



Parish of St Mary the Virgin Annual Report 2017



Introduction by Christoph Lindner, Rector

Dear Church Member,



2017 was my first full year as Rector of the Parish of Denham. Edda and I have settled into the church family and local community very well and are grateful to be serving God with you here in Denham. There were many wonderful highlights and I hope that the photos in this report will remind us of some of them. There were also difficult times and sadnesses, especially when we had to say good-bye to much-loved members of our church family. I often wonder how people deal with hardship, sickness and bereavement without the eternal hope we have in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us therefore not get so settled and comfortable that we lose sight of the need to share the love of God with those who do not (yet) know His love in their lives. To that end we went through a detailed process of shaping our vision as a church. Most of us, when we saw the three symbols on the front cover, probably thought immediately: *We pray, we welcome, we share like Jesus.*

This booklet will help us to look back on 2017 and to thank God for the many ways in which he has blessed this church. It is my prayer that it will also encourage us to offer ourselves afresh to Jesus, who is building his church. Having a vision statement is wonderfully helpful to keep us on track. But it needs each one of us to be active in making it a reality – even if you think your contribution is only small.

Please try to join us on Sunday 15th April for our morning service at 10.30am and then our Annual Parochial Church Meeting at 11.45am, straight after the service. The service and the APCM will be an opportunity to come together and to look ahead at the coming year. We will also elect churchwardens, PCC members and Deanery Synod representatives.

On Sunday, 8th April we will begin a new sermon series entitled *Nine-A-Day: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit*. After all, we are called to pray, welcome and share *like Jesus!*

Please take some time to read this report and use it as fuel for your prayers.

Yours in Christ,



**Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham
Annual Meeting of Parishioners and
Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 15th April 2018, 11.45am
St Mary's Church, Denham**

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

2. Vote of thanks to the Churchwardens for the previous year
3. Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

4. Number of parishioners present and apologies for absence
5. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 23rd April, 2017
6. Matters arising

Reports

7. Presentation of the copy of the church electoral roll
8. Annual Report for 2017
9. Financial Report
10. Church Wardens' Report
11. Deanery Synod Report

Elections

12. Election of Deanery Synod Members
13. Election of members for the PCC
14. Appointment of sidesmen/women
15. Appointment of Auditor
16. A.O.B
17. 2018 and beyond
18. Closing Prayer

APCM (provisional date): Sunday 7th or 14th April 2019 TBC, 11.45am, St Mary's

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners & Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 23rd April 2017, 11.45am
St Mary's Church, Denham

The Rector, Christoph Lindner, was in the chair.

1. Opening Prayer

The Rector opened the meeting with a prayer

2. Welcome and Introduction

The Rector welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised them that the meeting would commence with the Annual Meeting of Parishioners followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. He highlighted one correction on the agenda: Item 18 should read "2017 and beyond".

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

3. Vote of thanks to the Churchwardens for the previous year

Christoph thanked Carlene and Hilary for their tireless work and commitment to the church's ministry. The churchwarden is the lead lay person of the local church, an officer of the bishop and a crucial link between the church and the Bishop. Hilary has brought years of experience and of serving the church. Carlene has taken on the role with vigour and has enriched us with the gifts that God has given her. Christoph thanked them both and also for their support of himself and Edda.

4. Election of Churchwardens

Hilary Richins has agreed to stand again as church warden for another year. Clive Ashcroft nominated and Joan Bell seconded. She was unanimously re-elected on a show of hands.

Carlene Litchmore has also agreed to stand again as church warden for another year.

Carole Wadlow nominated and Michael Carmody seconded. She was unanimously re-elected on a show of hands.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

5. Number of parishioners present and apologies for absence

55 parishioners signed in as being present. Apologies for absence were received from Anne Thomas, Sue Fletcher, Beverley Miller, Debbie Miller, Vicky Miller, Pam Dymott, Julian Williams, Monique Lyle and Joyce Tearall.

The Rector reminded those present who were not on the electoral roll that they did not have the right to vote.

6. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 17th April, 2016

Item 5: Mike Stewart was appointed auditor. This should have come under the heading of *matters arising*.

Robin Doran and Mike Dymott approved the minutes. A show of hands unanimously approved the minutes. The minutes were then duly agreed and signed.

7. Matters arising

No matters arising.

REPORTS

8. Presentation of the copy of the church electoral roll.

Numbers have risen from 110 to 120. The Rector welcomed all new members. Maurice Litchmore was thanked by the Rector for his diligence. The Rector highlighted that eleven names have been removed which are being missed by this church family, some have moved away and some have passed away. The Rector encouraged those who are not on the electoral roll to consider doing so.

9. Annual Report for 2016 (available in advance)

The Rector thanked Louise Hardy for all of her hard work in the office. The Rector advised that we need to find the right pace for change and listen to God's Spirit to lead us in this and in setting priorities among the many new ideas and needs – there will always be more than we have capacity for.

One priority is to have a united church family. The Rector thanked the long standing members for welcoming new members into the church and new members for leaving behind their church family and investing time in this church. The Rector also thanked the volunteers in children's, youth and family ministry, who contribute to this important area in church.

Another priority is to share the good news and share it with the local community in word and action.

10. Financial Report

Income & Expenditure

The audited accounts for 2016 show that we had an excess of income over expenditure of £4701 compared with just £36 in 2015 & a budget DEFICIT for 2016 of £17425. The Rector gave thanks to God that we have raised more revenue this year to enable us to upgrade some of our facilities. We need to create more space in the vestry for Sunday club (new shed, new chairs) and need to improve facilities at St Mark's. Money has been set aside for this.

This remarkable improvement in our fortunes stems from the fact that Gift Aided donations in 2016 exceeded 2015 by some £12000 which more than made up for the expected reduction caused by the death of a previously generous donor & a 'one off' donation in 2015 which was not repeated in 2016.

Donations in 2016 included a generous £2000 made to compensate for the absence of the annual Patronal Festival fair.

The PCC decided to make a special donation of £700 towards the setting up of a fresh expression of church in Milton Keynes without any regular income of its own.

The Parish share of £64,600 has been paid for the year, in time for us to benefit from any rebate that might be voted by the Deanery for early/full settlement.

The Fabric Fund ('designated' for maintenance of the church, vestry & church yard and church houses) stands at £155,000. The most significant item of expenditure taken from the Fund in 2016 was £10,193 for the installation of an en-suite bathroom at St Mark's House.

In 2016 we donated some £ 10,711 to charities, see notes 9 & 10 for the details.

The Church Growth Fund, set up with a donation of £38,100, now stands at £37,500.

St Francis House: Our tenants for approaching 3 years continued to enjoy living in the House. Rent received net of minor maintenance of the property & Agents fees amounted to £14100 which was transferred into the Fabric Fund.

St Mark's House became available during 2016 when our former tenants moved on. After some redecoration, minor maintenance & the installation on an en-suite bathroom the house was sympathetically split into two 'flatlets'. Francis & Annabel Moloney moved into one of these. The other was still in the final stages of preparation at the year end.

Our Balance Sheet shows that surplus funds continue to be invested in CofE short term deposits.

Our Auditor, Mike Stewart FCA, carried out the Audit of our accounts and found them to be in good order. The Accounts, (on file) bear his signature.

Clarification for Note 9 (Donations which we gave to charities outside of the parish): The contingency of £290, was added to the Christian Aid East Africa appeal.

The Rector thanked Gerald Miller for his commitment and constructive approach and how he helps the church to thrive. He also thanked those who have helped to set up the Church Growth Fund and St James for their very generous donation. The Church Growth Fund has been set aside for new and growing ministries and mission initiatives. Planned Christian Giving is the best way to ensure a healthy development of our funding; the Rector encouraged people to think about giving regularly.

Michael Carmody proposed the accounts, Pam Montgomery seconded. They were unanimously adopted with a show of hands.

