



Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Celebrating the Life of our Church

Wednesday 27th April 2016

8.15 pm

St Mary's Transept Hall

SIDESPERSIONS 2016

Name	Telephone
Sue Ashton	620276
Julie Beaman **	792123
Janet Biggs	792289
Doris Cheetham	792669
Barbara Corbett **	792738
Lilian Cowland	792505
Isobel and Damian Cranmer	626495
Sandra Cresswell	01442 248669
Derek Crouch * / **	629768
Louise Emmins	793616
Chris Fernley	794843
Celia and David Forbes	794062
Ralph Goold	792716
Brian Hayward	792982
Julie Henman **	794889
Alan and Edna Lindfield *	792159
Natalie Marsh	07989 504108
Dick Morgan	792166
Ann Palmer	792108
Heather Reid	792369
Pauline Ridgeway **	793579
Grace Sawyer *	793743
Alan and Angie Simkins	792151
Susan and Anna Stacey	794800
Sue Taylor	793820
Jill Whitehouse (**)	01442 394691
Allyson and Rod Woodhouse	01442 254003
Rosemary Woodhouse **	792668

* Sidespersons who have also agreed to act as reserves.

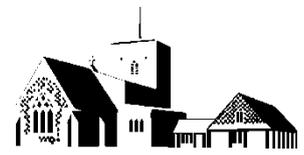
** Sidepersons for Baptism services.

*“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers,
for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”
Hebrews 13. 2*

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THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN



THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS to be held on Wednesday 27th April 2016, at 8.15 pm in the Transept Hall of St Mary's Church

AGENDA

Opening Prayer

1 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th April 2015

2 Motion:

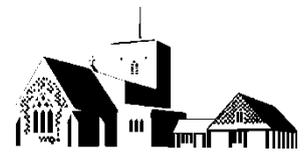
‘That the requirement of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 that a churchwarden may serve for a maximum period of six terms of office (six years) as churchwarden of the same parish will not apply for the elections for Churchwardens at St Mary, Redbourn to be held on 27th April 2016’

3 Election of 2 Parochial Churchwardens

4 Election of up to 2 Deputy Wardens

5 Chairman's Closing Remarks

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29th APRIL 2015

Present: The Vicar, The Curate, two additional clergy and 47 Parishioners and one visitor.

The Vicar opened the meeting at 8.15 pm with a prayer.

1) **Minutes of the Meeting held 30th April 2014**

The Minutes of the meeting were read, approved as drawn, and signed by the Vicar as a true record.

Proposed by: Peter Hansford Seconded by: Clive Williams Passed: Nem Con

2) **Motion**

The requirements of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 that a Churchwarden may serve for a maximum period of six terms of office (six years) as Churchwarden of the same parish, will not apply for the elections of Churchwardens at St Mary, Redbourn to be held on 29th April 2015.

Proposed by: Brian Hayward Seconded by: David Cheetham Passed: Nem Con

3) **Election of Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens**

Churchwardens

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Sue May	Stephen Gell	Celia Forbes
Mollie Williams	Stephen Gell	Celia Forbes

Deputy Churchwardens

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Alan Simkins	Mollie Williams	Sam Butterworth
Stephen Gell	Shirley Foster	Bill Foster

All the above were elected Nem Con.

4) **Vote of Thanks**

The Vicar offered the thanks of all the meeting and expressed gratitude for the additional hard work put in, especially in view of the building work being carried out during the year. The Vicar was pleased to have the same team carrying on for a further year.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.24 pm

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN

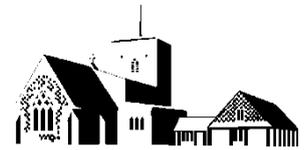


THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING to be held on Wednesday 27th April 2016, at 8.15 pm in the Transept Hall of St Mary's Church

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th April 2015**
- To receive and discuss**
 - 3 The Electoral Roll**
 - 4 A Report on the Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council**
 - 5 A Report on the Proceedings of the Deanery Synod**
 - 6 The Annual Report & Financial Statements 2015**
 - 7 A Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**
 - 8 A Report of the Ministry and Witness of the Church throughout 2015**
- 9 Election of 4 Representatives to the Parochial Church Council**
- 10 Appointment of Sidespeople**
- 11 Appointment of an Independent Examiner to St Mary's Church**
- 12 Any Other Business**
- 13 Chairman's Closing Remarks**

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29th APRIL 2015 IN THE TRANSEPT HALL OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Present: The Vicar, The Curate, two additional clergy, 47 Parishioners and one visitor

The meeting opened at 8.25pm under the chairmanship of the Lay Co-Chairman.

Apologies for Absence: Janet Biggs, Karen Doye, Ken Smith, Barbara Corbett, David Swift, Wendy Cruickshank, Albert & Reona Joly, Janet Lang, Jan Nelder, Martin & Anne Howe, Catharine Pusey, George & Diana Reading, Cyril Harling, Mark Cresswell, Louise McPhee, Ruth Handford, Val Simmons

Booklets containing the minutes of the previous APCM, the various reports and the Accounts for 2014, were available for perusal before the meeting, either by e-mail wherever possible, and by hard copy in Church.

1) Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th April 2014

The minutes of the meeting were read and approved as a true record, and were signed as such by the Chairman of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

Adoption of the minutes

Proposed by: Mollie Williams Seconded by: Stephen Gell Passed: Nem Con

2) Electoral Roll

The report had been circulated within the APCM booklet and was accepted Nem Con. Jim May was thanked for his continued work in maintaining the records.

3) PCC Report

This report was also circulated within the APCM booklet and was accepted by the meeting.

4) Deanery Report

The Deanery Secretary's report had been circulated within the APCM booklet. Our thanks are due to the Redbourn representatives on the Deanery Synod, who continue in office for the coming year.

5) Treasurer's Annual Report and Financial Statements 2014

A full set of Accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Treasurer's verbal report is included below as it gives a full explanation of the financial position during the year in relation to the audited accounts.

PCC Accounts to 31st December 2014

The accounts for the year ended 31.12.14 have been circulated. These are in the usual format as per previous years and conform to the requirements of the Church Accounting regulations and the new Charities Act 2011 which came into effect on 14th March 2012.

Pages 1 to 3 make up the Annual Report by the Vicar in his capacity as Chairman of the PCC.

Page 4 is the Independent Examiners Report which has been signed by Ruth Hughes. The accounts were approved by the PCC on 21st April 2015.

Page 5 is the summary of our income (Entitled Incoming Resources) and Expenditure (Entitled Resources Expended) known as the Statement of Financial Activities or SOFA. This reveals a total income for the year of £390,383 and total expenditure of £408,112 resulting in a deficit for the year of £17,729. To this figure is added the gains on investments held by the Diocesan Office of £711 and a surplus of £20,000 arising from the revaluation of the cottage making a total surplus for the year of £2,982. However it must be appreciated that the significant increase in the value of the cottage does not result in cash unless we sell the cottage!

Page 6 is the Balance Sheet for the year at 31st December 2014. Debtors include Income tax recoverable of £18,003, prepayments and accrued income of £2,468 and other debtors of £47,539. Deposit funds include £88,536 with CBF C of E Funds and £15,726 with Nationwide. Liabilities include deferred income and accrual of utility and other costs including creditors of £62,801. A significant part of the creditor total is the final payment due to the contractors finishing the building work on the church.

Pages 7 and 8 outline the Accounting policies adopted by the PCC which are unchanged.

Pages 9 and 10 provide a detailed breakdown of our income and expenditure which was summarised on page 5. You will see that total giving under the heading of Donations on page 9 came to £93,219 compared to a figure of £90,526 in 2013. The term "Donations" used in the accounts here covers all the collections from Stewardship which includes Standing Orders and the blue envelopes. This figure reflects an increase in giving of some 3%, a very similar increase to that of 2013. Tax recoverable on the total giving was £24,764 compared with a figure of £23,590 in 2013. Cash collections at services increased from £6,445 to £6,590. Sundry donations of £35,663 include such items as Funeral donations of around £2,732, and contributions to activities such as Fellowship Afloat, Searchlight suppers and revenue from coffee on the common of around £2,128.

Fees for weddings and funerals of £17,592 was very similar to 2013. An amount of £7,236 was paid to the Diocese.

Page 10 details our expenditure.

The parish share of £101,697 was paid in full which reflects an increase of just under 1%.

Expenditure on utilities at £7,981 reflects a significant reduction on the figure of £9,619 in 2013. This is affected by a number of factors such as a warmer winter, boiler outage, and renegotiated rates for both electricity and gas.

