

Parish of St Mary the Virgin

Annual Report 2018





Introduction by Christoph Lindner, Rector

Dear Church Member,



Our cover photo for this year's annual report draws us into the open – from our beautiful parish church into our community and world. As I was reflecting on the image I was reminded of Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28: "Go and make disciples of all nations!" Go! The church of Jesus Christ is a movement, taking his good news to the ends of the earth. 2018 has been a rich and active year in the life of our church. Edda and I are so grateful to be serving God together with you; Jesus' commission wasn't given to one or two people, but to his followers together.

Someone has said that love isn't a noun, it's a verb. Similarly, it could be said that *church* is a verb: it's about a community which prays, welcomes and shares like Jesus. We have done that together during the last year and there are so many highlights! I hope that the photos in this report will remind us of some of them. Of course we also share the struggles and the losses together. As we say 'good-bye' to church members who move away or pass away, we are encouraged that others join us in this work.

This booklet will help us to look back on 2018 and to thank God for the many ways in which he has blessed this church. Let us continue to pray for the activity of God's Holy Spirit in calling people to follow Jesus and to join his church here in Denham. And let us all practise generosity in welcoming them and in contributing of our time, talents and resources to see his kingdom come.

Please join us on Sunday 7th 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 thank God for his many blessings in 2018 and to look ahead at the coming year. We will also elect churchwardens, PCC members and Deanery Synod representatives.

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

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Christoph", written in a cursive style.

**Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham
Annual Meeting of Parishioners and
Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 7th April 2019, 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 15th April, 2018
6. Matters arising

Reports

7. Presentation of the copy of the church Electoral Roll
8. Annual Report for 2018
9. Financial Report
10. Churchwardens' 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. 2019 and beyond
18. Closing Prayer

APCM (provisional date): Sunday 26th April 2020, 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 15th April 2018

The Rector, Christoph Lindner, was in the chair.

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

The Rector welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer.

He advised that the meeting would commence with the Annual Meeting of Parishioners (also known as Annual Vestry Meeting), followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). He highlighted the following corrections in the annual report. On page 9 John Breese should only be noted once and Anne Thomas is to be added to list. On page 27 the year for Denham Village Fayre should read 2017, not 2018.

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

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

Christoph thanked Hilary Richins and Carlene Litchmore for their exemplary commitment to the church's mission and ministry. Churchwardens are the lead lay persons of the local church, officers of the bishop and a crucial link between the church and the bishop. The Rector thanked Carlene for her last two years of service and for her support to Edda and himself.

Hilary has been churchwarden for twelve years and has seen a lot of changes over the course of those years. This year she will be stepping down. The Rector expressed how much he has appreciated everything she has done to assist him since arriving in Denham and wished her God's blessings for the future. Hilary was presented with a gift, together with a specially made church kneeler.

3. Election of Churchwardens

Carlene has agreed to remain churchwarden for another year. Samantha Carter has been nominated for the role as churchwarden. The Rector commented that she will bring her skills and serving heart to the role. Both were duly elected.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

4. Number of Parishioners present and any apologies

55 parishioners signed in as being present. Apologies for absence were received from Pamela Montgomery, Sue Fletcher, Sandy Wickenden, Rosemary Doran, John Breese, Natalie Sargent, Mike Dymott, Philip Thompson and Chris Thompson.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 23rd April 2017

No corrections to be made. Sharon Williams approved the minutes, Michael Carmody seconded. Show of hands was given to adopt the minutes.

6. Matters arising

No matters arising from the minutes taken.

REPORTS

7. Presentation of the copy of the church electoral roll

The electoral roll has grown from 120 to 126 members. The Rector welcomed the 12 new members. Suzanne Hearnden-Smith asked to go onto the electoral roll for next year. The Rector thanked Maurice Litchmore for his diligence in his role as electoral roll officer. The Rector gave thanks to God for those people who are no longer on the electoral roll, some of whom have moved away while others have passed away. They will be missed by all.

The Rector expressed the church's gratitude to Louise Hardy, Edda Lindner and Anne Thomas for working in the office while the post of parish secretary was vacant. He thanked Victoria Lucas for her work as parish secretary since April.

8. Annual Report for 2017 (available in advance).

The Rector commended the printed annual report to the church and thanked everyone who contributed to it. It reflected the many ministries and people involved with them in the life of our church.

9. Financial report.

The audited accounts for 2017 showed an excess of income over expenditure of £1288 compared with £4702 in 2016. As a result of the remarkable increase in Gift Aided donations we were able to transfer the whole of the net income from the Fayre into the Fabric fund. The goal was to do this again in 2018.

In total we donated some £ 10,511 to charities. The church growth fund stood at £ 33,860 at the end of the year; £ 3,366 were spent from it. The Fabric Fund stood at £ 212,965, a significant increase on the previous year.

The Rector thanked those who contribute regularly to the parish and noted that it is essential in giving us a solid basis for our budgeting and planning. He encouraged parishioners to consider giving regularly, even a small amount each month helps.

The Rector then proceeded to give thanks to Gerald Miller for all of his hard work as treasurer for the past thirty-three years and for the support he has given to the church. He was wished a happy retirement and a gift together with a kneeler was presented to him.

Michael Stewart has taken over the role as treasurer from January. The meeting expressed the church's gratitude to him for taking on this role.

No questions were asked about the financial report. It was unanimously adopted by a show of hands.

10. Churchwardens' report

This was printed on page 15 of the 2017 annual report. No questions arose.

11. Deanery Synod Report

The Rector thanked Michael Carmody and Judith Babb who represented Denham Parish at Deanery Synod over the last year and referred the parishioners to their report on page 26 of the Annual Report for 2017.

ELECTIONS

12. Election of Deanery Synod Members.

Judith Babb will be standing down from Deanery Synod. The Rector gave thanks to Judith for the wisdom and experience she brought to the role.

Janet Allen has been nominated for Deanery Synod representation. She was elected by a show of hands to represent Denham Parish at Deanery Synod.

13. Election of Members for the PCC

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

This year Robert Ash and Sharon Williams have come to the end of their three year term on PCC. However, they have both agreed to stand again for another term.

Gerald Miller has stepped down as treasurer and PCC member.

Samantha Carter is stepping down as elected PCC member to become ex-officio member as churchwarden.

There are two vacancies on the PCC. Michael Stewart and Dexter Brown have been nominated as new members of the PCC.

Nomination forms were all present and correct.

All four candidates were duly elected by a show of hands.

14. Appointment of sidesmen/women

An updated list of sidesmen and sideswomen (all on the electoral roll as per Church Representation Rules) was tabled at the meeting and they were duly appointed. The following names were removed: Judith Babb, Stephen and Alison Barrett, Samantha Carter, Jonathan Govan, Margaret Sargent. The following were added: Craig Alexander, Joan Bell, Caroline Goodwin, Cathy Macqueen, Chris Macqueen, Hilary Richins.

15. Appointment of Auditor

The Rector gave thanks to Michael Stewart who has been our auditor for many years but will not continue in the role now that he has become our treasurer. David Steel, who is the treasurer of St James Gerrards Cross with St James Fulmer, has offered to audit our accounts in future.

David Babb proposed and Kathy Paine seconded David Steel as auditor. A show of hands was given in favour.

16. A.O.B.

Robin Doran asked who he could telephone if he is unable to do his duty on a Sunday morning. He was advised to call Carlene Litchmore. A training day has been organised for everyone who contributes to our services (in particular the 10.30 service).

17. 2018 and beyond.

A handout was presented, which is attached to these minutes. The Rector gave thanks to those who have helped to shape the church this year and to those who returned the vision response form which he found most useful. The Rector was able to see which areas of ministry different people are drawn to. The magazine has been missed by everyone and the Rector asked for people to pray for a new editor. He also asked for people to pray that God will lead us to the right ordained minister who can assist the Rector. This could be a non-stipendary minister or a house for duty minister, for whom we would provide accommodation, but no salary.

The Rector spoke about building capacity and viewing your whole life as a chance to pray, welcome and share whether it is with families, neighbours or at work. It is also about finding the right kind of ministry for each season of our life, it may be leading a children's group one year and making refreshments another.

The Rector then spoke about selecting a few things that God is asking you to do. Don't overburden yourself with too much commitment. Share the good news with people you know and pray for them regularly and ask God to show you how to share God's love with them in word and action. The Rector also encouraged everyone to join a lifegroup – a small group of people who meet regularly to grow in friendship and faith.

The PCC has chosen five mission partners who operate locally, nationally and internationally. We will build a strong relationship with the chosen charities and ask them to come and talk to us. The Rector would like a link person for each organisation to liaise with them, and encouraged anyone who is interested to speak to him.