11. Churchwardens' Report

2016 has been a mixed year for the churchwardens. In January we said farewell to Rev. Beverley Pinnell who led us through the interregnum, then followed 8 weeks of visiting clergy and lay members of our church leading our services, until on Friday 4th March the Bishop of Buckingham installed Rev. Christoph Lindner as our new Rector of Denham. Edda, his wife was also welcomed and approximately 28 members from St. James Church, Gerrards Cross. Edda and her team of helpers were to form a new children's ministry in our church.

At the APCM in April, Barbara Randall stood down as Churchwarden after 16 years and Carlene Litchmore was elected and warmly welcomed. Barbara's health deteriorated and in June she lost her three-year-long battle with her lung disease. She had been a member of our church for over 40 years.

The churchwardens can confirm that the care and maintenance of the church has been maintained throughout the year. Some of the church furniture has been moved to make a clearer lobby entrance by the west door. The linens, church registers and artefacts are in good order. They thanked the cleaners and flower arrangers for their continued care of the upkeep of our parish churches, and the sidespersons / welcome team who greet and serve the congregation.

The churchwardens thanked Christoph and Edda for the spiritual uplift they have brought to our church and their support and guidance throughout 2016.

12. Deanery Synod Report

There were four meetings of the Synod during the past year. The first held at St Mary's Amersham had as its main item of business consideration of a Deanery Mission Action Plan. The Synod was broken up into discussion groups to consider topics relations to Education and Discipleship, Children

and Families, and Mission and Evangelism and to make recommendations to the standing committee for further formalisation.

The second at Chalfont St Peter was primarily a social event for bonding, though dealing briefly with finance and additional people to co-ordinate the preparation of the Deanery MAP.

The third meeting at St Michael's Beaconsfield received a report on the progress of the MAP but the main item was a presentation on behalf of the Children's Society in respect of its work nationally and within the Diocese.

The last meeting at St Michael's Amersham dealt with the Deanery budget and approval of the Deanery accounts and looked forward to the forthcoming Deanery Synod elections. We also had a talk from a young local youth worker who is being sent out to Honduras by the Church Missionary Society to work among street children with local churches. His basic living costs and pension will be dealt with by CMS but Deanery Synod members felt that it would be useful to give him some additional support.

ELECTIONS

13. Election of Deanery Synod Members

Anne Thomas and Michael Carmody have both completed a three year term. Michael Carmody has agreed to stand again which was proposed by Anne Thomas and seconded to Joan Bell. Anne Thomas has decided not to stand again as a Deanery Synod member. Therefore there are two vacancies available, no nominations were received.

MC was duly elected.

14. Election of members for the PCC

Parishes with an electoral roll of 101-200 can have up to 12 elected PCC members.

Gerald Miller, Samantha Carter and Ann Collins have come to the end of their three-year term. Gerald Miller (proposed Victoria Lucas, seconded Samantha Carter) and Samantha Carter (proposed by Clive Ashcroft and seconded by Carole Wadlow) have both agreed to stand again. Ann Collins has decided to stand down from the PCC and the Rector gave her thanks for her commitment and the role she plays in the church.

Philip Hardy will also be standing down from the PCC and the Rector also gave his thanks.

There are currently three positions available on the PCC. The APCM received three nominations: Anne Thomas (proposed by Victoria Lucas and seconded by Pamela Montgomery) Kathy Paine (proposed by Edda Lindner and seconded by Judith Babb) and Tim Sole (proposed by Joan Bell and seconded by Gerald Miller). All were duly elected.

15. Appointment of sidesmen/women

The updated sidesmen/women list was circulated. The Rector advised that you have to be on the electoral roll if you are a sidesman. The following people were removed from the list: Christopher Pearson, Philip Hardy, Irene Bennett, Mike Dymott, Tony Drane and Christine Willson. The following were added:

David & Judith Babb, Brian & Heather O'Regan, Alison & Stephen Barrett (8 am service only). The Rector encouraged those present to consider becoming a sidesman in order to build up the team and welcome those coming into church. The Rector gave thanks to the existing sidesmen.

16. Appointment of Auditor

Mike Stewart is happy to stand again as Auditor. All were in favour by a show of hands. Mike Stewart was duly nominated. The Rector gave his thanks to Mike Stewart.

17. A.O.B

Sharon Williams felt that there are not enough bibles in pews. More bibles which are currently in the cupboard will be put in the pews.

18. 2017 and beyond

St Mary's had its first *Leading Your Church into Growth* (LYCiG) day. 35 people attended at St Mark's hall. The group looked at how to grow the church in numbers, spiritual depth and the way we serve our community. The Rector felt that it was a significant moment in the life of our church – there was a real sense of belonging together just like on Easter Sunday when the church was filled to capacity. He spoke about Up, In and Out. UP – being rooted in the good news of Jesus, IN – building a strong community and OUT – sharing the love of Christ in word and action, both through church activities and in our everyday lives. In 2017 we will create a new Mission Action Plan and we will be asking God to grow the church and to make a bigger difference in our lives and in our communities. The Mission Action Plan will be shaped by us and put into action by us. We will also look to build new teams who have the gifts and vision of growing the church. Later in the year on Sunday 10th September at our Patronal Festival, Bishop Steven Croft will be visiting Denham, he will preach at the Sunday service. This will be followed by a hog roast and later in the afternoon there will be Songs of Praise.

19. Closing Prayer

The Rector closed the meeting after attendants read together the LYCiG prayer.

APCM (provisional date) Sunday 15th April 2018, 11.45am, St Mary's

**Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham
Annual Report and Financial Statements
of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2017**

Incumbent:

Rev'd Christoph Lindner, The Rectory, Ashmead Lane, Denham, UB9 5BB

Bank:

Barclays Bank, 142 High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1JX

Auditor:

Michael Stewart, Oak Cottage, Cheapside Lane, Denham, UB9 5AD

Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham - Annual Report for 2017

Background

The PCC of St Mary's Church, Denham has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Christoph Lindner, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church through regular public worship, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical work.

Membership

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure and in 2011 was registered with the Charity Commission as THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, DENHAM with Charity Registration Number 1144358.

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the annual parochial church meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

Up to the APCM 2017:

Incumbent: Christoph Lindner, the chairman

The churchwardens: Hilary Richins (vice-chair), Carlene Litchmore.

Elected members of the PCC were Ann Collins, Gerald Miller, Samantha Carter, Robert Ash, Sharon Williams, Carole Wadlow, Philip Hardy, Tony Drane, Clive Ashcroft, Joan Bell, Pam Montgomery.

The representatives on the Deanery Synod were Michael Carmody and Anne Thomas. Judith Babb joined the PCC in September as member of the Diocesan Synod. The treasurer was Gerald Miller. The secretary was Victoria Lucas.

From the APCM 2017:

Elected members of the PCC were Robert Ash, Clive Ashcroft, Joan Bell, Samantha Carter, Tony Drane, Gerald Miller, Pam Montgomery, Kathy Paine, Tim Sole, Anne Thomas, Carole Wadlow, Sharon Williams.

The representative on the Deanery Synod was Michael Carmody. Judith Babb joined the PCC in September as member of the Diocesan Synod. When she stepped down from Deanery Synod she was co-opted as Deanery Synod representative. The treasurer was Gerald Miller. The secretary was Victoria Lucas.

Committees

The *Standing Committee* (we call it 'Cockpit Crew') is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. Apart from its statutory members (Rector and Churchwardens) the members are Samantha Carter and Clive Ashcroft.

Our *Fabric Committee* looks after the fabric of St Mary's Church and the churchyard. The members are Robert Ash (chair), Tony Drane, Philip Hardy and Roy Lyle.