Fund raising expenses relate to catering for various functions and the purchase of Fairtrade goods for sale.

I would like to record our sincere thanks to Jim May who not only undertakes all the work associated in the role of covenanting Officer but also undertakes all the work involved with the weekly collections and banking ably assisted I believe by Sue! Jim also manages the Common Round Accounts! Not to mention the very significant work he has taken on as Project Manager for all our building work.

Also my sincere thanks to our Independent Examiner, Ruth Hughes for her invaluable work on the accounts at the end of the year and her assistance to me in producing the final drafts. You will appreciate that the accounts have been somewhat more complicated this year with all the building work that has been undertaken.

Thank you.

Adoption of the accounts

Proposed by: Rod McPhee Seconded by: Doris Cheetham Passed: Nem Con

The Vicar recorded the thanks of everyone to Brian and Ruth for their continued hard work.

6) A Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

The Churchwardens' Report was included within the APCM booklet.

Acceptance proposed by: Sue May Seconded by: Pat Lacy Passed: Nem Con

All the other reports in the booklet were received and accepted en bloc by the meeting.

7) A Report of the Ministry and Witness of the Church throughout 2014, given by the Vicar, the Reverend Will Gibbs, is printed in full below:-

I have great pleasure in giving my report on the Ministry and Witness of St Mary, Redbourn for the calendar year 2014.

The church is warm and all is well! I'd like to begin by expressing enormous thanks to our team of Churchwardens for all that they do and I'm delighted that the wardens that have served us so well last year will continue to work closely with me in the coming months. Temperamental church clocks and errant boilers are the very public and visible challenges they overcome which are in danger of skewing our perception of their role as they quietly smooth the way in the life of our church, week by week, month by month, in so many ways.

And of course, our primary calling as the Body of Christ in this place is to offer worship to our God. Morning and Evening Prayer continue to be the weekday engine room for much of what goes on here and I give thanks to God for those who share in these times of scripture and prayer with me.

Our Sunday service pattern consciously seeks to express variety, quality and prayerfulness and we have been blessed by the enriching presence of a considerable number of people who have joined St Mary's in the past year. We hope that you have felt the welcome that we sincerely offer because you change us for good as new gifts, ideas and personalities come among us as a living testament to the God who is doing new and good things among us.

Speaking of welcome, we were pleased to host a visit in June from parishioners of St Mary and St Alban, Teddington who attended the Alban Pilgrimage and shared in our Sunday morning service followed by lunch the next day. They expressed great appreciation for their time amongst us and I hope we might be able to make a reciprocal visit at some point in the future.

Drawing on the previous hospitality of David and Rita Phear and others, it has been good to share in breakfast between the 8 am and 9.30 am services on the First Sunday each month and thank you to those who have played a part in making this special time together possible.

Our Wednesday evening Eucharist continues to be a blessing in the midpoint of what is usually a busy week of activities and meetings and I commend it to you if it isn't something you've attended much, or at all.

The services we offer require careful preparation and I am profoundly grateful to those who launder our robes and make new vestments, and to our sacristans, vergers, car drivers, servers, choir and musicians, flower arrangers and church cleaning teams who all bring their gifts to bear so fruitfully and faithfully as we gather to worship God.

One particular highlight last year, if I can call it that, was an incredibly moving service at the beginning of August to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and it was a tangible reminder of the power of music and poetry to convey what is sometimes hard to express in other ways; in this case the horror of war.

We have also offered a service once a term with the Redbourn Day Centre, a monthly communion with the Mothers' Union, a fortnightly home communion at Grace Muriel House in St Albans with Dennis Hart and the other residents, and monthly services at St Matthew's Care Home and New Forge Place. I'm very grateful to members of the Local Ministry Team and others who assist me and share in this valued ministry being offered. The Bishop's permission for distributing communion was up for renewal at Advent and it has been very good to welcome some new chalice assistants with that permission to share in this privileged ministry.

Part of the privilege and responsibility of being the Parish Church for the people of Redbourn is the conducting of occasional offices at some key moments for families. In 2014 there were 24 baptisms and 1 thanksgiving service, 6 young people were admitted to First Communion at Advent following a period of preparation and a very healthy number of 17 weddings took place at St Mary's during the year. It is always a joy to welcome families, guests and friends to share in these lovely occasions.

It has been another sad year for deaths and 34 funerals or memorial services were conducted during the year. We have said goodbye to some really special servants of Christ and great friends of this Church who leave a big gap and a real sense of loss: Mary Featherstone, Gurney Mercer, Peter McCarthy, Anthony Chapman, Millie Henman, Alan de Leiros, Gladys Kingham, Geoff Golding, Rita Phear and Ted Henry. I am always conscious how little justice you can do to a whole life when it comes to an end. Even in the best funeral service or eulogy imaginable, you cannot encompass a fraction of what these people mean, not just for those closest to them,

but in many cases, for us all. We cannot do justice to them, but we have a God who can, and in him they live. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Those of you who know me well, will have heard me comment that I always wince and mutter when prayers of intercession are offered for ‘Our Vicar Will and his ministerial team’. They are, of course, our team and we continue to be greatly blessed by the gifts of Lucy, Bishop Robin and Lois, Christine Farrington, Jan Goodair and Mark Cresswell. Some changes are imminent and we will be enormously saddened to say farewell to Lucy, Anthony, Jamie, Ellie and Libby this summer. I won’t say too much at this stage but each has contributed such a lot to the life of our church and they will be greatly missed. It is so easy to forget that Lucy came to us as our Curate less than three years ago as she always seems to have been here (in the best way) and I couldn’t ask for a better colleague to work alongside. We will also be saying a sad farewell to Jan who this summer will move back ‘up North’ to be closer to her family, and especially Grandchildren. We offer our thanks from the bottom of our hearts to Jan for all that she has given to us and we will continue to remember her fondly and often in our prayers.

We have been inspired by the way that Mark has continued to flourish during his training, study and preparation to be a Licensed Reader and we look forward to sharing in that special service with you in Hertford on 28 June. We have also said a ‘happy hello’ to Paul and Kay Vernon, fairly new to Redbourn and to St Mary’s, and Kay is a Licensed Reader. We look forward, both of you, to the next chapter of God’s ministry in you here among us.

The work of the Local Ministry Team continues to flourish with members of the team leading acts of worship and preaching, offering pastoral visiting and home communion services and assisting in baptism and marriage preparation sessions. The team undertook a team profiling exercise to analyse its strengths and weaknesses and has spent time in study and training as we look forward to being re-mandated for a four year period at our Patronal Festival in September. The team continues to play a key part in marriage and baptism preparation, planning and leading a monthly Messy Church session at the Junior School, a weekly ‘Bears and Prayers’ time of worship, craft and fellowship for toddlers and their carers and encouraging engagement with our popular Spotlight study and discussion groups. We enjoyed an excellent church weekend away during Lent last year and cherished the space offered by our Advent Quiet Day, held at St Paul’s Walden. Regular pastoral lunches for the elderly, isolated and recently bereaved have been a very valuable innovation with delicious home cooked food, and much laughter and enjoyment from those who have attended. And whilst speaking of food (a subject close to my heart) the Caring Cooks scheme, headed up by Julie Beaman and a team of helpers, has continued the valuable ministry of delivering meals to those who have recently given birth or returned home from a spell in hospital as a practical demonstration of our care and support for them.

2014 saw a shift in focus in terms of our charitable giving with an emphasis on raising funds for one main designated charity alongside our support for other charities through funeral collections and other sundry donations. The first beneficiary of this new approach was ‘Present Aid’ – a scheme within Christian Aid for raising funds for livestock, school and medical equipment, tools and other goods for communities in need around the world. We enjoyed a really fun Progressive Supper in July and an excellent Organ Concert in September, amongst other fundraising events. As well as financial giving, we express our charitable links through prayer, support, visits and visiting speakers where possible and continue to support the DENS Food Bank in Hemel by collecting tinned foods and dry goods regularly.

This year has seen continued progress in the upkeep and maintenance of the churchyard through the committed involvement of volunteers involved in the mowing rota, monthly gatherings for 'Operation Churchyard' and the ongoing visits from time to time from the local probation service. In the autumn a purpose built mower store was built to replace the dilapidated gas hut and this has significantly improved our storage facilities and servicing facilities for our mowers and other gardening equipment. I'd like to place on record our thanks to David Swift and all the churchyard team for their time and work but we would like a few more to join them...