The Rector then outlined three important projects for the next 12-18 months.

1. Review our buildings.
2. Review all of our worship services.
3. Reach out to our local communities.

18. Closing Prayer

The Rector closed the meeting after attendees prayed the *Leading Your Church Into Growth Prayer* together.

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

Attachment: Rector's Report on 2018 and beyond

Our Journey, two years on

YEAR 1: Three themes from John 15

"Love one another": Building a strong community (IN)

"Abide in me": Being rooted in the good news of Jesus (UP)

"Bear fruit": Sharing the love of Christ in word and deed (OUT)



YEAR 2: Shaping and Communicating our Vision

We pray *like Jesus*

We welcome *like Jesus*

We share *like Jesus*

"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."

(Source: Diocese of Oxford)

YEAR 3: Turning our Vision into Reality:

1 Build capacity

- Priorities (part of our vision?)
- Teams
- A second ordained minister
- Priesthood of all believers
- Whole-life ministry
- Seasons of ministry

2 Select a few

"Take a brave step towards what you can do not a guilty step back." *Sheridan Voisey*

- Choose the role / those roles in the church that you *can* do and let go of those you feel you should
- Pray regularly for five people that you want to share the good news of Jesus with.
- Join a lifegroup
- Select five mission partners as a church: Trinity (with SHOC), Church Army, Bible Reading Fellowship, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Tearfund.

**Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham
Annual Report and Financial Statements
of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2018**

Incumbent:

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

Bank:

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

Auditor:

David Steel, Danescroft, 37 Kingsway, Chalfont St. Peter, SL9 8NX

Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denham – Annual Report for 2018

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 work, teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses, events, small groups and religious assemblies in schools; children's and youth work; working for the common good of the parish in co-operation with other agencies; supporting other charitable work in the UK and overseas; ecumenical co-operation with other churches.

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 2018:

Incumbent: Christoph Lindner, the chairman

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

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 representatives on the Deanery Synod were Michael Carmody and Judith Babb. The treasurer was Mike Stewart (in attendance). The secretary was Victoria Lucas.

From the APCM 2018:

The churchwardens: Carlene Litchmore (vice-chair), Samantha Carter.

Elected members of the PCC were Robert Ash, Clive Ashcroft, Joan Bell, Dexter Brown, Tony Drane, Pam Montgomery, Kathy Paine, Tim Sole, Mike Stewart, Anne Thomas, Carole Wadlow, Sharon Williams.

The representative on the Deanery Synod were Michael Carmody and Janet Allen. Judith Babb was in attendance. The treasurer was Mike Stewart. The secretary was Victoria Lucas.

Committees

The *Cockpit Crew* is the *Standing Committee* of our PCC. 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 Clive Ashcroft, Kathy Paine and Mike Stewart.

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

St Mark's Committee is 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.

During 2018 we convened the *St Mark's Development Group* as a sub-committee of the PCC with the brief to explore how St Mark's Hall can be developed. Its members were the Rector (chair), David Babb, Michael Carmody, Roy Lyle, Brian O'Regan, Kathy Paine, Mike Stewart.

Church Attendance

Please refer to the Electoral Roll Report below for details on the Electoral Roll.

The usual Sunday attendance, counted during October, was 101 adults and 13 children. Around 1,000 people came to our carol and Christmas services in December. In addition we hosted two carol services for the local schools at St Mary's.

Electoral Roll Report

St Mary's Church Electoral Roll has been renewed; under the *six years rule* a new application form has been completed for all members included on the roll as required by the diocesan synod and is available for viewing at this meeting. The roll will also be displayed on the notice boards of St Mary's, St Francis and St Mark's.

The church Electoral Roll has seen a rise in numbers on the previous roll. Whilst there was the expectation that not all members would renew their membership due to death, relocation etc there is a very positive side with the inclusion of thirty five first time applicants. This year has seen an increase in membership by fifteen on the previous year's roll. The number of names entered upon the Church Electoral Roll of the parish is one hundred and forty one (141).

Parishioners who are listed on the roll are entitled to vote at this meeting. However in order to qualify for nomination to the Parochial Church Council (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 Officer or at St Mary's from the display area near the entrance of the church.

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 church buildings after this meeting with a further copy to be sent to the Secretary of the Deanery Synod.

Maurice Litchmore, Electoral Roll Officer

PCC REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2018

Aims, Objectives & Activities

Our aims and objectives are summarised by our vision statement, which the PCC adopted in 2018:

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.

From this broad vision statement flows our *Mission Action Plan* for 2018-19, which forms the basis of the review of achievements and performance below.

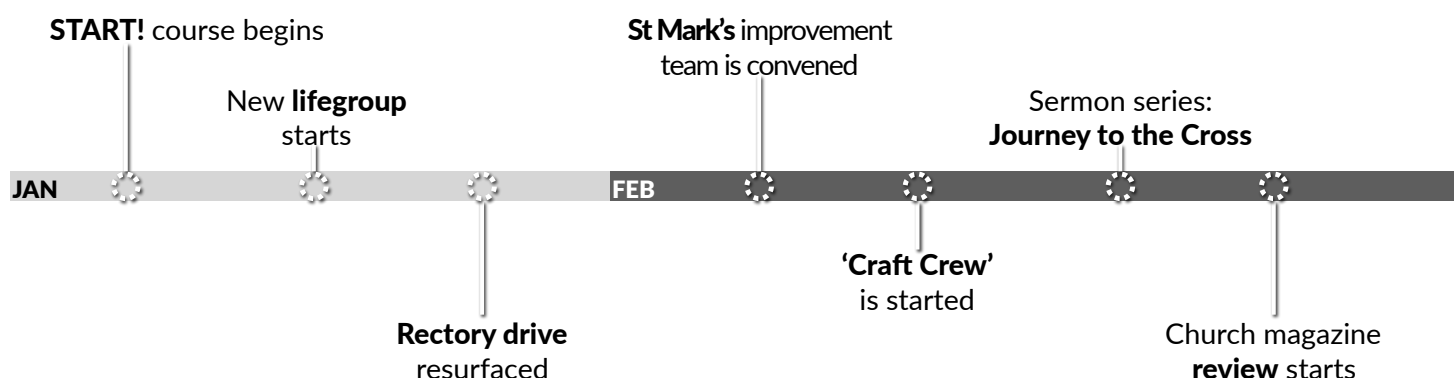
The PCC met ten times in 2018. Some of the areas of ministry we focused on over the year were: the 'Rethink' mission week, data protection (GDPR) and the associated updating of our church records, the appointment of an associate minister, preparing the introduction of the Parish Giving Scheme, finance and sub-committee updates, as well as a number of important management, fabric and churchyard matters.

Our ongoing focus was monitoring and reviewing our Mission Action Plan. Appointing a second ordained minister to the parish was a central objective. This included the preparation of a role description and a parish profile, advertising the role, shortlisting, interviews, deliberations and appointments to the post.

In September we announced the appointment of Ian Jennings and Nnamdi Maduka as associate ministers, who were due to start their ministry in January 2019. At several points in the autumn – and notably at a drinks reception in Advent – members of our PCC had opportunities to meet them both.

Our standing committee (Cockpit Crew) met ten times.

(Timeline below: Some of the significant events in 2018)



Achievements and Performance

Our Mission Action Plan for 2018-2019 had the following objectives:

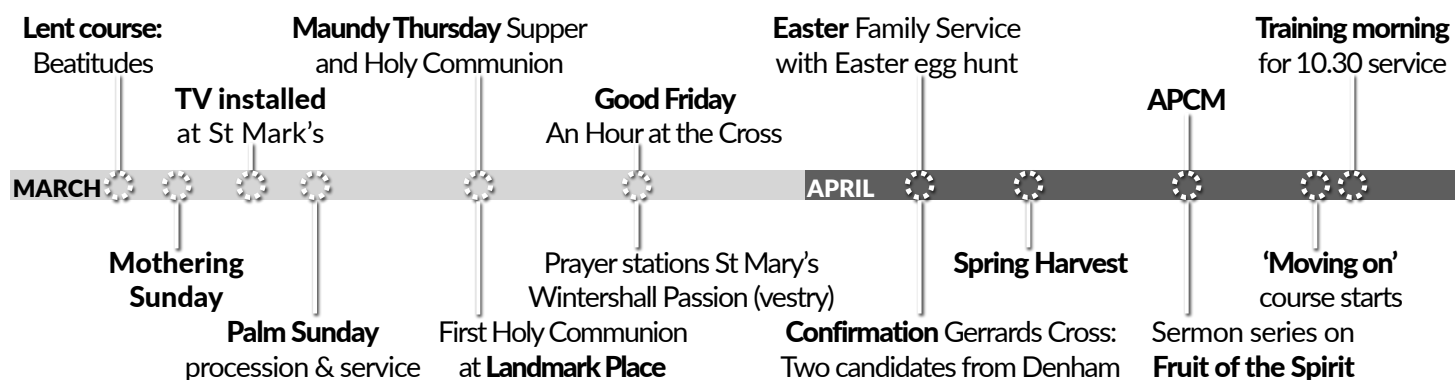
We will offer an introduction to the Christian faith at least once a year.