During 2017, the *St Mark's Committee* was recognised as a sub-committee of the PCC within the ministry of Denham Parish Church, responsible for the maintenance and running of St Mark's Church Hall. The Committee members are Michael Carmody (chair), Brian O'Regan (treasurer), Joan Bell (secretary), John Breese, Edda Lindner, Anne Thomas. The Rector and churchwardens are ex officio members.

Church Attendance

After revision of the Electoral Roll there were 126 people on the roll. Please refer to the Electoral Roll Report below for details.

The usual Sunday attendance, counted during October, was 106 adults and 14 children. Over 1,000 people came to our carol services in December. In addition we hosted two carol services for the local schools at St Mary's.

Electoral Roll Report

St Mary's Denham Church Electoral Roll has been reviewed and amended as required by the Diocesan Synod and is available for viewing at this meeting. The roll will also be displayed on St Mary's, St Francis and St Mark's Notice Boards.

The review for this year has seen the removal of 6 names and the addition of 12 new entries; this has resulted in an increase of 6 on the 2017 roll. The number of names entered upon the Church Electoral Roll for the parish is one hundred and twenty-six (126).

Parishioners who are listed on the roll are entitled to vote at this meeting. However in order to qualify for nomination to the PCC they must have been registered on the electoral roll for at least six months.

Addresses have been checked and verified by the Churchwardens and are held on the Electoral Roll Database. In accordance with the Data Protection guidelines, addresses of members are not published on copies of the roll that are on display in the Parish Church.

New applications may be submitted after the closure of this meeting for inclusion on the next roll. Application Forms are available from the Electoral Roll Officer or at St Mary's from the display area near the church entrance.

Copies of the Church Electoral Roll Certificate will be displayed for a minimum of fourteen days alongside the roll already on display in the parish churches after this meeting. A further copy will be sent to the Secretary of the Deanery.

Maurice Litchmore, Electoral Roll Officer

PCC REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2017

Aims, Objectives & Activities

Our aims and objectives are summarised by our vision statement, which the PCC adopted in 2017:

We pray like Jesus. Jesus taught his disciples to pray to God as 'Father' and was in constant communication with him. As his followers we want all our life to be grounded in our relationship with him.

We welcome like Jesus. We have experienced God's welcome in Jesus and want to be a welcoming community for everyone.

We share like Jesus. We are called to share life, faith and ministry and to develop a culture of generosity that speaks of our generous God.

The PCC met ten times in 2017. Some of the areas of ministry we focused on over the year were: integrating the running of St Mark's into our overall leadership structure, developing new forms of worship such as Café Church and Messy Church, identifying a second ordained minister for our parish, a pastoral care policy, a new job description for our parish secretary, as well as a number of important fabric and churchyard matters.

Our main focus was the process of *Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG)* and the development of a vision statement and mission action plan. Two LYCiG leadership evenings were held, to which a few leaders were invited who are not members of the PCC.

From January to March we had a vacancy for our parish secretary. We were very grateful to Anne Thomas, Louise Hardy and Edda Lindner for helping in the church office during those months. After interviews for a revised and expanded job description, Victoria Lucas started as parish secretary in April.

From July, we introduced monthly devotions of the *ministry team*, consisting of the Rector and Churchwardens, Louise Hardy, Victoria Lucas, Edda Lindner and Francis Moloney.

From September, the standing committee of our PCC ('cockpit crew') met monthly.

Achievements and Performance

The central theme of 2017 was the development of a vision and mission action plan for our parish. We used the Church of England *Leading Your Church into Growth* programme to structure this process. Leadership meetings alternated with open meetings to which all church members were invited: many attended and were highly engaged. A small working group then took on the various ideas and shaped

them into a draft statement which the PCC refined over several months. The short statement “We pray, welcome, share like Jesus” was introduced in September, followed by a sermon series to deepen our understanding of these themes. It was a special blessing to have the Bishop of Oxford, Steven Croft as our speaker at our Patronal Festival in September. He encouraged us to pursue this vision whole-heartedly and placed it in the context of our diocesan vision to be *contemplative, compassionate and courageous*. In November we presented the full vision and mission plan to our church.

It is an exciting expression of who we are becoming and where God is leading us and it will serve us well in years to come: “A good vision statement acts as a magnet (drawing people together around the agreed vision) and a compass (pointing the direction of travel). A clear vision statement helps a busy or struggling church overcome the conflict of competing agendas – if a proposal won’t help deliver the vision, it is not a priority.” (From the website of our diocese.)

We pray like Jesus

This part of our vision encompasses everything that helps us to deepen our relationship with God – individually and together. Over several Sundays during the first half of 2017 we explored the Lord’s Prayer and our recommended Lent book (*Tim Keller: Prayer*) gave us an opportunity to deepen our understanding and practice of prayer. Before Pentecost we had a series of special evening prayers around the parish. We read the Bible in lifegroups and with the help of Bible reading notes. At our Carol and Christmas services we gave away more than fifty copies of “The Story - Luke and Acts”.

In the second half of the year we introduced a short time of prayer before our 10.30am service. Prayer changes things and it will remain an ongoing challenge for all of us to make it a natural part of our everyday lives.

We welcome like Jesus

We had many opportunities to welcome people – baptisms, weddings, funerals, Easter, Christmas, special services and special occasions such as the May Fayre. Baptisms represented a particularly poignant welcome as we marked the beginning of a child’s Christian journey. We also celebrated two adult baptisms.

As part of our welcome we started new services which aim to connect with people that have no or little previous experience of church; we found that both Café Church and Messy Church had potential in this respect.

Increasingly, people experience our welcome by finding out about us through our website. Just before Advent we were able to launch our much-improved new website. It is our aim to make this a place where people can find everything they might want to know about Denham Parish Church - whether they are members or not.

Another way to welcome and connect with people was Denham Parish News – by giving copies away to newcomers and through its nearly 500 subscribers. In October we thanked Janet Drane for her many years as editor.

Welcome is also about many seemingly small and practical details, such as creating a welcoming environment in our buildings – a small ‘declutter group’ improved our entrance area at St Mary’s. An extended churchyard path makes visiting graves easier and safer. The purchase of new stackable chairs for St Mary’s and St Mark’s created much needed space to welcome more people and help especially our children’s teams to create a welcoming environment.

We share like Jesus

It is our vision to share our faith, our life and ministry and to do this generously. This is expressed in many facets such as our pastoral care (a group from our church took part in a six-part course at the beginning of the year and continues to show God’s love and care to many people), the emergence of lifegroups in which we grow in faith and friendship (in September we launched our first daytime ladies’ lifegroup), or social events where we celebrate the gift of friendship (a summer afternoon tea in the Rectory garden was such an occasion).

In 2016 we decided to make our Patronal Festival on the second Sunday in September a celebration of the life of our church and 2017 was a wonderful expression of that: A celebration service with Bishop Steven, a hog roast lunch and a joyful Songs of Praise event in the afternoon, in which our own choir and the choir of the Most Holy Name Roman Catholic Church shared leading us in worship. The day wasn’t as well supported by our own church family as we would have hoped – the PCC commends this special day to everyone in our church family and would encourage them to make a commitment to it in their diaries.

In 2016, about 25 new members joined the parish church from St James. In 2017 they continued to build friendships and serve God together with longstanding members of our church. This growing unity was underlined by a comment from Bishop Steven at our Patronal Festival: He had learnt about our recent story and said that he wouldn’t have been able to say who was an ‘old hand’ and who was a ‘new member’.

We shared life, faith and ministry with all ages and stages: at our thriving *Little Lions* toddler group, at school assemblies (which we now hold regularly at both local schools), with older children in the newly established monthly *Sunday Club Older*, with a monthly Holy Communion service and special events at Denham Garden Village, or with a monthly service of Holy Communion at White Plains Residential Care Home.

As a church we are not an isolated community but share our life with the wider church of Jesus: in September we hosted our Deanery Synod at St Mark’s; earlier

in the year we welcomed two churchwardens from St James in Gerrards Cross and Fulmer to strengthen our partnership and thank them for their generosity in helping us to set up a Church Growth Fund.