The new Mower Store was just one element in a schedule of building work to improve our facilities and I want to pay testimony to Jim May and the Ancillary Buildings Committee who have done a brilliant job to mastermind the fundraising for these projects and to oversee the work. We now have much improved toilet facilities, storage and an enlarged choir vestry here in the Transept, a superb Upper Room for our older children's groups and a brand new Parish Office, which along with the Mower Store, give us first class facilities to assist us in our ministry as a church. The 'Building for Growth' appeal was launched on 1 March and I am profoundly grateful for all who have given so generously to this, enabling us to raise all the funds needed for this work. The Auction of Promises, Bluebell Walk and cream teas, lovely choir concert, and superb fundraising dinner coupled with individual gifts have made this a very enjoyable and successful process. Thank you all for your part in this. It was a fitting and joy-filled celebration at our Patronal Festival to welcome back Bishop John Taylor to dedicate the new facilities and to give thanks with us for this work.

Our ministry with young people goes from strength to strength and I would like to record my thanks to Sandra Cresswell, our children and youth coordinator, for all that she does. At the risk of embarrassing her, you ought to know that she gives one day a week, unpaid, to this ministry and we're hugely indebted to you for this. She doesn't do it all herself and I'm very grateful for the great teams of people working with Mini Church, Messy Church, Junior Church, PALs, Gospellers and Bears and Prayers to ensure that we're not just making a provision for our young people but creating an environment where they can flourish in their faith and understanding as an equally valued part of our church family.

One particular highlight last year, amongst many, was a concert in June to raise money for a Parkinson's Charity. We had contributions from individuals and groups, from a visiting choir and our own, and from the Junior School. It struck me as an icon for what good parish ministry should look like – the church looking upwards and outwards and being the catalyst for bringing different people together as we serve those in greater need.



Emmaus?

Two familiar faces meet at the Easter Monday Pilgrimage to worship God and share in the breaking of bread together.

Each year a group meet mid-morning to make the gentle walk, following the course of the Ver, to St Albans for a picnic and to join with a couple of thousand others from around the Diocese for a time of worship and praise.

Why not join us next year?

I am mindful of a quote from Han Urs von Balthasar, the Swiss Roman Catholic priest and a theological heavyweight of the 20th century:

“What you are is God’s gift to you, what you become is your gift to God.”

I cannot cover everything in this report. I have particularly tried to draw out things of particular note that complement the reports that we have before us. I am also conscious that I cannot thank everyone who ought to be thanked – because that is virtually everyone.

This place lives and grows because nearly everyone here gives to it sacrificially, especially in terms of time and energy and money. We could not survive and flourish without the generosity of so many people in the giving of time, talents and treasure. It is an offering back to God of all that we have received and it is never taken for granted.

So I am painfully aware of not being able to say thank you enough to so many people who deserve more than just thanks for what they do. And if you ever wonder, I hope you will accept that what is done really is recognised not just by me and everyone else, but – immeasurably more importantly – by the one for whose sake we do it. Thank you all.

8) Election of 5 Representatives to the Parochial Church Council

Five places are available for a period of three years.

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Celia Forbes	Sue May	Mollie Williams
David Swift	David Forbes	Mollie Williams
Karen Doye	David Forbes	Mollie Williams
Alan Simkins	Mollie Williams	Sam Butterworth
Steve Smith	Marion Stewart-Smith	Mollie Williams

Election of the above representatives:-

Proposed by: Rosalie Hayward Seconded by: Rosemary Woodhouse Passed: Nem Con

9) Appointment of Sidespersons

The names had been circulated within the APCM booklet prior to the meeting. The names of Jim May and Sandra Cresswell were added to the list.

Adoption of the sidespersons:-

Proposed by: Rod McPhee Seconded by: Dick Morgan Passed: Nem Con

10) Appointment of Independent Examiner

Ruth Hughes was thanked for all the work she puts in to help provide the set of Accounts for the year, and for the assistance she offers to the Treasurer throughout the year. Ruth indicated her agreement to carry on for a further year.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Proposed by: David Cheetham Seconded by: Lois Smith Passed: Nem Con

11) Any Other Business

It was commented from the floor how much the monthly parish breakfast was appreciated.

It was enquired how the Strategic Plan is progressing. The Vicar replied that good progress is still being made and an updated copy will be displayed on the notice board in due course.

The Russian Orthodox congregation who use St Mary's for their monthly service is thriving. They are grateful for the use of our premises, and have increased the donation they make to us, in appreciation.

The 12 o'clock communion service continues, and a record attendance of 11 people was noted recently!

The Deanery Synod is looking to increase its strength, and a meeting is to be held at St Mary's on the 12th May to discuss this. Sandra Cresswell and Mike Wood will represent Redbourn at this meeting.

Lucy thanked everyone for their support of her and all her family during her Curacy at St Mary's, with specific thanks to Will for the training he has given her and his personal support.

12) Chairman's Closing Remarks

Keith McAdam remarked just how many people are engaged in keeping St Mary's flourishing in the way that it does. We are very lucky in the outstanding leadership we have, particularly Will and the team around him. The Advent and Lent programmes are always very substantial and very much appreciated.

Lucy has become an integral part of St Mary's in the three years that she and her family have been with us. We wish her joy in her new position as Vicar at Flitwick, and hope that links between her new church and us will soon be established.

We are also pleased that Mark Cresswell is shortly to be installed as a Lay Reader, and that Kay Vernon will soon be accredited as a Lay Reader here also. Mary Fisher is soon to complete her Ordination training. We also thank the Rev. Dr Jan Goodair who has been part of the scene at St Mary's for some time, and will be leaving us in the summer to move nearer to her family in Yorkshire. Our thanks must also go to Will's family for the support they give him, which helps him to carry out his ministry at St Mary's in the way that he does.

Everyone was invited to stay after the meeting for refreshments.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Grace at 9.21 pm.

LAY CO-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2015

As Lay Co-Chair it is a privilege to support the Vicar in conducting the business of the PCC and its Standing Committee, which provides an oversight of the many activities at St Mary's.

We keep track of our goals in the Mission Action Plan (MAP), which was agreed four years ago, focusing on three broad areas: 1) worship at St Mary's and building personal faith; 2) being an outward looking church and creating community hubs; and 3) expecting church growth and developing leadership of all ages.

The MAP is a dynamic four-year vision for a dynamic faith community, and so it is time for us to take stock of what has worked well, what has not yet been accomplished, what God has taught us and how is he guiding our path for the next five years. We will all have an opportunity to participate in creating a new MAP for St Mary's next year. We look to God to inspire us with a vision for our church and our local community, to guide our worship and service of God through the next quinquennium. Our many special activity groups, young people's groups and the home groups should all feel able to contribute to this inspiring journey.

We all feel proud of our lovely Church that has served the Redbourn community for over 900 years. With generous support from the church family and from the Friends of St Mary's over the past two years, there have been big improvements to the physical space available for worship and serving God. The expanded and refurbished Transept gives better space for the Choir and music makers, and for our young people in the Upper Room; with the refurbished Transept kitchen being a great improvement. The new Church Office is a welcome addition and serves as a base for both the Vicar's secretary and the Curate. The new Store provides a much better base for the maintenance of our beautiful churchyard, so caringly maintained by the dedicated work of the churchyard team. We seek God's vision for the opportunities that will be provided by the next project - to renew the space of the old church hall.

The Advent and Lent programmes have been inspiring again this year and a great tribute to the vision and energy of Will and his team. Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals remain a major responsibility for our Parish Church and also a great opportunity. An on-going challenge is how we can each contribute more effectively as we reach out to the many people who live in Redbourn, engaging the energy of all ages, from babies to great grandparents? What is God calling each of us to, for the future?

Lucy Davis was appointed Vicar of Flitwick last summer at the end of her curacy at St Mary's. Her energy and enthusiasm expanded St Mary's ministry in many ways and the challenge of sustainability when she moved has been met by members of the church family stepping up to new creative roles. Jan Goodair moved closer to family in Yorkshire, just as Mark Cresswell completed his readership training and started more active ministry in St Mary's; he has also contributed greatly to improving electronic communications, while Sandra has led the enhanced ministry to children in St Mary's. The Cresswell family have contributed greatly to the life of our church community and as they plan their move to Suffolk we wish them well for their next step of faith. We are indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated wider Ministerial team. Kay Vernon transferred her Readers' Licence to our Diocese; she and Paul have also brought their considerable musical talents to St Mary's. Mary Fisher will be ordained this summer and will be doing her curacy in St Michael's Church, St Albans. Tim and Sophy Vickers will be joining us in the summer as Tim starts his Curacy in St Mary's.