In January we ran the START! course for the second time. In six sessions we explored the foundations of our Christian faith. Many of the participants continued with “Moving On”, a follow-up course, in the summer term.

Based on the model of stepping-stones across a river which we explored at *Leading Your Church into Growth* in 2017, we designed *Rethink Week* to be followed up by invitations to our carol and Christmas services and Alpha in early 2019. *Rethink* offered a range of events, many of them exploring big questions of life and faith such as suffering or forgiveness. There was great variety with events for parents, year-6 students at Denham Green Academy, a men’s curry evening, a concert, a wine-and-canapés evening, an afternoon for seniors and a Sunday service. Those who submitted feedback cards with questions were all followed up individually and invited to explore the Christian faith further. *Rethink* has been a vital catalyst in the life and mission of our church: It has challenged members to always be prepared to give a reason for the hope that we have (1 Peter 3.15) and to regard the witnessing to our faith as a natural part of our discipleship. Praying for and inviting family, friends and neighbours to find out more is an important aspect of that witness. Our three lifegroups helped with the planning and execution of some of the Rethink events – they and several other church members made the variety of events possible and demonstrated the value of all members of the body of Christ contributing to our mission. We have learnt much for similar future events and want to make sure that this has not been a one-off event.

We will start further lifegroups to help us grow in faith and friendship

Lifegroups are designed to help us grow in faith and friendship. At the end of 2018 we have three lifegroups, which use different materials, but follow a similar structure of catching-up, worshipping together, learning from the Bible and praying for each other. The Monday morning women’s lifegroup has continued to thrive and deep friendships have developed.



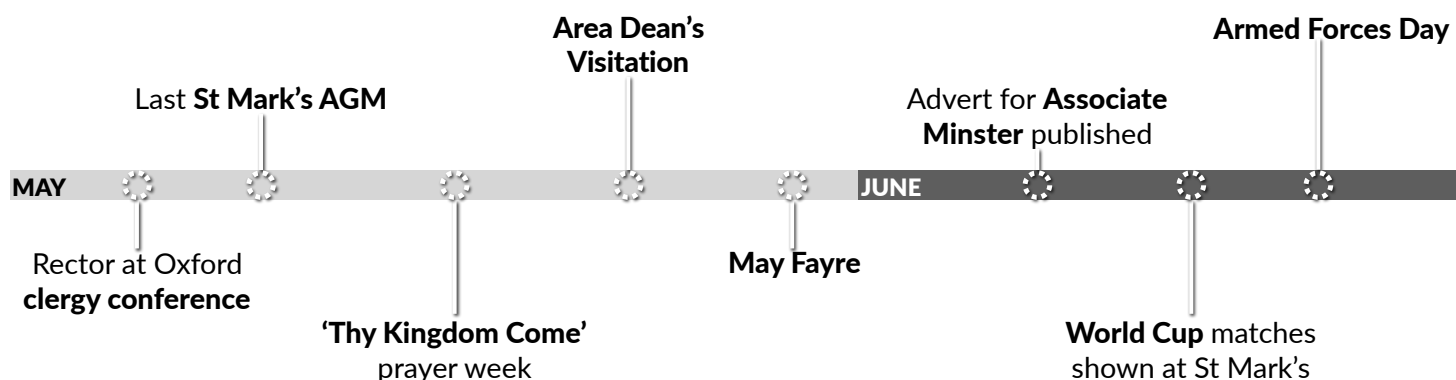
In the spring term our parish assistant Francis Moloney started a new lifegroup on Thursday evenings at St Mark's House. Several members of the group had taken part in the Bible Course in the autumn of 2017 and found the lifegroup a helpful way to continue their faith journey.

After the summer many participants in "Start" and "Moving On" continued to meet on Monday evenings at the Rectory. This has become our third lifegroup.

In the autumn term, all three lifegroups embraced the idea of hosting Alpha in the Spring of 2019. They will meet at the usual group time but relocate to St Mark's Church Hall to make space for guests.

We will appoint a second ordained minister to sustain and develop our ministry

Early in 2018 we began to put together a parish profile (you can view it here: <https://tinyurl.com/denhamparishprofile>), which together with a role description forms the basis of a job advert. In consultation with our diocese we decided to make this a *local appointment of a 'house for duty minister'*. This means that the parish provides accommodation and covers all ministry-related expenses, while the minister does not receive a salary. House-for-duty contracts are part-time (Sundays and two week days). While we did some networking with ministers in the local area, no obvious candidate emerged. We published the job advert in June, in both the Oxford and the London Diocese, as well as the Church Times. We received two applications, which were both short-listed for interview in July. The interview panel was chaired by the Bishop of Buckingham and included our Patron John Way, churchwarden Samantha Carter, PCC member Clive Ashcroft and the Rector. We were very impressed with both candidates during interviews and Bishop Alan encouraged us to explore whether God might encourage us to offer a role to both candidates, especially as they displayed complementary gifts and experience. The following weeks saw in-depth follow-up conversations during which a sense of rapport and calling emerged for us and the candidates. A special PCC meeting at the end of August decided to offer roles as associate ministers to both of them, which they accepted. This has been a long and thorough process and we are thrilled that God has prepared the way for Ian Jennings and Nnamdi Maduka to join us in January 2019. To read a short article introducing them, go to www.denhamparish.church/associates.



We will refresh our communications and publicity (e.g. website, church magazine)

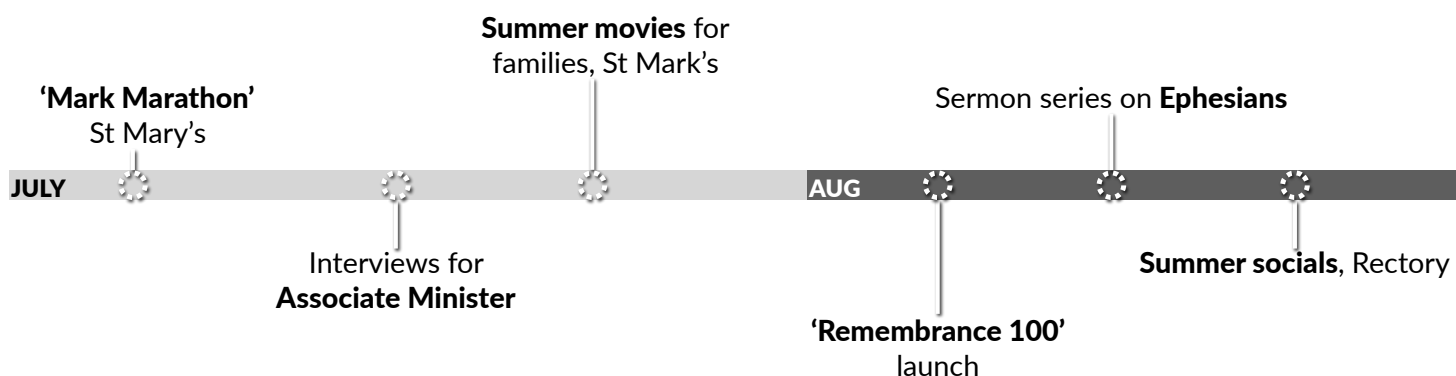
After the successful launch of our new website in late 2017, we paused publication of *Denham Parish News* from February 2018 to give us time to review and plan the re-launch. This was necessitated by the fact that our excellent long-term editor Janet Drane stepped down at the end of 2017. We made the decision to wait with the relaunch until a new editor was found. In the mean-time a small group met a couple of times to review and make suggestions for the development of our magazine. In the summer, Cathy Macqueen became our new editor and worked with the Rector and several other contributors on the relaunch. The first issue was published in November 2018, to very positive reviews. The magazine is now full-colour and published five times a year. The annual subscription fee of £5 remains unchanged. The vision is to provide a medium that engages both the church family and the wider community in Denham. To that end we are encouraging regular church members to take out a subscription (this can be done informally by paying £5 once a year and picking up your copy from church) to cover our printing costs and provide extra copies to give away for free.