Conclusion

God continued to build a *generous* church in 2017: So many church members contributed of their time, talents and financial resources to enable our mission and ministry to flourish. An expanded job description for our parish secretary was sorely needed and thankfully we found the right person for it in Victoria Lucas. The ministry team, which was leading the day-to-day work of our church in its various aspects (Hilary Richins, Carlene Litchmore, Louise Hardy, Victoria Lucas, Edda Lindner and Francis Moloney) was a vital support for the Rector and our whole church family.

The commitment of many members to regular planned Christian giving meant that we were able to cover all our costs for the year and commit the proceeds of the May Fayre to our fabric fund; this had been our medium term goal but we achieved it much quicker than anticipated.

We thank God for these many expressions of generosity, which enable us to sustain and develop our ministry. They are part of our worship of a generous God.

Please take the time to read the individual reports in this booklet – they are a wonderful expression of how we pray, welcome and share like Jesus!

On behalf of the PCC



Rev'd Christoph Lindner, Rector

Correspondence address for the PCC

St Mary's Church Office

Village Road

Denham

UB9 5BH

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT 2017

The churchwardens can report that the church building and contents are in good order.

Carlene and Hilary attended a conference on churchwardens' responsibility and mission in action, led by Archdeacon Guy Elsmore in February.

In March we celebrated the first anniversary of Christoph's ministry as Rector of our parish.

Our annual inspection by the new Area Dean Martin Williams took place in June. This covers our linens and communion sets, church policies, fire extinguisher and electrical test reports and our new fire exit signs. We passed with flying colours.

During the year we welcomed many visiting clergy and speakers, including, Nick Russell from Church Army, Jonathan Chaffey, RAF Chaplin, Nigel Gordon from Christians Against Poverty and The Bishop of Oxford, Steven Croft, who spoke at our patronal service in September on becoming a more Contemplative, Compassionate and Courageous church. We followed the service with a hog roast in the church grounds and a joint Songs of Praise service with members from the Catholic Church. In October we held a fish and chips harvest supper at St. Mark's.

Sadly this year we lost among others Mary Carmody, Beverley Miller, Wendy Cope Jennings and Freddie Cranmer Brown, all of whom had been faithful servants of our church.

We would like to thank all the sidespersons, readers and intercessors for their continued diligent service. We thank the cleaners of church, vestry and St. Mark's and the small band of flower arrangers and the refreshment team; we cannot do without the loyal service of all of them. Thanks to the choir and bell ringers for their talents in making our services enjoyable.

Finally Carlene and Hilary would like to thank Christoph and the congregation for their support, prayers and help during this year.

(Hilary Richins and Carlene Litchmore)

2017 FINANCIAL REVIEW AND RESULTS

Income & Expenditure

The audited accounts for 2017 show that we had an excess of income over expenditure of £1288 compared with £4702 in 2016. However, our decision to send the Christmas Service offerings to Charity reduced our surplus for the year by £1650.

We were able to make a significant change in our accounting, which due to the remarkable increase in Gift Aided donations & attributable income tax recovered, £31,000 over 2016, allowed us to transfer the whole of the net income from the 2017 May Fayre – some £16527 – into the Fabric Fund.

The notes annexed to the Income & Expenditure account I think are self-explanatory.

The cost of Gas & Electricity ‘appears’ to have gone down by a significant sum. This is because the cost in 2016 was based substantially upon estimates, which in the event were rather pessimistic by about £750. 2017 billings, following a change in our suppliers, were kept up to date, the only element of estimate being for the last 3 weeks of December.

The Fabric Fund (‘designated’ for maintenance of the church, vestry & church yard and church houses) stands at £212965. This is significantly up on 2016 due to the transfer of the 2017 May Fayre profit of £16527, a £10,000 donation, and a £20,000 bequest. The most significant item of expenditure taken from the Fund in 2017 was £10,105 on the churchyard path, fence & gate and £7,606 on new chairs for the vestry & St Marks.

In 2017 we donated some £ 10,511 to charities, see notes 9 & 10 for the details.

The Church Growth Fund, set up with a grant of £38,100, now stands at £33860, some £3366 having been spent during 2017.

Balance Sheet

Our Balance Sheet shows that surplus funds continue to be invested in CofE short term deposits.

Our Auditor, Mike Stewart FCA, carried out the Audit of our accounts and found them to be in good order. The Accounts, (on file) bear his signature.

W G Miller, PCC Treasurer

Extracted from the Annual Report of the PCC for the Year Ended 31st December 2017

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin Denham

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

	Note	General Fund (Unrestricted)		Fabric Fund (Designated)		Church Growth Fund (Designated)		Total Funds	
		2017 £	2016 £	2017 £	2016 £	2017 £	2016 £	2017 £	2016 £
INCOMING RESOURCES									
Weekly collections		4,465	5,087					4,465	5,087
Covenants/Gift Aid		75,773	51,884					75,773	51,884
Tax recovered		19,366	13,469					19,366	13,469
Donations		368	3,368				38,121	368	41,489
Incoming resources from donors		99,972	73,808	-	-	-	38,121	99,972	111,929
Denham & Patronal Festival Fairs			18,231					-	18,231
Vestry Teas&Sunday coffees		1,839	2,914					1,839	2,914
Miscellaneous								-	-
Other voluntary income resources		1,839	21,145	-	-	-	-	1,839	21,145
Wedding & Funeral Fees		17,384	15,756					17,384	15,756
Denham News/Parousia		(301)	42					(301)	42
May Fayre				16,527				16,527	
Misc/Southlands Event (2016)				1,107	762			1,107	762
Donations to Fabric Fund				30,000	15,000			30,000	15,000
St Francis House net rental income				13,955	16,757			13,955	16,757
Income from charitable & ancillary trading		17,083	15,798	61,589	32,519	-	-	78,672	48,317
Income from Investments - interest		1,990	1,841					1,990	1,841
Total Incoming Resources	1	120,884	112,592	61,589	32,519	-	38,121	182,473	183,232
RESOURCES EXPENDED									
Gas & Electricity		2,336	3,623					2,336	3,623
Church Insurance		4,175	3,761					4,175	3,761
Churchyard	2	6,311	5,271					6,311	5,271
St Francis House	3	1,082	1,012					1,082	1,012
St Francis Church		638	636					638	636
St Marks House	4	525	1,233					525	1,233
St Marks Church	5	0	0					0	0
Cleaning		2,631	2,498					2,631	2,498
Secretarial Expenses		10,061	4,530					10,061	4,530
Printing, Post, Books & Stationery	6	3,504	2,621					3,504	2,621
Clergy Administration		1,551	1,777					1,551	1,777
Telephone		1,218	1,070					1,218	1,070
Organist		3,696	3,654					3,696	3,654
Parish Share		67,729	65,851					67,729	65,851
Childrens Ministry		579	436					579	436
Parish Hospitality		1,011	1,639					1,011	1,639
Fabric Expenditure	7			19,226	12,764			19,226	12,764
Church Growth Expenditure						3,366	895	3,366	
Miscellaneous	8	7,059	3,639					7,059	3,639
Donations to Charities	9	5,490	4,639					5,490	4,639
Total Resources Expended		119,596	107,890	19,226	12,764	3,366	895	142,188	120,654
NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		1,288	4,702	42,363	19,755	(3,366)	37,226	40,285	61,683
Balances brought forward at 1st January		40,102	35,400	170,602	150,847	37,226	0	247,930	186,247
BALANCES C/FWD AT 31st DECEMBER		41,390	40,102	212,965	170,602	33,860	37,226	288,215	247,930

Independent Examiners Statement

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

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a) to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act and
 - b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirement of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 have not been met.
- 2) to which in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Michael Stewart FCA

(Original Signed)