This is an opportunity to acknowledge and thank Will on behalf of the St Mary's family. We particularly appreciate Will and Claire, Olivia and Darcy as a family. We are indeed fortunate to benefit from his leadership and visionary ministry in the Parish. He has stepped down from his term as Rural Dean to make time for a new role on the General Synod. Will's leadership of our faith community extends widely, building on strong community partnerships, as we seek to allow God's love to transform our local community.

Keith McAdam – Lay Co-Chair

PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT 2015

The elected period of the Parochial Church Council runs from April to April, and the statistics mentioned in this report relate to those dates.

The full PCC has met six times during the year, and the Standing Committee four times. Those on the Council are:-

The Chairman	The Vicar, The Revd Will Gibbs
Lay Co-Chairman	Keith McAdam
Churchwardens	Sue May and Mollie Williams
Deputy Churchwardens	Stephen Gell and Alan Simkins
Readers	Cyril Harling
	From July 2015: Kay Vernon, Mark Cresswell
Deanery Synod	Ralph Goold, Jill Whitehouse, Julie Henman
Deanery Lay Co-Chairman	Peter Hansford
Diocesan Synod	Clive Williams (retired during 2015)
Stewardship Chairman	Mike Wood
Plus elected members of the PCC	

Record of members' attendances at meetings:

	Full PCC	Standing Committee
The Vicar	6/6	4/4
Sam Butterworth	4/6	
Doris Cheetham	5/6	
Sandra Cresswell	6/6	4/4
Karen Doye	5/6	
Celia Forbes	5/6	3/4
Stephen Gell	6/6	2/4
Ralph Goold	4/6	
Peter Hansford	3/6	
Cyril Harling	N/A	
Brian Hayward	6/6	4/4
Julie Henman	5/6	
Jim May	6/6	4/4
Sue May	6/6	4/4
Keith McAdam	5/6	2/4
Rod McPhee	5/6	
Michelle Parry-Slater	5/6	
Alan Simkins	2/6	3/4
Steve Smith	4/6	
David Swift	4/6	4/4
Jill Whitehouse	6/6	
Clive Williams	4/4	
Mollie Williams	6/6	4/4
Kay Vernon	5/5	
Mark Cresswell	1/5	

Offices held by members for the year 2015/16

Lay Co-Chairman	Keith McAdam
Treasurer	Brian Hayward
Secretary	Celia Forbes

Chairpersons of Sub-Committees

Stewardship	Mike Wood
Ancillary Buildings	Jim May
Youth	Sandra Cresswell
Churchyard	David Swift
Charitable Finance	Sue May (retired at the end of the year)

Members' attendances at meetings have been good, ranging from a low of 75% to a high of 92%. The attendance at Standing Committee meetings continues to be high, with very few absences.

The Mission Action Plan is drawing towards the end of its four years and it has been good to look back over it and see quite how much has been achieved. However, a new plan will be drawn up in mid-2016, no doubt with many new challenges.

We are most grateful to Mark Cresswell for his continued maintenance of our website and for the re-vamp in recent months. We were sorry to lose the input of Anthony Davis following his and Lucy's move to Flitwick. At present the newsletter is not being circulated by e-mail – any offers? Our printers continue to provide their usual back room service, and now they have moved their operations to the new Church Office, they are largely unseen, but nevertheless greatly appreciated.

The renovations to the Transept and the provision of additional meeting space and storage have been very well received. We are most grateful to Jim May who has overseen the whole project from start to finish with all the frustrations which he overcame with such very good humour. We have always been very proud of the facilities we have at St Mary's, and even more so now. During this time Rosemary and Geoff Woodhouse who manage the Transept have had a lot to contend with, but always have remained cheerful!

PCC and Standing Committee minutes continue to be posted on the St Mary's website (www.stmarysredbourn.org), and a paper copy is always displayed soon after the meetings on the notice board in the south porch. I do urge everyone to read these minutes so that they keep abreast of all that is happening at St Mary's.

Celia Forbes – Secretary to the PCC

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT – APRIL 2016

The Electoral Roll has been revised this year in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

- ❖ In April 2015, there were 285 persons on the Electoral Roll.
- ❖ During the year, 7 left and 13 persons joined the roll.
- ❖ The nett effect of this is that the total has risen by 6 in the last year.
- ❖ Thus there are 291 persons on the new Electoral Roll.

Of these 291 people, 45 live outside the parish. Last year, 42 lived outside the parish.

Jim May – Electoral Roll Officer

WHEATHAMPSTEAD DEANERY SYNOD 2015

Ayot – Flamstead – Harpenden St Nicholas – Harpenden St John – Kimpton
Markyate – Redbourn – Sandridge – Wheathampstead

Rural Dean	The Revd Richard Banham (from October 2016)
Lay Chair	Mr Peter Hansford
Honorary Secretary	Mrs Elizabeth Brown
Assistant Secretary	The Reverend Shaun Speller
Treasurer	Mr Michael Readman

Wheathampstead Deanery Synod is made up of parish clergy and lay representatives elected by your PCC for three years according to the numbers on the electoral roll, together with members of Diocesan Synod (who are also thereby members of Deanery Synod and their PCC). It meets three times a year under the leadership of the Rural Dean and Lay Chairman, and provides a forum for discussion of current issues within the deanery and beyond, as well as receiving regular reports from Diocesan and General Synods. During the year Deanery Synod members have been responsible for electing members to the new Diocesan Synod for this triennium and for electing members to represent our diocese on the new General Synod who will serve a five year term.

Synod meetings open with prayers led by the host parish which also has the opportunity to talk about its life and work. It soon becomes apparent that every one of the nine parishes and twelve churches in the deanery is different. An Ascension Day service and Deanery Evensong in the autumn provide opportunities for church members across the deanery to worship together in different churches and to build relationships with other congregations.

The Revd Jeanette Gosney, the Diocesan Parish Development Officer, came to speak in July about developing a strategy for all baptised people as the Body of Christ to contribute to the Church's mission and ministry using their particular skills and knowledge. A number of courses are available to encourage those wishing to build the kingdom of God in their communities; some have already been run successfully in our parishes.

Synod's autumn meeting was 'An encounter with cancer and the healing role of the Jesus prayer' by the Revd Simon Manley-Cooper, a former chaplain at the QEII hospital. We were privileged to hear a very personal and honest account of Simon's own experience of being diagnosed with cancer, the investigations, scans, the waiting for results and all through it he was sustained by the prayer *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*

During the coming year the Deanery will be reviewing its Mission Action Plan and as part of that process the most recent Synod meeting was a presentation by Mr. Jim May on 'Building for Growth', the rebuilding project recently completed at St. Mary's, Redbourn, in which he outlined how the works were planned, funded and managed. It was a most informative evening, and a demonstration of how the deanery can work together in mutual support.

Elizabeth Brown – Deanery Synod Secretary and member of Diocesan Synod

CHURCHWARDENS REPORT FOR 2015

2015 has been another interesting year for your church wardens, with on-going challenges from our clock and heating system. Picking its moment perfectly, the boiler again stopped working during the early part of the year, and we thank you very much for donning those extra layers and bearing with us as we worked to get the issue resolved. Finally realising that the time had come to replace the boiler, following the advice previously received from the Diocesan Heating Advisor, we opted for a 'like-for-like' replacement. On inspection of the flue, it was found that this, too, needed to be replaced in order to make the system sound, and eventually, as winter gave way to spring(!), the new system was up and running. A huge 'thank you' to 'The Friends of St Mary's' for paying for this heating work.

Much to everyone's distress, once winter came around again, we were faced with fresh heating problems, which was very frustrating, considering we were expecting a trouble-free winter at last! A faulty thermostat turned out to be the cause, and we were back in business.

June saw the initial annual service carried out by Smith of Derby to the church clock, and it was pointed out that the hands had not been keeping good time. The engineer said that the company was in the process of field-testing a new design of pendulum regulator, as their existing one had been found to be unreliable. We were told that as soon as testing was complete, they would be arranging to fit these in churches that needed them – a process that could take some time. In the meantime, we are endeavouring to keep the hands as accurate as possible manually.

Following the identification of a health and safety issue, the candles adjacent to the lectern have been changed to oil-fuelled ones, and supports fitted to the bottom of the stands so that they are well- shielded, and impossible (?) to knock over.

On the subject of light, in December the fire brigade was called when one of the main nave lights caught fire. This was as a result of the internal ballast over-heating. The electrician called to advise us suggested that the problem was not unexpected in lighting of this age, and that replacing them all at this stage made financial sense, as to replace the one unit would be £436 + vat, but all six could be done for £1,619 + vat. Also the new units are fitted with LED bulbs which will give a very long life per bulb, and will cut down on expense, as they are cheaper to run. We look to have this work done in the new year.