We will draw up plans to improve St Mark's Hall and implement them.

At the beginning of 2018 we set up a working group, operating as a sub-committee of the PCC, with the aim of co-ordinating the various ideas and plans to upgrade St Mark's and develop a comprehensive proposal. The members of the group are the Rector (chair), David Babb, Michael Carmody, Roy Lyle, Brian O'Regan, Kathy Paine, Mike Stewart. They have met four times, once with our own church surveyor to get a comprehensive picture of the available options. A full report will be given to the PCC in 2019. In the meantime we have begun to implement important safety upgrades such as fire doors.

We will develop relationships with selected mission partners, working both in the UK and abroad.

Our PCC and APCM have adopted the following five mission partners: Trinity/SHOC (a local homeless charity), Church Army, Bible Reading Fellowship, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Tearfund (an international Christian charity, working where the need is greatest due to conflict and poverty). We have identified a church member for each of these organisations who will be a link person and ensure that



we strengthen our relationship. These five 'champions' met up for the first time in September. In November Des Scott (Church Army) spoke to us at our Sunday service. Of course we will continue to support other charities throughout the year and on special occasions.

Pray, welcome, share like Jesus

Beyond the immediate objectives of the Mission Action Plan we have continued to explore what it means to be a praying, welcoming and sharing church. You can find some of the highlights of the year on the timeline below.

Much of our welcome and care happens through **occasional offices** (baptisms, weddings and funerals); we are acutely aware of the need to improve our ongoing care and follow-up for families with whom we build a relationship through those services.

Our **weekly church services** provide the main focus for worship, community and teaching for most of our church members. **Lifegroups** help their members to deepen community and grow further in their faith in a way that larger services cannot do.

Special seasons such as **Lent** provided opportunities for shorter courses and creative engagement with our faith (e.g. prayer stations and the live streaming of the Wintershall Passion on Good Friday). As a part of our welcome we provided occasional **opportunities for community and celebration**, such as the May Fayre, St Mary's Patronal Festival, showing some of the World Cup football matches, summer movies for families and socials over the summer.

We are **part of the world-wide church** of Jesus, which is expressed through our relationships with other local churches, our deanery, diocese and other partnerships. We have a close relationship with a group of churches from various denominations in the area. The Rector continued to meet with those leaders for prayer and an annual retreat. One of the fruits of this co-operation was the joint **Rethink initiative**. Various courses outside our parish and in particular larger gatherings such as **Spring Harvest** (12 of us went) helped us to be inspired and equipped. In the same way, our story as a local church can inspire others: At a **day**



conference for the Bucks area of our diocese in March, the Rector was interviewed about our experience as a church over the last years, especially the process of welcoming members of another church (St James) into our church family and building one united community.

We marked the **centenary of Armistice Day** with two poignant services in the parish (Denham Garden Village and St Mary's) and contributions to other events, such as the remembrance event at our local village school.

Conclusion

Many prayers were answered and so many church members contributed of their time, talents and financial resources to enable our mission and ministry to flourish and to make progress on many of our stated mission objectives - thank you! A special thank you to Hilary Richins, who passed on the baton as churchwarden to Samantha Carter and to Gerald Miller, who was succeeded as treasurer by Mike Stewart. It is a gift when long-term officers of our church are succeeded by equally committed members of our church. The *ministry team*, which consisted of Carlene Litchmore, Samantha Carter, Louise Hardy, Victoria Lucas, Edda Lindner and Francis Moloney, was leading the day-to-day work of our church in its various aspects. It was a vital support for the Rector and our whole church family, as was the whole PCC.

We have seen God's faithfulness, often expressed through the faithfulness of our church members. This has enabled us to sustain and develop our ministry. Thank you!

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!

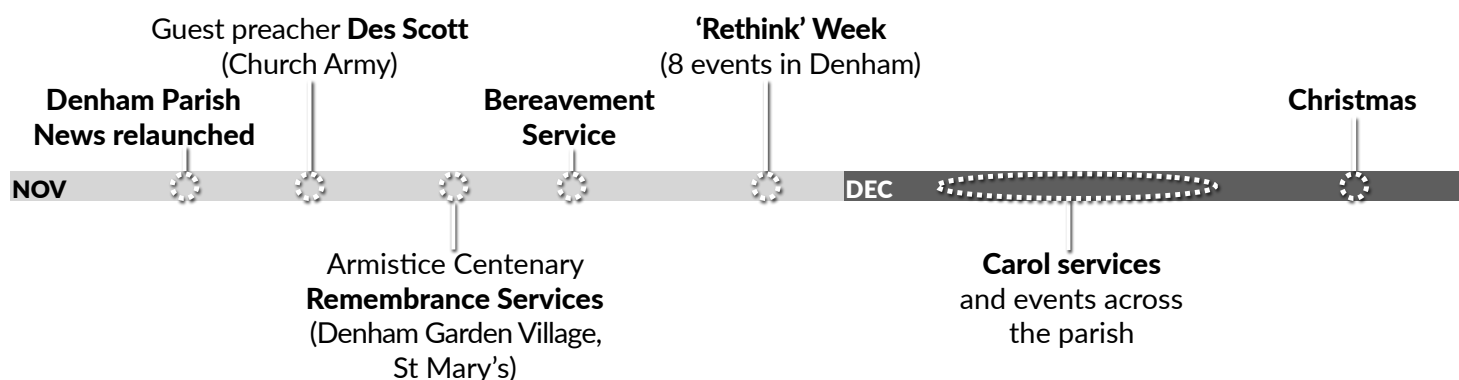
On behalf of the PCC



Rev'd Christoph Lindner, Rector

Correspondence Address for the PCC:

St Mary's Church Office
Village Road, Denham, UB9 5BH



CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT 2018

At the last APCM we bid farewell to Hilary Richins on completion of her tenure as churchwarden at St Mary's and welcomed Samantha Carter, who joined Carlene Litchmore to continue the guardianship of our church. Carlene and Samantha express their appreciation to Hilary for her support and willingness to be called upon where needed.

The Churchwardens are pleased to report that the church buildings and contents are in good order. More detailed maintenance activities can be seen in the Fabric Report.

This year has been a fairly busy period covering a wide spectrum of activities, the selection included below is to provide an insight into the role of the churchwardens.

In May the Churchwardens and Rector attended the Archdeacon of Buckingham Visitation for 2018 at St Mary's Church in Slough. The purpose of the visitation, which is conducted as a service of worship, is to formally install Churchwardens (Carlene and Samantha made our Churchwardens' Declaration with the welcome support of Christoph) within the Deanery as trustees and empowering them to undertake their responsibilities of the role.

This year's Maundy Thursday Supper took on a different format where we shared a "bring and share supper" which was then followed by the usual practice of all diners receiving holy communion.

Our annual inspection (Area Dean's Visitation) took place in July and the main focus of the inspection was placed on St Mark's Hall, also embracing the records of St Mary's. The inspection covered the St Mark's inventory - linen, communion sets, bibles, church policies, health and safety equipment, procedures and lawfully required reports and document relating to public buildings. The inspection passed without any points to address and in acknowledgement the Area Dean Tim Harper commented "I was very encouraged by our time together".

Ongoing work from Hilary's tenure saw us in June receive the Altar Cloth in memory of Barbara Randall, which now forms part of the Church Linen and graces the Lord's Table at appropriate services.

At this year's Patronal Festival we celebrated a "Hymns and Pimm's" service at St Mary's. Members of the congregation and our guest speaker Fiona Castle selected their favourite hymns and those who attended the celebration were treated to a feast of music and songs led by our Choir and the Choir of The Church of the Most Holy Name (RC) whilst having a glass of Pimm's in hand.

We received many gifts from members of the congregation for Harvest and a few volunteers helped us to separate, package and distribute the gifts amongst the community, which were well received.

In October, the Leadership Team consisting of the Rector, Churchwardens, Organist, Parish Assistant, Children's Ministry Leader and the Parish Secretary had a day out in Ware, where we attended a gathering on "Shaping the culture of local churches". It was good to see, reflect and share experiences with others outside our immediate church family.

December was a very busy month; preparation of the Church for the numerous Christmas Services and gatherings whilst making time for the everyday happenings. We distributed floral gifts to members of families who have lost loved ones during the year. (Midnight) Holy Communion was well attended; and then ... rest!

During the year we welcomed several visiting clergy and speakers, including Cathy Smith, who previously served as Curate here, Meyrick Beebee from St James, Des Scott from Church Army and Fiona Castle at our Patronal Day Service.