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin - Denham

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016		2017	2016
	£	£		£	£
1 Donations Received (Fabric Fund)			9 Donations to Charities		
Donations	30,000	15,000	CMS	500	350
May Fayre	16,527		Christian Aid	500	350
Misc/ Southlands Event (2016)	1,107	762	Church Army	500	350
Rent St Francis House*	13,955	16,757	Children's Society	500	350
*net of minor mtce/replacements	61,589	32,519	Samuel Kpagheri - Togo	415	216
2 Church Yard			Church Urban Fund	180	140
Parish Council Grant	(1,100)	(1,100)	C of E Pensions Board	180	140
Groundsman	5,175	5,093	Church Housing Trust	180	140
Minor repairs,tools & consumables	2,236	1,278	Msalato College (Tanzania)	180	140
	6,311	5,271	Thames Valley Hospice	180	140
Denham Parish News			South Bucks Hospice	180	140
Subscriptions/Adverts	4,023	3,751	Sobell House (Mt Vernon)	180	140
Printing & postage	(4,323)	(3,709)	Red Cross	180	140
	(300)	42	SHOC	175	200
3 St Francis House			Mercy Ships	180	140
Insurance	546	515	Buckingham Clergy Charity	180	140
Boiler service/ Alarm mtce.	536	497	Caring for Ex Offenders	180	140
Miscellaneous	-	-	Mission Aviation Fellowship	180	200
	1,082	1,012	WorkAid (Chesham)	180	140
4 St Marks House			Emmaus UK	180	140
Insurance	1,043	983	Chiltern Food Bank	200	153
Boiler/alarm service	95	-	Wycliffe Bible Translators	180	140
Misc inc minor refurbishments	1,097	250	CMS Missionaries	-	220
Rent rec'd (net agents fees)	(1,710)	-	Misc/Contingency	-	290
	525	1,233		5,490	4,639
5 St Marks Church					
Donation from St Marks	(4,200)	(1,871)			
Light, heat, power, water.	1,262	840			
Cleaning & maintenance	1,865	-			
Insurance	1,073	1,031			
	-	-			
6 Printing, Post, Books & Stationery			10 Charities supported by fund raising initiatives of friends of St Mary's		2017
Photo copier - Rectory/Office	684	648	Weekly Collections		
Books & training aids	1,970	629	Children's Society Christingle		436
Stationery & Postage etc	850	1,344	Br. Legion Remembrance Sunday		362
	3,504	2,621	Bishops Fund		531
7 Fabric Expenditure (Fabric Fund)			SHOC Christmas Appeal		825
Church yard, path, fence & gate	10,105		Tearfund Christmas Appeal		825
Chairs (vestry & St Marks) net	7,606		East Africa appeal		290
Storage shed	1,045		EMBRACE		500
Misc	470		Christian Aid		500
	19,226	12,764			
8 Miscellaneous			Vestry Teas		
Piano & Organ tuning	444	283	Girls Brigade		100
Fire extinguisher mtce	441	434	History Society		88
Keys & locks	566	-	Chalfont Otters		434
Silverware maintenance	516	-	Denham Brownies		130
Website/computer mtce	263	539			5,021
Grundon waste disposal	795	840			
Drain survey	576	-			
Roof Alarm mtce	428	428			
Churchwatch	(223)	(138)			
Vac.clnr,CD,Fridge, ntce bd.	393				
Flowers,Palm crosses,Daffs	996	561			
Misc.& Consum'bles items under £250	1,864	642			
	7,059	3,589			
Hospitality/Rectors Welcome Party*	1,011	1,639			

*2016 Net of Donation from HSBC of £500 thro' Samantha Carter

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin Denham

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2017

	2017 £	2016 £
Current Assets		
Short term deposits	284,500	262,500
Bank Current Account	25,635	10,819
Cash in hand	0	2,015
	<u>310,135</u>	<u>275,334</u>
Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors, accruals & Gift Aid in advance	(21,920)	(27,403)
	<u>£ 288,215</u>	<u>£ 247,931</u>
Funds		
General Fund (unrestricted)	41,390	40,103
Fabric Fund (designated)	212,965	170,601
Church Growth Fund (restricted)	33,860	37,227
	<u>£ 288,215</u>	<u>£ 247,931</u>

**Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 30 January 2018 and signed on their behalf by
Rev. Christoph Lindner (Rector) and Hilary Richens & Carlene Lichmore (Church Wardens)**

The Notes below form part of these Accounts

Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP

Funds

The General Fund represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use & are available for application to the general purposes of the PCC. The Fabric Fund

The Fabric Fund is designated for improvements or major repairs to the fabric of the Church.

The Church Growth Fund is designated for the growth of the christian message in the Parish and beyond as deemed appropriate by the PCC.

Accounting Records

The accounts, include all transactions, assets & liabilities for which the PCC are responsible in Law. They do not include the accounts of Church groups that owe their affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Incoming Resources

Collections, planned giving & donations are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC
Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when received. Funds raised by the Village Fair are accounted for net of associated costs.

Assets

Consecrated & beneficial property is excluded from the accounts by s96(2)a of the Charities Act 1993, and no value is placed on movable church furnishings. All expenditure is written off as incurred.

REPORTS FROM OUR GROUPS AND MINISTRIES: FROM A TO Z

BAPTISMS

In 2017 we had five baptism preparation evenings to give parents and godparents an opportunity to explore the meaning of baptism and then make an informed decision. The evenings were led by Christoph and Edda Lindner – often another member of the children’s ministry team was present to talk about their own faith story, our groups for children and to build relationships. Adults were prepared separately for baptism.

Baptisms took place on the first, third and fifth Sundays of a month as part of the 10.30am service. In 2017 we baptised 12 babies/children and two adults and had one thanksgiving for the gift of a child.

We would love to develop our ministry to baptism families, including baptism follow-up. Please talk to Christoph if you would like to help.

BELLRINGERS

Bells and upper chamber

The bells, ropes, frame and fittings are in good order, with maintenance carried out on a regular basis led by Barry Wild, assisted by other ringers. We hope to renew our Tower Maintenance Award this year, reflecting a high standard of care. We have sufficient funds (mostly generated from the remnant of wedding fees once the ringers have been paid) to cover routine maintenance costs.

Death watch beetle in one of the main beams still seems active, and discussions are progressing with the PCC about the best way to treat it.

Ringers

Last year’s 2 learners are now competent ringers, and we have a pool of 9 or 10 ringers to call on. This may seem plenty, but other commitments, illness and advancing years can mean that we struggle to get the necessary 6 on Sundays and for weddings; we were particularly short over Christmas. A couple more ringers would therefore still be welcome so we ask everyone to be on the lookout for likely candidates; the personal approach has proved to be the most successful form of recruitment. Carole Wadlow retired from ringing this year, and we thank her for the many years of loyal service she gave.

Weddings

The fee charged for wedding bells has not been regularly reviewed for some years, though there was a one-off increase a couple of years ago. At £100 it is one of the lowest in the area (the average was around £140 when last surveyed in late 2014) which limits the amount we can pay ringers and can be awkward if we call on people from elsewhere who are used to more and have to travel further. It would be useful to plan for a modest increase of £5 or £10 this year or next to avoid it slipping further behind. It would also be good to consider at least a small surcharge (perhaps £20) for weekday weddings to reflect the difficulty in finding a band, asking those still in work to take a day off etc.

General

We continue to be indebted to John Davidge from the local Ringers Guild for his support, particularly on practice nights. We are also grateful to some of the tower ringers who between them operate the chiming mechanism on alternate Sundays. More volunteers for this task – which can be picked up rather more easily than tower ringing and need only involve one Sunday every few months – are still welcome. (*Andrew Simpson, Tower Captain*)

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Sunday Club

2017 has been a year of "steadiness and specials".