Finally, we have begun to address the issue of the loose tiles on the church floor. Some remedial work has been carried out to re-bed some of the worst ones, and at some point in the new year some more work will be carried out and an attempt made to fix them in place more permanently.

The churchwardens continue to enjoy the privilege of this role within the life of the church, and offer our thanks to all who help us. We would like, this year, to pay a special tribute to those who give their time and talent to making our church so beautiful – our flower team, our cleaning team, and the fabric group. We are all blessed to enjoy the results of all the work they do.

Sue May

Mollie Williams

ANCILLARY BUILDINGS SUB-COMMITTEE

Our 'Building for Growth' programme is all but finished. The year started with the official opening of the church office on 5th January. In the Transept, a stair lift was installed, the kitchen was refurbished, new flooring was laid in the hall and the corridors and new lighting was installed in the hall and the link corridor. Two final invoices are awaited, but it looks like all the work done this year and last year was completed within budget and, more importantly, within the amount raised. Our sincere thanks, again, to all who contributed to the appeal.

Tackling the Old Church Hall is the next project. Planning Permission has been received for conversion to residential accommodation and the Architect has put the work out to tender.

Jim May – Chairman

THE CHARITABLE FINANCE COMMITTEE – CFC

Our Charity for 2015 was launched at Candlemas, at the beginning of February.

'PTSD Resolution' is a national charity providing counselling and support for sufferers of post-traumatic stress disorder, and their families. At the launch service, we were very pleased to welcome Captain Euan Eltringham of the Black Watch Regiment to speak to us on a very personal level, about PTSD, and the need for such important support and care.

At the end of the year we were able to present a cheque for £7,800 to 'PTSD Resolution' via Jo Ham, one of their counsellors in our local area, at our 'Arts & Tarts' event in November. On this occasion also, we were lucky enough to meet Phil, and his partner, Leigh, a veteran who has been helped by 'PTSD Resolution' via Jo's counselling. Our fundraising events had also included a Fashion Show, a concert by Dagnall Community Choir and we have also benefited greatly from fundraising initiatives by individual and groups, including a swimathon and a sponsored silence. The committee offers huge thanks to everyone who helped to make such a great contribution to this wonderful charity.

The total of £71,000 raised since the CFC was set up in 2008 is a testimony to the hard work and dedication of those who served on the Committee during that period and a challenge to those of us who serve on the current committee.

We continue to support DENS (Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter) in Hemel Hempstead, and a team of volunteers regularly takes donations from the church and other collection points in the village. In addition, 'Coffee on the Common' used takings from their weekly August sessions to supply the night shelter with equipment for their teaching kitchen, and their Christmas 'hamper' collected extra donations for DENS Christmas wish list. Thanks go to 'Coffee on the Common' customers for that support.

In December it was decided that both myself and Penny McAdam would stand down from the committee, and we would like to express our personal thanks to the other members of the committee and to the wider church family, for supporting our efforts in this very valuable part of our Christian mission.

Sue May – Chair of the CFC

Stephen Gell – Secretary of the CFC

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

The main focus for the Stewardship Committee during the year was to encourage everyone to prayerfully consider their level of giving to St Mary's. Our costs continue to rise, including a £3,000 rise in our Parish Share contribution, so we need to ensure our income increases to cover all our expenditure.

A summary of the key activities:

Not just "Keeping the lights on" – Following an increase in the Parish Share a leaflet was produced in May to provide details of current levels of income and explain what the Church spends this money on. Highlights from the leaflet were displayed on the TV in the link corridor. There is much more to running a Church than just the utility bills. As a result of the appeal we saw an increase of 5.3% in our planned giving, which equates to £4,432 (excluding Gift Aid). At that stage we had 144 people who generously contributed to our Church through the planned giving scheme.

The Curate – The Committee spent some time considering accommodation options for the new curate, due to join us in 2016. A number of recommendations were passed back to the Standing Committee for further discussion.

Patronal Festival – Following the service in September, those present spilled out in to the Churchyard to enjoy a live band, barbeque, drinks, bouncy castle, and to continue our fellowship together. The Committee organised the food for the event with the Friends of St Mary's providing the bar.

Welcome Book and Photographs – Sections of the Welcome Book were again updated during the year and new photos added. We print quite a few of these books during the year so they are obviously of value to new and existing members of our Church and also visitors.

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee I would like to thank all those who give so generously of their time, talents and treasure. Please see the Stewardship notice board in the Transept to see how you can all contribute further to the life of our wonderful Church.

Michael Wood – Chairman

LAY LEADERS OF WORSHIP

This year, Will invited 4 of us, Rod McPhee, Peter Hansford, Sue May, and David Forbes to undergo training and be licensed as Lay Leaders of Worship.

The intention is that after the training – consisting of reading, training sessions, and practical training in leading services, the licensed LLWs will be able to assist in and lead non-Eucharistic worship in St Mary's.

We will be licensed by the Bishop, and the role will only apply to the designated home Parish. The Training has certainly been enjoyable, even if, in a few cases, it took us outside our usual comfort zones!

We hope that over the next few months, particularly in Sunday Evening Services, and in other services during peak times of the year, we will be able to ease some of the liturgical burden from Will and others, and expand the number of those leading worship at St Mary's.

David Forbes – on behalf of the LLWs

CHURCHYARD SUB-COMMITTEE

Our Churchyard is maintained throughout the year by a loyal group of hard working volunteers. Every Saturday morning in the summer, weather permitting a small group of three or four cut the grass and keep the grounds tidy. We have a rota that repeats every six weeks.

Once a month we have an Operation Churchyard where we tackle larger jobs, maintain hedges and borders, cut back heavy undergrowth and clear areas around old graves. Operation Churchyard is open to everyone, and is truly a great way to spend a Saturday morning with friends.

Although we had a very wet start to 2015, and following the good work of the Probation Service we have been able to maintain the clear open views through the Churchyard.

The new mower store is a great asset, we are able to keep the machinery safe and dry and maintain everything in the comfort of the store. I would like to thank Michael Darvell, Mike Thain and Geoff Woodhouse for all their time and effort helping to maintain the machines.

Our flower beds and Rose Gardens are maintained beautifully by individuals, Ursula Bradley, Carole Dawson, Ken Smith, Clare Farquar and Wendy and Dick Morgan. These areas are a credit to them and I thank them all.

If you are not already involved in helping, please consider spending a few hours a month as part of a team or a family group cutting the grass, managing a flower bed or small area.

Please check the Church news for dates of Operation Churchyard or speak to me if you wish to tend an area.

I would personally like to thank everyone who regularly helps with the maintenance of our wonderful Churchyard and encourage you all to spend some time walking through the grounds.

David Swift – Chairman

eXplore – MESSY CHURCH

Our monthly sessions of Messy Church under the title 'eXplore', continue to be a real delight, offering lots of fun and messiness along with a meal and act of worship to younger members of our own church family and beyond.

We continue to meet at Redbourn Junior School from 3.15 pm on the 3rd Monday of the month – thanks to the generosity of the headmaster, and others at the school who make us welcome. Our numbers have remained reasonably constant, but of course we would like to see our 'eXplore' family grow. Our team consists of Will, Ailsa Hulme, Penny McAdam, Barbara Corbett, Sue Field, Val Coates, Heather Stanley, Alan Amos (who plans to make efforts to join us, despite the fact that he will move to Wales in December), and myself, with cooking support provided by Angie Simkins, Jenny Crouch, and Janet Nelder. We welcome other occasional helpers, and are always looking to encourage others to join the team.

Topics covered this year have included Old and New Testament stories (including a guest appearance of the 'big fish' that swallowed Jonah!), and sessions related to key times in the church year.

I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank the individual members of the great team that make these sessions possible.

Sue May – eXplore Coordinator

THE MOTHERS' UNION

We have enjoyed another busy and interesting year, with a variety of speakers and topics at our monthly meetings.

The theme for 2015 was 'With Love from Mothers' Union', and we explored this theme at our Diocesan Sharing Day in March, entitled 'Going Global'. We had to provide a display, and took along the 'teaching tool cloak' that we bought for Lucy Davis for use at her Bears and Prayers –it sparked much interest among other branches.

We thoroughly enjoyed the 'making of the Christingles' again. Takings were over £100 down on last year –possibly due to the new and rather complicated payment envelopes.

Our Action and Outreach programmes for St. Mary's continues with the provision of Baptism Packs and teddies or a book for those older children that are being christened. We also continued with our Toiletry Bags for Yarl's Wood Detention Centre, and have had very positive feedback from the women there. In September, we started to knit Christmas Stockings for children in hospital over the festive period, and Sandra Woodland very kindly donated the wool.