This year Pauline Best, Julie Jones, Rosa Burke, Ethel White and Jean Standing (among others) passed away. They have been faithful servants of St Mary's and we will miss them.

Carlene and Samantha express their appreciation to Janet Drane who was the editor of the Church Magazine for a very long period of time. She handed over the editorship to Cathy Macqueen; welcome Cathy!

We thank all the sidespersons, readers, intercessors and servers for their continued diligent service. We thank the cleaners of St Mary's and St Mark's, flower arrangers and the refreshment team whose dedication we could not do without. We thank the choir and bell ringers for their talents in making our services enjoyable.

Carlene and Samantha thank Christoph, the PCC and the congregation for their support and prayers during the year.

(Carlene Litchmore and Samantha Carter)

2018 FINANCIAL REVIEW AND RESULTS

The accounts, which have been reviewed by David Steel FCA, acting as an Independent Examiner, show a surplus of £1,310 in the General Fund, a surplus of £16,878 in the Fabric Fund and a use of funds of £6,287 in the Growth Fund. Combined these give a net surplus of £11,901 which is matched by an increase in cash balances of £10,436.

Income in the General Fund increased from £120,844 in 2017 to £135,303 in 2018. Every element of our income was up compared to the previous year except Weddings and Funerals which showed a decrease from £17,384 to £12,648, a trend that looks likely to continue into the current year.

Expenditure in the individual General Fund cost headings was in line with budget and similar to last year. Utilities expenditure was up compared with last year but very similar to the costs in 2016. Churchyard costs at £4,287 are lower than the £6,311 the previous year, where some estimates for anticipated expenditure were higher than required when the invoices were received.

By far and away the biggest increase in expenditure is in Donations to Charities which increased from £5,490 in 2017 to £18,609 this year. This increase is due in part to a very generous gift of £8,000 received during the year specifically for our mission partners, but it also reflects a substantial increase in the charitable donations from our extended Church Family.

Income in the Fabric Fund totalled £47,087 which included a surplus from the Village Fayre of £15,827 and a number of very generous donations totalling £21,970. In addition there was net rental income from St Francis House of £8,310.

Expenditure from the Fabric Fund totalled £30,209 with the three largest elements being £10,601 for churchyard paths and drainage, £6,208 for the refurbishment of St Francis House and £5,845 for a new mower.

Expenditure from the growth fund included £1,694 (net) for *Rethink*, £2,195 for recruitment of the Associate Ministers, £946 for a new screen at St Mark's Hall (net of a donation of £1,000 from Bucks County Council) and £1,308 for an upgrade to the website.

Cash Balances increased from £310,135 to £320,571, of which £284,500 are on deposit with CCLA, the charity investment organisation for the Church of England.

(Mike Stewart, PCC Treasurer)

NB. The financial statements on the following pages will be available in a larger format at our APCM.

Extracted from the Annual Report of the PCC for the Year Ended 31st December 2018

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin Denham

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

		General Fund (Unrestricted)		Fabric Fund (Designated)		Church Growth Fund (Designated)		Total Funds	
	Note	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES									
Weekly collections		7,815	4,465					7,815	4,465
Covenants/Gift Aid		80,053	75,773					80,053	75,773
Tax recovered		21,710	19,366					21,710	19,366
Donations		3,358	368					3,358	368
Incoming resources from donors		112,136	99,972	-	-	-	-	112,136	99,972
Denham & Patronal Festival Fairs								-	-
Vestry Teas & Sunday coffees		3,030	1,839					3,030	1,839
Miscellaneous		4,056						4,056	-
Other voluntary income resources		7,066	1,839	-	-	-	-	7,066	1,839
Wedding & Funeral Fees		12,648	17,344					12,648	17,344
Denham News/Parousia			(301)					0	(301)
May Fayre				15,827	16,527			15,827	16,527
Rethink / Miscellaneous				980	1,107	1,950		2,930	1,107
Donations to Fund				21,970	30,000	1,241		23,211	30,000
St Francis House net rental income				8,310	13,955			8,310	13,955
Income from charitable & ancillary trading		12,648	17,063	47,087	61,589	3,191	-	62,926	78,672
Income from Investments - interest		3,433	1,990					3,433	1,990
Total Incoming Resources	1	135,303	120,884	47,087	61,589	3,191	-	185,581	182,473
RESOURCES EXPENDED									
Gas & Electricity		3,116	2,336					3,116	2,336
Church Insurance		4,113	4,175					4,113	4,175
Churchyard	2	4,287	6,311					4,287	6,311
St Francis House	3	942	1,082					942	1,082
St Francis Church		127	638					127	638
St Marks House	4	95	525					95	525
St Marks Church	5	1,657	0					1,657	0
Cleaning		2,580	2,631					2,580	2,631
Secretarial Expenses		11,762	10,061					11,762	10,061
Printing, Post, Books & Stationery	6	1,829	2,967					1,829	2,967
Clergy Administration & Training		3,606	2,088					3,606	2,088
Telephone		1,315	1,218					1,315	1,218
Organist		3,595	3,698					3,595	3,698
Parish Store		67,345	67,729					67,345	67,729
Childrens Ministry		641	579					641	579
Parish Hospitality		987	1,011					987	1,011
Fabric Expenditure	7			30,209	19,226			30,209	19,226
Church Growth Expenditure	8					5,478	3,366	9,478	3,366
Miscellaneous		6,587	7,059					6,587	7,059
Donations to Charities	9	18,609	5,490					18,609	5,490
Total Resources Expended		133,993	119,596	30,209	19,226	9,478	3,366	173,680	142,188
NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		1,310	1,288	16,878	42,363	(6,287)	(3,366)	11,901	40,285
Balances brought forward at 1st January		41,390	40,102	212,965	170,602	31,860	37,126	288,215	247,930
BALANCE C/FWD AT 31st DECEMBER		42,700	41,390	229,843	212,965	25,573	33,760	300,116	288,215

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.

David Steel FCA

(Original signed)

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin Denham

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2018

	2018 £	2017 £
Current Assets		
Short term deposits	284,500	284,500
Bank Current Account	36,071	25,635
Cash in hand		
	320,571	310,135
Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors, accruals & Gift Aid in advance	(20,455)	(21,920)
Net Assets	£ 300,116	£ 288,215
Funds		
General Fund (unrestricted)	42,700	41,390
Fabric Fund (designated)	229,843	212,965
Church Growth Fund (restricted)	27,573	33,860
	£ 300,116	£ 288,215

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 12 February 2019 and signed on their behalf by
Rev. Christoph Lindner (Rector) and Samantha Carter & Carlene Lichmore (Church Wardens)

(Original signed)
Rev C Lindner

(Original signed)
Mrs S Carter

(Original signed)
Mrs C Lichmore

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 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.

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin - Denham

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

	2018	2017		2018	2017
	£	£		£	£
1 Donations Received (Fabric Fund)			7 Fabric Expenditure (Fabric Fund)		
Dorations	21,970	30,000	Churchyard Paths & Drainage	10,601	10,105
May Fayre	15,827	16,527	St Francis House Refurbishment	6,208	
Rert St Francis House*	8,310	13,955	New Mower	5,845	
Miscellaneous	980	1,107	Professional Fees	3,333	
*net of minor mtce/replacements	47,087	61,589	Rectory Gardens	2,800	
Donations Received (Growth Fund)			Chairs (vestry & St Marks) net		7,606
Rethink	1,950		Storage shed		1,045
Christmas Collections	800		Miscellaneous	1,422	470
Dorations	441			30,209	19,226
	3,191	-			
2 Church Yard			8 Church Growth Fund		
Parish Council Grant	(1,100)	(1,100)	Rethink -	3,644	
Groundsman	5,050	5,175	Recruitmen: Associate Ministers	2,195	
Minor repairs, tools & consumables	837	2,236	St Mark's Hall Screen	1,946	
Release of 2017 Provision	(500)	-	Website Upgrade	1,308	
	4,287	6,311	Misc	385	3,368
3 St Francis House				9,478	3,366
Insurance	79	546			
Boiler service/ Alarm mtce.	533	536	9 Charitable Donations		
Miscellaneous	330	-	Mission Partners		
	942	1,082	Trinity / SHOC	3,100	175
4 St Marks House			Trinity / SHOC - Christmas	800	825
Insurance		1,043	Tearfund	3,100	825
Boiler/alarm service	95	95	Church Army	3,100	500
Misc inc minor refurbishments		1,097	Bible Reading Fellowship	3,100	
Rert rec'd (net agents fees)		(1,710)	Wycliffe Bible Translations	3,100	180
	95	525			
5 St Marks Church			Other Donations		
Doration from St Marks	(3,000)	(4,200)	Royal British Legion	608	362
Light, heat, power, water.	1,223	1,262	Vestry Teas - 14 Charities	1,701	752
Cleaning & maintenance	2,438	1,865			
Insurance	996	1,073	Other Charities in 2017		6,892
	1,657	-		18,609	10,511
6 Printing, Post, Books & Stationery					
Photo copier - Rectory/Office	672	684			
Books & training aids	283	1,433			
Stationery & Postage etc	874	850			
	1,829	2,967			

REPORTS FROM OUR GROUPS AND MINISTRIES: FROM A TO Z

BAPTISMS

2018 was a busy year for baptisms. It is a privilege to welcome children (and adults!) as they begin their Christian faith journey. We had four 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 or in a separate service where we could not accommodate the number of family and friends attending the baptism in a regular church service.