Steadiness: By the end of the year, 29 children between the ages of 1 and 14 were registered, with actual attendance often in double digits. There wasn't a single Sunday Club without children; on occasions, we had three and on other weeks, especially on baptism Sundays, we sometimes had more than 20 children.

Francis Moloney, together with other Sunday Club helpers, started a monthly "Sunday Club Older" during the 10.30am service. Children from the age of 10 (school years 5 and up) were dropped off at the Rectory from 10.15am. After breakfast and chats they had age-specific opportunities to grow in Christian teaching and worship.

The stackable chairs and the new screen with sound bar have given us much more flexibility and opportunities to use the vestry in child-friendly ways. The leaders and team have been reliable and at the same time flexible in planning and preparing for Sunday activities across the wide age range.

Specials: The weekly Sunday Clubs have been interspersed with one-off events such as a workshop for a presentational dance to the words of the Lord's

Prayer back in February. We had the first Easter Egg Hunt around the church straight after the Easter Sunday Service. The Sunday Club leaders and team hosted popular and exciting activities for children on Fayre day, including a teddy bear tombola, catapult castle, *hook-a-duck* and *splat-the-rat*.

Furthermore, some members of the Sunday Club team hosted a vestry tea and offered not only delicious cake, but added a child friendly focus with paper table cloths that could be used for doodling and some toys and games to make a pleasant Sunday afternoon at St Mary's even more enjoyable.

The year finished on a high with the Family Carol Service at which the children presented the play "Jesus' Christmas Party" which included drama, songs and narration. Sonja and Jon Clements directed and executed the whole project with a lot of creativity and attention to detail.



(Family Carol Service: Jesus' Christmas Party)

Messy Church

"Messy Church is a form of church for children and adults that involves creativity, celebration and hospitality, primarily for people who don't already belong to another form of church." (www.messychurch.org.uk)

We ran trials of Messy Church in February, April and June, which was all about us "having a go" and using Francis' experience of the Messy Church concept from his previous church. In September we ran a Messy Church for the team to envision and communicate the purpose of this very family-friendly service. From October we introduced a monthly pattern of Messy Church on the fourth Sunday of the month. The core team learnt that a monthly review and planning

meeting was essential when establishing and building up a new ministry as there is so much to learn and discuss. The core team consists of Francis Moloney, Kath Sole, Sheyla Johnson, Kathy Paine, Tim Sole, Anne Thomas and Edda Lindner, but there are other members of the church family who contribute and help with the actual sessions.

Each month was different in terms of what we learnt as a team and who attended. Every time we had great crafts and activities, followed by a celebration time with bible story, songs and prayers, then rounding the session off with a delicious, home made meal. Please pray for God's guidance as we establish good patterns and seek to invite families who would otherwise not engage with the Christian faith.

Assemblies

In 2017 we established regular assemblies in both our local schools. At Denham Green Academy, we started with occasional assemblies led by Christoph, Edda, Kathy and Francis. As a result, the school invited us to lead assemblies on a more regular basis from September 2017: A team of two people lead a short interactive assembly twice a month, for which we use the "Big Start Assemblies" material. We use powerpoint, games and videos plus the time-tested methods of story-telling and songs to communicate Christian values in a way that connects with the lives of the children.

At Denham Village Infant School we held weekly assemblies until the end of the summer term. A team of three people used the "Open the Book" programme, a Bible Society resource based on interactive bible story telling. In 2017 the team consisted of Christoph Lindner, Michael Carmody, Francis Moloney, Edda



Lindner and Wendy Cope-Jennings, who sadly passed away later in the year and is much missed as a friend and team member.

From September we moved to a fortnightly rhythm - with a bigger team and a suitable assembly co-ordinator, we would love to be able to offer more assemblies in the future. *(The photo above is a little insight into how much the*

assemblies are appreciated. We are delighted to be building strong relationships with both schools.)

Little Lions by Kathy Paine

Our toddler group has been thriving since we opened in September 2016. We meet on a Wednesday morning at 10am in St Marks Hall and are always delighted to welcome new families. We have 20+ families who attend regularly and are becoming a lovely supportive community in Denham Green.

At each session we have free play, sensory activities and snacks for the children followed with singing, dancing, nursery rhymes, our Bible story and even parachute games. (In fact anything fun we can think of!)

An amazing team of mums/carers help to set up, welcome newcomers, plan and get creative with craft activities which often link with the story, and clear away at the end of the session.

Another amazing team takes charge of the snacks for the children and provide drinks etc. for the grown-ups.



It is such a pleasure to be part of Little Lions as we all work together to provide a friendly, caring environment in which we see friendships develop between grown-ups, and children grow from tiny babies to active toddlers who join in with great enthusiasm as they grow up. We finish each session with some singing and a short bible story.

We are an all-age team so if you have a heart for young children and their families or could offer time to help prepare snacks etc. we would love to hear from you.

Early Years - Care for the Family Parenting Course

In the autumn term we offered a six-week parenting course at St Mark's Hall. The course booked up very quickly and under Kathy Paine's experienced leadership we had a successful course for which we got very positive feedback from the participating parents. Due to some very dedicated helpers we were able to offer a crèche alongside the sessions, which helped the mums to have some uninterrupted time to think through important parenting themes and to have an opportunity to share their ups and downs with other mums. A huge thank-you to all who made it possible to run the creche!

(Edda Lindner)

CHOIR

I would like to thank each and every member of our choir (15) for their support and encouragement in the musical, spiritual and social life of our community at St Mary's. This past year we have thought of ways in which we can as a group engage in our church's vision to 'Pray, Welcome, Share'. Week by week our choristers are also involved in the PCC, bell ringing, pastoral care, life group, leading intercessions, reading the lessons, flower arranging and providing refreshments at vestry teas and after the morning service.



We celebrated some 'significant' birthdays with Sandy, Beverley, Suzanne and Ann and sung at the happy occasion of Katie and Richard's wedding (Caroline and Clive Ashcroft's daughter). Several of us went to

Prom Praise at the Albert Hall and in August enjoyed a garden party at the invitation of Caroline and Clive Ashcroft. At the Patronal Festival in September we once again were delighted that the choir of the Holy Name led by Richard Cottle joined us to lead the songs of Praise service in the afternoon and relaxed over afternoon tea. We were also boosted by Mervyn Hogg and Ben (a young organist from the parish) who both played some rousing organ recital music. In December we sang carols on the green with other local organisations and groups.

This past year two valuable members of our choir past and present died. Bill Tearall who had always been a loyal and enthusiastic member before his move to Weymouth and Wendy Cope-Jennings who until her sudden death in October had been involved in so many ways both in St Mary's and the local community. We also sung at the funeral of another special person, Beverley Miller, who we will always remember as such an outgoing, welcoming verger at the many weddings she attended to over the years.

At our choir social after the Nine Lessons and Carols we looked over the previous year and thanked Christoph for his leadership and in particular his support for the choir, vocally and instrumentally. We have and are continuing to expand our musical styles and are always on the lookout for instrumentalists and singers who would like to be involved.

On a personal note I would like to thank Mervyn Hogg, Cameran Johal, Mary Ledingham and Nicola Flower, who stepped in so ably at such short notice to play for the Christmas and New Years services. *(Louise Hardy)*

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

Four meetings were held during 2017 and because it was an electoral year there were a number of changes of membership to both officers and representatives including from our own parish.

The February meeting held at Amersham had as its main topic a talk from Steve Poulson about his impending placement with a missionary organisation in Honduras (a first newsletter from him has just been received by the Deanery setting out the dangerous conditions he is working under with street children. More information: <https://churchmissionsociety.org/people-in-mission/steve-poulson>). There was also a significant item on the Deanery budget with new proposals as to how the surplus arising from prompt payment could be called upon to further parish based ministry / growth activities.