We took part in the '16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence' Campaign again in November/December, using a daily prayer at home.

Our fundraiser on Mothering Sunday raised £293.35, and this enabled us to complete our fundraising for material to be made into Mothers' Union Uniforms for those MU members in Chamnye. Samwel informs me that membership of the MU there has increased significantly since, so a very worthwhile project. We continue to send them Christmas, Easter and Mothering Sunday Cards of greeting.

We had an equally successful annual Wheels Appeal Fundraiser in June, raising £254, and when we had the Wave of Prayer, followed by a strawberry tea, we raised £17 for overseas work.

In May we welcomed two new members, and dedicated our new tablecloth – beautifully made for us by Ann Palmer with help from Barbara Corbett.

Our Annual Outing in June consisted of a canal trip from Hemel Hempstead towards Watford, on a blazing hot day, through beautiful and tranquil scenery, whilst having a cream tea. It was much enjoyed by all.

We had some very interesting and inspiring talks over the past year – Our Lent talk was by Christine Farrington on Women Bishops, we found out where all the MU money goes from Susan Stokes, heard a truly fascinating talk by Ann Palmer on her life in Japan, and a very moving talk on Hearing Dogs from Michelle Parry-Slater. Keith McAdam talked on myriad subjects about Africa and Reona did a marvellous talk on Mary in December. We were also lucky enough to have both an Advent talk by Will in November and a wonderful Deanery Advent Service of Prayer and Reflection here at St. Mary's in December – it was extremely moving.

In my third year as Branch Leader I have been lucky enough to continue to receive marvellous guidance and support from a very enthusiastic, hardworking and fun committee, who are full of good ideas. My thanks to Will for taking our monthly Communion Services, and also to Gill for her beautiful organ playing

The Committee would also like to formally thank Rosemary and Geoff for all their hard work in setting up the transept and making sure that all our meetings run like clockwork.

At this year's AGM Valerie Simmons and Heather Stanley left the Committee (Heather having completed 3 years as Secretary). Eileen Fernley was elected as the new Secretary, and Barbara Corbett joined as a Committee member.

In conclusion – I feel privileged to be Branch Leader– and feel we are a strong, loyal, and active branch here at St. Mary's – and certainly with 39 members, one of the biggest in the Diocese. Much of our success is due to all the members and their hard work.

Our theme for 2016 is 'A Celebration of Faith' – We will try to make the coming year a true celebration of all that the Mothers' Union stands for and does, both here in our own church of St. Mary's, in our village of Redbourn, in the Diocese and through our links with Chamnye and our work overseas.

Mary-Jane Boffey – Branch Leader

ST MARY'S TEXTILE GROUP

A dedicated group of around a dozen ladies meet twice per month to work creating sewn items for use in St Mary's. Work is still progressing on the first of three green altar cloths. This work has been interrupted this year in order to produce canvas kneelers for the altar rail. Sewing is complete and has gone to the upholsterer to be finished, hopefully to be in use around April 2016. Several ladies who are not from St Mary's or the textile group, kindly offered to help with the kneelers, and we are grateful for their help.

Barbara Corbett – Group Coordinator

BELLRINGING AT ST MARY'S CHURCH

We have rung at all Sunday morning services this year and some of the evening services but these are more difficult as not all our ringers are local. We still need more learners although we did get one new one this year.

Practice nights are usually well attended with visitors as well as our own ringers.

We rang a quarter peal on 2nd August in thanksgiving for the life of Tony Cobb who was a very competent and well respected member of our band from 1979 – 1999, until he went travelling in his boat to warmer climates and passed away this year. Gemma also rang her first quarter and another one was rung for Pauline's 60th Birthday.

We have finally received the peal board commemorating the peal rung to celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and it is now on display in the tower.

We had our usual tower outing in September and Christmas Dinner at the Chequers in December. St Mary's Redbourn hosted the usual district meeting in July with ringing, service and tea attended by approximately 30 people from the District.

Gemma was thanked for her work as Tower Treasurer, Pauline as Tower Captain, Liz as Ringing Master, Andrew as Steeple Keeper and Mary as Secretary. Will was thanked for his support to the ringers during the year and we look forward to meeting our new curate Tim, who joins us in the summer.

Pauline Ridgwell – Tower Captain

THE LOCAL MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Members: Julie Beaman, Mark Cresswell, Sandra Cresswell, David Forbes, Will Gibbs, Julie Henman, Penny McAdam, Sue May, Kay Vernon, Jill Whitehouse and Mike Wood.

2015 has seen some changes to the membership of the LMDT with three members leaving – Doris Cheetham, Lucy Davis and Ian Wooding Jones. We were delighted to welcome Mark Cresswell, Sandra Cresswell, Julie Henman, Kay Vernon and Jill Whitehouse to the LMDT as a new four year mandate was given at the Patronal Festival on 6 September 2015.

We have had fewer of our monthly meetings this year, but the varied work of the members of the LMDT has continued. Caring cooks, Pastoral lunches, Holy Communion in various Care Homes, pastoral visits, participation in Services, Baptism services and Marriage Preparation, all show the variety of ways in which the LMDT is involved in Parish life.

We have also undergone further Team training under the auspices of Geoff Mercer, and seem to have a good balance of strengths (and weaknesses!) on our Team.

We look forward in 2016 to Tim, our new Curate joining us, and bringing with him new insights into how the LMDT can continue to grow and assist in supporting the Parish.

David Forbes – Member of the Local Ministry Team

SPOTLIGHT SMALL GROUPS

The Spotlight groups continue to provide an opportunity to share our faith journeys in groups of up to 12 people and to encourage one another, meeting every other week in term time. We are not all from St Mary's. The Tuesday morning group meets in New Forge Place and includes some who live there and others from the village. Other Spotlight groups meet on Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Each group chooses its own subject focus. We have had interesting and fun discussions on 'the significance of meals in the Bible', some have focused on the Lectionary readings, others around Rob Bell videos.

In September more than fifty people, a mixture of Spotlighters and others, came to the Spotlight Supper. We welcomed the Reverend Jeanette Gosney, the Diocesan Parish Development Officer, who helped us think about our gifts and how we might use them in community.

In November all the Spotlight groups participated in leading a Spotlight Service. Mark Cresswell helped us create a focus on Expectation, Thanksgiving and Celebration.

In June we welcomed Carol Hofmeyr, founder of The Keiskamma Trust in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, for our 2015 cafe style Starlight talk in the village hall. It was a privilege to hear of the Trust's work in music and embroidery in that materially poor community. The attendance was close to 100. We were shown pictures of some of their major works, including a one hundred metre tapestry illustrating the history of South Africa which now hangs in their parliament in Cape Town (equivalent to the famous Bayeux Tapestry depicting the history of England). They have also used Picasso's huge Guernica painting (his depiction of the horrors of bombing in a Spanish village around the 1939-45 war) as a template for a major tapestry on the devastation of AIDS in their community.

Penny McAdam – Spotlight Group Co-ordinator

YOUTH WORK at ST MARY'S

St Mary's has many children who are actively encouraged to take part in worship and service by the provision of age appropriate groups. We are blessed to have over 35 leaders of the various groups.

Baby Church

This is for the under 2's and meets in the vestry during the service. We ask that parents stay with their child and play with some of the toys while listening to the service.

Children and babies are also welcome to stay in the service but Baby church is there for restless tots or upset babies.

Children from 2 to the end of year 10

These children have their own groups who meet every Sunday except the 1st Sunday in the month and on special occasions.

On the 1st Sunday of the month we have an all age service.

Children are encouraged to take part and are invited up to the altar during the Eucharist prayer so they can see what is happening and feel more involved during that very important part of the service.

When there are children's groups the children lead out after the Collect following a lit lantern and Joe our Mini Church puppet. The children in Pals return just after the Peace and the rest of the children return in time to take part in the Eucharist.

Mini Church

This is for children who are 2 to those going into Reception at school. The children enjoy Joe the puppet and a bible story. They normally then do an activity linked to the story and sing a song. It is great seeing these young children rushing back into church wanting to share their experience. Mini Church has 2 adults leading each week and they meet in the choir vestry. Numbers attending have increased this year. Most children stay without their parents but parents are always welcome. Claire Gibbs is the Mini Church leader.

Junior Church

This is for children in reception to those in Year 4. This group is thriving with material being used that follows the lectionary. After the story and a song there is normally chance to make something or play a game. Junior church has 2 adult leaders per session. They meet in the Transept and have between 8 and 25 per session.

