumwithoutwalls.uk

Currently, designs are being drawn for a set of new pulpit falls for St. Mary's. Detailed plans will soon be submitted for approval.

The group meets once each month in the church hall and is open to anyone interested in all things hand/needle craft.

Margaret Willis

Play and Praise

'Play and Praise Sessions' have taken place on a Saturday morning in March and June in 2018. Each session consists of a period of 'play' with craft activities and toys situated around the Church with refreshments available and then a gathering together for 'Praise' -a story, singing and some prayers.

During the first session of the Year our activities were based around the story of Zaccheus, with the children acting out the story around the Church and making posies for their Mums for Mothering Sunday the following day.

In June the session focussed on the Story of the Lost Sheep with the children going on a hunt for small sheep hidden around the Church and joining in the story .

During 2017 and 2018, the numbers attending the sessions had been dwindling with often only one or two children and their parents or carers. It was decided therefore that we would take a break and not have a session in November, giving us time to reflect and review the timing, format and the ways we promote these activities.

I would like to thank the team of people who over the years have planned and helped with such enthusiasm at the sessions.

Anne Morris

Prayers for St Mary's

In spite of the re-ordering works, prayers have continued to be said monthly in church for the fulfilment of a vision received over 10 years ago of a full church for every main service. We meet at 12 noon on the first Monday of every month, and would be glad of more members of the congregation to join us on a regular or ad hoc basis.

Janet and Nick Nelson

Prayer Chain

From time to time we are asked to pray for people who would prefer their request not to be made public. These requests are passed on to members of the Prayer Chain to be included in their private prayer. As co-ordinator of the Prayer Chain I would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in being part of this and am always happy to pass on requests for prayer ensuring requests are dealt with sensitively and maintaining confidentiality.

Terry Davies

Residential Homes

We continue to support these as and when they request services. There are two types of contact – the care homes for which we offer chaplaincy and home communions – Ross Court, Westbank and Rosedale (until November 2018), and the residential complexes – Fonteyne Court, Wallace Hall Court, Bernard Hackett Housing and Woodside for whom we make provision as agreed with the residents. Christmas services were held for Westbank and Ross Court. During the year we have made some headway with deepening our understanding of the needs of dementia sufferers and Anne Morris and Judith Hazelton have a monthly programme of individual and group contacts

Derek Glover

Safeguarding

No report -

St Mary's Hall

Firstly, grateful thanks are due to Terry Davies for many years' service on the committee also Keith Richards, both have stepped down.

The main achievement of the year has been to move the Community Larder from the first floor to the basement. After a mammoth clearing session, this has been brought about by the hard work of Bryan and Sue Jones and others, and is being greatly appreciated by staff, clients and donors alike, who no longer have to negotiate the treacherous staircase.

The finances are now under the umbrella of the PCC; we have removed the difficult "Trust" name.

New terms and conditions of hire have been agreed. These include a clause concerning removal of rubbish by the user.

Regular income is now received from Addaction and "Decks and Dice." The main room is increasingly used for church related activities.

Church Hall Treasurers Report - The Church House Trust accounts are incorporated in the PCC financial reports.

Margaret Willis

Sidespersons

2018 proved to be quite a challenging year. Phase I of the re-ordering of the church, although completed early in the year, brought with it changes to routine, which together with a range of special or additional services kept our sidespersons on their toes.

The group has been depleted by the loss of several members through increasing age and ill health, in particular, three from the team covering the 8 o'clock services, although recently two more volunteers have been co-opted. We were particularly stretched over the summer months due to several members of the group having prolonged convalescence coinciding with others being on holiday.

Thanks to all who have taken part in this ministry, especially for Baptism services; there is always room for additional volunteers for this not difficult but much appreciated role in our worship.

Janet Nelson

Current Sidespersons List:

Mrs Valerie Allen	Mr Gerald Atree	Mr John Davies	Mrs Norma Davies
Mrs Marian Francis	Mr Gerald Francis	Mrs Celia Glover	Mrs Sylvia Greer
Mr Julian Hallett	Mrs Pam Harding	Mr Terry Harding	Mrs Jean Harrison
Mrs Judith Hazelton	Mr William Hazelton	Mrs Susan Jenkins	Mr Peter Jenkins
Mr Graham John	Mrs Sharn John	Mr Bryan Jones	Mrs Judith Landau
Mr Peter Landau	Mrs Janet Nelson	Mr Nick Nelson	Mrs Jean Parkin
Mrs Anne Remington	Mrs Denise Robertson	Mrs Marilyn Reynolds	Mr Peter Reynolds
Mrs Susan Ryan	Mr Bob Ryan	Mrs Jean Spencer	Mr John Spencer

Sunday Kids

Sunday Kids meet during the 9.30am service at St Mary's on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month. We moved into our purpose built room at the back of the church at the beginning of 2018. Leaders, parents and children are really enjoying the new, warm, carpeted environment where we can follow our own service but still feel part of the main church service. This year we have eaten pancakes and talked about Lent, made a donkey to lead the Palm Sunday procession, turned water into wine (with the help of a magic trick) and made our own little Nativity sets. The children really love showing the congregation what they have been doing as they are always very pleased with their craft work. Anne and I would very much like to be able to have Sunday Kids running on the 2nd Sunday of the month. If anyone would be able to assist us with this, please let us know. It really is great fun and a very important part of our ministry to children.

Sharn John

Supper Club

We have had an excellent season with the supperers enjoying 12 very thought provoking talks and some wonderful food. For many of the talks women were invited and this would seem to be the trend for 2019. Our thanks go to all our volunteer speakers and to the Castle Lodge Hotel for making this aspect of outreach possible.

William Hazelton

Appendix – Electoral Roll rubric

1. All persons whose names are entered upon the Church Electoral Roll of the parish (and such persons only) are entitled to vote at the election of parochial representatives of the laity.
2. Subject to the provisions of rule 14(3)(c), a person is qualified to be elected a parochial representative of the laity if -
 - (a) his/her name is entered on the church electoral roll of the parish and, unless he/she is under the age of eighteen years at the date of the election, has been so entered for at least the preceding period of six months;
 - (b) he/she is an actual communicant which means that he/she has received Communion according to the use of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England at least three times during the twelve months preceding the date of the election; and
 - (c) he/she is of sixteen years or upwards;
 - (d) he/she is not disqualified as referred to in paragraph 3 of these Notes.
3. (a) A person shall be disqualified from being nominated, chosen or elected from serving as a churchwarden, a member of a parochial church council, a district church council or any synod under these rules if he/she is disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993 and the disqualification is not for the time being subject to a general waiver by the Charity Commissioners under subsection (4) of that section or to a waiver by them under that subsection in respect of all ecclesiastical charities established for purposes relating to the parish concerned. In this paragraph "ecclesiastical charity" has the same meaning as that assigned to that expression in the Local Government Act 1894;
 - (b) A person shall also be disqualified from being nominated, chosen or elected from serving as a churchwarden or member of a parochial church council if he/she has been so disqualified from holding office under rule 7(3) of [the Incumbent (vacation of Benefice) Measure 1997].
4. Any person whose name is on the electoral roll may be appointed as a sidesperson.

Revd Simon Tarlton