The May meeting at Penn, discussed a desire to support Steve on a motion from myself but this was deferred so that new members could be more properly briefed and the matter considered by the standing committee in view of the longer term financial implications. The main business was the election of new Deanery officers and appointment to the Ministry and Pastoral Committee but the post of lay chair and pastoral committee members was also deferred to enable additional applicants to be sought.

The September meeting held in our parish at St Mark's Denham Green appointed a new lay chair (Lawrence Tebboth) and also a second Area Dean (Martin Williams) to share the load, on Bishop's advice, in such a large and active deanery. The proposal to support Steve was confirmed in the figures I had previously proposed. The meeting then split into 9 sub-groups to consider what our churches might look like if we tried to live out our Bishop Steven's call to be contemplative, compassionate and courageous. The groups made a brief report back on their discussions which will be fed into the Deanery Mission Action Plan.

The November meeting at Gerrards Cross, included an election of members to the Mission and Pastoral Committee (I had expressed an interest, but was unsuccessful). A report was given on the latest progress in preparing the Deanery Mission Action Plan, but some information is now out of date and parishes were asked to provide updated information. Finally, the Deanery Budget for 2018 was considered and approved. Finally a Deanery visit to Oberammergau was announced, organised by the new lay chair, Lawrence Tebboth. Our Rector, Christoph Lindner, will be the chaplain. *(Michael Carmody)*

DENHAM PARISH NEWS

It was another successful year for the magazine with 10 copies produced during the year, which were delivered around the Parish by our team of volunteers. I would like to thank all the people who contributed articles for the magazine, and of course Carole who took delivery of the magazines from the printer and sorted them into bundles for the people who delivered them to the various homes. Also I would like to thank the advertisers whose support we greatly valued and Eve Harrison who did a sterling job in dealing with this aspect for many years.

I retired as Editor in October last year and the last two issues were produced by Victoria in the Parish Office. *(Janet Drane)*

Rector's note: *We are so grateful to Janet for the many years at the helm of our church magazine. In 2018 we will review the format and identify a new team to pick up the baton from her. In the meantime, a monthly calendar will be available; we will also endeavour to deliver it to subscribers to keep in touch with them.*

DENHAM VILLAGE FAYRE

2017's fayre was a good day, people turned up in the hundreds and there was a steady throng of people along the road and in the churchyard.

Christoph and Edda gave us wonderful musical renditions during the day, refreshment teams were rushed off their feet both in the vestry and the village hall, all the church stalls were busy and sold out.

We had classic cars, a fairground for smaller children, morris dancers, cheerleaders, beekeepers, a punch and judy man, brass band and children's activities in the churchyard .

The day raised £16527 and has gone into the fabric fund for the church.

As coordinator of the fayre I would like to thank all those involved in making the day happen. *(Sharon Williams)*

DISCIPLESHIP

The Well at St Mark's continued to be our main discipleship group in 2017. We met fortnightly on Monday evenings. In the spring term we used the excellent UCCF recourse "Uncover Luke" to study Luke's Gospel, followed by a Bible study on Mission, based on the Book of Acts, in the summer term. In the autumn we used the "Bible Course" to get an overview of the big story of the Bible and to develop tools to read the Bible on our own or in groups. Table groups did not only discuss the themes of the evenings but also pray for one another.

The “Leading Your Church into Growth” process included two Saturdays, which were both attended by more than 30 church members each. As we discussed what the vision and mission for our church should be, we also learnt a lot along the way about what the role of *church* is in God’s plans and got to know one another better.

In September we launched our first ladies’ daytime lifegroup which meets on Monday mornings in the Rectory. Two members of St James in Gerrards Cross and Fulmer are helping us to establish this new group, which has grown very quickly and helped members to grow in faith and friendship. New members and guests are always welcome. A session consists of a catch-up over a cup of coffee, a time of sung worship, a Bible study with discussion and prayer. In the autumn the group used the course “What’s so amazing about grace?”



(The Rectory ‘car park’ on a Monday morning during lifegroup)

In April a group of about 10 church members went to “Spring Harvest”, a Christian conference and Festival. They enjoyed the week so much that we have planned to take a group again in 2018.

FABRIC REPORT

Church and Churchyard

Vestry shed

The faculty application submitted to the Oxford diocese for the installation of a small metal shed alongside the Vestry was granted and the shed is now used for the storage of miscellaneous items out of the Vestry, thereby creating more usable interior space.

Churchyard path extension

Applications to both South Bucks DC and Oxford diocese for planning and faculty requirements were granted and the planned extension to pathway at the northern end of the graveyard was undertaken in the autumn by contractors, MDC Land Services under the management of church surveyors, Evans Crawley. This work included clearing the edges of the existing concrete path leading to the Upper Graveyard.



Churchyard access gate - reinstatement of fencing/gate

MDC Land Services also completed the works instructed relating to the boundary fencing and the reinstatement of the access gate to the Upper Graveyard.

Churchyard Sign/Notice Boards

The sign board at the rear of the church by the gate was restored and with new signage fitted in May 2017. The enclosed notice board by the church main gates was also restored.



Churchyard embankment clearance and re-instatement of the public right of way

An approach was made to Bucks County Council to see if vegetation clearance works needed to re-instate the public right of way across the churchyard to its former location could be partly financed by BCC. This was forthcoming and contractor, MDC Land Services was instructed to clear the trees and scrub, dispose of all arising by "chipper" and then grade through the embankment by excavator. These works were completed over the days before Christmas resulting in the retrieval of land that can be used for burials in the years to come.



Church Electrics and lighting

The two troublesome flood light fittings at the rear of the church have been replaced with new LED fittings. The programme of replacing old style lamps with LED's is progressing.

Church interior

All the clear glass windows at St. Mary's have been deep cleaned the cost being met by a kind but anonymous donation. The church clock and the organ were serviced during the summer. An additional Yale lock was fitted to the Vestry Door and main lock serviced.

Church Trees

The large and fine oak tree in the churchyard has been reduced in height and lateral spread to help keep it safe and to prolong its natural life.

Unheralded churchyard works

In addition to the churchyard grass cutting in the spring and summer months, there are some maintenance and tidying works that go on throughout the year to keep the churchyard looking neat and cared for by person/persons preferring to remain nameless. Thanks to such folk should be recorded.

External walls / church damp

No further developments from the report submitted for last year's APCM.

Rainwater drainage

A preliminary inspection was undertaken by MDC Land Services in December 2017 to address the problem of wet weather churchyard flooding caused by the backing-up of rainwater from the church's rainwater gullies.

This initial inspection and clearance work did clear the drainage runs for two of the gullies and future work is planned for the remaining four gullies.

Tower timbers - Death Watch

The beams of the floor in the clock chamber have been measured and a plan produced. This is now being used in the initial design for restoration works to the beam ends most affected by the death watch beetle.

Fabric matters to be addressed in 2018

The report suggests priority areas for attention (in no particular order):

- Drains – pipe runs and soakaway repair works
- Church interior walls re-decoration
- West and South Doors restoration – it is believed that there might be specific guidance as to what we can do with those and what we cannot do. Rather a specialist operation for both the wood and the metalwork, presumably both needing to be treated in situ
- Damaged Tower beams (death watch) – structural survey and progression of restoration works
- Exterior walls re-pointing – development of a strategy

(Robert Ash)

PRAYER

Our weekly prayer meeting at St Mark's on Mondays at 7.30pm continued throughout the year. There was a faithful group of regular attendees who set aside time to pray for our church, people in need and our world. At times numbers were swelled by those who attended *The Well* straight afterwards. On those weeks we also tried a format with more informal sung worship. Numbers remain relatively small, however, and in 2018 we will review how we can engage more people in regular prayer.

For two years the Archbishop of Canterbury has now asked churches to set aside the 10 days between Ascension Day and Pentecost for prayer with the initiative *Thy Kingdom Come*. In 2017 we used this as an opportunity to hold evening prayer in different parts of our parish and would like to build on that experience in 2018.