In 2018 we baptised 19 babies/children and four adults and had one thanksgiving for the gift of two children.

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, thanks particularly to Barry Wild, who has recently stepped down as Steeple Keeper. Luke Boreham has agreed to take over, helped by other ringers. Two new ropes are on order as one wore through late last year. We have sufficient funds (mostly from the remnant of wedding fees once the ringers have been paid) to cover routine maintenance costs; they should take us through what seems likely to be a quiet year for wedding bells in 2019.

Death watch beetle in one of the main beams still seems active, and discussions continue with the PCC about the best way to deal with it long term.

Ringers

We have nine ringers at the moment, which is just about enough, but other commitments, illness and advancing years means we do not always have the 6 we need on Sunday and for weddings; over Christmas we were pleased to welcome a

few visitors which helped immensely. A couple more ringers at least would still be welcome so we ask everyone to be on the lookout for likely candidates, a personal approach having proved to be the most successful form of recruitment.

Weddings

The fee charged for bells has not been regularly updated since a one-off increase a few years ago. At £100 it is one of the lowest in the area (the average was around £140 when last surveyed in late 2014). It limits the amount we can pay ringers and can be awkward if we call on ringers from elsewhere who are used to more and have to travel further. We welcome the PCC's intention to review these fees at the beginning of 2019.



General

On Remembrance Sunday 2018 we were able to combine elements of two well-intentioned but conflicting national suggestions to give thanks for the centenary of the end of the First World War and to remember all those who had died in that and other conflicts. I gather the ringing was well-received.

We are indebted to John Davidge from the local Ringers Guild for his continued support, particularly on practice nights. We are also grateful to the volunteers who take turns to operate the chiming mechanism on alternate Sundays. More people would be welcome for this role, which can be picked up rather more easily than tower ringing and need only involve one Sunday every few months.

(Andrew Simpson, Tower Captain)

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

A for Amazing Teams

It's been a busy year. This is how often our regular groups and activities happened in 2018:

- Assemblies x35
- Destiny x11
- Little Lions x37
- Messy Church x9
- Sunday Club x48

All these ministries to, for and with children and their families can only happen because of all the people who give their time and talent. A big 'thank you!' to everyone who has helped plan, shape, run and support any of these ministries that focus on the younger generation. We said thank you and farewell to two members of the team who have moved away: Missy Sharp and Marjo den Broeder were very involved since March 2016. Also a big thank you to Anne Thomas who was the kitchen co-ordinator for Messy Church for two years.

(Below: Two of the many amazing teams)



B for Branching Out!

Under the capable leadership of Jane Brown and Sonja Clements the activities for families on Fayre Day have grown further and the south side of the churchyard was filled with fun, laughter and accessible activities for all families throughout the day.



In 2018 we were able to increase the number of assemblies at both schools. What was known as *Sunday Club Older* became *Destiny* (the name was chosen by the children themselves): *Destiny* is the monthly session for children from school years 5 and up in the Rectory.

We have introduced a leaflet for families which is issued twice a year and summarises all the activities for children and families.

At the family service in July, we marked the transition of five children, who moved from primary school to secondary school.

In July and August we offered “Summer Movies at St Mark’s” for all ages. Both events were popular and created welcome and inexpensive activities. Families could vote for their favourite movies at Messy Church. We showed *Finding Dory* and *Toy Story 3*. At both events we welcomed more than 30 adults and children. On October 31st we offered a Lantern Trail, which was very well received and all ages had fun sharing food and walking with their lanterns from St Mary’s to the Rectory and finishing the celebration with toasted marshmallows and hot chocolate.

C for Creativity

All our activities in 2018 were marked by creativity and a loving attention to detail. Some special events need to be mentioned:

To mark the ***Centenary of the end of WW1*** we created a poppy banner and all ages from the community had the opportunity to make one of the 100 poppies on the banner, which was then displayed at St Mary’s Church on Remembrance Sunday.



This year the ***Christmas story*** was narrated by the Sunday Club children through the lens of the animals. A detective mouse, together with the help of a donkey, a sheep and a camel solved the mystery of the first ever Christmas at this year’s Christmas Family Carols. The children and team were outstanding.

(Edda Lindner)

Little Lions

(Kathy Paine)

Little Lions continues to thrive and we often have up to 25 mums/carers attending with their children. We have a core group that attend regularly who over the year have formed good friendships with each other and with us. There is real community here and mutual support. We just love seeing the babies grow up and become lively toddlers who participate with gusto in our story/singing/dance sessions.

We are grateful for those who generously give their time to help, especially our trusty snack team who provide refreshments with such love and dedication. Many thanks to those who have joined and those who are moving on. We would welcome more volunteers with open arms so please let us know if you can spare some time.

Our group is self-funding on a week-by-week basis and we manage to provide snacks, craft activities and replace toys where we can. We were delighted to be able to buy some much needed chairs, a table and a set of gym play blocks with a grant we were given from Denham Parish Council for which we were very grateful. We are working towards investing in an outside playhouse and some more secure fencing when more funding becomes available.

In November we were pleased to run an event for *Rethink*, considering the tricky faith questions children ask. Edda and Kathy are planning to run a *Care for the Family Parenting Course* in 2019 as several of our Little Lions mums have expressed an interest.

Meanwhile we all look forward to Wednesday mornings where there is much fun and laughter, where we share Bible stories, say prayers and chat – though it's rather tricky to finish a sentence sometimes!

CHOIR

I would like to thank each and every member of our choir (17) for their support and encouragement in the musical, spiritual and social life of our community at St Mary's. In October we had the opportunity to explore and review our worship and the part music plays through the "Exploring Worship" course. This was based on a three-part interactive course "Inspiring music in worship" by Helen Bent. Week by week our choristers are also involved in the PCC, bell ringing, pastoral care, life groups, leading intercessions, reading the lessons, providing refreshments at vestry teas and after the morning service and helping at the annual village fayre.

We enjoyed several social events through the year – a garden party thanks to the hospitality of Caroline and Clive Ashcroft and an evening meal at the White Hart, Chalfont Giles when we were joined by previous choir members Ken and Kath and Bill and Caroline. A number of us went to Prom Praise at the Albert Hall and to Spring Harvest in April.

In June we said goodbye to Marjo (she returned to Holland) with a lunch after the morning service at Suzanne and Lee's garden and were thrilled she came back to visit and sing with us at the Nine Lessons and Carols. It is sad when members move away but we are fortunate that Chris Macqueen, George Meacock and Clive Ashcroft have joined us and we have at present a well-balanced choir.

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 (called *Hymns and Pimm's* this year) in the afternoon and afterwards relaxed over afternoon tea. We were also boosted by contributions from pianist John Breese and organists Mervyn Hogg and Ben Hunt. Later in the month Richard invited us to take part in a recording he was making at St Joseph's and also to join the audience at the Christmas Carol concert at the Church of the Holy Name.

In November during *Rethink week* as a group we had opportunities to join with the parish in a number of local events. Engaging with people at the parade in Denham Green, taking part in an evening of worship at Latimer Minster, singing at an open choir practice culminating in presentations by the 'Rethink choir' on the Sunday morning and enjoying the Jonathan Viera concert (organised by Carole) to name just a few!

In December Beverley and I joined with Christoph and Edda to take part in the *Carols and Readings for Christmas* at Denham Garden Village. We were delighted to lead carols with residents of White Plains Care Home and to join with other local organisations and groups on the Village Green for a fun night of carols.

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 are continuing to expand our musical styles and are always on the lookout for instrumentalists and singers who would like to be involved in helping to lead our worship. (Louise Hardy)

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Amersham Deanery Synod comprises laity and ministers from local churches in the area, who meet four times a year to share best practice and learn more about common issues pertinent to our local churches.

The 2018 meetings have focussed on children's ministries at home and abroad, mental health issues and new ways of parish giving.