Pals and Gospellers Groups

Between the 2 groups we have over 15 young people who attend our church

One of the highlights of last year was the trip in September to Fellowship Afloat. 26 of us enjoyed a weekend staying on the lightship where all had a chance to sail, climb, walk, do some archery, sing and eat cake. It was a fun weekend which ended with a short service on board the lightship.

We enjoyed it so much that we plan to repeat the trip again in September. Forms will be coming out soon.

Pals

This is a group for those in Years 5 to 10. We have a regular attendance each week and base our sessions on material which follows the lectionary and gets the young people to actively study the bible and think about what it means to them.

It is very rewarding to work with this group as they are starting to question and formulate their own ideas about God, faith and religion.

Gospellers

We meet twice a month, on the 2nd Sunday between 4 and 6pm and after Evensong on the 4th Sunday of the month from 7.30pm.

Highlights of the year have been bible study, cooking, camping out, making rockets and the Christmas Meal. We have also attended FUEL this year which is a special united service for Youth organised by the 2.67 project.

We are a busy group who always welcome new people to be part of the group and also to share some part of their lives, be it a skill or a story.

So if you think you have something to share that these young people might like please get in touch.

Off to Uni

Quite a few of our young adults are away at University and although they come home for the holidays please keep them in your prayers while they are away.

Holiday Zone

During the summer holidays all the youth leaders helped to run a children's session each Sunday except the first Sunday of the Month. This was for children from 2 up and the sessions followed the lectionary. These were enjoyed by all.

Holiday Club

Holiday Club 2015 was a great success and was enjoyed by 72 children, 14 young leaders and 20 adults each day. The theme was Space Academy and during the week we learnt how Daniel travelled to a new land for God and how God kept him safe. Many people helped to make this a memorable week for all the children. The Holiday Club for 2016 is 'Guardians of Ancora' and runs from 25th – 30th July. The forms for this are out now.

Christmas Holiday Club

Once again Christmas holiday club had lots of children, young people and adults. We wrote our own words to the Christmas Story, had sausages for lunch and party games in the afternoon.

The next day we presented our version of that first Christmas day to the rest of the congregation.

Thanks

I would just like to say a very big thank you to every leader who gives up their time to serve the young people at St Mary's the children are truly blessed from your time, commitment and care. To the rest of the congregation I ask that you pray for the leaders but also for the children and young people. Thank you

Sandra Cresswell – Children's and Youth Work Coordinator

ST MARY'S CHURCH CHOIR

The choir is in good heart and voice. Numbers are buoyant, with over 30 on the choir roll, a record in recent years.

Alas in summer 2015 we said a sad goodbye to the Revd Dr Jan Goodair, following her move to Yorkshire. She was the first person we think to combine priestly duties with singing in the St Mary's choir – will there be another!? Happily at the same time we welcomed Paul and Kay Vernon, and since then have welcomed Julie Henman.

It was good to perform this year *From His Courts*, an arrangement of Pachelbel's Canon by Paul Vernon with words from Psalms 127 and 128. This had previously been performed in slightly more up-market venues than Redbourn church: Westminster Abbey and Salisbury Cathedral. Other home-grown music sung during the year included a newly composed set of Preces and Responses by Kathy Goodchild, and arrangements by Damian Cranmer of music by Gibbons published in Wither's *The Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623).



The Junior Choir continues in lively mode. We have space for one new junior, so if any parent thinks their child might be interested, do get in touch with Jonathan.

Jonathan Goodchild

*Organist and
Director of Music*

BEARS AND PRAYERS GROUP

Bears and Prayers has been running at St Marys for 30 months, and offers a time for young children, their parents, grandparents and carers to meet for worship and fellowship. Numbers vary Friday by Friday and we have been actively trying to boost the numbers especially by talking to families who go to 'Coffee on the Common' we are averaging about 6 children and they are 'regulars'. We are also going to meet with the Baptism team so that we can continue to involve parents and children after Baptism. Each week we start with songs and a bible story, followed by coffee, cake, toys and a simple craft. With Lucy leaving we now have a team of Penny McAdam, Ailsa Hulme and Mollie Williams. We have been delighted to see the adults sharing prayers of thanksgiving and giving, and caring for each other during the ups and downs of life as well as giving us feedback as the Bears and Prayers evolves. It was lovely to see a huge number of parents and children coming to our last session in the summer which coincided with Lucy leaving. Parents sent us photographs and we made a presentation collage as well as some teddies for Lucy to carry on the concept in Flitwick. Two parents made beautiful teddy cakes and there was a wonderful atmosphere as we came to worship together. Bears and Prayers continues to be a strong 'touching point' for those who do not regularly come to church, where they find friendship, receive pastoral support, and are offered an effective opening to Sunday worship.

Ailsa Hulme – Coordinator

THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH, REDBOURN

Main activities and Fund Raising

The Friends Committee tried to run a range of social activities during 2015. One event, a Salsa Evening planned for October had to be cancelled due to lack of ticket sales.

- January** A successful and very enjoyable Winter Ball took place at St Luke's School. We are very grateful for the efforts of Alan Simkins in bringing sponsorship from businesses in the village and the Committee for selling tickets.
- June** We were able to reinstate our popular Barn Dance which took place on the 20th June and was enjoyed by all who attended. Thanks are due to Dan and Sue Sims for the use of their barn and to Will and the rest of the barbecue team.
- September** The Friends ran the bar at the Patronal Festival on the 6th September and had a successful bucket collection at the event. Liz Woods and Wendy Bloisi deserve particular thanks.
- December** St.Albans Round Table again invited us to collect during one evening of their 'Father Christmas' float tours of the village. This proved a very enjoyable, and humbling, evening for those who helped with the collection. We collected a record total of £1061 which, after donations to Round Table and The Redbourn Care Group, left us with £541! Thanks are due to Janis Apsa for driving the float around the village and to Ian Wooding Jones for getting it from, and back to, the North Pole.

Projects:

This year we have used our funds for the purchase of a new boiler costing just over £12500 and made a donation of £5000 to the PCC for work to the Transept. We have also made other small payments for work as and when the need has arisen.

Future Projects:

During the course of 2016 we hope that expenditure will be relatively low as we prepare for the next Quinquennial Report from the Church Architect. Obviously every request for money will continue to be looked at on its merits and be considered in light of the Objects contained in the Constitution.

Personnel:

Chris Little stood down as Chairman after many years in the role but is to continue on the Committee. Enormous thanks are due to Chris for his tireless and selfless work. We would be very grateful to hear from anyone who feels they would like the challenge of taking on the Chairman's role.

In 2015 Alan Simkins left the Committee as one of the PCC representatives. We would like to thank Alan for his great support over the years; he will be sorely missed.

We have been joined during the course of the year by Louise McPhee and Alex Maynard, both of whom have already brought real drive to the workings of the Committee. More volunteers to join the Committee would be extremely welcome.

Summary:

The Trustees consider this a successful year, with a number of enjoyable social activities having taken place.

Regular subscriptions continue to provide a significant part of the income. Bequests in wills are rare but enormously useful and greatly appreciated.

The Friends are very grateful for the support from members, both past and present, as we continue in our task of maintaining and beautifying our church building and churchyard.

Steve Smith – Acting Co-Chair

REDBOURN DAY CENTRE

We started the year with 16 members. Daphne Smith soon left to go into a care home in Harpenden and June Surridge and Gill Howe joined, taking our membership to 17. With the addition of Sylvia Turner in May, our numbers reached capacity and have remained so for the rest of the year. There is a waiting list of several people who have been put forward by their doctors.

During the year the new computerised DBS checks for the volunteers were successfully completed.

Every Wednesday follows the same pattern as before, with a welcome beverage on arrival, and once the second bus has arrived we have a short session of ‘sitting down exercises’ taken by a member of the Extend Group on alternate weeks. Lunch is provided by St Luke’s School and then we have a variety of activities aimed at stimulation and companionship. Board games are popular and there is an enthusiastic ‘art’ group. Sometimes we have interest afternoons which consist of talks on items of interest, music and poetry, entertainment, quizzes and the occasional movie. One afternoon everyone made a tie and dye shopping bag, which was fun, and which they found very useful. Another time Janet Biggs gave a flower arranging demonstration, with everyone trying their hand. Baking Eccles cakes for tea was also enjoyed.

Outings this year consisted of a trip to St Albans Arena to see the Operatic Society’s performance of ‘Oliver’, which was wonderful. That was in April, then in July we went to Waddesdon Manor for a full day out, a tour of the manor house, and a delicious meal in the restaurant, followed by a short wander around the gardens. In November we went on our annual shopping trip to Hemel Hempstead with lunch at Debenhams. As with all the outings, we need a lot of wheel chairs, so we either borrow from the Care Office, or hire them there. This of course means we have to have strong volunteers to push them. Fortunately we always seem to manage.