Prayer became one of the three central areas of our church vision. It remained a central part of our services and small group meetings. In October we began to hold a short pre-service prayer at St Mary's on Sundays at 9.55am. Everyone is welcome to join us.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AND ENRICHMENT

2017 was a busy year for weddings at St Mary's (20 weddings in total). Our marriage preparation helps couples to understand and embrace the vows they are going to make and to build strong foundations for a lifelong marriage. One of the helpful tools we use for this is a couple survey which bride and groom fill in independently. This is then followed up by an invitation to meet with a couple from our church for supper and for an informal conversation about the results (it is *not* a test and you cannot fail it!). Currently Jane and Dexter Brown and Edda and Christoph Lindner are helping with this aspect of marriage preparation. Couples have found this a very helpful process and it has helped us to build stronger relationships with them.

In November, the 70th wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip gave us a wonderful reason to hold a special event for couples - "What is Love Actually", led by Mark and Christine Daniel from *Family Life*. It was well attended and a lot of fun.

PASTORAL CARE

The pastoral team that we established in the autumn of 2016 continued to meet on a regular basis in 2017 and to offer Jesus' presence and compassion, as well as practical help, to many people. In addition to that we ran a pastoral care course "Time to Care" together with St James Church in Gerrards Cross. The majority of pastoral care team members took part. We subsequently wrote a pastoral care policy that was adopted by our PCC. The introduction states: "Pastoral Care is a fundamental compassionate ministry of the church, in which both ordained and lay people represent Jesus and the parish church. It may be exercised in many different ways. The basic goal of pastoral care is to help persons live life in all its fullness, in the strength of and according to the example and promise of Christ."

SAFEGUARDING

There was one new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal record check requested in 2017. This took our totals to 16 unpaid volunteers able to work with children and young people and 6 unpaid volunteers able to work with vulnerable adults.

In March, the Parish Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and adopted by the PCC. The policy was duly displayed in our church buildings and a copy was sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to keep on record.

Over a two month period in the Spring, several church members attended a course on Pastoral Care in the Parish, entitled "Time to Care". This involved 6 sessions covering all aspects of pastoral care including safeguarding training and a church service of dedication. The children's ministry team joined the pastoral team to refresh their safeguarding knowledge and all the volunteers took and passed a test. Sincere thanks to Christoph and Edda Lindner for their involvement with many aspects of this course. A Pastoral Care Policy was devised by the pastoral team and approved by the PCC.

In August, the Oxford Diocese advised us that the Churches' Agency For Safeguarding (CAS), our existing DBS Umbrella Body, would cease looking after us at the end of the year. As recommended by the Diocese, the Access Personal Checking Services Ltd (APCS) was adopted by our Parish from September and the PCC were informed. The APCS was more cost effective with an administration fee of £4.79 for each online unpaid volunteer Disclosure. I took the decision to no longer offer paper disclosures as the online process resulted in less errors and was much faster. The APCS has an upgraded accounts system with invoices emailed monthly to our Parish Office. A big thank you to Victoria for enabling this process to work smoothly.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to all the Parish volunteers for their important work in establishing a safe and caring community. I would also like to thank the Rector, Churchwardens and PCC for their continued support. May we all remember that Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and we should remain vigilant at all times.

(Samantha Carter, Parish Safeguarding Officer)

ST FRANCIS HOUSE

Our tenants for some 4 years now continue to enjoy their stay in the house. Other than property insurance, boiler & alarm service a net cost of £1082 all other minor property maintenance and the Agents fee is offset by rent received & the net amount £13955 transferred to the Fabric Fund. *(Gerald Miller)*

ST MARK'S HALL

This has been an extremely active year as major changes of membership of the committee enabled us to have a very thorough review of how the lettings side of our activities should be organised and as to the terms of the hiring conditions,

provision for health and safety, organisation of cleaning services, booking arrangements and the handling of finance.

We also looked at our organisational relationship as a result of our now being a direct sub-committee of the PCC, rather than a more independent body, with necessary changes in our financial standing and now offering online paying facilities.

There have been major changes to our services provision with now the introduction of Messy and Café churches on a monthly basis and a Saturday men's breakfast gathering has been trialled. The Well on a Monday evening provided a chance for worship and prayer on a more informal basis and was often followed by a teaching programme on a theme of Christian discipleship and mission.

Some new equipment has been provided in the kitchen and for the cleaner and major work undertaken towards to the provision of new cupboard storage facilities which is now being implemented. Just at the years end the architect was asked to submit plans for building regulation approval to the local authority, which will be necessary should the PCC wish to proceed with proposals to improve toilet facilities together with approaches to funding bodies to help meet necessary costs.

The church architect has indicated that the existing building is deficient in a number of ways to meet current legislation and such items would need to be dealt with before a successful toilet project could be implemented. These matters are currently under consideration. *(Michael Carmody)*

ST MARK'S HOUSE

The House was divided into 2 flat-lets in 2016. These were occupied in 2017 by Francis & Annabelle Moloney and from time to time by Judith & David Babb. Property insurance, alarm servicing and minor maintenance is to some degree offset by rental income leaving a net cost of £525. *(Gerald Miller)*

VESTRY TEAS

Vestry teas began this year on Sunday 4th June and opened every Sunday between 3 and 5pm until Sunday 10th September. Our church and many charities benefitted from the money raised. Many, many thanks to all the bakers and servers who gave their time and talents each week. *(Hilary Richins)*

WORSHIP

Our 8am Sunday service (Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion) continued to have a small but committed core congregation.

The subsequent 10.30am service has seen healthy attendance, especially on feast days and at baptisms. We alternated between seasons when we used the Church of England lectionary readings and special sermon series, such as the Lord's Prayer, the great discoveries of the Protestant Reformation 500 years ago and a series on our vision to pray, welcome and share like Jesus.

After pausing our services at St Mark's we launched a monthly Café Church service in early 2017, with a mix of familiar hymns and prayers, conversations around tables, a short talk and home-made cakes. It has been well received and a regular congregation has developed. A very dedicated team help to set up, run and take down the service and many people contribute cakes.



(Café Church at St Mark's)

For Messy Church, please read the section under "Children and Families.

Our lay reader emeritus, Joyce Tearall, found it increasingly difficult to lead services and discussion groups at St Francis, due to her full-time care for her husband Bill. However, we continued to hold a monthly service with discussion group with a small but committed and appreciative group. We tended to use the same themes there as at Café Church - the Lord's Prayer during the first half of the year, followed by a close look at the Ten Commandments.

Special services such as Easter, Patronal Festival, Harvest, Remembrance and Advent / Christmas were highlights of the year and attracted many visitors.

All our services are supported and enriched by our church members in many ways - thank you!

Our Mission Action Plan: Immediate priorities for the years 2018–2019

- We will offer an introduction to the Christian faith at least once a year.
- We will start further lifegroups to help us grow in faith and friendship.
- We will appoint a second ordained minister to ensure we can sustain and develop our ministry.
- We will refresh our communications and publicity (e.g. website, church magazine).
- We will draw up plans to improve St Mark's Hall and implement them.
- We will develop relationships with selected mission partners, working both in the UK and abroad.

"The church lies at the very centre of the eternal purpose of God. It is not a divine afterthought. It is not an accident of history. On the contrary, the church is God's new community." John Stott



PRAY



WELCOME



SHARE

We Pray Like Jesus

*Jesus said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come."
Luke 11.2*

Jesus taught his disciples to pray to God as 'Father' and was in constant communication with him. As his followers we want all our life to be grounded in our relationship with him.

We Welcome Like Jesus

*When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today."
Luke 19.5*

We have experienced God's welcome in Jesus and want to be a welcoming community for everyone.

We Share Like Jesus

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John 1.14

We are called to share life, faith and ministry and to develop a culture of generosity that speaks of our generous God.