In Feb, Julie Dziegiel, gave a talk on *Messy Church*, its origins, aims and implementation. The original concept was an all-age, intergenerational meeting with an interactive and creative dimension to teaching the bible. Many churches in the area have engaged with the concept although in most cases the focus has been on delivering a service for younger children.

In May, Janna Holder from the Holy Trinity and Baptist Churches in Seer Green, spoke about the children's and young people's ministry in that area. The talk contained many good ideas on engaging outreach to children and young people in the community.

In September, GP Graeme Fletcher gave a comprehensive talk on the increasingly important issue of mental health in schools, church and community. Graeme gave an explanation of the most common mental health problems and ways for the general public to best help. He covered; depression, anxiety, suicide, bi-polar, schizophrenia and borderline personality disorder.

In November, Steve Poulson, who grew up in Amersham, inspired with his talk on the work of the charity *Street Kids Direct* in Honduras, a young people's mentoring scheme that is funded by the Church Mission Society.

In May and November, presentations were given on, the Parish Giving Scheme, with an emphasis on the advantages to smaller congregations of, among other things, recouping Gift Aid on giving on a monthly, rather than annual, basis.

(Janet Allen)

DENHAM PARISH NEWS

Denham Parish News was re-launched in November 2018, in colour and with 5 issues per year (November/February/May/July/September). The cover price is now £1 per issue with the annual fee for subscribers remaining at £5 p.a, including free delivery to those subscribers living within the Parish.

Production of the magazine is very much a team effort, with special thanks going to Carole Wadlow and her faithful team of distributors, everyone who has contributed articles or photos and to Sam Eastwood for his graphic design skills in

making the magazine look so appealing. I'd also like to thank our many advertisers and acknowledge the faithful and diligent work of Eve Harrison who recently stepped down from her role co-ordinating them over many years.

It has been a steep learning curve for me as editor but I am excited to see how God can use the magazine to reach out to our local community.

(Cathy Macqueen)

DENHAM VILLAGE FAYRE

2018'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, refreshments 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, fairground for smaller children, Morris dancers, cheerleaders, beekeepers, Punch and Judy man, brass band and a children's activities area in the churchyard.

The day raised just over £16,000 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

2018 saw our *lifegroups* grow from one to three – Monday mornings (women only), Monday evenings and Thursday evenings. Even in a mid-sized church as ours it is difficult to form deep friendships on the basis of a few chats before and after the weekly service. It is also very difficult to apply the readings and sermons from a service without reflections and support in a smaller group. That's why lifegroups are such a helpful way to grow in friendship and faith. Much pastoral and prayer support also happens through the members of the group.

In the spring term, a new evening lifegroup started to meet on Thursdays, following on from the *Bible Course* in the autumn of 2017. The group is hosted by Francis and Annabel Moloney in St Mark's House. *The Well* at St Mark's (fortnightly on Monday evenings) transitioned into the START! course on Monday nights. After START! this group continued to meet and became our third lifegroup on Monday evenings. Our lifegroups have chosen a variety of materials, from

women in the Bible, *Freedom in Christ*, *Discipleship Explored*, to *Talking Jesus* (a resource helping us in sharing our faith).

In April a group of about 12 church members went to *Spring Harvest* again. *Spring Harvest* is a Christian conference and festival. We enjoyed the week very much and will take a group again in 2019. Inspired by their contributions at Spring Harvest, we invited Jonathan Veira to give a concert and Louise Morse a talk as part of *Rethink* here in Denham. Both events were well received.

While *Rethink* was primarily conceived as an event to invite those who have big questions and are not part of a church, we have found the themes of the week profoundly helpful for our own discipleship. Big questions such as “God and suffering” concern us all and we wrestle with them, no matter how long we have been a Christian.

There were other opportunities to grow in our faith, such as a *Lent course* on the Beatitudes (written by Bishop Steven Croft) and a ‘*Mark Marathon*’ in the summer: about 30 people met one evening to read through the whole of Mark’s gospel, on which the lectionary readings for the year were based.

On Easter Day, two members of our church were *confirmed* at St James in Gerrards Cross. For 2019 we are hoping to host a confirmation service in our own church.

FABRIC REPORT

Church and Churchyard

Matters that occupied much of the Fabric Group’s time during 2018 did not on the face of it, result in clear and tangible achievements. Progress in three major fabric issues affecting St Mary’s was hampered by the prolonged process of gaining DAC approval for works to be carried out and to a lesser degree, by the concern of the Fabric Group to ensure that matters were being addressed in a considered and logical manner.

1. Church drainage

MDC Land Services carried out an initial investigation in December 2017 to see what might be proposed as a solution to the system of rainwater drainage runs and soakaways that has in recent years not coped effectively with the dispersal of rainwater.

DAC Faculty was awarded in September 2018 and works undertaken in October to excavate and clear the drains and renew silted soakaways with modern replacements.



With Thames Water Authority approval the storm water drains from and adjacent to the Vestry, were diverted into the foul drainage system.



2. Damp in structural walls

An informal assessment in 2016 by a conservation expert identified that damp in the church's structural walls was primarily the result of the application of cement-based mortar when re-pointing the exterior faces in the 1980s. The Fabric Group sought a second opinion, formulated a project brief and commissioned Hutton+Rostron, experts in building pathology and architectural conservation, to undertake a detailed survey.



The instruction requested a final report on the likely cause of damp in the church walls and floor, to assess the damage (bubbling and flaking interior paint and the masonry; discolouration of exterior flint church walls; crumbling of other dressed stone and quoins) and to advise on recommended remedial works and the consequences of not doing anything.

DAC approval for dust samples from drill holes to be extracted for salt/moisture content analysis took three months to be granted and so the survey was not carried out before the end of 2018. It will be undertaken early in 2019.

3. Interior walls re-decoration

A programme of works to carry out interior wall re-decoration clearly should dovetail with considerations related to the damp walls situation. The western Nave arch, above the organ however might be the exception to that; and mindful of the need to have the organ both serviced and deep-cleaned (the latter long overdue), efforts during the autumn focussed on sourcing potential contract decorators to undertake such work and one such contractor has subsequently been commissioned.

4. Church roof

Summit Roofing contractors undertook the first phase of roof maintenance and repair works in November (lead flashing re-sealed and re-pointed, gutters cleaned).

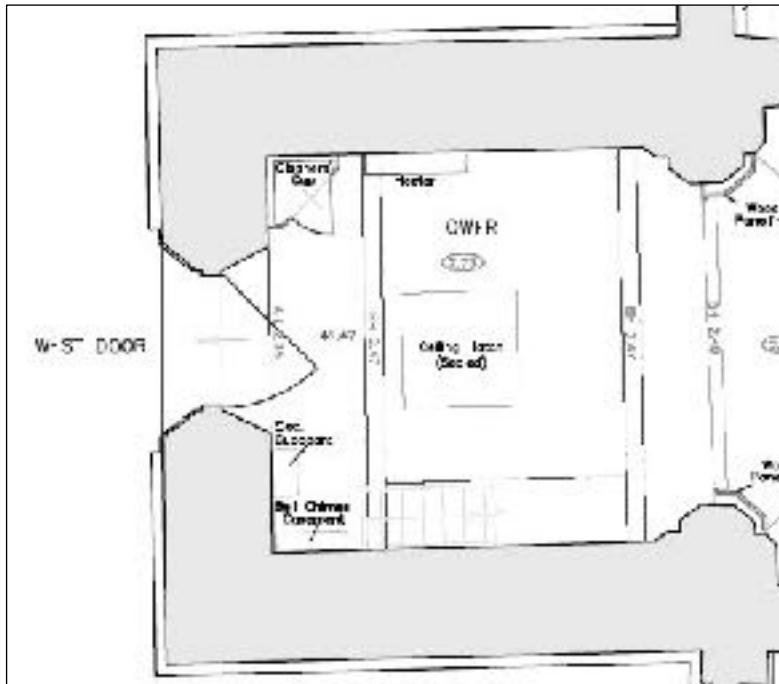
Phase 2 of this work relates to the proposed installation of rainwater guttering along the north and south faces of the upper Nave so that we have a more effective drainage system to reduce the amount of roof run-off that gets blown onto the external wall faces, (especially the south face), that we think causes the leaks in the South Aisle.

5. Churchyard paths

The path behind the Vestry was cleared and the full extents of the paving exposed so that contractor, Ultraclean, was able to surface clean all the York stone paths in early December before the onset of winter.