Our year came to a happy conclusion with a Festive lunch at the Aubrey Park Hotel, for sixty eight people, including bus drivers and couriers.

2015 was a happy and productive year, thanks to all those involved, especially our wonderful teams of helpers, the Care Group, St Mary’s and everyone who gives their support.

Margie Johnstone – Day Centre Coordinator

THE CHURCHES TOGETHER IN REDBOURN 2015

Chair: Revd Will Gibbs.

Committee Members: Revd Linda Woollacott, Fr Michael Mannion, Doreen Cosier, Christine Clow (Treasurer), Samantha Statham, Maggy Swift, Sue May and Grace Sawyer (Secretary).

The Committee for the Churches Together in Redbourn met in January and September 2015. Three Redbourn Churches were represented on the committee, St Mary's Church, the Methodist Church and The Catholic Church of St John Fisher.

Lent 2015

In Lent 2015 weekly meetings were held in the lounge of New Forge Place, following a series of topics based on the four gospels and how each one portrayed Jesus.

Lent Charity Lunches in 2015 were at Redbourn Methodist Church each Friday.

On Thursday evenings there were meetings at St Mary's Church on the five Thursdays during Lent, the first four following the theme 'Jesus in the four Gospels'.

On the fifth Thursday, March 26, Mark Topping presented a dramatic one-man series portraying many of the people who followed Jesus at the time of the Crucifixion

Donations made at meetings in Lent, were welcome, enabling us to send contributions of £250 to *CAFOD* and to Christian Aid.

The Walk of Witness on Good Friday 2015 began at 11:30am outside the Catholic Church of St John Fisher and about 100 people joined, stopping at the Village Hall Car Park, the War Memorial, and finishing at the Methodist Church. At each of the stopping places, ministers led hymns, readings and prayers. Refreshments were provided afterwards at the Methodist Church.

United Services	January	Service for the Week of Christian Unity
	March	Women's World Day of Prayer
	May	Service for the Week of Christian Aid
	June	Pentecost Praise
	November	Remembrance Service at the War Memorial

Combined Services for Redbourn churches were held during winter and summer on Sunday evenings from Christmas until Lent and from late July until early September.

Easter and Christmas Cards These gave details of services in all participating churches and were distributed to every home in the village. CTR Street Prayer cards were included.

Subscriptions Each church makes an annual donation to the Churches Together Fund, covering the cost of Easter and Christmas cards, Street Prayer Cards, Carol sheets and towards Lent expenses.

Lent 2016 The programme for Lent 2016 was agreed at the CTR Committee meeting in September 2015, Thursday talks to be on 'Following the Cross' and details to be in the February 2016 edition of Common Round.

Grace Sawyer - Secretary

ST. MARY'S TRANSEPT REPORT 2015

The Transept Hall, built in 1989, provides excellent facilities for groups and meetings. The recent improvements to the Transept over the past year have improved the layout and capacity, which have been welcomed by the users.

These have included redecoration to the common parts, and upgrading of the kitchen facilities, flooring and lighting.



Bookings are gradually increasing and our letting rates are very competitive compared with other venues in the village. The lettings are diverse, which beside the regular Church use, include Christening parties, wedding anniversaries, children's parties and a variety of outside organisations which book for group meetings.

The hall is being advertised in the Common Round. Please contact me to make a booking, or if you require further details about availability.

Rosemary Woodhouse – Transept Warden

Telephone: 01582 792668

Email: woodhouse.37@virginmedia.com

ONLINE ACTIVITIES – MEDIA AND WEBSITE REPORT 2015

This year has seen continued development of the communications at St Mary's. There has been very strong growth in the use of social media, in particular our Facebook and Twitter accounts which have been run with the help of Michelle Parry-Slater. It provides a valuable two way communications channel amongst members of the congregation with over 250 subscribed readers each; items on these accounts often reach over 1,000 other readers for popular items providing a valuable social profile and engagement for the church in society.

The website has been redeveloped after Christmas to a new responsive design suitable to be read on phones, tablets and PC's and with additional security. So far this seems to have had a positive effect on the number of visits, although we have only collected a few statistics. Currently the website is receiving about 600 visitors per month viewing and just under 2,000 pages viewed per month. Facebook interacts well with the website bringing over 250 per month. The top pages are those that provide further contacts in the church and some of the articles we have published with one being read over 700 times, but that was exceeded by a more humorous post involving the Vicar at the Beers and Carols!

Mark Cresswell – Church Website Editor and Administrator

REDBOURN COMMON ROUND

2015 was another successful year for the production and circulation of the magazine. The number of copies printed each month was 1200, most of these being for regular local orders, additional single copies being sold at St Mary's and in the Post Office and some posted to addresses outside Redbourn.

There were 11 editions during the year, July and August being combined. The price remained at 60p per copy or £6 for the year (11 editions).

Tony Bull led the team of printers. A team of around 50 distributed the magazine and Ken Smith continued to be responsible for organizing distribution.

Jim May is Treasurer and he is responsible for the Classified Advertisements. Occasional one-off adverts were included in the pages of copy, these adverts being paid for by the advertisers.

Redbourn churches continued to give news and details of services. A wide variety of village activities submitted copy; there was an open invitation to village organizations to do so.

It is our policy to deliver a complimentary copy of the magazine to all new residents.

Those responsible for the production and circulation of Common Round in 2015:

Editor	The Vicar
Treasurer and Classified Advertisements	Jim May
Printing	Tony Bull and Keith Stanley
Collating and distribution	Ken Smith
Co-ordinator	Grace Sawyer

Grace Sawyer – Common Round Coordinator

REDBOURN COMMON ROUND - FINANCIAL REPORT 2014

I am pleased to provide a few comments in connection with the financial statement for 2015.

Income from magazine sales was £6,433, an increase of £967 on the 2014 income, due to our increasing the price to £6 for the year or 60p an issue. Magazine sales through our distributors were approximately 1,200 copies. Of these, 19 were postal sales.

Advertising income for the year was £8,082, up by £1,345 on the previous year. External Services represents £1,001 of photocopying for other voluntary organisations in the village.

On the expenditure side, our new and significantly more reliable copying machine cost us £346 less to run than the old machine. We changed stationery supplier and saved £1,304.

The net funds at end of year were £23,617, which is £796 less than 2014 year-end. This is because of another request from the PCC for £10,000 to help pay for the Building for Growth work. Of this sum, £15,759 was held in the Nationwide Treasurers Account, earning a small amount of interest.

Jim May – Common Round Treasurer

REDBOURN COMMON ROUND			
INCOME / EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 2015			
		2015	2014
			£
Bank Balance Brought Forward	[A]	9,709.04	12,135.00
CREDITS			
Magazine Sales	Distributor	6,234.90	5,258.10
	Postal	114.00	100.00
Post Subscribers Post/pack contribution		266.00	190.00
Post Subscribers Donations			
Magazine Sales Post Office		84.50	108.60
Advertisement Sales current year		8,081.98	6,737.22
Advertisement Sales previous year			1,458.72
External Services Provided		1,000.98	886.55
TOTAL INCOME	[B]	15,782.36	14,739.19
DEBITS			
Printing		3,447.03	4,712.36
Stationery		1,443.13	2,747.50
Sundry Production Expenses		30.00	32.97
Distribution Expenses		327.84	382.96
Capital Items Purchased			
Machine Rental (from November 2014)		1,361.72	442.34
Bank Charges			
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	[C]	6,609.73	8,318.13
NETT MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		9,172.63	6,421.06
Current Account Funds	[D]= (A + B - C)	18,881.67	18,556.06
Transfer to PCC	[E]	- 10,000.00	- 10,000.00
Reversal of previous year debtors and creditors	[F]	- 1,022.80	130.18
Provisions - Debtors	[G]		- 23.36
Provisions – Creditors	[H]	1,041.14	1,046.16
Net Current Account Funds	[J]= (D+E+F+G+H)	8,900.02	9,709.04
Deposit Account Balance 31.12.14		15,727.13	15,695.72
Deposits			
Interest 30.06.15		15.60	15.57
Interest 31.12.15		15.87	15.84
Withdrawals			
Balance 31.12.15	[K]	15,758.60	15,727.13
TOTAL FUNDS:	[L]= (J+K)	24,658.62	25,436.17
Less Creditors	[M]	- 1,041.14	- 1,046.16
Plus Debtors	[N]		23.36
NET FUNDS: February 2016	[L+M+N]	23,617.47	24,413.37