6. St Mary's Measured Survey

A measured survey of the church and adjacent churchyard was undertaken by Plowman Craven Ltd., chartered geomatic surveyors. Using terrestrial laser scanners combined with conventional survey instruments, surveyors spent four days on site capturing 3D and 2D data that has provided a set of accurate CAD plans that will be used for fabric projects in the years to come.



7. Fabric matters to be addressed in 2019

Areas for attention (in no particular order):

- Church interior walls re-decoration
- Vestry and office refurbishment
- Churchyard path repairs
- Nave roof guttering installation
 - o Lightning conductor installation
- Development of a strategy for addressing the damp in the structural walls and floor
- 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

(Robert Ash)

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AND ENRICHMENT

2018 saw a fall in the number of weddings, compared to previous years. This is a trend that will continue in 2019 and it remains to be seen whether this is a blip or whether we are catching up with a trend that many other churches have seen over the last years. In 2018 we had 11 weddings and one service of dedication after a civil marriage ('wedding blessing').

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.

PASTORAL CARE

The pastoral team that we established in the autumn of 2016 met five times in 2018. We established a regular rhythm of meetings (every other month) and assigned a main contact from the team to each individual who had particular or ongoing pastoral needs. We hold all members of the team to a rigorous standard of confidentiality. Our pastoral care policy guides us in our ministry. 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."

Much pastoral care is of course done naturally amongst friends. We believe that one of the best places for it is the **lifegroup**, where people know each other, share their ups and downs and pray for each other. It has been so encouraging to see how members of lifegroups have looked after one another and have become a great source of strength and support.

PRAYER

Last year we were planning to review how we can engage more people in regular prayer as numbers at our Monday evening prayer at St Mark's had diminished. As a result of our review we put our focus on developing lifegroups, where prayer is an integral part of the group's life. It is encouraging to see that other teams begin and end their meetings with prayer – let's continue to make prayer a natural activity when we come together!

There is an important place for special times of prayer and we continue to explore opportunities for this. A prayer evening at Latimer Minster in preparation for *Rethink* was well supported by members of our church and showed us creative ways of engaging in prayer.



On Good Friday we provided prayer stations at St Mary's, which helped us to engage with Jesus' journey to the cross (see one of them on the photo). They were put together with great care and those (relatively few) who came found the experience very meaningful.

For the third year running the Archbishop of Canterbury's prayer initiative *Thy Kingdom Come* in the days leading up to Pentecost was taken up by many churches. In 2018 we held daily evening prayer for a week at St Mary's during that time. Everyone who came was encouraged and expressed a hunger for more prayer meetings of this kind.

We joined another Christian prayer initiative, *Remembrance 100* marking the 100 days before Armistice Day, with a special evening prayer in August, followed by weekly prayer guides. We have had very little feedback whether church members engaged with it and how helpful they found it. It seems that praying is easier when we come together in one place.

Prayer is one of the three central areas of our church vision. It remains a central part of our services. We continue to meet for a short pre-service prayer at St Mary's on Sundays at 9.55am. Everyone is welcome to join us.

SAFEGUARDING

'Safeguarding is a key aspect of the church's ministry'

There were 5 new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal record checks requested in 2018. One of those was a renewal. This gave us a total of 21 volunteers able to work with children and vulnerable adults in Denham Parish. 9 of those volunteers were able to work with children and young people only, 2 of those volunteers were able to work with vulnerable adults only and 10 of those volunteers were able to work with both children and vulnerable adults. The ministries involved were children's work, pastoral care, choir, bell ringing and safeguarding.

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

The PCC also adopted a new Recruitment and Disclosure Barring Services criminal record check Policy. We updated our 'Safeguarding Contact Details' notice and introduced a postcode sign (to assist calling the emergency services should the need arise) and displayed both in all church buildings.

The Diocese announced it was working towards creating a church which was safer for everyone by updating its recommendations for safeguarding training. We endorsed this by encouraging all PCC members and volunteers such as sidespeople, servers, readers and intercessors to undertake a basic online training course and some took up this opportunity. Our volunteers working more closely with children and vulnerable adults continued to undertake more detailed training.

The Access Personal Checking Services Ltd (APCS) continued as our DBS Umbrella Body and proved cost effective, approachable and efficient with some checks coming back within 24 hours.

The PCC approved our Parish Secretary, Victoria Lucas, as an additional Parish Verifier, allowing her to view and check identification provided by candidates undergoing DBS checks. All DBS applications were undertaken online either by the candidate at home or with assistance in the office.

I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to all our Parish volunteers for investing their time and effort in valuable work and showing a duty of care in establishing a safe and caring community. I am very grateful for the continued support of the Rector and members of the PCC in another busy year.

(Samantha Carter, Parish Safeguarding Officer)

ST FRANCIS HOUSE

Our tenants of four years left the house at the end of October 2018 so that it could be refurbished before the arrival of Nnamdi Maduka and his family at the end of December. The cost of property insurance, boiler servicing and alarm system maintenance totalled £942 in the year. All other minor property maintenance and agent's fees are offset by rent received, which led to a total of £8,310 being transferred into the Fabric Fund. The refurbishment programme brought the house back up to an appropriate standard throughout at a total cost of £6,208. *(Mike Stewart)*

ST MARK'S HALL

Our own parish church has been making increased use of the hall. We are therefore pleased that we have managed to cover the basic running costs by our letting income, in spite of losing a couple of our regular hirers during 2018. We welcomed, however, a new regular monthly hirer (a Christian Asian community).

The management committee met four times during the year and undertook a root and branch review of all the terms and conditions of letting and set up some new protocols for hirers. The booking system was transferred to the Parish office and alternative new methods of payment established by our treasurer. We also looked at safeguarding and insurance provisions for the hall making our regular hirers more responsible in this regard and a start was made on some desirable health and safety improvements to try to meet modern standards.

The major physical work involved the provision of a range of storage cupboards in the small hall following which the area was redecorated by the voluntary and competent efforts of John Breese, Kathy Paine and Edda Lindner. Additional and better seating provision was made and the store room decluttered and reorganised.

A new TV screen has been installed with the assistance of an external grant which can be made available to our hirers for a small additional fee.

Because of the many changes that have occurred a meeting was held with our regular hirers to get feedback and find out what further improvements to facilities may be desirable – this was well received.

My thanks to all those who have been physically involved in practical maintenance of grounds (notably John Breese), buildings and equipment.

(Michael Carmody, Chair of St Mark's Committee)

ST MARK'S HOUSE

An en-suite bathroom was added to one of the bedrooms in 2016 to give us added flexibility in the use of the property. St Mark's House has been occupied by Francis and Annabelle Moloney and (for a couple of days per week) Judith and David Babb. Rental income totalled £3,000 and the operational costs totalled £95. *(Mike Stewart)*

VESTRY TEAS

The vestry tea season began at the beginning of June until the end of September with many long hot sunny Sundays. We had four new group organisers this year raising funds for *Blind Veterans*, *Chiltern Child Contact*, *Red Cross* and *RSPCA* along with other charities, like *Cancer Research*, *Papyrus* (teenage helpline). *Prostate Cancer* and for the benefit of our own church funds. Thank you so much to everyone who baked the delicious cakes, poured the tea and to the kitchen helpers, without whom vestry teas could not take place. All these provide a relaxing time and tasty refreshment for our visitors. (Hilary Richins)

WORSHIP

Our 8am Sunday service (Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion) continued to have a small but committed core congregation. We have lost a few stalwarts due to health reasons, but regularly welcome visitors or church members who tend to come to 10.30 but find 8am a good alternative on days when they cannot make the later service. It provides a contemplative space at the beginning of the Lord's Day.

Our 10.30am Sunday service remains the focal point of our worship, community and discipleship. Attendance has been steady, at times increased by baptism parties and on feast days. We continue to have a mix of seasons when we follow the Church of England lectionary in our Bible readings and other times when we have specific sermon series to help us develop aspects of our discipleship. In 2018 we focused on Mark's Gospel, and in particular followed Jesus' journey to the cross in the weeks leading up to Easter. Other sermon series reflected on the Fruit of the Spirit, St Paul's letter to the Ephesians and 'knowing and telling the gospel'.

Our monthly Café Church service at St Mark's is now well established, with a mix of familiar hymns and prayers, conversations around tables, a short talk and home-made cakes. A regular congregation has developed and we are exploring ways to invite new people to what is a friendly and engaging service. A dedicated team help to set up, run and take down the service and many people contribute cakes.

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

We continued to hold a monthly service with discussion group at St Francis with a small but committed and appreciative group. We tended to use the same themes there as at Café Church.

Special services such as Easter, St Mary's 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!





APCM 2018



When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. (*St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 2*)

